



NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 28, No 18 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • SEPTEMBER 17-30, 2015



**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
THE \$15 LIVING WAGE PROPOSAL | PG. 4**



**SPEAKING UP: APPLY TO FREE
JOURNALISM PROGRAM | PG. 7**

CB7 DIST. MGR. RESIGNS FROM POST

Resignation marks third departure of a CB7 DM in three years



Photo by Adi Talwar

DUSTIN ENGELKEN (LEFT), announces his resignation as District Manager for Community Board 7 at the first full Board meeting since the summer hiatus.

By DAVID CRUZ

Dustin Engelken, Community Board 7's district manager, resigned as DM at the Board's first general meeting after the summer hiatus. His resignation, unexpected, the third from a CB7 district manager in the last three years, leaves the Board looking for a replacement, and a widening delay in resolving community issues.

"I know that my announcement may come as a surprise to many people in this room so I felt it was important to make clear that the nature of my announcement tonight was not meant to be malicious, but rather I felt it was important to avoid any miscommunication by making the announcement to everyone here all at once and in my own words," said Engelken, reading remarks

before a stone-faced crowd at the Sister Anunciata Senior Center in Bedford Park Sept. 15.

Engelken told Board members his decision was purely personal, with his wife accepting a lucrative job offer in Germany, forcing him to relinquish his position.

"During the next three weeks I'll still be available in the office to serve as a resource...for committees and the community at

large," said Engelken, whose last day is Oct. 10. The Board, which covers Norwood, Bedford Park, University Heights, Fordham and Kingsbridge, has 42 members.

But the timing of Engelken's resignation came amid his growing frustration toward the current chairwoman, Adaline Walker-Santiago, according to several sources.

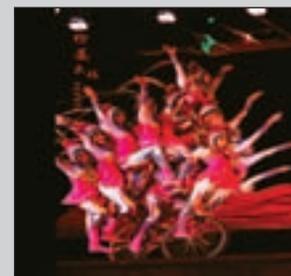
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IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST



Participatory Budgeting Kicks Off in Norwood Sept. 29



File photo courtesy Office of Councilman Andrew Cohen

CASTING HIS VOTE during the last leg of Participatory Budgeting in April is Councilman Andrew Cohen, who brought PB sessions to the 11th Council District.

By DAVID CRUZ

Imagine better amenities for your parks, schools, and streets. Now, imagine being empowered to pump \$1 million into those improvements.

It's a mission Councilman Andrew Cohen is trying to achieve once again through participatory budgeting, a process where residents in a Council district decide where a certain portion of capital funds will go.

Several meetings have now been arranged to hammer out some ideas. In Norwood, residents can gather to hash out ideas at MMCC, the community center at 3450 DeKalb Ave., on Sept. 29 at 7 p.m.

"The Councilman believes that constituents are the experts of their streets and local parks," said Daniel Johnson, Co-

hen's chief of staff. "It's really taxpayers deciding how their tax dollars are spent."

Johnson noted the process will remain the same as last year, with initial meetings scheduled for all of September. Eventually, so-called delegates will be appointed to flesh out some ideas, which will then be vetted by Cohen, his staff, and later city agencies to determine its feasibility.

The \$1 million represents 20 percent of Cohen's budget towards capital projects, which can take upwards of five years to begin construction. Projects must cost more than \$35,000 and have a lasting impact of more than five years.

Early this year, five projects were approved by Cohen and several city agencies. They included projects throughout

Cohen's 11th Council District, though none were picked for Norwood or Bedford Park. Still, Cohen used some of his remaining capital budget for a \$450,000 job to rehab PS 8's auditorium. He also allocated \$350,000 in capital monies to replace Mosholu Library's aging windows.

Residents who can't make the meetings are encouraged to submit ideas via email, District11@council.nyc.gov.

Additional reporting by Jasmine Gomez.

Step-by-Step Guide to Participatory Budgeting

1. After learning about participatory budgeting, residents discuss ideas and select delegates at public meetings.
2. The delegates chosen form committees and turn the community's ideas into full proposals with help from experts and council member's staff.
3. Delegates present proposals to community, get feedback, and revise the proposals.
4. Delegates present final proposals and residents vote on which projects to fund.
5. Council members present their spending plans to the City Council, including the participatory budget projects.
6. Community oversees implementation of projects.

Public and Community Meetings

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: Education/Libraries & Youth Services, Sept. 17; Economic Development, Sept. 29; Community Relations/LTP, Sept. 29 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL meets at Cosmopolitan Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, 39 W. 190th St., on Sept. 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING workshop meets at MMCC, 3450 DeKalb Ave., on Sept. 29 at 7 p.m.

St. James Park Enters Next Rehab Phase

By **ADEDAMOLA AGBOOLA**

Following complaints from residents, a Bronx neighborhood park is entering another round of upgrades. The park is expected to receive top-down renovations of its basketball courts and a remodeling of half its tennis courts.

For many years, St. James Park, settled between Jerome and Creston avenues from 191st to 193rd streets, has served as Fordham Heights' playground for children living in the neighborhood. It has also provided a space for adult residents to organize sports tournaments during the summer. Eight tennis courts were installed over 100 years ago, and have proven to be an archaic feature given how underutilized they are these days.

"We actually don't play tennis here, so we just change it to a volleyball court instead," said Ricardo Perez, a resident, who has lived on Morris Avenue for more than a decade. "It's the best we can do with what we have even though this court isn't really a volleyball court. I mean now that we have a proper field, I guess I could go play soccer."



Photo by Adedamola Agboola

THESE PLAYERS REPURPOSE the tennis courts at St. James Park into a makeshift volleyball court.

cer."

Renovations began in August and are expected to be completed by the end of September. Half the tennis courts will be converted into a multi-purpose, synthetic turf field with removable goalposts to double as a football field and a soccer field.

Nathaniel Walker, 15, who attends the nearby Theatre Arts Production Company School has been coming to the park with his friends after school. "We've all been playing soccer, even football on the tennis court, so it's good that we're getting some type of [field]," says Walker.

The New York Parks and Recreation Department, which manages St. James Park, acquired the land in 1897, with the State Legislature naming the park after its proximity to St. James Episcopal Church, which abuts the playground on Jerome Avenue at 190th Street.

St. James Park received heavy upgrades in 2007, when funds from the \$220 million Croton Water Filtration Mitigation Fund allocated some \$5 million towards renovations. The funds were given in exchange for building the massive water plant that remains under construction in Van Cortlandt Park. Some improvements included a new rubberized swing area, a section for toddlers to play in, and a sprinkler system.

Another project at the park will see two new full-size basketball courts outfitted with new asphalt, color seal-coating, and new backboards. The project is being sponsored by the New York City Council and the Office of the Mayor and will cost \$150,000. It is slated for completion by January 2017.

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE

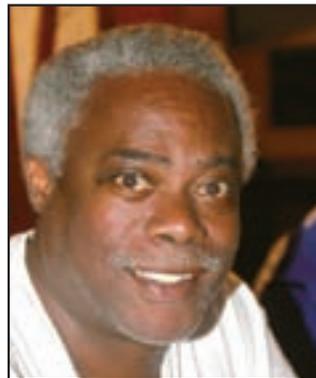


This week we asked readers their thoughts on a proposal to raise the New York State minimum wage to \$15 per hour for all hourly workers by 2021 (in the city, the \$15 wage would take effect in 2018).



It should be \$15 an hour, but they're talking about raising it to \$10 [by Dec. 31 of this year]. People can't live on that. So they really should get off their butts and try and help us out a little bit more.

Chris Gardella
Bedford Park



I like it; they should do it all at once. It shouldn't go to \$10, then \$13 (in 2016) and then \$15 (in 2018). I think it should go straight to \$15. I'm sure the employers will get some kind of benefit from the Federal government to subsidize the salaries.

Lance Hudson
Highbridge



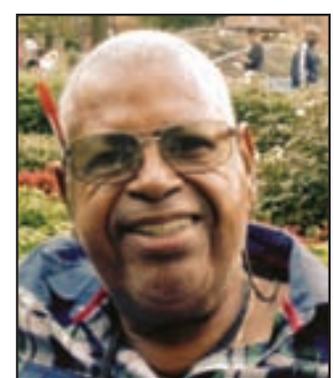
I think that in the future they're going to have machines that will replace all the workers. A few people will be running the machines and there will be few employees. They should just make it \$15 once and for all, because the rent is very expensive. How are they going to pay the rent? Fifteen dollars is not a lot, but it's better than \$10. Employers will be all right; they just don't want to give the right pay to employees. Employers are making money like crazy. They're doing good.

Armando Lozada
Norwood



They should do it right away; why waste time? People will be laid off, that's going to happen. Why do you think they had so many Mexicans working in a lot of places, off the books?

Juan Santos
Parkchester



It should be welcomed. People in the New York City area are struggling to pay the rent, and to have food on the table and money for transportation. I think the rent by itself is very expensive these days in New York, and it requires the person to have a good income. If business owners claim they have to lay off workers to stay in business, then they are crooks and they should be out of business.

Fernando Alomar
Parkchester

Editor's Note: Have an idea for an Inquiring Photographer question? Send suggestions to dacruz@norwoodnews.org.



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The Allure of Synthetic Marijuana: One User's Dark Journey

By **WILLIAM MATHIS**

In 2011, Edwin Rivera was serving time in the Bear Hill Correctional Facility in upstate New York when he learned about a new drug. "We started hearing about it," Rivera said. "People were talking about this new thing, K2."

K2, a nickname for synthetic marijuana, has become the new "it" drug in the northwest Bronx. Rivera's story, complete with moments of hallucinations, explains why K2 has been popularized despite its harsh and unpredictable effects.

The state of New York banned the sale of K2 back in 2012 after a number of its users were hospitalized. However, many bodegas, including 14 in the 52nd Precinct covering Norwood and Bedford Park, continue to freely sell synthetic marijuana over the counter under various names, all labeled as potpourri or incense, and not for consumption.

These days, Rivera, 33, is drug free and living at VIP Services, a men's residential rehabilitation center in the Tremont area of the Bronx, a condition of his parole. A recovering heroin user with a stint in prison for burglary, Rivera turned to K2 after readjustment on the outside proved challenging. "Nobody wanted to listen," he lamented. "So I started getting high."

But Rivera could not take conventional drugs; drug tests can detect those. So instead of going to a dealer, he walked from the rehabilitation center down to the bodega a few blocks away on the corner of East Tremont and Third avenues to purchase some K2. "I felt like I was getting away with smoking weed because there was no test for it," Rivera said.

He began to smoke K2 regularly, two joints every hour each day. Unlike many illegal drugs, even such a heavy addiction was not prohibitively expensive. A packet of K2 costs between \$4 and \$5, with each packet containing enough for a 10 to 15 average hit.

Part of the reason K2 is so hard to detect and also criminalize, is because it is hard to know for sure what each packet contains. Manufacturers repeatedly change the chemical makeup to evade evolving drug laws. As a result, users have no way of knowing for sure what they are ingesting. "It could be dog poo in there," Rivera admitted.

There are also few statistics on the number of users out there.



Photo by William Mathis

EDWIN RIVERA, DRUG FREE, at the men's residential rehabilitation center in Tremont where he lives.

"I call it the "loophole" drug," said Debra Vizzi, executive director of VIP Services. "It's one step ahead of us. As a result, we can't determine adequate numbers of usage, and some researchers are lumping it with cannabis and not a separate study."

The effects of the high are just as unpredictable. "K2 is similar to an angel dust high," Rivera said. "Some people might see roaches or demons." Once while visiting his mother in Brooklyn, he saw a woman, high on K2, hit a young girl all over her body. When bystanders intervened, the woman said she had seen bugs crawling all over the child and was trying to swat them off.

Rivera also experienced its side effects too. A few months ago he woke up after a heavy dose of K2. He could not remember what had happened, but later learned that he collapsed and experienced a seizure. He still bears scars on his hand from where his convulsions banged it against the ground.

Now, Rivera is clean again. A couple of months ago, he started waking up in a heavy sweat and stomachaches, reminiscent of the pains he used to feel waking up in withdrawal from heroin. Unwilling to be an addict again, he sought help and went through a 21-day detox program at an inpatient clinic in upstate New York.

Rivera thinks the government should do more to fight K2 use. "They should really make it illegal," he said. "They should crack down on stores."

This fall, the city government will try to do just that. City Council will propose a new law that could impose penalties from a year in jail to a \$5,000 fine for K2 vendors.

Still, Rivera knows that drugs in the city are no easy problem to solve. "An addict is an addict," he said. "If an addict can't get one drug, they going to turn to something else."



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Bedford Park Congregational Church Aims to Restore Organ

By DAVID CRUZ

At Bedford Park Congregational Church, members keep one foot in the past, and the other in the future.

The past: A historic, 124-year-old rustic church at the corner of East 201st Street and Bainbridge Avenue, whose architecture representing a bygone era earned it a landmark designation by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission in 2000.

“This is the way it was when I first got here,” said Annette Porter, president of the church’s Board of Trustees, looking back when she first began worshipping at the church 20 years ago.

The future: Preserving the past.

Such has been the case for churchgoers, who’ve now settled into a restoration period for the church following some lengthy years in cobbling funds for renovation work. They’ve now turned their attention to reviving a 58-year-old Möller pipe organ, out of order for the last decade. Having sat on the back burner, the wooden instrument stands as a kind of relic, its somber hums unheard for some time. Sure, a traditional piano played by or-

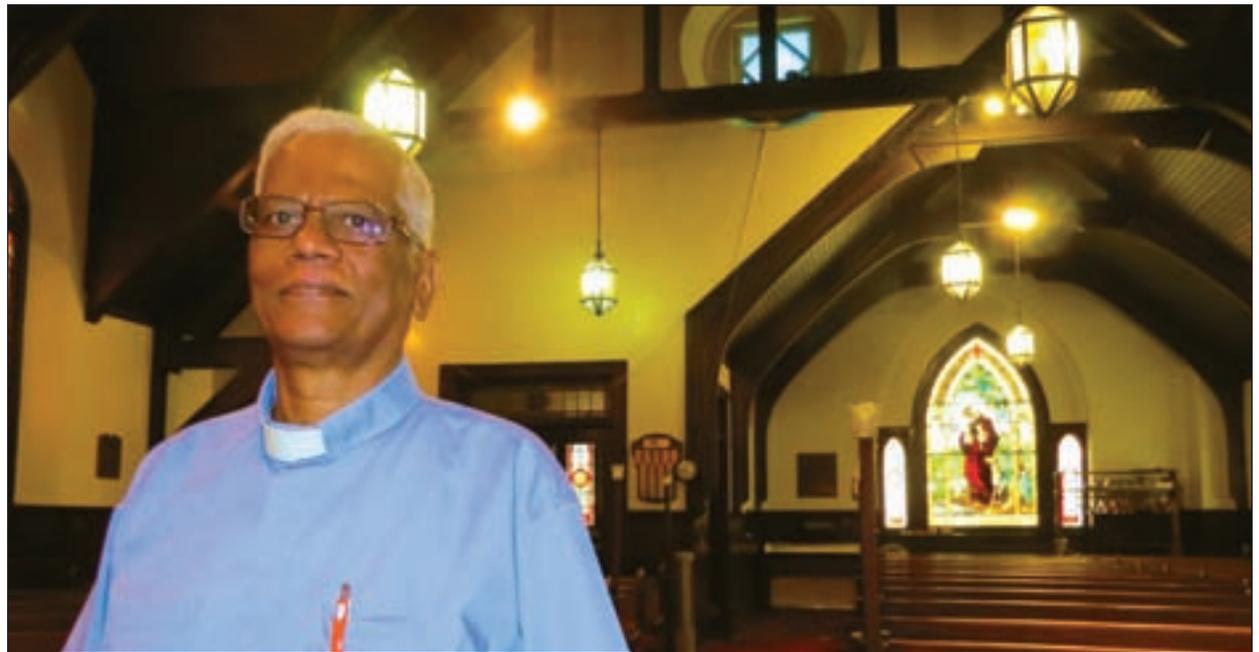


Photo by David Cruz

LEADING THE FLOCK at Bedford Park Congregational Church is Rev. Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj, pastor for the past 20 years.

ganist Vladimir Yudilevich serves as a faithful substitute, but for Rev. Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj, the church’s pastor, the organ lends a kind of spiritual vibe missing at Sunday services.

“If you can hear the sound of the organ, it gives [the service] a different flavor,” said Ponnuraj, speaking

to the *Norwood News* from inside the church, a cozy religious home unlike some of the more spacious neighboring churches.

The price to fix the organ ranges from \$87,000 to \$179,000, depending on how much church organizers want to restore the piece. Choosing to repair is the preferred option, given the \$250,000 tag to replace the organ altogether. Church officials have raised these kinds of funds before. On Oct. 24, it’s set to hold a fundraiser, with all proceeds going to renovate the organ.

The latest project marks another point in the church’s restoration period, with various top-down renovation projects completed to fix the sanctuary’s crumbling facade. A massive, \$100,000 roof job was made to repair its leaky roofs while preserving the Romanesque style tower, no easy feat. The church raised \$50,000 to fix the church, thanks to fundraisers, dinners, and bake sales. Matching funds were awarded by the New York Landmarks Conservancy, a group that offers grants and low-interest loans for landmarked structures.

And even as BPCC juggles a number of projects, it hasn’t forgotten its flock of some 50 members. In the last year, members organized a trip to Israel, participated in the yearly fundraiser, and held its first-ever back-to-school giveaway where families “made an afternoon of it,” according to Porter.

“Everybody felt so great about doing this program,” said Ponnuraj. “We’re going to have an evaluation



Photo by Jasmine Gomez

BEDFORD PARK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, deemed a historic landmark in 2000, sits at the same location where it was built in 1891 at East 201st Street and Bainbridge Avenue.

next week when we have our Board of Trustees meeting, and I think we’re going to get a 100 percent appreciation for that.”

Those events coincided with offering funds to Doctors Without Borders, a toy drive in partnership with St. Barnabas Hospital in Belmont, scholarships to college-bound church members, and maintaining a community garden.

“We’re trying to involve ourselves in all giving,” said Ponnuraj. “We not only receive, we also like to give to others. And I always believe that if you give, God provides you. You get a blessing back in your life.”

Editor’s Note: *Services at Bedford Park Congregational Church take place every Sunday at 11 a.m. Bible studies are held every Friday at 7:30 p.m. Church members plan to celebrate the church’s 124-year history on Sept. 29.*

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Bronx Youth Heard: Bolstering Civic Engagement

By NORWOOD NEWS

An after school how-to journalism program wants you to remember the three R's: Read. 'W'rite. Reform.

Such has been the mantra for *Bronx Youth Heard*, an eight-year journalism workshop that teaches basic journalism skills to high school students living or going to school in the Bronx. The course is now looking for Bronx journalism students who have something to say within the confines of news gathering principles.

"*Bronx Youth Heard* fills a gap for students who have a voice, but have limitations expressing that voice," said David Cruz, program director for *Bronx Youth Heard* who doubles as the editor-in-chief of the *Norwood News*. Its publisher, the Mosholu Preservation Corporation, a not-for-profit in Norwood, facilitates the bi-annual program. "The idea here is to tell them you have a voice to grease the wheels for change."

Cruz is in the midst of recruiting Bronx high school students for the program, which is set to begin Oct. 1 at Hostos Community College in the



File Photo

A LOOK BACK. *BRONX YOUTH HEARD* students from the winter/spring 2014 class practice their interviewing skills with this anonymous passerby at the former Bronx General Post Office, part of a lesson on Vox Pop.

Mott Haven section of the Bronx. Students take a 12-week course either in the winter/spring or fall, learning journalism fundamentals. A seasoned journalist leads classroom instruction, teaching topics that include identifying news, the elements of a news story, how to gain confidence for interviewing sources, and how to craft a news story. One of the program's more thrilling aspects comes from a field exercise called Vox Pop, where students

pepper random passersby with an assigned question.

"That gets the kids excited, no question," said Cruz, who emphasized that "you don't have to be interested in journalism to apply for the program."

The latter part of the program is spent writing news stories students had developed, incorporating journalistic principles they learned.

Those stories are then featured in the *Norwood News*, which publishes

two special sections yearly to showcase the students' work. As with most news articles, the students will have a byline and photo of themselves that go along with the news stories.

"These stories can be great additions to a student's growing portfolio," said Cruz. "Some past students have shared this with college recruiters as part of their body of work."

In the past few years, *Bronx Youth Heard* students have written stories that have shed light on stop and frisk for transgendered people, the so-called "sneakerhead" culture, and money management for teens.

"One thing we stress to the students is to focus on stories with the teenager in mind," said Cruz. "Those stories offer a different perspective of what teens are thinking when it comes to a certain topic. In many cases, some of the responses from teenagers are quite surprising."

Editor's Note: To apply for the program, you can click on this link - <http://bit.ly/BYHFall2015> - to fill out an online application. Any questions, contact David Cruz at dcruz@norwoodnews.org.

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Lehman Center for the Performing Arts Reaches 35-Year Milestone

By HAYDEE CAMACHO

With its 35th season under way, Lehman Center for the Performing Arts continues its tune as a cultural showcase, largely catapulted by Eva Bornstein, its longtime executive director.

The creation of Lehman Center was a dream of Lehman College's first president, Leonard Lief, who wanted a professional performance arts center for the college. A performance by the New York Philharmonic ushered in the music house on Bedford Park Boulevard in 1980.

This is Bornstein's 11th year with Lehman Center. Before taking the reins, she managed theaters in New Jersey, Chicago and Toronto. When she arrived, her biggest challenge was to shore up declining attendance at the Center. Indeed, presenting top-notch performances can be costly for a borough deemed the poorest across the city.

But Bornstein set out to explore the borough's neighborhoods to learn firsthand what rhythmic tunes make Bronxites bob their heads. Hearing the salsa music from passing cars and stores gave her an idea that was both obvious and groundbreaking for the borough. "Everyone knows that we have a large Puerto Rican community," said Bornstein, from her office inside Lehman Center, "so we started Latino events. We are Casa de la Salsa (House of Salsa)."

She's used her ear and intuition to lure Latin performers, a move driven by artistic appetites and business acumen--the Bronx, with a large Latino population, will likely buy a ticket to these performances. It worked last month when the popular contemporary Afro-Cuban group, Los Van Van, performed to a packed



Photo by Adi Talwar
WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES over the last decade is Eva Bornstein, executive director of Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, now in its 35th season.

house. "The entire audience of 1800 all stood up and danced much to the dismay of our security," said Bornstein. "It was like a happening in the Bronx."

Past Latin performers at Lehman Center have also included salsa legends El Gran Combo orchestra, Ruben Blades and Gilberto Santa Rosa.

Bornstein said other venues such as New Jersey Performing Arts Center and Tribeca Performing Arts Center began to take notice of her winning strategy of bringing Latin artists at family friendly prices. "Several other theaters looked at our success and are doing similar events," she said. "The main venues are realizing there is a Latino population."

Over the years, Bornstein broadened the Center's appeal by scheduling such accomplished artists such as Smokey Robinson, Patti LaBelle,

Johnny Mathis, Jose Feliciano, B.B. King, and Michael Bolton. "That was really out of the box," she said of Bolton's appearance. Non-musical attractions included a one-night performance by comedian Jerry Seinfeld.

Bornstein was introduced to the arts as a child when her parents took her to the ballet and classical con-

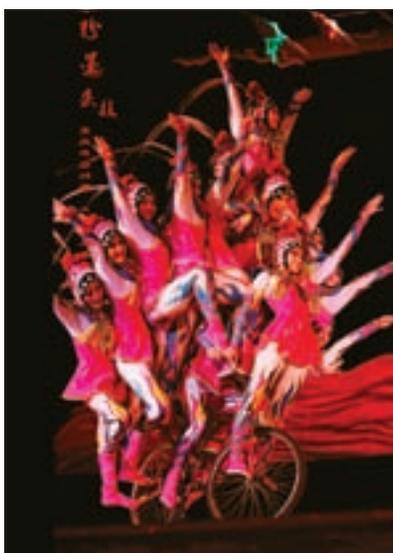


Photo courtesy Lehman Center for the Performing Arts

THE NATIONAL CIRCUS and Acrobats of the People's Republic of China will soar at Lehman Center for the Performing Arts on Nov. 8.

certs in her native city of Krakow, Poland, then under communist rule. The experience also shaped a strong belief in the importance of the arts for children, which she feels "shape and enhance our senses and our spiritual being." It's one reason she's kept children in mind when booking

the Russian National Ballet Theater to perform *Swan Lake*, and National Circus and Acrobats of The People's Republic of China. "I'm very happy to see more and more children under the age of 10 attending performances," she said.

This year's offerings include big Latin bands, The Machito Orchestra and The Mambo Legends Orchestra performing hits from the '40s, '50s and '60s, and a concert featuring Ex Gran Combo legend, Charlie Aponte, Jose Alberto, "El Canario" and Domingo Quinones. Lehman Center will once again host Parranda Navidena, Doo Wop: Rock & Roll is Here to Stay and Forever Freestyle.

A new event in the Center's lineup is the first performance by The Orchestra Now, comprised of young musicians who hail from New York's most prestigious music schools. "I like their entrepreneurial spirit," said Bornstein. "It is very exciting to host an inaugural concert."

Other upcoming international acts include performances by Ballet Folklorico de Mexico, Compañia Flamenca, The Royal Marine Band of Scotland and Bollywood Masala Orchestra and Dancers of India.

Additional events will be added throughout the year and Bornstein recommends checking the website regularly to stay in the know. "Our vision is to sustain Lehman Center as the major cultural institution in the borough," she said. "Our ambition is to become a mini Lincoln Center in the Bronx."

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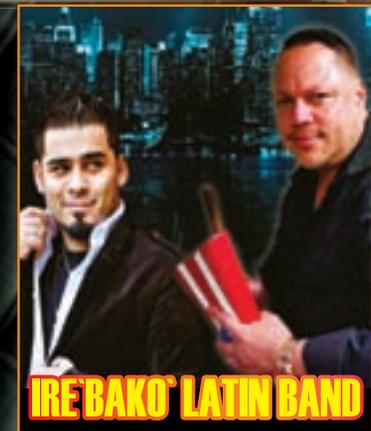
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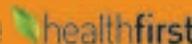


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Be Healthy

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Number of workers employed by
Montefiore Medical Center.

(Source: Montefiore Medical Center)

Vital
Stats

To Your Health! Pushes to Keep Montefiore's Workforce Healthy

By DAVID CRUZ

Maintaining a healthier Bronx has consistently been the mission of Montefiore Medical Center. And the hospital's crop of employees is no exception, a reason why Monte launched To Your Health!, an initiative to bolster the well-being of its 23,000 employees at every level.

Its overarching goal is relatively simple: keeping its associates healthy. In its internal webpage, To Your Health! reminds Montefiore staffers to lead by example and take care of oneself as they would for others. "...[I]n caring for others, we also need to care for ourselves," reads the message to those interested.

"In order to be able to be in their position and take care of their patients, their health needs to be good as well," said Jessica Shapiro, M.S., R.D., C.D.N., associate wellness dietitian at Montefiore. The program began sometime

in 2009, ramping up efforts for a healthier workforce in 2012.

Workshops are a daily part of Shapiro's outreach, which range from free yoga classes, talks on the importance of maintaining a balanced diet, and other exercise classes. Sessions are held at various hours of the day to adapt to employees' schedules. At Montefiore's health-conscious cafeteria (no fried foods are found there), nutrition tastings are regularly held. Employees can also take advantage of a Weight Watchers program at a discounted rate.

But drawing a crowd to the program's yearly events remains a challenge, despite its services featured on Montefiore's internal webpage and constant outreach by Shapiro and her team. These days, To Your Health! representatives stop by Montefiore's employee orientation sessions to offer a presentation on the benefits.

"That's where the first conversation starts," said Shapiro, adding she and her team are open to suggestions on "getting the word out" to attract Montefiore employees to its healthy sessions.

Should one be interested in improving their health, they're encouraged to take a health survey to determine how healthy you are. "Then you take a quick webinar, you get \$25," said Shapiro. "Once you get on there, you get on the email list. We send out monthly happenings every month that tells about the different associate events that go on."

Shapiro doesn't dispute that working towards a better you is challenging, though she stresses that opting for a healthy lifestyle can "open more doors to becoming even more healthy.

"So it's just one step at a time," said Shapiro. "It is a lot of work, but in the



Photo courtesy Montefiore Medical Center
JESSICA SHAPIRO SPEAKS on the benefits of balanced nutrition at Montefiore Medical Center's cafeteria at the Moses Campus in Norwood.

long run it's worth it because you can live a longer, healthier life for yourself and the people around you."

Editor's Note: To schedule a talk with Jessica Shapiro, email wellnessrd@montefiore.org.

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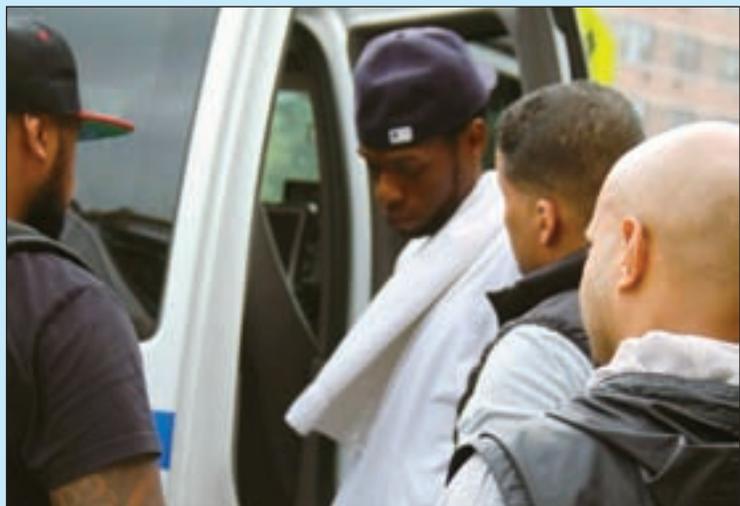


Photo by David Greene

PLAINCLOTHES COPS FROM the NYPD’s Transit Bureau nab Devin Scott (facing camera), an alleged subway swiper. They say he used a MetroCard to illegally sell admission to the underground subway at the Grand Concourse Bedford Park D train station on Sept. 4. Locals have long griped over so-called swipers lurking near turnstiles, hoping to convince straphangers who are in a hurry to pay them \$2 or more to swipe their MetroCard to let them through. Oftentimes, the MTA crooks deliberately damage a MetroCard dispenser to force customers to a swiper when there’s no agent on duty.



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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Bronx Youth Heard

The *Norwood News* is accepting applications for Bronx Youth Heard, a free afterschool program that teaches journalism skills to Bronx high school students ages 14 to 18. Applications are available online at <http://bit.ly/BYH-Fall2015>. For more information, contact David Cruz, program director for Bronx Youth Heard and editor-in-chief of *Norwood News*, at dcruz@norwoodnews.org or at (718) 324-4998.

Mosholu Pkwy. Informational Walk

Community Board 7's Transportation Committee Chair, Lowell Green, will host an informational tour of Mosholu Parkway on Oct. 3 at 10 a.m. Residents can meet in front of the Mosholu Parkway #4 subway station on Jerome Avenue. For more information, call CB 7 at (718) 324-4998.

Job Fair

The Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation and New York State Department of Labor host a job fair at Bronx County Courthouse, 851 Grand Concourse, 1st floor (Rotunda), on Sept. 22 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Candidates are encouraged to pre-register online at www.labor.ny.gov/secure/workforce/recruitment-event-bronx. For more information, call (718) 590-6252.

Apartment Applications

Applications are available for affordable housing for low-income individuals. To obtain an application, call Common Ground at (212) 659-0878.

Photo Club Meet-up

The New York Botanical/Zoological Photographic Society meets Saturday mornings at 9:45 a.m., through June, at the Ford-

ham Preparatory School, Room 243 on the Fordham University Rose Hill Campus, 441 E. Fordham Rd. Photographers can improve their skills, show their work, receive instruction, and attend workshops, photo shoots, and competitions. Admission is free. For more information, call (718) 543-3115.

MetroCard Buses/Vans

The MetroCard Bus for senior citizens is available at Scott Towers, 3400 Paul Ave., every fourth Monday of each month (excluding holidays) from 1 to 3 p.m.

Citizenship and English Classes

The Fordham Bedford Community Center offers free citizenship classes, Mondays and Wednesdays, designed to prepare students for questions asked on the U.S. Citizenship interview, and

free English classes (October to May), Tuesdays and Thursdays, both from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Interested individuals must complete an online registration form and bring it to Refuge House, 2715 Bainbridge Ave., on respective class days before class begins. For more information, call (718) 733-2557.

Free Curb Your Dog Signs

Free "Curb Your Dog" signs are available to homeowners and building superintendents at Community Board 7's office, 229A E. 204th St., from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information or to schedule a pickup, call (718) 933-5650.

To submit items for Neighborhood Notes, email dcruz@norwoodnews.org, subject line "Neighborhood Notes."

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Jerome-Gun Hill BID Fall Festival

The Jerome-Gun Hill BID is holding its free 14th annual **Fall Festival**, Sept. 19 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., rain or shine, on Jerome Avenue between Gun Hill Road and Mosholu Parkway. Events include live musical performances, chess tournament and lessons, dominos tournament, and basketball clinics. For more information, call (718) 324-4946.

Onstage

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **A Tribute to the Big Latin Bands**, featuring the Machito Orchestra and the Mambo Legends Orchestra, Sept. 19 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$45 to \$60. For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

The Woodlawn Cemetery presents free **Bardekova Ensemble Concert**, Sept. 20 at 3 p.m. at the Woolworth Chapel. The program includes selections of Irving Berlin, Miles Davis, and Celia Cruz, as well as classical composers. Enter at the Jerome/Bainbridge avenues gate. For more information, call (9718) 920-1469.

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **Doo Wop**, featuring the NY Exceptions, Sept. 26 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Events

The Bronx County Historical Society presents **A Special Tour of Yankee Stadium**, Sept. 20 at 2 p.m. Participants will receive Yankee promotional items and a guided tour inside the museum, monument park, and other restricted areas. Tickets are \$30 and can only



Photo courtesy Jerome-Gun Hill BID

THOUSANDS ARE EXPECTED at the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District Fall Festival Sept. 19. The event runs from 11

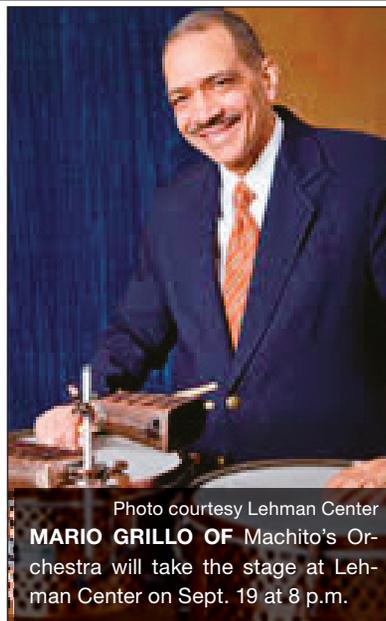


Photo courtesy Lehman Center
MARIO GRILLO OF Machito's Orchestra will take the stage at Lehman Center on Sept. 19 at 8 p.m.

and **Microsoft Word 2010 for Beginners:** (requires in-person advance registration), Sept. 24 at 6 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 adults: **Knitting Circle at 3 p.m.:** Sept.

17 and 25; and **Free Computer Classes:** to learn email and basic computer information, Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy **film:** "Paul Blart Mall Cop 2," Sept. 26 at 1:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for kids: **Afternoon Arts at 4 p.m.:** (ages 5 to 12), to learn about art, then create a piece, Sept. 23 and 30; **Kids Get Active Fridays at 3 p.m.:** (ages 5 to 12), dance and zumba, Sept. 18 and 25; **Kids' Pajama Party:** (ages 18 months to 12 years), to create a craft and hear read-alouds, Sept. 21 at 6 p.m.; and **Super Cool Science:** (ages 5 to 12), hands on experiments, Sept. 22 at 4 p.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy **Wildlife at the Library:** to meet a variety of wild animals, Sept. 18 at 3:30 p.m.; **Art Club at 4:30 p.m.:** to draw and paint with materials provided, Sept. 22 and 29; and **film:** Sept. 28 at 6 p.m. Adults can attend **Computer Basics at noon:** for beginners, Sept. 17, 24 and Oct. 1. 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 Sept. 21 for the next publication date of Oct. 1.

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Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects:** Caterpillar Sock Puppets, to make a woolly bear caterpillar sock puppet, Sept. 19 and 20 (followed by a nature presentation to see live woolly bear caterpillars and learn about them (\$5; free/WH members), at the Ecology Building at 1 p.m.; and Field Notes - An Edible Plant Insurrection, to joint hunt for plants followed by sketching them, then design an edible plant seed packet to plant seeds at home, Sept. 26 and 27; both in WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also scheduled is **concert**, featuring piano and strings performing classical music, Sept. 20 at 2 p.m. in the WH House (tickets are \$28/adults; \$22/WH members; \$15/ages 8 to 18; \$12/WH members; info at ext. 251). Grounds admission is free until noon Saturdays and Tuesdays all year. For more information and a schedule of events including tours and walks, call (718) 549-3200.

Library Events

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents the following events for adults: **film:** "East of Eden," Sept. 19 at 2:30 p.m.;

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CB7 District Mgr. Resigns

(continued from page 1)

Walker-Santiago, pegged as a community booster who's jumped on various neighborhood causes that include spotlighting sales of synthetic marijuana, kept her seat as CB7 chair in a contentious race against Board member William Francis, who challenged Walker-Santiago in three separate elections and coming short. Francis recently resigned from the Board in late August, shortly after Walker-Santiago removed him from the Kingsbridge National Ice Center's Community Advisory Council just a day before the group was to hold its initial meeting.

"It's an open secret that the chairperson of Board 7 and the district manager of Board 7 did not get along, and only [Engelken] knows the true reason why he's leaving," said one Community Board 7 member, who asked not to be identified because of their affiliation with the Board.

But those divisive sentiments were not tangible at the meeting, with Walker-Santiago sitting alongside Engelken as she expressed sincere thanks for Engelken's work. She led the crowd with a round of applause.

Engelken, a former member of the

Board and its so-called Parliamentarian, had replaced Socrates Caba of the Bronx HIV Advocacy Network in May 2014, six months after Caba had handed in his resignation. Caba's tenure as DM lasted from July until December 2013. In his resignation letter, Caba hinted at several new procedures enacted by the Board's executive committee he deemed "unsatisfactory." Walker-Santiago was chair then. She maintained her relationship was productive.

The Board's district manager duties will fall on Thomas Lucania, director of Community Boards Unit and Legislative Affairs for the Borough President's Office. Serving as a kind of stopgap, Lucania was interim district manager for CB7 from December 2013 until May 2014, following Engelken's hiring. Lucania juggled his duties at the Borough President's Office with those at the Board. Residents are still encouraged to call the Board relating to quality of life concerns.

District managers are city employees who serve at the pleasure of the Board, following the lead of its all-volunteer members and chair, while serving as a liaison between Board members and the City of

New York. DMs, mostly operating in their office, ensure neighborhood gripes are properly logged and forwarded to the appropriate city agencies or Board committees for resolutions. By all accounts, the Board manages the district manager, who later facilitates a city response.

But the dynamics and power struggles between district managers and Board chairs vary from Board to Board, creating a working relationship that runs from cordial to frosty. Before Caba's tenure, for instance, Fernando Tirado reigned as district manager. But his debilitating relationship with the previous Board chair, Paul Foster, resulted in Tirado resigning from the Board.

"It has always been a strained relationship with several members of the Board and the chair," Tirado told The Bronx Times Reporter in October 2012 following his resignation. "There were things that were done that I disagreed with and found very difficult to work under."

But some DMs across the Bronx experience very little friction with its chair. In the Central Bronx, Ivine Galarza, Community Board 6's longtime district manager, understands the deferential role DMs

play.

"The district manager needs to work with the Board; there are so many personality conflicts," said Galarza, adding she has a close working relationship with her chair, Wendy Rodriguez. "Sometimes you may have to bend and try to get them on your side. But not all the time think you are Mr. or Mrs. Know-It-All. You need to build rapport with members."

But notwithstanding the Board's internal politics, Engelken notched several achievements under his belt, notably the Board's collective attempts at resolving a broad heat problem involving the real estate firm, Simply Better Homes, an issue the Norwood News covered extensively in the early part of 2015.

"There were a lot of people whether they realized it or not, who really did see concrete and positive changes because of the actions that we took on that issue," said Engelken. "It was a great example of what a Community Board can accomplish."

Engelken's resignation will once again jumpstart the search for the next district manager, which position could take months to fill.

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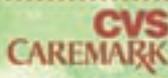
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