



NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 30, No 24 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • DECEMBER 7-20, 2017



**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
HARASSMENT CLAIMS | PG. 4**



**SEE PHOTOS: NORWOOD NEWS
SNAPSHOTS | PG. 10**

JEROME AVE. PLAN ADVANCES

Bronx Borough Board approves plan; Now in hands of Planning Commission



Photo by Aaron Mayorga

FEARS OF GENTRIFICATION were amplified Nov. 27 after the Bronx Borough Board approved with conditions the controversial rezoning of Jerome Avenue, which, opponents argue, may displace current residents. Pictured is the intersection of Jerome and West Tremont avenues.

By **DAVID CRUZ** and
AARON MAYORGA

The Jerome Avenue Rezoning proposal edged closer to reality as the Bronx Borough Board voted in favor of the massive project. But some strings came attached to the massive plan, which looks to rezone 92 blocks of Jerome Avenue in hopes of ushering in

more affordable housing.

The board, comprised of Bronx community board chairs and district managers along with New York City Council members representing the borough, voted in favor of the proposal at its monthly meeting Nov. 27. The plan covers a two-mile stretch within

the west Bronx community boards 4, 5 and 7. In all, the city is committing \$1 billion in investments for the neighborhoods. Fordham South, University Heights, Morris Heights, Mt. Eden, and Highbridge are among the neighborhoods impacted by the plan.

Meantime, the 13-member

City Planning Commission held a near five-hour hearing two days later to discuss the plan with pleas by residents for equity and fairness to the community. The board plans to meet during the second full week of December to vote on the plan.

At the Borough Board
(continued on page 15)



**Search for New CB7
DM on Hold | pg 2**



**Lawmakers Step in to
Help Morgan Group
Tenants | pg 6**



**Parents: More
Mosholu Library
Services | pg 7**



Out & About
pg 14

Norwood News is published
bi-weekly on Thursdays by

Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC)
3400 Reservoir Oval East
Bronx, New York 10467
Phone: 718 324 4998
Fax: 718 324 2917

E-mail: norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org
Web.: www.norwoodnews.org

Publisher

Mosholu Preservation Corporation

Executive Director of MPC

Melissa Cebollero

Director of MPC

Jennifer Tausig

Editor-in-Chief, Norwood News

David Cruz, dcruz@norwoodnews.org

Accounts Receivable

Dawn McEvoy

Proofreader

Judy Noy

Interns

Diego Barcacer Peña, Stephanie Luciano,
Yara Palin, Aaron Mayorga,
Sofia Mahairas

Regular Contributors

David Greene, Adi Talwar

For Display Advertising

Call (718) 324-4998

**Support Your
Community Newspaper!**

The *Norwood News* is a not-for-profit publication and relies upon the support of its advertisers and readers to produce a quality community newspaper. To support your paper, become a member and receive a subscription for one year.

Simply mail check or money order for \$40 to:
Norwood News, 3400 Reservoir Oval East,
Bronx, NY 10467.

Norwood News is not responsible for typographical errors. Opinions expressed in signed letters and bylined columns represent the sole opinion of the author and are not necessarily those of Mosholu Preservation Corporation or Montefiore Medical Center. Editorials represent the views of the editor only. The newspaper reserves the right to limit or refuse advertising it deems objectionable. Advertisements appearing in this paper cannot be used without the written permission of the *Norwood News*. Letters to the editor are subject to condensation and editing. Writers should include their affiliation or special interest if any. Anonymous letters are not published but your name can be withheld upon request.

Mosholu Preservation Corporation is a non-profit support corporation of Montefiore Medical Center.

IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST**Cohen's Construction Accountability Bill Clears Council**

Legislation that will increase accountability for roadwork has been passed by the New York City Council and awaits the mayor's signature.

Norwood Councilman Andrew Cohen, who represents the 11th Council District, co-sponsored the bill. He has noticed the amount of construction work around the area as of late. Norwood has seen work along East 208th Street and DeKalb Ave. and pockets of East Gun Hill Road.

"Obviously, there's a number of different people who tear up the street, whether it's Con Ed, or DEP [Department of Environmental Protection]," said Cohen. "I'm sure the *Norwood News* has observed that there has been a lot of construction in the streets lately, so I was really enthusiastic about this bill passing the council and

I hope to at least ultimately maintaining our roads in regulation."

Cohen also cites the ongoing roadwork by Con Edison at Sedgwick Avenue in Van Cortlandt Village as an example. The work has been happening since July, 2016. "[It] has been highly disruptive and has really put a strain on people's ability to come home from work, park their cars," said Cohen. "The streets are a mess; they look terrible."

The bill, which amends the administrative code for leaving roads in poor conditions regarding "street construction, maintenance repairs, obstruction and closures," will raise the fines for such violation from "\$500 or \$1,000 to \$5,000, and from \$5,000 to 10,000," according to the bill's language.

According to Cohen, the DEP has

also done substandard roadwork. Last year, Cohen's office had an issue with the agency about a storm drain in his district. "Their repairs were outrageously horrible, I told DEP and they didn't want to repair it," said Cohen. "[So] I told them, 'why don't you meet me at the site and if you think it's acceptable, we'll call it a day.' And at that point they decided that it was worth it to fix it, and they fixed it."

Cohen is adamant the bill will stop contractors from leaving behind patchy work. "I think the serious sign will make contractors think twice about doing a substandard job. That's really the goal, and I'm hoping that is the result," said Cohen.

—Diego Barcacer Peña

Search for Bronx CB7 DM Drags, Cleanliness to Blame

The latest delay on securing a Community Board 7 district manager has to do with an untidy office.

At the last CB7 general board meeting on Nov. 21, the holdup was blamed on finding a vendor to properly sanitize the office.

"The process has to be delayed to allow time for the board office to undergo a thorough, professional, hygienic cleaning in order to safeguard the health and well-being of the staff, the incoming new district manager, and visitors," read Andrew Laiosa, chair of the Search Committee conducting interviews of prospective district managers.

The board's previous district manager, Andrew Sandler, had resigned from the position two weeks before he

passed away from cancer in August.

It's unclear what specifically needs to be cleaned, though sources tell the *Norwood News* that a flood in the bathroom a month and a half ago is to blame, among other things. Since the summer, the board office has operated regularly, with employees arriving to work on weekdays. Meantime, committee meetings are held at the office three times a week. The board office has two employees. None have become sick from the office.

No member had raised any questions related to health conditions at the office once Laiosa read from his report.

This will be the fifth district manager the board has sought. Prior district managers have left either because

of infighting or seeking other employment.

District managers serve at the pleasure of the board. They function as an attache for residents who need quality of life concerns addressed by the right city agencies. The board has managed to go about its daily routine, with Thomas Lucania, the Bronx borough president's director of the community boards unit and legislative affairs, filling in.

The board has identified two prospects. The *Norwood News* is withholding their names due to privacy concerns, though one currently works for New York City government while the other had worked at a not-for-profit.

--David Cruz

Public and Community Meetings

COMMUNITY BOARD 7 committee meetings are held on the following dates at the board office, 229 E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Housing, Land Use & Zoning Committee meets on Dec. 12; and Executive Committee meets on Dec. 14. There will be no Parks Committee meeting as it's happening on Dec. 7, the same time as the CB7 Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.



Letters To The Editor

Shelter Needs More Checks And Balances

The title of the article from the Nov. 9-22 issue ("Fordham Shelter Housing Site Here to Stay") written by Reggie Francois gives the impression that FHOC [Fordham Hill Owners Corporation] and the neighborhood were defeated when in fact FHOC played a vital role in mobilizing our community so that our voices could be heard. It was written recklessly and in an insensitive tone, where fear was invoked in the commentary. Francois mentioned many of the local legislators present but left out Councilmember Fernando Cabrera and wrongfully referenced "FHOC Community Engagement Committee" as "FHOC community engagement community." The accurate committee name and background information from the chairperson was provided, but key details were omitted.

Many people from the neighborhood, including FHOC residents, attended the town hall meeting because they were unaware of the 233 Landing Road Development. Adaline Walker-Santiago, chairperson of Community Board 7, was not given a fair opportunity to speak despite the facilitator State Senator Gustavo Rivera, whom we just learned officially supported the 200- male shelter in the neighborhood, receiving advanced notice that she wanted to speak.

DHS and BRC had no intention of engaging the community until FHOC became active with the 233 Landing Road Development. DHS and BRC did

not even meet with FHOC Board of Directors until a meeting was requested by Cabrera whom we sought to get more answers from regarding the shelter of 200 plus males being placed in our community. In fact, Cabrera was pressured into hosting the meeting at the last minute, but rightfully declined because it was not his meeting to present.

DHS representatives throughout the process have been elusive and unprofessional. DHS representative Lori Boozer referred to FHOC VP Rachel Bradshaw as "crazy and a flat-out liar" in an email when she held her accountable for not following up regarding meeting requests with DHS Commissioner Steven Banks. Many questions were left unanswered, brushed to the side and answered with false statements.

How can a specific question about Meghan's Law be swept under the rug of obscurity by stating that their colleagues have looked into all of the laws necessary to be in compliance? How could the city place such a large shelter with a male demographic in a neighborhood and not even think they deserve the right of knowing about it and how the shelter will be operated? We have seen so many city shelters fail our communities. All FHOC wants to do is protect our residents and the community as a whole. All our neighbors want to do is live in a neighborhood that has a fair opportunity to thrive and flourish under the funding of our tax dollars! Even minority residents deserve to stand up for their

community and quality of life.

Chad Y. Royer
FHOC Community Engagement
Committee

Learning About Shelter Homeless

I appreciated the article reporting on unsheltered homeless people – the street homeless – living in Fordham and Norwood. It was a brief glimpse into a life that most of us know little about. I think it's worth noting however, that the street homeless make up a relatively small portion of the people we know to be homeless in NYC. While some people who end up homeless suffer from addiction and/or mental illness, the main reason people are homeless is something we can all identify with, the skyrocketing cost of housing -- and that can affect all sorts of people.

People who live in the street or in parks, or in hidden places, are notoriously difficult to count. But every year, as mandated by law, the City organizes a count of people living in the streets. In 2017, they counted almost 4000 people. As your article notes, many of these people do not want to sleep in a shelter.

Margaret Groarke
Kingsbridge

Equal Time for Mayoral Candidates

With 99 percent of the vote counted, the results show that Reform Party candidate Sal Albanese (2 percent, 22,891 votes), Green Party candidate Akeem Browder (1 percent, 15,763

votes) and Independent Michael Tolkin (1 percent, 10,762 votes) all finished ahead of Independent Bo Dietl (1 percent, 10,592 votes). Yet your editorial in the Oct. 26-Nov. 8 edition on the mayor's race ("Who Will You Hire") mentions Dietl and shows a picture of him while not mentioning Albanese, Browder or Tolkin.

Your editorial deals only with the candidates allowed in the general election debate. This was based on the results of a poll taken by Marist College. They did not include Albanese in their poll, claiming they did not know he was still running.

Quinnipiac polls in 2009 showed Mayor Michael Bloomberg winning a third term in a landslide. In the poll that counted, on Election Day, Bloomberg received 50.7 percent (585,466 votes while Democratic and Working

Families candidate Bill Thompson received 46.3 percent, or 534,869 votes). When Marist's polls are used to choose participants, I have to question the legitimacy of the debates.

The *Norwood News* should give more coverage to "minor" candidates in the future. People should consider looking beyond the candidates pushed by the media. When a candidate as honest and good as Albanese is running, people who claim they want honest politicians should vote for him. And the 78 percent of eligible people who didn't vote at all won't change anything.

Richard Warren
Norwood

ADVERTISE TODAY
in the
NORWOOD NEWS

Nearly 40,000 readers means 40,000 customers.
SELL YOUR BRAND. MAKE MONEY.
Advertise in the Norwood News. **Call 718-324-4998.**



NORWOOD NEWS
3400 Reservoir Oval E. • Bronx, NY 10467
718.324.4998

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

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**



This week we asked readers whether an accusation or allegation of sexual harassment is enough to dismiss someone or should there be a full investigation? Are these dismissals a knee-jerk reaction or justified?



Sometimes the way that people are dismissed are sometimes based on just the immediate reactions that some people give after the accusation. I think that some of the dismissals might be justified if the person actually admits to it. I suppose then that people have a right to dismiss them if they feel uncomfortable with them or they don't want to be associated with them. I think that a lot of the accusations tend to be sort of like hearsay and things that can't really be proven.

Stephanie Rodriguez
Soundview



I think the firings have been justified for them because they should act responsibly in the job that they have. They cannot be there exercising their power and think that it's not going to be looked into. They need to look into it. If the person who allegedly committed the allegations confesses and says "I'm sorry," they would not accuse themselves. I'm really not surprised these days because nothing is perfect. These things coming out helps, because now the bosses will take a look at what's happening and train their employees to respect themselves and others.

Gwen Hunter
Bedford Park



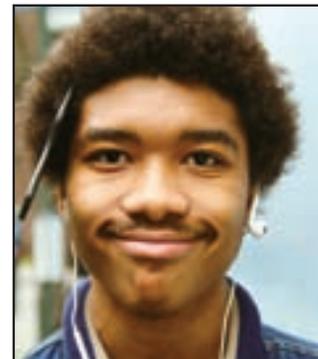
I think that when there's an allegation of sexual harassment, of course it needs to be investigated. You can't just make allegations out of nothing. You need to research and really find out what's going on. I really do think that when someone is suffering sexual harassment at their place of work, it should be taken seriously because we spend most of our time at work. You should feel safe at your workplace. There's no way you should feel like someone is attacking you or harassing you in any type of way. It should be investigated and they can take the right actions necessary.

Alfredo Ortiz
Norwood



It's a big issue. I think they should pass stricter laws because no worker should have to feel uncomfortable or fearful, especially at the workplace. I do think sexual harassment, discrimination or any form of unjust situations should become a crime, especially in the workplace. Should they not be held accountable?

Staceyann DeLeon
Morris Park



I feel like the accused should have to step aside until the investigation is finished. That is a really huge accusation and it looks bad, both on the individual and the company if they don't act accordingly and swiftly. So they should suspend the person until further notice. I'm not surprised at the fact that it's happening, because people are corrupted and Hollywood is something else. The fact that there are so many being reported, is ridiculous and unforgivable.

Jonny Alexander
Parkchester

BAINBRIDGE NURSING AND REHABILITATION CENTER
IS PLEASED TO OFFER THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- Tracheostomy Care
- Short-Term Rehabilitation PT/OT/Speech 6 days
- Joint Replacement/Trauma Injury Recovery Program
- Specialized Stroke Rehabilitation Program
- IV Therapy
- Hospice and Palliative Care
- Specialized Wound Care Program
- Alzheimer's and Memory Care
- Therapeutic Activity Program
- Social Work Services
- Long-Term Skilled Care Services
- Psychological Services
- Sub-Acute Skilled Services

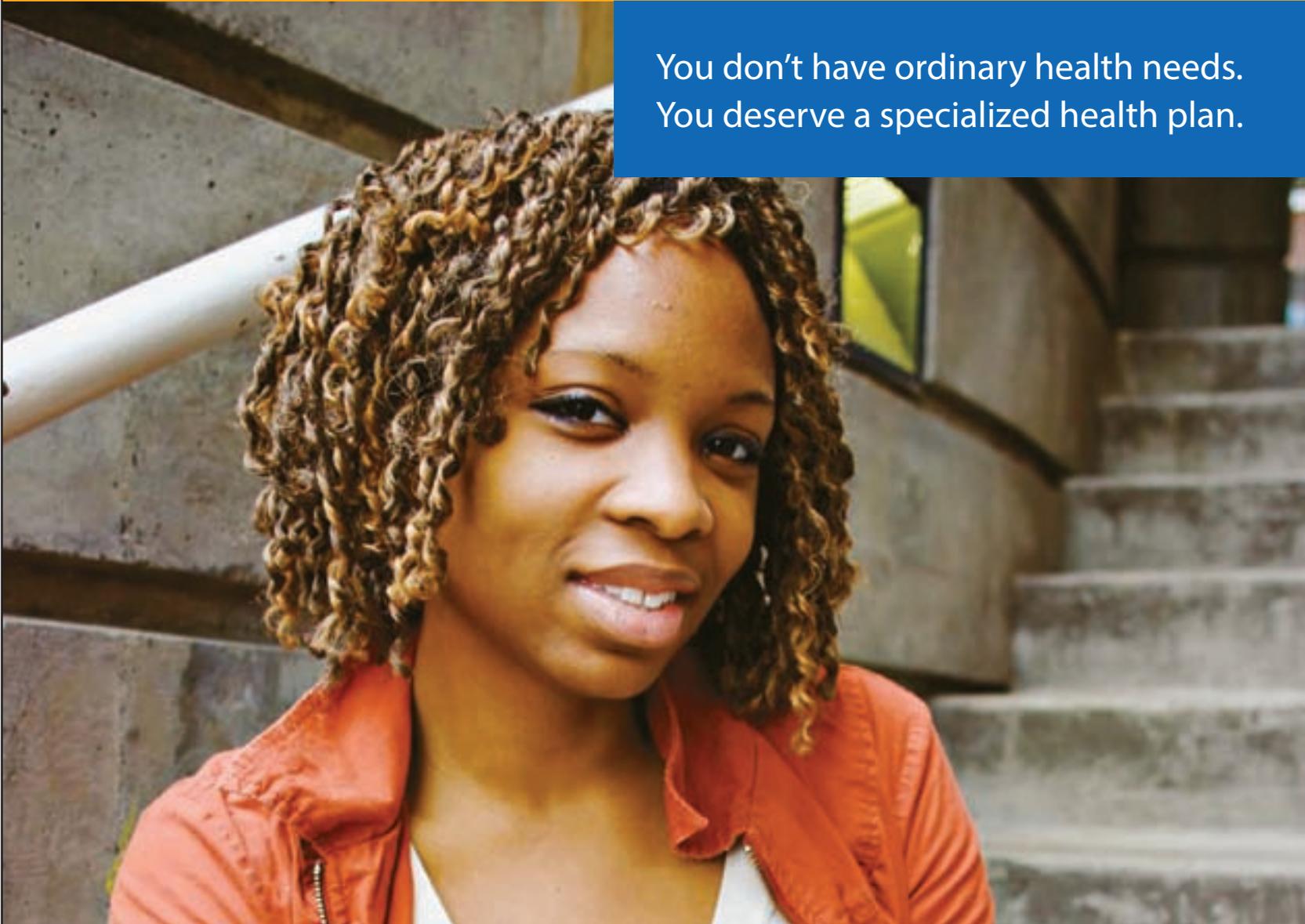
ADMISSIONS 7 DAYS A WEEK

BAINBRIDGE
NURSING & REHABILITATION CENTER

3518 Bainbridge Avenue Bronx, NY 10467
718-655-1991
www.BainbridgeCares.com

Still getting HIV care through a non-HIV health plan?

You don't have ordinary health needs. You deserve a specialized health plan.



If you're living with HIV/AIDS, SelectHealth is a health plan dedicated to serving your special needs. Your SelectHealth primary care doctor is an experienced HIV Specialist. And every physician in our network is fully committed to serving our community.



vnsnychoice.org/selecthealth

VNSNY CHOICE SelectHealth Medicaid
Learn more: 1-866-469-7774 (TTY: 711)
8 am – 6 pm, Monday – Friday
All calls confidential.

Lawmakers Advocate for Tenants at Pair of Morgan Group Buildings

By YARA PALIN and DIEGO BARCACEL PEÑA

The ongoing hazardous conditions at a Kingsbridge Heights apartment building is now getting the attention of a Bronx legislator.

State Senator Gustavo Rivera, representing the neighborhood, has stepped in to show support for the tenants of 60 E. 196th St., which has been plagued with disruptive construction.

In response to the situation, Rivera attended a Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) investigatory conference with tenants and the Morgan Group, which owns the building. He also has secured legal assistance from Legal Services of New York (LSNY) in cooperation with the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC) and organized to help tenants apply for rent reductions.

As of Nov. 28, the Housing Preservation and Development agency has 163 violations filed against the building. More than 70 are Class C violations, ranging from paint that tested positive for lead to exposed electrical wiring.

The *Norwood News* previously reported that tenants on one line of the building were forced to share a single bathroom for weeks after they were left

without water or gas while their kitchens and bathrooms were being demolished for city-mandated renovations. In some cases, tenants had their sinks and toilets completely removed. A stop work order was implemented by the city Buildings Department on Oct. 26, but was lifted on Nov. 8.

Jesus Ayala, an asthmatic tenant, says that the conditions have worsened since August. He says that they have not yet plugged a hole in the wall of his apartment, and instead covered it with plywood. Ayala says, "I had to go to the hospital [because] I ran out of the inhaler." His sister, Iris, says their apartment tested positive for lead paint and that her nephew tested positive for lead poisoning.

Maria Valdez, another tenant, says that although her kitchen was torn apart she was grateful to have it finished in time for Thanksgiving. She says, "There are still a few details that they have to finish, but those are things that you don't have to stop cooking for." She also says that she thinks the conditions have improved, but that there is still a lot more to be done.

Another tenant who only went by Ingrid, says that the circumstances have improved since Thanksgiving, after the meeting. She says that the Morgan Group



Photo by Aaron Mayorga

THE MORGAN GROUP owns some 50 buildings in the Bronx, mostly in communities across the northwest portion of the borough.

Holy Street Naming, Batman!

The co-creator behind DC Comics' Batman will be immortalized in Fordham. Bill Finger (pictured), a graduate of Norwood's DeWitt Clinton High School, will have his legacy honored with a street naming set for Dec. 8. The portion of East 192nd Street between the Grand Concourse and Valentine Avenue will be renamed "Bill Finger Way."

Finger was born Milton Finger on Feb. 8, 1914 in Denver, Colorado. He's long remained in the shadow of Bob Kane, another Clinton H. S. alum credited as the main creator of Batman. But Finger, conceptualized the look of the Caped Crusader while penning many of the early stories.

Finger's name, first reported by the South Bronx blog Welcome 2 The Bronx, will appear blocks from Poe Park where Kane and Finger would meet to conceive the Dark Knight mythos. Batman first appeared on the pages of Detective Comics #27 on March 30, 1939. Finger is also credited for having co-created the Green



Lantern.

The New York City Council approved the street naming in June this year. His was one of 11 other street namings the Council passed. Others include fallen EMT Yadira Arroyo, slain NYPD Sgt. Paul Tuozzolo, and revered community organizer Francis "Al" Chapman.

--David Cruz

was told that they must "finish at least the basic stuff for Thanksgiving like the kitchens and the bathrooms." However, Miguel, a tenant who commented on the first *Norwood News* article about the building, insists that the violations are mere "gossip." He says, "The building is being fixed in sections. The hot water and heaters, none of those things have we been without. It's just people finding something to complain about."

The Morgan Group is among the more prolific landlords in Norwood's surrounding communities. The firm's white and gold insignia typically hangs just above the first floors of apartment residences. The real estate tracking website Property Shark has at least 50 apartment buildings listed under The Morgan Group, with a swath of its properties found in Norwood and the surrounding communities. Scott Morgan is listed as the owner. Morgan did not return calls seeking comment.

Rivera also heard about conditions at 3115 Sedgwick Ave. in Van Cortlandt Village, another building owned by The Morgan Group. The area falls within

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz's district, which also overlaps with Rivera's. The two plan to set up another conference on Dec. 8 with Scott Morgan to discuss conditions and alleged harassment that tenants are going through at the Van Cortlandt Village building, which is also facing multiple violations.

Dinowitz has condemned the conditions tenants have been subjected to. He says that tenants have shown him photos of the "shattered porcelain sinks" and "broken pipes" that they were left with. He also says the actions of The Morgan Group are "criminal." "While I am still waiting on conclusions from various agencies involved, if they conclude that harassment has occurred, then I strongly urge the Attorney General to take appropriate action."

Rivera encouraged tenants to become organized. "One tenant can obviously be... pushed away to the side, but a group of tenants is always stronger," he said.

David Cruz contributed to this report.

Parents Protest Mosholu Library's Sparse Children's Services

By YARA PALIN

Outside the Mosholu Public Library, 10 children sat on the sidewalk on Dec. 1 as Elaine Langer, a Norwood resident and concerned parent, read to them during story time. Since the summer, the library hasn't been able to consistently offer children's services and has been without a children's librarian since September.

Moments before the unorthodox story time, Langer and around two dozen other parents expressed their grievances by protesting in front of the library.

Tancy Rodriguez, another Norwood resident, says that her family moved to the community six years ago because "[the community] had a good library. If we expand our family and there's not good services like this, we won't stay in the community."

Rodriguez also says that her six-year-old son has been attending story time since he was a week old. "Story time is how we've formed community. This is where I met all my friends. My child has formed relationships because of story time,"



Photo by Aaron Mayorga

THIS BOY STOOD among the young protesters outside the Mosholu Library on Dec. 1.

she says.

Langer has also been vocal about her displeasure with the library. In an email to the *Norwood News*, she said it is "absurd" that both children's librarians were transferred to other libraries without any replacements.

Other children's programs like STEM Explorer's Challenges, Lego Club, and Baby Lap Sit have also

been on hiatus.

Elizabeth Quaranta, president of Friends of Mosholu Parkland, and in attendance, felt that it was important to show support for members of the community because she is also part of a community activism group. "I think the library underestimated the community and so we're out here because it's the beginning of what needs to get done at

this library," she says.

Although she was shocked to hear that the library was left with no children's librarian, she feels that story time is "more than just sitting down and reading a book" because it forms a "bond" and a "unity" throughout the community.

Quaranta also alluded to other problems that have been brought to the library's attention. She says, "We've been asking for so long for other things and until it's at the very last straw is when they decide to do something."

In a statement, the New York Public Library has released a statement saying that they will be reinstating all the children's programs, along with a librarian, starting in January. "I wish it would've happened yesterday," says Elisabeth von Uhl, who helped organize the protest. "I wish it would've happened in the beginning of September so that we didn't have a school year start without a children's librarian. It is what it is."

Additional reporting by Sofia Mhairas and Stephanie Luciano.

**FIVE STAR
PIZZA & BURGERS**

**BUILD YOUR OWN PIZZA
BURGERS & SALADS**

347.843.7342

295 E. GUN HILL ROAD,
BRONX N.Y 10467

BEFORE

AFTER

LUNCH SPECIALS

GET FREE 2 LITER
WHEN YOU PURCHASE
ANY LARGE PIE OR PURCHASE
OVER \$20 DOLLARS OR MORE

BURGER LUNCH
ANY BURGER W/ FRIES AND
CAN SODA FOR **\$6.99**

WINGS/TENDERS COMBO
6 PRICE WINGS OR TENDERS
W/ FRIES & CAN SODA **\$6.99**

WRAP LUNCH
ANY WRAP W/ FRIES AND
CAN SODA FOR **\$6.99**

BUILD YOUR OWN PIE

STEP 1 - CHOOSE SIZE

- MEDIUM (8 SLICES) - \$11.95
- LARGE (12 SLICES) - \$12.95

STEP 2 - CHOOSE A CRUST

- ORIGINAL CRUST
- CHESSY CRUST + \$3.00

STEP 3 - CHOOSE SAUCE

- RED MARINARA
- BUFFALO RANCH

STEP 5 CHOOSE TOPPINGS **\$4.95** plus
Choice of 1-2 Toppings

VEGGIES

- FRESH GARLIC
- GREEN OLIVES
- SPINACH
- BROCCOLI
- RED CHICKS
- TOMATOES
- PINEAPPLE
- MUSHROOMS

MEATS

- BACON
- PEPPERONI
- SAUSAGE
- CHICKEN
- BBQ CHICKEN
- HAM

\$2.00 for Extra Additions, Toppings

Free

FREE 2 LITER SODA
WITH
A 10 DOLLAR PURCHASE WITH
COUPON ONLY

SPECIAL OFFERS

\$2 OFF
WHEN YOU SPEND
\$15 DOLLARS.

JONG S. KIM, 86

member for 3 years



NEW LOOK,
SAME GREAT
MR. KIM.

ELDERSERVE HEALTH IS NOW
RiverSpring Health Plans

NEW NAME, SAME GREAT CARE.

RiverSpringHealthPlans.org

NORWOOD NEWS

S N A P S H O T S



Photo courtesy Office of the Bronx Borough President
DR. HASAN ADERMAJ (center) poses with Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. (r) and Albanian American Society Foundation President Esad Rizai at the annual Albanian Independence ceremony on Nov. 29. The occasion recognized Albanians for their contributions to the borough while also celebrating the 105th anniversary of Albanian's independence from the Ottoman Empire.



Photo by David Greene
THESE YOUNG KIDS get some face time with Santa Claus at the annual Sparkling the Holidays event hosted by the Fordham Road BID on Dec. 1 at Bryan Park on East Fordham Road near East Kingsbridge Road. The event kicked off the holiday shopping season at the BID. Special raffles and entertainment also headlined the event.



Photo by Stephanie Luciano
OFFICIALS (L-R) CUNY Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning Judith Bergtraum, Lehman Center Executive Director Eva Bornstein, CUNY Chancellor James B. Milliken, Lehman College President Dr. José Luis Cruz, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Assemblyman Jose Rivera, Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz, and Councilman Andrew Cohen take part in the official ceremonial groundbreaking for the new Lehman Center for the Performing Arts. The event marked the start of construction for this not-for-profit and largest venue of its kind in the Bronx, and is expected to modify and upgrade its interior.



Photo courtesy Montefiore Health System
YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD Spider-Man swung by the Children's Hospital at Montefiore on Nov. 30 for a surprise visit to patients 14-year-old twins Nicolas and Karen Ramirez. The wall crawler's visit was made possible by the nonprofit group Heart for a Hero.



Photo by David Greene
VOLUNTEERS AT FORDHAM United Methodist Church feed more than 450 guests during their 15th annual Thanksgiving dinner. The annual tradition saw parishioners and visitors enjoy dinner among new friends.



Photo by Diego Barcaceal Peña
OL' SAINT NICK gathers young patients together from the Children's Hospital at Montefiore for a story on the meaning of Christmas on Dec. 4. The event was aimed at making the holidays brighter for the hospitalized children.



HEALTH CHECK

Avoid Painkillers When Possible

By **AMANDA PARSONS**

You may be hearing a lot about opioids lately, particularly in the Bronx where more residents die of drug overdoses than in any other borough. Frequently used opioids include illegal drugs like heroin, but also legal drugs like morphine, hydrocodone (such as Vicodin), oxycodone (such as Percocet and OxyContin), and codeine (such as Tylenol #3).

These drugs can be highly addictive and share similar effects on the body like relaxation, pain relief, and feeling “high.” But in higher doses, they can also lead to respiratory failure (when your breathing slows or stops) and death. Fentanyl, a known opioid, is particularly dangerous because it is 50 times more potent than



OPIOIDS ARE RESPONSIBLE for 308 deaths in the Bronx in 2016, according to data from the New York City Department of Health.

heroin and not all drug users know, or can tell, whether it has been mixed into the heroin they are using.

The best way to avoid overdose

deaths is to avoid opioids wherever possible. For patients taking medications that contain opioids (usually used for pain relief), this means taking these drugs only when absolutely necessary and then discarding the remaining unused pills. For people who already have an addiction, the two most important things are to connect that person to addiction treatment and to ensure that naloxone, a drug that can reverse the effects of opioids, is readily available (and that someone knows how to use it).

Naloxone is available for free at some community-based organizations and at pharmacies (with insurance) like Duane Reade, Walgreens, CVS and Rite Aid. It can be given as a nasal spray or as an injection and starts working within two to five minutes. Other tips in understanding naloxone include:

NYC has a great mobile app called “Stop OD NYC,” which you can download for free.

Find out how you can get trained to give Naloxone at a location near you by going to www.health.ny.gov/overdose. This training is important for family and friends of people who are

addicted, and also for people who use drugs themselves.

If you see someone who you suspect has overdosed, call 911, give naloxone if you have it, do rescue breathing or CPR if the person isn’t breathing, lay the person on their side if they are unresponsive (to prevent choking) and stay with the person until help arrives.

Remember that NYS 911 Good Samaritan Law provides protection to anyone calling 911 for help, even if the caller is a drug user too (and even if they have drugs on them when the help arrives). This means you shouldn’t worry about getting arrested if you are the one calling for help, even if you have taken drugs or have them around.

These resources can help you save a life! Get trained today and help protect our community from preventable overdose deaths.

Editor’s Note: *Amanda Parsons is vice president of Montefiore Health System’s Office of Community & Population Health and assistant professor of Family & Social Medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.*

St. Patrick’s Home

Rehabilitation & Health Care Center



“Where it all began”

- Short-Term Rehabilitation and Long-Term Care
- Physical, Occupational & Speech Therapy
- Daily Mass in our Chapel
- Restorative Nursing
- Wound Care
- Therapeutic Recreation
- Memory Program
- Palliative Care
- Pastoral Care
- Psychological Services
- Gift Shop & Coffee Shop
- And many other services...



66 Van Cortlandt Park South, Bronx, NY 10463

Tel: 718-519-2800

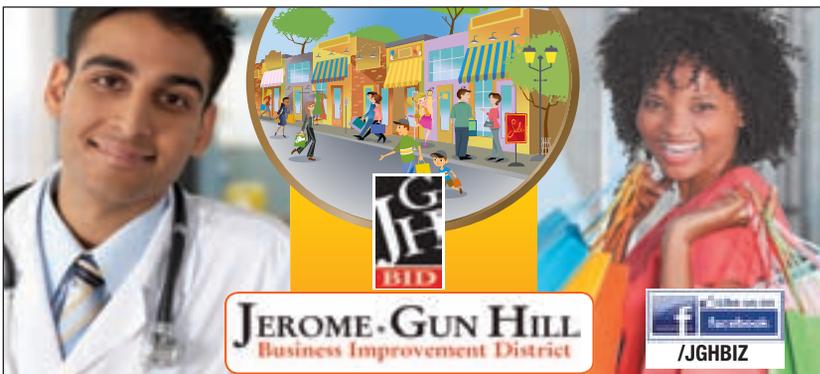
Fax: 718-304-1817

www.stpatrickshome.org

Carmelite Sisters Serving the Aged Since 1929



FACEBOOK.COM/STPATRICKSHOME



BIG SAVINGS

**THROUGHOUT THE JEROME-GUN HILL AREA!
COME SHOP & SAVE BIG ALL YEAR ROUND**

Over 200 Stores on Jerome Avenue from Mosholu to Gun Hill Road and on Gun Hill Road to Webster Avenue



Discover the Stores, Quality Service and Savings at the **Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District**.
Where Good Neighbors Deserve Great Shopping!
 All in a Safe, Clean & Friendly Environment
 Call the **BID Hotline at 718-324-4946** for more information or visit us at www.jeromegunhillbid.org



APARTMENTS FOR RENT

LANGSAM PROPERTY SERVICES CORP., AMO®
A COMPREHENSIVE REAL ESTATE SERVICE ORGANIZATION

1601 Bronxdale Avenue • Bronx, NY 10462 • T 718 518 8000 • F 718 518 8585
www.langsamproperty.com

Classifieds

Professional Directory

PEDIATRIC SERVICES

Tiga Pediatrics
 3510 Bainbridge Avenue, Suite 5, Bronx, NY 10467. Ages 0 to 21 years. General Practice, Obesity, Asthma, ADHD Same-Day Appointment Every Day! (718) 881-8999

COMPUTER SERVICES

Computer Repair
 Upgrade, troubleshooting, laptop overheats, cracked screen, broken power jack, virus removal, data recovery. Call James (646) 281-4475, (718) 324-4332.

BEAUTY SERVICES

Come to Madame P's Beauty World.
 We specialize in haircutting, hair care, hair coloring, all relaxers, Wave Nouveau, weaving to stimulate hair growth and carefree curls. We also offer press and curl. 20% off for seniors. 10% off for college students with picture ID. 617 E. Fordham Road (Fordham University section). Call today for your appointment: (347) 284-3834.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Epiphany Lutheran Church
A PLACE OF GRACE IN NORWOOD 3127 Decatur Ave., Bronx, NY
 Phone: (718) 652-6839 Web Site: www.epiphanybx.org
 WORSHIP - Sundays at noon BIBLE STUDY - Wednesday nights at 7 p.m.
 THRIFT SHOP - Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America God's work -- our hands

LODGINGS WANTED

Give these newlyweds a home for the holidays! Loving, married couple seeks furnished room or studio apt. with a caring family. Will pay \$1,000.00 per month. Will help with light housekeeping and shopping. Contact Lauryn or Matt (929) 451-5821.

WORSHIP SPACE WANTED

Christian Nonprofit Church group seeks a space to worship God. Big enough to accommodate 60 people. Worship services: Saturdays 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesdays 7 to 9 p.m., Fridays 7 to 9 p.m. First choice - Hunts Point community. To pay \$500 per month. Call Denise on Sundays (718) 584-6891.

Join Our Christmas Service At:
Bedford Park Congregational Church
 309 E. 201st Street (between Mosholu Pkwy & Bedford Park Blvd.)
December 24 at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m
All Are Welcome
 "Rejoice for God is with us — Emmanuel. In the darkness of our world shines God's Holy Light. Now there is reason o hope, to love, to laugh, and to live."

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Canned Food Drive

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz holds annual Holiday Canned Food Drive until Dec. 13. Donations, which are given to Bronx non-profits for families in need, can be dropped off at his office, 3107 Kingsbridge Ave. For more information, call (718) 796-5345.

Heating Assistance

Sign up to receive free heating assistance through the New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). Eligible households can receive assistance of up to \$725. A family of four with a yearly income of \$53,482 can still qualify for help. For more information about eligibility, and to sign up, call (212) 331-3126.

Toy Drive

The Office of Councilman Andy King is accepting new toys for its 11th annual "Sharing is Caring" toy drive collection for young Bronx residents. Toys must be new, unwrapped, and appropriate for children ages 18 and under. Donations can be dropped off at 940 E. Gun Hill Rd. from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, through Dec. 21. The holiday event is scheduled for Dec. 24. For more information, call (718) 684-5509.

Dance Scholarships

The Dance Studio at Bronx House, 990 Pelham Pkwy., So., offers full year scholarships to 10 students in grades 3 to 5 for comprehensive dance training. To apply, parents must schedule a mandatory interview with the dance administration. Interviews are currently being scheduled for the weeks of Dec. 12 to 15 and Jan. 9 to 12, 2018. For more information about requirements and to schedule an interview, call (718) 792-1800 ext. 235 or visit www.bronxhouse.org.

Donate Clothes

The Office of Councilman Andy King is accepting warm clothes for the winter season through Jan. 5, 2018. Coats, sweaters or any other warm clothing can be dropped off at 940 E. Gun Hill Rd. from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. They must be clean and in wearable condition. For more infor-

mation, call (718) 684-5509 or (718) 684-5511.

Coat Giveaway

Free, donated winter coats will be given out to the first 800 kids ages 2 to 12 on Dec. 16 from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at Ponce De Leon Bank, 980 Southern Blvd. Children must be present. For more information, call (347) 720-8052.

Free Personal Financial Counseling

The New York City Department of Consumer Affairs's Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) offers free one-on-one financial counseling by appointment. To schedule an appointment, and to find a Financial Empowerment Center near you, go to <http://bit.ly/2yQd11R>.

Crime Victims Support

Crime Victims Support Services offers victims help in navigating the criminal justice system. Free confidential services include claim assistance, case follow-up, crisis counseling, and victim advocacy. For more information, call (718) 823-4925.

Free Support Services

University Behavioral Associates (UBA), 4119 White Plains Rd. (corner of East 230th Street), offers a free Healthy Families Program for families living within the zip codes of 10466, 10467, 10469, and 10464. UBA can connect families with services such as housing assistance/referral, education, elder care, employment, legal matters, and health, among others. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, contact Meredith Pouncey at (718) 652-0227 ext. 259 or ext. 271.

Bronx Photo Club

The Bronx Photographic Society (formerly the New York Botanical/Zoological Photographic Society) meets bimonthly at Fordham University Prep School on the Fordham University Campus, 441 E. Fordham Rd., room 327 or 329 starting at 9:45 a.m. as follows: Dec. 16, Jan. 6 and 20, Feb. 3 and 17, March 3 and 17, April 14 and 21, and May 5 and 12. For more information, call (718) 543-3115.

"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?"

- Registrant since 1996



We would like to invite you to our

Open House!

This Monday & Thursday,

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Find out how you or a loved one

can take part in our

Day Health Care Program in a

warm, caring, & nurturing environment.

SERVICES:

- Nursing, Medical Care and Health Monitoring
- Case Management and Coordination
- Therapy Services (physical, occupational, speech)
- Breakfast, Snacks, and Lunch provided daily
- Fun activities and trips
- Free Wi-Fi and access to computers



Free Door-to-door TRANSPORTATION!

Se habla español
Мы говорим по русски



BAINBRIDGE
ADULT DAY HEALTH CARE CENTER

RSVP Contact
Adriana Garcia

3518 Bainbridge Avenue • Bronx, New York 10467

Tel: (718) 653-2273 • Fax: (718) 882-6610

www.BainbridgeDayCares.com • info@BainbridgeDayCares.com

Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Holiday Lightings

The public is invited to the following holiday lighting events:

Dec. 7 at 6 p.m. - At Mosholu Parkway and Bainbridge Avenue, presented by Community Board 7. Activities include annual tree lighting, CB7 choir and Mount St. Ursula and PS/MS 20 choirs. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

Dec. 12 from 6 to 8 p.m. - At Williamsbridge Square, 3500 White Plains Road (corner of Gun Hill Road), presented by Mosholu Preservation Corporation and Councilmember Andy King. Activities include holiday lighting, singing, dancing and free gift giving. For more information, email mpc@mpcbrooklyn.org.

Dec. 13 from 6 to 8 p.m. - At Jerome Avenue and Mosholu Parkway North, presented by Jerome-Gun Hill BID. Activities include annual tree lighting, free warm beverages, free presents for kids while supplies last, picture with Santa, music with DJ and coupons for sales in the BID. For more information, call (718) 324-4946.

Onstage

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **A Musical Tribute to Sam Cooke**, performed by singer Cody Childs and the Ladies of Soul, Dec. 9; and **concert**, featuring chamber music performed by Celia Cruz H.S. orchestra, Dec. 16; both at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Willie Colón and His Orchestra**, Dec. 9 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$50 to \$65 and \$100/VIP which includes reception and pre-concert

drinks and d'oeuvres at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

Lehman College, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents the following free events: **Passing Strange: The Musical**, Dec. 7-9 at 7 p.m., theatrical performance featuring student musicians with choreography, in the Lovinger Theatre, 1st floor, Speech and Theatre Building (tickets: \$10; \$8/CUNY ID; free/Lehman students with valid ID); **Lehman College & Community Latin Jazz Ensemble**, Dec. 10 at 2 p.m., performing Latin works, in the Hearth Room, 3rd floor, Music Building; **Lehman College Jazz Ensemble** performing jazz, Latin-jazz and hip-hop, and **Lehman College Guitar Ensemble**, performing



File photo

KIDS CAN EXPECT a visit from Santa Claus at the annual holiday tree lighting ceremony sponsored by the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District. More information on this and other holiday events can be found in our Editor's Pick and Holiday Events sections.



Photo courtesy Joshua Bright/Wave Hill

LEARN HOW TO make an amulet using your palm at Wave Hill (see more information under Events).

blues, jazz, pop and rock, Dec. 11 at 3:30 p.m., in the Recital Hall, Music Building, 3rd floor; **Lehman College & Community Chamber Orchestra**, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m., performing classical music, in the Hearth Room, 3rd floor, Music Building; and **Master Class: Voice**, Dec. 14 at 12:30 p.m., featuring voice students, Recital Hall, 3rd floor, Music Building. For more information, call (718) 960-8247.

The Riverdale Choral Society presents **concert**, Dec. 10 at 3 p.m. featuring **classical music**, at Christ Church Riverdale, 5030 Henry Hudson Pkwy. at West 252nd Street (\$25). For more information, call (718) 543-2219.

Holiday Events

Williamsbridge Oval presents **Winter Wonderland**, Dec. 16 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Events include arts and crafts, carnival games, snacks, and pictures with Santa. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

New York Botanical Garden presents the **Annual Holiday Train Show**, through Jan. 15, featuring model trains and miniature replicas of NYC landmarks. For more information and to purchase tickets, call (718) 817-8512.

Library Events

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children: **Hands on Projects** (ages 7 to 12; preregistration required): Wreath Making, Dec. 7, Gingerbread House Making, Dec. 14, and Holiday Card Making, Dec. 21, all at 4 p.m.; and Ornament Making, Dec. 10 and Polar Bear Making, Dec. 12, both at 3:30 p.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy **Holiday Party and Ugly Sweater Contest**: winner receives prize; everyone receives book to take home, Dec. 20 at 4 p.m.; and **Dreidel, Dreidel, Dreidel**: learn to play the game and receive chocolate coins, Dec. 12 at 4 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 teens/young adults: **Film**: "Spider-Man Homecoming," Dec. 9 at 1:30 p.m.; and **Craft-eens!**: Different craft every Wednesday, Dec. 13 and 20 at 3:30 p.m. (all materials are provided). Adults can attend: **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: **Preschool Storytime and Crafts at 11:15 a.m.**: (ages 3 to 5), including puppetry, dramatics, crafts and flannel boards, Dec. 8; **film**: "A Charlie Brown Christmas," Dec. 16 at 2 p.m.; **Family Trivia Night**: for the entire family, Dec. 18 at 4 p.m.; and **Gingerbread House Workshop**: Dec. 21 at 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Dec. 11 for the next publication date of Dec. 21.

Events

The Williamsbridge Oval offers a variety of **free classes for youth** ages 6 to 12, this fall, after school and Saturdays, including drama, sports, dance, art and more. Also offered is **Literacy Day**, Dec. 8 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Bring your favorite book and enjoy stories and snacks; for ages to 13 years. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 543-8672.

Gracie Mansion, 88th Street and East End Avenue, will be open to the public for its annual **Holiday Open House**, Dec. 16 from 2 to 5 p.m. Guests will tour the mansion, then visit the outdoor tent to view holiday arts and crafts. For more information and to RSVP, visit www.nyc.gov/GracieHolidayOpenHouse.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Put Wave Hill in the Palm of Your Hand, to trace your hand to make a palm-shaped amulet, then decorate it, Dec. 9 and 10; and Wintery Birdy Marionettes, to make puppets, Dec. 16 and 17, both 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.

Exhibits

The Bronx County Historical Society presents **What Lies Beneath -- Cemeteries of the Bronx**, through April 8, 2018, at the Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street). Also offered is **Early American Gravestones**, lecture and workshop, Dec. 10 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. (\$25) at Bronx County Archives, 3313 Bainbridge Ave. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Jerome Ave. Plan Advances

(continued from page 1)

meeting, Council Members Fernando Cabrera and Vanessa Gibson, whose district largely cover the rezoned area, abstained from the vote. Councilman Ritchie Torres, whose 15th Council District is not impacted by the Jerome Avenue plan, also abstained via proxy vote. The move came as a surprise to some as Torres is in the running for New York City Council Speaker and in need of any political clout he could muster from his legislative colleagues in the Bronx. A spokesman for Torres told the *Norwood News* the abstention was intended to follow Gibson's and Cabrera's lead.

For Gibson, the proposal represents a watershed moment for these low-income neighborhoods, many of which fall within her 16th Council District. Development along the stretch has been patchy with many apartment residences in subpar states.

Schools are also overcrowded. With school districts 9 and 10 falling within the west Bronx severely overcrowded, Gibson called on the city to increase the number of school seats to prepare for the influx of new residents.

"We cannot accept more residents and families in this district if we do not address the unfunded seats that we have in School District 9, which is about 600 [seats], and School District 10, which is about 1800," said Gibson, reading off prepared remarks. "We are projecting 2200 additional seats that are needed on top of the unfunded seats."

That idea was seconded by Community Board 4 Chair Kathleen Saunders and Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., who was not present during the hearing but had his remarks read aloud.

The seats are a part of a number of stipulations added to the growing list of demands from the community. Other terms include ensuring subways are ADA-compliant, preserving 2,000 existing affordable housing units, building affordable apartment units with specific square footage, and building a community center in the neighborhood of Highbridge.

Over the course of the Thanksgiving weekend, Diaz and his team hammered out solid commitments from the de Blasio administration. They include funding to rehabilitate Aqueduct Walk, establishing anti-harassment housing policies, and delving into preserving the existing automotive sector on Jerome Avenue. The city has already begun making some commitments, including a \$4.6 million earmark towards a park. "The people of the Bronx are not opposed to improvements," Diaz said in his statement. "In fact, we expect our fair share of community benefits. The residents who testified at my hearing last month asked for greater afford-

ability, more significant tenant protections and assurances that this rezoning would work for everyone, including them. These commitments from the City are important steps towards these goals."

Saunders sees these commitments as a positive step forward, though she looks to keep the city on the hook with some of these stipulations by establishing a monitoring team comprised of members of community boards 4, 5, and 7 and other residents. "It will be a work force," said Saunders.

But Gibson's voice arguably matters the most throughout the process given how much the proposed zoning falls within her district. Her position will determine whether the New York City Council will vote in favor of the project. Council members typically defer their vote to the council member whose project presides in that district.

"This neighborhood plan is generated for us, for the residents that deserve everything that we are asking for," said Gibson.

Community backlash to the Bronx Borough Board's decision to approve the rezoning has been swift.

Allen Lum, a resident who testified during the Nov. 2 hearing organized, criticized the board's recommendations for not incorporating the suggestions made by the Bronx Coalition for Community Vision. "The demands listed in the board's document do not outline an explicit contract with the community that would protect our residents and our small businesses from displacement," Lum said in an email.

Ed Viera, Jr., a schoolteacher who also spoke to the *Norwood News* last month, echoed these concerns, arguing that the rezoning "doesn't intend to reflect the actual social fabric of the Bronx. It aims to put a new, richer face on it and people like me are not invited."

"I was dumbfounded, but expected it," reacted Carmen Vega-Rivera, an organizer with Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA) since 2011. Vega-Rivera, who is disabled, questioned whether lawmakers even considered the community's feedback. "If you don't listen to what the community needs but you're looking at what the community could possibly look like, speaks to the fact that those of us that are here... don't matter."

Vega-Rivera, who has lived in the Bronx for the last 40 years, sees parallels between this rezoning and others like it. "Show me in the other four boroughs where you have done rezoning and people have not been displaced, have not lost their homes, they have gotten better jobs," she said. "When you can show me that, then I'll start believing it and have a little bit more hope... right now, it is bleak."



Wishing you
Joy & Peace this
Holiday Season



**RIDGEWOOD
SAVINGS BANK**

multiply the good

**Want to Reach 40,000
Potential Customers???**

Want to Increase Your Sales???

**Advertise in the
AWARD-WINNING
NORWOOD NEWS**



The ONLY newspaper covering your neighborhood

Affordable Rates Available!

**Call (718) 324-4998 or email
norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org**