New businesses in the neighborhood

By Maria Rocha-Buschel

This week, Town & Village presents its monthly round-up of business activity in the neighborhood. The past month has been unusually quiet for the area in terms of closures and while new businesses often come in the form of restaurants, the neighborhood has gained a handful of non-food related businesses in the last few weeks.

Recently opened Cafe El Presidente 30 West 24th Street btwn Fifth & Sixth Aves (212) 242-3491

cafeelpresidente.com

Mexican marketplace Cafe El Presidente opened its doors near Madison Square Park at the end of last month, Mad-ParkNews.com first reported. The taqueria offers tacos with various fillings, made with freshly-made tortillas, as well as as ceviches, Veracruz-style coffee and a juice bar with homemade Mexican-style soda. Fillings for the tacos include lobster, shrimp, carne asada and vegetarian options.

The spot is now serving breakfast, lunch and dinner to eat in and while a waiter at the restaurant said that they're not offering take-out yet, they're planning to start soon.

Nirvana Wellness NYC 366 Second Avenue (212) 533-3315

nirvanawellnessnyc.com

This Maryland-based spa, which also has locations in California and Virginia, opened up on Second Avenue at the beginning of April, along with another New York location in Chelsea. The business focuses on reflexology to relieve stress in the neck, scalp, hands, back, shoulders and feet. They also offer full-body acupressure and traditional Chinese deep tissue massage.

The hours for the Second Avenue location are Monday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Gift cards for this location are available.

Riccardo Maggiore Salon 226 Fifth Avenue between West 26th and West 27th Streets (212) 448-0600 riccardomaggiore.com

Hairstylist Riccardo Maggiore opened this 4,200 square foot salon in the Flatiron District in mid-April. The business offers haircuts and color, hair straightening, waxing, facials, manicures, pedicures and eyebrow shaping services.

The salon also has a location on East 57th Street.

Pinkyotto 2 West 23rd Street btwn Fifth & Sixth Aves (212) 206-8282 pinkyotto.com

This location on West 23rd Street is the sixth boutique for Pinkyotto, which already has four other New York location and a store in Boston. The store was founded in 2005 by former model and Pratt MFA graduate Ryo Liu along with Peter Hsia, a grad of NYU's Stern School of Business.

The boutique focuses on clothing for women that is fashionable but affordable, and clothing that is vintage-inspired with bold and artistic prints.

Pinkyotto Flatiron's location is open Monday to Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Opening soon **Explore and Discover 444 Second Avenue** btwn East 25th & 26th Sts (212) 867-3386 explorediscover.net

Explore and Discover is a new early learning center that will be opening on Second



Photos by Maria Rocha-Buschel (Above) Cafe El Presidente on West 24th Street (Below)



Avenue on September 8 of this year. The school will be utilizing the Reggio Emilia approach for classes and while childcare is included in the services that the teachers provide, it is geared more towards early childhood development for infants from three months to toddlers of two years.

A representative for the school said that administrators are planning to hold events at Waterside Plaza to get more involved with the community and the activities, which would be focused on helping parents understand infant and early toddler care and education, would be free and open to all families. The school is currently open for admission.

TD Bank 5 East 22nd Street **Park Avenue South** tdbank.com Rose Associates announced

between Broadway and

on April 16 that it had signed a 15-year lease with TD Bank for the space at Madison Green, located at 5 East 22nd Street. The space faces 23rd Street and Broadway and is adjacent to the N/R subway

Other retailers on the property include LensCrafters, Papyrus and FedEx. The bank is expected to open this

The Lego Store 200 Fifth Avenue btwn West 23rd & 24th Sts stores.lego.com

Lego will be opening their flagship Flatiron store this summer. A spokeswoman told DNAinfo that there will be a soft-open for the store in mid-July and there will be a grand opening celebration for an entire weekend in August. The store will include a 3,535-square-foot retail section with a 481-square-foot play space and reading area for kids. Real Estate Weekly first reported that Lego Systems Inc. signed a 10-year lease for the space.

Closed **Calumet Photography** 22 West 22nd Street btwn Fifth & Sixth Aves

Calumet Photography on West 22nd Street is currently holding a sale to get rid of all of its merchandise before the store's closure.

An employee told Town & Village that there was no set date for when the store would officially close, other than after everything is sold.

The focus of the store's inventory is photo accessories like tripods, lights, backdrops, reflectors, lenses and filters, and with the closing sale, some of the merchandise is up to 70 percent off.

The European-based company posted on Facebook in mid-March that after being in business for 75 years, it would be closing its stores in the United States.

The message noted that the European stores would remain open but both the website and Twitter account are inaccessible. Crain's Chicago Business reported that the company filed for Chapter 7 Bankruptcy after a lender decided not to continue its financing.

Speakeasy 151 Avenue C btwn East 9th & 10th Sts

Local blog EV Grieve reported on Friday, May 2 that the low-key salsa bar Speakeasy on Avenue C would be closing that upcoming weekend.

The blog noted that the closure is due to the impending arrival of the bar Nublu, which was originally open farther down the avenue at East 5th Street but was taking over the space at East 10th Street. Nublu is planning to reopen in the spot this fall and while Speakeasy only occupies the small space on the second floor, the incoming bar will occupy the two stories.

'The Price We Pay for War' concert, exhibit

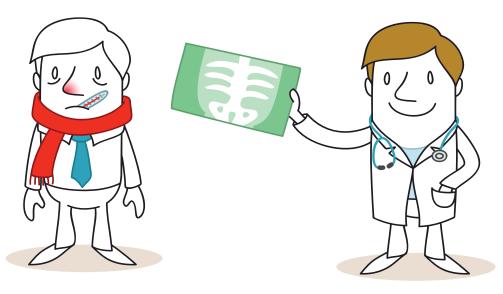
The Fifteenth Street Quaker Meeting House Arts Committee presents "The Price We Pay for War," created by Martin Bard on Thursday, May 8, starting at 7 p.m. There will be music, poetry, drama and folk songs illustrating the price of war with The Wounded Warriors Project at 7:30 p.m. An exhibit of war photography will be on view starting at 7 p.m. This event takes place at the Quaker Meeting House, 15 Rutherford Place, corner of East 15th Street. All voluntary contributions will benefit The Wounded Warriors and The Arts Committee Production Fund. For further information, call Martin Bard at 9212) 666-8310.

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