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MidCity News

BPC/34SP/CIC 2008 Almanac

As we head into 2009, here's a look back at last year's highlights at Bryant Park, the 34th Street District, and Chelsea. This recap not only covers the achievements and notable events of 2008, it also provides some insight into what you can expect from us over the next 12 months.

January. Food Channel star Rachael Ray tapes an entire program at The Pond at Bryant Park. The Pond closes its third season with record attendance of 199,584, nearly 61,000 more than previous year. 34SP installs illuminated sign designating 32nd Street between Broadway and Sixth Avenue as "Korea Way." Yankees captain Derek Jeter appears at Herald Square for Gatorade promotion.

February. 34SP forms Sidewalk Committee to address problem of broken sidewalks in District. 34SP takes delivery of new, custom designed barricade covers that help to "brand" Herald and Greeley Squares. Le Carrousel at Bryant Park begins 2008 with dramatically increased attendance over first two months. Herald Square hosts Dunkin' Donuts' "Toasty Tent", providing free samples of warm food for chilly shoppers.

March. Arborist examines each tree under the care of 34SP and pronounces them "doing remarkably well." Associated Press writer Christopher Sullivan pens syndicated article describing one year at Bryant Park. Bryant Park installs stereo system to pipe classical music into restrooms. BPC installs new top on Le Carrousel.

April. 34SP and BPC award Cemusa, producer of stylish street furniture, exclusive rights to hang banners in both districts. BPC adds second Tai Chi class for 2008 season. Law & Order tapes 200th episode at Bryant Park with cast that includes Robin Williams. More than 100 poets read their work on "Poem in Your Pocket Day" at the Reading Room in Bryant Park.

May. Chelsea Improvement Company installs first of series of custom-built illuminated street signs designed and developed by Ignacio Ciocchini. Mayor Bloomberg signs legislation that adds the new Bank of America Tower at One Bryant Park to the BP BID district. BP begins twice-weekly free yoga sessions. 34SP announces plans to convert coin-operated automated public toilets in Herald and Greeley Squares into luxurious, staffed, free restrooms.

June. 34SP wins SEGJ Jury Award for its innovative Regulated Parking Sign System designed and developed by Ignacio Ciocchini. Bolstered by new equipment installed by

Information Director George Townley, BP's free Wi-Fi system sets new record for monthly usage. Greeley Square hosts launch of HGTV's "Design Star III" series. BP's first-ever Twilight Knitting session draws 75 experienced knitters.

July. CIC and Laughing Lotus Yoga Center launch free "Vinyasa Flow Class in the Park" yoga sessions at the park at 15th Street and 10th Avenue. Joyce Carol Oates appears at the Word for Word series at BP's Reading Room. BPC begins counting evening crowds weekdays at 6:00pm.

August. 34SP, working with NYC Department of Transportation, and Fashion Institute of Technology, decorate unsightly Jersey barrier on 31st Street. BP's free Wi-Fi network sets one-day record with 898 users on August 18. 34SP's Storefront Improvement Program designs new sign for Salt & Pepper restaurant, and facilitates production and installation of the sign. BP's free yoga classes wind up season with a record 2,371 participants.

September. BP's summer lawn season ends with a record 96 days open to public. 34SP completes transformation of Broadway between 35th and 36th Streets into part of NYC DOT's "Broadway Boulevard" project. 34SP welcomes 'wichcraft as operator of food kiosks at Herald and Greeley Squares. *Bank of America Presents NY Now* brings musicians from The New York Philharmonic, The Metropolitan Opera, Orchestra of St. Luke's, NYC Opera, and The New York Pops to BP for performances showcasing their upcoming seasons.

October. The Pond at Bryant Park, presented by Citi, opens on October 25 for its fourth season. CIC begins installation of treepits in Chelsea. BP's free Tai Chi classes end season with a record 1,697 attendees. BP's Piano in the Park winds up season with record 105th performance.

November. Holiday Shops at BP opens with all vendors housed in custom-made kiosk designed by BPC. Le Carrousel adds winter children's program with Flaubert Frog reading stories from around the world. BP's Reading Room closes for season after a record 54 events. CIC begins installation of award-winning parking regulation signs in Chelsea area.

December. Le Carrousel in BP closes out 2008 with new yearly records in riders and revenues. Fashion Herald, a blog researched and written by 34SP's Tricia Lewis, averages 210 different visitors each day, with one-day high of 703. New York Magazine rates NYC's skating rinks and The Pond is the sole rink to garner five stars. BP adds audio tour narrated by Matthew Broderick.