

NORWOOD NEWS

Youth Baseball:
How to Keep Your
Kids Injury-Free

page 8

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As Clock Ticks, Little Opposition to MS 80 Closure



Photo by Adi Talwar

ONLY A FEW dozen people from 650-student Middle School 80, including Parents Association President Cecilia Donovan, pictured forefront, showed up to a hearing about the closure of the school. MS 80's fate will be decided at a meeting in Brooklyn next week.

By ALEX KRATZ

If there is widespread opposition to the proposed closure and re-imagining of Junior High School 80, Norwood's oldest and largest middle school, it was not apparent at a Department of Education hearing on Monday night.

In what amounted to the school community's last and best chance to voice its opposition to the DOE's controversial new "turnaround" program, which would dramatically change the makeup of JHS 80, only a handful of people, including one parent, two students and one teacher, chose to give testimony.

Grace Siemar, a 1944 graduate of the Mosholu Parkway school, when it was known as PS 80 and served students from kindergarten to 8th grade, said she was disappointed with the lack of turnout.

"We should have seen fliers on every car and lightpost around the school," she said, adding that no local elected officials attended or gave testimony (representatives for State Senator Gustavo Rivera and Councilman Oliver Koppell, however, were in attendance). "Everybody should have come out."

The school's auditorium, where the hearing took place, was dominated by empty seats. Only about 50 people attended and many were DOE staffers, union representatives or local community board members.

Those who did speak blasted the DOE's decision to abruptly drop a previous plan to transform the struggling school, commonly known as MS 80, under another improvement model called "re-start," which was imposed on the school last summer.

"We're not pawns, we're people," said Ricardo Martinez, an MS 80 graduate who lives in Bedford Park.

Many students, teachers and parents say the school was heading in the right direction under the re-start model and behind the leadership of former Principal Lovey Mazique-Rivera, who was suddenly replaced by interim Principal Lauren Reiss last month.

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Bronx Unemployment Rate Hits Highest in Decades

By JEANMARIE EVELLY

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of stories exploring the issue of unemployment in the Bronx.

Hitting its highest peak in nearly two decades, the Bronx's unemployment rate reached a staggering 14.1 percent in February — the most recent month for which local data is available — with approximately 77,701 residents in the labor force here unable to find paying work.

Though the borough has been pegged in recent decades as a place of rebirth, having rebounded from the devastation and neglect of the 1970s and 1980s, the Bronx continues to carry the highest unemployment rate of all the counties in New York State, and by a significant margin. The jobless rate for New York City in February was 10.2 percent, and the state's overall rate was 9.2 percent.

"The Bronx has, historically, had a much higher unemployment rate than most of the other boroughs," said James Brown, an analyst with the New York State Department of Labor.

But the numbers don't show the whole picture, experts say. Unemployment rates, by government definition, only count residents who

are actively looking for work within the last 30 days. This means the 14.1 percent number does (continued on p. 4)

SPRING BREAK

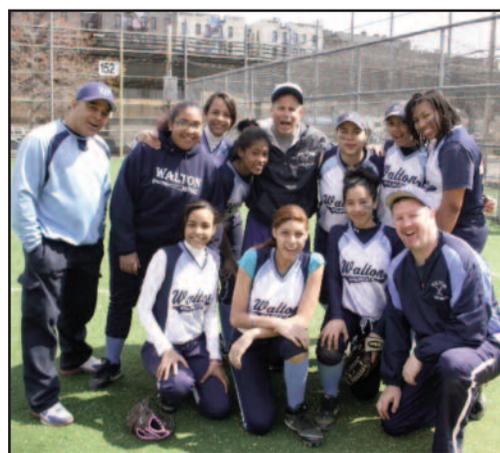


Photo by Destiny DeJesus

THE WALTON High School softball team spent spring break staying sharp on the field by taking on a team from Syracuse in an exhibition match. More on Walton's softball team in the next issue of the *Norwood News*.

Struggling to Save a Historic Church

By DESTINY DEJESUS

Due to a lack of funding, the Bedford Park Congregational Church has been struggling to keep its appearance intact. The leaky roof and cracked paint on the walls show the wear-and-tear befitting a 120-year-old historic building and help is still thousands of dollars away.

While the congregation works to raise rehabilitation funds, parishioners are keeping their struggles in perspective.

"We know that a structure is not a church," said Annette Porter, secretary of the church's Board of Trustees. "Church is the people, the love for Christ and the ministry."

The church was founded in 1889. Worshipers met in a parishioner's home at first, then moved to a hall on 203rd Street. Two years later, in 1891, Edgar K. Bourne, son of the church's first minister, designed the permanent church and by March 1892, the building was complete.

The church stands today on Bainbridge Avenue at East 201st Street and is a prime example of a small 19th century suburban church. Over the years, it has received several historically significant donations, including original stained glass windows and a bell from the 1800s. Inside the crumbling old church, worshipers can view a beautiful, his-

(continued on p. 6)

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In The Public Interest

By JEANMARIE EVELLY

Potential Candidates Eye Peter Rivera's Assembly Seat

Peter Rivera, who has represented the Bronx in the State Assembly for the last two decades, will be leaving his post this summer to join Gov. Andrew Cuomo's administration. He will take over as head of the State Labor Department.

That leaves his 76th Assembly District (to be renamed the 89th, due to legislative redistricting), up for grabs this fall. Two potential candidates have already expressed their interest in running for the seat, which covers the neighborhoods of Van Nest, West Farms, Parkchester and Castle Hill.

Danny Figueroa, Rivera's longtime chief-of-staff, is throwing his hat in the ring in an effort to fill his boss's shoes. He would be likely to face off against Luis Sepulveda, a Parkchester attorney and community organizer who challenged Rivera for his seat in 2010, but lost.

Figueroa, a father of three who grew up in the south Bronx but has lived in Parkchester for the last 25 years, said he hadn't considered a formal run for office until Rivera announced he would be vacating the seat. He has been the assemblyman's chief-of-staff for the last nine years, and says that while his name might not be as recognizable as Sepulveda's, he hopes his work in Albany and his ties to the community will win him favor with voters.

"I feel that I have the experience that is necessary to go to Albany and continue the work that the assemblyman has performed, and to also bring a new type of energy," he said. "We've done some really good things, and I think that I have the experience necessary to continue to move our state, our county and our district forward."

Sepulveda, who resides in West Farms, also points to his experience serving the community as the strength of his potential candidacy.

"I've been working in this district for a long time," he said. "I've been working on many projects to improve the lives of residents here."

Sepulveda, who also teaches law classes at Mercy College, has spent the last two years since his first run for office organizing a number community events and campaigns, often alongside State Sen. Ruben Diaz, Sr., a friend who endorsed Sepulveda his first time around. The two started a program that provides free legal services to low-income residents, and Sepulveda has organized rallies to address school overcrowding and a campaign to draw attention to air pollution and safety issues caused by the Cross Bronx Expressway.

"People know what we've been doing," he said. "So I hope this finally will get me to the promised land."

Those vying for state office have until July to collect signatures to get their names on the official primary ballot.

'Living Wage' Bill Nearing Council Vote

After months of negotiations, and nearly two years after the original bill was introduced, legislation that would

require some developers that receive taxpayer subsidies to pay workers a living wage will likely be voted on in the City Council within the next few weeks.

City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, who has been working on her own "compromise" version of the bill since January, announced last week that negotiations were complete. The news indicates that movement on the legislation is likely to come soon, as Quinn decides what bills come to floor for a vote, and when.

"This bill was based on a concept of fairness. Businesses that accept significant taxpayer dollars must pay a living wage," the speaker said in a statement. "Because this bill was modified to only cover direct recipients of financial assistance, we believe it will lift wages without hampering job growth and economic development in New York City."

Quinn had been tiptoeing around the living wage issue since it was introduced by two Bronx council members in June of 2010. A mayoral hopeful for 2013, she was 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.

Quinn's amended version 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, which 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.

Even with that concession, Partnership for New York City, which represents many of the city's business interests, dropped its support for the bill because Quinn rejected a clause that would have allowed the mayor to exempt projects from the wage requirement he or she determined was in the city's best interest to do so, according to the *New York Times*.

Mayor Bloomberg, who has opposed the legislation from the beginning, has said he

would veto the bill if it should pass in the Council. Quinn would need the vote of 34 council members to override such a veto.

Town Hall Meeting Addresses Transportation Frustrations

State Sen. Gustavo Rivera and commuter advocacy group Transportation Alternatives hosted a town hall meeting last Thursday to discuss transit issues in the Bronx.

"My constituents in the Bronx depend on mass transit to get to and from work each and every day. It is clear that Bronxites understand that if they are paying a higher fare, they should be receiving better service," Rivera said in a press release after the event.

Residents who turned out for the meeting said they were frustrated by the number of MTA fare hikes in recent years. The straphangers said they need more buses added to the busy Bx1, Bx2 and Bx10 lines during rush hour, and would like to see more Select Bus Service options in the borough, particularly along the Grand Concourse.

Rivera was critical of his fellow lawmakers during budget negotiations last month, saying the legislature was not investing enough funding in public transit. The MTA, strapped with massive debts, has raised fares three times since 2007, and will raise fares again next year unless the state secures more funding for the agency.

More on norwoodnews.org

- News Updates
- Crime Watch
- Be Healthy! Wednesday
- Bronx Sports Report Thursday
- Bronx Breakdown Friday

Public and Community Meetings

- **COMMUNITY BOARD 7's committee meetings will be held at the Community Board Office, 229-A E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. on the following dates, unless noted otherwise: Thursday, April 19 - Relations/Long Term Planning, Wednesday, April 25 - Education and Libraries; Thursday, April 26 - Land Use/Zoning. For more information, call (718) 933-5650 or visit www.bronxcb7.info.**
- **THE CROTON FACILITY MONITORING COMMITTEE will meet on Thursday, April 19, at 7 p.m. at the DEP Office, 3660 Jerome Ave.**
- **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION will meet Wednesday, May 2, at 8 p.m. at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy. apt. B1 (lobby floor). All are welcome.**
- **THE 52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL will meet Thursday, April 26 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Bedford Park Senior Center, 243 E. 204th St. For more information, call (718) 220-5811.**



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Through the Woods, An Artist Returns to the Bronx

By ALEX KRATZ

When high winds ripped through the borough's parks and wooded areas three years ago, most people saw devastation and thousands of downed tree limbs in the aftermath. Barbara Korman saw her next art project.

For the past three years, Korman, a native Bronxite who has lived in Bedford Park for the past 30 years, has gathered downed tree limbs, carted them back to her the studio in her apartment near Mosholu Parkway and meticulously shaped and painted them into three dimensional installation pieces.

When put together on display, "it creates a sense of motion," said Kathleen Reckling, the director of Arts Westchester, where Korman's limb work is on display. "The way it's formed, it seems like wind is blowing through them."

Those pieces are showing this spring in a series of shows in Westchester and, for the first time in two decades, Korman exhibited her work back in the Bronx where the art scene appears to be taking off for, well, the first time ever.

Korman, who is coy about her age (an article in the *New York Times* from 1992 said she was 53 at the time), is one of the borough's most accomplished artists. Her work has appeared in more than 100 exhibits at dozens of museums and galleries, including the Neuberger Museum of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Grounds for Sculpture, Samuel Dorsky



Photo courtesy Arts Westchester

BARBARA KORMAN with her installation piece, "Looking at Woods," now on display at Arts Westchester.

Museum of Art and Katonah Museum of Art, among others.

A Bronx girl to the core, accent and all, Korman grew up around 174th Street and Walton Avenue before her parents moved out to the northeast Bronx near Pelham

Parkway.

From the beginning, Korman says she "always had an interest and ability in the arts."

She took a bus and a train to attend Music and Arts High School in Manhattan. After graduation, Korman double majored in graphics and sculpture at New York State College of Ceramics.

After encountering some job discrimination — one employer wouldn't hire her because she wasn't married and therefore was considered a "security risk" — and turning down a job at the prestigious Rhode Island School of Art and Design because she couldn't bear the thought of losing her "New Yorker" identity, Korman took a job teaching art in the public school system.

She worked at Co-op City High School and later at Harry S Truman H.S. She never lost her passion for creating her own artwork. For a while, she rented a separate studio for her work, but eventually moved to Bedford Park, where she could afford to have a studio inside her apartment.

In 1991, Korman serendipitously took a buyout from the Board of Education, just in time to catch her "15 minutes of fame."

In May of 1991, Korman was asked to produce work for the New Year's display windows for Tiffany's and Company. Luckily, Korman now had the time to work on it around the clock.

The display was a huge success, landing her in the *Times* as a "style maker." She sold each of the pieces used in the

display and it led to several commissioned pieces.

"It gave me a certain kind of credibility that people needed," she says.

Since then, Korman has continued to produce beautiful work that has appeared in galleries throughout the region, but she drifted away from her home borough. But now that's changing.

In March, Korman displayed her shaped, painted and arranged limbs installation at the BronxArtsSpace, a gallery in the south Bronx run by Linda Cunningham, a SoHo transplant who moved to the borough 12 years ago.

Cunningham said Korman's artwork was "very well received, people were very intrigued by it. It's sensual, not sexual, but it can communicate itself. It's art."

Up until recently, Cunningham said, "There was no art scene in the Bronx." But that's also changing. Energized by the group No Longer Empty, which turned the Andrew Friedman home into an enormous collection of exhibits, Cunningham said arts groups are collaborating like never before.

Korman agrees. She's thrilled to be back in the middle of something energetic and blossoming, saying, "I'm as excited about being back in the Bronx as I was about Tiffany's."

Ed. Note: See Barbara Korman's work at Arts Westchester, 31 Mamaroneck Ave., White Plains, NY, until May 20. For more information, call (914) 428-4220 or visit artsw.org/sculpture.

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Homeless Nonprofit Faces Probe After *Post* Story

By JEANMARIE EVELLY

A local nonprofit that advocates for the rights of homeless residents is facing scrutiny after the *New York Post* ran a story about the group last month, alleging one of its board members gave a “crash course on squatting” — an accusation the organization says is false.

Picture the Homeless (PTH) is a city-wide nonprofit headquartered on Morris Avenue in the Bronx, just south of Fordham Road. Run largely by homeless or formerly homeless individuals, PTH works to organize the city’s homeless population, advocating on policy and social justice issues.

On March 25, the *New York Post* ran an article titled “City-funded activist group teaches homeless how to invade apartments,” saying PTH board member Andres Perez taught a group of people outside a Brooklyn housing complex “how to wrest ‘control’ of vacant apartments,” the article reads. It went on to describe Perez telling his audience how to break into vacant, city-owned properties so they could squat there.

A week later, the City Council’s law department requested that the Department of Housing, Preservation and Develop-



Photo by Sam J. Miller

PICTURE THE HOMELESS members at a rally at the Albany Capitol Building last year.

ment, which administers funding provided to PTH, put a hold on any city funds to the group and to investigate them for wrongdoing, citing the *Post* story.

But Ryan Gibbs, another PTH board member, said the article was completely false and “inflammatory.” Perez was talk-

ing at a protest PTH and Occupy Wall Street activists were holding outside of Brooklyn City Council Member Erik Martin Dilan’s office, Gibbs said, and was merely telling the crowd about his past experiences being homeless.

“He was only speaking from his per-

sonal experience,” Gibbs said. “The *Post* took it and ran with it.”

A spokesman for HPD said the agency is currently “reviewing” PTH’s funding contract, but would not comment further because the investigation is ongoing.

PTH receives city funding through the City Council’s Housing Preservation Initiatives (HPI) program. The group has received \$240,000 since 2008, and is slated for another \$50,000 this fiscal year. The money is used for affordable housing surveys, town hall meetings, counseling for community members who are at-risk of homelessness and providing MetroCards to low-income or homeless residents, according to the city contract.

“No money that we get here goes to homesteading,” Gibbs said.

PTH members protested outside the offices of the *Post* last Thursday. In a press release, the group accused the paper of “racist, reactionary” news coverage and for having a bias against the homeless. Over the last decade, the *Post* has published four editorials criticizing the group, calling them “smelly” and “vagrants with lawyers,” PTH says.

The *Post* ran another story on Sunday, reiterating the paper’s version of events detailed in the first article.

Bronx Unemployment Rate Hits Highest in Decades

(continued from p. 1)

not include large swaths of people who may have given up on the job hunt long ago, or who exited the workforce to go back to school, or raise families. It also fails to consider the population of workers who are off the books — a common practice in the Bronx, where many residents are foreign-born or undocumented.

“You always have to treat the number with a certain amount of skepticism,” said Ken Small, director of development at BronxWorks, a nonprofit that offers job training and other services. “The government has very interesting ways of defining who is employed and who is not employed.”

While the accuracy of the number might be contested, most experts agree that the Bronx has a jobs problem. A number of factors and circumstances, both social and economical, play a role in the borough’s work woes, they say.

The borough lacks the kind of industries that lend easily to employment, according to Small. The Bronx’s largest employers are in the healthcare, retail, and nonprofit sectors, which are often the hardest hit during a recession.

“We don’t have a Silicon Valley in the Bronx,” Small explained. “The jobs that are here are largely nonprofit jobs, and to some extent retail jobs. The nonprofit industry is dependent on Washington funding, and the retail sector here in the Bronx continues to struggle.”

The borough took a hard hit over the last few years, shedding several hundred manufacturing jobs when the Stella D’Oro cookie factory closed in 2009, and then Old London Foods, the makers of Melba toast, shut down their Bronx plant just a few months later. Plans to turn the vacant Kingsbridge Armory into a shopping mall, which supporters argued would have boost-

ed the area’s employment opportunities, were killed in 2009 in a fight over wages.

Since then, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., and the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp. have been courting various developers in attempts to lure them to the borough. This year, an

have a high school diploma but to have some certified-skills training, or to have at minimum a two-year college degree.”

Mark Naison, a history professor at Fordham University who directs the school’s urban studies program, said the unemployment rate is related to large

“The reality is, people here are really poor, and many of them can’t get legal jobs because of criminal record or legal status. It’s not a pretty picture.”

—Mark Naison, professor at Fordham University

electric truck manufacturing company and online grocer FreshDirect have announced moves to the Bronx, and a new mall — complete with a Macy’s department store — is planned to open in Bay Plaza in the next few years.

But some say the unemployment issue is more systemic, and can’t necessarily be fixed by a few new local businesses.

“It’s largely tied to labor force demographics,” Brown said. “The Bronx’s working age population has a much higher number of people, proportionately, who have not completed high school, and a fairly large number who indicated a difficulty speaking the English language. Unemployment is pretty closely coordinated with education.”

The Bronx’s graduation rate is lower than those of the other five boroughs. In 2010, 54.7 percent of Bronx high school students received their degrees, compared to 65.1 percent of the city overall.

“We have communities in the Bronx where large numbers of folks do not have sufficient formal education,” Small said. “It’s critical in this labor market to not only

pockets of Bronx communities where many residents are embroiled in the criminal justice system — either on probation or parole or have criminal records.

“The reality is, people here are really poor, and many of them can’t get legal jobs because of criminal record or legal status,” he continued. “It’s not a pretty picture.”

Small, however, is slightly more optimistic. While the borough’s unemployment numbers might remain the highest, the area is faring better overall than many other places in the state whose local economies have flat-lined in recent years, he said.

“If you look around the Bronx, and you look at some other upstate communities, like Rochester, Syracuse, Buffalo—those places have a post-apocalyptic look to them, a totally devastating look about them,” Small said.

“I don’t see that in the Bronx now, as much as I would say 35 years ago, when you would literally just see stretches of abandoned buildings. I would venture to say that there’s a hopefulness, and a sense of opportunity that wasn’t here previously.”



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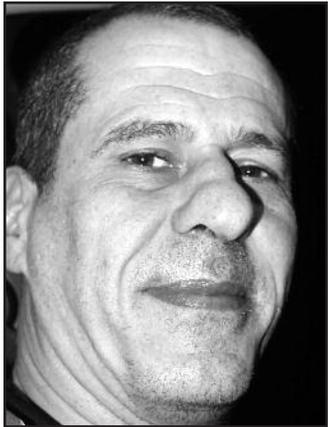
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Inquiring Photographer

By **DAVID GREENE**

This week, we asked readers why they think unemployment in the Bronx is the highest in the state, and what should be done about it.



I think with all the state and city budget cuts, the first thing they cut was education. They stopped the funding for all the training [programs], so now no one's qualified here to do the job.

Jon Wilson



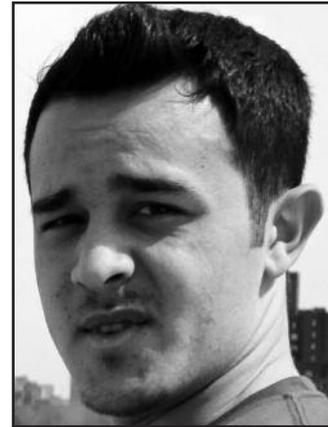
They closed all the factories. They only had two, New London and Stella D'Oro, and they closed them both. We need industry. I don't know where the blame should go, but they should never have let these factories close in the first place.

Dr. Robert Taglia



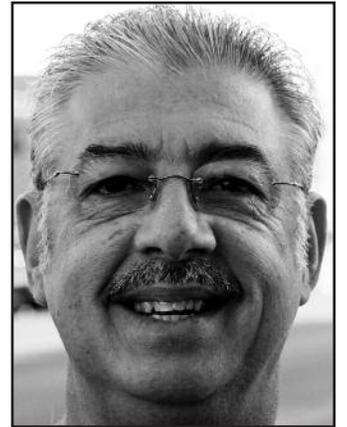
A lot of people are self-centered. They would rather drop out and get easy money than work hard and try to make a career, or get a job. So many people focus on technology and being lazy, than to actually go out and make an effort for themselves.

Christopher Duverge



I'm working now, but I was working at another place for 11 straight weeks, and they took me out because they didn't want me to join the union, because it was a union building. So the super took one of his friends [instead]. I had been with the same company for over a year. They actually said that the office wanted to try somebody else, but I found out it was one of the super's friend's.

Kristijan Cotaj



The reason why is because it's the poorest county in the country. If you don't have jobs and you don't have people paying taxes, how do you create jobs? We need jobs, a stimulus and a willing work force. That's what you need, but nobody wants to work.

Al Lindenberg

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Struggling to Save a Historic Church

(continued from p. 1)

toric Latin Bible from 1592, encased in glass. These prized possessions signify the preciousness of the church and, for parishioners, the importance of preserving it.

Porter said the church estimates it will need \$180,000 to complete repair work on the building. So far, they have raised \$60,000. That doesn't include a grant from the New York Landmarks Conservancy, which offered to put up \$25,000 if the church could match it. They did and are now waiting to receive the funding.

The church continues to reach out for additional help. "We wrote to more than 32 politicians," said Rev. Christopher Ponnuraj.

With little governmental help coming back, the congregation hosts brunches and bake sales and continues to explore other ways to raise money. Despite their lack of funds, the church continues to lend a hand to anyone who needs it.

It opens its space to many different groups and organizations, including Alcoholics Anonymous. It also finds time to hold many community events, like the annual fun fair, a pot luck luncheon and the Christmas pageant.

Over the years, the congregation has become more diverse. With about 50 regular worshipers, the church is very small and family-like. When a member's hus-

band died in a fatal car crash, the group got together and paid for the funeral. "Everyone is very generous," said Ponnuraj. "Though our needs are more, we never stop helping others."

The church works closely with Part of the Solution (POTS), a soup kitchen and multi-service agency on Webster Avenue. The church regularly donates food, toiletries and clothing for the homeless. In participation with the United Church of Christ, the congregation has also prepared "disaster bags" to aid victims of the Haitian earthquake two years ago.

The church is preparing for its 125th anniversary celebration in 2014 and officials are hoping to have everything fully renovated by then.

"[The church building] is more than utilitarian," says Porter. "It was really built with love, and we need to let people know that we are a community church, active in ministry to the community and we need help."

Ed. Note: Those wishing to make a donation to Bedford Park Congregational Church should contact Rev. Christopher Ponnuraj at (917) 743-1574 or e-mail ckponnuraj@gmail.com. The church, 2988 Bainbridge Ave. at East 201st Street, is planning a flea market and Church Open House on Saturday, May 19, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The open house, held in conjunction with the NY Historic Landmarks Conservancy, will be held from noon to 2 p.m.

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Concourse Tenants Score Victory for Workers

By **MARCOS SIERRA**

The unexplained firing of three long-time union workers just before the new year at a historically well-maintained building on the Grand Concourse in Bedford Park led to a furious battle between tenants and their landlord. But after months of heated exchanges and union protests, two workers were rehired and tenants continue to put pressure on their landlord.

The story of 3224 Grand Concourse, a massive complex of eight buildings, is a classic tale of how tenant organizing can bring about change from even the most stubborn of landlords.

“We’ve had impeccable building service seven days a week, for the past 50 years,” said Charles Fritsch, during a strategy meeting earlier this year after the firings. “How can they get rid of a group of men who have taken care of this complex and replace them with unqualified workers?”

He encouraged tenants to keep calling 311 to register grievances about the stockpiles of trash that are blocking basement fire exits, creating a serious fire hazard.

“I know it doesn’t seem like much, but at least we will have a paper trail with the city that documents our concerns, in case anything happens,” Fritsch said.

Orlando Torres, from the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition, a well-known advocacy group that has a history of joining with community groups in support of accountability for abusive landlords, facilitated the meeting where Fritsch implored his tenants to keep battling.

“We are committed to doing what is in the best interest to bring light to this situation,” said Torres. “If we have to march right up to the offices of 3224 Grand Concourse LLC, to demand a meeting, we’ll do it.”

Residents began to share stories of the deteriorating conditions in their apartments and a common thread began to unspool.

“I woke up at 5 o’clock in the morning and had a puddle in the middle of my bathroom,” said Denise Gonzalez, who lives in building E.

Kenneth Adams, a longtime resident of building A said, “I had some minor cracks in my ceiling which I have been trying to get repaired for some time, but with the constant work being done in the apartment above me, a lot of them have

gotten much worse.”

Resident Danny Jackson, a local firefighter at the North Bronx Firehouse on Briggs Avenue, lives in building H. “As a firefighter, I fully understand the dangers that stockpiled trash can pose, especially the level to which the trash has been allowed to accumulate,” he said.

At the height of the real estate boom, many private equity investors poured capital into rent-regulated housing in the Bronx, assuming that if apartments could be released from regulation (through vacancies and capital improvements), rents would increase dramati-

“We’ve had impeccable building service seven days a week, for the past 50 years. How can they get rid of a group of men who have taken care of this complex and replace them with unqualified workers?”

—Charles Fritsch, tenant

caly and swell investors’ incomes. Housing advocates say the high sale price for many buildings and the landlord’s debt obligation often leads to maintenance cutbacks or an aggressive effort to hike rents, which is exactly what the residents at 3224 Grand Concourse say they have begun to experience.

“Firing union workers, cutting back on building services and doing unlicensed, uninsured work, these are tactics right out of the playbook” of other “sinister” management companies, said Fritsch, a resident of Building E since 1972.

It’s not only residential tenants that are experiencing the pain. Eight-year commercial tenant Dr. Jomarie Zuleznik, of Comprehensive Geriatric Care, is also concerned.

“One of my treating rooms began to get extremely hot,” Zuleznik said. “The super came to do an inspection and concluded there was a broken steampipe beneath the floor. It would have to be ripped up.”

When unusual sounds began emanating from beneath her treating room floor on Jan. 11, Zuleznik immediately called 311 to file a complaint. Inspectors from the Department of Buildings were dispatched the next day, but were unable to gain access to the area. According to

Zuleznik, the work lasted until Jan. 25, when according to the DOB website; another inspector was refused access to the structurally compromised area.

“This is disruptive to my business, my employees, and especially my patients. I have people who come here to get care, and when I can’t get assurance from the landlord about the integrity of the work they’ve done beneath my office, it’s extremely frustrating. It really has me thinking twice about renewing my lease,” Zuleznik said.

A search on the NYC Department of Buildings website shows four stop-work orders being issued. The first, a Class 1

violation issued Jan. 4, was for illegally gutting two apartments, and storing unsafe building material in another basement apartment.

It was again slapped with another stop-work order two days later, when an inspector observed exposed plumbing in a basement apartment, and construction debris piled from the floor to the ceiling. A subsequent violation was issued on Feb. 2, for continuing to do work in apart-

ments without proper permits; blatantly violating the stop-work orders. DOB inspector efforts have been systematically stymied with new building workers outright refusing access to areas of interest or “coincidentally” being adrift when inspectors appear. As of the writing of this article, 3224 Grand Concourse LLC, has been fined a total of \$10,000, for what Fritsch called “the gangster mentality” in its disregard of the stop-work orders, and continuing to work without DOB permits.

A recent meeting on April 2, between the National Labor Relations Board, the building workers union, 32BJ, and the management office yielded positive results for residents and workers. Two of the terminated workers were reinstated to their positions as of April 16. Hector (the super), the only worker to survive the initial cut, was reinstated to union status.

The third terminated worker was not given his job back; however, the union is still working with the management office to resolve that matter separately.

“Not only are we getting most of our original workers back, but they’ve stopped the illegal construction, and agreed to return to seven-day-a-week maintenance service,” said Fritsch. “This is a major victory for us, but I know it’s going to be a rough place to work for the next few months.”

Editor’s Note: Repeated calls for comment to the management office of 3224 Grand Concourse, LLC have not been returned.

(immediately hazardous) violation issued Jan. 4, was for illegally gutting two apartments, and storing unsafe building material in another basement apartment.

It was again slapped with another stop-work order two days later, when an inspector observed exposed plumbing in a basement apartment, and construction debris piled from the floor to the ceiling. A subsequent violation was issued on Feb. 2, for continuing to do work in apart-

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The number of Americans treated for baseball-related injuries in 2010, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Vital Stats

Tips From the Experts: Avoiding Baseball Injuries

It's spring and baseball season is under way. And while the sport means mostly fun for young players hitting the field, the threat of an injury still looms. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 282,000 people under the age of 18 were treated in hospitals, doctors' offices and emergency rooms for baseball-related injuries in 2010. Young players, parents, and coaches should be diligent in taking precautions to avoid injuries that could mean bench time, or even surgery later in life.

The most common baseball-related injuries are to the shoulder and elbow, and are often the result of overuse, according to Tony Wanich, an orthopedic surgeon at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx. Pitchers are especially prone to getting hurt. Most of these injuries can be avoided with proper training and by taking the right preventative steps, Wanich says. Here are some of his tips for avoiding injury and staying healthy throughout the season:

- Be sure to warm up. Establish a consistent warmup routine prior to any ath-



Photo by Adi Talwar

FOR YOUNG ball players, most injuries are to the elbow and shoulder and are caused by overuse, according to Montefiore's Dr. Tony Wanich.

letic activity, including stretching, where stretches are held for 30 seconds.

- Running is a key component in pre-activity warmup and preseason condi-

tioning, and is an important way for pitchers to develop endurance and stamina, and for position players to develop speed and agility.

- Strength training is essential for baseball players. Special attention needs to be paid to the rotator cuff, biceps, triceps, and forearm muscles.

- Take a break. The adage that practice makes perfect is not always the case in baseball. It is important to avoid pitching on consecutive days.

- Youth pitchers should focus on developing accuracy and control through good pitching mechanics. Focus on mastering the fastball before moving on to other types of pitches.

- Communication between players, parents and coaches is an easy way to identify problems before they become a more significant injury. Pain that does not improve with rest should be evaluated by a specialist.

- Follow the rules. Little League Baseball has established a set of pitch count guidelines, and guidelines regarding the amount of rest needed between games, which both coaches and parents should follow to avoid overuse injuries. Most injuries can be treated non-operatively if addressed early enough.

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As Clock Ticks, Little Opposition to MS 80 Closure

(continued from p. 1)

Dayana Nunez, a math teacher at the school who was hired by Mazique-Rivera eight years ago and was the only faculty member to testify on Monday night, described the upheaval at the school as “terrible.”

On Friday, March 16, Nunez left work and said goodbye to her principal, not once thinking it would be the last time she would speak to Mazique-Rivera as her boss. The following Monday morning, an emergency meeting was convened to introduce Reiss as the interim principal.

Nunez said the whole school was an “emotional wreck” after Mazique-Rivera’s dismissal, but that she and other teachers have maintained their professionalism and focused on their students and preparing them for state testing, which began this week.

“In terms of my work and students,” Nunez said, “it doesn’t make a difference.”

The DOE says it needed to place MS 80, which has struggled with state test scores over the past several years, into the turnaround program in order to secure \$1.8 million in extra funding over the next two years.

The state funding was awarded to MS 80 last summer when it entered into the re-start program, which paired the school with an outside support organization, Abyssinian Development Corporation, a nonprofit group that works with schools in Harlem.

But the funding was suspended when the city DOE could not come to an agreement with the United Federation of Teach-

ers (UFT), the nation’s largest teachers union, over formal evaluations. The DOE wants to eliminate the appeal process for teachers who receive low scores on their evaluations and the UFT insists there must be some way for teachers to appeal.

Cecilia Donovan, the head of MS 80’s Parents Association and the only parent to testify, directed her remarks at the DOE and criticized its entire approach at MS 80, including the decision to replace Mazique-Rivera.

“I went to college because I had Lovey Riveras in place to help,” she said.

Later in her testimony, which lasted beyond the allotted two minutes, she scolded the DOE. “You give support to a school, you don’t close it down,” she said, adding, “You’re totally messing it up.”

Several people who testified implored the DOE to keep the name and number of the school, which has been in place since 1924. Part of the turnaround program calls for a name change and the DOE says MS 80 will become “New School 575” if the turnaround proposal is approved by the Panel for Education Policy at a meeting in Brooklyn on April 26.

“I don’t like that 575,” Martinez said. “It sounds like a pair of jeans.”

Benedit Medina, a 12-year-old sixth-grader who was one of two students to testify, sat in a section with about a 10 other students who held up signs reading, “We Love MS 80.”

“I think it’s just wrong,” Benedit said. “We have a bad reputation and we’re working to get better. But how can we get better if we’re not MS 80?”



Photo by Adi Talwar

MOST OF THE few people who testified at the hearing on MS 80’s proposed closure implored the DOE to keep the name, MS 80.

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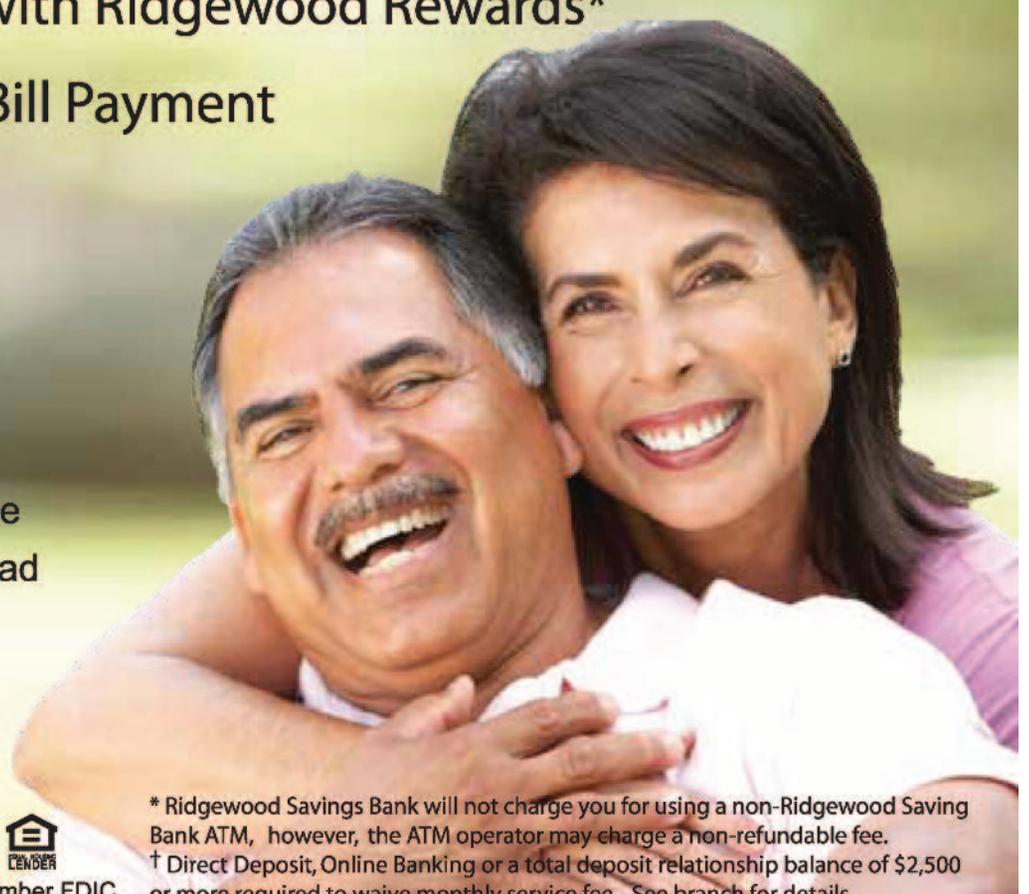


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Business Beat

Kingsbridge Merchants Building Toward Bigger Things

By **MARCOS SIERRA**

On a Thursday night earlier this month, the merchants on Kingsbridge Road had more than the upcoming Easter shopping weekend to be happy about, including a reinvigorated merchants association that is making things happen.

Nancy Torres, the president of the Kingsbridge Road Merchants Association, brought in special guests, including Bronx Chamber of Commerce President Lenny Caro, and Community Board 7 District Manager Fernando Tirado, as she welcomed other Kingsbridge Road business owners to the association's first meeting at the stylish Montecarlo Room on Jerome Avenue.

"The goal for MAs [merchant associations] is to become a BID [Business Improvement District]. It's a long, difficult process, but we are here to help you with that work," said Caro during his turn at the microphone.

Hoping to spark some intrigue, he added, "I have a meeting with the NYC Tourism Board tomorrow to discuss ideas on increasing tourism in the Bronx."

One of the ideas Caro, who was sporting an enormous Yankees World Series ring, shared was "to have tour buses come up from Manhattan, stop initially at Yankee Stadium, and culminate with a walking tour at the revitalized Poe Park," which is just two blocks east of the Kingsbridge corridor.

Caro touted the "good things" that are happening in the Bronx, such as the approval of the Donald Trump-backed golf course (now costing an estimated \$97 million) in Throggs Neck and the arrival of Smith Electric, the Kansas City, Mo.-based company which builds zero-emission delivery trucks for its customers. One of those customers will be Fresh Direct, which is building a new headquarters on the Harlem River and, as part of its deal with the city, is purchasing several Smith Electric vehicles.

All three deals came with significant help from public subsidies and tax breaks, but Caro focused on the benefits the new businesses will bring.

"We're going to create over 5,000 jobs in the next five years," Caro said.

But it wasn't all about new development projects and jobs at the meeting.

Also in attendance was Moises Reyes from Bronx Community Solutions, a non-profit launched in 2005 to work with youthful, non-violent offenders in Bronx communities. By providing judges with alternative solutions like community restitution (such as graffiti removal and trash cleanup), and links to social services, Bronx Community Solutions has helped reduce jail sentences by a third.

"It's more than just community services," said Reyes. "It's about education and betterment too."

Tirado also talked about crime and public safety issues, mentioning nearby "hot spots," including Davidson and Grand

avenues and St. James Park, where prostitution and drug-dealing are prevalent.

"We're working more closely with law enforcement to make the area feel more secure for the merchants and community at large," he said.

Tirado went on to talk about the coming development at the Kingsbridge Armory and how merchants can become more involved in the process.

The association is working to present its first public event — a food festival, coming this summer on June 23. Merchants Association Vice President Christian Ramos said he is excited about the

event, which will be a collaboration with approximately 60 food vendors at Aqueduct Avenue and 192nd Street.

The event planned for June and attendance at the association's meeting are positive developments, said Michael Lambert, deputy director for Mosholu Preservation Corporation, which is aiding the fledgling Kingsbridge Road Merchants Association.

"This was a good turnout considering how early formations of merchant associations go," Lambert said. "But in time, it can grow just like the other successful MAs in the Bronx."

Merchants Association Yielding Benefits for Members



BUSINESS OWNERS show off the mini-grant checks they received at a recent meeting of the 204th Street and Bainbridge Avenue Merchants Association.

By **DESTINY DEJESUS**

The 204th Street and Bainbridge Avenue Merchants Association meeting continues to build on momentum created during this past holiday season.

At a meeting held on Thursday, April 12 at Beso Lounge, business leaders discussed plans for funding, events, neighborhood resources and a future meeting schedule. Around seven small business owners attended as well as other organizations such as Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC) and Community Board 7 (CB7).

"The feedback was very positive, merchants talked about things they would like to see in the neighborhood," said Michael Lambert, executive director of the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District (BID) and deputy director of Mosholu Preservation Corporation.

More importantly for many business owners, mini-grant checks of up to \$2,000 were distributed to participating merchants. Hispanic-Serving Institutions Assisting Communities (HSIAC) grants, supported by Lehman College, were given to business owners as a reimbursement for making enhance-

ments to their business. The goal of the HSIAC grants are to encourage and promote local business development, improve the quality of life, and maintain support of local merchants.

Bill Curran, of McKeon and Son Funeral Home, is heavily involved in the merchants association as the treasurer. Curran received a \$2,000 grant for the improving security in his funeral home, which was recently renovated after a fire nearby caused significant water damage.

"Some merchants used the grant towards things like cameras, lighting and security purposes," he said.

The Department of Transportation is partnering with several local community groups and merchants to create a "Weekend Walks" experience for shoppers and local residents this summer. Local businesses will be able engage in sidewalk sales. Members of the association are hoping the event will promote businesses along the corridor and encourage more people to become involved with the merchants association.

Editor's Note: *Mosholu Preservation Corporation publishes the Norwood News.*

This Spring, Enjoy Fordham Road

The Fordham Road Business Improvement District is sponsoring a number of events in the coming months to make the busy thoroughfare even better.

Check out Muller Park, a newly created pedestrian plaza at 190th Street and Creston Avenue at Fordham Road. The new space is equipped with tables, chairs and greenery for residents to take a break while shopping or just enjoy some time outdoors.

The Fordham Road BID will be hosting a sidewalk sale this weekend, from Thursday, April 19 to Saturday, April 21.

Merchants will be selling their wares on the sidewalk outside their shops from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

The 5th Annual Fordham Go Green Walk event will be held on Saturday, May 5 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Join the Fordham Road BID, Bronx elected officials and community sponsors for a day of environmentally-friendly and fun health-related activities, including a multicultural fair in Poe Park. The walk will start at 2500 Creston Ave.

For more information, call the Fordham Road BID at (718) 562-2104.



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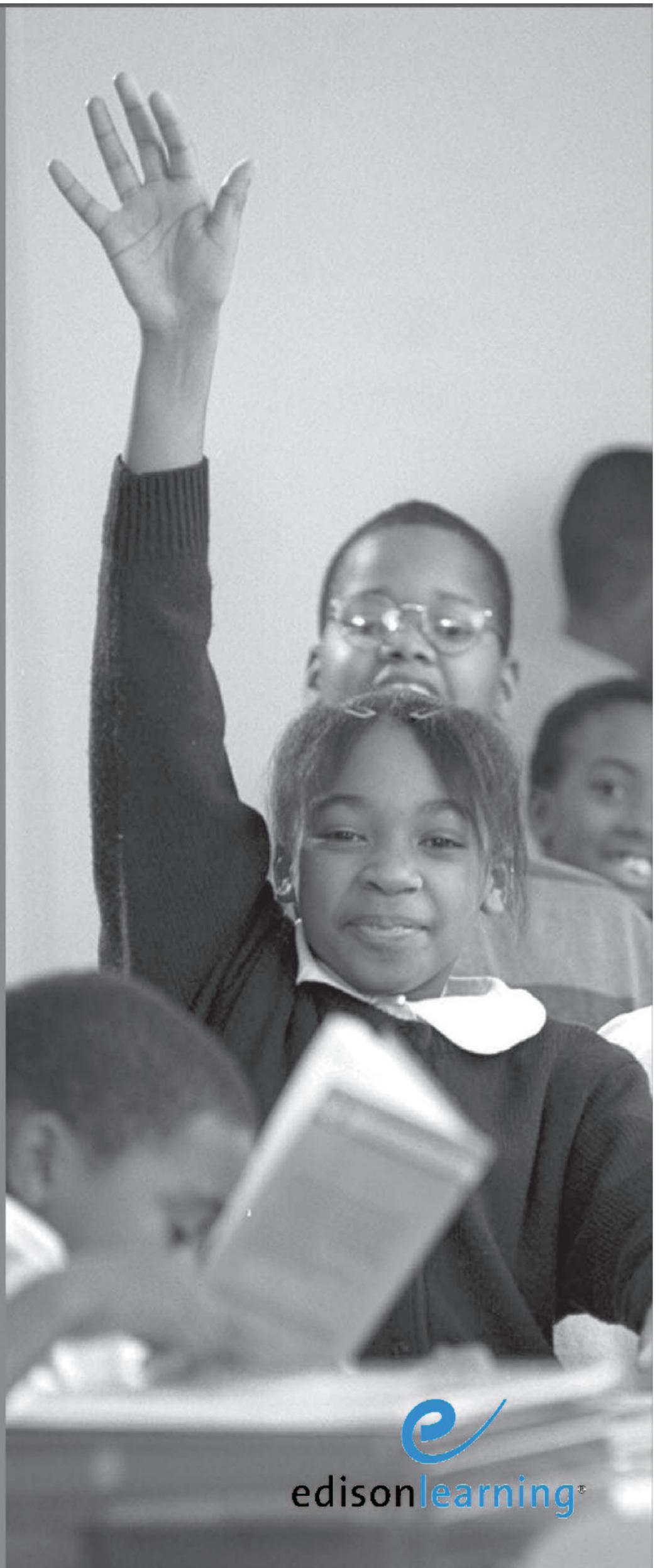
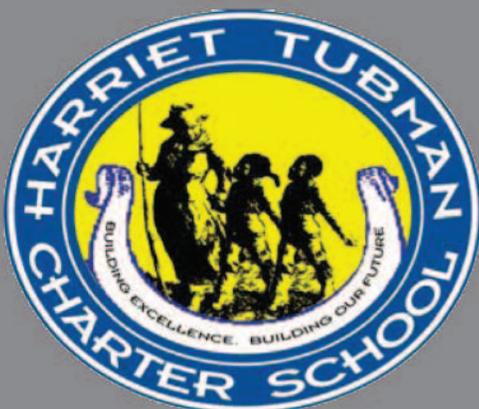
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Neighborhood Notes

Forum on Landlord Accountability

Manhattan College's Scala auditorium, on the 1st floor of the Leo Engineering Building, 3825 Corlear Ave. (between East 238th and 240th streets), will host a panel discussion on how to hold landlords accountable for home safety, Monday, April 23 from 4 to 6 p.m. Speakers include a tenant, a landlord and housing advocates. For more information, contact Jordan Moss at jordanmoss.bx@gmail.com or Margaret Groarke at margaret.groarke@manhattan.edu.

Free Health Fair

The Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, 3101 Kingsbridge Terrace, hosts a Working on Wellness Health Fair, Thursday, April 19 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Featured are a free blood pressure screening, HIV testing, dental screening, and more. For more information, call (718) 884-0700 ext. 178.

Free Legal Advice for Bronxites

The NYC Bar Association's Legal Referral Service, in collaboration with the NYS Courts Access to Justice Program is conducting a free legal information fair on Wednesday, May 2, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Bronx Supreme Court, 851 Grand Concourse, between East 158th and East 160th streets. Issues

include landlord/tenant disputes, immigration, small claims court, and more. For more information, call (212) 382-4716.

Affordable Housing Forum

State Sen. Gustavo Rivera invites community leaders, homeowners, and tenants to come and exchange ideas on important housing issues on April 21 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lehman College Music Hall Building's 1st floor East Dining Room, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. For more information, call Josiris Urena at (718) 933-2034.

Community Job Fair

Manhattan Parking Group will hold interviews for full- and part-time positions at the new Botanical Garden parking garage and other garages throughout the city. The interviews will be held Mondays, April 23 and 30 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Community Board 7 office, 229-A E. 204th St. Applications can be picked up any time during business hours. Dress properly and bring driver's license and Social Security card, and either birth certificate, U.S. passport, green card, or work permit. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

Fair Housing Conference

New Yorkers from around the state are invited to a free two-day conference to hear advocates and experts discuss housing issues on April 25 and 26, from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Bronx Zoo's Schiff Family

Great Hall, 2300 Southern Blvd., Gate C. To RSVP, send an e-mail to rsvp@dhr.nygov or call Barbara Klar or Iris Carrasquillo at (888) 392-3644. For accommodations, call John Herrion at (718) 741-8332.

Health Equality Forum

Assemblyman Nelson Castro and State Sen. Gustavo Rivera invite the public to hear lawyers and health advocates speak on health care system reform on April 28, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at P.S. 33, 2424 Jerome Ave. A free breakfast and health screenings will be available. For more information, call (212) 633-0800 ext. 1232.

Israel Independence Day Festival

The public is invited to the biggest NYC festival celebrating Yom Ha'atzmaut, Thursday, April 26 from 4 to 8 p.m. at The Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, 3700 Henry Hudson Pkwy. E. (Netherland Avenue). Enjoy food, music, rides, and much more. In case of rain, the festival will be held indoors. For more information, call (718) 590-6116.

Program for Middle School Students

"Bronxtopia" is a free program which allows middle school students to work with real artists and writers to create graffiti, photographs, poems and more, and will take place Tuesdays through June 5,

from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at the Grand Concourse Library, 155 E. 173rd St, concluding with a library exhibition of all works. For more information, e-mail education@bronxmu-seum.org or call (718) 681-6000 ext. 132.

Free Fitness for Seniors

City Parks Foundation invites New Yorkers, 60 and over to participate in City-Parks Senior Fitness, which offers free tennis lessons and yoga instruction. The hourly 8-week spring session begins the week of April 30 and will take place twice a week at several Bronx locations through June 22, including Pelham Bay, Soundview, and Van Cortlandt Park. Equipment and instruction is provided free of charge. Van Cortlandt Park, at Jerome Avenue and 233rd Street, will hold yoga on Mondays and Wednesdays, and walking on Tuesdays and Thursdays, both at 9 a.m. For more information, call (718) 760-6999.

Neighborhood Festival

The Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, located at 3101 Kingsbridge Terrace, will hold its 2nd annual neighborhood festival on Saturday, April 21 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Featured will be food, games, music performances, a street fair, flea market, and more. To perform, contact Jane Folloro at (718) 884-0700 ext. 181, and to participate in the flea market, contact Sadie Mahoney at ext. 186.

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

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Part-Time Position: A great opportunity has come. I hereby introduce a part-time payment collection representative position to you. It will take little time; it pays any amount, such as \$2800.00 in a month, plus benefits. Please send email to gynde112@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.

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.

Cash Paid: For antiques, old items, collectibles, artwork, jewelry, books, records, coins, stamps, sports cards, bric-a-brac. Moving sales, estates, contents of homes. (718) 882-0598 (home), or (347) 734-9261 (cell).

Penny the Clown: Magic*Balloon*Face Painting. Call (917) 679-9411.

Trip to Atlantic City: Caesar's Casino, Saturday April 21, 2012. Leaving 11 a.m. from East 163rd Street and Hunts Pt. Ave. For more information, contact Eddie (718)

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Out & About

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Onstage

■ Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and President Norman Seabrook of COBA present **The Bronx Push 4 Peace**, festival and Hot 97 FM live show, April 28, from 1 to 5 p.m. at Hostos Community College, 500 Grand Concourse, featuring a number of performers, free prizes and free refreshments. For more information, call (718) 933-5650/51.

■ Casita Maria, 928 Simpson St., will host **Pepatient's BX-Rated: la Mezclatina Rising**, dance theatre project about four Latinas, April 20 at 7 p.m. For more information, call

(718) 589-2230 ext. 6055.

■ The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents singer **Gloria Gaynor** and **The Hit Men**, singers of the '60s, '70s and '80s, April 21 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$25 to \$45); **Cinderella**, performed by the Moscow Festival Ballet, April 22 at 4 p.m. (tickets are \$25 to \$40; \$10/children 12 and under); and singing legend **Smokey Robinson**, April 28 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$55 to \$85). For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

■ Lehman College, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents free: **Lehman Woodwind Quintet**, April 22 at 2 p.m., and

Lehman Brass Quintet, April 26 at noon, both featuring classical music, in the Recital Hall, 3rd floor, Music Building; and **Lehman Jazz Band**, featuring music of the Beatles, Duke Ellington, Count Basie and others, April 29 at 2 p.m., in the Hearth Room, 3rd floor, Music Building. For more information, call (718) 960-8247.

■ The Bronx Arts Ensemble presents **The Emperor's New Clothes**, musical of the popular children's story, April 22 at 1 and 3 p.m., at The Whitehall, 3333 Henry Hudson Pkwy. (\$6); pianist **Stewart Goodyear**, April 29 at 3 p.m., at the home of Dr. Peter and Ute Gouras, 5225 Sycamore Ave. (\$25); and **Annual Gala**, a Bronx Arts Ensemble annual benefit, April 21 at 5 p.m. (call for location). For more information, call (718) 601-7399.

■ The Bronx Concert Singers will perform **A Night at the Opera**, concert at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1891 McGraw Ave. in Parkchester, May 6 at 4:30 p.m., featuring soloists and chamber ensemble. Tickets are \$20; \$35/for two; \$15/seniors/students with valid ID; \$5/high school students/under. For more information, call (917) 743-4641.

■ The Empire City Casino, 810 Yonkers Ave. in Yonkers, presents free **concerts** in its 1st floor Entertainment Lounge April 19 to 22, and 25 to 29. For more information and a detailed schedule of events and times, call (914) 457-2614 or contact mborofsky@yonkersraceway.com.

Events

■ Lehman College, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents free: **Earth Day**, April 25 at 5:30 p.m. in the Music Building's East Dining Room, to celebrate environmental awareness. Events include a film, "Taking Root: The Vision of Dr. Wangari Maathai," the late international female figure who fought for democracy, human rights and environmental conservation. For more information, call (718) 960-7963.

■ In collaboration with No Longer Empty's exhibition, This Side of Paradise (see "Exhibits"), the Lehman College Art Gallery, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., invites the public to its free **Tango Lesson**, April 19 at 12:30 p.m. Bring shoes that allow you to pivot: high heels for women, leather soled shoes for men are recommended. For more information, call (718) 960-8731 or visit www.lehman.edu/gallery.

■ JASA Van Cortlandt Senior Center, 3880 Sedgwick Ave., presents the following events: **Holocaust Commemoration**, featuring illustrated presentation, April 19 preceded by lunch at 12:15 p.m. (lunch: \$2/seniors; \$2.50/non-seniors); **Trip to South Ferry**, April 20; **Line Dancing**, April 27 at 1 p.m.; **Open Sunday**, featuring NY Troubadors performing Beatles, Simon and Garfunkel, and others, April 22 at 1:15 p.m. preceded by lunch at 12:15 p.m. (\$2/senior lunch; \$2.50/non seniors; \$2/senior program; \$3/non seniors; RSVP by April 19); **Zumba for Seniors**, April 25 at 10:30 a.m. followed by a Medicare benefits presentation at 11:15 a.m.; **Celebrate March/April Birthdays**, with keyboard player/singer, April 25 at 1:15 p.m., including Latin dancing, preceded by lunch at 12:15 p.m. (\$2/senior lunch; \$2/ed/rec contribution); and **Blood Pressure Screening**, April 27 at 10:30 a.m. at Hudson Pointe at Riverdale, followed by a presentation on cerebral vascular accidents: signs and symptoms at 11:15 a.m. For more information, call (718) 549-4700.

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■ The Bronx Council on the Arts presents free craft workshop, **Mother's Day Gifts**, to create a handmade gift, as part of its final third Saturday of the month series, at the Huntington Free Library, 9 Westchester Square, April 21, 12:30 to 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 829-7770 or (718) 931-9500 ext. 33.

■ The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (165th Street), presents **Light in the Darkness**, film screening to celebrate Immigrant Heritage Week 2012, followed by Q&A with the director, April 21 at 7 p.m. in the North Wing, 2nd floor. For more information, call (718) (718) 681-6000.

■ The New York Botanical Garden presents its **Antique Garden Furniture Show and Sale**, April 27 to 29 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., featuring fountains, statues, benches, and more, as well as informative tours and talks. A Benefit Preview Party and Collectors' Plant Sale will be held April 26 from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information, call (718) 817-8658.

■ Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **tours**, Tuesdays at 11 a.m. from the Perkins Visitor Center (free all day) and Saturdays at 2 p.m. from the Glyndor Gallery (free grounds admission until noon), all through Aug. 18. Additional garden walks include April 21 at noon (free until noon), April 22 and 29 at 2 p.m. (free with grounds admission); and May 10, for a "Walk on the Wild Side" at 2 p.m., all from the Perkins Visitor Center. For more information, call (718) 549-3200.

■ The public is invited to ride the May 2 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 Bronx Documentary Center, 614 Courtlandt Ave., presents **Bronx Gardens**, by photographer Nina Berman, April 28 to July 1, Wednesdays to Sundays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, call (347) 332-6962.

■ Sister Annunicata Bethell Senior Center, 243 E. 204th St., presents an **Art Exhibit and Open House**, April 26 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call (718) 933-5650/51.

■ 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. For more information, call (718) 960-8731.

■ No Longer Empty presents **This Side of Paradise**, Thursdays to Sundays, 1 to 7 p.m. through June 5, at The Andrew Freedman Home, 1125 Grand Concourse (167th Street). A number of related events will take place throughout the exhibition. For more information, call (718) 293-8100.

Library Events

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. off Fordham Road, presents programs for kids including **Tales for the Teeny Tiny at 11 a.m.** (ages 3 to 12), April 21 and 28; **Stories Songs and Activities That Celebrate Our Earth**, (ages 5 to 12), April 21 at 2 p.m.; **You Are My Flower** (ages 3 to 5), music entertainment, April 22 at 2 p.m.; **Global Partners, Jr. at 4 p.m.** (ages 5 to 12), students connect worldwide via the Internet, April 25; **Science Demonstrations** (ages 5 to 12; registration required), April 24 at 4 p.m.: "Current" Events, and May 1 at 3 p.m.: **Fundamental Forces**; and **The Last Pine Tree on Eagle Mountain** (ages 3 to 12), musical about relationship between an eagle and a pine tree, April 28 at 2 p.m. For teens and young adults, there is **Math Gaming - Chess and Tangrams**, April 26 at 4 p.m.; and **Wild at the Library**, live animals, May 3 at 4 p.m. Adults can attend **Single Stop/Government**

✓ EDITOR'S PICK

Hike for Van Cortlandt Park

The public is invited to join the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park at its 3rd annual **Hike-a-Thon** on April 28. Register and raise at least \$30 and receive a Friends T-shirt and become a member for the year. Children under 18 who raise at least \$60 and adults who raise at least \$120 who are also among the first 100 to register, will receive goody bags. Prizes will be available to those raising the most pledges. Choose from one, three or five miles. Funds raised will be used to help implement the FVCP's Trails Plan. For more information, call (718) 601-1460.

Benefits at 9 a.m., April 19, 24 and 26; **"Cavalcade of Comedy,"** black and white movie, April 21 at 2:30 p.m.; **Arts & Crafts Workshop**, Stitch Poetry Journal, April 27 at 1 p.m.; **Cell Phone Buying Guide** (online registration required), April 28 at 2 p.m.; **How to Avoid Identity Theft**, May 1 at 10 a.m.; **Free Introductory Computer Class**, April 25 at 10 a.m.; and **A Mini Film Festival in Celebration of Immigrant History Week**, dual language films, April 19 starting at 11 a.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 the Computer** (advance registration required), May 2 at 10:30 a.m.; each for seniors and adults. Children can attend **Toddler Story Time at 10:30 a.m.**, April 19, 26 and May 3; and **Stories and Songs of Latin America** (ages 3 to 12), April 24 at 4 p.m. For teens and young

adults, there is **Knitting**, April 19 at 4 p.m.; **Spa-aahh Time**, workshop (all material provided), April 24 at 4 p.m.; and **Movie**, April 24 at 4 p.m. For immigrants, there is **English Conversation**, intermediate level, for immigrants (ages 16+), free, Tuesdays 6:30 to 8 p.m., through June 5 (registration required). For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

The Jerome Park Library, at 118 Eames Place, offers **Cooking at 4 p.m.**, April 19, 26 and May 3, and **Dance Club at 3:30 p.m.** (advance registration required), April 20 and 27 (both for teens and young adults); **Computer Basics at noon** (for adults), April 19, 24, 26, May 1 and 3; and **Blown Away by Poetry** (ages 5 to 12), April 24 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 April 23 for the next publication date of May 3.



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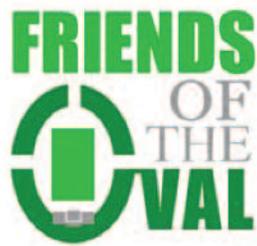
PARK

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Meet at Wayne Avenue entrance



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