

NORWOOD NEWS



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CELEBRATING MARTIN LUTHER KING



Photo by David Greene

PARISHIONERS PACKED the pews at Trinity Baptist Church in Edenwald celebrate the legacy of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 20. This year marks 50 years since King convinced President Lyndon Johnson to help pass the Civil Rights Bill, pushing for better equality across America.

Questions Raised Over Armory CBA

By DAVID CRUZ

Though the Kingsbridge Armory Community Benefits Agreement had been endorsed and approved by 26 signatories, questions have arisen over whether the signatories behind the CBA are a true representation of the community.

It's an inquiry Fernando Tirado is leading. The former Community Board 7 district manager went to bat for the Kingsbridge Road Merchants

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CB7 Holds Line on Webster Avenue

By HAYLEY CAMACHO

Despite rezoning along the 1.5 mile stretch of Webster Avenue as a way to encourage market rate housing and new businesses, Community Board 7 members remain angry over the city Department of Buildings' lax enforcement of the new zoning laws and loopholes that have led to widespread supportive housing ventures.

In what's become a hot topic within CB7's borders, the members pored over the issue and possible solutions at the board's Economic Development Committee meeting held on Jan. 8. Meetings have become at times contentious ever since the rezoning went into effect, amending construction laws on Webster Avenue running from East Gun Hill Road to Fordham Road.

The community board for the Norwood, Kingsbridge, Bedford Park, Fordham, Mosholu and University Heights areas has played hardball mainly with the Stagg Group, a development and construction company which is building sites at 2977-89 and 2997 Webster Ave., to finally include the required first floor commercial space after complaints to the DOB that resulted in a second review of Stagg's plan.

Board members are skeptical in how rigorous the DOB is in enforcing new zoning requirements for projects. "You can influence but you can't mandate except for the zoning, and the zoning is being circumvented," said CB7's Economic Development chair Ellie Lundeen.

These days, economic development has intertwined with housing since new buildings must include commercial space on the first floor, as per requirements from the new zoning laws. It's a reason why CB7's Economic Development Committee has collaborated



Photo by Hayley Camacho

WEBSTER AVENUE is ripe with plenty of construction thanks to rezoning, though these days Community Board 7 is tightening its grip on any Letter of Support to supportive housing developers.

with the board's Housing Committee over these issues.

A big obstacle in the revitalization of the Webster Avenue corridor are incentives provided by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development that allow developers to obtain a range of special loan financing and tax credits to build supportive and low-income housing. The agency offers loans to non-profits that provide on-site social services that eliminate the repayment of the principal or interest as long as the borrower agrees that the property be used for low income homeless tenants for 30 years.

HPD also awards tax credits for housing projects that reserve at least 20 percent of apartments for low-income households. Once tax credits are allocated, the developer typically sells the credits to corporate investors who supply private equity to cover a portion of

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In The Public Interest

Liberty Dems Seek New Leaders

With Ritchie Torres ascending to the role of Councilmember for the 15th Council District, the Liberty Democratic Association (or Liberty Dems for short) is without a leader. The powers that be are now seeking a candidate to fill Torres' shoes following his departure, with elections slated for Sunday, Jan. 26. It's part of the club's belated New Year's Party, costing \$10 to partake.

Members will also fill the vacancy for treasurer, a post held for several years by longtime civic activist Ray Unger, who passed away last June.

As far as Joe McManus sees it, the role of the club ensures "good people are involved in politics and make(s) sure good people are elected." Of course, candidates seeking endorsements from the club must fall on the Democratic ticket. McManus serves as the 80th Assembly District's State Committeeman. From a grassroots level, the club helped orchestrate a big victory for the relatively inexperienced Torres, whose credentials include serving as Housing Director for Councilman Jim-

my Vacca.

The club's influence has certainly increased now that Torres was elected as Councilman, beating a crowd of contenders with help from the Bronx political machine, unions, and Torres' own grassroots involvement in tackling housing issues.

"He's an honest kid and you want those people in politics," said McManus. "And I would say we make sure that you're represented by people who are at least halfway decent."

An overall plan of incorporating new members akin to Torres' energy is still on the club's minds with older members still outranking younger blood. McManus hopes the new president would be able to up the ante when it comes to recruitment.

Guests will gather at Janel Towers' community room at 801 Neill Ave. in the neighborhood of Morris Park beginning 2 p.m. and wrapping up at 5 p.m. Neighbors can RSVP to Joe McManus at (718) 644-1841 or Monica Major at (917) 208-3886.

—DAVID CRUZ

Cuomo Backs Bronx Metro-North Plan

By DAVID CRUZ

It's all but a reality.

With Governor Andrew Cuomo publicly announcing his support for more Metro-North service to the Bronx in his State of the State address, the borough's state lawmakers are giddy on when they can actually vote on earmarking the proposed project estimated to cost over \$1 billion.

They'll get their chance this coming March when the MTA's five-year capital budget plan will be voted on by both houses of the State Legislature, highlighting the agency's projects in the pipeline through 2019. The Metro-North project will expand service to the east Bronx, isolated transit areas that often require commuters to take a bus and subway to get to work in Manhattan. Four train stations along the borough's east end will be built along the existing Hell's Gate line, the main line that takes Amtrak's passengers directly north to Boston or south to Man-

hattan's Penn Station.

Locals in Co-op City, Morris Park, Parkchester and Hunt's Point are slated to see a station in their neighborhood. The respective neighborhoods were chosen given their dense populations, with Co-op City housing the largest cooperative in the city with some 50,000 residents living there.

Both State Legislatures have publicly supported the project. In the Senate, Independent Democratic Conference president, Sen. Jeff Klein, vowed to make sure the project passes Senate, calling the plan his "top priority."

Last spring, Klein and Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. released a report detailing the economic gravy train the expansion would produce, with over \$1 billion in benefits projected as a result of the expansion. On top of property rates, the Metro-North expansion plan would create 5400 jobs, according to the report. "[T]he benefits to local homeowners, businesses

PICHARDO SWORN IN



Photo courtesy Assemblyman Victor Pichardo's Office

BRONX COUNTY Civil Court Judge Beltré-Rosado (l) administers the oath of office to Assemblyman Victor Pichardo (center), now representing the 86th Assembly District, a seat once held by disgraced Assemblyman Nelson Castro. Pichardo stands with mom Luisa Duran.



and the economy are clear," said Klein.

But the building of these stations is contingent on whether the Long Island Railroad will release track space for the impending Metro-North trains. The likelihood of that happening is strong since the MTA is currently building the East Side Access construction project, which will divert LIRR trains into Grand Central, freeing up track space.

Bronx Celebrates Centennial

For 2014, the Bronx will examine its past, present and future with the Bronx Centennial, reflecting on the 100 years the Boogie Down became known as Bronx County. In celebration of the borough's first 100 years, a year-round centennial celebration will be held, with the first official event being the inauguration of Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. The event was seen as a historical nod to the first swearing in ceremony that took place when Bronx County was formed in 1914. Plenty of politicians, including Mayor Bill de Blasio, were on hand to witness Diaz Jr.'s third swearing in. The BP outlines several accomplishments the borough has made so far, touting some major development happening in the borough. He'll go more in depth at his State of the Borough Address sched-

uled for February 20 at Hostos Community College at 11a.m. In celebration of the centennial, the Empire State Build-

ing lit up the skyline with the Bronx's official blue and orange colors.

—DAVID CRUZ

Public and Community Meetings

- **The 52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL will meet on Thursday, Jan. 23 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Concourse House, 2751 Grand Concourse. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.**
- **COMMUNITY BOARD 7 committee meetings are held on the following dates at the board office, 229A E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Senior Services Committee and the Public Safety & Quality of Life meet Thursday, Jan. 30. For more information, call (718) 933-5650 or visit bronxcb7.info/calendar.**
- **BEDFORD-MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION meeting will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 5 at 8 p.m. at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy. So., apt. B1 (lobby floor). All are welcome.**

All meetings are subject to change. Call to confirm.

Assemblyman Eric Stevenson Found Guilty

By DAVID CRUZ

Following a year-long probe, six-day trial and two hours of deliberations, Assemblyman Eric Stevenson (D-79th A.D.) was found guilty of accepting over \$20,000 in bribes in exchange for drafting legislation that would have benefitted owners of two senior day care centers throughout the west Bronx.

“As a unanimous jury swiftly found, Assemblyman Stevenson brazenly betrayed the public that elected him,” said Manhattan U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara. “Graft and greed are intolerable in Albany, and we will go to trial as often as we have to until government in New York is cleaned up.” Indeed, political corruption has been the buzz word peppered with reform lately, with Governor Andrew Cuomo intending to root out crooked pols through several anti-corruption initiatives he highlighted in his State of the State address.

Stevenson’s downfall began after the FBI sought the help of former Assemblyman Nelson Castro, who became a legislator mole for the feds after running into legal troubles himself. For four years, Castro would work for the feds to gather information on possible corruption within the State legislature. He found it in Stevenson, the scion of a family of Bronx politicians. Stevenson held the seat in the 79th Assembly District, representing Morrisania and East Tremont, relatively poverty-stricken portions of the Bronx.

Stevenson was arrested by the feds for accepting \$20,000 in bribes to help fast track the opening of two social adult centers in the Bronx — one on Westchester Avenue in Stevenson’s district and another at 2287 Jerome Ave. near ex-Assemblyman Nelson Castro’s district.

Throughout 2012, Stevenson met several times with Igor Belyanky, his brother Rostislav, Igor Tsimerman, David Binman, and Sigfredo Gonzalez, a minor Bronx wannabe political figure and executive director of the New Age Social Adult Center. The five conspired to pay off Stevenson, offering him cash and funds in the form of a check paid by a political action committee. Stevenson had violated State law by not filing the check as a campaign contribution. In Stevenson’s case, the pol was videotaped stuffing \$10,000 cash into his trousers from outside Jake’s Steakhouse in Riverdale early last year.

For accepting the money, Stevenson promised to introduce a bill putting a three-year moratorium on other social centers as a way to create a “local economy,” and allowing the underhanded business owners an ad hoc monopoly over the number of senior day care centers built in the Bronx. Monopolization of senior centers has become apparent throughout the city, with many opening centers with little to no government oversight. On top of accepting bribes, Stevenson also will-



File Photo

ASSEMBLYMAN ERIC STEVENSON (at the podium) is convicted of using his power as a lawmaker to draft legislation for money.

ingly agreed to organize several community events to recruit senior citizens into the program, promising them free meals and entertainment.

Senior day care centers had been popping up all over the Bronx since many do not require a license, yet receive plenty of funding through Managed Long Term Care insurance, often funded through Medicaid.

Gonzalez and Castro secretly recorded the alleged conspiracy conversations.

Stevenson remained as the 79th’s Assembly member as his case was handled by prosecutors and defense attorneys. But following his conviction, his web page on the New York State Assembly’s website was removed, suggesting his tenure as representative is suspended. Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. reacted to the verdict, calling Stevenson’s conviction caps “an unfortunate chapter in our borough’s history.”

“As I have made crystal clear in the past, our borough and our city require and deserve an honest, corruption-free government. The public must have faith in its elected leaders, and the deplorable actions of Assembly Member Stevenson should not cast a bad light on all elected officials, most of whom work hard to deliver for their communities and solve the issues that face our neighborhoods,” said Diaz Jr.

The borough has seen its share of political scandal over the years. Just days before the Stevenson/Castro scandal, prosecutors charged the borough’s Republican Party chairman Joe Savino with corruption.

Stevenson can face up to 55 years in prison once he’s sentenced.



Photo courtesy The Bronx Times Reporter

WHAT COST Assemblyman Eric Stevenson his Assembly seat? Russian businessmen talked Stevenson into securing a bill that would have put a moratorium on social adult centers, giving sites like the New Age Social Center for Adults (pictured) a corner on the market. Social centers promote freebies once featured at the defunct site (insert).

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Inquiring Photographer

By DAVID GREENE

This week we picked readers' brains on a new law that will expand paid sick leave to 500,000 small business workers.



They're working, and they get sick, and it's law that they will get paid? I think that's absolutely wonderful. Yes, I'd like a law like that for the working people because they have to stay home for two or three days and lose their pay.
Mary Leon



I don't think it's good for small business owners because if I have to pay you six sick days, I'd actually be taking a loss because I don't make that much to begin with. So if I have to pay my worker \$50 for the day to stay home and I'm only bringing in \$100 or \$150 minus the cost of the merchandise, I'd only be going home with \$40 or \$50 myself. So I couldn't feed the family and I'd go bankrupt.
Jose Serrano



I believe Mayor (Bill) de Blasio is a great man and I value his opinion. These workers are important to this city and the country and they need to get paid if they are too sick to work; they deserve that. I support that completely.
Syed Mohammad Abbas



It's good if they get paid when they're sick because they still need to pay their rent, pay bills and buy food. It's a great idea. If they come to work sick, they will also get the other workers sick.
MD Babul Aktar



Our workers get sick and the owner here pays them. Yes, it's a very good thing.
Hany Ayad

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Parks Dept. Seeks Managers for VC Stables

By DAVID CRUZ

Giddy-up!

There'll be a change of leadership at the Van Cortlandt Park Stables in the near future, as the city Department of Parks vets a new concessionaire to oversee the sprawling stalls, with the current manager primed to ride off into the sunset.

The Riverdale Equestrian Center (REC) manages the riding stables for now, occupying roughly 21 acres of trails, an indoor riding arena, and a 1/4 mile exercise track. But managers for REC decided not to renew their 10-year deal with Parks, which expires in 2015, following some pressure to re-focus their services to the community. Now, through a Request for Proposal released in December, Parks brass took a tour of the grounds on Jan. 8, with prospective concessionaires getting a glimpse of the land.

"This has been a long time coming," said Christina Taylor, president of the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park, the park advocate group that believed REC could've done better to cater more to the neighborhood's needs. "We just saw they could've fulfilled a greater need for the community," said Taylor.

Much of the group's concerns lay in the kind of clientele REC attracted, mainly serious horse riders aiming to compete in the Olympics and not neighbors interested in taking a recreational ride around the trails. Taylor remembered, "People from the community really didn't use the stables" since the commu-

nity-driven amenities REC offered were scant. In most cases, an undertone of elitism would often be detected by neighbors after learning REC staffers would personally drive to Manhattan to pick up competitive horse riders, disregarding the same requests from cautious Riverdale parents. "When I heard that, that was pretty much the last straw," said Taylor.

The stables have been a source of enjoyment for neighbors since 1982 where children train with some of the mares, often riding them along the park's bridle paths. But Community Board 8 chairman Robert Fanuzzi has criticized managers, believing the stables are not well-operated.

New Terms

Under the new deal, Parks brass wants an operator that can offer riding lessons to the general public while also housing a pair of Parks Police steeds at least for six months each year. They're eyeing mostly prospective operators that provide after school programs, summer camps or therapeutic riding programs, services offered by REC. The stipulations are in direct response to REC's often floundering amenities for the community that also included the lack of trail rides for kids.

"But the horses they use at the stables are show horses...so they didn't want to take them out on the trail on the chance they would trip on their hoof, or twist an ankle because the trails are honestly not in great condition," said Taylor. "I think it would be great for people to come and ride a horse at Van Cortlandt Park."

STUBBORN FLAMES ENGULF PART OF CATHOLIC H.S.



Photo by David Greene

FIVE FIREFIGHTERS suffered injuries while battling this stubborn blaze at Monsignor Scanlan High School in the east Bronx on Friday, January 17, taking several hours to knock out. The three-alarm blaze engulfed the boiler room, where the fire began just after 6 p.m. and later brought under control in two hours. The fire is being classified as suspicious. The school has been a borough staple since 1949. Roughly 400 students attend.

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Armory Questions Raised

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Association (KRMA), the group that promotes the 269 businesses along the Kingsbridge Road commercial corridor, running parallel to the enormous Armory.

Tirado pressed Community Board 7's Economic Development Committee on Jan. 8 to use its clout to help incorporate KRMA into the CBA, despite the commercial group having received last-minute funding by the city Economic Development Corporation to improve the strip.

The CBA signatories are comprised of representatives from churches, community groups and social service nonprofits. Half of the signatories in the legally-binding document are affiliate members of the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, the influential community group that's been at the forefront in pushing for a community-backed project for the last 18 years. They finally came to a consensus with the Kingsbridge National Ice Center, clearing the project that's slated to become the world's largest ice center with nine rinks and a seating arena. KNIC Partners LLC agreed to a host of amenities such as local hiring, 50,000 square feet of community space and a 1 percent revenue share, which amounts to roughly \$300,000 a year.

Reviewing the Signatories

The NWBCCC member signatories, about 13 of 26, signed on representing themselves irrespective of the longtime group. Meantime, NWBCCC's president, Sandra Lobo-Jost signed on behalf of NWBCCC, raising a red flag for critics who believed this to be a case of double-dipping, where one signatory was represented 13 times.

"It's an umbrella organization," said Tirado, referring to NWBCCC. "They count as one signature, but in this case they're signing names." By including different signatures to the CBA, Tirado believes the tactic is intended to give off the appearance of broad community support, though he dubs it a "smoke screen." He pointed out that institutional organizations such as Jewish Home Life Care and the Legionnaire Grey Cadets were excluded.

An analysis by the *Norwood News* shows that 38 percent of the signatories reside within Community District 7, the district where the Armory resides. The rest of the groups hail from other areas outside the district, though preference was given to Community Board 7. Others are found in outside areas, including Community District 10 which has two representatives on the CBA—the Bronx Christian Fellowship Church and the Bronx Clergy Criminal Justice Roundtable, Inc. The organizations, however, share one address—Gun Hill Road in Williamsbridge. They also fall under the same pastoral leadership of Tim and Que English.

Community Board 2 has representation in the CBA through Wanda Solomon, who signed on behalf of Mothers on the Move, a Hunts Point advocacy group where she serves as executive director. Another signatory is Dennis Rivera, once a major player for 1199 SEIU. These days, Rivera has a home address in Puerto Rico.

"What would they be double dipping into?" asked Alice McIntosh, head of the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Al-

liance, a negotiating arm for NWBCCC. "What we negotiated, we negotiated for the community at large and not just the northwest Bronx. The signatories are not going to be receiving money or anything like that."

McIntosh disagreed that the CBA signatories offered simple padding to the document. As far as NWBCCC is concerned, each entity functions separately, with groups offering community support in different ways. "You have to look at the population or constituency that particular organization serves," said McIntosh.

Exclusivity

But the move insinuates an exclusionary preference by NWBCCC, which ultimately decided who was allowed to sign the CBA. Among those left out was the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, a social services community center in the neighborhood for decades. The center now borders Community District 7, having once fallen into Community District 8 before Council lines were redrawn.

"Anything that has to do with any decisions that affect our community I would certainly want to be a signatory," said Giselle Melendez-Susca, KHCC executive director.

Meantime, Christian Ramos, the vice president of the Kingsbridge Road Merchants Association, said he was approached to be a signatory, though he declined since he was offered one day to review the 65-page document. The CBA has now merchant representation except for Morton Williams Supermarket owner William Sloan. Sources allege Sloan's interest to sign was purely for selfish reasons—signing it on the assurance no big box retail chain would move into the Armory, which would have potentially driven him out of business.

"[Morton Williams] cannot represent the small stores," said Ramos. "He's already big."

Still, whether community groups signed it or not, the true power of the CBA lies in its 11-member Committee Advisory Board, which will decide how to reinvest the 1 percent revenue developers with the Kingsbridge National Ice Center agreed to share with the community. Both NWBCCC and the legal team of the Kingsbridge National Ice Center agreed to create the committee with NWBCCC, the councilmember in the 14th District (currently Fernando Cabrera) can pick three members each. Community Board 7 will be allowed to pick four while KNIC can choose one. Overall, the coalition will divide responsibility over what to do with those funds.

But Ramos is concerned the panel will have little insight in handling the needs of businesses since many have no business experience. "If I need some grants for the merchants, or grants for Christmas lights, I don't feel I need to go to KARA when that money is supposed to be sent to us," said Ramos.

But however outspoken the concerned can be, this could be a case of too little too late since the CBA is legally indestructible, offering future community groups very little wiggle room. The approval now seals the community's fate until the year 2117.

Keeping Webster Avenue Revitalization on Track

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development costs.

There are currently five supportive housing projects under way for low income seniors, homeless families and the mentally ill on Webster Avenue. This past October, the board rejected proposals from the Stagg Group and Doe Fund, a Manhattan-based nonprofit, for even more supportive housing.

The Need for Supportive Housing

The Bronx has seen an overall increase in the number of supportive housing and assisted living facilities over the years, thanks to a federal mandate that requires the city to find housing for the itinerant. With the State divesting its psychiatric centers followed by a housing crunch, the only recourse the mentally ill can take is going into supportive housing and assisted living sites, creating a double-edged sword. With incentives to build along the corridor, an influx of social service housing has boomed.

District 11 Councilman Andrew Cohen attended the meeting and weighed in. "The zoning incorporates a lot of incentives for supportive housing that are making it a land grab for a supportive housing boom here which I don't think is what the vision plan envisioned," he said.

Holding Their Ground

To be eligible for HPD incentives, developers need a Letter of Support from a community board's Housing Committee, which is followed by a vote by the full board. "It's to the developer's benefit to do

supportive housing, but then they don't want to put in the commercial space on the first floor," said Lundeen. "And we're not going to give you the letter unless you do."

"We are holding those Letters of Support to our chest hard and we are not giving them out like candy," said Jean Hill, CB7's Housing Chair. "The Doe Fund went away quite disturbed with us because we did not give them one and Stagg also tried to whisper in other ears and we're asking other partners who are concerned about the area to stand firm with us and help us hold the line," she said in reference to the four big institutions in the area—Montefiore Medical Center, The New York Botanical Garden, The Bronx Zoo, and Fordham University—which support the mixed use economic development plan for Webster Avenue.

"If you have supportive housing and other mixed income, you're going to have a more stable community," said Lundeen.

Lack of Transparency

As for the DOB, Lundeen claimed the agency works in secret, never revealing where the next building is going up on Webster Avenue. CB7 members and residents serve as the eyes and ears in the community. DOB spokeswoman Kelly Magee noted that a link on the DOB's website entitled *Building on My Block* has information on new construction in each community board.

"Formal notification is not mandated, but this [the website] is a tool that allows community board members and New Yorkers to look up the developments in

their community," she said. "The community board would be involved and receive notification for any type of development that is going through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure or anything that's requesting variances from city planning," she added.

Cohen applauded the board's resolve. "I think at the moment it seems to be a very tough tide to stand against," he said. "I am appreciative on not giving out these letters of support because I don't think that what these people are proposing jives with what the community wants to have happen on Webster Avenue." He also offered to support the board's efforts. "The zoning situation is something that I can do something about, but I can't do it overnight."

One remedy discussed was for the Land Use Committee to change the zoning on Webster Avenue to a type of "floating zone" model used in upstate New York. It would involve leaving the hubs at Bedford Park Boulevard and East Gun Hill Road intact and down-zoning the Webster Avenue corridor to limit building heights to three stories plus the commercial overlay, with the hope that CB7 would support reinstating the zoning for any development that embraces its vision.

The board, along with the Moshulu Preservation Corporation, is working on the creation of a Webster Avenue Business Improvement District to attract retailers to the corridor. "If you look at Fordham Road, it is very successful. There is very little movement of retailers and few empty stores," said Lundeen.



Map courtesy city Economic Development Corporation

THE CITY is banking on Webster Avenue's Four Bronx Institutions Alliance (mapped out in these points) to spur development. But CB7 suspects the rezoning is backfiring.

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Bronx Youth Heard

The Dangers of School Co-Location

Isis Zavala said she specifically chose Hostos Lincoln Academy of Science as her top high school pick for its open campus policy on lunch. Plus, she liked the freedom of being on the Hostos Community College campus, where the school had once resided. It seemed like the perfect fit.

But the summer before she started, the school moved into the Lola Rodriguez De Tio building that's nearly a mile away. Now that students are co-located with three other schools, they say they lack space, freedom and extracurricular activities. They are dissatisfied and haven't seen any positive effects.

Grisselle Romero, 16, doesn't like having to accommodate other students, many of whom are

much younger. "It makes me upset because it's so tightly packed and you bump into people," she said. "And it's not a good idea to have middle schoolers and high schoolers together because of fighting."

In the two years that Hostos Lincoln Academy has been at its new home, the school has been sharing the space with I.S. 162, and University Prep Charter High School. Each school has its own floor, though they share the same amenities that can include the lunchroom, gym and auditorium.

Co-Location Push Back

Throughout the Bronx, parents have been battling co-location and winning.

The move has been stopped at P.S. 1 Courtlandt School in District 7 in the south Bronx. Along the northeast end of District 11, a move to house an Icahan Charter High school was denied co-location with two public middle schools in Pelham Parkway following community pressure.

The city Department of Education reports that 58 percent of all NYC public schools are co-located, though only 8 percent of co-located schools are charter schools, according to NYC Charter Center, a nonprofit group that promotes the building of charter schools throughout the city.

The Bronx Borough President's Office supports co-location initiatives, but has to deal with the "inequality between charter schools and public schools in

the same building," said John DeSio, a spokesman for Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. "Our office has worked to have charter schools partner with their neighbors on shared improvements to their buildings," added DeSio.

The apparent inequalities are more than inconvenient to Madeline White, a 16-year-old student at Hostos. "Imagine sharing a school [building] with three other schools — 500 students each, only one gym and lunchroom. The space is not enough," said Madeline, who plays on the Hostos basketball team. "We can't practice after school because the gym is used by other schools."

And the limitations don't stop there. Students aren't allowed to associate with



Photo by Marco Paulino

CO-LOCATION CREATES a divide, according to students at Hostos Lincoln Academy of Science. The school was co-located with I.S. 162, and University Prep Charter High School, causing unwanted friction among students.

their peers on other floors.

"Some of my friends who went to my middle school go to Green Dot, but we can't talk to them and can't go to the library which is in Green Dot," said Mercy Onwuta, referring to the original name of University Prep.

The schools can be very territorial about their small space because they are responsible for their students' safety. "I went up to Green Dot and I was walking around, but then the principal saw me and he started screaming," said Veyyes Sanchez, a student at Hostos. "Then [Hostos vice principal Vincent] Marano yelled at me. They made it a big thing."

Marano realizes that the situation isn't ideal. In the college campus, students

were allowed to go outside and eat lunch, but this freedom isn't allowed in the new building. According to Marano, students who would normally follow the rules are rebelling by leaving the school grounds for lunch which is now against school policy. "Co-location isn't a preference but a necessity. It isn't compromisable, it's not something you design," said Marano. "Co-location into a college has value, but co-location into other schools does not."

Students believe that co-location, and the increase of it, shows that the importance and value of education is not emphasized in the Bronx. "I think the DOE is trying to save money by putting these schools together," said Tahjai Foote, a Hostos junior. "You can't compromise education."

When Stop and Frisk Compromises Teen Expression

On a recent Friday night dinner date with his girlfriend, Sam Rodriguez was constantly irritated by his itchy bra. The 16-year-old Mt. Eden local reminded himself that wearing this undergarment was the most painful thing he's done.

Sam, born Samira Rodriguez, is a transgender female who normally binds his chest in a tight wrap to suppress his female traits. He learned just how itchy the bra can be after being stopped on his way home that night. He was with his girlfriend when a cop demanded he stand against the wall while he searched him. Sam's girlfriend stood by and cried at what she was seeing — a stop and frisk encounter. Sam said he felt like she did something wrong — that he was wrong for being him.

After the incident, Sam decided he needed to look more female to avoid police harassment.

Unfortunately, Sam isn't the only teen who has become fashion conscious as a way to avoid being among the 69 percent of teens who have been stopped and frisked by the police since the program started, according to NYPD data provided by NYCLU.

The majority of teenagers being stopped by the police are either black, Hispanic or members of the LGBTQ community, the NYCLU reports. Now some teenagers are changing the way they dress, an important part of teen expression, seeing it as a link between going about one's business or being stopped and frisked.

"I might as well color my face white, maybe then the cops will leave me alone," said 17-year-old Essa Waggeh. Essa of Melrose was stopped by cops in front of his group of racially-mixed friends. The young dark skinned African-American complied with the police, but when he got home, he said he burst into tears. He felt

as if he were a criminal and now the cops would be on the lookout for him continuously. To avoid future harassment, Essa gave up his baggy jeans and sweater for skinny jeans and button up shirts. He made the change voluntarily but out of necessity. He said he is frustrated that he

QUEDUS BABALOLA



can't express himself in public.

And while teens like Sam and Essa succumbed to internal pressure to change their appearance, Bronx resident Paul Ramirez has balked at changing how he looks even after repeated stops by police. "How I'm dressed shouldn't be the basis of anything at all," said Ramirez, who

operates the online clothing store dubbed "From the Bronx," which sells apparel showcasing Bronx pride.

As a light-skinned Puerto Rican, Ramirez and his brother get stopped when they are predominantly in black neighborhoods. He said it was because they don't blend is as much. Still, Ramirez has stood his ground, though he maintains a friendly demeanor with officers. "It forces me to be more diplomatic to police officers," Ramirez said, adding that stop and frisk and racial profiling go "hand in hand — they're boyfriend and girlfriend."

Under new mayor Bill de Blasio, the policy will be under review, but that doesn't change the fact that some teens say they feel reluctant to express who they really are.

"The police should try putting themselves into our shoes and see how it feels to be harassed because of our right to freedom of expression," Sam said.

Shop and Frisk: Teens' Perspective

The eyes glare, a subtle pursuit ensues, and the idea of feeling unwanted results.

That's often the experience of a Bronx teen shopping any store, as clerks and managers cast a layer of suspicion on teens who simply browse about a store.

"Every time I go to 10 Spot with my friends, I am followed by store personnel and I am given rude looks," said Kiana Carter, 15, about the women's clothing store. "I feel pressured, nervous and feel as though they do not trust me and I am not supposed to be there." When

my group of friends are going to vandalize the store and burn their clothes."

But not every teen has this problem. Amar Krcic, 15, has never been followed or asked to leave a store because of his so-called "gringo life," or Caucasian complexion. He explained that store owners view him less of a problem since he greets them when he walk into stores. But the only time Amar encounters eyes on him in stores is when he's with his Pakistani friend, Zaheer Babar, 15. The store owners look at them with wary faces and follow them throughout the store.

Bill of Rights

Whether they are followed or left alone, teen shoppers are protected under the new Customers Bill of Rights crafted by the Retail Council of New York, a state trade group.

The agreement, drafted in light of two "Shop and Frisk" episodes at Barney's and at Macy's last year, protects shoppers by emphasizing four basic rights that include the right to safety, the right to be informed, the right to choose, and the right to be heard. There are also four more rights that are based on fairness and an assurance shoppers will experience a safe environment.

Stores that sign the document agree to curb profiling, defined as "the practice of judging and addressing people based on their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, ancestry, appearance, or any personal or physical characteristics."

Not all stores, including Toys R Us, have signed the Customers Bill of Rights, but Barney's, Macy's Bloomingdale's, Lord & Taylor and Saks Fifth Avenue have signed and have agreed to post it in their stores.

Earlier this fall, three teen reporters went to Toys R Us in Bruckner Plaza and were asked to leave, offering no explanation. A representative of the store did not respond to two requests asking about the incident or its plans to sign the Shoppers Bill of Rights.

Regardless of how some store owners profile, others are more accepting of teens. "I have no problems with seeing teenagers at my store, even if there's lots of them," said Angel Chukui, who owns a bodega at 1946 Bathgate Ave. "Teenagers have to eat too, plus it's good business for my store." His store is near St. Joseph's School and he sees teens early in morning and when school lets out. "It does, however, concern me when they're loud and disturbing the other customers," he said.

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Photo courtesy of Daniel Avila / NYC Parks

FREE COMPUTER TIME is available at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center thanks to the city Department of Parks.

Williamsbridge Oval Computer Lab Rocks Norwood

The Williamsbridge Oval Park Recreation Center has made a comeback and the city Parks Department has taken it to a new level by introducing a computer lab for the community.

The computer lab found in the second floor of the granite building is new to the recreation center, but has already become one of the more popular spaces. The lab holds eight PCs, thanks to the Parks Department's partnership with New York Public Library. The Computer Resource Center manages the free lab, giving computer access to kids and teens so they can keep up with their schoolwork.

But on top of being a space to work, the computer lab is also a place to learn. Ana Maria Campos, the director of Computer Resource Centers citywide, said Parks leans more towards "academic enrichment opportunities" than having teens log onto Facebook. "I get psyched about kids learning about programming, or video production with a community focus," said Campos.

One-day classes are taught, including one on Internet safety, where teens learn how to protect themselves online.

On a recent wintry afternoon, Tiffany Pena, 15, a student at Cathedral High School and a regular visitor had just left the lab after taking advantage of the facility, satisfied with the free perks. "The computer lab is helpful to other teenagers and myself," said Tiffany. "We can now do homework there, do research, or just hang out and play games."

The lab offers students a space to do

their homework or any school-related work any day of the week from 3 to 7 p.m. In the few weeks since it opened, the center staff has seen the space fill up after school. "We do see a lot of interest in open access," said Campos, referring to teenagers simply browsing the Internet without having to take a class.

One visitor, Genesis Duran, 15, a student at Discovery High School, dropped off her little brother Luis, 13, at the lab so she could hit the center's first floor fitness room. "It's helpful because [the computer lab will] give

ROSANNIE CALDERON



kids the opportunity to explore the web and get knowledge," she said.

The Recreation Center re-opened in late November after three years of construction by the Parks Department. The community was angry over delays related to the \$5.2 million project that included a total makeover. About \$1 million was spent on the computer lab along with a fitness room, a game room, a cycling room, improved locker rooms and upgraded bathrooms.

Only rec center members may use the resource lab and other facilities. Membership prices range from \$100 to \$150 for adults (ages 25 to 61), \$25 a year for seniors (62 and over) and young adults (18 to 24). Membership is free for youth under 18.



**JASMIN GARCIA,
NATALIE MENDEZ
AND SAMIYAH
DEFREITAS**

Kiana goes to the Soundview store with friends, she makes sure that they spread out and don't stay in a dense group. And while Kiana changed the way she shops, 15-year-old patron Veronica Wilson, 15, has not. Veronica still walks into Hot Topic, a store normally known for its gothic clothing, and when employees follow her around, she holds her ground, asking "what's up?"

Unlike Veronica, Yamel Garcia, 18, has weary feelings upon entering a store. She says that one time she was followed by store personnel in American Eagle, Times Square 42nd Street. They tailed her floor by floor until she left the store. Yamel concluded that her experience varies from borough to borough—when she is in a Bronx store, there's less of a chance she'll be followed, but in downtown Manhattan she says she feels as though "they think



Photo by Jasmin Garcia, Natalie Mendez, Samiyah Defreitas

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! Macy's posts this Customers Bill of Rights following several publicized cases of so-called "Shop and Frisk."

Bronx Youth Heard

Vol. 6, No. 2
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The Bronx Youth Journalism Initiative is a free journalism program for Bronx high school students, run by the *Norwood News* with support from City Councilman Fernando Cabrera and former Councilman Joel Rivera, and in collaboration with CUNY's College Now program at Hostos Community College.

Musicians Homegrown at PS/MS 95

By DAVID CRUZ



Photo courtesy PS/MS 95

JULIE WATERS, elementary school music teacher for PS/MS 95, leads a class full of potential Mozarts at the school.



Photo courtesy PS/MS 95

ON THE middle school side of PS/MS 95, music instructor Andre Devero sheds insight into the power of music to these students.

“It is really lovely to bring music into this school, and win over the hearts of the classes,” explains Julie Waters, a music teacher at PS/MS 95 Sheila Mencher, a K-8 school in Kingsbridge. She looks at music as a very natural activity, an art form paired with high standards, discipline and a sense of humor.

The school’s foundational music program teaches students K-5 basic skills and concepts such as music notation, reading music, and refining one’s pitch through singing and playing instruments. The little ones sing many songs derived from American folk, pop, and world music while the older children sing as well as learn to study music more academically, exploring how and why music is created. Students are encouraged to form their own sounds to make unique contributions to the work of the class.

“We know what a profound experience music has on kids,” Waters said, adding the art form “can save lives.” “[I]t gives children a place to belong and succeed and express themselves when they don’t know how else to do it,” said Waters. “I have seen in my life that music can be the only thing that makes students want to stay in school – and go to college.”

Andre Devero, music teacher for the middle school students, leads the upper school program, teaching band, orchestra and keyboard basics during the day. An after school program is also available, offering students the chance to put in extra

rehearsal time. In all, hundreds of them are being exposed to playing musical instruments, which educators have promoted for years, given its proven ability to increase memory, boost team skills and improve mathematic skills.

At PS/MS 95, the eighth grade band has been invited to play at Great Adventure, and all the music students will take part in the Spring Arts Festival, entitled “Come Together,” based on the idea of people coming together to help each other as a community. Devero has a home recording studio, composing, producing and recording for local artists in nearby Harlem.

What does the program mean to students? Fourth grader Benjamin Boateng feels that “all of us have a special talent in music and each of us should try. Music gets me into my inner self.”

Graduating senior Saad Rahman talked about the hard work linked to perfecting one’s musical craft. “We learn what it actually takes to sound good in an ensemble. This allows me to create on my own and to think more—to do something else, and I have the aspiration to go on to the next level.”

Students will showcase their musical talents on Thursday, Feb. 13, with a performance based on the music from *The Wizard of Oz*. Teachers and families will gather at the school auditorium from 8:50 to 9:40 a.m., where each grade will perform their own song, giving every child the experience of gracing the stage to flaunt their skills.

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Bedford Pk. Neighbors Un-Stumped After Sandy Tree Removed

By DAVID GREENE



Photo by David Greene

BEFORE: Bedford Park residents mark the one-year anniversary after fire crews removed this tree toppled by Superstorm Sandy's raging winds.



Photo by David Cruz

AFTER: The power of the people helped remove the tree, leaving behind a soiled patch. Just what to do with the rest of the damage remains to be seen.

Timber!

Fifteen months of haranguing, calling 311 and cajoling helped clear a giant tree stump that remained a neighborhood hazard in Bedford Park ever since Superstorm Sandy knocked out the tree that existed beforehand.

Resident Hector Rivera recalled the giant tree outside of 17 E. 198th St. dangerously tilted to the other side of the street where it eventually came down on a house when the storm hit. A picture of the damaged tree can still be viewed on Google Maps.

Rivera recalled, "The tree hit the top of the home, and because of the branches, the owner of the home was trapped inside." The street would remain closed off to traffic for several days.

Superstorm Sandy's raging winds caused the tree to snap in two, with its upper portion toppling onto a two-story home. The lower portion smashed the hood of a car parked along East 198th Street, its roots ripping up the concrete. This obstructed the roadway on East 198th Street, diverting traffic to parallel streets. The FDNY was called in to chop the tree down days after Sandy, with crews from the city Parks Department later picking up the pieces and carting it away. But the stump remained, leaving residents to declare the work unfinished.

Months went by. The stump had stood affixed to the ground, narrowly clearing

the sidewalk for pedestrians, though it attracted rats and litterers who used the tree stump as a dumping ground. Neighbors continued to press the city for resolve after reports of neighbors tripping to the ground, often at night where the street is barely lit. But relief did come on Jan. 13 when the Parks Department removed the stump, later patching the hole with dirt.

But the removal of the tree has caused a whole new set of problems, mainly what to do with the broken sidewalk. Neighbor Kajun Corporan was thrilled to see the stump removed, though she urged that the sidewalk be fixed since "people are still tripping over the broken sidewalk." "There are a lot of old people in the area," she said, pointing to the narrow sidewalk abutting the hole.

A request for comment from the Parks Department was not immediately returned.

During a conversation with a Parks Department official back in October regarding the repeated telephone and e-mail requests, the official stated, "If we received it (the request) we should have responded... we do answer e-mails, we do want to work with you."

Meanwhile, Parks officials have so far planted more than 820,000 new trees as part of the *MillionTreesNYC* initiative, while tree stumps from fallen or dead trees remain across the borough and around the city, including many along both ends of Mosholu Parkway.



Photo by David Greene

A LOOK AT how hard the tree fell onto East 198th Street, tearing its roots and ripping up the concrete.



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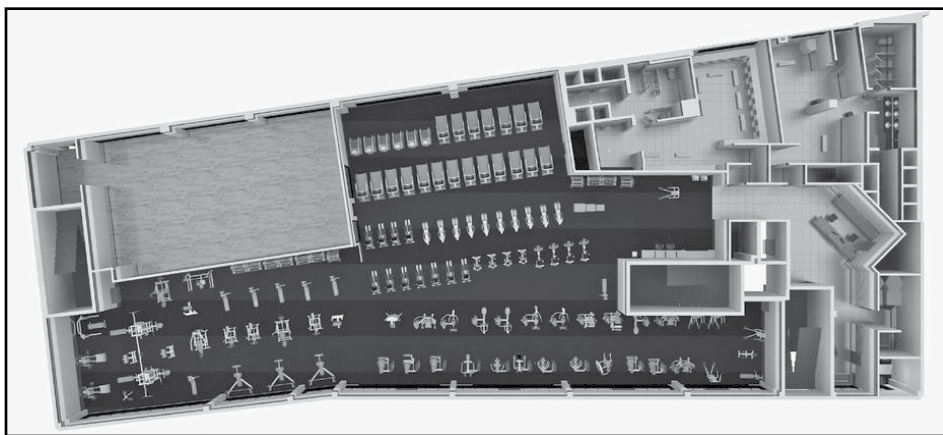
Crunch Gym Set to Open in Norwood

By DAVID CRUZ

In what's considered symbolic of the type of business Norwood looks to draw on Webster Avenue, Crunch Gym is on its way to opening following a yes vote from Community Board 7's Housing Committee.

The snowstorm on Jan. 21 impeded the full board to vote on approving a Letter of Support to owners of the exercise chain. As of press time, that full general board meeting was postponed to Jan. 28. But the Housing Committee voted in favor of the plans during its Jan. 15 gathering, with zoning attorney Michael Nacmias offering a presentation.

Members pored over details of the gym, which will boast a large workout area, men's and women's locker rooms, and a tanning room. Overall, Crunch officials are expected to draw 4,000 to 6,000 members annually, taking advantage of some other amenities, including on-site parking. Roughly 750 members are expected to visit the gym daily, which could perhaps improve the overall health makeup of the neighborhood. As it stands, Norwood is relatively dry from an exercise gym, an area whose health profile includes high rates of diabetes and obesity, according to the city Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The Centers for Disease Control and



Rendering courtesy Crunch Gym

A BIRD'S EYE view of the Crunch Gym set to open on Webster Avenue near 205th Street. The gym boasts an exercise studio, weight rooms, men's and women's locker rooms and a tanning room.

Prevention has long promoted exercise, recommending 20 minutes of rigorous exercise three times a week or 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week.

Speculation had indeed run rampant on whether Crunch would move into a building at 3170 Webster Ave., a relatively new glass building already housing the Bronx Community Charter School on the second floor. The corridor has been attracting businesses since the city moved to rezone some 80 blocks along the corridor, drawing franchisee Assaf Gal to set up shop. Gal, an exercise enthusiast, has

opened several Crunch gyms before, according to his LinkedIn page. He was unavailable for comment.

The housing committee's blessing is, of course, a simple ring of endorsement since Crunch owners, though, are still required to apply for a special permit through the city's Board of Standards and Appeal since the gym is considered a Physical Cultural Establishment. Nacmias is hashing out details with the regulatory panel and is expected to receive a decision soon.

But well before Crunch officials pitched

their plan and were approved by the board, promotional materials circulated around the neighborhood, with some rate cards peddling a \$9.95 yearly charge. Crunch's official website also lists the Webster Avenue location, supporting Crunch's presumption that the chain will be approved by the BSA.

"They've been advertising for three or four months," said Sheila Sanchez, a community activist who attended the committee meeting.

With Crunch expected to open in the coming months, the gym could pose a problem for already established exercise chains in the Bronx, including Planet Fitness, which has eight gyms throughout the borough, outnumbering Crunch, which will open its first Bronx location in Norwood. Indeed, exercise gyms have been popping up dramatically throughout the city, forcing owners to lower their prices.

Crunch has also represented the type of business neighbors would want to see along the Webster Avenue strip, rezoned to lure more businesses. The building at 3170 Webster Ave. still has space for a business on the first floor, with residents expecting a supermarket on the premises. But speculation is swirling that a medical facility will open.

If all goes well, Norwoodians can expect Crunch to open by spring.

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District Manager Position: Available at Bronx Community Board #7. Description and requirements are available at www.BronxCB7.info. Send Resume to: Search Committee, Bronx Community Board #7, 229 East 204th Street, Bronx, New York 10458.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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).

Notice of Public Sale

Secure Self Storage will be holding a Public Lien Sale located at 4268 Third Ave., Bronx, NY 10457. The sale will be held on Thursday, February 6, 2014 at 10:00 A. M. The contents of the units will be sold for cash to the highest bidder. Certain terms and conditions apply. See manager for details. For more information, call (718) 294-1111.

Unit Number Name Items

307 Miguelina Almonte, 523V Michael Seabrook, 044 Olusesan J Adeleye, 509V Cynthia Lartey, 757C Edgar Acosta, 537V Awilda Vega, 351 Davalyn Aaron, 733 Theron Hamilton, 501V Tanya Ballard, 030 Jane Olivia, 504 Orlando Cepeda, B021 Aracelis Davila, 239B Dorothy Young, 739 Jorge Burke, 618 Velvet Reed, 146 Sharmaine Parsons, 405V Perla Sandoval, B001 Clashema Dupree, 504V Andres Rodriguez, 273 Beverly Vasquez, 348 Richard Akoto, 526V Alcala Padilla, 413 Solomon Owusu-Ansah, 171 Jose DeJesus, 553 Rosalyn Powell, 027 Ealise Turner, 179 Savy Molina, 056 Nicole Frances, 017 Lissette Cruz, 336 Roberto Agosto, 011 Carmen Serrano, 216 Nneka Onuorah.

Classifieds: \$12 for the first 20 words and 25 cents for each additional word.
Professional Directory: \$144 for six months; \$260 for one year. To place an ad, call (718) 324-4998 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Free Weekend at Wave Hill

Admission to the grounds at Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, is free the weekend of Jan. 25 and 26. In addition, there will be free activities at the WH House including **Family Arts Project: Hibernator's Den**, to learn about hibernators, then make a mask or woodsy home, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; and **Hibernators' Pajama Pop-in Weekend**, for the entire family, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. On Jan. 26, there will be **Interactive Performance: Tales of the Hibernators**, to enjoy songs, stories, and puppets, from 2 to 2:45 p.m. For more WH activities, see "Events." For more information and a schedule of events, call (718) 549-3200.

Onstage

■ Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Grounded Aerial**, choreography amplified into the air, Jan. 25 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$25 to \$35); **Hair**, Feb. 2 at 6 p.m. (tickets are \$25 to \$45); and **Haifa Symphony Orchestra of Israel**, performing classical music, Feb. 6 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$25 to \$75; \$10/ages 12 and under). For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

Events

■ Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Arts Project: Nature's Music**, to collect twigs and leaves and create a collage with natural materials and incorporating imaginary music, then incorporate all into a pocket-sized accordion book to take home, Feb. 1 and 2; at the WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Additional event includes **Concert: Sonic Escape**, a variety of music, Feb. 2 at 2 p.m. in the WH House (tickets are \$32 and

\$28 for seniors, \$18/ages 7 to 18, and WH members \$22; \$12/child; RSVP to ext. 251). Grounds admission is free Saturdays until noon all year, and free all day Tuesdays in January and February. Glyndor Gallery **tours** take place Tuesdays and Saturdays at 2 p.m.; garden **walks** are held Tuesdays and Saturdays at 11 a.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m., from the Perkins Visitor Center. For more information and a schedule of events, call (718) 549-3200.

■ The public is invited to ride the Feb. 5 free **Bronx Culture Trolley**, which transports visitors on the first Wednesday of every month (except January and September), to free Bronx hot spots. 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. 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.

A forum on entitled "**Town Hall Meeting on the Affordable Care Act Health Education Series**" will be held Monday, January 27 from 8:30 to 11a.m. at Montefiore Medical Center's Moses Campus at 111 East 210th Street. Congressman Charlie Rangel is the keynote speaker. If you're planning to attend mass transit is encouraged as public parking is limited. Montefiore Medical Center, Healthfirst, the Children's Defense Fund, the Bronx Chamber of Commerce and local clergy leaders are the lead sponsors. For more information contact or to RSVP, please contact:Wendell Alexis: 718-920-7620 or wealexis@montefiore.org or Krystal Serrano: 646-512-0251 or kserrano@healthfirst.org

Exhibits

■ Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse, offers free, **Whimsical Winter Wonder Exhibit**, through Jan. 31, showcasing the works of 16 artists from around the world, including paintings, photos, and sculptures, Tuesdays to Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more

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. Which are as follow:

| Household Size | Maximum Income | Maximum Rent |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1 person HH | \$36,120 | \$903.00 |
| 2 person HH | \$41,280 | \$1,120.00 |
| 3 person HH | \$46,440 | \$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 application.

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



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Photo courtesy Wave Hill

SONIC ESCAPE will present a concert Feb. 2 at Wave Hill, showcasing their music that blends folk, classical, pop, bluegrass, protest songs and sea shanties into a tale of how North America's music came to be. More info under "Events."

information, call (718) 365-5516.

■ The NY Botanical Garden presents **Close: A Journey in Scotland**, through March 16, featuring creations of 21 notable contemporary designers and artists working in the Scottish landscape. For more information, call (718) 817-8700 or visit nybg.org.

■ Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, 2nd floor North Wing, between 161st and 164th streets, presents free: **Paulo Bruscky: Art is Our Last Hope**, through Feb. 9; and **Tony Feher; and Orchard Beach: The Bronx Riviera**, both through Feb. 16. Admission is free. For more information, call (718) 681-6000 ext. 131.

■ The Bronx County Historical Society's Museum of Bronx History at the Valentine-Varian House, 3266 Bainbridge Ave., presents **History Woven Into Cloth**, selections from the Society's textile collection, through April 6. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Library Events

■ The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents programs for adults including: **Stories Within: Photographs by Sandra Ayala**: exhibit, Jan. 25 at 1 p.m.; **Computer Basics**: Jan. 28 at 2 p.m.; **Teaching Children About Money: Raise a Financially Savvy Child**: Jan. 29 at 10 a.m.; **Dress for Success'**

Going Places Network: Jan. 30 at 9:30 a.m.; **Heritage Arts & Crafts**, Jan. 31 at 4 p.m.; and **A Performance Reading of "To Kill a Mockingbird"**: Feb. 1 at 2:30 p.m. Children can enjoy **Preschool Story Time at 11 a.m.**: Jan. 23 and 30; **Toddler Play Time at noon**: Jan. 23 and 30; and **Ship Book Making**: Jan. 23. The entire family can attend the **Burdetsky Family Circus**, Jan. 25 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

■ The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for seniors and adults: **Knitting Circle**: Thursdays at 3 p.m.; and **Wii Program**: Tuesdays at 3 p.m. Children can enjoy **Toddler Story Time at 10:30 a.m.**: (ages 18 to 36 months), Jan. 23 and 30; and **Reading Aloud Story Time**: (ages 3 to 5), Jan. 27 at 4 p.m. The entire family can attend **Film**: "Despicable Me 2," Jan. 27 at 4:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

■ The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers: **Pajama Party**: (ages 5 to 12), Jan. 27 at 6 p.m. For adults: **Computer Basics at noon**: Jan. 23, 28 and 30. For teens/young adults: **Cooking**: Jan. 23 at 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

NOTE: *Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Jan. 27 for the next publication date of Feb. 6.*



Photo courtesy of Lehman Center for the Performing Arts

DEATH-DEFYING STUNTS and eye-catching acrobatics like this will be in store for guests of Ground Aerial, a visceral aerial treat dance company led by Karen A. Fuhrman.

Neighborhood Notes

Free Tax Prep

Ridgewood Savings Bank, 3445 Jerome Ave., hosts a free tax preparation day to eligible filers on Sunday, Feb. 9 from 9:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 881-3430 or (718) 882-0440.

Marketing Workshop

Lehman College's Bronx Small Business Development Center, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., hosts a marketing workshop for business owners on Jan. 29 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Carman Hall, Room B75. For more information or to register, call (718) 960-8806.

Summer Camp Applications

The Fresh Air Fund is accepting applications for its free 2014 summer camp program for eligible children ages 6 to 12 for the Volunteer Host Family Program, and ages 8 to 15 for the camping program in Fishkill, NY. For more information, call (800) 367-0003 or go online to www.freshair.org.

Coat Drive

New York Cares is collecting coats for the needy this winter through Feb. 7. Bronx donation sites include the Office of the Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. at 851 Grand Concourse (room 209) from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Other drop-off sites include the 52nd Police Precinct, 3016 Webster Ave. For more information, visit www.newyorkcares.org.

Computers at the Oval

Computer access is now available at the newly-opened Williamsbridge Oval Computer Resource Center, Mondays through Saturdays (subject to change). Call to confirm. For more information or a detailed schedule, call (718) 543-8672.

Apply to Your Community Board

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. invites Bronx residents to join their local community board. Applications are available at your local board office or at Diaz's Community Board office and will be accepted for all 12 Community Boards for Bronxites who reside, work or have professional or other significant interests in the Bronx. Deadline is Feb. 7. For more information, call (718) 590-3543/8977, or apply online at bronxboropres.nyc.gov.

Free GED Prep & Transition Programs

Pathways to Graduation offers free GED educational services to diploma seeking students 18 to 21, in advance of NY's new Common Core-aligned Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC), which offers educational services from the DOE's Adult Transition Centers at age 22. Centers are located at 1010 James A Polite Ave. For more information, call (212) 374-5141.

Photo Workshops at Fordham U

The New York Botanical/Zoological Photographic Society holds bi-weekly photo workshops for avid photographers two times a month on Saturdays at 9:45 a.m. at the Fordham Preparatory School (room 243) on the Fordham University Campus through June. For more information, call (718) 543-3115.

For more Neighborhood Notes online, go to www.norwoodnews.org and click on "Neighborhood Notes."

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 6:30 PM

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