



# BIG APPLE GREETER NEWS

FALL 2008

## Dear Friends,



Welcome to our fall newsletter! We've had a busy summer, with ever-growing numbers of visitors from all over the world enjoying the unique experience that is a "greet" with a Big Apple Greeter. As always, I send my most

sincere thanks to our wonderful volunteers who make it all possible.

In September, Patricia Ryan, Director of Volunteers and ACCESS, left Big Apple Greeter to finish graduate school. Patricia has been a valuable member of our staff since 2002. We wish her great success.

Greeter and office volunteer Madeline Marziotta has joined our staff as Coordinator of Special Events and Development Assistant. Maddy became a greeter in 2001 after her retirement from Morgan Stanley. We are delighted to welcome her to the team.

At our 16th Anniversary Recognition Breakfast in May, we honored William DeCota, Aviation Director, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and Greeter of the Year Sami Steigmann. We are most grateful to Benefit Chair Larry Kellner, Chairman & CEO of Continental Airlines, the Benefit Committee, Board Chair Tom Lewis, the Board of Directors, Founder Lynn Brooks, and the Big Apple Staff and volunteers. The event was a huge success!

Alicia Pierro, Executive Director



Here we are at "Sweet Sixteen" and still going strong! Every year, we get bigger and better, increasing the number of volunteers, visitors, and interesting locales to be visited. This, of course, is made possible by the enthusiastic hard work of the volunteers, staff and dedicated Board of Directors.

Many thanks to Patricia Ryan for her valuable contributions to Big Apple Greeter's growth and a warm welcome to Madeline Marziotta in her new role on staff.

Congratulations to Big Apple Greeter 16th Anniversary Recognition Breakfast Honoree William DeCota and Greeter of the Year Sami Steigmann. Our heartfelt thanks go to Benefit Chair Larry Kellner, the Benefit Committee, the volunteer Board of Directors, Founder Lynn Brooks, and the Big Apple Staff and volunteers for all their hard work.

A special thank you goes to our generous donors and event sponsors for their continued support of Big Apple Greeter and its contribution to New York City.

Tom Lewis, Chair, Board of Directors

## Agri-Tourism Grant Underwrites New Profiles

The people who think it funny to find "agriculture" and "New York City" in the same sentence don't realize the rich agricultural history of the city, the farming practiced today and the abundance of New York State agricultural products available in the city's shops, green markets and restaurants.

Big Apple Greeter has used a \$24,000 matching grant from the State of New York Department of Agriculture and Markets to develop 5 new Neighborhood Information Profiles featuring New York City's agricultural life, past and present, and create 2 walking itineraries, that will soon be available to the public for free on Big Apple Greeter's website, [www.bigapplegreeter.org](http://www.bigapplegreeter.org). In addition, the grant has been used to underwrite outings for volunteer Greeters who will learn more about New York City's ties to agriculture. Greeters can then share this knowledge with visitors from around the world, as well as with their friends and families here in the city. The Agri-Tourism grant program was designed to encourage tourism development and partnerships as a means of promoting New York State-grown food and agriculture to visitors and residents alike.

Two of the new Neighborhood Information Profiles feature Inwood, Manhattan, and Red Hook, Brooklyn. Thanks to this grant, Big Apple Greeter has produced its first multi-neighborhood profiles. Highlighting New York City's agricultural history and featuring five historic locations, 2 profiles will introduce visitors to Queens County Farm Museum, Dyckman House in Manhattan, Valentine-Varian House in the Bronx, Wyckoff Farmhouse in Brooklyn, and Decker Farm in Staten Island. The fifth new profile takes a look at agriculture today in New York City, including a successful rooftop beekeeper who sells honey at local greenmarkets; The Science Barge, a sustainable urban waterfront farm; and vegetable farming in Riverbank State Park. With the addition of these 5, there will be a total of 20 Neighborhood Information Profiles; each is a five-page report researched, written and edited, photographed and graphically designed by volunteers.



Photo: Dyckman Farmhouse Museum

Dyckman Farmhouse Museum

Big Apple Greeter's new walking itineraries showcase a New York State wine and cheese trail in Park Slope, Brooklyn, and, in Manhattan, a trail featuring a few of the many unique shops and greenmarkets that carry New York State agricultural products. Visitors will be able to print the itineraries from Big Apple Greeter's website and use them for personal exploration.

The Greeter Trips are a type of "train the trainer" program, enhancing Greeters' knowledge of neighborhoods or sites that can then be incorporated into future visitor walks. The grant has underwritten trips to Queens County Farm Museum, Red Hook Community Farm, Decker Farm and Union Square Greenmarket, among others.

Our Visitors say... I would just like to say that meeting Bobbi has confirmed that you still can get something for nothing... He took us on the subway for the first time...We have traveled a lot and this day belongs among the golden dozen...I think it helps the solidarity and humanity between people...The day after we met you, we took the subway Coney Island...

## Big Apple Greeter Celebrates 16 Sweet Years

The New York Marriott Marquis was filled to overflowing with friends and supporters for Big Apple Greeter's 16th Anniversary Recognition Breakfast. The event honored The Port Authority of NY & NJ Director of Aviation William R. DaCota, who heads the world's largest aviation system. Mr. DaCota received the Good Corporate Citizen Award and Sami Steigmann was honored as Big Apple Greeter's Greeter of the Year.

"This is the largest turnout ever for our breakfast event," said Board of Directors Vice Chair Louise Morman in her opening remarks to over 450 guests, who then enjoyed Making Connections, an entertaining video full of information about Big Apple Greeter was produced by Fox 5 New York.

Event Chair Larry Kellner, CEO & Chairman of Continental Airlines, came from Houston to present William DaCota with the Good Corporate Citizen Award. Mr. Kellner said, "He is a tremendous asset to New York. He shares with everyone a true passion for this city." Mr. DaCota learned first hand what visitors experience with Greeter Benjamin Bean on a greeter visit through the Morningside Heights, including a visit to the Cathedral of Saint John the Devine. "Big Apple Greeter is incredible. It's what I strive for at my airports: friendly, accessible service." He thanked all his friends, supporters, and Big Apple Greeter for this great honor.

Big Apple Greeter Executive Director Alicia Pierro presented Greeter of the Year Sami Steigmann with an engraved Tiffany & Company crystal apple. "He knows how to give visitors the New York that is most important to them," she said. Mr. Steigmann, a Holocaust survivor, said, "Big Apple Greeter changed his life forever and for the better. This is a way I can give back to the city I love." Mr. Steigmann said the best reward was hearing visitors say they want to come back to New York. He saluted Big Apple Greeter Founder Lynn Brooks who "proved one person can make a difference."

Lynn Brooks and Board of Directors member Matthew Daus, commissioner of the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission, introduced a new initiative called Greeter for a Day. Based on the Principal for a Day programs, Greeter for a Day allows civic and corporate leaders to be a Greeter for a few hours, welcoming visitors and sharing their love of New York City. Extolling New York's "charisma," Mr. Daus said "I'm going to do it and will ask some of my cab drivers to do it."

Event attendee Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz stepped up to the podium to offer his support for the program. For more information on Greeter for a Day, contact Lynn Brooks at lbrooks@bigapplegreeter.org.

The breakfast event concluded with the drawing of wonderful door prizes from Continental Airlines and the Bronx Zoo.



Benefit Chair Larry Kellner presents award to Honoree William DeCota



Registration for over 450 attendees



Founder Lynn Brooks announces the new "Greeter for a Day" initiative. Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz lends his support while Executive Director Alicia Pierro looks on.

**Thank you to the following 16th Anniversary Recognition Breakfast donors who contributed to our gift bags and supported us at Sponsorship levels.**

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Photo Credit: Karen Bell

Photo Credit: Karen Bell

Photo Credit: Karen Bell

# Greeter of the Year Sami Steigmann

Sami Steigmann has been apart of the Big Apple Greeter family since 2002, when a friend recommended the volunteer opportunity to him.

Six years later he still loves the experience, from his pre-visit, preparation time to the hours he spends with his visitors. Before each visit, Sami contacts his guests to inquire about their plans and interests. When he first meets his visitors, he gives them a verbal map of the city of New York,

but, with a twinkle in his eye, warns them that they will be tested at the end of the day. "I enjoy being a greeter which is why I spend so much time on each visit," he says. During the day he shares any number of only-in-New York experiences – restaurants both historic and unique, inexpensive street food dished out by neighborhood personalities, the Fashion Avenue Designer Walk of Fame, the MetLife Building, Empire State Building, and Federal Hall, to name but a few. He credits much of his knowledge to the visitors he has encountered over the years, who often point out things most New Yorkers might take for granted.

The road of life has taken Sami on a long journey. Born in Romania, Sami and his parents survived the Holocaust and relocated to

Israel. As an adult, he immigrated to Milwaukee, WI, for 15 years before returning to Israel, but he soon realized America was in his blood

and moved to New York City. Sami has proudly called himself a "native" New Yorker for the last 20 years.

Today Sami volunteers to speak with school-age children about the Holocaust and his life experiences. He also volunteers for several other organizations, including Make-A-Wish Foundation® of Metro New York. Through Big Apple Greeter, he shows wish-children and

their families around New York City. Sami says that volunteering for Big Apple Greeter and meeting people from all walks of life has changed his life in many ways and has inspired his upbeat, positive outlook on life.



Greeter of the Year Sami Steigmann

## Big Apple Greeter's 16th Anniversary Recognition Breakfast

Good Corporate Citizen Award: **William R. DeCota**, Director of Aviation, The Port Authority of NY & NJ

Greeter of the Year: **Sami Steigmann**

Benefit Chair: **Larry Kellner**, CEO & Chairman, Continental Airlines, Incl

## Liquidnet Matches Employee Volunteer Time

While many companies have a matching gift program, Todd Cherches' employer, Liquidnet, Inc., goes many extra miles by matching not only their employees' financial donations, but also their donations of time.

Called "Double Down," when a Liquidnet employee volunteers time, the employee registers the name of the organization and the number of volunteer hours worked. Liquidnet donates \$20.00 for each hour of employee volunteer time. For example, Todd's 5 hour greeter visit with Chris and Kate Stott was matched by Liquidnet with a \$100 donation to Big Apple. Todd said it best: "How cool is that!"

The 7-year-old financial services company, which provides a global equities marketplace for institutional asset management, is taking a leadership role in changing the face of global corporate philanthropy. Led by founder and CEO Seth Merrin, Liquidnet's core social values, called Global Social Engagement, promote the responsibility of giving back, both as a company and by each individual in the company. "We believe in the potential of one: that one person can make a difference, one idea can lead to change, and one company can have an impact," it states on Liquidnet.com. The initial focus of Global Social Engagement is a partnership with the Agahozo Shalom Youth Village, a residential community for orphans in Rwanda, a response to the 1994 genocide. The company gives 1% of its annual revenues to its Global Social Engagement initiatives.

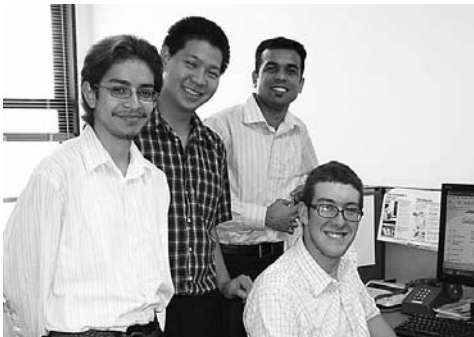


Photo Credit: Elizabeth Holmes

## Pace University

Pace University Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems will be developing new computer systems for Big Apple Greeter, including new databases and a new website. The multi-year project started in January 2008. Seen here are team members Jose Gonzales, Paat Sinsuwan, Bhavik Domadia and Patrick Stankard.

Our Greeters say... They had never tasted knishes or corned beef before..."Greeting" is always such a great experience, where one learns at least as much as one gives information...Nathan's hot dogs were a big hit, of course...They said there were more people on one block in New York than the total population of their town... Very relieved to hear me speak Dutch...This visit was probably as much fun for me as it was for the visitors...

# What a Way to Celebrate a Birthday!

As we all know, visits to the Big Apple are always special, but some are more special than others. One such special visit occurred in January 2008 when Chris and Kate Stott from Nottinghamshire, England, arrived in Manhattan for their first-ever visit to the US. Only a month before on Christmas morning, Kate opened



Photo: Paul Margolis

Visitors Chris and Kate Stott in Chinatown with Greeter Todd Cherches

four tightly wrapped packages: a Sex & the City DVD box set, a New York City guide book, an envelope of American dollars, and finally, two airline tickets to New York City -- presents that meant they would spend her 30th birthday in the Big Apple!

Since they didn't want to miss a thing, they contacted Big Apple Greeter which had been mentioned in their guide book. They thought perhaps it was a little too good to be true: why would someone volunteer to take strangers around New York City for no charge? Soon they were matched with Greeter Todd Cherches. "We were really fortunate that Todd was available. After a telephone confirmation from Big Apple Greeter, Todd emailed us to introduce himself, briefly outline why he volunteers. Todd also gave us his contact telephone numbers, which was a massive reassurance as suddenly we had a point of contact in this new, daunting and exciting place we were going to visit. He gave us tips on what to wear and also answered our questions regarding theatre tickets," explained Kate.

A native New Yorker, Todd was living in Los Angeles and read an article about Big Apple Greeter while on a flight home to visit his parents. He and was so impressed, he saved the

article. After relocating to New York, Todd became a volunteer greeter in 1997. When not showing visitors around the city, Todd supports the organization in many other ways, including brainstorming ideas, and providing meeting space and facilitating contacts. Todd says he always enjoys assisting visitors whenever he can, whether by giving directions, showing people how to use the subways, or making recommendations.

On their first full day in New York -- one of the coldest of the winter -- Todd met Chris and Kate in the lobby of their hotel and set off. Todd showed them how to use Metrocards and the subway to move around the city. They visited Grand Central Terminal, Chinatown, Little Ita-



Photo: Paul Margolis

The Stotts of Nottinghamshire, England, learn the subway is the best way to get around New York City.

ly, Ground Zero and finished off with a view of the Statue of Liberty. They thought Todd was "fantastic and conversation was really easy. He provided a brilliant insight into absolutely everything that we may have never gotten if we had made our own way around." During their 4-day visit, they "walked miles and miles and to every tourist attraction in New York." In fact, they walked so much that Kate wore out a new pair of boots! They even got tickets to Phantom of the Opera only four rows from the stage and saw the views from the top of the Empire State building on a perfect day. Although Chris said he'd never been so cold in his life, they thoroughly enjoyed their visit and promise to come back soon...and bring their children!

## A Snapshot of 2007 Visits, Visitors and Volunteers

During 2007, Big Apple Greeter organized 2,804 visits for 7,207 visitors. This represents an increase of 10% in visits and 19% in visitors in the last five years. By the end of 2007, Big Apple Greeter has hosted 31,962 visits and 79,811 visitors since it was founded in 1992.

### Origins of Visitors

The number and share of visitors from foreign countries continued to increase in 2007, most likely the result of the declining dollar. Visitors from outside the United States made up 83% of Big Apple Greeter's visitors. Visitors from the United Kingdom accounted for more than one-quarter of all international visitors.

Some 37% of all visitors in 2007 hailed from Western Europe, primarily from Germany, France and the Netherlands. The South Pacific accounted for 16% of visitors with flow from Australia continuing strongly from 2006.

North American visitors, from both the US and Canada, declined in both number and share in 2007. California, Texas, Florida, Illinois, Ohio and New York State were states with the most visitors.

### Characteristics of Visitors

In 2007, 13% of all visits were family visits: 601 children enjoyed the hospitality of Big Apple Greeter along with their parents.

One-fourth of visitors requested greeters who spoke languages other than English. German, French and Spanish were the most frequently requested. Visitors were delighted (and surprised) to find greeters who spoke Romanian, Finnish, Greek and Chinese as well! Forty percent of greeters speak at least one language in addition to English.

Food topped the list of visitors' interests, followed by history, shopping, general touring and architecture.

# A Greeter Day in Astoria

Greeter Suzanne Paliotta knows Queens like the back of her hand. The Queens native still lives in the borough and taught in borough schools for 29 years. When Suzanne, a greeter for 14 years, was asked to share Astoria with Celebrate New York 2007 Honoree Amanda Burden and Special Assistant Carolyn Grossman, she was very excited: "It was a real privilege to share a favorite neighborhood – and the food! – with people who love the city as much as I do."

"I was completely charmed by Suzanne and by Astoria. The personalized descriptions of neighborhood lore and the delectable Greek pastries made for an unforgettable afternoon," said Ms Burden.

As a greeter, Suzanne knows the importance of giving her visitors an overview of the neighborhood, its history and the significant role it plays in the life of New York City. "Astoria has been a multi-ethnic neighborhood since the 19th century. In mid-20th century it became primarily Greek. Today, because of its proximity to Manhattan, the neighborhood has become appealing to a younger generation looking for an interesting and affordable place to live" said Suzanne. She and her visitors walked along Ditmars Boulevard, taking in some of the shops and restaurants that make Astoria so famous. On Shore Boulevard the ladies stopped to speak with a young man carrying a fresh fish he had just caught in the nearby East River. At Astoria Park they stopped to take in the beautiful view of the river, Triborough and Hellgate bridges, and Manhattan.

Enjoying pastries bought at a neighborhood shop, they walked by the Greek Orthodox St. Demetrios' Cathedral, and shops, clubs and restaurants catering to people of some of the many different cultures that today make up Astoria, including Arab, Czech, Greek, Italian, Albanian, Colombian, and Bangladeshi.

Astoria is so culturally rich and diverse that one afternoon was not enough time to take in everything. Athens Square Park, Socrates Sculpture Park, Steinway Piano Factory, Museum of the Moving Image, Kaufman Astoria Studios, Noguchi Museum, and many other sites will have to wait for the next visit.

I met ladies in front of L'Incontro Restaurant on Ditmars Blvd. and 31st St. (elevated N train). Restaurant one of better Italian restaurants in Queens. Walked west on Ditmars to Shore Blvd. on East River. Area is more residential than on 31st Street and Ditmars. On way we met young man getting out of car with fresh whole fish caught in East River in Astoria. Women were fascinated and had interesting conversation with him. Astoria Park begins

or ends at Shore Rd. and Ditmars. At that point view of river, Triborough and Hellgate Bridges, and Manhattan were very impressive. (picture postcard lovely) Gave information about significance of Triboro name and Hellgate which is for trains only. Mentioned Slocum Boat disaster that occurred there many years ago, on the river. (German immigrants on day boat rid). Many lives lost. Walked through parts of Astoria Park. Returned to 31st Street under elevator train and stopped in Titan Supermarket (largest in Astoria). (Great miniature baklava pastries. Ladies bought a few mini pastries and bottled drink. Ate along our walk. Walked past St. Demetrios Church (it was closed) Largest Greek congregation outside Athens. This is a cathedral. One of many, many, Greek Churches in area. On 31st St. and other streets off it, Arab, Czech, Greek, Italian, Albania, Colombian, Bangladesh, Arab, clubs, shops, etc. were seen. Time did not allow us to view Athens Square Park, Socrates Sculpture Park, Museum of Moving Image, Kaufman Studios, Noguchi Museum because Astoria is a very large area to see and talk about.

Why Important? Historical, Ethnic, varied Architecture (more open than Manhattan), cultural heritage, museums, retreat for rich before Astoria of today (end of 19th century and beginning of 20th century, Economic - because of multi-ethnic area, stores, clubs, restaurants are popular with people from other parts of city, Proximity to Manhattan, appeals to 20 to 45 year olds, new Housing., etc., etc.

I hope this will help you. If there is further assistance needed, please contact me. Thank you. Best regards to you and the other personnel. Suzanne Paliotta

*P.S. Astoria is a great food haven and so varied.*

## Greeter Bits...

Greeter Brad Smith's visitors wrote to say that they have "so fallen in love with the city that we are planning on moving to Brooklyn from Dayton, Ohio, in just less than three years." ...Greeter Joseph Briller's visitor from Iowa enjoyed talking to an apartment building doorman. "Kari asked many good questions and...mentioned... that doormen were not generally known in Iowa and would he please explain exactly what a doorman does? [He] graciously did so leaving out only the names of famous people who live in the building as he is not permitted to reveal that."

## A Snapshot of 2007 Visits, Visitors and Volunteers

### Neighborhoods Visited

Only four out of ten visitors specified neighborhoods they wanted to visit. "Greeter's Choice" was selected in 60% of all visits. Leaving the neighborhood choice up to the greeter, visitors were taken to a wide variety of neighborhoods and sites throughout the five boroughs.

The majority of visits were conducted in Manhattan, but nearly one-third (31%) were to the other four boroughs. Greeters took 26% of their visitors to Brooklyn during 2007.

The most frequently visited neighborhoods in 2007 were Greenwich Village, Midtown, Chinatown, Fifth Avenue and SoHo. Fifth Avenue was more popular in 2007 than in 2006, perhaps due to the increase in international visitors coming to New York City to shop. Greeters shopped with 16% of all visitors last year.

### Characteristics of Visits

A total of 7,074 visits were requested in 2007 – an average of 590 per month. Requests ranged from 277 in January to 795 in April. 2,804 or 59% of the 4,751 qualified requests were successfully completed.

Some 35% of visitors used the Internet to gather information about Big Apple Greeter. Other important sources of information included friends and previous visits (26%), publicity and media (21%), and guide books and travel professionals (18%).

Nearly nine out of ten (85%) visitors used subways or buses on their Big Apple Greeter visits (75% used subways; 29% used buses). Many visitors said they continued to use public transportation after their greeter visits.

The average length of a Big Apple Greeter visit was 4 \* hours. About one-third of visits lasted longer.

# Volunteering is a Two Way Street

By Jennifer Huntley

Susan Ellis is no stranger to New York. As president of Energize, Inc., a training, consulting, and publishing firm specializing in volunteerism, she often speaks at professional work-shops and seminars here. “Most of what I know about working with volunteers began with Susan,” said Big Apple Greeter Founder Lynn Brooks, who met Susan 25 years ago. “She was an ‘icon’ even then. When I started the Center on Volunteerism at Adelphi University, Susan was a mentor, a speaker, an advisor and more.”

On March 14, 2008, Susan Ellis changed roles. For a special birthday weekend she came to New York as a tourist. I was her “Greeter” for a visit to the Yorkville neighborhood where she was born.

“I could have taken myself to that corner of Second Avenue and 86th Street,” she told me, “but I need a Greeter to make all the connections come together.” Her parents were Austrian immigrants who arrived in New York in 1947. The tenement where Susan and her family lived in Yorkville until she was seven years old has been replaced by a modern hi-rise, but a few familiar landmarks remain.

“Oh, Shaller und Verber.” Susan pointed to the store using the German pronunciation learned from her parents. We retraced the route to her first school, P.S.77, since relocated to 96th Street. Susan and I shared childhood memories of Carl Schurz Park where I also played when my family lived on East 87th Street. On the flat pavement leading to the promenade along the East River Susan described home movies of her first attempts at roller skating and the often viewed film of her mother’s feet as she jumped to avoid the skate’s wheels.

As we walked across 86th Street to the Neue Galerie for German-Austrian Art, Susan enthusiastically described her career in Volunteerism. She founded Energize, Inc. (<http://www.energizeinc.com>) in 1977 and since that time has assisted clients throughout North America (48 states and 6 provinces), Europe (9 countries), Asia (4 countries), Latin America (2 countries), Australasia (2 countries), and Israel to create or strengthen their volunteer corps. She has published 12 books. Her first, *History*

*of Volunteerism*, is now in its third printing.

And what did she think about Big Apple Greeter as a volunteer organization?

“Fantastic! On many levels,” she said. “The idea of a person to person connection maximizes the best part of being a volunteer – it comes



Photo: Jennifer Huntley

*Jennifer Huntley and Susan Ellis (l. to r.) explore the Upper East Side together.*

across as friendship, not a tour. Its great for New York –a total contradiction of what people might think of the city.” She also cited the many languages Big Apple Greeter offers and the opportunity for visitors to discover off the beaten path neighborhoods.

And why was I a Big Apple Greeter, she asked? I love showing off the everyday things that make New York wonderful and unique, the unexpected moment around any corner. I enjoy meeting and connecting with people, helping them make the most of their visit to the city. In short, the same things that make Big Apple Greeter a great volunteer organization.

“That’s it,” Susan said, “Volunteering is a 2 way street.”

## Thank You... to Our 2008 Volunteer Recognition Event Sponsors

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New York Travel Advisory Bureau  
NY Water Taxi

## Volunteer Recognition Event

Greeters, who meet visitors from around the world, do not often have the opportunity to visit with each other. On a beautiful Saturday in May, Big Apple Greeter volunteers gathered to swap stories with their fellow volunteers as they enjoyed the sun, warm breezes and New York City skyline from the deck of a NY Water Taxi as they cruised around New York Harbor. Big Apple Greeter’s annual Volunteer Recognition Event brought out volunteers who work in all areas of the program, from greeters who welcome visitors to office volunteers who help the program run smoothly. The day started with a self-guided tour of Amazonia Brasil, a breath-taking 13,000-square-foot recreation of the Amazon, located next to



Photo Credit: Karen Bell

*Caption here...*

South Street Seaport from April through July 2008. Volunteers experienced firsthand the sights and sounds of life in the Brazilian Amazon, including its biodiversity, people, villages and cities. Then it was on to the NY Water Taxi to enjoy a one-hour cruise around the harbor with refreshments compliments of NY Water Taxi and door prizes donated by many wonderful sponsors of Big Apple Greeter. Big Apple Greeter thanks all our donors and sponsors who helped make this year’s Volunteer Recognition Event a big success!

## About Big Apple Greeter...

Founded in 1992, Big Apple Greeter's mission is to enhance New York City's worldwide image while enriching the City experience for its visitors. Connecting with business and leisure travelers from all over the US and the world, Greeters take visitors on informal, unscripted walks through one or more neighborhoods in any of the five boroughs, promote tourism throughout the city, and help visitors discover the ease of using public transportation. Over 300 volunteer Greeters speak almost 25 languages and enjoy giving their time and energy back to their hometown. Since its founding, Big Apple Greeter – a free public service – has welcomed over 85,000 visitors and been featured in thousands of newspapers, magazines, and television and radio programs all over the world, reaching an audience of over one billion potential visitors to New York City. Big Apple Greeter is proud to partner with NYC & Company, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Make-A-Wish Foundation® of Metro New York.

### s · t · a · f · f

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## A Snapshot of 2007 Visits, Visitors and Volunteers

### Visitors' Satisfaction

Virtually all visitors said their greeters made a difference (97%) and made them feel welcome (98%). 92% said they felt more comfortable exploring New York City after their greeter visits.

Two-thirds of visitors said they plan to return to New York City and 85% expect to contact Big Apple Greeter again.

### About the Greeters

At the end of 2007, there were 316 active greeters. 134 or 42% have been greeters for five years or more. The majority of greeters (60%) live in Manhattan, 14% live in Brooklyn and the rest live in the other boroughs or suburban areas. Greeters conduct an average of 10 visits per year, with 28 greeters conducting 20 or more visits in 2007.

Virtually all greeters (97%) show Manhattan neighborhoods, and 63% show Brooklyn. 70% show more than one borough. One-third show the Bronx and Queens, and 19% show Staten Island.

Greeters have many interests which they enthusiastically share with their visitors. These include parks and scenic spots (64%), New York City history (54%), food (52%), theater (49%), architecture (46%), art (44%), shopping (41%), and music (36%).

### Office Volunteers

in addition to greeters 34 New Yorkers volunteer in the office of Big Apple Greeter. They provide the crucial function of matching visitors and greeters, as well as assisting the full-time staff in fundraising efforts, clerical work a

## BIG APPLE GREETER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As of 09/09/2008

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