

NORWOOD NEWS

**Medicaid Cuts
Threaten Elderly
Couples**
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SALSA THE NIGHT AWAY!



Photo by Adi Talwar

BESO LOUNGE, the new bar and club on East 204th Street in Norwood, offers free salsa lessons on Friday nights and is revitalizing the area's sleepy nightlife scene.

Beso Lounge Offers Rare Kiss of Norwood Nightlife

By **MARCOS SIERRA**

The nightlife in Norwood, long dormant since it once housed more than 20 Irish bars in the 1980s and early 1990s, is getting a boost from the Bronx's newest hotspot, Beso Lounge.

Since it opened in late 2010, Beso Lounge has spiced up the after-hours party scene on East 204th Street at Decatur Avenue with an intoxicating mix of music, drinks, décor and dance. Located in a spacious setting that used to be The Sandbox bar and restaurant, co-owners Eli Garcia and Gino Pacheco say they not only want to bring the party back to the Bronx, but help build up the local economy in the process.

With backgrounds in real estate and the social sciences, Garcia and Pacheco didn't imagine themselves as nightclub owners.

"I think that if the market would not have collapsed back in 2008, Beso Lounge wouldn't be here right now," said Pacheco, who was selling real estate when the housing bubble burst four years ago. "It was something that was missing in the area and we capitalized on the opportunity."

Although they weren't experienced, the nightclub scene was familiar territory.

"A friend of mine once said to me, 'If you want to open a business, look to see where you spend most of your money,'" Garcia said. "I loved going to clubs, so I decided that's what I would do."

With its high ceilings, wooden floors, and contemporary design, the space inside Beso appears much larger than it really is.

"It took us a while to think about how we wanted to set up the space," said Garcia, who holds a BS in Sociology. "We wanted to make sure we could maximize every inch, but at the same time, ensure our customers have enough room to dance."

The bar, which stretches almost the entire length of the floor, offers enough room to order drinks, flirt with the person next to you, and even chair-dance to the upbeat music and pulsating colored lights.

"It's a cool place," said a sweaty Martin Polanco, while sipping on a rum and coke after dancing to a fast paced bachata song. "You can't tell it's this big from the outside."

With a bevy of friends in tow on a recent Friday night, Bronxite Leslie Ramos was excited about her first time at Beso. "I've seen it (Beso Lounge) on Facebook, and my friends talk about it all the time," said Ramos. "I'm

(continued on p. 9)

DOE Plans to Close Middle School 80

By **ALEX KRATZ**

Amid a backdrop of plummeting test scores, gang problems and a bitter showdown between the teachers union and the Department of Education, Middle School 80 in Norwood is facing closure and a complete overhaul of its staff and administration.

If the overhaul plan is approved, MS 80, and 32 other city public schools, will undergo a dramatic reorganization that will include replacing its administration, at least 50 percent of its current staff and undergoing a name change. Students who have not graduated before the start of the next school year will be given a guaranteed seat in the new school.

The Panel for Education Policy still needs to approve the reorganization, but based on recent history, that appears to be a formality. The PEP rarely rejects a DOE-recommended reorganization plan.

The DOE has designated MS 80, a 650-seat school on Mosholu Parkway that has been dogged by gang problems and low state scores, for the fed-

eral "turnaround" program. The designation would allow the school to again receive extra state funding that was being withheld because the city and the United Federation of Teachers, the largest teachers union in the country, have not been able to come to an agreement over teacher evaluations.

MS 80's recent scores on state math and reading tests have dropped them into the lowest 5 percent of state schools. Last year, in response to its lagging test scores, the DOE tagged MS 80 as a "re-start" school, which paired it with an outside education organization and gave it the injection of state funding.

But two weeks ago, with an eye on keeping the increased state funding in place — a total of \$1.8 million over the next two years was cut off in January — the DOE decided to scrap the re-start model and put MS 80 into the turnaround program.

In addition to securing increased funding, DOE officials say the turnaround program will allow failing schools like MS 80 to get a fresh start, (continued on p. 4)

Lawmakers Strike Redistricting Deal New Lines Spark Controversy, Lawsuit

By **JEANMARIE EVELLY**

After months of debate, state lawmakers and Gov. Andrew Cuomo approved a redistricting deal last week that will re-set State Senate and Assembly lines for the next decade, and establish an independent commission to take over the process after the next Census in 2020—a plan that many local leaders are unhappy with.

The new lines, many Bronx leaders and community groups argue, split like-communities across legislative districts, diluting their voice

in the political arena and violating the federal Voting Rights Act, which is designed to protect the voting power of minority communities.

"This plan violates federal law that protects minority communities from being split between several districts with the intention of diminishing the ability of minority communities to elect a representative of their choosing," said Bronx State Sen. Gustavo Rivera in an e-mail. "Despite large population growth in the Latino community in the Bronx, no additional Latino majority senate (continued on p. 10)

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In The Public Interest

An Entrepreneur Takes Advantage of Empty Kingsbridge Armory

By MARCOS SIERRA

The future of the Kingsbridge Armory is still undecided, though Mayor Bloomberg's new round of RFPs (Request for Proposals) for plans on redeveloping the site are due this week. In the meantime, one Latin American entrepreneur is taking advantage of the enormous space.

Pedro Zamora, a music promoter and restaurant owner with Mexican roots, had been hosting concerts and other events at vacant armories in Brooklyn for years until 2010, when the city told him the sites were no longer available for rent.

Searching for locations that were large enough, Zamora found the 5-acre Kingsbridge Armory sitting dormant in a largely Hispanic section of the Bronx, perfect for his plans for the space, which include hosting a number of popular Latin musicians and even a full-fledged rodeo scheduled for March.

"[The Armory] hadn't been used in quite some time and needed repairs to bring it up to code, so I did the repairs myself," he said. "In exchange for the repairs, I got a good deal on the rent and the Department of Buildings helped expedite the necessary permits."

On Feb. 11, Zamora hosted his first concert at the Armory, featuring bachata singer Hector "El Torito" Acosta and popular norteño ensemble Los Tigres del Norte. The show drew thousands, including representatives from the offices of Bronx elected officials.

"I went to the concert with my cousin and brother, and we had a great time," said Jose Zapata, taking a break from



File Photo

SOME 3,500 PEOPLE showed up for a concert at the Armory in February.

playing soccer in St. James Park. "The place was really big and the music was just like home."

"I can't wait for the rodeo," added his cousin Kelby. "I went to buy a new hat, so I can look cool when I go."

"Everyone was uncertain in the beginning, including me. It was extremely hard, but it all paid off at the end of the night," Zamora said. "We received a tremendous amount of support from the city agencies, and I am sure the rest of the planned events will be just as successful."

"If I can get more companies to join forces with me, we can better stimulate the local economy," he said. "I have

always desired to reach out to the Latin American community to provide these types of services, and build strong, sustainable relationships."

Although he hasn't been able to secure a long-term commitment from the city, Zamora's vision for the Armory is not limited to music concerts. Bucking bulls, live music, masked wrestlers grappling in a padded ring and vendors selling tacos and other treats are all part of the upcoming events that Zamora has scheduled for the massive space.

"This place is enormous," he said. "I would like to set up a soccer league, and even bull riding in here. It's definitely doable."

Local Activists Push for 'Sustainable' Armory

Two groups that were integral in leading the City Council defeat of a shopping mall plan for the Kingsbridge Armory in 2009 are continuing their efforts to see the space redeveloped responsibly, pushing for a community use for the long-vacant building.

The Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC) and the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance (KARA) were scheduled to hold a candlelight vigil outside the Armory on Wednesday, March 21 — the day before the city's deadline for developers to submit their proposals for revamping the site.

In a press release, the groups said they plan to pray and to publicly reveal their hopes for the Armory's future uses, which they describe as a "vision of sustainable development." In the past, both groups have advocated fiercely for new school space and living wage jobs at the site.

—JEANMARIE EVELLY

Cabrera Rallies for Passage of Tenants' Rights Bill

Bronx City Councilman Fernando

Cabrera and housing activists rallied in front of Bronx Housing Court on Tuesday, pushing for the passage of a City Council bill that seeks to protect tenants against landlord abuse by informing them of their rights under the law.

The proposed legislation would require landlords and property owners to post an explicit "Tenants Bill of Rights" in the lobbies of buildings with three or more units, and distribute copies to tenants when signing their leases. The bill outlines laws regulating heat and hot water, eviction, subletting and other sources of tenant-landlord conflict.

Bronx Housing Court handles more eviction cases than those in any other borough, according to a press release describing the rally.

—JEANMARIE EVELLY

Public and Community Meetings

- **The 52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meets on Thursday, March 22 at 7 p.m. at St. Philip Neri Parish, 3031 Grand Concourse, in the school auditorium. For more information, call (718) 220-5811.
- **COMMUNITY BOARD 7** committee meetings (held at 229A E. 204th St. in Bedford Park at 6:30 p.m.): Education, Wednesday, March 28; and Land Use/Zoning, Thursday, March 29. For more information, call (718) 933-5650 or visit www.bronxcb7.info.
- **The BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meets on Wednesday, April 4, at 8 p.m. at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy. So., Apt. B1 (lobby floor).

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- **Crime Watch**
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- **Bronx Sports Report Thursday**
- **Bronx Breakdown Friday**

Fordham Students Demand Change After Bias Incidents

By DAVID GREENE

Fordham University students took to the streets last week to demand change in how the northwest Bronx Jesuit school approaches multiculturalism and how it handles acts of racism and bias.

More than 150 students walked out of the Rose Hill campus on Thursday evening, March 8, after a series of hateful messages were reported at Rose Hill and the school's Lincoln Center Campus.

Taking a page from the Occupy Wall Street movement, students used the "public microphone," where the crowd repeats what a speaker is saying, to demand that the school's administration re-examine its current policies on investigating and reporting bias incidents.

"We demand that the Fordham administration reexamine the inadequate protocol to address incidents of bias and sexual violence," said student Patrice Edwards. "We want an anonymous bias

reporting system."

Edwards, an African-American student, said she also sought racial-sensitivity training for security as well as an open dialogue among students, staff and faculty regarding race, gender and sexual orientation. Students also want additional funding for the school's Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs and a more diverse administration.

"They (Fordham University) need to put in place policies that deal with racism as hate crimes," said Beverly Roberts of the Parkchester branch of the NAACP.

Roberts told the Fordham students, "We will continue to support you and

whenever you're having a rally, we will be here to show you the NAACP supports the students of Fordham University."

Students held their rally a day after meeting with Fr. Joseph McShane, the president of Fordham University. McShane has said the school has reached out to the NYPD's bias crime unit.

The rally was held in response to a handful of recent incidents. On February 7, a senior reported a racist message was written on her dorm room's front door. On March 2, a similar hateful message was scratched into a large piece of sheet rock. Two weeks ago, an anti-gay message was found at the school's Lincoln Center campus.



Photo by David Greene

STUDENTS AND ALUMNI walk out of Fordham University's Bronx campus to rally and demand change after a series of hate messages were found on campus.

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DOE Plans to Close Middle School 80



Photo by Alex Kratz

ELAINE GORMAN, the director of the city's new turnaround program who spoke with parents at a meeting last week, is overseeing the overhaul of 33 city schools, including MS 80.

(continued from p. 1)

while still retaining the teachers and programs that work.

Opponents of the turnaround program and the DOE's handling of struggling of schools in general, say students will suffer because of the jarring shifts in faculty and programming and that the agency continues to ignore parental and community input.

Last week, the Bronx Borough Presi-

dent's Office organized a public meeting with Elaine Gorman, the new director of the city's turnaround program. Gorman will be tasked with overseeing the rebuilding of 33 city schools, including 10 in the Bronx.

Cecilia Donovan, the president of MS 80's Parents Association, attended the meeting to express her frustration with the pace of all the changes.

"Everything is happening very, very,

very fast," she told Gorman.

Donovan said her daughter is doing well at MS 80, but is now concerned about what's going to happen to her principal and teachers.

Donovan said the timing of the turnaround designation, as the city and teachers union remain deadlocked in contentious negotiations, makes her and other parents skeptical about the DOE's motivations and whether they really have the students' best interests in mind.

"The children are the greatest pawn in all of this," she said.

Donovan was one of only a handful of parents in attendance at the meeting at Morris High School in Morrisania, which Gorman said she volunteered to attend.

Gorman, a 43-year veteran of public school education in Maryland and New York, was working in the DOE's Office of Innovation before agreeing to take over the turnaround program a month ago. She said her office will consist of her and a special assistant. She listened thoughtfully to Donovan and others express their frustration and tried to bring clarity to a confusing situation. She agreed to visit MS 80 and other schools coming under her watch to better understand what's working and what isn't.

"If you want me out again, I'll be out again," Gorman said. "I will come as often as you want."

Under the turnaround model, MS 80 Principal Lovey Mazique-Rivera is likely to be replaced as is the entire administration. Gorman said a hiring committee, made up of the new administration, students, parents and others in the school community, will be created. Every teacher at MS 80 who wants to stay at the new school will have to re-apply for their old jobs. A maximum of 50 percent of the old staff can be retained. Any programs that have proven effective would be kept, Gorman said.

MS 80, a school with a high percentage

of English Language Learners, is one of the only schools in the Bronx that has a bilingual education program, which allows students to learn in both English and Spanish.

"If the bilingual program is working, then it should be kept," Gorman said.

Despite Gorman's reassurances, skepticism about the turnaround plan was rampant at the meeting.

"We've had enough with the experimentation," said Monica Major, the borough president's education director.

William Pagan, the borough president's representative on the Panel for Education

**"Everything is happening very, very, very fast."
—Cecilia Donovan, MS 80 Parents Association President**

Policy, said closing and re-opening schools still isn't getting to the root of the problems schools like MS 80 face, including large class sizes and a lack of resources.

"You're putting a patch on a wound that actually needs stitches," Pagan told Gorman.

Councilwoman Maria del Carmen Arroyo showed up long enough to blast the DOE for only seeking parental and community input after making decisions.

"The way the DOE handles transitions with our schools is horrible," she said. "Parents are always the last to know what happens with their school."

Ed. Note: A joint public hearing for this proposal is scheduled for April 16 at 6 p.m. at M.S. 80, 149 E. Mosholu Pkwy. Oral comments can be left at (212) 374-5149, and written comments can be sent to D10proposals@schools.nyc.gov.

Construction Begins on Low-Income Mosholu Gardens

By **DESTINY DEJESUS**

Earlier this month, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for Mosholu Gardens, an eight-story housing development with 63 low-income units located at 245 Mosholu Parkway North, in Norwood.

The building will be developed through a partnership of Acacia Network, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and other groups.

"This groundbreaking ceremony is a celebration of the strong partnership among developers, advocates, financiers, and the City," said HPD Commissioner Mathew M. Wambua.

Acacia Network is the largest Latino based nonprofit organization in the northeast. The network offers health and social services as well as housing. Acacia Network works closely with the Bronx and East Harlem communities.

The units will be available to individuals earning no

more than \$34,860. Residents of Mosholu Gardens will have access to on-site services such as laundry facilities, a 24-hour concierge, resident attendant services and a computer facility. Other services will include case management and access to Acacia's network of healthcare, housing, educational and social services.

"Mosholu Gardens will not only help transform the lives of a vulnerable population, it will enhance the environment and the fabric of the surrounding community," said Acacia Network CEO Raul Russi.

Thirty-nine of the units will house members of the special needs population and formerly homeless residents. Each unit will include private kitchens and bathrooms and residents will have access to indoor and outdoor communal garden areas.

In total, the project cost roughly \$15 million. Many funds have been received from HPD, The National Equity Fund (NEF) and other organizations in order to help develop the new housing. The construction of the Mosholu Gardens is expected to be completed by Aug. 1, 2013.



A RENDERING of Mosholu Gardens, which is slated for completion by August 2013.

www.norwoodnews.org

Police Report

Pedestrian Killed on University

Ghana Galley, a 24-year-old University Heights resident, was killed while crossing University Avenue last week.

Police say Galley was crossing University Avenue early Wednesday evening, March 14, when she was struck by a 2003 Econoline van that was taking a left turn from West 190th Street onto University.

The driver remained at the scene as police and emergency medical workers arrived. Galley was taken to St. Barnabas Hospital, but was pronounced dead on arrival. Inspector Joseph Dowling, the commander of the 52nd Precinct, said they are still investigating but it doesn't appear to be a criminal act. Police did issue the driver two summonses for failure to yield to a pedestrian and failure to exercise due care (when navigating pedestrians).

man brandishing a firearm walked into Connie's Laundromat and pushed the lone employee to the back of the store. After forcefully taking the keys to cabinet filled with money from the employee, he took off with \$300 in quarters and an undisclosed amount of bills. —ALEX KRATZ

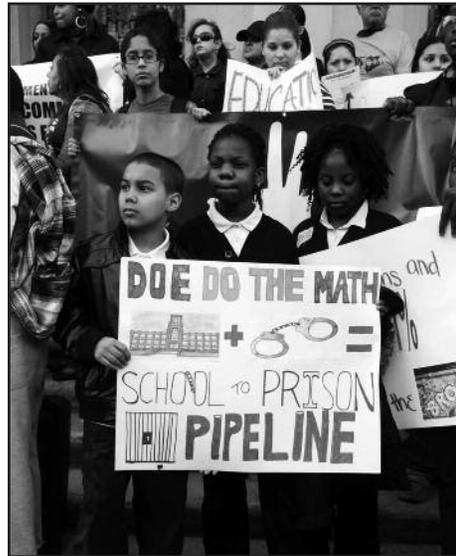


Photo by David Greene

DOZENS OF ACTIVISTS, students, teachers and their supporters gathered in front of the Bronx County Courthouse on March 9, to demand an end to what they call the over-policing of the New York City school system by the NYPD. Police arrested or ticketed about 14 students each day in city schools from October through December, according to NYPD data. About 94 percent of students arrested were black or Latino; 75 percent were male.

Arrest in Bedford Park Robberies

Police have arrested a suspect in the robberies of two Bedford Park businesses earlier this year. Inspector Dowling praised the efforts of Detective Kevin Murphy who apprehended Michael Archilla, 19, who lives on Bedford Park Boulevard, where the robberies took place.

On Jan. 5, a man walked up to the counter at K & C Candy Store and, acting as if he were armed, said two words "open" and "money." He grabbed money from the register and left. On Jan. 22, a

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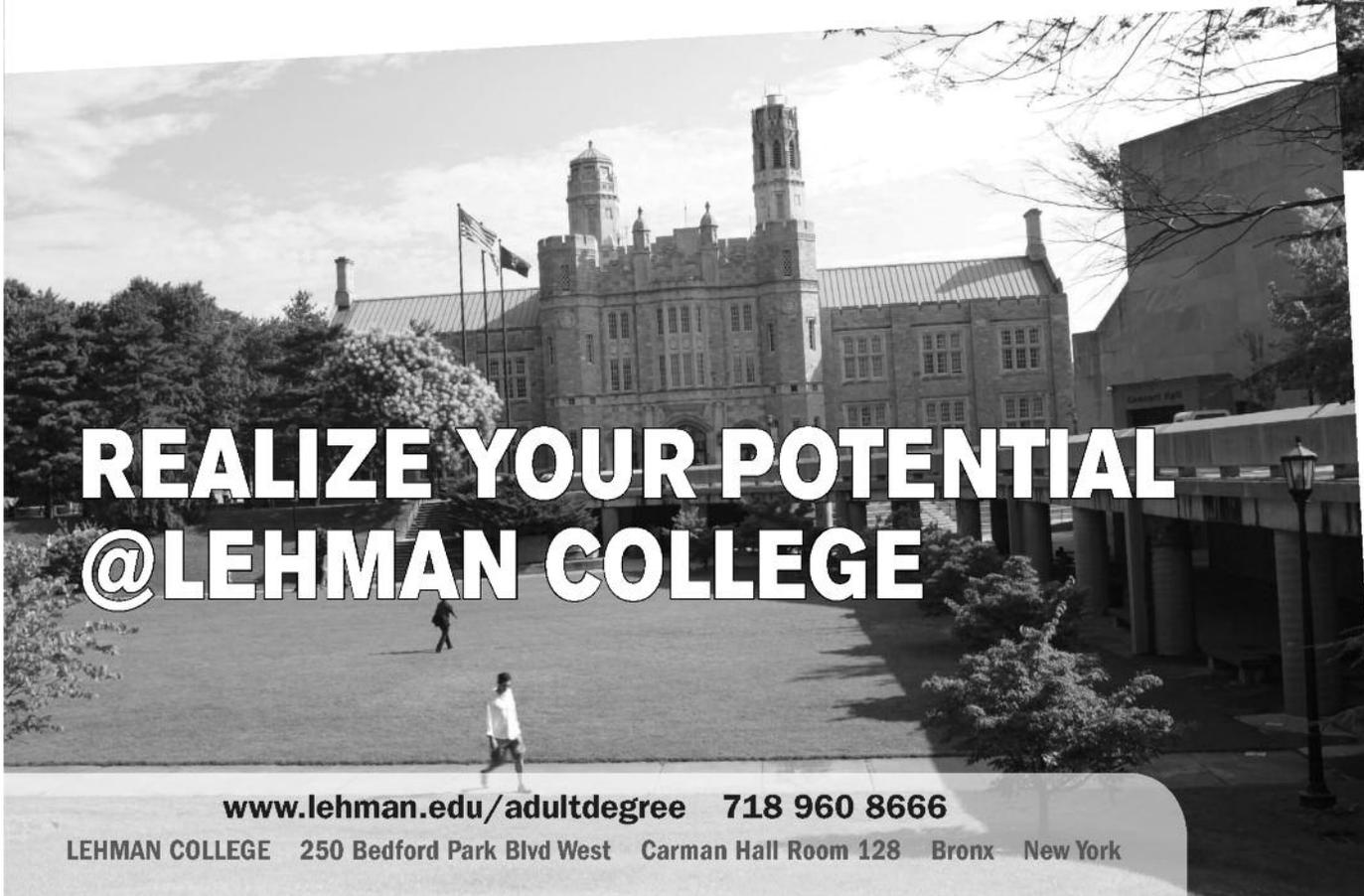
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Letters

Keep MS 80 Open and Give Our Children Your Support

The following letter was sent to Chancellor Walcott last week. Cecilia Donovan had received no response as of press time on Tuesday night.

Dear Chancellor Walcott,

My name is Cecilia Donovan and I am the current president of the parents association at MS 80X. I have been given the authority by the Parents Association Executive Board and parents of Middle School 80 to reach out to you concerning our children. Our school has been designated to close in June 2012. We know from the federal guidelines that our principal, Mrs. Rivera, will be removed very shortly, yet we still have not heard from anyone from the NYC DOE about what is going to happen to our teachers, staff and children. This is unacceptable.

I am writing to you to request that [during] this turmoil of closing MS 80, the NYC DOE consider and reflect on the chaos and confusion all of this change is creating and right before the state exam! Is this a deliberate attempt of the NYC DOE to bring about chaos to justify their agenda? The damage of all this emotional

confusion and uncertainty that is created for our children, who are students at MS 80; the elementary schools, that are feeder schools to the only free standing middle school in this community; and to the community residents and parents, many of whom graduated from MS 80 and live and work in this community, will not fade. We request that you get involved and bring some sanity to this process. Why can't all of these changes wait until June? Our children must not become the *collateral damage* of bureaucrats who have never been to our community and have no regard for how our parents and children feel about all that is being done to them — Yes, to them. At the end of the day, Chancellor Walcott, not one person from Tweed understands how devastating it is to have our one and only middle school destroyed right in front of us — and to think that you are going to send a stranger to our school as the new leader, who has no idea of what we are like, our hopes, our dreams for our children, and the challenges we face, to take over without even consulting us about what we want in a new school, is a crime and just wrong.

We want you to consider, a candidate for the principalship from our own nei-

borhood, Leanna Mercedes, who lives in the community, has attended public schools all her life within our community, knows and has worked with our children and brings an experience base that will make the new school a success. Please don't place someone here who has no experience working in a high needs area like this, who will not be able to communicate or relate to the community and who thinks that this school is but a step on their way to the chancellor's position. We do not need a carpetbagger here — we need a leader who knows firsthand our struggles and challenges and can address them. We need someone here who has a vision to make THIS school a place for developing the best citizens of the future. Out of these halls have emerged such luminaries as Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, Penny Marshall, and countless others! Not to forget a future aeronautic designer/scientist/actress, my daughter, Ciara Donovan. Our school was an A school until two years ago and while we have struggled to meet AYP [Adequate Yearly Progress], 50 percent of that blame lies squarely at the feet of the NYC DOE. The mandates and unfairness in how students from outside of this community are placed at MS 80, the lack of adequate funding and resources, has made the struggle greater for us and while we can understand that the RACE to the Top money is all the NYC DOE thinks about, it is coming at the loss of a great school that with another type of support and attention could have been a success. Our current principal took over a challenging school (over registration of special education students, and a large concentration of ELLs), and with little support created a wonderful school for our children. Yet all her efforts and successes, although not reflected in a test score, was not enough for any of the NYC DOE bureaucrats to consider, pay attention to and see the value added. Instead, without ever visiting or coming to see for yourselves, they made judgments and decisions based on paper. How insulting is that!

Now we are pleading that you at least consider who the candidate to lead the new school will be and give us a voice — give a chance, give our children an opportunity and give them hope. Select Leanna Mercedes, a graduate of MS 80 to lead the school. To this end, MS 80 Executive Board and Mr. Anthony Riviecco, Norwood Community Activist are requesting to meet with you and your deputy who is in charge of hiring as soon as possible.

We pray and hope that you will consid-

er our request.

**Respectfully yours,
Cecilia Donovan**

Good Point

Re: Judy Noy's Op-Ed: No Merit Pay for Teachers (2/23-3/7 issue): Ms. Noy's point, that teachers should not receive merit bonuses for doing their job correctly is justified.

I want every school principal, assistant principal, teacher, and teacher-hiring commissioner drug-tested, and psychanically-tested (sic.). That's from my experience as a past Secondary English teacher, and tutor.

What students do is test teachers for weaknesses. There used to be a chapter 13 in the old, out-of-date Teachers Manual. It explained classroom demeanor for teachers. Someone, please re-issue this book

**Cheryl L. Fistel
Norwood Resident**

Worship in Schools

Your lead story in the February 23 - March 7, 2012 issue reports that the Department of Education is objecting to religious worship in public schools during non-school hours on the grounds that issues of church and state should be kept separate. The question to the DOE is who is this harming?

The space that a school rents out to a religious group when the building is officially closed, classes are not in session, and no teachers or students are present, should have absolutely no effect on anyone who is not even on the site. It's not as if worshipers are proselytizing around school property.

By renting available space to any legitimate group, everyone benefits. A congregation gathering to worship has a place to pray in peace while the school receives payment for space that isn't otherwise being used at the time. This is a win-win situation.

With a struggling economy and schools being under-funded and often in need of supplies, this is a way to garner income. Perhaps if parents of the school-children attending the schools involved voiced support of using schools in this manner, this could help turn the tide.

What a shame that the powers that be cannot see the overall picture. And isn't it costly for a judge and court to spend time debating the matter, going back and forth between decisions and appeals?

Can't we all just get along?

**Judy Noy
Norwood Resident**

HULL AVENUE APARTMENTS

The **Postgraduate Center for Mental Health** has applications available to persons with limited income for **studio and 2-bedroom apartments** located at **3525 Hull Avenue in the Bronx**. Income qualifications will be based on Federal Low Income Guidelines.

Household Size	Income Limit	Maximum Rent
1 person	\$34,860	\$871.00
2 person	\$39,840	\$1,120.00

Interested persons may obtain an application by writing to:

**Property Management Department
c/o PCMH**
158 East 35th Street
New York, NY 10016

Applications may also be picked up at:

3525 Hull Avenue
Bronx, NY 10467
Monday to Friday
10 AM to 4 PM.

Completed applications must be sent by **REGULAR** mail (NOT registered or certified mail) to the address indicated with the applications must be received by **Friday, May 11th, 2012**. Applications received after the deadline will not be processed.

Call **212-889-5500 x204** with questions.



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Inquiring Photographer

By **DAVID GREENE**

We asked readers about a proposed bill in the state senate that would ban food and drink from NYC subways and buses at the risk of being fined.



Well I think it's a very good plan because a lot of people just eat and leave debris on the train, they don't take it with them. So for the most part, I believe it's a good plan. I think if people were a little bit more careful with what they do in terms of maintaining the cleanliness in the train, it would be better for everyone.
Don Lundy



If you clean up after yourself it's not a problem. If you're drinking a cup of coffee, I don't see anything wrong with it. But if you're drinking something and you're spilling it ... I (still) don't agree with a fine.
Benny Adorno



I believe that some people have to do many things in the morning and they have to have their nutritious morning breakfast, on their way to work with the MTA, which is a cup of coffee and a donut, or a bagel, something small. It could disturb some in a way ... but to issue a fine is ludicrous.
Lisette Wiginton



I don't think they should do that because you can't tell these dummies when to eat or when not to eat. Somebody could be just getting on the train, let's say, on Thanksgiving, and they take the train to their mother's house with all the food and they want to eat a little something on the train... they can't do that, it's not a crime.
Ya Yah Jackson



What about mothers who bring their babies on the train? They need to eat. They can't stop people from wanting to eat, it doesn't even make any sense. I can understand the garbage issue. Maybe if they put some more cans around, if that's what they're concerned about. But to fine people is like criminalizing eating.
Jeanette Lynn



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Bronx Stars of Tomorrow: Chess Master Justus Williams

In his first year as a teenager, Bronx native Justus Williams has already become the youngest African-American chess player to be awarded the title of Chess Master in the country, and he is the first to tell you about the hours of studying and dedication that he is continuing to put towards his game. Williams sat down with the Norwood News at IS 318, the Brooklyn middle school he attends which boasts a nationally ranked chess team, to talk about his past tournament in Brazil, his favorite chess piece, and his secrets to match preparation.



Photo by Emily Piccone

You were just in Brazil for the World Youth Chess Championship, welcome back! How did it go down there?

It was very good out there, very hot. I got 26th out of probably 200 people. I was there for two weeks and I played one game a day and the games usually last somewhere between three and four hours with a 90-minute

time limit per move. I played against a top rated player from Russia who was 14 and it was a draw (a tie). When I went to Brazil, all my opponents were from different countries. I prepared for each one so I wouldn't be blindsided by their moves and so I wouldn't get into opening

trouble. When I go to continental tournaments I bring my own chess set because I feel more comfortable with it. The pieces are wooden and are not too big, not too small; I just like the way it feels.

How did you prepare for a game?

I look at my opponents' past games, see what they're good at and see what openings they had trouble with. I would build a database for them, and try to get the best position, so I felt that I had a good edge.

How did you begin playing chess?

It started at P.S. 70 (in the Bronx) with the Bronx Bomber chess team. I didn't really know how to play, but my mom was just pushing me to do it. I moved to IS 318 (in Brooklyn) in 2009, because it would be a good chess team, and I felt that I should be challenged. I'm glad now that there are more people into chess than just me. Now, playing [with my classmates] is a challenge. I will probably win, but it's challenging. I used to not study a lot, but now I've gotten more serious about chess and I'm trying to study an hour a day, like reading books and looking at top games. I used to just play in tournaments and think that it was helping me but it really wasn't.

What makes a challenging opponent? Strong offense or strong defense?

I would probably say offense because a lot of the top grand masters have told me that I have a lot of good defensive skills, and usually an offensive type of player will push you hard.

Does the opening player have an advantage?

Usually people would want to play first and usually they have an advantage. But the part of chess is learning how to use your color to your advantage. I wouldn't really care what color I got. I would just let it be.

Who do you think is the most skilled opponent that you've beat?

I beat my first GM (grand master), Michael Rohde, when I was 11 years old. I felt that that was a big accomplishment, and I was playing black.

Any GMs that you look up to?

I was honored to meet Maurice Ashley. He's the first black chess GM and we've talked a lot. He's a good guy.

Are you friends with the other young chess masters from New York?

Yea, James Black goes to this school. We kind of go back and forth a lot because we're both good players, but I don't know, I think I'm better than him. But we're all friends. The other one lives in White Plains. When we see him at tournaments we always hang out.

If you had to be a chess piece which chess piece would you be?

I really like knights because they can just jump all over the board, and sometimes knights are just annoying pieces because generally they're good at attacking. They could just jump towards the King, attack it and jump back out.

Do you have any words of wisdom for Bronx kids your age?

I didn't think I was going to be good at chess, so just try everything, and try the things you don't think you'd be good at. If those don't work out then try the things that you don't think you'll like.

Interview by Emily Piccone.

Ed. Note: *Bronx Stars of Tomorrow* is a periodic feature in the Norwood News highlighting young people who are excelling in different activities. To nominate someone, e-mail us at norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org.

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Beso Lounge Offers Rare Kiss of Norwood Nightlife

(continued from p. 1)

going to have my birthday party here next week,” she added, pumping her arms in the air.

Beso’s co-owners are also heavily involved in the community. For Christmas 2010, they partnered with Leroy Pharmacy on Toys for Tots, a community project that distributed gifts to more than 500 kids.

On Valentine’s Day 2011, an auction was held at Beso Lounge for single men

and women, but finding love was not the primary reason for the nearly 100 attendees at the event. It was actually a fundraiser for Autism Awareness.

As the newly elected president of the East 204th Street and Bainbridge Avenue Merchants Association, Garcia said, “Our goal is to make the shopping experience along East 204th Street the best it can be. There are new businesses in the area that aren’t aware of the support system that is the merchants association.”

“We want to get involved in the community as much as we can by attending community meetings, and keeping our doors open,” Pacheco added. “It’s about doing the right thing; that’s an important value for me.”

“It’s a great place with great managers. They’re like family,” said N. Medina, who works at Leroy Pharmacy nearby. “I’ve gone there a few times since it’s opened. It has a distinct and respectable atmosphere. I wish I could go more often,” he added.

Being the “new kid” on the block, Beso Lounge had a slow start.

“It wasn’t easy in the beginning. There was a lot of work that needed to be

done, but we had a good support system in the local community leaders like deputy director of [Mosholu Preservation Corporation] Michael Lambert and [Community Board 7] District Manager, Fernando Tirado,” said Pacheco.

“Now that we are part of the merchants association, we offer the same type of support to other businesses in the area — it’s transactional,” added Garcia.

“It’s always a good thing to welcome another merchant into the area,” said Ben Alvarado, owner of Tropical Pets. “Beso brings a different vibe and new people to the neighborhood, and allows for a more diverse business environment.”



Photo by Adi Talwar

GINO PACHECO (left) and Eli Garcia opened Beso Lounge in late December 2010 and are looking to help other local businesses through a reinvigorated merchants association.

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DAILY COST PER STUDENT

Parishioner **\$16.38** per day + optional **\$8.00** per day After School
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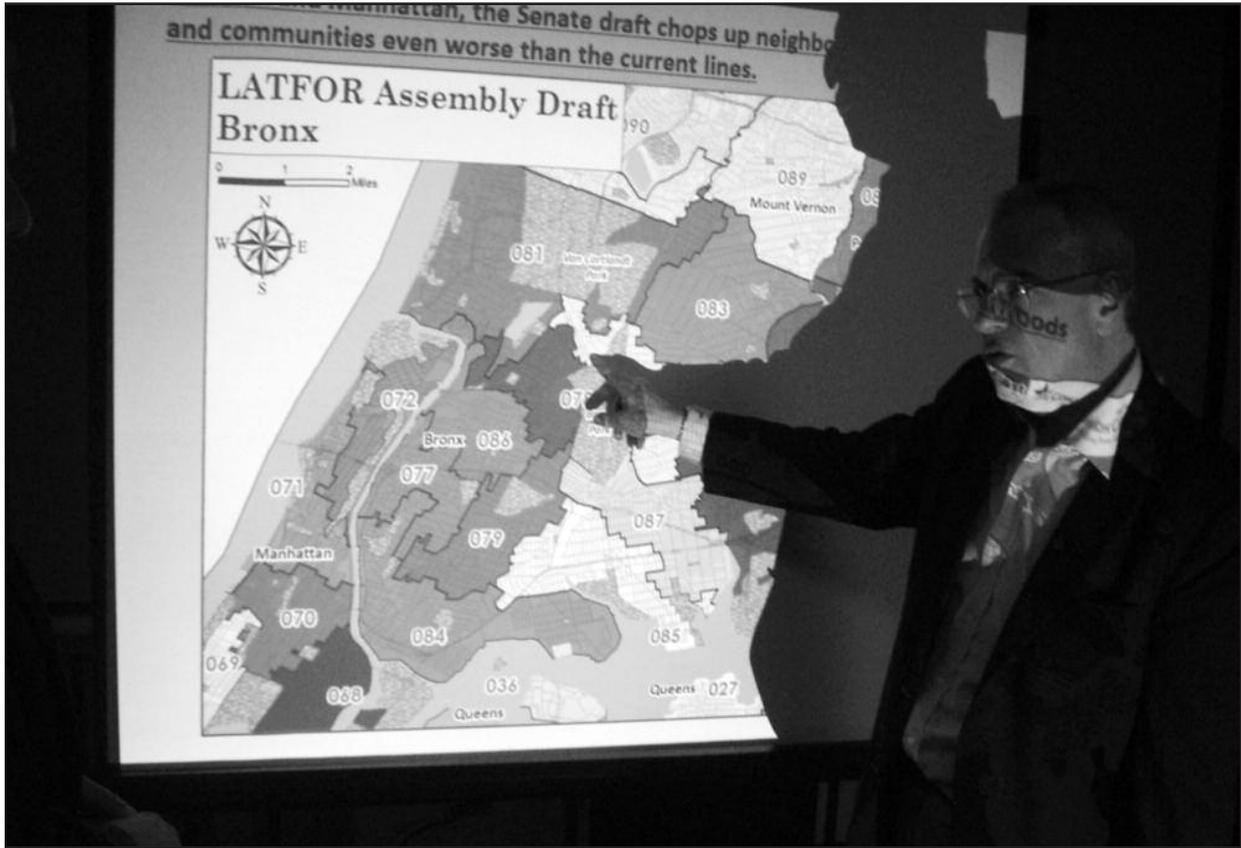
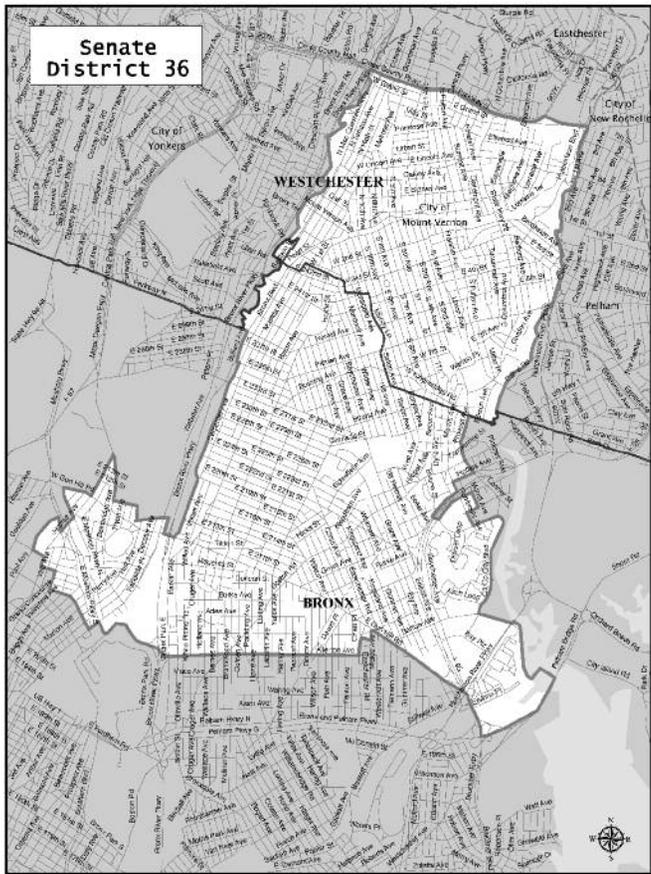
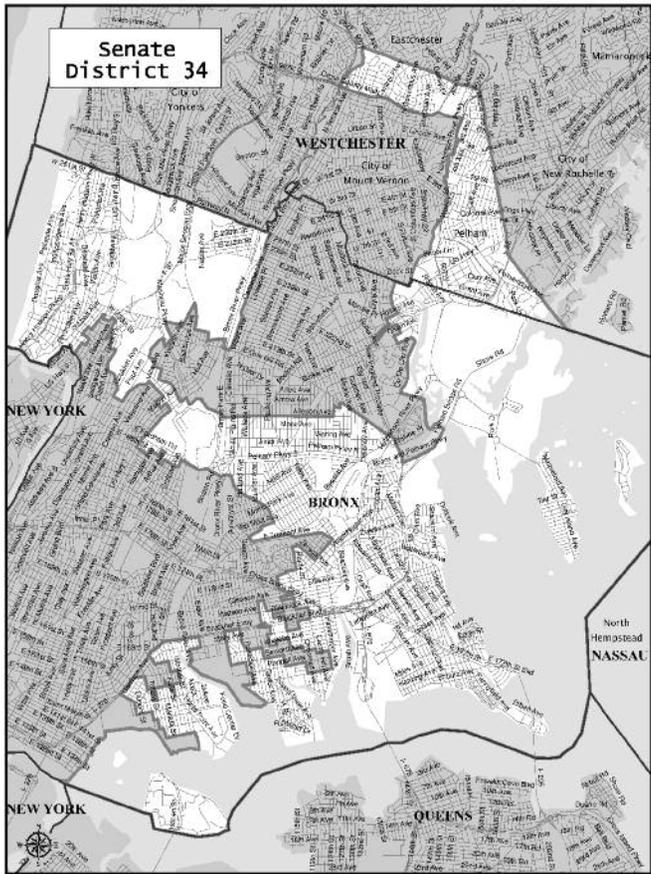


Photo by Alex Kratz

BRONX ASSEMBLYMAN Jeff Dinowitz points to a map of his new district lines at a town hall meeting last week.

Lawmakers' Redistricting Deal

(continued from p. 1)

districts were created.”

The final maps were approved in a late night legislative session last Wednesday night and Thursday morning that ended in Senate Democrats walking out in protest. Senate Republicans on the LATFOR panel, charged with coming up with the new maps, had added an additional 63rd Senate seat, a move that Democrats say was a ploy to maintain the GOP's slim majority in the state, and which they're challenging in court. The Justice Department is currently reviewing the final districts, and has 60 days after submission to accept or reject them.

Locally, changes are in store for State Senate districts encompassing the *Norwood News*' coverage area. Ruth Hassel-Thompson's 36th District will now include portions of Norwood and Bedford Park, previously represented by Rivera. In the first draft of maps proposed by lawmakers last month, those areas were drawn in State Sen. Jeff Klein's district. Many Bronx community groups had criticized the first maps as an attempt to pack the area's mostly-white, more affluent neighborhoods into Klein's coverage area.

“[The fact] that they purposely tweaked Ruth Hassel-Thompson's district demonstrates the fact that they saw how racially gerrymandered it was,” said Lucia Gomez, executive director of La Fuente, which has been advocating for greater minority representation in the redistricting process, and one of many groups that pushed for the formation of a new, majority Hispanic district in the Bronx.

Klein's new 34th District will absorb all of wealthy Riverdale, which had previously been split between his district, Rivera's and that of Bronx State Sen. Adriano Espaillat. Klein and the three fellow members of his

TO THE LEFT are the new maps for the state senate districts that encompass the *Norwood News* coverage area in the northwest Bronx. The districts were approved last week by the state legislature, but still face legal challenges. As they stand now, Ruth Hassel-Thompson (36th District) will be taking over Norwood and most of Bedford Park, while Jeff Klein's district (34th) will snake between Hassel-Thompson and Gustavo Rivera (33rd) in Bedford Park on its way to Riverdale, where it will take over areas once controlled within Rivera's district. Rivera will still represent Fordham and University Heights and much of Kingsbridge and Kingsbridge Heights.

Maps courtesy NYS Legislature

Independent Democratic Caucus were the only Democrats to vote in favor of the redistricting package.

In a phone interview, Klein said that while the redistricting process was “far from perfect” he had opted to vote in favor of it because of the State Amendment attached to the plan that would create a 10-member independent redistricting commission to take over the process in the next re-drawing after the 2020 Census.

“It would have been much better to have had the independent redistricting commission take place this year, but that didn't happen,” Klein said, adding that he didn't agree with the decision of Senate Democrats to walk out during the session.

“I think it was wrong,” he said. “A good part of our job is coming to Albany and voting on legislation. Leaving session and voting absent is not part of your work.”

Others, however, criticized the amendment as not going far enough to take the redistricting process out of the hands and away from the influence of lawmakers.

“Since individuals would be appointed by the legislature on this commission, it would not be an independent commission,” Rivera said in an e-mail, adding that, if the commission is gridlocked, then lawmakers will again take over the process.

Cuomo had vowed to veto any maps produced by lawmakers that looked gerrymandered, but consented to approve the lawmakers' final lines in exchange for the passage of the amendment.

“I think he did a bad trade,” Gomez said.

Locally, lines for the Assembly districts encompassing the *Norwood News*' coverage area will remain relatively unchanged, namely because Assembly Democrats, who hold the majority in that chamber, get the final say in how the lines are drawn there. The northwest Bronx will remain under the representation of the 78th, 80th and 81st assembly districts, seats currently held by Jose Rivera, Naomi Rivera and Jeffrey Dinowitz, respectively. Dinowitz's district will gain sections of Kingsbridge Heights.

Meanwhile, maps for new state congressional districts drafted by a judge were imposed by a federal court this week, merging Kingsbridge and Norwood in the Bronx with a district in northern Manhattan currently represented by Charles Rangel, and which Espaillat has expressed interest in running for. The congressional lines were taken up by the courts after New York legislators failed to come to an agreement on how to draw them in a way that would reduce the number of seats from 29 to 27, as required by population changes in the Census.

Be Healthy!

14%

Drop in the reported cases of salmonella infections since 2010, according to the New York City Department of Health, the lowest rate in 20 years. Health officials attribute the decrease to the city's implementation of the letter-grading system at restaurants.

Vital Stats

Proposed Medicaid Savings Could Mean Hardships

By JEANMARIE EVELLY

Can a couple live in New York City on \$1,159 a month?

That's the maximum combined income allowed for spouses to qualify for home health-care coverage under the state's Medicaid law. For years, those caring for an ill, disabled or elderly spouse at home through the public insurance program have been able to protect their savings through a provision known as spousal refusal — which allows someone to separate their income and assets from their partner who needs care in order to meet the strict income limits required by Medicaid.

As part of a cost-savings measure proposed in his budget for the upcoming fiscal year, Gov. Cuomo wants to eliminate spousal refusal, a move that advocates and elder care lawyers say would deal a financial and emotional blow to many couples and families.

"It will be devastating for people. It would force people to get divorced in order to pay for health care," said Bernard A. Krooks, an elder care expert with the law firm Littman Krooks LLP, and former president of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys. "It's bad public policy."

Under current law, couples who live in the same household can make no more than \$1,159 a month between them and their collective assets must be less than \$20,850, to qualify for Medicaid coverage for nursing care at home.

Without the option of spousal refusal, couples who are over this threshold have few appealing options if they can't afford care without Medicaid benefits.

They can divorce or move into separate households, so that the income of the spouse in need of care is considered individually by the state. They could "spend down" their savings, forced to put any money that exceeds the maximum income towards the cost of care until Medicaid kicks back in. Some would be forced to turn to a nursing home or long-term care facility, since income rules for that kind of care are less strict under Medicaid than those for homecare coverage.

"When the spouses' resources are looked at by Medicaid, it puts the whole family in danger of poverty, of possible eviction, if they have to spend down their bank account," said Sharon Shapiro-Lacks, executive director of Yad HaChazakah-JDEC, which advocates for people with disabilities.

Cuomo and others say eliminating spousal refusal is one tactic to combat Medicaid fraud, though elder law experts argue that almost everyone who applies for it is investigated by the state, and if they are found to have excessive assets, taken to court to pay for a reasonable share of the costs of care.

"There's not much scamming of the system," said attorney David Goldfarb, a member of the Executive Committee of the Elder Law Section of the New York State Bar Association.

Spousal refusal has been on the budget chopping block before, though it has consistently been restored in the final budget deal by the State Legislature. The budget deadline is April 1.

"It's scary this year — there's an



Photo courtesy Borough President's Office

ON THURSDAY, March 15, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and the Borough President's Disability Advisory Council held the borough's first ever "Medicaid Rights Forum and Disability Resource Fair."

understandable clamoring for fiscal responsibility," Shapiro-Lacks said.

Proponents of cutting the measure estimate it would save the state millions of dollars a year, but advocates say that projection doesn't consider the costs that the state would spend on Medicaid coverage of nursing home care for people who had previously been at home, or in other

public benefits that families might need if they were forced to relinquish their savings.

"By protecting spousal refusal, they are being fiscally responsible because they're protecting families from becoming impoverished, possibly separating and then drawing more from the public assistance system," Shapiro-Lacks said.

CONTEST WINNERS DINE AT CARIBE



AS PART OF a Valentine's Day promotion, the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District held a raffle in participating stores. Any customer who spent more than \$25 would be eligible to win a free meal at their choice of restaurant in the BID. The winning family included three generations of Bronxites: (left to right) Sherina Ali, Jolina Vanessa Rodriguez and Rodriguez's daughter. They won a dinner at Caribe Restaurant, located at 2 E. Gun Hill Rd.

GRAND CONCOURSE APARTMENTS

The **Postgraduate Center for Mental Health** has applications available to persons with limited income for studio apartments located at **2950 Grand Concourse in the Bronx**. Income qualifications will be based on Federal Low Income Guidelines.

Household Size	Income Limit	Maximum Rent
1 person	50% AMI = \$29,050	\$726.00
1 person	60% AMI = \$34,860	\$871.00

Interested persons may obtain an application by writing to:

Property Management Department
c/o PCMH
158 East 35th Street
New York, NY 10016

Applications may also be picked up at:

1401 Teller Avenue
Bronx, NY 10456
Monday to Friday, 10 AM to 4 PM.

Completed applications must be sent by **REGULAR** mail (NOT registered or certified mail) to the address indicated with the applications must be received by **Friday, May 11th, 2012**. Applications received after the deadline will not be processed.

Call **212-889-5500 x204** with questions.



Neighborhood Notes

Mosholu Parkway Cleanup

Community Board 7 invites the public to its “Neighborhood Cleanup” event, Saturday, March 24 from noon to 4 p.m. along Mosholu Parkway. Volunteers will meet at the intersection of East Mosholu Parkway South and Webster Avenue at 11:30 a.m. For more information, call Fernando Tirado at (718) 933-5650.

Bronx Fathers Forum

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. invites the public to an interactive panel discussion, “Bronx Fathers Taking Action,” about why a father’s involvement is important for their children’s growth and education, Thursday, March 29, from 6 to 9 p.m., at the Bronx County Courthouse Rotunda, 851 Grand Concourse (at East 161st Street). Food and refreshments will be provided. For more information, call Sara Monserrat at (718) 590-3567 or to RSVP, e-mail Wilfredo Pagan at wpagan@bronx.nyc.gov.

Free Tax Prep Help

• LIFT-The Bronx, a non-profit organization serving the Bronx for the past 12 years, offers numerous services for those in need, including job searches, housing, childcare and healthcare services, and legal services. The new office at 2381 Belmont Ave., will host several tax prep events to assist low-income individuals and families. For more information or to sign up, call (718) 733-3897 or email Bronx@liftcommunities.org.

• The University Neighborhood Hous-

ing Program, is sponsoring free Federal and State Income Tax Assistance to low-income residents of the Bronx provided by IRS certified tax preparers at Refuge House, 2715 Bainbridge Ave. (near East 196th Street), by appointment only. Services are provided on Wednesdays from 3 to 8 p.m. on March 28, April 4, and 11; and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 24, 31, and April 14. For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 933-2539.

Job Fair

The Manhattan Parking Group presents a job fair, Thursday, March 22 from noon to 3 p.m. in the Community Board 7 office, 229-A E. 204th St. for positions at the New York Botanical Garden Parking Garage. Bring a photo ID, proof of address, and a resume. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

Decatur Apt. Bldg. Accepting Applications

Edison Arms Apartments located at 2828 Decatur Ave. is updating its waiting list, including units that are handicap accessible to tenants over the age of 62. All qualifications will be based on Section 8 Federal guidelines. Application deadline is April 10. For more information, call (718) 584-5101 or visit the management office at 2855 Southern Blvd.

Green Collar Job Training

The Bronx Environmental Steward-

ship Training Academy is taking applications for its job training programs. Applicants must be 18 to 40 years of age, have a high school diploma or GED, be physically able to work, and be able to take part in the training full time. Applications can be found online at www.ssbx.org. For more information, call (646) 400-5438 or e-mail bestacademy@ssbx.org.

Learn Business Marketing

Project Enterprise and the Small Business Development Center are holding a free event at CUNY, 2501 Grand Concourse, 3rd floor, on March 28, from 6 to 8 p.m. Receive professional help in marketing your business and listen to a guest speaker. Seating is limited. Please register at (718) 960-8806 or e-mail sbdc.bronx@lehman.cuny.edu.

Home Health Care Program

The New York State Department of Health has new openings for the Jewish Home Lifecare Bronx Home Care Program. This program is made available to clients who are in need of nursing services and are covered by Medicaid, and provides services in nursing, home health aide, social work, and nutrition. For more information, call (800) 544-0304 or e-mail Connections@jewishhome.org.

NYBG Parking Garage Open House

The Manhattan Parking Group pre-

sents a free Community Open House at The New York Botanical Garden’s new parking garage located at 401 Bedford Pk. Blvd. from March 30 at 1 p.m. through April 1 at 3 p.m. featuring an information session and self-guided tours. Staff will be on hand to answer questions. Free key chain giveaways while supplies last and short-term complimentary parking will be available for participants. Enter garage through Bedford Park Boulevard or Webster Avenue entrances. For more information, call (212) 490-3460, ext 15 or e-mail betty@mpsparking.com.

Free Parenting Classes

The Mercy Center, at 377 E. 145th St., is offering free parenting classes to parents age 21 and under. Classes are held Thursdays from 5 to 6:30 p.m. through April 26. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (718) 993-2789.

SUNY Workshops

The State University of New York’s North Bronx Career Counseling and Outreach Center presents a workshop for academic and workforce development at 2901 White Plains Rd., Wednesday, March 28 at 3 p.m. about the pros and cons of obtaining a G.E.D. For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 547-1001.

For more Neighborhood Notes online, go to www.norwoodnews.org.



Norwood Triangle Adult Education Classes

Beginning April 14th @ MMCC

NEW! Indoor Rock Climbing
Mondays, 7:00pm-8:00pm
Fee: \$85/8 Sessions

Belly Dancing
Mondays, 7:00pm-8:00pm
Fee: \$85/8 Sessions

Back to Work Seminars
Mondays, 7:00pm-8:00pm
Fee: \$30/5 Sessions

Computer Training
Thursdays, 6:30pm-7:30pm
Saturdays, 11:00am-12:00pm
Fee: \$90/8 Sessions

Kickboxing
Saturdays, 3:30pm-4:30pm
Fee: \$85/8 Sessions

Karate
Mondays & Wednesdays, 7:30pm-9:00pm
Saturdays, 11:00am-12:30pm
Fee: \$110/8 Sessions

Learn How to Swim @ Fordham University
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Fee: \$120/8 Sessions

Zumba
Saturdays, 1:00pm-2:00pm
Fee: \$85/8 Sessions

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Fee: \$100

Security Guard Training
April 21 & 28, 9:00am-5:00pm
Fee: \$150

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\$13.25/month (Youth, 15-18 yrs.)
\$10/month (Montefiore Hospital Employees)

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Classifieds

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tel: 917-443-0501

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Bronx, NY 10467
(347) 329-0023

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Personal Assistant Needed: We are looking for an office assistant. Duties include greeting clients, answering phones, and routing mail, data entry and retrieve, scheduling and calendar maintenance. Ideal candidates will have proven customer service skills in an administrative setting and experience with Microsoft Office applications. If interested, email resumes to smith.williams885@gmail.com

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RELIGIOUS SERVICES

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.

The Bedford Park Congregational Church, located at 201st Street and Bainbridge Avenue, invites you to join us for our Easter Services: April 1, 2012 Palm Sunday, 11 a.m.; April 5, 2012 Maundy Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; April 6, 2012 Good Friday, 12 noon; April 8, 2012 Easter Worship, 11 a.m. For further information, please call Reverend Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj (718) 367-8996. All are welcome.

MISCELLANEOUS

Worship Space Available: At the Bedford Park Congregational Church, corner 201st Street and Bainbridge Avenue. Please call Reverend Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj at (718) 367-8996.

Classifieds: \$9 for the first 20 words and 25 cents for each additional word. **Professional Directory:** \$144 for six months; \$260 for one year. **Business Cards:** \$360 for six months (12 issues); \$625 for one year (25 issues). **Deadlines:** Deadlines for classified ads are one week prior to publication. To place an ad, call the *Norwood News* at (718) 324-4998 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

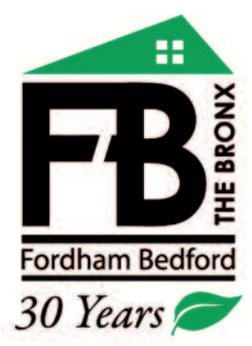
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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

Onstage

■ The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Sonoro Ponceña y Ocho y Más**, featuring old school salsa, March 24 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$45 to \$60); and **Lehmandance Spring Concert**, featuring original choreography, March 28 to 31 (in the Studio Theatre; tickets are \$5 to \$10). For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

■ Lehman College, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents free events: **FDNY Pipe and Drum Band**, March 22 at 12:30

p.m. in Carman Hall B-04 (call (718) 960-6722); **Lehman College Community Band**, featuring classical music, March 25 at 2 p.m. in the Lovinger Theatre (call (718) 960-8247); **Billy Collins and Friends**, featuring poetry, March 29 at 12:30 p.m. in the Lovinger Theatre (call (718) 960-6722); and **Lehman Jazz Combos**, April 1 at 2 p.m. in the Music Building Hearth Room (call (718) 960-8833).

■ The Pregones Theatre, 575 Walton Ave., presents **Baile Cangrejero**, featuring Afro-Latino poetry to rhythms of bomba, plena, and bolero, March 30 and 31 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$12 and up; discount for seniors and students). **Meet the Artist Open Rehearsal**, free, March 29 at 1:30

p.m. For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 585-1202.

■ The Bronx Arts Ensemble presents **Hansel and Gretel**, featuring a slapstick version of the children's tale, including singing, dancing, and juggling, March 25 at 1 and 3 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3243 Ampere Ave. Tickets are \$6. For more information, call (718) 601-7399.

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. off Fordham Road, presents **Straight From the Heart**, featuring popular music with jazz vocalist, March 31 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.



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Events

■ Wave Hill, 675 W. 252nd St., presents a **Winter Workspace Workshop**: Open Studios, for artists to develop new work and offer opportunities for public interaction, free with grounds admission, March 25, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Grounds admission on Saturday is free until noon. For more information, call (718) 549-3200 ext. 305.

■ The public is invited to ride the April 4 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 Lehman College Art Gallery, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Under the Influence: The Comics and Contemporary Art**, featuring works of both established and emerging artists; and **Michael Ferris, Jr.: The Bronx Series and Other Work**, (figurative sculpture), free, Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., through May 12. A **Talk** by David Saunders, author of "H. J. Ward," will be held March 27 at 12:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 960-8731.

■ The Bronx Museum of the Arts, at 1040 Grand Concourse (165th Street), South Wing Galleries presents **Juan Downey: The Invisible Architect**, on view through May 20. Admission is free on Fridays. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

■ Bronx Artspace, 305 E. 140th St., 1B, presents **Vital Signs**, through March 30. For more information, call (718) 401-8144.

Library Events

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. off Fordham Road, presents programs for kids including **Preschool Story Time at 11 a.m.**, March 22 and 29;

✓ **EDITOR'S PICK**

Silence Is Golden

The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., invites the public to hearken back to yesteryear with a free screening of the silent film, **The Phantom of the Opera**, March 24 at 2 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

Tales for the Teeny Tiny at 11 a.m. (ages 3 to 12), March 24 and 31; **Rosie**, story of the Riveter from WWII, (ages 5 to 12), March 24 at 2 p.m.; **Global Partners, Jr. at 4 p.m.** (ages 5 to 12), students connect worldwide via the Internet, March 28 and April 4; and **Science Demonstrations at 4 p.m.** (ages 5 to 12; registration required), March 27: Watts Up, and April 3: Super Structures. For teens and young adults, there is **F-2-F: Say It Smart**, April 3 at 3:30 p.m. Adults can attend **Effective Resume Writing: Part 1**, March 22 at 2 p.m.; **Arts & Crafts Workshops at 2 p.m. in room 505:** March 23: Book Making, and March 30: Photo Calendars; **The Bronx: Then and Now**, lecture, March 24 at 2:30 p.m.; **Home Buyer Workshop**, March 27 at 10 a.m.; **Free Introductory Computer Class**, March 28 at 10 a.m.; **Book Discussion**, "The Good Earth," March 28 at 10:30 a.m.; **Avoiding Scams and Frauds**, April 3 at 10 a.m.; and **Drawing From Experience**, a graphic memoir workshop series, April 5 at 10 a.m. For immigrants, there is **Immigration Law**, to know your rights and obligations, March 24 at 5:30 p.m.; and **ESL Classes** (registration required), April 4 at 6 p.m. For more information,

call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

■ The Mosholu Library, at 285 E. 205th St., offers **Knitting Circle**, Thursdays at 3 p.m.; **Wii Program**, Tuesdays at 3 p.m.; and **Introduction to Computers**, April 4 at 10:30 a.m., each for seniors and adults. Children can attend **Toddler Story Time at 10:30 a.m.**, April 5; and **Marvels of Motion**, (ages 5 to 12), March 27 at 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

■ The Jerome Park Library, at 118 Eames Place, offers **Cooking at 4 p.m.** (for teens and young adults), March 22, 29 and April 5; **Computer Basics at noon** (for adults), March 22, 27, 29, April 3 and 5; **Robin Hood**, a play (ages 5 to 12), March 27 at 4 p.m.; and **Arts & Crafts** (ages 5 to 12), April 2 at 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

NOTE: *Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwood-news@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by March 26 for the next publication date of April 5.*



SONORO PONCEÑA y Ocho y Más plays March 24 at Lehman Center. (See Onstage.)



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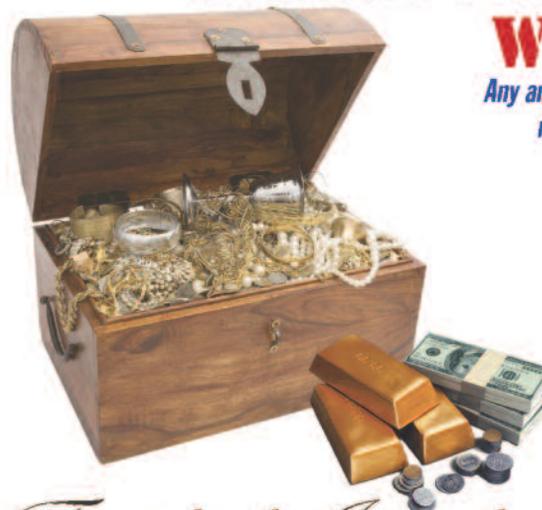
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