



NORWOOD NEWS

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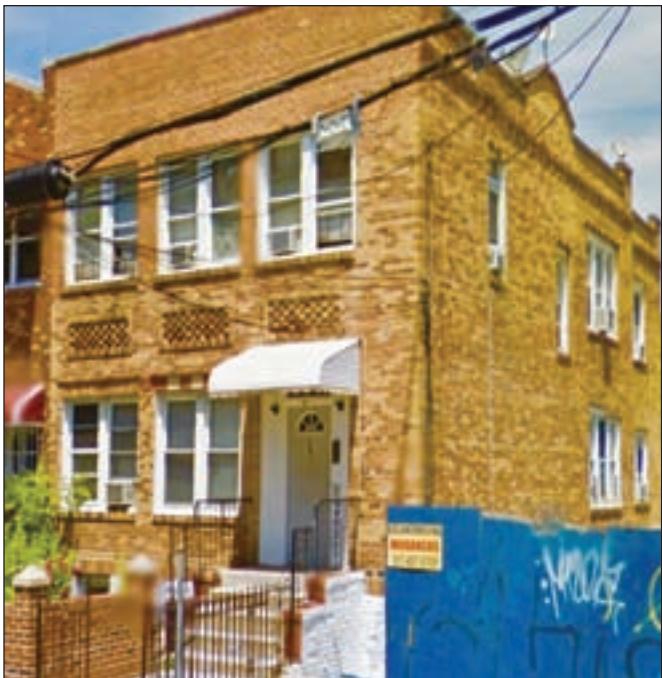
**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
DO YOU VOTE? | PG. 4**



**BRONX PRIMARIES
PREVIEW | PG. 5**

BEDFORD PARK TENANTS DISPLACED

City housing agency looks to keep building owner on hook for repairs



BEFORE AND AFTER images of 267 E. 202nd St. left vacant after a fire tore through the home. Tenants at the property were in the middle of suing their landlord, Peter Fine.

Photos by Google Maps/Daniela Beasley

By DAVID CRUZ

The tenants of 267 E. 202nd St. no longer call that address home. At least not for now.

It didn't come as a result of their ongoing legal dispute with their landlord, Peter Fine, who long sought to aggressively evict tenants while apparently eyeing the property for high-rise redevelopment, but an overnight fire that tore through the en-

tire two-story home, displacing four families and complicating their lawsuit.

But Fine, a multimillionaire and real estate magnate whose portfolio includes Boricua Village in the Melrose section of the Bronx and several luxury homes in Florida, may still be on the hook for restoring the condemned property to pre-fire conditions. The latest adds another layer of delay

for possible redevelopment of the space.

The legal effort by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) complements a Housing Court lawsuit filed by MFY Legal Services on behalf of tenants seeking repairs to the home as a way to stem eviction. Currently, the building has 178 open violations logged through HPD—one class I,

32 class A, 10 class C, considered the most pressing and in need of immediate repair, and 135 class B infractions. So far, HPD charged \$2,682.75 in inspection fees and emergency repairs.

Waiting Game

The wheels of justice, however, have languished in delays, testing tenants' patience. For some tenants,

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EDITORIAL**Here's Why Voting Will Change Your Life**

By the time the next edition of the *Norwood News* rolls in, droves of voters will have headed to schools, community centers and the like to cast their ballot for their next legislator this primary election cycle.

Or, if the cynical side prevails, they'll stay home. Voting, it seems, has become blasé and an avoidable chore. Sadly, the Bronx, a borough that's home to some 619,241 voters facing issues of income inequality, housing and health disparities, only saw 6 percent of its electorate go to the polls in 2015 (coincidentally, Norwood also had 6 percent of its residents go to the polls), according to New York City Board of Elections figures. The numbers are not as bad compared to Manhattan with just 4 percent in 2015. Taken together, New York City, which includes the Bronx, ranks one of the worst cities in New York State when it comes to voting.

With that, here's an editorial that's become a tradition: Go out and vote. Very few will remind you of its power.

This goes for registered Republicans and Democrats, though the latter appears to have far more influence in the Bronx. After all, Bronx Democrats outnumber Republicans by a margin of 10 to 1, making the September Primary a more closely watched election and a preview of just who will win November's General Election to seal the deal.

It's tough to pierce exactly what's led fewer and fewer Bronx residents to the polls. It could be the lack of civic engagement classes taught in high schools that contextualizes the strife it took our union to fight for such a right, a complicated voting system, or the fact Election Day falls on a workday and folks are preoccupied.

Or it could mean that voters have given up on a process that's still nonexistent in countries such as Iran, North Korea and Libya where tyranny rules and speaking out of turn can get you thrown in jail or killed. This outbreak of indifference has certainly



File Photo

VOTE AND VOTE OFTEN to weed out bad politicians.

affected the Bronx. And with politicians in federal, state or city spheres doing little to tell you the power of voting (really, how many registration drives can you think of?), it seems the reminder to vote has been left to those who are driven by passion.

Voting gives you the right to exercise natural choice. That power represents the thousands of soldiers who've died defending that choice from forces that want to strip you of it. We're reminded of that whenever ISIS succeeds in its latest terror bombing or uprisings from a populace demanding it. Even if you feel your candidate will lose, you still haven't. At the end of the day, you haven't relinquished your vote. It's yours and no one can take that away from you. If you're a parent, bring your kids to demonstrate why voting is a conscience decision that holds plenty of weight.

The Bronx seems to have crept away from its sad cesspool of corruption, with former Assemblyman Eric Stevenson holding the title of the last lawmaker to be carted off to jail in 2013 for official misconduct. Perhaps the Bronx has turned a page. But it can regress if the electorate is not cognizant of who they're allowing to govern them.

Perhaps this year's presidential races between Democratic presidential contender Hillary Rodham Clinton and Republican presidential contender Donald Trump will spark a new trend of voter participation, with hordes of voters at the ballot kiosk going forward. We'll have to wait until next November to measure any kind of success.

If there's one positive aspect that could come out of this race, it's that.

Public and Community Meetings

COMMUNITY BOARD 7 committees are held on the following dates at the Board office, 229A E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Budget, Personnel & Ethics Committee on Sept. 1 at 6 p.m.; Public Safety & Quality of Life Committee on Sept. 1; Education, Youth & Libraries Committee on Sept. 1 at 7:30 p.m.; Executive Committee on Sept. 6; Traffic & Transportation Committee on Sept. 8; Veterans Committee on Sept. 8 at 7:30 p.m.; Environment & Sanitation Committee on Sept. 13; and Health & Hospitals Committee on Sept. 13. For more information, call the Board office at (718) 933-5650.

THE BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION meets at 400 E. Moshulu Pkwy, So., apt. B1 (lobby floor), on Sept. 1 at 8 p.m. For more information, call (718) 367-2230.

Opinion

Moshulu Parkway No Place for Ball Sports

By ANDREW COHEN

Perhaps you have shared an experience that was quite memorable when it happened to me—driving along the busy, fast-moving stretch of central Moshulu Parkway when a ball comes flying out in front of your car. You brake quickly, bracing in fear that a child will scamper out into the street to retrieve the ball, then breathe a sigh of relief when that doesn't happen.

New York City Parks Department maintains the six-lane parkway's trees, shrubs, flowers and benches, restful spots in the shade on a hot summer day. Parks also maintains the paved bike lane and fenced recreation areas spread out within the parkway's borders for children and teens—Kossuth Playground, Knox-Gates Playground, Moshulu Playground, and Frisch

Baseball Field.

The neighborhoods that surround the parkway have recreational space, but it is in need of improvement. The most dated, 85-year-old Kossuth, has a recreation building, play equipment, sprinklers, basketball, volleyball and shuffleboard courts. Yet, several years ago, we still saw pick-up games of soccer, volleyball, and football occurring in open spaces in the parkway's median. Some believe that hundreds of dogwood trees were planted along Moshulu Parkway in 2014, specifically to deter ball sports. The point is that trees are a far more appropriate use of the median space in its present configuration than large group barbecues and sports games.

Recognizing that Moshulu Parkway must serve those seek-



Photo courtesy Office of Councilman Andrew Cohen
COUNCILMAN ANDREW COHEN

ing play space as well as motorists, I have brought together stakeholders in the community to gather ideas on improving the corridor for both. A town hall meeting was held in April 2015, and later that year, Parks and New York City Department of Transportation accompanied members of the community board on a walk-through of the parkway. Community visioning events to come up with user-inspired design ideas were held at two playgrounds in fall 2015 and spring 2016, spearheaded by Friends of Moshulu Parkland.

Recognizing this interest, I

allocated over \$600,000 of capital funds towards renovating Kossuth Playground in the 2016 budget, and \$300,000 in the 2017 budget. Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. allocated an additional \$500,000, so a combined \$1.4 million will go to Kossuth. We acknowledge that more funds will be needed to renovate all of the aging, but much-needed play space along the parkway. I recently wrote to Parks Commissioner Mitchell Silver to request that a playground along the parkway be designated as a Community Parks Initiative (CPI) site, due to its dire need for

improvements and the passion of its local advocates. CPI was created to focus on making unprecedented investments to upgrade small, neighborhood parks with committed local advocates. The recreation space along the parkway perfectly fits CPI's goals.

The original plan for the parkway should be respected. Barbecues are prohibited, and ball sports are, quite simply, unsafe. It is imperative that groups use the designated spaces set aside at Frisch Field, Williamsbridge Oval Park, Van Cortlandt Park and Bronx Park for these activities.

Moshulu Parkway should remain a venue for passive recreation. Working together with community advocates is our best option for creating the safe recreational space people want in their parks.

Andrew Cohen is Councilman for the 11th District, which includes the communities of Norwood, Bedford Park, Kingsbridge, Riverdale, Van Cortlandt Village, Wakefield, and Woodlawn.

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



With the Primary set for Sept. 13, this week we asked readers whether they vote and their thoughts on voting.



I do vote. I voted for Obama in his two terms. I wanted to vote for Bernie Sanders, but now I'm going to vote for Hillary Clinton. It's important to vote because they represent the people, and I think Donald Trump is an (expletive). I think Clinton has the backing of her husband, former President Bill Clinton, so I think she is fit for the job.

**Jamise Smith
Norwood**



Yes, I do vote and I think it's very important to vote. When you don't vote, the voting process eliminates funding from a community and the elected officials that we choose and vote for are the ones that have statistics and surveys on the needs of the community. They know how to fight for what the community needs.

**Sandra Pabon
Bedford Park**



Yes, I vote because you have to use your voice. If you don't vote, you don't have a say. I don't think this year is very different; every election is a horse race and everyone has their opinion. The media likes to blow it up, but at the end of the day, the issues are still the same. This year's candidates' high unfavorable rating is due to the primary voters and maybe our primary system needs to be overhauled, but these are the best candidates that each party came up with.

**Carlo Catuogno
Morris Park**



I vote because we select our government. We have to vote. In order to have our government, we have to vote. I would encourage everyone to vote. If you don't vote you don't have a say in anything. This is the worst election year I've ever seen, the worst. People have their choices, and we have to make sure what we're doing in our selection. What comes out of a candidate's mouth is what's in their mind and there's certain choices we make, we can't take back.

**Melvina Cameron
Parkchester**



Yes, I vote to protect my rights, so they don't raise the transit fare and the economy is already so crazy. And Donald Trump wants to send immigrants back to their countries. Why would we want to send the immigrants back if they came here to work hard and pay taxes like everyone else? He wants to build a wall and I don't like that idea.

**Maria Bobben
Van Nest**

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

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September Primary in the Bronx

By DAVID CRUZ and DANIELA BEASLEY

The September Primary, a solid indicator of who will win November's General Election will take place Sep. 13. Several key Democratic races have heated up. The *Norwood News* looks at some of those key races.

33rd State Senate District



Senator Gustavo Rivera (left) of the 33rd Senate District and City Councilman Fernando Cabrera (right) of the 14th Council District took part in a heated debate on BronxTalk with Gary Axelbank. This is Cabrera's second attempt at unseating Rivera, the incumbent who's held the seat since 2011.

Cabrera's district mostly overlaps with Rivera's, with neighborhoods that include Kingsbridge, University Heights and Mt. Hope. Cabrera immediately accused Rivera of not bringing resources to the largely working class district and not passing any laws. Cabrera emphasized the \$50 million in earmarks he brought to the district, which included the installation of surveillance cameras. Traditionally, it is easier for council members to bring in monies to a district when compared to Albany legislators.

"He has a problem with the truth," said Rivera, a repeated counter to Cabrera's criticism throughout the debate.

Rivera defended the work he has done by highlighting three bills that have since been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo and explained his part in increasing school funding for this coming year. He also shot back at Cabrera for accepting money from landlords to advance his campaign, with housing conditions being a big topic of debate during this time.

"If he wants to talk about landlords giving me funding, then I guess I'm the Robin Hood because I'm the one who passed the Tenant Bill of Rights," countered Cabrera.

36th State Senate District

The somewhat crowded race for the 36th Senate District seat, left vacant by Sen. Ruth Hassell-Thompson in July, sees five Democrats on the ballot: Jamaal T. Bailey, Pamela A. Hamilton-Johnson, Edward A. Mulraine, Alvin Ponder, and Rev. Que English.



Photos courtesy respective campaigns

CANDIDATES IN THE crowded Democratic race for the 36th Senate District include (l-r) Jamaal T. Bailey, Pamela A. Hamilton-Johnson, Edward A. Mulraine, Alvin Ponder, and Rev. Que English.

Bailey, a protégé of Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and his director of constituent services, is the frontrunner in the race, thanks to his relationship with Heastie, whose 83rd Assembly District overlaps with the 36th Senate District. Bailey's also received heavy endorsements from labor unions and from Hassell-Thompson.

The district has a foot in Bronx and Westchester counties, making time for both areas a tough split for Hassell-Thompson's successor. One of the major questions posed throughout the campaign is whether Norwood and Bedford Park, falling within the district's coverage area, would be well represented going forward. Bailey, Hamilton-Johnson, and English assured the *Norwood News* their presence will be felt in the neighborhoods.

78th State Assembly District



Longtime Assemblyman José Rivera (left) faces challenger Ischia Bravo, (right) former executive director of the Bronx Democratic County Committee, in the seat for the state's 78th Assembly District, which Rivera has held since 2002. The district covers Fordham, Kingsbridge, Belmont and Bedford Park. There've been several attempts made to unseat Rivera, once chair of the Bronx Democratic County Committee, but Rivera's

always managed to trounce his competition.

Bravo was recently interviewed on BronxTalk in what was intended to be a debate with Rivera, who did not appear on the show. Bravo, meantime, highlighted a Democratic platform that included her desire to grow tourism in the Bronx, improve the public school systems and insure tenants' rights are protected. She didn't offer specifics on how she would accomplish those goals.

"We don't have someone now that's working for us; we have someone now who is collecting a paycheck," said Bravo of Rivera in a video she posted on Facebook shortly after her appearance on BronxTalk.

Rivera was listed as the least-performing lawmaker this year, according to an analysis article published by Politico New York. Although listed as co-sponsor and multi-sponsor to a number of bills, Rivera was the sponsor of only one bill this last legislative session, which saw the ongoing renewal of free Wednesday admission at the Bronx Zoo. Despite his thin legislative record, Rivera did receive endorsements from 1199 SEIU and 32BJ SEIU, the nation's largest labor unions.

In a statement, Rivera said "For the last 34 years I've been working hard for the people I represent. Fighting for funds that bring after-schools programs, funding for seniors centers and to build parks. I work to give the people what they need - and what they sometimes isn't legislation."

78th State Assembly District Leader



The race for female district leader for the 78th Assembly District pits newcomer Samelys Lopez (right) against Nilda Velazquez, (left) a longtime supporter of Assemblyman Jose Rivera who's held the seat since 2014. Lopez, a Bedford Park resident and former Community Board 7 member, launched her grassroots campaign in June, cycling around the district to promote her name and get the necessary signatures to get on the ballot.

The race ranks among the least critical ones this election year, though it signals the ongoing attempt of seeing fresh blood within the 78th Assembly District and its slate of district leaders.

Students, Friends Say Goodbye to Beloved Norwood Teacher

By DAVID GREENE

Students and fellow teachers gathered to say goodbye to a beloved Norwood teacher who passionately pushed scores of students to follow their dreams and pursue their goals.

Ramon Cabrera Mojica, 52, was a teacher by trade. He taught art and fashion design and was the fashion designer and coach to contestants of the Miss Puerto Rico Pageant at the National Puerto Rican Day Parade in Manhattan.

"His death is a loss to the entire community," said Benjamin Torres, Mojica's best friend and roommate. According to Torres, Mojica battled liver cancer and died in Manhattan on Aug. 5.

Mojica taught at MS 308, The Bronx Dance Academy at 3617 Bainbridge Ave. from 2000 to 2014. The school was walking distance from Mojica's home, where he lived for 30 years.

"He loved his job and he was loved by his students," said Torres, adding Mojica was passion-

ate about art, enjoyed nature and would often visit the New York Botanical Garden.

Dozens of fellow colleagues and many former students of Mojica gathered for a memorial service held on Aug. 28 at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church in Marble Hill.

Co-worker Anna Peacock said of Mojica, "He was kind and generous and the teachers loved him. He just embraced everyone and we'll all miss him."

During the memorial service, former student Jennifer Lopez, who attended MS 308 in 2004, recalled Mojica's urging "to try [my] hand at art and design" over ballet, which she briefly entertained. Lopez eventually graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology with an associate's degree in fashion design and a bachelor's degree in business administration. Today Lopez works in the retail department of a Ralph Lauren clothing store.

Nadia Salim, a 2004 graduate of The Bronx Dance Academy, said



Photo by David Greene

RAMON CABRERA MOJICA appears in framed photograph being held by his best friend Benjamin Torres.

of Mojica, "He pushed me to enter an art competition and I won first prize and I've continued drawing ever since."

Maria Picon met Mojica as a contestant of the Miss Puerto Rico

pageant of the New York Puerto Rican Day Parade in 1987, where he was a mentor to the young competitors. It was a competition that Picon would later win. Picon says today, "He was my coach, my teacher, my fashionista, my dress designer. He taught me how to talk to people and be sure of myself and to embrace my culture."

Former journalist Leticia Theodore-Greene penned a piece in 2000 about a citywide art project that featured Mojica. Learning of his death, Theodore-Greene said, "The death of someone who impacts the future, in the way a teacher can, can be a big loss. Teachers do what parents can't do during working hours and what many people don't want to do at all. We owe so many of them our gratitude."

Mojica was cremated. His ashes will be scattered by family members in his native Puerto Rico. In lieu of flowers, Torres asks that donations be made in Mojica's name to the American Cancer Society.

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Kossuth Playground Gets Half Mil Boost from BP



Photo by Wendy Joan Biddlecombe

KOSSUTH PLAYGROUND (PICTURED) is slated for \$1.4 million in renovations.

By WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE

With Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.'s recent pledge to invest more than \$14.3 million in capital funds toward park improvements, the group working to revamp Kossuth Playground on Mosholu Parkway received the news they've been waiting for.

"Yes! We get to have our park! I'm so happy," said Elizabeth Quaranta, president of Friends of Mosholu Parkland (FOMB), reacting to news of Diaz's inclusion of Kossuth Playground receiving \$500,000 in funds for improvements to the playground.

The playground sits atop a hill on Mosholu Parkway and is the only legally designated area for recreation on the parkway. Councilman Andrew Cohen, who represents Norwood, is adding an extra \$300,000 to the \$600,000 he set aside last fiscal year. Cohen said the initial idea was to do a "modest upgrade" of the park. Eventually, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation recommended a total overhaul of the 86-year-old playground.

"We are trying to push for our residents – both young and old – to develop and practice healthier habits, as well as the importance of play space for kids to be kids," Diaz Jr. said in a statement to *Norwood News*. Diaz noted the playground project is "very much in tune with all of our needs that we could get behind and support" through capital monies.

The allocation coincides with FOMP's broader attempt to renovate Kossuth Playground. Last fall, the group launched an effort with Partnerships for Parks that polled residents over how to better the playground. Recommendations includ-

ing a comfort station, improved lighting, repaired surfaces, and improvements to the sprinklers and water fountains were outlined in a vision report released this past spring.

With money set aside for upgrades, the next step is a scope meeting between the Department of Parks and community residents. The process—which will eventually include the design, bidding and construction—could take about three and a half years, Cohen said.

"As long as it's new voices to add to what is already there," said Quaranta of the scope meeting. "But to repeat the same things over and over again... We need to use our time productively and not to go over the same things that we've known for so many years."

The basketball court should be among the first amenities to get a facelift, said Quaranta, adding that kids should be directed to play on the new courts at the Williamsbridge Oval during construction.

"This park affects a lot of people in this community and we want to see it preserved for future generations," Quaranta said. "There are a lot of trees here but we live in a very urban lifestyle. Everyone here has one job, two jobs, is trying to put food on the table, and this is where they come and sit and watch the kids play and take a breather from their apartments. The playground is a reprieve."

Editor's Note: *Friends of Mosholu Parkland will hold a fall festival at Kossuth Playground on Oct. 8. More information is available on the Friends of Mosholu Parkland Facebook page or by emailing mosholuparkland@gmail.com.*

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SNAPSHOTS



Photo by Miriam Quinones

FREESTYLE LEGEND TONY ORTIZ sings his heart out at the sixth annual Summer Streets on Aug. 4. The well-attended event sponsored by Moshulu Preservation Corporation and the East 204th Street-Bainbridge Avenue Merchants Association drew scores of residents to Norwood's neighborhood business strip. The all-day gathering began with the World Cup Bar Starz championship on East 204th Street between Bainbridge and Decatur avenues.



Photo courtesy Montefiore Health System

THESE 10 BRONX KIDS wrap up their time at Camp Spinnaker in New Hampshire in mid-August. These children, who all have asthma, receive their care at Montefiore Medical Center. Their trip to the camp is funded with help from the Centers for Disease Control's New Hampshire Asthma Control Program and the American Lung Association. Associates from Montefiore's Comprehensive Family Care Center facilitated the trip.



Photo by Miriam Quinones

THESE KIDS TEST their athletic prowess on the race track, one of 15 sports activities at Williamsbridge Oval Park as part of the annual Summer Sports Jamboree hosted by the New York City Parks Department. The kids' event drew an estimated 1000 young people to the park on Aug. 17. At its heart, the all-day event encouraged exercise at New York City's parks.



Photo by Miriam Quinones

ORQUESTA SCC MEMBERS perform their flair of Latin music at the doors to the Williamsbridge Oval's Recreation Center. The group performed Aug. 11 and was sponsored by local Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz as part of the 2016 Summer Concert Series in the Northwest Bronx.



Photo by Miriam Quinones

THE PUBLIC ADVOCATE'S OFFICE recognized several Bronx residents for dedication to their neighborhoods at the 52nd Precinct's National Night Out event. The county-wide event bolsters relationships between communities and police departments. Standing with Brenda Caldwell, president of the 52nd Precinct Community Council (2nd from left), holding up awards, are (l-r) Sheila Sanchez, Carlos Ortiz and 52nd Precinct Community Affairs Officer Crystal Reveron.



Photo courtesy Montefiore Health System

WORLD WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT'S Chief Brand Officer Stephanie McMahon (pictured) shares a moment with 3-year-old Daniel at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore on Aug. 17. McMahon had been joined by V Foundation CEO Susan Braun along with WWE wrestlers Darren Young, Dolph Ziggler, Zack Ryder and NXT Superstar Bayley for the scheduled WWE-themed appearance.

Norwood Local Heads to BU Law on Full Ride

Miosotti Tenecora, a graduate of local Bronx public schools and Fordham University-Rose Hill (Bachelor's, Magna Cum Laude, 2010), recently began her studies at Boston University School of Law as a Public Interest Scholar, a full-tuition award that recognizes her academic achievement and commitment to practicing public interest law. She is the daughter of Flor Mejia of Norwood, who works as a student bus attendant.

Over the summer, Tenecora served as an intern in the district office of New York City Council Member Andrew Cohen, where she helped arrange free legal help for local residents, in partnership with several public interest law groups. During her time in college, she volunteered numerous hours tutoring Bronx high school students and is currently mentoring a Bronx high school student through the organization, iMentor. Local honors for Tenecora have included the 2016 "Rookie of the Year" Award for volunteer work with

the Bronx Young Democrats.

Tenecora also received an M.A. in International Studies from Concordia University in 2014, and during that degree program, worked in Shanghai, China for a year as an instructor at the Delter-Telfort Business Institute. She is interested in eradicating poverty and violence against women and children, ensuring peaceful societies, and advancing sustainable development that is in harmony with nature. She recently worked at Sanctuary for Families as Project Assistant for their Matrimonial/Economic Justice Project, and interned at the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Andorra to the United Nations, following and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals. She also worked at the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York in Brooklyn, the Victims Services Unit at the King's County District Court, and volunteered with a group called 'Her Justice.'

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HELP WANTED

Head Cook - Moshulu Montefiore Community Center is seeking a full time head cook for our Senior Center. The ideal candidate will have 2+ years' institutional food preparation experience, including supervising food production and kitchen staff, ordering food products, creating and following menus as per DFTA and DOH guidelines, maintaining kitchen sanitation and safety standards, assisting in safety training and procedures, complying w/state, local and regulatory agencies. Experience developing nutrition programs for senior citizens a plus. HS degree and Food Handler's certificate required. Culinary training a plus. Competitive salary and benefits. Submit cover letter and resume to: jobs@mmcc.org.

SUMMER TRIPS

Kancella Travel & Tours, Sept. 17: Winery Tour and Wine Tasting in New Jersey. Enjoy an introduction to wine making and sample the finest at this location. Italian lunch included. 5-Hour Resorts Casino w/bonus price, \$89 pp; Oct. 2: Lobster Feast and sea food at Nordic Lodge Restaurant in Rhode Island – ALL YOU CAN EAT. 5 Hours at Mohegan Sun Casino w/bonus price, \$169 pp. Buses depart Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx. Time 8 a.m.; Las Vegas, Nevada, Sept. 23: 5 days and 4 nights. Included: hotel, air transportation, tours, lunch buffet. 4 nights at Excalibur Hotel & Casino. Price \$889 pp. Call for reservation and purchase tickets. Kancella Tours – Justo Cancellia (347) 405-2017; Eddie Rosa Enterprise (718) 757-5485. Email kancellastours191@yahoo.com.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES



Participatory Budgeting

Workshop assemblies on Participatory Budgeting, a process where residents decide how \$1 million of taxpayer money will be spent for community improvements in their neighborhoods, take place at the following locations: Bedford Park Senior Center, 243 E. 204th St., on Sept. 8, and at the Williamsbridge Oval on Sept. 28, both at 7 p.m. For more information or to RSVP, call the Office of Councilman Andrew Cohen at (718) 549-7300.

September Primary

New York State's Primary takes place on Sept. 13. Polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. across the Bronx. To find your nearest poll site, go to <https://nyc.pollsitelocator.com/search>.

Poll Workers Sought

Apply to become a paid poll worker at <http://www.elections.ny.gov/BecomePollworker.html>. Responsibilities

include setting up voting equipment, process voters, and assist voters if required. Candidates must be a New York City resident.

Rent Freeze

Help on applying for a rent freeze through the New York City Rent Freeze Program, or SCRIE/DRIE, is available Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. by appointment at Refuge House, 2715 Bainbridge Ave. To be eligible, you must be at least 62 years of age or receiving disability benefits through Social Security and having a total household income of \$50,000 or less. For more information or to make an appointment, call (718) 933-2539.

Health Bucks

Health Bucks, coupons that can be used towards food purchases at area farmers markets, are available at the Office of Councilman Ritchie Torres, 573 E. Fordham Rd., Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Residents

must live within the 15th Council District and qualify for \$10 worth of Health Bucks only. For more information, call (718) 842-8100.

MetroCard Bus

MetroCards can be purchased through the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's buses every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month at the following locations: Fordham Road and Grand Concourse from noon to 2 p.m.; and Van Cortlandt Village, 3887 Sedgwick Ave., from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Senior citizens wishing to get discounted MetroCard passes can go to Scott Towers, 3400 Paul Ave., every 4th Monday of each month, from 1 to 3 p.m. Services are unavailable on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Resolve Warrants

An information session on resolving warrant issues for basic quality of life infractions, including drinking al-

cohol in public, trespassing, loitering, and littering, takes place Sept. 17 at Mount Hope Community Center, 55 E. 175th St., from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 590-2272.

Free Flu Shots

Montefiore and Walgreens/Duane Reade will hold free flu clinics for the public at the following locations throughout the borough on Sept. 25: St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church, 2345 University Ave. from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; and Our Lady of Mercy Church, 2496 Marion Ave., from 2 to 5 p.m. For more information, call (718) 920-4659.

SNAP Benefits

Families of three earning a total \$2,512 a month are now entitled to food stamp benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). For more information or to find the SNAP office nearest you, call the Bronx Human Resources Administration office at (718) 722-8013.

CAREER INFORMATION SEMINARS

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Park Reservoir Bd. Must Follow Mitchell-Lama Rules, Says State

By DAVID CRUZ

A state agency that oversees administrative decisions for Mitchell-Lama cooperatives has told the Board of Directors of Park Reservoir to comply with rules when it comes to changing management firms.

The latest comes as a majority of board members for the Van Cortlandt Village complex seek to officially replace its longtime management company, Amalgamated Housing Cooperatives, at a board meeting scheduled Sept. 11. The letter could delay the vote, resulting in board members starting its vetting process all over again and giving supporters of Amalgamated more time to hammer out any differences.

In a two-page letter obtained by the *Norwood News*, the state Department of Homes and Community Renewal (DHCR), the state agency that oversees Mitchell-Lama buildings, suggested the board jumped the gun in scouting for a new management company. A bureaucratic procedure must be followed when finding a new managing agent, according to the letter, including the submission of a management plan.

"All proposed managing agents must meet the minimum eligibility requirements under DHCR's Mitchell-Lama regulations," read the letter. "They must, among other selection

criteria, be a licensed, NY State real estate broker and must provide a Statement of Qualifications describing its experience and capacity for managing the development."

In an emergency meeting in mid-July, cooperators were given a handout detailing the Board's vetting process that ended with criticism over the board's backwards approach to scouting for a new management company. At the meeting, which revealed nasty infighting among board members, cooperators were told that Midas Management, a Bronx-based real estate company, was the preferred firm. The firm has ties with Daniel Padernacht, a housing attorney and chair of Bronx Community Board 8, which covers Van Cortlandt Village.

Supporters of Amalgamated argue its 60-year relationship with Park Reservoir and its above-average amenities should be taken into consideration. Opponents say Amalgamated's meddling in Park Reservoir's financial affairs have forced it to take control of its destiny.

Leading the push is Steve Zitrin, vice president of the board, who declined to comment on the latest development. Susan Braunstein, another board member in favor of replacing Amalgamated, did not return calls as of press time.

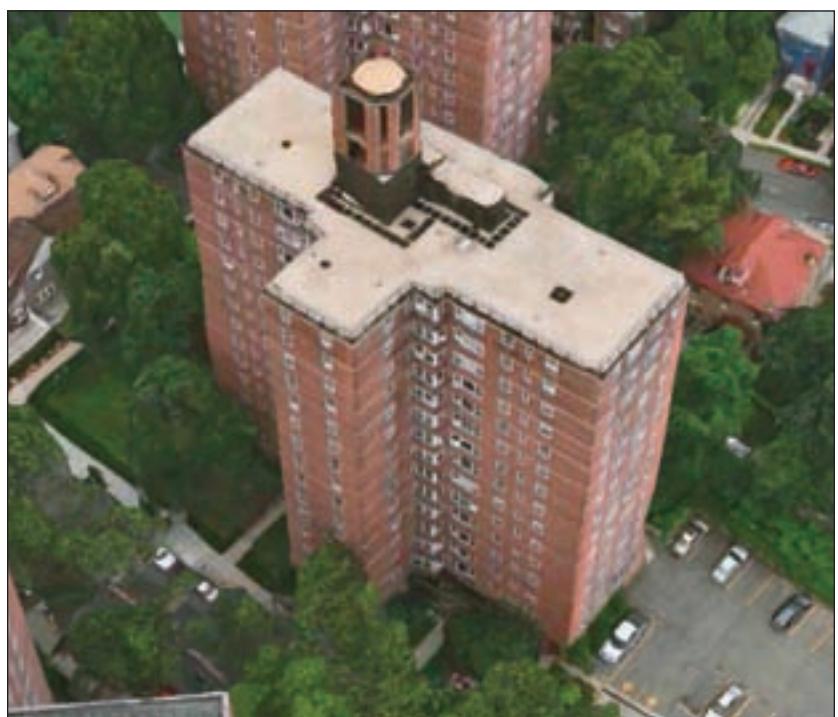


Image still
A MEETING WILL decide the fate of the current management company of Park Reservoir (pictured).

NCBH Names New CEO

Amid financial turmoil for the city's network of hospitals, Maureen Pode, previously acting CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals in North Central Bronx, has officially been named CEO of the North Central Bronx Hospital, by president and CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals, Dr. Ram Raju.



MAUREEN PODÉ

Earlier in her career, Pode held an assortment of positions at the Cabrini Medical Center before deciding to work at NYC Health + Hospitals where she has stayed for the past 14 years.

As a senior execu-

tive, Pode will begin implementing the three new service lines that have replaced the hospital's former network structure, focusing on patient care, post-acute care and ambulatory care. Pode has more

than 30 years' experience in acute and ambulatory care and looks forward to contributing to the change that NYCH Health + Hospitals ultimately hope will improve health outcomes and eliminate unnecessary hospital admissions.

"I look forward to continuing our work together to build upon the rich history for serving the residents of the North Bronx," said Pode. "Our strength has been and will continue to be our commitment to the provision of respectful compassionate and high quality care."

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Free Theatre at the Oval

The public is invited to a free performance of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, Sept. 10 at 1 p.m. For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 543-8672 or contact sarah.bishow@parks.nyc.gov.

Onstage

Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd., Pelham Bay Park, presents **Summer Sunset Classical Concert** from 7 to 8 p.m. Sept. 15: Violinist and harpsichordist perform sonatas. Tickets are \$20/concert. For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 885-1461.

Events

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. invites the public to a **Muslim School Holiday Celebration**, a fun filled day, on Sept. 17 from noon to 3 p.m. at PS

83, 950 Rhinelander Ave. (entrance on Radcliff Avenue). For more information, call (718) 590-3522.

Fordham Road BID presents **Fordham Film Festival**. Events begin at 5 p.m. and include music, games and activities. At Bryan Park, East Fordham and East Kingsbridge roads: Sept. 9 at 7:30 p.m.: "E.T." For more information, visit fordhamroad.nyc.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects: Print and Fly With Monarch Butterflies**, to make large-scale printed butterflies and participate in a group



File Photo

PRINT AND FLY With Monarch Butterflies to make large-scale printed butterflies and participate in a group installation, Sept. 3 and 4, at Wave Hill (see details under "Events").

installation, Sept. 3 and 4; and **Go Outdoors With Van Gogh**, to sketch nature using watercolor paint and pencils, Sept. 10 and 11; both in WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 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.

Bedford Park Congregational Church, corner of Bainbridge Avenue and 201st Street, presents events to help celebrate 127 years of service to the Bedford Park community: **organ concert** at 3 p.m. and **catered dinner** at 5 p.m., both on Sept. 18 (\$35/ticket); and **Anniversary Service** on Sept. 25 at 11 a.m. For more information, call Reverend Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj at (718) 367-8996.

The Children's Hospital at Montefiore, 3415 Bainbridge Ave., presents its annual **Back-to-School Resource Fair**, Sept. 21 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Included are education and recreation resources for families and service providers of children with disabilities, adult learning, after school, Dial-a-Teacher, homework help, and more. For more information, call (718) 741-2426.

The Jerome-Gun Hill BID will celebrate its 20th anniversary and **15th Annual Fall Festival** on Sept. 17 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., rain or shine, on Jerome Avenue, between East Gun Hill Road and East Mosholu Parkway North. Events include live musical performances, children's activities, vendors and food, and a variety of BID merchants. For more information, call (718) 324-4946.

throughout the Garden which helps celebrate its 125th anniversary. For more information, call (718) 817-8700.

Library Events

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents the following events for adults: **film: "In the Time of the Butterflies,"** Sept. 10 at 2:30 p.m.; and **Microsoft Word 2010 for Beginners:** (online registration required), Sept. 12 at 2 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 kids: **Backyard Exploration at 4 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12), to hang out in the backyard, help with the garden, play, write with chalk, read, etc., Sept. 6 and 13; and **Arts & Crafts at 3:30 p.m.**: (ages 3 to 12), to make book logs and friendship bracelets, Sept. 7 and 14. Teens/young adults can enjoy: **film: "The Angry Birds,"** Sept. 10 at 1:30 p.m. Adults can attend: **Device Advice at 10:30 a.m.**: One-on-one help with phone/tablet, text messages and download apps, Sept. 7 and 14; **Free Computer Classes:** to learn email and basic computer information, Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.; and **Knitting Circle:** Thursdays at 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for children: **Kids Get Active Fridays at 3 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12), dance moves on the Wii game console, Sept. 2 and 9; and **Toddler Storytime and Craft:** (ages 3 to 5), stories, songs and craft, Sept. 1 at 11:15 a.m. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

Exhibits

The New York Botanical Garden presents **Impressionism: American Gardens on Canvas** through Sept. 11, an exhibition



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NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Sept. 5 for the next publication date of Sept. 15.

Bedford Park Tenants Displaced

(continued from page 1)

it was their last straw.

Cinthya Garcia, a mother of two forced to relocate to a dingy homeless shelter in Queens, is among the newly scattered tenants. She eventually moved out of that shelter to another shelter in the South Bronx and is now awaiting news from the New York City Human Resources Administration, a city agency that's now finding a place for her.

"As of right now, I'm sitting in a shelter that is not a place for my kids," Garcia said. "And if I could get a place that we could lay peacefully and not be around junkies and bugs and rodents, I would take that over anything."

Garcia would be the second tenant to move on. Still, the shrinking list of tenants does not weaken their case against Fine.

Carrying On

Community residents are still keeping the cause alive, for the sake of its tenants and the preservation of that sleepy portion of Bedford Park. It's for that reason neighborhood activists have opposed Fine's proposal to build a high-rise apartment building. The neighborhood is currently zoned as an R8, which allows for buildings 10 stories or higher.

Uproar over Fine's intentions has since ensued, with many seeing Fine's idea as further congesting the narrow neighborhood. It also inspired a petition that blamed the neighborhood's decades old zoning laws for making high-rise construction easy in the neighborhood.

Fine effectively inherited the building's problems that happened under Genesis Realty, the previ-

ous owner and management company. Early this year, Genesis sent eviction notices on Fine's behalf demanding tenants to leave within 30 days. Tenants suspected the evictions were part of an elaborate scheme to force tenants out so developers can bulldoze the building, thereby increasing the lot space, and allow for a higher building.

There were also instances of harassment including late-night visits from Fine himself, according to previous claims from tenants.

"The tenants need to be treated right, which they haven't throughout all this," John Reilly, a Bedford Park resident and expert on affordable housing, said. Reilly suggested tenants should receive some punitive damages to make them "whole again."

Fire

The fire occurred at 2 a.m. on Aug. 11, with flames tearing through the second floor, waking tenants.

"The minute I open my front door, it was like hell had just met me at the door," Garcia said. "The whole hallway was so hot. I don't know how a fire got so hot so quickly."

One resident had escaped by leaping from the second floor, landing on a car 12 feet from his apartment and suffering injuries. Families have since set up a GoFundMe page asking for donations to pay for the victim's hospital bills.

Marisol Jimenez, another tenant, was in her basement apartment as a firefighter attempted to rescue her and her elderly parents. "My father had to be pushed out of the way by a fireman; fire and debris threatened to fall

on him," Jimenez recalled. Jimenez and her parents are currently living with her brother elsewhere.

Six other residents and three firefighters sustained injuries.

Its timing led community leaders to consider a variety of ways the fire began, including the possibility it may have been set intentionally. A spokesman for Fine, Michael McKeon, criticized the notion of foul play as "outrageous, reckless and not supported by any facts."

A FDNY investigation would later determine the blaze was an accidental electrical fire caused by a faulty air conditioner.

"Even in the most generous scenario, this fire is indisputably gross negligence," Councilman Andrew Cohen, who represents Bedford Park, said.

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