



NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 29, No 24 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • DECEMBER 8-21, 2016



INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
HOLIDAY SHOPPING | PG. 4



**SPECIAL REPORT: NOISE IN NORWOOD
AND BEYOND | PGS. 8-9**

BRACING FOR TRUMP PRESIDENCY

Immigrants and advocates turn fear into mobilization on verge of Trump presidency



Photo by Wendy Joan Biddlecombe

PAM SPORN (background center) hangs a sign inside a beauty salon window on Bainbridge Avenue. She works alongside fellow volunteer John Losasso.

**By DEBORAH CRUZ and
WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE**

Ahead of a new presidency, where the country's next commander-in-chief, Donald Trump, a Republican, has vowed to deport millions of undocumented immigrants while triggering anti-immigration sentiment, sections of Norwood hosted events that either denounced his positions or took them seriously.

At a community room at Tracey Towers filled to the brim, the foreign-born came in droves for help on filling out their citizenship paperwork. The pop-up immigration service saw immigration attorneys aid visitors in filling out form N-400. The demand was noticeably high—those who stopped by without making an appointment ahead of time were told they had to call for a

separate appointment.

"It is definitely filled to its capacity. We sold out last time and we sold out this time," said Councilman Andrew Cohen, a Democrat who organized the event with CUNY Citizenship Now, said. "I would say that the climate has only heightened with insecurity about the kind of Draconian immigration policies our new president might find appropriate."

The CUNY Citizenship Now, which has offered free immigration services since 1996, is strictly for legal U.S. residents with a current Green Card. The program provides counseling with attorneys, and flashcards to prepare people for the citizenship test, and fact sheets on how to acquire U.S. citizenship. There is also the opportunity for the appli
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Vol. 29, No. 24

Norwood News is published bi-weekly on Thursdays by Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC)
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EDITORIAL



Let's Cut Out That Racket

For this edition, the *Norwood News* embarked on a journey to understand the culture of noise, specifically incessantly loud noise in the neighborhood with a near 3,000-word article that barely scratches the surface on why the city is unable to blunt this pesky quality of life complaint.

Noise, whether it's loud parties, car horns blaring, or that infernal Mr. Softee ice cream truck that spews that annoying jingle, is pervasive. That noise, unlike the rumble of trains or daytime sirens, fly-by-night noise in the grand scheme of things, can go on for hours, seriously damaging quality of life. For residents, they've tolerated the noise so much that it's embedded in their life. In one case, a person shrugged, wondering, "What am I going to do?"

The first step is usually to call the police in the hopes of resolving issues. It's not always the case to get help, especially for the 52nd Precinct, whose priorities lie in resolving criminal or emergency situations before handling quality of life matters, standard practice across the agency.

But the NYPD can't seem to completely stem noise issues. Answering a noise complaint, at a residential building for instance, is thwarted should an alleged offender not answer the door. The noise could thus continue, thus allowing violators to carry on with intensity and unknowingly exploiting a policy that makes loud noise a permissible move.

So would the New York City Council consider a law that would tape a noise complaint summons to the apartment door of a violator? After all, the New York City Department of Sanitation does not have to see a violator leave garbage on their front lawn for sanitation officers to issue a ticket. Why can't the Police Depart-

**The more
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311 with noise
complaints, the
more the Police
Department can
get a clearer
picture of how
bad the noise is.
Standing back
does nothing.**

ment be given the same right? The Police Department has a variation of that kind of approach via red light cameras, where tickets are issued to the owner of a vehicle that runs the light. The principal can translate to noise coming from apartment buildings. Why not ticket the management company who will then pass the cost to the person whose name is attached to the apartment via an existing lease or current records?

We're living in a data world. Is it too much trouble for a police officer to review 311 complaints made on a building and direct HPD and/or the Buildings Department to send letters

to building managements, warning that fines would be imposed if they continue the culture of noise? Or are building managers so far removed that it allows noisy tenants to run wild?

Looking the other way is not an approach that solves issues. For residents to really take back their quality of life, it requires an aggressive avalanche of calls to 311. The system, set up in 2003, works as an accountability metric. So if 311 analysts begin to see an uptick in noise complaints, perhaps the NYPD will revive Operation: Silent Night, which dedicated cops to exclusively answer to noise complaints in so-called "high noise zones." The premise had the DNA of the NYPD's Broken Windows Theory: stopping quality of life noise to thwart bigger crime. Police officers, working with other agencies, had used sound meters to determine the frequency of sound and issue tickets.

Should the program be implemented, the first step would be to purchase more sound meters. As it stands, only one meter, albeit outdated, is available at each precinct. Not exactly adequate resources to combat the number one quality of life complaint in the city. The New York City Council should consider upping the NYPD's budget to get those meters.

Fighting crime does involve data-driven analyses. That's where residents come in. The more they flood 311 with noise complaints, the more the Police Department can get a clearer picture of how bad the noise is. Standing back does nothing. If you hear loud noise, call it in. Otherwise, the only peace you'd get may be moving to a quieter neighborhood.

Public and Community Meetings

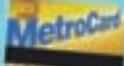
COMMUNITY BOARD 7 will hold its general board meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 20 at 6:30 p.m. at Serviam Gardens, 323 E. 198th St. Committee meetings are held on the following dates at the board office, 229 E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Environment & Sanitation Committee meets on Dec. 13; Health & Hospitals Committee meets on Dec. 13 at 7:30 p.m.; and Community Relations/Long Term Planning Committee meets on Dec. 15. For more information, call the Board office at (718) 933-5650.

THE 52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL meets at Beso Lounge, 320 E 204th St., Dec. 22, from 6 to 9 p.m. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.

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By DAVID GREENE

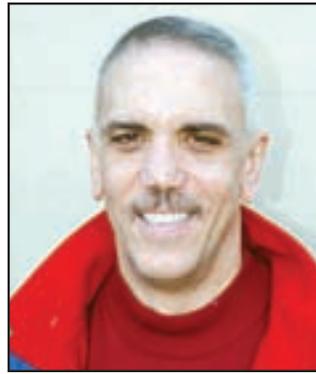


This week we asked readers where they would be buying their holiday gifts this season.



Honestly, I'm doing all of my shopping online with minor shopping in the stores because the stores are crazy right now. So most things I will get online. I will go to Bay Plaza, Fordham or Parkchester. There's a lot of good deals, also on 125th Street there are some good deals.

Diana Sawaked
Van Nest



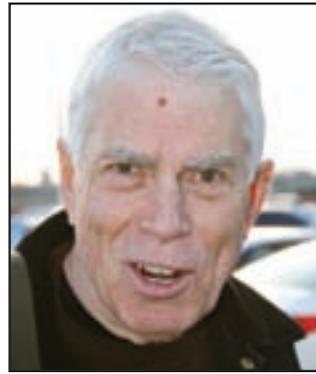
I definitely have my Christmas list and I'm going to shop here in the Bronx to support our merchants and vendors. So most of my shopping will be done here in the Bronx on Jerome Avenue, The Hub on Third Avenue or Bay Plaza, trying to keep business in the Bronx. There are great deals, you just have to keep your eyes out for them and go online and check and see when the deals are available.

Anthony Naccari
Norwood



Mostly, I will do online shopping, absolutely. I will buy some iPads, a lot of candles and perfume from Bloomingdale's and will go to Target for the Christmas tree and the lights. I won't be doing a lot of shopping in the Bronx, just Target and the rest online, because I don't like shopping at all.

Chloe Rojas
Yonkers



I do have my Christmas list ready. Well, we're being pretty modest this year. I have a granddaughter who we got a record player for; remember those? And we got some records and we're sending them up to her with a small check. Target is one store we'll visit and a lot online. Online is just easier, no crowds of people. The shipping and the taxes kind of balance each other out and there's more than I can find online. I'm going to buy something in Target and have no idea where inside that two-acre store I will find it.

John Garges
Yonkers



My feelings are Donald Trump is going to be a great president for the United States. He's a cutthroat businessman. On dealing with the rest of the world, he may need to learn how to calm down and talk, but when it comes to business, nobody tells him anything. I hope Donald Trump does good. I understand when he says we're going to bring America back to the way it was, because in the '80s and '90s, the white Americans got lazy; they did their drugs and partied and then asked, "Where did our good jobs go?"

Albert Mango
Bedford Park

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DeWitt Clinton HS Principal Removed



The troubled DeWitt Clinton High School considered one of the worst performing schools in the New York City public school system, is now left without its principal amid accusations he fixed grades, according to reports.

Santiago Taveras (shown above) was removed as principal of the once famed school early this week. *The New York Times* reported Taveras was removed after an internal investigation by the New York City Department of Education (DOE) found he changed grades on student transcripts while threatening to remove an assistant principal in keeping it quiet by giving the principal a poor rating. Accusations Taveras altered grades was first reported by the *New York Post* more exactly one year ago, and disputed by school staffers.

Taveras, who recently made local headlines for jump-starting an initiative that would see Clinton students complete their schooling in four years, became school principal in 2013 after spending several years as a DOE deputy chancellor assigned to close failing schools.

The news further stains a school that's seen prominent alumni such as comic book icon Stan Lee, retiring Congressman Charles Rangel, and designer Ralph Lauren. In the last decade, the school has fallen into academic despair. A review of the DOE's High School directory and High School Progress Report, results shows the graduation rate at DeWitt Clinton High School at 45 percent, significantly lower than the average 69 percent citywide.

The DOE is reportedly seeking a replacement.

- David Cruz



Image courtesy Apple Maps

THE PARK RESERVOIR complex (pictured) has a new Board of Directors following months of infighting over whether to replace its longtime management company.

Park Reservoir Sees New Board After Battle Over Management Switch

By DAVID CRUZ

After a bitter battle over a proposal to switch management firms at a Mitchell-Lama complex in Van Cortlandt Village, several members of the Board that pushed for the proposed switch have been voted out, with members favoring the existing management now in power.

Among its first orders of business was nixing the plan to remove the longstanding company.

"I believe now the plan to

come up with a new management company is essentially dead, period," Gary Axelbank, newly elected vice president of the Park Reservoir Board of Directors, said.

Cooperators at the complex voted off four members of its Board of Directors in early November. For months, the ousted members lobbied to replace its management company, Amalgamated Housing, a firm that's been tethered to Park Reservoir for more than six decades, citing financial

reasons. Members, led by now former vice president, Steve Zitrin, sought Midas Management, a Bronx-based real estate brokerage firm, as a replacement. The Board's current president, Andy Kimmerling, was one of the lone dissenters against the replacement.

The former Board finally voted in favor of replacing management companies, though its decision was not set in stone pending submissions to the state Department

of Housing and Community Renewal, the agency that oversees Mitchell-Lama complexes.

The news came suddenly to cooperators who felt sidelined over the developments, with some joining the Committee to Save Park Reservoir to stymie any changeover. In a vote expressing their outrage, committee members voted 111 to 35 opposing the former majority's move.

The new Board intends to be more transparent.

Bus Sandwich on Jerome Avenue



Photo by Miosotis Munoz

IT WAS QUITE the scene on Jerome Avenue near Rite Aid as this vehicle becomes a bus sandwich following a three-vehicle collision on Nov. 30, considered a New York City Gridlock Alert Day and also considered a heavily busy traffic day. Gridlock caused the traffic to be backed up, causing delays, as the accident that involved a Beeline Bus and MTA bus was cleared up. No injuries were reported. Passengers on both buses had to get off and find another ride.

Deliveryman Robbed in Norwood, Suspect on the Loose

Cops at the 52nd Precinct need help tracking a suspect wanted for robbing a deliveryman at gunpoint as he was making a delivery stop.

Police say the suspect (pictured) followed the 54-year-old victim inside 3544 DeKalb Ave. on Nov. 20 around 1 a.m., flashing a gun. It was in the building's vestibule where the victim was stopped at gunpoint, willingly giving up the \$60 in cash he was carrying. The suspect quickly took off.

The thief is described as a male Hispanic, around 25 to 35 years old, and average height. He was spotted in surveillance camera wearing a black baseball cap, a black



leather jacket and black pants.

Anyone with information about the crime is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at (800) 577-TIPS (8477). Calls can be anonymous.

—David Cruz

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Sad, Final Toast Held for McDwyer's Pub

By DAVID GREENE

A steady stream of customers old and new have been paying their respects for the last several weeks, as the news spread that Norwood's iconic McDwyer's Pub would be closing after half a century.

Eamonn McDwyer, or "Eddie" to his friends, was just 29 years old when he opened his saloon on St. Patrick's Day, 1966, at the corner of East 204th Street and Hull Avenue. In the final days, he was surrounded by friends as workers removed a television and pinball machine, a rarer find in the Bronx.

Jeffery Cohen, an attorney who represented McDwyer in his failed battle against his landlord, said that McDwyer was a victim of the ever-changing business atmosphere. Cohen who stopped by the bar to check on his client, explained, "Real estate prices have gotten so escalated... pretty much it's a new environment, a new world. It's a changing atmosphere."

A neighborhood that once boasted no less than 23 bars along the Bainbridge Avenue/East 204th Street strip now has just three places to sit and have a drink.

After saying good-bye to well-wishers, McDwyer poured his last glass of wine on Tuesday, Nov. 29 and made one final toast

with a pair of friends. McDwyer said, "Yes, it's very sad for me, but everything is okay. It's just a sad moment closing up after 50 years."

Asked about his plans, McDwyer said, "I don't know what to do with myself. Maybe I might look for some nice, pretty young lady and ride off into the sunset."



Photo by David Greene

TO WHAT ALE'S YOU. McDwyer's Pub pals Jane Chaney and Gabriel Jiminez share a drink with owner Eddie McDwyer (right) for a final toast.

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Longest Sole Serving JGH-BID Chair Declines Run for Seat

By DANIELA BEASLEY

In a shocker at its end-of-the-year powwow, members of the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District were surprised to hear their longtime and only chair, Alice Kulick, announced she will leave the BID after helping it some 20 years ago.

Opening the program, Kulick announced she was removing herself from the slate of nominees for the board, where a contingent of 30 registered members of the BID were on hand to vote its new board. Residents and community stakeholders were also among the crowd attending the 20th annual get-together that doubled as an informational session for existing merchants.

“I will always be a part of this BID, but you all have a list of names, and you can cross mine off,” Kulick said before offering new board help during the transition.

Kulick has been chairperson of the BID since its inception, owning property in the area for 51 years. As an owner, Kulick helps to fund JGH-BID through property assessments, where funds go towards beautifying



Photo by Melissa Cebollero

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS, RESIDENTS, and, of course, merchants turn out for the 20th annual Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District’s yearly meeting.

and promoting businesses as a way to increase revenue.

There were eight slots on the Board for property owners, two slots for merchants and one slot for a resident. After the vote, the BID

officially had it’s 11-member board decided on for 2017 and a vote will be conducted at the first board meeting to elect the chairperson, treasurer and secretary.

For the property owners, the

board members are Frank Canzone, John Dedvukaj, Lewis Gjelij, Rudy Gjonaj, Dennis O’Brien, Craig Recla, Martin Vuksanaj and Dr. Arnold Wilson. Hakeem Alhariri and Ali Fonzal filled the two merchant slots, and the resident spot on the board went to Sallie Caldwell. Out of the 11 board members selected there were four members appointed who weren’t up for reelection and are completely new to the BID Board, who are expected to give a new perspective to the Board as to what to change to improve the BID in the coming year.

All merchants who attended the meeting were automatically entered into a raffle to win a free 10-second commercial on Cablevision. This will be part of a larger commercial that the BID is doing as part of an effort to keep residents shopping in Norwood, and to bring new shoppers into this part of the Bronx to help the area flourish.

Eric Phillips, owner of Drug Rite located at 3432 Jerome Ave., won the raffle and will be working with the BID on his portion of the commercial expected to come out this spring.

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By DAVID CRUZ

Beating back the metallic thuds, relentless clacks, rhythmic pounds, and bass sounds stands as a daily occurrence in some Bronx neighborhoods, with Norwood and Bedford Park no exception.

Unwanted noise, a never-ending nuisance that somehow, despite registering as a top quality of life complaint, remains perpetually prevalent. It is the city that never sleeps, and noise is living up to that adage.

And as the holiday season settles in, the uptick in noise complaints usually follows. For the NYPD and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, agencies tasked to respond to aggravating noise issues, the priority to curb the nuisance is stymied by bureaucracy that subjugates the quality of life for many Bronx residents, offering no immediate relief.

The investigation found bureaucratic barriers for police officers, outdated noise meters, grossly under-trained officers who use the meters, and a city policy that seems to encourage residents to resolve noise-related issues among themselves, disregarding any potential conflicts. Handling noise within the 52nd Precinct, the stationhouse covering Norwood, is a task that's also marred by what amounts to be a busy precinct.

Noisy Tales

But a busy precinct as reason to hold off noise complaints holds very little sympathy for residents who've battled the culture of noise for years. Immediate relief does not come fast enough for residents yearning for it. In some cases, it doesn't come at all.

It's certainly the case for Herman Guy, a retired social worker living in Bedford Park. Peace and quiet is patchy for Guy, who has dealt with the midnight clamor of loud music coming from three different buildings in his neighborhood at East 202nd Street.

On weekends, the pounding bass sounds of bachata originating from an apartment building across the street penetrates Guy's apartment. "[W]hen they put the music on, it seems like the later it gets the louder the volume of the music goes up," Guy said.

Residents living in the noisy apartment building were not home when the *Norwood News* visited the building. A next-door neighbor confirmed that loud parties happen, though he's not bothered by them as much as he is by idling vehicles playing music loudly. "Sometimes the dishes are almost vibrating," the next-door neighbor said.

Calling the local 52nd Precinct hasn't worked out so well for Guy.

"They tell me okay, we're gonna send them down from the precinct and have someone take a look at it," Guy said. "And I'm home, an hour goes by, two hours go by, three hours go by, and the cops don't come by."

Unwanted noise isn't just confined to nighttime parties or clatter from a construction project. In Brant Alpert's case, deafening noise is a daytime occurrence. A resident of Kings College Place in Norwood, Alpert's constantly hearing

a clamor of car horns honking, overlapping loud enough to "raise the dead at Woodlawn Cemetery" that's found at the end of the block.

"Morning and afternoon, every weekday," Alpert said of the noise issues. "The sound of angry voices yelling back and forth among the drivers sometimes adds to the noise, with a spectre of violence in the air. I'd like to see a return to the time when a school street, at arrival and dismissal times, was closed to vehicular traffic."

On Jerome Avenue, Amazing Linens, a store hard to miss on the strip, thanks to its collection of gold-colored banners that read "We Buy Gold," remains the number one culprit for amplified sound. A booming amplifier tucked between two linen displays outside the store can be heard to the detriment of wincing passersby with a male voice blasting it's going out of business (it's done so for the past year). The sound, heard for hours, can also be heard blocks away.

"The recording is very hard to ignore or tune out," Judy Noy, a resident, said. "I wonder how many others are adversely affected."

Among the distressed is Babo Caba, a street vendor who's set up a street shop directly in front of Amazing Linen. "I don't like it, but you have no choice," Caba said. "It's been almost a year now."

It's also in violation of 10-108 of the city administrative noise code, which bars stores from using amplifiers to attract customers. Baha Awad, co-owner of the store, assured the *Norwood News* he'll lower the volume.

There's also the noise near the Botanical Square apartments, where amplifiers are usually brought out to the street during the summer, blasting ear-shattering music that made the season "worst of all" for noise. One resident, who asked not to be named for fear of reprisal, said the noise is ongoing, even in the winter.

"During the colder months, they bring their noise into the hallways/common areas," said the resident. "When there's a house party, they often have guests out by the stairs talking loudly, drinking alcohol, and smoking marijuana while their house door is open for the entire floor to hear the music."

In her case, she's called 911 only to see them "make one loop around the building in their car and drive right out." She's even gone so far as to tell the occupants to lower the music. Finally, she's tracked her complaints via 311, New York City's so-called "front door" to city agencies. Filing the complaint is not a quick fix, as most residents would think, but more of an on-the-record account of an incident that leads to larger investigation into a troubling noise issue. In the caller's case, her complaint is one of some 10,000 residential-related noise complaints filed through 311.

Over the last six years, data compiled from 311 shows noise as the top complaint for residents living within the 10467 zip code, largely considered Norwood. In September, the *Norwood News* reviewed 311 calls taken over the last six years within Community Board 7, the civic body covering Norwood, Bedford Park, Kings-



bridge Heights, Fordham, and University Heights and found the following number of complaints for varying types of noises, and how many were generated within the 10467 zip code:

- Commercial Noise: 721; 1,336 since 2010
- Residential Noise: 10,196; 37,387 since 2010
- Collection Truck 6; 7 since 2010
- Generic Noise: 485; 918 since 2010
- Street/Sidewalk Noise: 2203; 5921 since 2010
- Vehicle Noise: 1,044; 2,766 since 2010
- Park Noise: 95; 296 since 2010
- Noise Survey: 137; 184 since 2010
- House of Worship Noise: 20
- Helicopter: 9

Other findings include:

The 10467 zip code has the highest number of commercial, residential, and collection truck noise complaints in all of the Bronx.

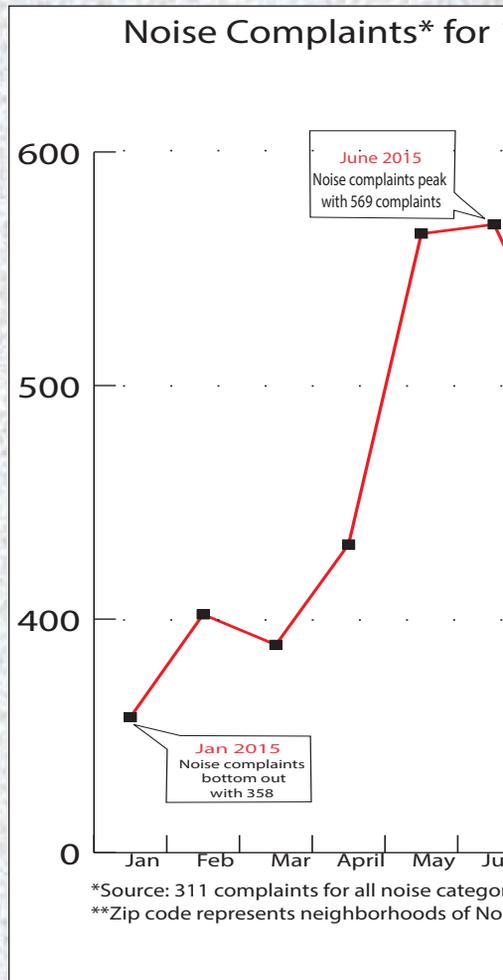
The 10463 zip code ranks highest for generic noise complaints.

The 10452 zip code ranks highest for street/sidewalk and vehicle noise complaints

24 of 25 neighborhoods of the Bronx show that residential noise complaints are highest number of complaints out of the six noise complaint categories (exception was the 10464 zip code, home to City Island, where commercial complaints outnumber residential).

Investigating Noise Complaints

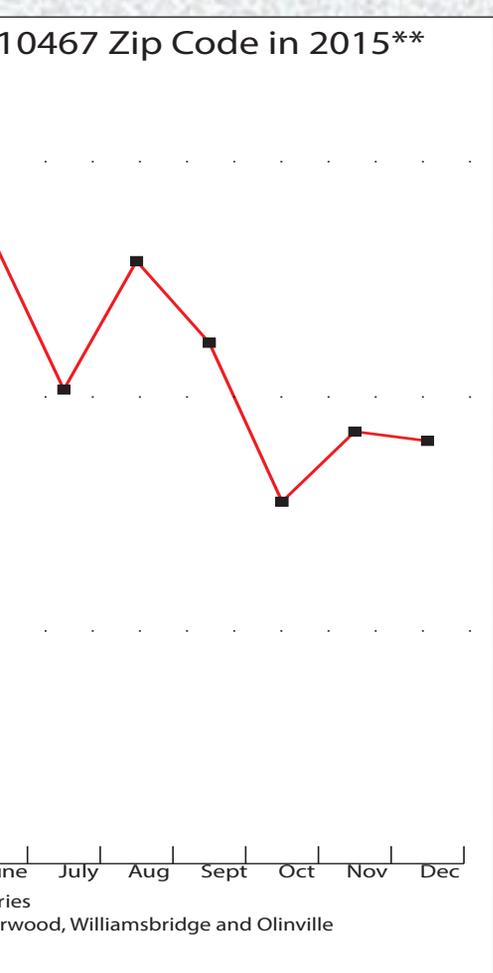
Noise is categorical from the bureaucratic perspective of New York City government, which responds to noise complaints through various methods. For the NYPD, discretion by a responding police officer is usually the deciding factor over whether a violator will get a ticket or warning under the administrative noise



code, where the city approaches various kinds of noise differently.

In nearly every instance there is no quick fix or guarantee that a noise complaint will end satisfactorily for the complainant. What could be loud for one, may

SPECIAL REPORT: NOISE IN NORWOOD AND BEYOND



system, or 311, beginning a paper trail that includes a location of the assumed violator. After issuing an open ticket, 311 quickly routes the calls to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), since the nature of the call focuses on the state of a given landscape, or to the local NYPD precinct, depending on key words said by a caller. Operators of the service handle some 58,000 311 complaints a day, that are redirected to the appropriate agency in a matter of minutes.

It's at the local precinct where noise complaints are placed on a "sheet," a listing of "jobs" NYPD patrol officers are given by the front desk during patrol. But officers operate in triage, prioritizing calls according to its emergent nature. Noise complaints, notwithstanding its annoyances and an urgent need to cease quickly, does not fall on a level of priority, further frustrating callers who, good or bad, direct their anger towards 311.

"If I live in a tough neighborhood, people say, 'I could give a crap about the noise. I want to be able to walk my kid to school without being accosted, robbed, or dodging bullets,'" Augie Aloia, professor of Criminal Justice at Monroe College and a retired NYPD sergeant told the *Norwood News*.

At the 52nd Precinct, covering the neighborhoods of Bedford Park and Norwood, 311 complaints are catalogued and assessed every Monday, a lumbering process that involves follow up visits. Immediate enforcement, police find, is not always easy. In some cases, there's a kind of discouragement to combat noise complaints in some neighborhoods, working against a need for a better quality of life.

Should police respond to complaints of a resident making a loud noise, for instance, officers can be impeded from doing their job should the occupant disregard answering the door. At the mercy of the law, officers must stand down if a door is not open. Not even taping a summons to the violator's apartment door can work, a regular practice by the New York City Department of Sanitation, which issues citations to homeowners who leave trash on their front yards as a matter of accountability.

Councilman Andrew Cohen, representing the 11th Council District that includes Norwood and Bedford Park, said he would consider looking into that.

"I don't see why we couldn't leave a ticket," Cohen said. He did encourage constituents to continue calling 311 to address noise issues.

But violations are not a guarantee. Enforcement stands as a discretionary judgment call by responding officers, who can issue a summons for unreasonable under Section 24-233 of the New York City noise code.

Noise Meters

In some cases, officers, which also involve those with the DEP, can utilize a noise meter to objectively measure sound. These handheld meters are usually reserved for commercial establishments where sound has exceeded legally acceptable limits. Standards are applied to different types of sound. Nightclub music, for example, cannot exceed 42 decibels or risk getting a summons. The findings, measured on an A and B scale and in decibels, are presented as evidence to the Environmental Control Board, the judicial panel that presides over noise cases. The maximum fine for a noise infraction stands at \$24,000.

Operating a noise meter requires training. And as it stands, that training by the NYPD is given to a few. At a New York City Council Committee for Environmental Protection in late June, NYPD Lt. Robert Corbett said that the Police Department, an agency of 34,000 police officers strong, only 1,428 officers have been trained to appropriately use the device to get a reading. Complicating the job further, there's only one meter per precinct, according to Corbett, and no budgetary funds set aside for more meters.

"Many of the sound meters are older models that cannot get the C scale of frequencies that would pick up base and lower frequencies, which we need for clubs and bars," Corbett testified. "We are replacing them over the next year or two, and each precinct would have at least one."

Challenging what a noise meter registers can be contested. False positives can occur, such as when a machine picks up ambient sound, triggering decibel readings to go beyond acceptable limits, according to Council committee testimony from Robert Bookman, a lobbyist for nightclubs that feel that their businesses are targeted, present at the Council committee.

But whether one is the violator or the sufferer, excessive exposure to loud noise can impair hearing. The World

Health Organization has long seen prolonged noise to be a long-term health hazard that "goes beyond hearing impairment and includes interference with communications, disturbed sleep, cardiovascular and psycho-physiological effects, reduced performance and changes in social behavior." In the moment, however, listening to music can make one feel good thanks to the body's reaction to noise they find pleasing.

"[T]he vibration in the chest will connect with the solar plexus that is between the thoracic cage and the abdominal cage," Ernesto DeGenova, speech and language pathologist with United Health Plan, said. "So the person is always feeling very good because of that transmission of the low frequencies in the body. That's why when you're listening to the music you feel very good because of the vibration."

DeGenova cautioned that the higher the decibels the less time one should be exposed to loud noise.

Ongoing Issue

For now, tackling noise issues remains a battle that's not so easily won. The 52nd Precinct has increased its number of officers these days thanks to the Neighborhood Coordination Officer Program, which dedicates officers to one precinct. Officer Crystal Reveron of the 52nd Precinct's Community Affairs Unit sees an increase in numbers as one way to curb noise issues.

"[W]e're churning out 13 cars, whereas before this program began it was like maybe six or seven," Reveron said. "[W]e're double in manpower, so there should not be a reason why we can't get to 311 [noise complaints]."

Guy of Bedford Park wants to take enforcement a step further. With noise a frequent headache for people, Guy suggests the NYPD consider a Noise Unit, with officers responding solely to noise complaints. The Bloomberg administration did have such a unit, dubbed Operation: Silent Night, but it's since fizzled out. For now, Guy's immediate recourse is to turn the volume up on his own radio or television, at least to muffle the noise.

Has the thought of approaching the noisemakers crossed his mind? Yes, though it's not really a realistic option.

"I know a fight is going to occur because I'm gonna tell them, you know, 'Listen, you play your music loud,'" Guy said. "And they gonna say, 'Oh go f-- you,' and then I'm gonna say 'f-- you back.'"

Avoiding conflicts is also the approach of Barbara Stronczer, president of the Bedford Mosholu Community Association, the local civic body that meets monthly. At a September meeting, Stronczer had recounted a summer of endless noise to officers who attending the meeting. Among the issues was a neighboring barbershop whose loudspeakers continued until the place closed.

"We need your help," Stronczer told the officers. "I know one of my neighbors, who last weekend will scream (inaudible). And then you lose your cool, and God knows what happens after that."

Additional research by Daniela Beasley

not be loud for police officers, the last voice that decides whether to issue a summons or give a warning.

The NYPD is alerted of noise complaints either through a specific precinct's front desk, the 911 emergency

USPS To Install Secure Mailboxes Following 'Fishing' Spree

The U.S. Postal Service has cast a wide net on its old mailboxes so it could replace them with new ones following a string of so-called 'fishing' incidents across the Bronx.

The news could spell relief to Bronx residents victimized by the practice that involves thieves stealing mail by feeding a glue trap attached to a string into a mailbox and "fishing" out mail from the slot. Thieves preferably would look for checks where names were bleached using a special machine. The checks would later be cashed with many residents not knowing they were a victim until their mail was no longer received. This caused a lot of headaches for residents, forced to go to the post office to play it safe.

It's unclear when Norwood, which had several reported fishing incidents reported, will receive the new mailboxes. In Congressman Eliot Engel's 16th Congressional District, covering the northwest Bronx, some mailboxes have already been removed, adding inconvenience to residents who relied on the public mailboxes during the holiday season.

"Many of my constituents have been in for a surprise lately as they went to drop letters off at the mailbox only to find it wasn't there," Engel said. "The timing of this move is less than auspicious, but in order to protect our mail during the busy holiday season, this change had to be made. I will continue to keep in contact with postal officials throughout this process to ensure the boxes are replaced as soon as possible."

TO REPORT A STORY TO THE NORWOOD NEWS, CALL US AT 718-324-4998

PAID

Sparkling the Holidays at the Fordham BID



Photo by Miriam QUINONES

TWO KIDS HANG with Santa Claus at Sparkling the Heart of Fordham, courtesy of the Fordham Road BID.

After a successful year of outdoor movie nights, sidewalk sales, family events, and a huge street fair, the Fordham Road Business Improvement District (BID) wrapped up a terrific year with its 12th Annual Sparkling the Heart of Fordham holiday event on Friday, Dec. 2 at Bryan Park. Over 2,500 people attended and enjoyed live music, free raffles with prizes and 600 free toys distributed by Santa Claus. This year's presenting sponsors included Macy's Backstage, Monroe College, local New York City Council Member Ritchie Torres and WellCare.

The BID's 2016 Summer Film Festival was its most successful to date. The festival featured classic films of the '60s, '70s, and '80s, concluding with a screening of "West Side Story" in Fordham Plaza and "E.T." in Bryan Park. "West Side Story" drew an attendance of more than 700 people,

which included hundreds of students from nearby Fordham University. Denizens of Fordham Road are looking forward to a new series of classic films in the summer of 2017.

This year also saw the BID hosting eight sidewalk sales, giving merchants the opportunity to show off their wares to the thousands of shoppers visiting Fordham Road every day. The final sidewalk sale of 2016 took place on Nov. 26 to honor "Small Business Saturday."

This was not, of course, the last opportunity to get a good deal on Fordham Road. Currently shoppers can receive a 10 percent discount at nearly 60 of Fordham Road's hottest shopping destinations when they present either a program advertisement/coupon/invitation or a MetroCard. Additionally, to ensure shoppers can enjoy the holiday season safely, the BID is provid-



Photo by Miriam Quinones

DANIEL BERNSTEIN (CENTER), co-executive director of the Fordham Road BID, poses with the circus group, Skyz the Limit, at the 12th annual Sparkling the Heart of Fordham event on Dec. 4.

ing uniformed security patrols along Fordham Road through New Year's Eve.

The BID is gearing up for a busy 2017. To stay connected with the BID, visit www.fordhamroad.nyc or download the Fordham Road app, available in the Apple Store and on Google

Play. You can also follow the BID on social media: @FordhamRoadNYC and #FordhamRoadNYC. The website, social media pages and free app give you access to information about programs and events hosted by the BID along Fordham Road all year round.

Once Homeless Vets Find Comfort During Holidays

By **DEBORAH CRUZ**

An abundance of red gift bags were spread out on a table surrounded by gold, red, and green stars that decorated the walls of Kingsbridge Terrace, a home for formerly homeless veterans operated by The Jericho Project.

Chairs and tables abutted a brightly lit and decorated Christmas tree with a sign that read, "Merry Christmas." The front of the room filled with volunteers placing plates of sandwiches, cookies, soft drinks, and finger food on the tables. And Tori Lyon, CEO of The Jericho Project, oversaw the room, mingling with staffers at the First Annual Day of Action happening at six other of its supportive housing sites.

The Jericho Project is a service that helps youth, veterans, and families who have suffered with homelessness. "The most important thing that we want is to raise awareness about homelessness that I think a lot of New Yorkers see," said Lyon. "It's such a visible problem and people feel like there's nothing they can do about it."

A study by the Coalition for the Homeless released in October shows there were 62,306 homeless people in New York City, the highest number in decades. Those homeless included families and children.

Darold Cox and Reginald William are among those calling Kingsbridge Terrace home. "I was in the streets homeless, trying to survive," said Cox, "having the support of the staff here, knowing that if I do need something I

can come to them and they will help me in any way they can." Cox left the struggling with substance abuse.

William became homeless after losing his job at Brooklyn Hospital while battling depression. "After the second month at my job my brother passed away, 30 days to the day my mother passed away, and I was destroyed. I didn't realize I was falling into depression," said William. Six months after the death of his mother William could not function at his job in Brooklyn Hospital and lost his job. Spiraling downward he went from shelter to shelter looking for a permanent housing unit. He ran into The Jericho Project in 2012.

"The change was dramatic, just the fact that I could stick a key in my door, it was fascinating," said William joyfully.

The 33-year-old non-profit emphasized the importance of their new event since it gives the group's corporate sponsors the chance to volunteer and give back.

Proskauer, a major attorneys firm, is among the companies partnering with The Jericho Project and attending the event.

"We have what we call Pro Bono work, corporate social responsibility, so we do free legal work for organizations and individuals, community service projects and we also do charitable giving," said Bill Silverman, partner at Proskauer. "The veterans are one of our priorities."



Photo by Deborah Cruz

VOLUNTEERS AND RESIDENTS of The Jericho Project enjoy a meal at the group's supportive housing home dubbed Kingsbridge Terrace.

"Bainbridge is a wonderful place, I have many friends and I get to socialize. Why should I stay home alone when I have a family here?"

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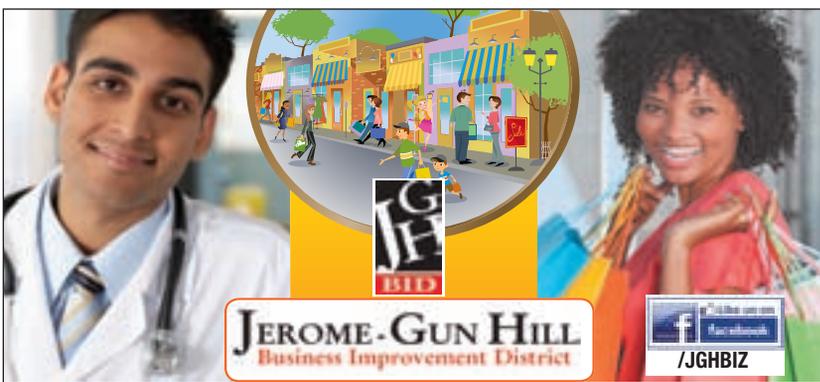
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Salary: \$30,273 – New Employees and \$34,814 – \$39,275 – Incumbents (with two years of city service), Hours/Shift: Monday thru Friday 9:00 AM to 5:00PM

Position: We are currently seeking an entry level position as a full-time Community Assistant to work in the Community Board 7 office.

Primary Responsibilities: Answering telephones, greeting constituents and directing individuals to appropriate staff members or providing directory assistance; Providing general administrative and clerical support, including typing of minutes and drafting correspondence; Receiving and sorting mail/deliveries, sending faxes, copying letters and documents; Assisting in coordinating CB 7 activities and meetings and providing community engagement and outreach, under the direction and supervision of the District Manager; Maintaining an updated Community Board 7 website; Assisting in drafting monthly calendar of community board meetings; Speaking with constituents and assist with processing their service complaints and delivery of municipal services; Providing administrative support to various CB 7 committees; Performing general administrative duties, including filing, scheduling and maintenance of public records and internal documents; Tracking deadlines for various applications to NYC and NYS agencies; Attending a portion of the monthly evening full board meeting to register attendees and help with meeting preparation.

Preferred Skills: No formal education or work experience is required; Proficiency with clerical procedures; Computer literate; Excellent customer service skills; Detail oriented with ability to multitask and meet deadlines; Excellent verbal and communication skills; Organizing and planning; Proficient in English and Spanish. **EMAIL** your cover letter and résumé to: info@bronxcb7.info no later than Friday, December 16th, 2016. **OR SUBMIT** your cover letter and résumé by USPS mail, postmarked no later than December 16th, 2016 to: **Bronx Community Board #7, 229-A East 204th Street, Bronx, NY 10458.**

The City is an Equal Opportunity Employer - New York City residency required unless employee was employed by New York City for more than 2 years

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Holiday Shopping Tax Break

A public service reminder to shoppers: All clothing and footwear items sold for less than \$110 in NYC are exempt from nearly nine percent of state and local sales tax, according to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance.

Scholarships Available

College scholarships valued at \$2,000 each will be available to 100 students of Puerto Rican descent. Students must have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or above, be a high school senior or full-time college freshman, sophomore, or junior age 17 through 25, be enrolled in an accredited two- or four-year college/university, and have a record of volunteer work or community service. Deadline is Feb. 20, 2017. For more detailed information, and to apply, go to www.nprdpinc.org.

Heating Assistance Available

Funding assistance for heating bills is available via NYS government for elderly and low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. Eligible households can receive a one-time benefit of up to \$626, depending on income, household size and heating source. A family of four can have a household income of up to \$53,076 annually, or \$4,423 a month, and still qualify for help. For more information and to apply, log on to <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/>.

Apply to Kindergarten

Applications are now available for Kindergarten at New York City public schools for children born in 2012. Parents can apply by calling (718) 935-2400, online at schools.nyc.gov/applyonline, or by visiting the Department of Education's Family Welcome Center at 1 Fordham Plaza, 7th floor (this site is for families enrolling their children

into school districts 7, 9, and 10). The application deadline is Jan. 13.

Bias Reporting Hotline

Residents who have experienced bias-motivated threats, harassment or discrimination are encouraged to call Division of Human Rights' toll-free hotline at (888) 392-3644 weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. To report a crime or fear for your safety, call 911 immediately.

Coat Drive

New York Cares is running its annual coat drive for individuals to donate gently used, freshly laundered coats through Dec. 31. Coats may be dropped off at your nearest police station. For more information and locations, visit newyorkcares.org/coats.

State Gov't.

Internships Available

Some 400 spring internships with New York State government offices are available for NYS residents who

are undergraduate and graduate students at colleges and universities in NYS and elsewhere. To apply, log on to nysinternships.cs.ny.gov to view job descriptions, create profiles, upload resumes, writing samples, and letters of recommendation. Deadline is Dec. 23.

Free ESL & GED Classes at MMCC

The Mosholu Montefiore Community Center offers free ESL classes at its main building, 3450 DeKalb Avenue for ages 18+ (info: (718) 882-4000); and free GED/TASC classes at its annex, 3512 DeKalb Ave. for young adults ages 17 to 24 (info: (718) 652-0282).

C.O.V.E. Seeks Interns

Community Organized with a Vision of Excellence at 3418 Gates Pl. (basement) is seeking paid interns ages 14 to 18 to work at the after school program. For more information, call (718) 405-1312.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Holiday Events

The public is invited to the following holiday events:

Dec. 9 - **Caroling and Dessert Exchange.** Free, at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (lyrics are provided). Bring your favorite dessert: cookies, cake, or pie to share. Info: (718) 543-8672.

Dec. 17 - **Winter Wonderland.** Free, at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, to celebrate Christmas, Chanukah, Eid e-Milad-un nabi, Kwanzaa, and Three Kings Day, noon to 2 p.m. Events include winter arts and crafts, carnival games, healthy snack program, and a visit from some special guests including Santa. Info: (718) 543-8672.

Dec. 8 - **Tree Lighting Ceremony.** Presented by Bronx CB7, 6 p.m., at the Mosholu Parkway Lawn, intersection of Mosholu Parkway and Bainbridge Avenue. Info: (718) 933-5650.

Dec. 8 - **Christmas Tree Lighting.** Presented by Fordham-Bedford Housing Corporation, free, 4 p.m. at Serviam Gardens, 323 E. 198th St. Events include Christmas carols, hot chocolate, and pictures with Santa. Info: (718) 708-8110.

Dec. 13 - **Holiday Procession.** Through various neighborhoods, with the 52nd Precinct, 5 to 7 p.m., starting and ending at the precinct, 3016 Webster Ave. A photo op for Santa and officers is from 7 to 7:30 p.m. Info: (718) 220-5811.

Dec. 16 - **Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall.** The Mosholu Montefiore Senior Center (MMSC), 3450 DeKalb Ave., invites seniors to this event, leaving at 9:15 a.m. (\$90/members; \$96/non members). Trip includes coach bus, orchestra seats and lunch at Dallas BBQ. Info/RSVP: (718) 798-6601.

Dec. 22 - **Holiday Show.** Features the MMSC seniors. Info: (718) 798-6601.

Onstage

Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Willie Colón**, performing *Asalto Navideño*, a Christmas concert celebration featuring salsa music, Dec. 10 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$40 to \$100 (VIP). VIP tickets include a pre-concert wine and hors d'oeuvres reception at 6:30 p.m. and the best seats in the house. For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 960-8833.

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **Celia Cruz Bronx H.S. of Music**, performing concert, Dec. 10; and **Latin Jazz concert**, Dec. 17; both at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Events

The New York Botanical Garden presents the **Holiday Train Show** exhibition in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, through Jan. 16, featuring numerous NYC landmarks made from plant parts and large-scale model trains. New this year is the Coney Island roller coaster. For children, there is **Evergreen Express**, through Jan. 22, 10

a.m. to 5:30 p.m., in the Everett Children's Adventure Garden, to explore plant parts, make crafts, create a train puppet, join a musical marching parade, and more. In addition, there are **afternoon tours** on the holiday weekend (meet at the Reflecting Pool at the Leon Levy Visitor Center). For more information or a detailed schedule, call (718) 817-8700.

The Bronx Country Historical Society presents lecture, **Celebrating 175 Years of St. Ann's Church**, designated as a NYC historic landmark, Dec. 17 at 1 p.m., at the Bronx County Archives, 3313 Bainbridge Ave. For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 881-8900.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects:** Snowflakes, Candles and Stars, to mix and mold an image of nature onto a candle or weave a string star or button snowflake at this seasonal bazaar, Dec. 10 and 11; and Pine Scents and Sensations, to make a display using pine boughs and other natural objects, Dec. 17 and 18; all in the 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.



SANTA CLAUS WILL make an appearance at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center on Dec. 17 (see listing of events under Editor's Pick for more information).

NYC Health & Hospitals invites the public to **The Future of Healthcare in NYC**, to learn about services, to share insight on how H&H can better serve your community and to help shape healthcare in your neighborhood, Dec. 13 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Community Board 12 office, 4101 White Plains Rd. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call (718) 918-4055.

Library Events

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents the following for children: **Hands-On Projects at 4 p.m.:** (ages 7 to 12; preregistration required), Polar Bear Hand Print Making, Dec. 15, and Santa and Snowman Making, Dec. 22; and **A Christmas Carol:** (for ages 5 to 12), performed by Traveling Lantern Theatre Co., Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. Adults can attend **Computer Basics:** Dec. 8 at 2 p.m.; and **MS Word for Beginners:** to create documents, enter and edit text, save files, and various formatting options, Dec. 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 children ages through 12 years: **Winter Wonderland Spectacular:** hands-on musical experiences, Dec. 13 at 3:30 p.m. Teens/young adults can attend **film:** "Ghostbusters," Dec. 17 at 1:30 p.m. Adults can enjoy: **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, Dec. 9 and 16; **Preschool Story Time and Craft:** (ages 3 to 5), features books, puppetry, dramatics, simple crafts, and flannel boards, Dec. 15 at 11:15 a.m.; and **Holiday Party:** (ages 5 to 12; preregistration required), to make gingerbread houses and hear seasonal songs. Adults can attend **Computer Basics at noon:** Dec. 8, 15 and 22. 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 Dec. 12 for the next publication date of Dec. 22.



Photo courtesy Joshua Bright/Wave Hill
MAKE YOUR VERY own nature candle at Wave Hill on Dec. 10.

Ahead of Trump Presidency, Norwood Mobilizes

(continued from page 1)

cation fee, which is a whopping \$680, to be waived for the people who qualify.

“If you cannot get processed today that is okay, we have 30 different sites all over the city where we can follow up with you,” said Eboni Mason, events manager for Citizenship Now, “even the people who did not have an appointment.”

Road to Citizenship

Gladys Irias, 52, a native from Tegucigalpa, Honduras went to the workshop that day in hopes of acquiring her citizenship. “This is the first time I’m doing this, but I have lived here for almost 12 years,” Irias has a son and daughter who are currently studying medicine and teaching, respectively. “My husband sent for his mother and for me to go to the US, he was already here,” said Irias, who works as a supervisor in a money transfer office. She was one of the many who was disappointed with the recent election. Irias, a Norwood resident, came to Tracey Towers in hopes of applying for citizenship.

Margarita Falcon, 44, a native from Oaxaca, Mexico has lived in the United States for 20 years, “I am definitely more nervous now that Donald Trump has been elected,” she said. “His ideas are really out there.” Falcon said she was very disappointed in the election, but there is nothing one could do but accept it. Falcon, who works in maintenance in Manhattan, was one of the people who qualified for a waived application fee. “It’s a very high fee and supposedly it’s going to rise even higher,” she said. The new fee will increase to \$725 by Dec. 25.

As of 2014, a third of Bronx residents were born in another country, according to U.S. Census data. Many of these people either hold a Green Card and reside as a permanent resident or have yet to acquire their papers.

Promoting Inclusivity

Elsewhere in Norwood on the same day, a group of 11 volunteers canvassed businesses along Bainbridge Avenue to ask shop owners to display a sign in their front window reading, “Standing Against Islamophobia and Racism.”

The idea of the signs, said organizer Pam Sporn, is to show Norwood that their neighbors and shop owners don’t agree with what she says is the hateful rhetoric of President-elect



Photo by Deborah Cruz

A STAFFER WITH CUNY Citizenship Now (far right) helps a couple with their immigration paperwork at a free workshop at Tracey Towers.

Donald Trump.

“It’s easy to feel depressed, disillusioned, and discouraged after the election,” Sporn said. “There is vicious and racist language coming out of politicians’ mouths, and [it’s difficult] to see the kind of appointments that Trump is making. But doing this with my neighbors and friends gives me a lot of strength. The government may try to deport people or set up a [Muslim] registry, but we’re not a passive mass to be abused. Our neighborhood is so diverse and this can really bring the community together.”

Canvassing Norwood

For over two hours, the group split into pairs, talking to business owners in English and Spanish and taping 50 signs onto storefronts. The materials were printed by the Network Against Islamophobia, a project by Jewish Voice for Peace.

“Put [the sign] anywhere, the best place you can put it,” said Muhammad M. Ali, perhaps the most enthusiastic shop owner to greet the canvassers, allowing them to hang the posters in the window and door of Ador Fashion, which sells traditional Bangladeshi clothing.

“Anything, anything against re-

ligion, and hated, I don’t like it. Any religions. We are human beings, and in the Constitution there is freedom of religion, freedom of choice. Somebody calls ‘God,’ somebody calls ‘Allah,’ but the creator is one,” Ali said on why he agreed to put the posters up.

Some shop owners politely declined, saying they didn’t want to get involved in politics. Others invited the volunteers to put the posters outside their store.

One owner, who is not being identified, said that he has been concerned about his safety since the election and has started closing his store earlier in the evening. He said he didn’t want a sign in the window that might indicate his religion.

“[People have] come in to buy something and they don’t want to pay,” the owner said. “They say ‘this is my country.’”

Deli owner Mohamad Alsidi, however, said that he hasn’t had any issues in the neighborhood, and agreed to hang the sign because he is against “any kind of racism.”

Yamilet Galan, who was in a nail salon when the canvassers came in, took a sign to put in her apartment window on Perry Avenue. “It’s not only Muslims, it’s Spanish [speak-

ers] too,” Galan said. “I don’t know. I don’t understand the people [who voted for Trump].”

The group of volunteers started canvassing the previous weekend by knocking on apartment doors at 3400 Wayne Ave. and 3341 Reservoir Oval W.

“I’m a neighborhood supporter, and I have to revive my activism—I thought I was in retirement,” said canvasser John Losasso. “This election has reactivated and reanimated us as well. It makes me feel like I’m doing something necessary—we have to do something, and it feels empowering.”

“I’m a therapist, I work with a lot of people from Central America and there’s a lot of anxiety that has come up in our sessions,” said Jose Alfaro, a former Norwood resident who now lives on the other side of Van Cortlandt Park and who helped canvass the businesses. “I think we, in neighborhoods, need to organize and bring people together.”

Editor’s Note: A canvass of businesses along the West 231st Street and Broadway is planned for 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 10. The group will meet on the northwest corner of Broadway and 231st Street by Chase Bank.



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