

12-TOWN NEWS

Feel welcome at mom-n-pops

Small stores offer personal touches that can be in short supply at larger chains

BY JOSEPH TEPPER
DAILY NEWS WRITER

DO YOU HATE being told to take a number? If you're beginning to feel like just number to the big chain stores, maybe it's time to look for a store with more of a family feel. Check out some of our favorite town mom-and-pop shops, which have personal touch that has endeared them to locals for decades.

Riverton Flower Shop Harlem

101 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd.
www.rivertonflorist.8m.com

One of the oldest florists in Harlem, Riverton Flower Shop is run by a four-member family team. The corner flower store is best known for fragrant floral arrangements, bouquets and baskets for special occasions, or just to brighten up your day.

Ray's Barber Shop Wood

4 W. 207th St., (212) 569-4090
"From 7-days-old to 103, I've cut them all," said Ray Mazzini, a 54-year-old barber from Washington Heights, who learned the tools of the trade from his father and brother. Ray offers a first-time \$10 haircut. It's \$14 after that.

John's Doo Wop Deli Wood

6 W. 207th St. (212) 567-9779
"I try to bring people back to a good home in their life," said owner John Mazzella, whose deli walls are filled with vinyl album covers from the likes of Sinatra and Dean Martin. Although this Doo Wop Deli was opened more than 50 years ago, you wouldn't know it once you walk inside and try their self-

Benjamin Optical Harlem

248 W. 116th St.,
(646) 400-0851
www.harlem-optical.com

When Benjamin Optical first opened in 1950, World War II veteran Dr. Irwin Benjamin sold only a simple collection of prescription glasses to the community in Harlem. Sixty-one years later, his son Richard has expanded the selection to include designer frames like Armani and Gucci, but still serves the same community. "I'm very lucky to walk down the street here and have everybody say 'Hi Doc!' when they see me," said Dr. Benjamin.



Spilled Brats Washington Heights

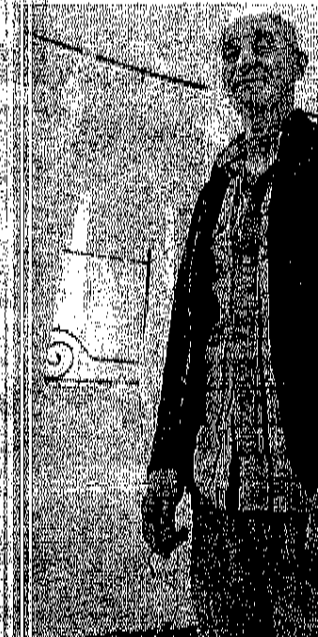
4 Bennett Ave., (212) 543-2202
www.spilledbratshyc.com

"It's a neighborhood store and we carry supplies for pets you don't find at the big chains," said Hichem Mansour, manager of Spilled Brats pet store in Washington Heights. The store's free delivery option, late hours and organic dog food selection have proved popular to local pet owners since the shop opened in 2005.

Sugarhill Harlem Inn Harlem

460 W. 141st St., (212) 734-5432
www.sugarhillharleminn.com

"I try to get people to go do things in the



neighborhood and that are our owner Jeremy Archer (above), who bought this 1906 townhouse with more than a decade ago. At the room-and-breakfast, Sugarhill Inn, a room is \$125 a night.

