

NORWOOD NEWS

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Trending: Faith-Based Health Programs
page 5

FORDHAM'S SHOOTING STAR



Photo courtesy Fordham Athletic Department

LAST WEEK at Rose Hill Gym, senior guard Alberto Estwick shoots and scores the winning three-point basket for Fordham University in its gritty 66-64 comeback victory over Rhode Island. The up-and-down Rams (8-10 overall record) went on to lose their next game against St. Bonaventure. For more on local sports, see page 9.

For All His Success, Discovery HS Teacher Lands in Basement

By ALEX KRATZ

Last Saturday afternoon at a high-profile workshop event in Manhattan called "Changing the Way We Eat," Discovery High School science teacher Steve Ritz gave a presentation about the Green Bronx Machine program he started two years ago. The program, which now combines elements of nutrition, sustainable agriculture and "green" building construction, started as a way to bring science to life for his special education students.

The students grew their own food on vertical gardens in the classroom. They were coming to class engaged and excited about learning. They made money. The program was featured on local and national television and garnered the high school an award from the New York City Strategic Alliance for Health and praise from local elected officials.

The Norwood native clicked through 245 slides in 13 minutes. Most of those slides were from photos taken inside Ritz's Discovery classroom where it all began more than two years ago. He received a standing ovation.

There was just one problem. The program no longer exists at Discovery, one of a handful of

(continued on p. 10)



UP UNTIL this year, Steve Ritz's students at Discovery High School grew food in his classroom. Now administrators want nothing to do with Ritz's program.

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Kingsbridge Armory Open for Business

Hockey Group is Leading Contender

By ALEX KRATZ

Two years after the City Council killed a plan to turn the long-vacant Kingsbridge Armory into a giant shopping mall, the city is once again seeking development proposals for the 600,000-square-foot, castle-like structure.

In his State of the City speech at Morris High School in the Bronx, Mayor Bloomberg said his office had received unsolicited interest in the Armory from groups with the resources to revamp the nearly 95-year-old building. Although the new request for proposals, released on Jan. 12, does not rule out the possibility of another mall project, momentum is building for another type of use.

"We've heard from a variety of interested parties who want to develop it into recreational space," Bloomberg said in his speech.

The frontrunner emerging with recreational plans appears to be a group of investors, including former New York Rangers star Mark Messier, who want to turn the Armory into the region's (and possibly the nation's) biggest hockey complex.

The group has already met with Councilman Fernando Cabrera, whose district includes the Armory, and outlined a detailed proposal that Cabrera believes might bring badly-needed jobs and provide youth with recreational opportunities.

(continued on p. 10)

Speaker, Bx Pols Strike 'Living Wage' Deal

By JEANMARIE EVELLY

A contentious and nearly two-year battle over the Bronx-born "living wage" bill came to close to conclusion in the City Council last week when Speaker Christine Quinn announced a compromise between the two warring sides of the debate and Bronx elected officials agreed to support it.

Quinn's amended version of the Fair Wages for New Yorkers Act, which will be introduced sometime next month and is likely to pass, would require developers receiving substantial taxpayer subsidies to pay employees a so-called "living wage," or \$10 an hour with benefits, \$11.50 without.

It would not, however, raise the pay for retail workers within these subsidized developments. That had largely been the intent of the original bill and the issue at the heart of the argument that inspired it: the fight for living wages, three years ago, for workers at a shopping mall that was proposed to fill the Kingsbridge Armory.

Still, the Bronx leaders behind the legislation — including Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., who led the charge to defeat the mall plan at the Armory — quickly endorsed Quinn's proposal, as did most of the bill's other main proponents.

(continued on p. 4)

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In The Public Interest

Bronx Council District 11 Race Gets a Candidate

Cliff Stanton, a Kingsbridge Heights resident who is involved with parents associations at PS 24 and Bronx High School of Science, is moving ahead with plans to run for the Council District 11 seat currently occupied by Bronx City Councilman Oliver Koppell. Koppell's district, which includes Norwood, Kingsbridge Heights and Riverdale, will be up for grabs in 2013.

The Bronx Press Politics blog, run by the newspaper the *Riverdale Review*, first reported that Stanton had started a campaign committee earlier this week. For the past several years, Stanton and other parents at PS 24 have led a boycott against the *Review* after the paper interviewed students at the school without parental consent in 2010.

Last Tuesday, Stanton attended the Community Board 7 monthly meeting to talk about the need for a

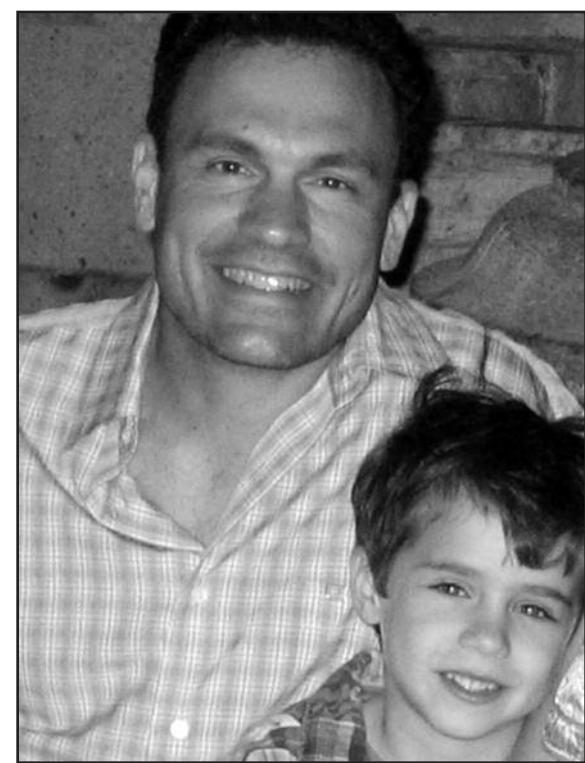
traffic study for the streets surrounding Bronx Science. Stanton is also a board member of a new charter middle school looking to set up shop in the area.

The Bronx Press blog speculated that Ari Hoffnung, a Riverdale resident who is now a deputy comptroller for John Liu, might also be a candidate. Both might have to take on Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, who would be considered the frontrunner for the seat if, as widely assumed, he throws his hat into the ring.

"I'm not planning on running for Council — but I'm also *not* planning on not running for Council," Dinowitz told the City & State website.

Stanton told Politicker NY he's been disturbed by the "stubborn refusal to consider creative solutions to our problems in our neighborhood."

—ALEX KRATZ



CLIFF STANTON with his son Eytan.

Espada and Son Indicted On Second Slew of Charges

Federal prosecutors piled more criminal charges on former Bronx State Senator Pedro Espada, Jr. and his son, Pedro Gaultier Espada, this week — just over a year after the two were indicted on an original batch of corruption charges.

In the most recent accusations, the two men have been charged with using a for-profit janitorial services company to bilk money from Espada's nonprofit Soundview Healthcare Network.

Both men are already facing five counts of embezzlement, which they pleaded not guilty to, for allegedly funneling more than \$500,000 from the publicly funded health care clinics and spending the money on exorbitant personal luxuries. The pair will be arraigned on the new charges on Jan. 25.

For the past several months, Espada and his supporters have been fighting the government's efforts to deny Soundview from receiving Medicaid funding, its primary source of income. Espada was ousted from his seat in the Bronx's 33rd District in 2010 by Gustavo Rivera.

—JEANMARIE EVELLY

Two Dinowitz Bills Pass Assembly

Two bills sponsored by Bronx Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz unanimously passed the Assembly this month.

The first seeks to close loopholes that allow negligent landlords to retain control of rental properties that fail to repair.

Current law authorizes housing courts to replace negligent landlords with court-appointed administrators, but often permits the landlord to retain ownership if he or she promises to fix the problems "with due diligence" in a certain period of time, which often leads to further neglect and potential injury or death for the tenants of such buildings.

The second bill would strengthen the laws around government action when an area of lead poisoning has been identified, requiring the State Health Department to notify the public and take appropriate precautionary action.

Both bills are awaiting action by the State Senate.

—MARCOS SIERRA

City Council Votes to Ease Parking Regulations

The City Council voted on a set of legislation this week that seeks to ease the city's frustrating parking regulations and eliminate excessive ticketing.

One bill is aimed at eliminating the so-called "sanitation stickers," which are plastered on the windows of vehicles that violate alternate side parking rules, even before motorists are given the opportunity to prove their innocence.

"Drivers across the city will no longer have to waste their time and effort undertaking the near impossible task of removing these unsightly neon stickers. Simply put, this is another victory in our continuing effort to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers," said Councilman David Greenfield.

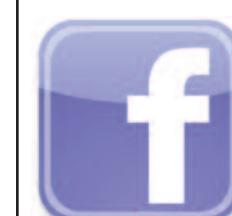
Another bill will aid drivers unlucky enough to get a parking ticket while in the process of paying for a muni-meter spot, requiring Traffic Enforcement agents to cancel tickets immediately if a driver's meter receipt shows a time no later than five minutes after the ticket was issued.

A third piece of legislation would prohibit late fees on parking tickets prior to a determination of liability. Current law has late fees accrue 30 days after a ticket is issued, instead of 30 days after a determination has been made in the case.

—MARCOS SIERRA

Public and Community Meetings

- THE 52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL will meet Thursday, Jan. 26 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Jewish Home Life Care Center, 100 W. Kingsbridge Rd. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.
- COMMUNITY BOARD 7 will host a public hearing to discuss traffic and congestion along East Gun Hill Road, on Monday, Jan. 30 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Moshulu Montefiore Community Center auditorium, 3450 DeKalb Ave.
- COMMUNITY BOARD 7 will host a public hearing to discuss safety and quality of life issues on Friday, Jan. 27 at Monroe College's King Hall gym, 2501 Jerome Ave., from 6 to 9 p.m.
- THE BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION meets Wednesday, Feb. 1 at 8 p.m. at the BMCA office, 400 E. Moshulu Pkwy. So. Apt.B1 (lobby floor). All are welcome. Donations are needed for the BMCA's flea market on March 10. Bring new and used items (except clothing) to the BMCA office on Wednesdays, Feb. 15, 22 and 29 from 1:30 to 4 p.m. or on Wednesday evening March 7, from 7:30 to 9 p.m.



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Business Beat

Family to Hit-and-Run Driver: You 'Destroyed a Family'

By DAVID GREENE

The family of hit-and-run victim Josbel Rivera, who was killed while crossing Moshulu Parkway on the morning after Christmas, is hoping the heartless driver surrenders to police and takes responsibility for his actions.

Still mourning the death of her cousin, Julissa Rivera told the Norwood News, "He destroyed a family. He took away an amazing life ... and doesn't have the courage to face us and tell us how or why this happened."

"We want clarity on what happened," Julissa said.

Safety Forum Hopes to Give Voice to Community

In the past two months, two young Bronx boys, a 4-year-old and an 11-year-old, have been shot in the 52nd Precinct, apparently over stolen designer jackets.

It's a sad but true commentary on our community's misplaced values, says Walter Bell, a counselor at two Bronx hospitals who is now the chairman of Community Board 7's public safety committee. "Society glorifies material wealth," Bell said the other night at CB7's general meeting. "It's to the point where we place more value on a Pele Pele jacket than the person who is wearing it."

Bell wants to discuss this and other public safety issues at a forum at Monroe College's King Hall Gym, 2501 Jerome Ave., Friday, Jan. 27, from 6 to 9 p.m.

Bell and Community Board 7 Chairman Paul Foster say they hope the forum allows people to speak up about their concerns, whether it's violence or prostitution or any other issue they feel is affecting their lives.

—ALEX KRATZ

"We know it's not going to bring him back, but it's so unfair how things happen, that we're looking for some type of comfort in knowing that somebody was responsible and takes this responsibility."

Investigators say Josbel, 23, was struck and killed as he crossed Moshulu Parkway at Paul Avenue at 4:30 a.m., right in front of Tracey Towers, on Monday, Dec. 26. At the time, police were looking for a gold-colored vehicle with front-end damage.

The family says Rivera was returning to the family's Kossuth Avenue home after a gathering with friends at a social club on Bailey Avenue and West 230th Street, when he was run down and left at the side of the road. Friends of Rivera would use the tree branch that police used to keep a sheet over Rivera's body, as the centerpiece of a memorial that continues to grow in his honor on the north side of Moshulu Parkway.

Rivera, a graduate of All Hallows High School and later a college graduate, was a popular employee at the Jerome Avenue Radio Shack, was looking forward to a new promotion as manager of a store in Baychester in the coming weeks.

Rivera's boss, who declined to give his name, said, "He would always walk in really happy, he was a very cheerful guy." Rivera's boss added, "He was always well prepared, he was a very smart guy."

"I think it's messed up," Rivera's boss said of the driver failing to come forward. "How you can hit somebody and just leave him there?"

Sources say investigators from the NYPD's Accident Investigation Squad had to wait until after the Christmas and New Year Holiday to view surveillance video from DeWitt Clinton High School.

Meanwhile, Rivera's two younger brothers are off to college, leaving their heartbroken mother virtually



Photo by David Greene

POLICE SHUT DOWN Moshulu Parkway for several hours as the NYPD's Accident Investigation Squad gathers evidence at the scene.

alone.

Editor's Note: Anyone with any information on the case are asked to call CrimeStoppers at (800) 577-TIPS. All calls remain confidential.

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Speaker, Bronx Pols Strike Living Wage Deal

(continued from p. 1)

"We had the option of either joining her or not joining her, and we decided that we would join her," said Bronx Councilman Oliver Koppell, one of the original bill's co-sponsors. "This is as far as she's willing to go, and it's kind of, 'take it or leave it.'"

As speaker, Quinn decides what bills come to the floor for a vote, and which ones get killed. A mayoral hopeful in 2013, Quinn had been tiptoeing around the liv-

ing wage issue, careful not to anger either side of the argument — the pro-labor groups that supported the bill, and the business and real estate communities that argued it would discourage development.

Koppell and co-sponsor Annabel Palma had already made several changes to the legislation to appease critics, narrowing the criteria for the projects that would have to comply to developments receiving tax breaks of \$1 million or

more (up from the originally proposed \$100,000) and excluding manufacturing companies, commercial tenants in affordable housing projects, and businesses earning less than \$5 million.

Quinn's decision to exclude retail tenants in subsidized developments from the proposed wage mandate is a response to criticism from the city's business community, and from Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who worried it would dissuade companies from doing business here.

"The requirement that tenants in subsidized projects pay more when the city has no financial connection with them is a provision that I believe would have cost us future retail jobs," Quinn said. "Placing this requirement on businesses that don't receive a direct benefit is simply unfair."

Instead, the Speaker proposed allocating up to \$10 million in next year's capitol budget to create an incentive fund for developers who voluntarily agree to apply a living wage mandate to their tenants.

While the exact details of the bill have not been released, Quinn claimed that it would raise wages for an estimated 500 workers a year, all of them direct employees of developers who accept city subsidies.

Stephanie Luce, an associate professor at CUNY's Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, said workers in janitorial, security and food services are the ones that would likely be affected by the proposal.

"If there is a retail development, like the Time Warner center, and you take out all the tenants, there are still people that run the building," she said.

Many of those positions, however, already pay above \$10 an hour, she said, adding that the exclusion of retail workers from the bill is "disappointing."

"That is a key occupation or industry in the city that generates a lot of the low wage work," she said.

Luce helped author a study, released last month, which looked at the earnings of retail workers and found that those in the Bronx make less than those in any other borough, with a mean pay of \$8 an hour.

Still, labor leaders, including the head of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDS) heralded Quinn's compromise as a step in the right direction.

"There is no question that the living wage movement has changed the conversation about job creation in this city," RWDS President Stuart Appelbaum said in a statement.

In his State of the City speech, delivered the day before Quinn's announcement, Bloomberg endorsed the idea of raising the state's minimum wage.

In that same speech, the mayor also announced that the city will be issuing a new Request for Proposals for the still-vacant Kingsbridge Armory. The new RFP will include a preference for plans that create quality jobs, though it doesn't call for living wage guarantees.

Bronx High School Students Wanted For Free Youth Journalism Program

The Bronx Youth Journalism Initiative, a free high school journalism after-school program run by the *Norwood News*, is now accepting applications for the spring 2012 semester!

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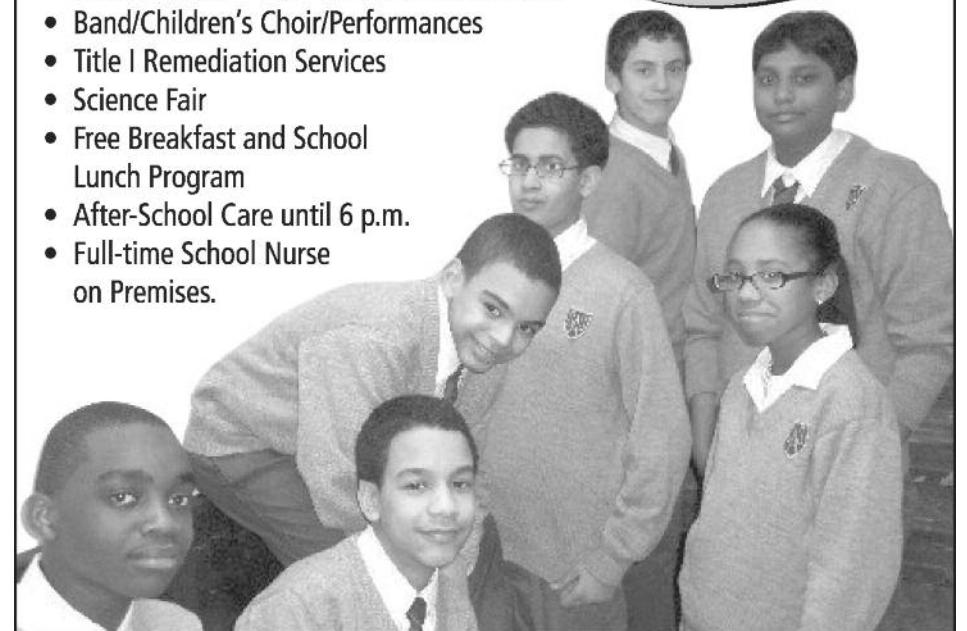
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The number of calories consumed by a third of New Yorkers eating at chain restaurants during lunch alone, according to a study cited by the Department of Health. Adults should consume around 2,000 calories, on average, for the entire day.

Vital Stats

To Reach Community, Health Advocates Look to Pulpit

By JEANMARIE EVELY

Your body is a temple. That biblical message is one that a number of Bronx-based health and fitness groups are hoping to spread to residents — by reaching them at church.

Health advocates are turning to faith-based organizations as a means of reaching the community, engaging churches and other houses of worship in programs and activities that promote nutrition, fitness, and overall healthier living.

"What we found was a tremendous amount of support within the faith communities that we encountered," said Nicole Hollingsworth, senior director of Community & Population Health at Montefiore Medical Center's Care Management Company. "The theory was to provide education in a way that would be rooted in everyday life."

Churches and other faith-based groups are especially effective at reinforcing a physician's message, she said.

"You hear this information about improving your own health," Hollingsworth said. "It's one thing for us to say it. But if it's your pastor that says it, that message comes across more strongly than we could do on our own."

Montefiore has led educational workshops and health screenings at nine different Bronx churches. This fall, the hospital led a months-long program focused on the risks of hypertension and heart disease with a group of 10 women who attend Jubilee Baptist Church, on White Plains Road in Olinville. The group participated in weekly educational workshops on hypertension, medica-



Photo courtesy Montefiore's Care Management Company

PASTOR LIZ TOWNES-SHULER, of Jubilee Baptist Church, gets her blood pressure checked. The church participated in a months-long hypertension workshop with Montefiore Medical Center.

tion management, weight control, healthy cooking habits. They learned how to properly read nutritional labels on food, and how to do yoga exercises to reduce stress.

"Each session was very, very informative and very well-received," said Pastor Liz Townes-Shuler. "I think it has changed our way of not only eating and thinking, but I believe it has changed our lifestyle tremendously."

Over the course of the program, she said, several of the women were able to lower their blood pressure readings.

Other groups are using similar methods. Bronx Health REACH, a coalition of local community-based

organizations and health care providers, runs several programs under its Faith-Based Outreach Initiative, including fitness groups, diabetes support and youth nutrition. In another project, a group of researchers from University of Florida, funded by PepsiCo, launched the "Bronx Health-Smart Church Program" this fall at four different Bronx parishes, training church leaders in tactics to encourage weight loss and other positive health outcomes in their congregants.

"One element we found helpful with the faith-based groups was in their allowing us to come to into their spaces," said Hollingsworth. "By us being able to go into the community, we think it allowed a lot of people to get a message that maybe they wouldn't have had time for."

Some experts say that adding a spiritual element to a health regimen increases a person's motivation, and perhaps, chances for success. Todd Belin, a Norwood-based personal trainer, recently launched a faith-based version of his Fitness Boot Camp class, incorporating Christian music, prayer and inspirational messages into the workout, with a focus on both the body and the spirit.

"It's a holistic approach," he said.

The program started at a church in Manhattan and got such positive responses that he decided to start a second one in the Bronx, Belin said. The method is effective, he says, because the element of faith makes people feel connected to something larger than themselves, an excellent motivator, Belin says.

"If you're alone and you're isolated, if you have no support and no accountability, you can't meet your fitness goals," he said.

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Editorial

Living Wage Dies

Editor's Note: This editorial reflects the opinion of the Norwood News, The Riverdale Press, Hunts Point Express and Mott Haven Herald, and appears in all four publications. It first appeared online on norwoodnews.org.

The battle to require businesses that receive city subsidies to pay their workers a living wage began with a bang when Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. led a fight to reject the creation of a shopping mall at the Kingsbridge Armory if retail workers weren't paid enough to make ends meet in this most expensive of cities.

The battle has ended with a whimper.

Council Speaker Christine Quinn has gutted the bill sponsored by Bronx Council members Oliver Koppell and Annabel Palma. Developers to whom taxpayers give \$1 million or more will be required to pay a minimum wage of \$10 an hour. Their tenants, however, can continue to pay \$7.25.

So when the Kingsbridge Armory is redeveloped, those who work there will be stuck with the same low wages as before. And citywide, according to Quinn, no more than 500 workers will be helped by the new law.

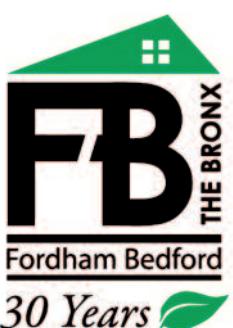
In the time-honored manner of politicians, Quinn and the proponents of the measure that would have extended a decent wage to retail workers are hailing this travesty as a compromise.

Diaz's statements saluting the deal and the revival of talks to develop the armory expose him as an empty suit.

And Quinn's measure re-emphasizes how powerless rank-and-file members of the body she heads are. Like Diaz, all they can do is fall into line and issue face-saving press releases.

Hardworking New Yorkers can't make ends meet. They need food stamps and the help of food pantries.

Small wonder that those who are seriously concerned with the growing inequality in our city stand aloof from conventional politics, and would rather occupy Wall Street than support the occupants of City Hall.



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Op-Ed

Living Wage Bill an Important First Step

**By RUBEN DIAZ, JR.
Bronx Borough President**

It is unfortunate that your recent editorial declined to celebrate a major victory in the fight for income inequality and instead chose to belittle the hard work of my office, our partners in government, and the Living Wage NYC coalition.

On Jan. 13, an important compromise was made on the Fair Wages for New Yorkers Act, one that creates the strongest 'living wage' legislation in the nation. This agreement will mandate that direct recipients of significant taxpayer subsidies do better by their employees. This is a fundamental shift in how we will use taxpayer dollars to facilitate economic development and its magnitude is far reaching beyond the employees that will receive pay increases. The Act would require those developers to pay workers \$10 per hour with benefits or \$11.50 without.

The agreement is a victory for the people of this City and sends an important message to the business community that New York City is open for business, but at a better rate of return for the taxpayers.

I am committed to justice and fairness for all New Yorkers and this common sense legislation, over the course of its life, will help thousands of working families in this City take the first steps out of poverty.

This bill was introduced at my behest by City Council Members Oliver Koppell and Annabel Palma. It quickly drew support, gaining 29 City Council co-sponsors and endorsements from the *New York Times*, Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, Comptroller John Liu and others. It garnered strong advocacy from community organizations and labor leaders from across the City, which includes RWDSU and Stuart Appelbaum and the Living Wage NYC coalition.

The fight to pass this legislation, and

the resulting bill, came out of our efforts to demand that our taxpayer dollars were spent more wisely at the Kingsbridge Armory. While the concept of a "living wage" had been discussed prior to that, our work at the Kingsbridge Armory is the reason why a citywide debate on this legislation came to the forefront. In the past two years, we have dramatically moved the needle on this important issue. We brought the dialogue on wage equality to the public eye years before Occupy Wall Street populated Zuccotti Park.

On the issue of the Kingsbridge Armory, it is misleading to say that its eventual redevelopment will not create living wage jobs, especially when do not yet know what will be proposed at that historic structure. Making conclusions about the Armory's future job potential based on the metrics of a discarded retail mall is wrong, and such a conclusion confuses the issue of the building's future development.

The compromise on this bill marks an important first step forward and dramatic change regarding the economic development and subsidy policies of the City of New York. It changes the way millions of dollars will be spent, and it opens the door for future legislation on wage equality. Job growth and the quality of life of New Yorkers will continue to improve—at a better rate of return for the taxpayer.

This is a fundamental shift in the business climate of our City, and opens the door for future legislation on wage equality.

Striking this deal with Speaker Quinn and the New York City Council means that fair living wages are becoming a realization for the people of New York and that this important bill will finally see a vote in the City Council.

I look forward to this legislation becoming law. We have changed the way we do business in this City, and that is an unqualified victory.



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Inquiring Photographer

By DAVID GREENE

This week we asked readers their thoughts on Mayor Bloomberg's plan to base New York City teachers' pay on merit and performance.



It is tough, because you have teachers that have been there for years and they're not doing a good job, but they have tenure, so the new teachers get laid off. If they did away with tenure, it would be based on merit, and I'd agree with that.

Carol Riccie



Either by merit or seniority, if they're not doing good, they could be there the longest. They could be writing kids' letters and not really passing them the correct way.

Fiona Parker



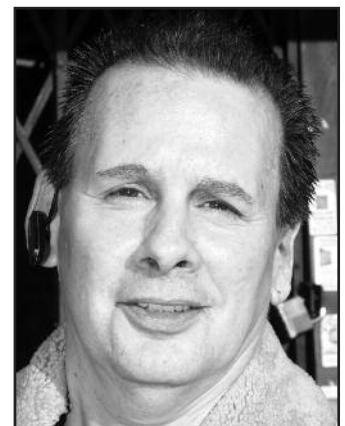
I kind of agree with that, but I also think the parents need to be involved. When I was a kid, my parents were at my school every week at all the parent-teacher meetings. I understand a lot of parents are busy, they have two jobs, but they have to be a part of it too. You just can't blame the teacher when the kid is failing.

James Mendola



I think pay incentives based on merit alone is clearly not fair, especially when you use standardized tests. It's not fair, you can't control that no matter how great of a teacher you are. So it should really be more balanced, with a well-rounded basis, and parent input should be included.

Kate Rivera



If they put in all those years as a teacher, to me, they would have more experience than someone just coming into the school. I don't think that would be fair. Classes are already overcrowded, and the kids are not learning what they should be learning in the public schools.

Richard Sardinia

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Photo by Adi Talwar

CARDINAL-TO-BE Timothy Dolan blesses POTS' new facility with holy water earlier this month. For more photos from Dolan's visit, go to norwoodnews.org and search "Dolan."

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Dolan Comes Out to Bless New POTS Building

By JEANMARIE EVELY

New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan, who just this month was elevated to the post of Cardinal by Pope Benedict XVI, came to the Bronx two weeks ago to visit local nonprofit Part of the Solution (POTS), taking a tour and officially blessing the organization's new building on Webster Avenue.

"This is what it's all about: God giving us gifts, and us giving those gifts to others, which is what you do here at POTS," Dolan said to the crowd gathered in the lobby of the sparkling new facility, as he read a blessing and sprinkled the space with holy water.

POTS originated as a small soup kitchen on Fordham Road in 1982, then moved to Webster Avenue, and has since blossomed into a multi-purpose center offering hot meals, food pantry services, haircuts, showers and legal advice to Bronx residents in need. POTS' new, much larger facility at 2759 Webster Ave. has been operational since this fall, but the group held its official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the space earlier this month on its 30th anniversary.

Dolan called POTS an "effective, loving, warm home." He toured the new building, greeting excited staff, volun-

teers and clients with handshakes and pats on the back before joining them for a meal in the community dining room.

"It's a wonderful day for the people who are guests here," said Sister Jane Iannucelli, a member of the Sisters of Charity of New York, who originally helped found POTS. "His coming here to bless POTS means that we are important."

As Archbishop, Dolan oversees the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, covering hundreds of parishes and over 2 million congregants. He will officially be elevated to Cardinal in February, a title that places him in an elite group with the power to elect a new pope should the current one die.

"He's not a bad guest to have," quipped POTS board chairman Donn Dolce.

Michael Bradley, a POTS client for almost 15 years, shook hands excitedly with Dolan. He said it was his second time meeting the archbishop, who came to a Thanksgiving dinner Bradley attended last year.

"He blessed me and everything," he said.

Bradley was homeless for over a decade before he found POTS, he said, and the staff there is now "like family."

"POTS filled my life," he said.

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Wings Reigns in the Bronx Behind Jenkins

By ALEX KRATZ

For the past several years, Wings Academy and John F. Kennedy have traded the title of best high school hoops program in the Bronx.

Last year, Wings took the Bronx AA Division title, finishing 16-0, and cruised to the borough championship by slaughtering JFK, 73-54, in the final. The Wings (it's the small aerospace-themed school's name and nickname) ended with a loss to eventual champion Boys & Girls in the PSAL semi-finals.

This year, Wings is again off to a fast start and was undefeated going into Tuesday night's road game at JFK's gym in Riverdale. Earlier in the season, Wings beat JFK at home by 6. In the rematch, the Knights came out strong, taking an eight point lead in the first quarter. Wings responded with a ridiculous 27-0 run behind the scoring of dynamic senior guard Justin Jenkins, who is being recruited by several Division I schools in the region (he just received an offer from St. Peter's College) and is writing a diary about his senior season for the *New York Post*.

JFK failed to score a single point in the second quarter, but roared back in the second half. Down one with only seconds remaining in the game, JFK pushed the ball up court. Louis Baltazar received the ball on the wing and drove hard to the basket, finishing with an acrobatic layup to put JFK up by one, 53-52, with 1.2 seconds left.

But Wings didn't panic, throwing a long pass and calling a timeout just past half-court with less than a second remaining. There would be just enough time for a quick catch-and-shoot. After the timeout, Justin sprinted along the baseline, received the in-bounds pass in the corner and all in one lightning quick motion, released a jump shot while fading away. Nothing but nylon. Game over. 55-53, Wings. Jubilation for Wings as crushed JFK players walked off the court.

Wings went on to win its next two games and is now 14-0. JFK is now 10-4. Both will probably meet again in the playoffs. Stay tuned.

Ed. Note: Check out the Bronx Sports Report, on the Norwood News' Breaking Bronx blog, every Thursday.

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Kingsbridge Armory Open for Business

(continued from p. 1)

Based on the group's presentation, Cabrera said the Armory could become the "Yankee Stadium of the ice world."

The plan would include a large central arena with seats for some 5,000 fans, plus another seven or eight skating rinks and space for other activities. Cabrera said the development would create 300 living wage jobs (\$10 an hour with benefits, \$11.50 without) and that the group would not need city subsidies to complete the project.

In 2009, opponents of the mall plan, which developers said would create 1,000 retail jobs, fought to have it rejected because it didn't provide enough living wage employment. The developer who earned the bid, Related Companies, received tens of millions of dollars in city subsidies and tax breaks, but would not guarantee living wage jobs at the finished mall.

Paul Foster, the chairman of Community Board 7, said the hockey group is scheduled to meet with the board at three separate meetings in the next month, starting with the land use committee meeting on Thursday, Jan. 26. They will also meet with the executive committee and then present in front of the entire board at the next general meeting in February.

Another group eyeing the Armory is the National Cycling Association, which wants to build a regional bicycling center, complete with a world-class velodrome race track and a BMX park, inside the Armory.

The NCA is fund-raising to put up a temporary velodrome to stage a six-day bike race inside the Armory this spring. The Armory has hosted six-day races in the past, but not for decades. Last week, NCA held a Velodrome Benefit race at Amity Hall in Manhattan where it sold beer from the Bronx Brewery. Organizers estimate it will cost \$700,000 to put on the six-day race in the Armory.

Unlike the hockey group, the NCA says it would rely on some public assistance for its permanent Armory



Photo by Alex Kratz

A LATE CHRISTMAS GIFT for the Bronx? The possibility of a redeveloped Kingsbridge Armory is once again a reality after the mayor released a request for proposals two weeks ago.

project and the group has yet to approach the community board about presenting its plan.

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., who formed a task force to explore possible developments at the Armory and has met with the cycling and hockey groups, declined to talk specifically about any of the plans while the request for proposals is still open. Interested groups have until March 22 to submit proposals.

Diaz introduced Bloomberg at the State of the City speech and both took the opportunity to say they had buried the hatchet after the contentious fight over the Armory mall proposal in 2009.

After the Council voted to kill the Armory proposal, Bloomberg told the *New York Times*, "As a result of today's vote, we can say one thing for sure: There will be no wages paid at all at the Kingsbridge Armory for the

foreseeable future."

Over the past year, however, Cabrera and Diaz have both worked to keep the channels of communication open between mayor's office and the Bronx regarding the Armory. But when Diaz released his task force report this past summer, there didn't appear to be any interested groups with the resources to make an Armory project happen without substantial public assistance.

The deep-pocketed hockey group, however, approached the mayor's office and the borough president sometime after the task force report was released.

Foster said he's encouraged by the group's willingness to meet extensively with the board. He wants to know how the community will benefit from the project. He said, he will ask the developer, "What is the community getting out of this, in addition to what you want?"

For All His Success, Discovery HS Teacher Lands in Basement

(continued from p. 1)

small schools on the Walton Campus in Kingsbridge Heights.

Local administrators forced it into homelessness this fall when Ritz was banished from his large, well-lit classroom with running water and high ceilings to a small classroom in the basement that he shares with an English teacher. A large pipe hangs from the middle of the ceiling that might injure a big man on the Walton basketball team. There isn't room to fit the vertical growing walls and there isn't any water source to feed the plants even if the walls did fit.

Last August, just weeks before the start of school, Ritz was told by administrators they needed his old classroom to better handle an influx of new students. They also told him to cease conducting his program on school grounds.

Ritz says he's most upset with the timing of the administration's decision. If he would have found out earlier, he says he could have found a new job at a school that wanted to foster his successful program.

Principal Rolando Rivera says he "looked the other way" last year while Ritz conducted his program, which, he adds, was not sanctioned or supported by the school and was not part of the curriculum. He said some of the things Ritz was doing in school, like holding farmers markets, were "questionable, at best." He added that Ritz was also "not doing well, instructionally." After discussing the situation with superiors, Rivera says he decided to shut the program down after the end of the last school year.

"It didn't fit with our vision for Discovery," he said, which is a college prep school and not a place for sustainable agriculture and job training.

Ritz says he used the vertical gardens to teach stu-

dents life science, but the wider program was conducted outside of class time. The school was happy to benefit from the program, he says, which was often counted as school credit toward students' graduation requirements.

This has forced Ritz into an uncomfortable and frustrating position. Ritz says he often gets calls from people and organizations who want to get involved or replicate what he is doing. He's been reluctant to criticize his administrators, including Rivera, who Ritz calls "one of the hardest-working principals I've ever met." But he also wants to strike while the iron is hot and grow the program while there is so much momentum.

Ideally, Ritz says, "I'd like the program reincarnated here where it was born. We've certainly met and exceeded expectations. And we've done it all for free!"

If it doesn't work at Walton or Discovery, Ritz says he will have to take his show elsewhere.

Up until now, Ritz has remained quiet about the situation, but attention coming from last Saturday's event has unearthed the elephant in the basement. Now reporters and politicians, including Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and State Senator Gustavo Rivera, are trying to find out what's going on.

If Ritz can't "reincarnate" the program somewhere else on the Walton campus or another DOE location, he has another idea: The Kingsbridge Armory, which you could hit with an organic tomato from Walton. Just give him a little corner of a space, he says, and he'll grow food for "pennies on the dollar," employ people at a living wage (plus benefits) and feed the hungriest and most unhealthy borough in the city.

"Give me a few square feet of the Armory," Ritz says. "Anywhere. I don't care. Put me next to bullets. I'll grow on top of bullets."



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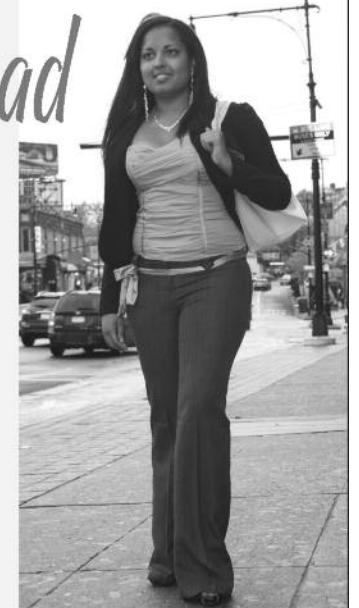
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Business Beat

Caribbean Cuisine Comes to Bainbridge



Photo by Emily Piccone

MAR & TIERRA offers a variety of Caribbean dining experiences.

By EMILY PICCONE

The shops and restaurants clustered around the last stop on the D train are multiplying.

A mile from the Botanical Garden and right below the newly-refurbished Reservoir Oval Park, the few blocks of commerce have a unique charm that still reflects an older time.

Within less than a mile, there's Mc-

Dwyer's Pub, the oldest Irish bar left standing in Norwood, Sal's Pizza, the neighborhood's oldest (and possibly best) pizza spot that just lost its namesake to retirement (but not its pizza, don't worry), and a piano bar on the corner of Webster and 204th that looks untouched since the '70s.

Joining these legends are a couple of newcomers that are bringing something fresh to the streets: a sign of nightlife. Catering to the expanding Dominican

population of Norwood, the Beso Lounge and Mar & Tierra have just recently opened their doors. Mar & Tierra moved in recently, filling the bottom floor of the ever in flux yellow brick building on the corner of Bainbridge Avenue and Reservoir Oval East.

The Dominican flavored restaurant and lounge is equal parts dining room and bar. Whether you choose to get cozy on a bar stool in front of a soccer game and a cold Corona or dine on white tablecloths to a classic variety of Dominican fare is up to you.

But be prepared for a dizzyingly large menu, with everything from salmon and tilapia to cow's tongue and whole roasted chickens. Mar & Tierra's menu is made for big groups of people that don't mind rubbing elbows over huge share plates of hearty food. Nearly everything is served with rice and beans and a small salad on the side.

If you want the Dominican flavor but don't need to feel full for days, try their Mofongo, a famous dish in Caribbean cuisine with African origins. Fried and mashed green plantains are mixed with cheese, pork, chicken, beef or shrimp and the result is a savory and slightly sweet blend of flavors, with crispy and chewy textures intertwining in harmony.

Ed. Note: *Mar & Tierra is located at 3236 Bainbridge Ave.*

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• Ridgewood Savings Bank, 3445 Jerome Ave., is hosting a free Tax Preparation Day for eligible low-income Bronx residents by IRS certified volunteers on Saturday, Feb. 18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information regarding required documents, additional locations, or to RSVP, call (718) 881-3430.

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hood organization, 3418 Gates Place (basement) between Mosholu Parkway and Gun Hill Road, is offering Martial Arts classes for ages 5 to adult, Saturdays, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at \$5/session. For more information, call (718) 405-1312.

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crime scene investigating. Funded by the NYS Education Department, the program offers free Saturday workshops providing enriching, academic support to seventh to 12th grade students. Along with scientific research and application, students strengthen writing, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. For more information or to enroll your child, call (718) 289-5952 or contact Eugene.adams@bcc.cuny.edu.

Public Hearing on Van Cortlandt Park Ice Rink

The Franchise and Concession Review Committee and the Parks Department will hold a joint public hearing on Monday, Feb. 6, at 2:30 p.m., at 22 Reade St. in Manhattan, to review the intent to award one 15-season term development, operation, and maintenance license to Van Cortlandt Park Ice Rink, LLC. A draft copy of the license agreement may be reviewed or obtained at no cost from Monday, Jan. 30 through Monday, Feb. 6, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., excluding weekends and holidays, at the Parks Department offices, 830 Fifth Avenue, room 313. For more information, call (212) 788-7490.

Hearing: New Bronx School Integration

The NYC Department of Education is proposing to open and co-locate a new district high school, 10X565, in school building X660, which currently houses Grace Dodge Career and Technical High School (10X660), and Crotona International High

School (10X524). Grace Dodge is also home to a Young Adult Borough Center. In anticipation of overcrowding, the DOE has proposed to phase out Grace Dodge High School, after an extensive review of data and community feedback indicated the school is unable to improve in instruction and organization. If approved, the new school would open during the 2012-2013 school year, and would serve approximately 105 to 115 students in the ninth grade. A public meeting will be held on Friday, Feb. 3 at 6 p.m. at Grace Dodge, 2474 Crotona Ave. For more information or to submit written comments, call Amanda Cahn at (212) 374-5159.

Help Fund Your Neighborhood

In support of New Yorkers across the city in their efforts to help build stronger communities, the Citizens Committee for New York City awards grants of \$500 to \$3,000 to volunteer-led groups that work on community improvement projects they feel are important to them. The Committee also supports public school-based initiatives focused on the environment and beautification, and offer project planning assistance and skills-building workshops. The application deadline is Jan. 31. For more information, call (212) 822-9580/9568 or visit www.citizensnyc.org/grants.

For more Neighborhood Notes online, go to www.norwoodnews.org and click on "Neighborhood Notes" in the right-hand column.



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Glad Tidings Assembly of God: 2 Van Cortlandt Ave. E. and Jerome Avenue. (718) 367-4040. Prayer Wednesdays at 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m., Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.; and Sunday Service at 11 a.m.

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Out & About

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EDITOR'S PICK

An Open Photo Call to All Ballplayers

The Bronx Museum of the Arts, at 1040 Grand Concourse, invites the public to submit up to five historical or contemporary photographs of anyone playing baseball, from amateurs to pros, of any age or gender, in neighborhoods, parks, schools, etc., for its **Baseball in the Bronx exhibition**, to be held April 13 to May 13. Submission deadline is March 16. Photos will be returned only if they are submitted with a self-addressed stamped envelope with proper postage. For more information of submission rules and details, call (718) 681-6000 or write bronxitestinbaseball@gmail.com.



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Onstage

■ The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Doo Wop** with leading singers and musical groups, Jan. 28 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$35 to \$50); **Blast!**, featuring music and theatre, Jan. 29 at 6 p.m. (tickets are \$25 to \$40; \$10/ages 12 and under); and **singer Bobby McFerrin**, Feb. 4 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$25 to \$45; \$10/ages 12 and under). For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

■ The Bronx Arts Ensemble presents **jazz pianist Valerie Capers** at the Riverdale-Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture, 4450 Fieldston Rd., Feb. 25 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$20; \$15/students/seniors; wine and cheese party is included); and **classical music** at the home of Peter Joseph and Elizabeth Scheuer, 4730 Fieldston Rd., Jan. 29 at 3 p.m. (tickets are \$25). For more information, call (718) 601-7399.

Events

■ The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Ave., presents its **First Friday** on Feb. 3 from 6 to 8 p.m., featuring film, art performances, music and other special events. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

■ JASA Van Cortlandt Senior Center, 3880 Sedgwick Ave., presents an **Art History Talk**, about Columbian sculptor Botero, Jan. 27 at 1 p.m.; and a **Jokercise**, Jan. 30 at 11:15 a.m. For more information, call (718) 549-4700.

■ In celebration of Black History Month, Woodlawn Cemetery's Memorial Chapel will host **author A'Lelia Bundles**, Feb. 26 at 1 p.m. to discuss her upcoming book, "Joy Goddess: A'Lelia Walker and the Harlem Renaissance." Walker is the daughter of the first African-American millionaire Madam C.J. Walker and hosted many famous people of her era at soirees at her salon, The Dark Tower. Tickets are \$15; \$10/students/seniors. Woodlawn Cemetery includes the final resting place of many prominent African-Americans. For more information, call (718) 920-1470.

■ The New York Botanical Garden presents a **trip to the tropics**, through Feb. 26, in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory. Included will be a new virtual tour, photo display, children's scavenger hunt and weekend salsa and photography lessons. For more information, call (718) 817-8658.

■ Wave Hill, located at 249th Street and Independence Avenue, presents **Winter Workspace: Painting With Paper**, Feb. 4, 1 to 4 p.m., to create a portrait of a local plant or animal out of paper, tape and glue; and **The Community Still Life Project**, Jan. 29 and Feb. 5, 1 to 3 p.m., to create paintings of large plants and flowers from life, using a variety of media; both in the Glyndor Gallery and both free with grounds admission. For more information, call (718) 549-3200.



THE DRIFTERS featuring Charlie Thomas headline a night of "Unforgettable Doo Wop" at Lehman Center on Saturday night, Jan. 28. See Onstage for details.

■ The public is invited to ride the Feb. 1 free **Bronx Culture Trolley**, which transports visitors on the first Wednesday of every month (except January and September) to Bronx hot spots, all featuring a variety of entertainment options and ends at Sweetwater's Bar & Grill for music, food and drink. Trolley night starts with a 5 p.m. reception at the Longwood Art Gallery at Hostos Community College, 450 Grand Concourse (at 149th St.). From there, the trolley departs at 5:30, 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. New attractions are added monthly; admission to most venues is free. Riders can get on and off at any scheduled stop and spend as much time as they wish at any or all of the featured venues. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 931-9500 ext. 33 or log on to www.bronxarts.org.

Exhibits

■ The Pregones Theatre, 571-575 Walton Ave. (149th Street) presents **Breathing History**, through Feb. 4. For more information and a schedule, call (718) 585-1202.

■ Lehman College Art Gallery, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Under the Influence: The Comics**; and **Michael Ferris, Jr.: The Bronx Series and Other Work** (figurative sculpture), from Feb. 7 through May 12. For more information, call (718) 960-7492.

Library Events

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. off Fordham Road, presents programs for kids including **Preschool Story Time**, Jan. 26, Feb. 2 and 9 at 11 a.m.; **Heart Animal Making**, Feb. 2 at 4 p.m.; **Griots in Concert** (ages 3 to 12), Feb. 4 at 2 p.m.; **Toddler Tales for the Teeny Tiny** (ages 3 to 5), Jan. 28 and Feb. 2 at 11 a.m.; **The Art of Mime** (ages 3 to 12), Jan. 28 at 2 p.m.; **Mad Science**

Workshops at 4 p.m. (ages 3 to 12; registration required): on Mission Nutrition, Jan. 31, and Earth Awareness, Feb. 7; and **Global Partners, Jr.** (ages 5 to 12), students connect worldwide via the Internet, Feb. 1 and 8 at 4 p.m. Adults can attend **Single Stop/Government Benefits**, Jan. 26 and 31 at 9 a.m.; **Worker Classification Employee vs. Independent Contractor** (registration required), Jan. 28 at 10:30 a.m.; **Movie Screenings**: ("Behind Locked Doors," Jan. 28 at 2:30 p.m.; "Ocean Heaven With Jet Li, Feb. 9 at 11 a.m.; and "Defining Beauty: Ms. Wheelchair America," Feb. 9 at 1 p.m.); **College Planning and Financial Aid**, Feb. 7 at 10 a.m.; and **Organizing and Managing Your Job Search**, Feb. 8 at 2 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

■ The Moshulu Library, at 285 E. 205th St., offers **Knitting Circle**, Thursdays at 3 p.m.; and **Wii Program**, Tuesdays at 3 p.m., each for seniors and adults; **Drawing Stories From Around the World** (ages 5 to 12), Jan. 31 at 4 p.m.; **Toddler Story Time**, Feb. 2 and 9 at 10:30 a.m.; **Holiday Arts & Crafts** (ages 5 to 12), Feb. 10 at 3:30 p.m.; and **Make Your Own Greeting Cards** (for teens and young adults), Feb. 9 at 4 p.m. Speakers of other languages (ages 16+) may attend free **English Conversation Program** (intermediate level), Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m. through March 13. For more information, call (718) 882-8239 or (212) 340-0918.

■ The Jerome Park Library, at 118 Eames Place, offers **Spin, Pop, Boom Show** (ages 3 to 12), Jan. 31 at 4 p.m.; and **Arts & Crafts** (ages 5 to 12), Feb. 6 at 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Jan. 30 for the next publication date of Feb. 9. Find more events at www.bronxnewsnetwork.org.

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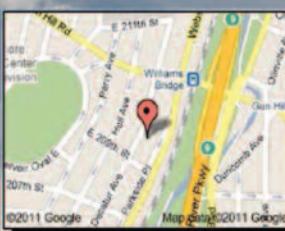



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