

# NORWOOD NEWS

Because the News  
Can't Be Contained

p. 2

Vol. 24, No. 22 ■ PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION ■ November 17–30, 2011

## Rash of Violence Puts Fordham in Crime Spotlight

By JEANMARIE EVELLY



Photo by David Greene

**RESIDENTS WAIT** for police to reopen Bainbridge Avenue after an early morning homicide on Nov. 5. In the past two weeks, there were three murders in the 52nd Precinct and a double shooting. Community leaders and elected officials gathered last Friday to brainstorm solutions to the uptick in violence. See story, p. 8.

## Group Wants Kingsbridge Armory To Be Bicycling Center

By EMILY PICCONE

The six-day bicycle race, made popular in Madison Square Garden in the late 1800s but not held in the city for decades, could be coming to the long-vacant Kingsbridge Armory come springtime. If that works out, event organizers say they will push for the Armory to become the permanent home of a regional bicycling center.

**“Cycling is a substantial part of our culture. It crosses all racial and cultural boundaries.”**

—Jack Simes, NCA CEO

In a presentation on the expansive 575,000-square-foot drill floor of the Armory two weeks ago, National Cycling Association CEO Jack Simes presented the two-part proposal and renderings of the velodrome, an angled, oval rac-

ing track, created by Ralph Schuermann, designer of four Olympic velodromes.

The NCA estimates the cost of a one-time event, which would include free bike clinics for youth, the installation of the track, bleacher seating for 2,500 spectators, concession stands and bathrooms, would run about \$700,000. Simes said the costs would be covered by private sponsors.

In addition to funding the event, Simes would need approval from the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), which manages the property for the city. The NCA has yet to submit a proposal.

“Before we would sign off on the Armory, someone needs to submit a plan, at which time we will review it,” said EDC spokesperson Kyle Sklerov.

Simes said the NCA would build off the success of the event and work to turn the Amory into a regional bicycling center that would include a permanent velodrome, BMX park and create cycling programs for youth. He said public and private funding would be needed for the long-term transformation of the Armory.

Rich Conroy of Bike NY said the velodrome would be a “tremendous help” in promoting  
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At the time of his death, Bimal Chanda was moving out of his apartment on West 190th Street and Grand Avenue, where he’d lived for decades. Concerned about increasing crime in the area, friends say, Chanda, his wife, and their teenage daughter were about to move to a condo in Parkchester.

On the morning of Oct. 29, he walked to the store to buy more packing tape. On his way home, he was attacked and viciously beaten in the stairwell of his building. He died five days later.

Chanda’s killing was one of several violent incidents that took place over the last few weeks in the northwest Bronx, with three attacks occurring in close proximity to one another in Fordham. Just a day before the fatal beating, another man was stabbed to death a mere block away, and last week, a four-year-old boy was in critical condition after he was shot on the street just a quarter of a mile south. (About a mile away, on East 198th Street and Bainbridge Avenue, 21-year-old Edwin Nunez was shot to death in the early morning hours of Nov. 5.)

The spike in violence has drawn attention to the area recently, but residents here say crime is nothing new.

“I saw a lady get her purse snatched in the middle of the day, while I was walking to lunch,” said Shaniece Utsey, who works nearby. “You always hear things like that.”

Mohammed Ali, a member of local Community Board 7 who was a close friend of Chanda’s, also lives in the neighborhood and says blatant drug deals, prostitution and muggings are frighteningly commonplace. His own wife, he says, was robbed at gunpoint in their home a few years ago.

“This area is getting worse and worse,” he said. “My wife is very afraid, my neighbors, everybody is afraid.”

The string of recent homicides nearly doubles the murder rate in the local 52nd Precinct, with the number of deaths this year jumping from four  
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## Mentors Helping Keep Kids in School

By RONALD CHAVEZ

Speaking at Walton Campus last week, Mayor Michael Bloomberg pointed to truancy as an accurate indicator of future academic struggle. “The more school a child misses during the early grades, the more unlikely for him or her to succeed in the higher grades,” he said.

Bloomberg went on to announce the expansion of a limited city mentorship program that he credits with improving absenteeism at participating schools, including the High School for Teaching and the Professions, one of several small schools at Walton in Kingsbridge Heights.

After the first year of the program, absenteeism dropped at Teaching and the Professions (also known as TAP) more than any of the six other participating high schools. According to figures from the mayor’s office, the school cut chronic absenteeism from 52 percent to 41 percent.

The city calls students who missed more than 20 days “chronically absent,” while those who missed more than 38 days were “severely chronically absent.”

In total, Bloomberg said students participating in the mentorship program attended 7,000 more days of class compared to the previous year. He said the city’s “Success Mentors” program, part of the its more comprehensive  
(continued on p. 4)

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# In The Public Interest



Photo by David Greene

**DOZENS OF PROTESTERS** and union members at an “Occupy Woodlawn Cemetery” rally on Saturday.

## Wall Street Protesters ‘Occupy Woodlawn’

A group of protesters from downtown Manhattan’s Occupy Wall Street encampment came to the Bronx last week, in a show of support for Woodlawn Cemetery workers campaigning against what they say are unfair labor practices at the landmark cemetery.

About 75 Wall Street demonstrators and members from several labor unions showed up on Saturday to rally with the cemetery workers, who for the last couple of years have tried unsuccessfully to address what they said were acts of overt racism by Woodlawn supervisors.

“We’re going to be there to support them, because their struggle is our struggle,” said Occupy Wall Street organizer Alan Janczewski.

The group marched outside the gates of the 150-year-old cemetery, holding signs and chanting slogans like, “Hey hey, ho ho, racist bosses got to go.”

For the past few years, unionized Woodlawn employees have been at odds with management, claiming supervisors there discriminated against minority workers. Last spring, the cemetery laid off 15 of its 37 workers, a move officials say was necessary to cut budgets costs but which workers claim was retaliation for their speaking out.

Occupy Wall Street demonstrators had been camping out in downtown Manhattan since mid-September to protest a range of issues, from corporate greed to wealth inequity. The movement spread to the outer boroughs last month, and several “Occupy the Bronx” demonstrations were held at Fordham Plaza and other locations.

On Tuesday, Mayor Bloomberg ordered police to clear the encampment at Zuccotti Park, the downtown Manhattan plaza where the movement began.

—**DAVID GREENE and JEANMARIE EVELLY**

## House Dems Protest New Voter Laws

Democrats in Congress are worried that new voter laws, passed this year in a number of Republican-controlled states, are going to make it harder for Americans—particularly those in communities of color—to cast their ballots in the 2012 election.

More than a dozen states passed some form of election law or policy change this year making it harder for residents to vote, according to an analysis by the Brennan Center for Justice at New York

University School of Law. Some states cut back on so-called early voting periods, which allowed residents who can’t make it to the polls during set Election Day hours to cast their ballots early. Other states are now requiring that people show state-issued photo IDs at the polls, a form of identification that as many as one in 10 voters don’t have, the study said.

The new laws are supposedly intended to help prevent voter fraud, but Democratic lawmakers say the changes are politically motivated, passed by Republican state legislatures to keep certain groups from voting, particularly young people or people of color, who tend to vote for Democrats.

“These laws cannot be explained as anything other than an attempt to disenfranchise Americans who disagree with the political views of those who passed these bills,” said Bronx Congressman Jose E. Serrano, who, along with 196 of his Democratic colleagues, wrote to the chief elections officials of each state urging them to overturn the new rules.

“If there is one thing that we should all agree on, it is that we must ensure that every eligible American is able to register, vote, and have their vote counted,” Serrano said. —**JEANMARIE EVELLY**

## Cabrera Bill Gives City Computers to Poor

Bronx City Councilman Fernando Cabrera passed his own “9-9-9 Bill” last week—a play on embattled Republican presidential candidate Herman Cain’s much talked about tax plan—though the two are unrelated.

Resolution 0999-2011, the bill’s technical name, was adopted by the City Council last week and allows the city to donate its extra unused computers to nonprofit groups that work with populations that otherwise might not have ready access to that kind of technology.

“In this day and age, technology is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity,” Cabrera, who heads the council’s technology committee, said in a press release. “And when it comes to serving some of the most vulnerable members of our society; our seniors, the disabled, and low income individuals; we cannot afford to leave them behind.”

Under the new resolution, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, which oversees the administrative

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needs of the city’s many agencies, can donate surplus city computers, software and equipment to eligible nonprofit groups.

“At a time where funding for the service community is at all-time lows, any resources that the city can provide will go a long way,” Cabrera said.

—**JEANMARIE EVELLY**

## Tour to Explore Rezoning Of Kingsbridge and U-Heights

Community Board 7’s Land Use Committee is hosting a walking tour of several neighborhoods in Kingsbridge Heights and University Heights to assess possible rezoning options. The walk is set to begin 10 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 19, in front of the Kingsbridge Armory (West Kingsbridge Road and Davidson Avenue). It will last about two hours. The walk will explore Davidson Avenue, Devoe Park Terrace, and Grand Avenue.

In March, with direction from Community Board 7, the City Council approved the rezoning of a stretch of Webster Avenue and select neighborhoods in Norwood and Bedford Park. The idea was to encourage residential and retail development on Webster and preserve the character of certain blocks in Norwood and Bedford Park.

—**RONALD CHAVEZ**

## Public and Community Meetings

- THE 52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL will meet on Thursday, Nov. 17 from 7 to 9 p.m. at 2455 Sedgwick Ave. For more information, call (917) 650-0620 or email [bcserina@msn.com](mailto:bcserina@msn.com).
- COMMUNITY BOARD 7 committee meetings will be held at the office at 229A E. 204th St. at 6:30 p.m.: Housing, Nov. 22; Land Use, Nov. 30.



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# Be Healthy!

# 3,500

The estimated number of calories in a typical Thanksgiving meal, according to the NYC Dept. of Health.

Vital Stats

## For a Healthier Thanksgiving, Don't Neglect the Veggies

By JEANMARIE EVELLY

There's no doubt the turkey is the inevitable star of the Thanksgiving spread. But if you want to boost the health quotient of your holiday meal, let your vegetable side dishes share some of that spotlight.

This year, cut out at least one traditional high-calorie standby—buttery rolls, or those marshmallow-coated yams—and opt for a few of these simpler sides instead.

### Sweet Boiled Beets

Use a pound or two of fresh beets. Wash and trim off stalks—the green, leafy bits at the top—but put them aside for later. Cut the beets themselves into quarters and peel off the rough outer skin. You can wear latex gloves if you want to avoid staining your hands. Place beets in a medium to large saucepan, and pour in a cup or two of orange juice, enough to cover the beets by at least an inch. If you can find blood orange juice—the regular orange's crimson-colored sister—that's even better, but regular Tropicana juice will do, too. Boil the beets in the juice for 30 to 60 minutes, depending on their size, or cook until they're tender enough to be easily sliced with a fork. Drain from the juice and serve.

Bonus: Beet greens—the stalks you trim off the top—are edible, and delicious. Simply sauté them in oil, garlic, salt and pepper. Cook until tender. That's two dishes for the price of one.

### Roasted Carrots with Cumin Seed

Take one or two pounds of full-sized carrots, peel them and slice into sticks. Spread the carrot sticks on a baking sheet and drizzle with two or three tablespoons of olive oil.

Sprinkle with two teaspoons of cumin seed, and season with salt and pepper. Bake in the oven at 425 degrees until brown and tender; about 25 to 30 minutes.

### Honey-Roasted Squash

Use as many acorn squash as you're looking to serve. Each squash will be halved, and one squash will make two servings. With a sharp knife, slice each squash in half, lengthwise, from stem to stem. Use a spoon to scoop out the seedy, stringy gunk in the center, so that each half looks like a little bowl. Place pieces in a baking pan with the centers facing up (in other words, skin side down). With a knife, score the squash, making shallow slices along the surface of each piece. Sprinkle with salt, then add a small pat of butter to the center each half. Drizzle squash pieces with honey. Before baking, add a cup of water to the pan for some moisture, then cover with foil, leaving a few gaps here and there so steam can escape. Bake at 400 degrees for about an hour, or until squash is soft.

### Spicy Green Beans with Garlic

Use one pound of fresh green beans, washed and with their edges trimmed. Briefly cook the beans in a pot of boiling water, for no longer than three minutes—they'll turn bright green, and should be slightly tender, but still crisp. Remove from boiling water and plunge beans into a bowl of ice water to stop them from cooking. Meanwhile, in a frying pan, heat two teaspoons of olive oil. Add the green beans, and stir for a minute or two. Add two cloves of chopped garlic and half a teaspoon of red pepper flakes (more if you like things spicy!) and cook for another few minutes, until beans are tender. Season with salt and pepper before serving.

### Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Vigil

Sunday, Nov. 20 is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Day. Local resident Damaris Vazquez is organizing a purple light vigil (the color identified with pancreatic cancer awareness) at East Mosholu Parkway North, between Bainbridge and Hull Avenues, at 5 p.m. The event will honor her mother, Ileana Vazquez, who died from the disease last spring. To make a donation towards pancreatic cancer research in Vazquez's name, please visit: [http://www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/InMemoryOf\\_IleanaVazquez/KeeptheMemoryAlive](http://www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/InMemoryOf_IleanaVazquez/KeeptheMemoryAlive)

### Zumbathon to Stomp Out Diabetes

Montefiore Medical Center is hosting a zumba marathon on Friday, Nov. 18 at the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center gym, 3450 DeKalb Ave., from 6 to 8 p.m. Zumba is a dance-inspired fitness workout. Tickets are \$15 in advance (you can register at [www.giving.montefiore.org/zumba](http://www.giving.montefiore.org/zumba)) or \$20 at the door. The first 50 1199 SEIEU members enter for free. You must show your 1199 benefit card. For more information, contact [rshanker@montefiore.org](mailto:rshanker@montefiore.org) or call (718) 920-5675.



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# More Than Weatherization on the Chopping Block

By EMILY PICCONE

In her 10th floor apartment in Keith Tower on Southern Boulevard, Marge Marcone wipes her hand across the long windowsill in her living room, and is still amazed by the lack of dust.

It has been more than a year since a local community organization installed all new windows in her apartment for free — a major improvement from her old, faulty windows.

“Those huge windows were monsters for me, they were very difficult to open, but air still got in,” Marcone said. “My window sills would be filthy, even on the 10th floor.”

Created to help low income residents of ailing buildings in the early 1980s, the

Northwest Bronx Community Clergy Coalition’s Weatherization Assistance Program was one of city’s first “green” building programs. It received a burst in funding from the economic stimulus package in 2009, allowing it to install new energy-saving boilers, lights, appliances and windows for tenants like Marcone and countless others.

But with funding set to expire in December, the program could be forced to downsize on all sides.

By the late 1970s, decrepit, unlivable buildings were becoming the norm in pockets of the Bronx.

John Reilly, executive director of Fordham-Bedford Housing Corporation, remembers back when they bought their first dilapidated Bronx building for \$100.

“The systems [of the building] were in terrible shape,” Reilly said. “There were a lot of old boilers, a few coal burners were still around in some buildings, and the roofs needed insulation. Fuel costs had gone up and the whole weatherization issue was a big one.”

Building owners were faced with both disrepair and the inability to apply for a loan due to the small income base of their tenants, says Fran Fuselli, who runs the Coalition’s Weatherization program.

“In the 1970s, owners made more money burning their buildings down than maintaining them,” said Fuselli.

The Weatherization Program attempted to fill the void left by neglectful owners and banks.

The program only takes on a building project where at least 50 percent of tenants have less than an income of 150 percent of the national poverty line, which is a total income of \$33,525 for a family of four.

Installing new boilers, Energy Star appliances, low flow showerheads and faucets, and switching out incandescent bulbs for compact fluorescents are among the repairs WAP makes to its buildings. On a building that the Coalition retrofitted prior to the stimulus funding, the building’s owner had a 25 percent savings on his heating bill within the first year, according to Fuselli.

With the stimulus money, they hired and trained 12 new staff members from within the Bronx community, and took on bigger buildings such as the Keith and Kelly Towers on Southern Boulevard. Gone were the days of entering an apartment and choosing what to repair and what to leave as is.

“Prior to the per unit cost increase, we would have to look at a building and sort of triage what we could do there,” Fuselli remarked. “We might have been able to do a pipe wrap, but we couldn’t put in a new boiler.”

Despite the burst of funding, the Coalition has hardly made a dent to the

five-year wait list that they have maintained throughout the life of the program. Jumping from completing 300 units per year to 1,800 in a two-and-a-half-year period, the program is now faced with looming budget cuts when the stimulus funding reaches its end in December.

Fuselli painfully says she has already had to lay off trained employees who were recently hired. She likes to think of WAP as one of the few federally funded programs well liked by both political parties, with job creation, housing rehabilitation and energy saving at the forefront of its campaign.

The national WAP receives funding from the Home Energy Assistance Program, the Department of Energy and

**“We need to keep weatherization in the forefront and let our elected officials know that this is a program at the direct benefit of the neediest in our community.”**

**—Fran Fuselli**

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), all of which still have undetermined budget’s for 2012, according to Fuselli. “We need to keep weatherization in the forefront and let our elected officials know that this is a program at the direct benefit of the neediest in our community,” she said.

“The improvements should not be stopped,” Marcone said. “We could have become slums too, but the fact that they’re doing so many improvements gives us a lift. It makes us want to take care of the place.”

## Group Wants Armory To Be Bicycling Center



Photo courtesy of the NCA

**A RENDERING**, by renowned architect Ralph Schuermann, of what a velodrome would look like inside the Kingsbridge Armory.

(continued from p. 1)

bicycling in the Bronx and New York City.

Simes said the biking programs would have a significant impact on the Bronx’s acute obesity and asthma problems. Citing the 168th Street Armory, now used by more than 100,000 kids a year for track and field purposes, they hope the Kingsbridge Armory could do the same with biking.

“Cycling is a substantial part of our culture,” said Simes. “It crosses all racial and cultural boundaries.”

Now a foreign concept in the United States, the six-day bike race is popular in Europe. The bike races are combined with an ongoing festival that includes beer gardens, bike expos, and live music lining the track.

While the original format of the bike race involved continuous biking shared between a team for six straight days, the modern race features a series of individual and team relays happening each of the six nights.

Desiree Pilgrim-Hunter, a member of the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance (KARA), a coalition of residents, clergy and community groups

advocating for responsible development of the Armory, criticized the NCA for failing to approach them and other key community groups. She also said the plan would not benefit the community.

“This is a temporary idea for next spring that does nothing for the surrounding community,” Pilgrim-Hunter said in a phone interview. “They will make money, the community will not.”

KARA is advocating for a multi-use facility with living-wage jobs (\$10 an hour, plus benefits), job training, and new schools at the forefront of their plans. “We cannot take any more part-time, minimum-wage jobs in this community,” said Pilgrim-Hunter.

The NCA did present the proposal to the Kingsbridge Armory Task Force, which included Pilgrim-Hunter and was headed by Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and Council Member Fernando Cabrera.

At the event, Diaz called on the mayor to release a request for proposals for the Armory. In late 2009, the City Council, backed by Diaz and KARA, killed a Bloomberg-supported plan to transform the Armory into a shopping mall.

## Mentors Helping Keep Kids in School

(continued from p. 1)

ensive “Every Student, Every Day” anti-truancy effort, will expand this year to include about 4,000 students, up from 1,400 during the 2010-2011 school year.

There will also be a new focus on helping students returning to school after long stints away in juvenile detention facilities, temporary housing or foster care. The city has also expanded a wake-up call program it says has proved effective.

Thomas Lopez, the program coordinator at TAP, said there was still room for improvement. The school sits at under 83 percent attendance for the year, while the city wants high schools to have at least an 85 percent attendance rate, he said. Lopez said the school is enlisting 30 additional peer mentors to supplement the city’s program.

The city has trained 300 new mentors, from many local organizations and col-

leges, including BuildOn and the Lehman College School of Social Work, to help students get through the day-to-day grind.

Mentors greet students every day, call them and their parents if they miss school, help them get extra tutoring or resources and generally help them stay on task and in class.

“Being a part of this program gave me a sense of stability and I feel like I am part of a family here at the High School for Teaching and the Professions,” said senior Jean Robinson.

Elisia Young, a guidance counselor at Walton who is also a mentor, said it takes compassion to

reach students. “When they come in through the front door, you don’t know what their day has consisted of,” she said. “If the compassion is not there, they feel far removed from you.”

# Opinion.

We love, welcome and encourage letters to the editor and opinion articles from readers. Write to: Editor, Norwood News, 3400 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467. Fax: (718) 324-2917; or e-mail: norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org.

## Editorial

### Neighborhood Crime Stats Will Return Next Issue

Last issue, we published five years worth of crime statistics for four of the neighborhoods in the 52nd Precinct. Unfortunately, when they came out in print, they were barely readable without the use of a magnifying glass or Superman's eyes.

With all of the recent violence in our primary coverage area, we decided to put our statistics project on hold and publish more original reporting from the last two weeks. However, we will begin publishing the statistics again in our next issue and in subsequent issues. This time, we'll make them readable. We apologize for all the headaches we may have caused.

### Congratulations to Buzunesh Deba!

One of our very own, Buzunesh Deba, finished a close second — just three seconds from victory — in the New York City Marathon on Nov. 6. Deba, an Ethiopian native, moved to Kingsbridge Heights six years ago. You may have seen her training around the Jerome Park Reservoir or Van Cortlandt Park with her husband and trainer Worku Beyi.

Now, not only is Deba a Bronxite excelling on a world-class level at her chosen sport, she's also one of the borough's greatest advocates. In an interview with the *Riverdale Press*, she said of the Bronx: "I wouldn't want to live anywhere else, this is such a safe place." It's refreshing reminder in a time of increased violence — affecting 59-year-old dads and 4-year-old boys — that the Bronx remains a great place to live.

## Letters

### Lots of Good Folks in the Bronx

Ms. Hirozawa responded to the Inquiring Photographer's (Oct. 20 Issue) question with a misstatement. The Bronx is NOT "the poorest congressional district in the country."

It does include the boundaries of the 16th congressional district which IS "the poorest congressional district in the country" from a financial point of view.

The district faces its own set of challenges, but there are a lot of good folks here.

How do I know? I live in the district.

**Gene Roman,  
Valentine Avenue**

### It Ain't Safe

Interesting article on page six, "Crime Trends in University Heights (2006-2010)" (Nov. 3 issue).

On Andrews Avenue, Sedgwick Avenue between Fordham and 183rd Street, I used to hear gunshots now and then. For the past month I'd say it's nightly, and I rarely hear sirens ever following shots. People who still happen to have jobs are still on their way home during the sounds of snap, crackle, pop. This is the most crime-riddled spot in plain view, for Christ's sake! The Bronx is allowed to crime. The mayor, the Cuomos, where the hell are these people? NYPD seems as corrupt as it was during Serpico. Look at that cop in Inwood, just next door, who got caught in daylight raping a woman on his way home, on her way to work.

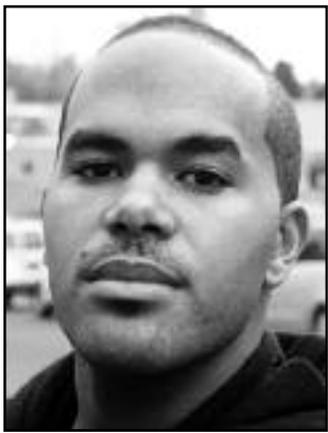
It ain't safe out there.

**Diane Virga**

## Inquiring Photographer

By **DAVID GREENE**

For this issue we asked readers for their thoughts on the recent spike in violent crime in the northwest Bronx.



There's a lot of violence going on these days and it's definitely increasing because of the cold weather and the holidays coming up. The police aren't doing enough. They used to be posted on every corner and now you don't see them.

**Michael Diaz**



Yes, I've noticed an increase in crime. Cop presence was good, but now you don't see them as much anymore. From what I heard, there was a cop on the corner during a shooting, but he couldn't do anything because he was alone.

**Alex Rodriguez**



Right now we need more police. We need these weapons off the streets and out of kids' hands. Do I feel safe? Sort of, because I don't bother anybody. I do what I have to do and get home.

**Chickie Rodriguez**



I've been living in this neighborhood for 25 years and it's changed; it's not as safe as before. They can put a stop to it if they do what they have to do, but I don't see myself secure anymore. I'm a delivery boy, so you know how it is out there.

**Fermin Torres**



I notice an increase in crime. I don't know how the police department is handling things these days, but crime is going up due to the fact that people are losing themselves. I think the police department needs to be a little bit more involved and be out here on the streets. It's not safe, anything can happen at any given time, and it's just getting worse. I don't think there's a solution.

**John DeLuise**

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Photo by Adi Talwar

**LAST WEEKEND**, volunteers joined up with a gardener from Mosholu Preservation Corporation and Friends of Williamsbridge Oval to plant bulbs and rake leaves at Oval Park.

## Oval Playground Opens; Rec Center Delayed Again

By **EMILY PICCONE**

Parks Department officials held a ribbon-cutting ceremony Tuesday for the reconstructed playgrounds at Williamsbridge Oval Park, though long-awaited renovations on the park's recreational center are still a year behind schedule.

Though the new-and-improved park playgrounds have been open and in use since July, the ribbon-cutting ceremony was held this month because construction on the basketball courts was only recently finished, delayed by a shoddy concrete job earlier in the summer.

The park's rec center, also undergoing

a complete overhaul, was originally slated for completion last spring. Its opening date was pushed back to October (last month) but a Parks spokesman now says the work won't be done until this coming spring because the company doing the project's plumbing work defaulted.

The park received \$6.1 million for its reconstruction (not counting the new synthetic turf field), and over half of that money was funneled into revamping the rec center. Other improvements that have already been completed are the park's two new playgrounds, water playing sprinklers, benches, pathways, basketball courts and new landscaping.

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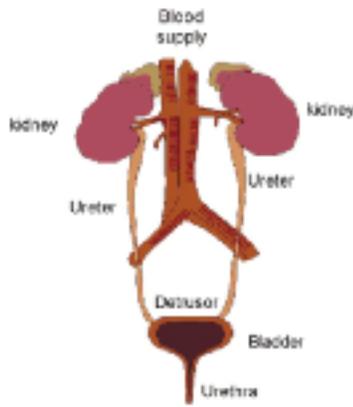
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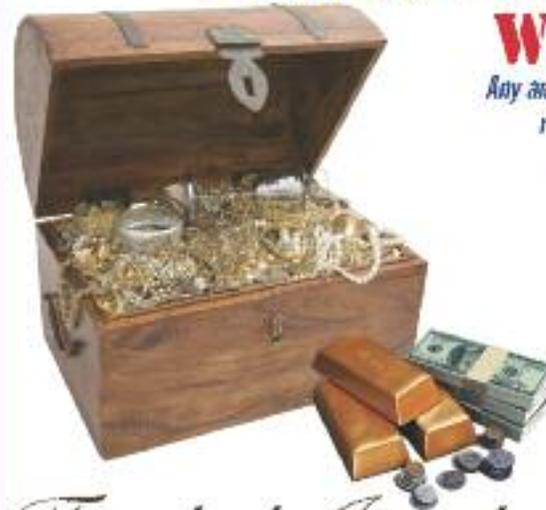
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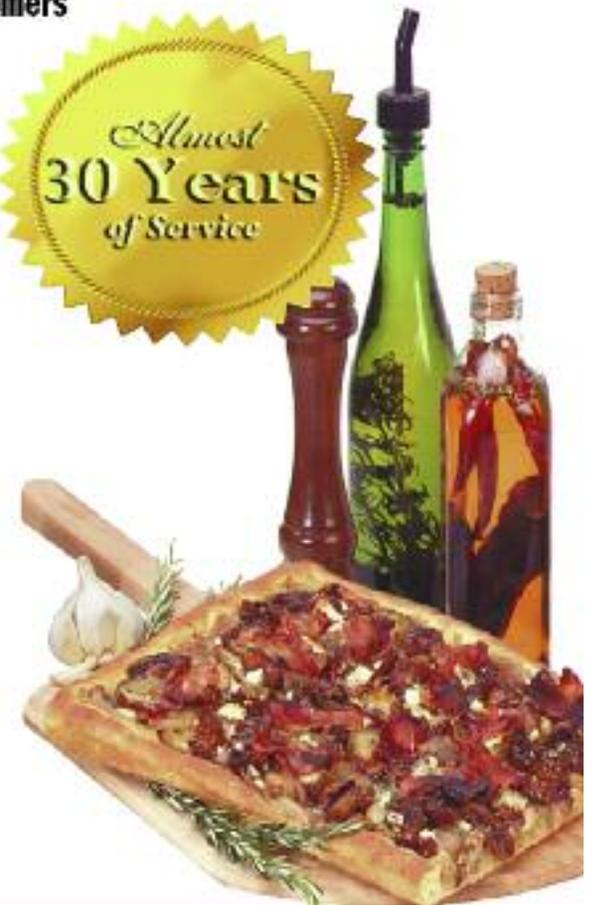
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# Neighborhood Notes

## BRIO Awards Applications Online

Applications for the 2012 'Bronx Recognizes Its Own' awards are available online on the Bronx Council on the Arts' website at [bronxarts.org](http://bronxarts.org). A total of 25 awards of \$3,000 each are available to applicants who are 18 years or older, currently living in the Bronx, and not enrolled as a full-time graduate or undergraduate student. Submission deadline is Jan. 27, 2012. For more information or to register for a free assistance workshop, visit [www.bronxarts.org](http://www.bronxarts.org), email [BRIO@bronxarts.org](mailto:BRIO@bronxarts.org), or call (718) 931-9500 ext. 35.

## Free BCA Writing Workshop

The Bronx Council on the Arts will be discussing "10 Things to Avoid When Starting a Novel," in a free writing workshop on Nov. 18 from 7 to 9 p.m. at Barnes & Noble, Bay Plaza, 290 Baychester Ave. in Co-op City. Bring a notebook and a pen. For more information,

call (718) 931-9500 ext. 21 or email [bronxwriters@bronxarts.org](mailto:bronxwriters@bronxarts.org).

## Year-End Tax Planning Strategies

The Small Business Development Center offers a free Year-End Tax Planning workshop for small businesses on Nov. 30 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at CUNY on the Concourse, 2501 Grand Concourse. For more information or to register, call (718) 960-8806 or email [sbdc.bronx@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:sbdc.bronx@lehman.cuny.edu).

## Resource Fair

WellCare of NY will host a health resource fair on Nov. 29 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the St. James Recreational Center, 2503 Jerome Ave. Events include free promotional items, healthy snacks, free fitness program for seniors, and free glucose and blood pressure screenings. For more information, call (718) 933-5650/1.

## Free ESL Classes

PS 94 at 3530 Kings College Place offers

free ESL classes Tuesdays to Thursdays from 5:10 to 8:30 p.m. Register at the school in room 256 or for more information and dates, call Miriam Seminario at (347) 563-4772.

## Free English Classes

The New York Public Library offers free English classes at selected libraries across the Bronx, in association with the Riverside Language Program, Inc., for adults 16 and older. Space is limited and registration must be done in person. To find a participating location and for more information, call (212) 340-0918.

## Community Board Accepting Applicants

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. is inviting Bronxites to become a community board member. Community boards work to bring government and citizens closer together, ensuring that neighborhoods receive the services they need. The community board application includes a written application and an

interview with a representative from Diaz's office. Interested applicants are urged to read the city's Code of Ethics for Community Board Members, which can be found online, along with the application, at [BronxBoroPres.nyc.gov](http://BronxBoroPres.nyc.gov). For more information, call Community Board 7 at (718) 933-5650.

## Children's Speech Program

The Mount Saint Ursula Speech Center, at 2885 Marion Ave., is accepting applications for its fall program. There are morning and afternoon openings for children ages 2 to 15 who are in need of speech and language services. Medicaid, private pay (with sliding scale), and some types of insurance are accepted. For more information, call (718) 584-7679.

*For more Neighborhood Notes online, go to [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org) and click on "Neighborhood Notes" in the right-hand column.*

# Rash of Violence Puts Fordham in Crime Spotlight

*(continued from p. 1)*

to seven during the first week of November alone, at a time when violent crimes had otherwise appeared to be decreasing.

"General crime stats are going down, supposedly, but the on-the-ground reality is that people are concerned," said Father Joseph Girone, pastor at nearby St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church. "You read about these stray bullets going through innocent people every week, practically."

Last Tuesday, 4-year-old Cincer Balthazar was shot during a botched robbery attempt on Grand Avenue near Evelyn Place. Cincer's father, Bobby Balthazar was walking the boy back to a homeless shelter where Cincer's mother lives, when a trio of young would-be muggers tried to steal the father's designer jacket. In the commotion, shots were fired and a bullet struck Cincer. Balthazar was able to wrestle the gun away from his attackers and chased after them. He ended up shooting Jose Marte, 17, in the neck.

The boy survived and was in critical but stable condition at Columbia University Medical Center, according to the *New York Daily News*. Jose is listed in stable condition and has not been charged. Another 17-year-old, Mauricio Acosta, was arrested and charged with attempted robbery, assault and criminal possession of a weapon, police said.

The week before that shooting, 35-year-old Gabriel Sherwood was found lying in the lobby of 2460 Grand Ave. with multiple stab wounds to his torso, and was pronounced dead at St. Barnabas Hospital shortly after. Police later arrested Johanna Rivera, 26, of 2463 Grand Ave., in connection with the killing.

Police released surveillance video footage of two men they believe were involved in Chanda's attack, but no arrests have been made. Police initially said the beating came during an especially violent robbery, but after the attack,

Chanda still had more than \$70 in cash, all of his credit cards and his cell phone.

On the day of Chanda's wake, Ali organized a press conference outside of the Parkchester funeral home where the service was being held. He wanted to publicly demand answers to his friend's senseless death, he said, and also draw attention to the vulnerability of the immigrant community to crime.

"My community is a very hardworking community, a very peaceful community," he said. "In our country these things happen because it's a poor country. This is the best country in the world, but

we come here and it's still happening. Where can we go?"

Chanda was born in Calcutta, India, though he'd lived in the Bronx for the last several decades. Ali, a native of Bangladesh, says many immigrants in the community are reluctant to call the police to report crimes, either for fear of retribution or because they don't think it will do any good.

On a recent weekday afternoon, the streetlamps along West 190th Street, where Chanda lived, were covered in police posters asking residents to call if they knew anything about the crime.

"Help us help you," one poster read.

Nearby, a woman was walking her dog. She declined to give her name, but said she lived on Grand Avenue, next door to the building where the man was stabbed to death in the lobby two weeks ago.

"There's always crime in this area, and there's never police around here," she said, nodding at an NYPD squad car that was parked on the corner, its engine idling. "They're only here now because this happened."

**Ed. Note:** For more details on these crimes and continuing coverage, visit our website, [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org).

## Brainstorming Solutions to Violence Conundrum

By ALEX KRATZ

In reaction to a recent spike in violent crime, including the shooting of a 4-year-old in University Heights last week, Bronx Councilman Fernando Cabrera and Council Speaker Christine Quinn held a public brainstorming session among community leaders. The goal was to solicit solutions, both immediate and long-term, for curbing the recent rise in violence.

At the beginning of the meeting, Quinn announced the formation of a gun violence task force in the Council headed by Cabrera and Brooklyn's Jumaane Williams. Quinn admitted the task force would need time to come up with a long-term plan. In the meantime, she asked for solutions that could be implemented immediately.

Following Quinn's lead, Cabrera, Deputy Bronx Borough President Aurelia Greene and community board leaders from several community districts offered up a wide range of ideas, some concrete, others more philosophical.

Cabrera advocated for the installation of more security cameras and the creation of a new comprehensive gang violence prevention program. The city's old program, which, Cabrera lamented, did not include the Bronx, was abandoned two years ago.

Greene hyped her boss, Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.'s ongoing Peace in our Streets initiative, which he launched last year and aims to get illegal guns off the street.

Someone suggested a city-funded public advertisement

campaign — violence as a health hazard — that would show the gruesome effects of violence in the same way stop smoking advertisements show badly damaged lungs.

Several people talked about the need to engage youth early, get them busy and doing positive things — sports, arts, getting job experience — before they drift into the hands of local gangs.

"Nobody wants to get to know [young people]," said Jim Fairbanks, who works for Bronx Council Member Helen Foster. "All they get is Stop and Frisk."

Walter Bell, the new chair of Community Board 7's public safety committee, suggested bringing those already involved in gangs to the table and working with them directly.

And, of course, there was much talk about the need for more cops. "People want to see more blue uniforms on the street," said Xavier Rodriguez, the district manager of Community Board 5.

Quinn tried to get beyond the call for more police, saying the Council would do their best to stop staffing cuts at the NYPD.

Several people attributed the increased violence to the borough's economic woes. "A lot of it is pure economics," said Wendell Jackson, the chair of Community Board 4, which includes Bronx Lebanon Hospital, where two staffers were shot last week.

The Bronx boasts the highest unemployment rate among the five boroughs.

# Classifieds

## HELP WANTED

### Bronx Children's Museum Jobs:

Museum Researcher/Evaluator; Museum Exhibition Developer; Hands-On Educators. Info at: [www.BronxChildrensMuseum.org/jobs](http://www.BronxChildrensMuseum.org/jobs).

The emerging Bronx Children's Museum seeks to inspire children and families to learn about themselves within the diversity and richness of their surroundings, the environment and the world beyond, and to promote literacy, the arts, health, science, greening, sustainability and the Bronx!

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## VENDOR BIDS WANTED

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be conducted in strict accordance with bid specification. Bids will be opened and read on Nov. 28, 2011.

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# Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

## Onstage

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. off Fordham Road, presents **Celia Cruz High School Choir**, concert on Nov. 19 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

■ The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Salsa Palooza**, Nov. 19 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$45 to \$60). For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

■ Lehman College, located at 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents free: the **Lehman Brass Quintet**, featuring music

from the 16th century to the present, Nov. 17 at noon (Recital Hall); and the **Lehman Jazz Band**, featuring popular music, Nov. 20 at 2 p.m. (Hearth Room); both in the Music Building, 3rd floor; and **Jazz Festival**, featuring music and workshops, Nov. 17 and 18 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; in the Lovinger Theatre (call (718) 960-8247 for all); and **Poetry Reading**, featuring two poets, Nov. 17 at 3 p.m., in the Art Gallery (call (718) 960-8731/8675).

■ Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education, 928 Simpson St., 6th floor Open Arts Space (at East 163rd Street) presents free: **Remembering Celia Cruz**, through Nov. 22. For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 589-2230 ext. 6055.

■ The Bronx Arts Ensemble presents a **Concert Dedicated to Johannes Somary**, featuring chamber music, Nov. 20 at 3 p.m., at the home of Geoffrey and Sarah Gund, 690 W. 247th St. Tickets are \$25 and include refreshments. For more information, call (718) 601-7399.

## Events

■ Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. invites the public to celebrate **Puerto Rican Heritage Month**, Nov. 17 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at Kismet Caterers, 1995 Westchester Ave. Featured will be music, dancing, and tapas of Puerto Rico while honoring community leaders and their accomplishments. For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 590-3522.

■ The Bronx Council on the Arts and the Huntington Free Library present **Holiday Ornaments**, a free craft workshop, Nov. 19 from 12:30 to 3 p.m., at the library, 9 Westchester Square. For more information, call (718) 931-9500 ext. 33 or (718) 829-7770.

■ The Mosholu Montefiore Senior Center, 3450 DeKalb Ave., presents a **trip to the Whitney Museum**, Nov. 22 at 9 a.m., and return to the Center by 1:30 p.m. for a late lunch (cost is \$5; register in advance); and **Winter Holiday Decoration**, workshop, Nov. 30 at 12:30 p.m. (pre-register in senior center office). For more information, call (718) 798-6601.

■ The Friends of Van Cortlandt Park presents an **End of Season Celebration**, to enjoy a taste of the garden, help with final harvest, prepare the site for the winter, and crafts and games for kids, Nov. 20 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Meet at the FVCP compost site; enter the park at Broadway and Mosholu Avenue. For more information, call (718) 601-1553.

## Exhibits

■ The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse at 165th St., presents **Muntadas: Information, Space, Control**, through Jan. 16; and **Urban Archives: Emilio Sanchez in the Bronx**, through Jan. 2. Admission is free on Fridays. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

■ Bronx Community College, 2155 University Ave., presents **Ezequiel Jimenez: His Art, Activism & Autobiography**, Nov. 30 from 2 to 3 p.m. For more information, call (646) 330-6913.

## Library Events

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. off Fordham Road, presents programs for kids including **Preschool Story Time**, Nov. 17 and Dec. 1 at 11 a.m.; **Baby Story Time**, Nov. 19 at 11 a.m.; **Sounds Like Science** (ages 3 to 12), Nov. 19 at 2 p.m.; **Wacky Waves** (ages 3 to 12), Nov. 22 at 4 p.m.; **Film Day**, Nov. 23 and 30 at 4 p.m.; **Global Partners, Jr.** (ages 5 to 12), students connect worldwide via the Internet, Nov. 23 at 4 p.m.; **Thank You** (ages 3 to 12), Nov. 26 at 2 p.m.; and **The Science of Art** (ages 3 to 12), Nov. 29 at 4 p.m. Adults can attend **Single Stop/Government Benefits**, Nov. 17, 22 and 29 at 9 a.m.; **Bronx Tales of the Armed Forces**, Nov. 17 at 4:30 p.m.; **Released With Conviction** (through Dec. 17), exhibition on prison release; film screening, Nov.



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20 at 2 p.m.; and **Film**, featuring African cinema, Nov. 26 at 2:30 p.m. English language learners can join **ESOL** (classes for speakers of other languages; in-person registration required), Nov. 29 at 1 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

■ The Mosholu Library, at 285 E. 205th St., offers a free Intermediate Level **English Conversation Program** for speakers of other languages (ages from 16 years), Nov. 22, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.; **Knitting Circle at 3 p.m.** (for adults), Nov. 17 and Dec. 1; **Beautiful Bandanas** (for teens and young adults; all materials provided), Nov. 22 and 28 at 4 p.m.;

**Holiday Arts & Crafts** (for ages 5 to 12), Nov. 22 and 28 at 4 p.m.; **Toddler Story Time**, (registration required), Dec. 1 at 10:30 a.m.; and **Wii Program** (for seniors and adults), Tuesdays at 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

*A HAPPY AND HEALTHY THANKSGIVING TO ALL OUR READERS!*

**NOTE:** Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to [norwood-news@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwood-news@norwoodnews.org), and should be received by Nov. 21 for the next publication date of Dec. 1. Find more events at [www.bronxnewsnetwork.org](http://www.bronxnewsnetwork.org).

✓ **EDITOR'S PICK**

## Thanksgiving Events

The public is invited to the following holiday events:

- Doctors Medical Group presents **Thanksgiving in the Community**, a free health fair, Nov. 23 from 1 to 5 p.m., at 392 Bedford Pk. Blvd., featuring health screenings, turkey raffles, refreshments, face painters, giveaways and more. For more information, visit [www.dmgny.com](http://www.dmgny.com).
- St. James Recreation Center, 2530 Jerome Ave. (192nd Street), offers a free **Thanksgiving Day Community Dinner**, Nov. 24 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., in its auditorium. For more information, call (718) 367-3657/8.
- The Mosholu Montefiore Senior Center, 3450 DeKalb Ave., presents a **Pre-Thanksgiving Luncheon**, with turkey and all the trimmings, and a magician, Nov. 17 at 11 a.m. For more information, call (718) 798-6601.

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- |                                       |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>PLAN 1</b>                         | 2 lbs. BEEF STEW<br>2 lbs. THIN SIRLOIN STEAK<br>1 1/2 lbs. GROUND BEEF<br>1 DOZEN EGGS<br>1 WHOLE CHICKEN   | <b>FREE</b><br>2 LITER SODA<br><b>\$24.99</b>    |
| <b>PLAN 2</b>                         | 2 lbs. BEEF STEW<br>2 lbs. GROUND BEEF<br>2 lbs. SHOULDER STEAK<br>1 WHOLE CHICKEN<br>3 lbs. CHICKEN LEGS - 1 DOZEN EGGS   | <b>FREE</b><br>2 LITER SODA<br><b>\$27.99</b>    |
| <b>PLAN 3</b>                         | 3 lbs. CHICKEN LEGS<br>2 lbs. GROUND BEEF<br>1 1/2 lbs. CHICKEN CUTLETS<br>4 SHOULDER PORK CHOPS<br>1 WHOLE CHICKEN  | <b>FREE</b><br>DOZEN EGGS<br><b>\$22.99</b>      |
| <b>PLAN 7</b>                         | 2 lbs. SHOULDER STEAK<br>2 lbs. PORK CHOPS<br>3 lbs. CHICKEN LEGS<br>3 lbs. CHICKEN WINGS<br>2 lbs. GROUND BEEF - 2 lbs. BEEF STEW   | <b>FREE</b><br>DOZEN EGGS<br><b>\$39.99</b>      |
| <b>PLAN 8</b>                         | 2 lbs. CHUCK STEAK - 2 lbs. BEEF STEW<br>2 lbs. PEPPER STEAK<br>2 lbs. GROUND BEEF<br>2 lbs. ITALIAN SAUSAGE<br>8 HAMBURGER PATTIES - 1 WHOLE CHICKEN  | <b>FREE</b><br>5 lbs. POTATOES<br><b>\$39.99</b> |
| <b>PLAN 9</b>                         | 2 lbs. SHOULDER STEAK - 5 lbs. CHICKEN LEGS<br>2 lbs. GROUND BEEF - 3 lbs. CHICKEN WINGS<br>2 lbs. BEEF STEW<br>1 pkg. ALL BEEF FRANKS - 1 DOZEN EGGS<br>1 PACKAGE OY. BACON - 2 lbs. SHOULDER PORK CHOPS            | <b>FREE</b><br>2 LITER SODA<br><b>\$45.99</b>    |
| <b>PLAN 13</b><br><b>POULTRY PLAN</b> | 5 lbs. CHICKEN LEGS - 3 lbs. CHICKEN WINGS<br>5 lbs. CHICKEN BREAST - 1 WHOLE CHICKEN<br>2 lbs. CHICKEN CUTLETS - 3 lbs. CHICKEN BREASTS<br>1 WHOLE CHICKEN - 1 pkg. GROUND TURKEY<br>2 lbs. TURKEY WINGS/DRUMSTICKS | <b>FREE</b><br>DOZEN EGGS<br><b>\$39.99</b>      |