

NORWOOD NEWS

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*Can't Sleep?
Find Your Cure*
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I ♥ THE BRONX



Photo by Adi Talwar

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Ruben Diaz, Jr. kisses his wife Hilda after giving his third State of the Borough speech at Harry S. Truman High School on Feb. 23. For more on the speech, go to page 2.

LGBT Chamber Opens First Office in Bedford Park

By **MARCOS SIERRA**

As the rain teemed outside and the temperature dropped on a late February Friday, decorations were going up and spirits were high inside the offices of Bedford Park Tax, Inc., where Rev. Carmen Hernandez had reason to celebrate.

"It's the first chapter of the NYC LGBT Chamber of Commerce, and I'm excited it's here in the Bronx," said Hernandez, hours before the official ribbon-cutting ceremony.

A single mother of nine who was raised on Willis Avenue in the Bronx, Hernandez founded the NYC LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Chamber of Commerce in 2007.

"Our purpose is to connect business owners of diverse backgrounds from the LGBT and straight communities to help build better relationships in those communities," said Hernandez who is also an ordained "street" evangelist.

"We need to better support our local businesses," she added. "When we have block parties, it's the local businesses like Bedford Park Tax, Inc. that help us out. The big corporations just give us an 800 number to call. It's just sad."

Hernandez's organization aims to implement a variety of services and programs for LGBT businesses in the Bronx and the rest of

New York City, through education, networking, youth entrepreneurship, assistance with minority business certification and facilitation of innovative projects, according to its website.

"The partnership between NYC LGBT Chamber of Commerce and Bedford Park Tax, Inc. is a good one," said Tax, Inc. owner Mark Rodriguez.

"It's getting harder and harder for individuals to find the resources they need to start a business," Rodriguez added. "I see what's going on in our community and with our

(continued on p. 8)



Photo by Catherine Fonseca

REV. CARMEN HERNANDEZ, second from the left, and other community members, cut the ribbon to the LGBT Chamber of Commerce's first office in Bedford Park.

Stop & Frisk Rates Spark Call for Reform

By **ALEX KRATZ**

Whenever he ventures out into his University Heights neighborhood, whether by car or foot, Blandon Casenave thinks there is a strong possibility he might be stopped and searched by police for no other reason than the color of his skin.

"I'm conscious of it all the time," Casenave said.

As a black man living in New York City, Casenave has good reason to believe his travels might be interrupted by a police encounter.

Last year, police officers stopped people and questioned them 684,330 times, according to a report recently released by the New York Civil Liberties Union. Many of them were also searched and the vast majority of those stopped — 87 percent — were black or Latino. Nearly 90 percent of the stops did not result in an arrest or a ticket and most of those that did result in an arrest or summons, were for low-level offenses.

The percentage of black and Latinos stopped has remained dispropor-

tionately high, but the number of stops continues to rise at an alarming clip. It's a 14 percent increase from 2010 and a 600 percent increase from a decade ago.

While the NYPD defends its stop tactics as one of the main reasons violent crime, especially murders, are down citywide compared to the 1990s, elected officials and other civil liberties groups are calling for widespread reform.

William Cannon, an NYPD veteran of 27 years, who retired from the department last October and now teaches at Monroe College, says stop tactics are used to prevent people from carrying around guns.

"If they feel uncomfortable carrying a gun because they might get in trouble if they get stopped," he said, "then they won't carry around that gun and they won't be able to use it."

"It's very effective," he added.

In an e-mail to the *New York Times*, Paul J. Browne, a spokesman for the NYPD, said, "Stops save lives." There are half as many mur-

(continued on p. 8)

Judge Forced to Draft Congressional Redistricting Lines

By **JEANMARIE EVELLY**

A federal judge released a set of maps on Tuesday proposing to redraw New York State's Congressional districts, an act required this year to reflect population changes based on the 2010 Census count. If approved, the new lines would have the Bronx represented by four different members of Congress, expanding the northern Manhattan district currently represented by Congressman Charles Rangel into the Bronx to include sections of Kingsbridge and Norwood.

Lawmakers in Albany have been sparring for months over how to draw the new maps. They proposed drafts for the State Senate and

Assembly lines in February, but were unable to come to an agreement on how to re-draw the state's Congressional districts, having to eliminate two, from 29 to 27, because of population changes.

With the deadline of the Congressional primary looming in June, a panel of federal judges appointed a magistrate to draft the new maps if the legislature couldn't come to an agreement of its own. After hearing testimony and viewing map proposals from the public — including the Assembly Democrats, the Senate Republicans, a coalition of Bronx officials and good government groups — U.S. Magistrate Roanne Mann released a set of drafted maps

(continued on p. 6)

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In The Public Interest

By JEANMARIE EVELLY

State of the Borough Spotlights Bronx Businesses

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., delivered his third annual State of the Borough address to a packed, darkened auditorium at Harry S. Truman High School on Feb. 23, a speech that focused heavily on the Bronx's economy and recent business developments in the borough.

A bevy of city and state elected officials were in the audience for the 54-minute speech, which covered the usual political topics — schools, health, transportation, crime — and recalled the accomplishments of Diaz's last three years in office.

But the gist of this year's speech: jobs.

The borough president spent much of the first portion of his address citing a number of recent business and development projects that are taking root in the Bronx. Standing at a podium with a changing photo slideshow behind him, Diaz noted Smith Electric, a company that manufactures battery-powered trucks which is opening a warehouse in the south Bronx. He then pointed to a mall project planned for the former Stella D'Oro cookie factory in Kingsbridge, last spring's deal to keep the Hunts Point Produce Market in the borough, FreshDirect's plans to move to Harlem River Yards and, of course, the potential redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory.

“We have changed the way business is done in the Bronx, and it shows,” Diaz told the crowd. “Major companies are making their way to our borders, to take advantage of our able workforce. In the past three years we have seen unprecedented interest in the Bronx.”

Some of that interest has brought criticism. Outside of Truman High School, before Diaz's address began, a couple of protestors held a banner that read, “Stop FreshDirect,” and handed out fliers to those entering the building.

FreshDirect, an online grocery company, received \$1 million in capital grant funds from the borough president, part of the \$127 million in tax breaks and subsidies the company will receive from the city and state to relocate from Queens to Harlem River Yards in the south Bronx. Critics say the deal is a misuse of precious waterfront property, and too generous for a company that doesn't offer services to most neighborhoods in the Bronx.

But Diaz stayed optimistic. Discussing

the future of the Kingsbridge Armory, he said he was certain the building would be home to living wage jobs and “the foundation for the revitalization of the northwest Bronx, in ways that a retail mall never could.” He praised the Bronx Tourism Council, the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation and a number of local schools for their successes, announced plans to host a Bronx “health summit” this year and cited a number of transportation improvement projects happening in the borough.

Diaz ended his speech reiterating the idea of unity and collaboration — between Bronx neighborhoods, community groups and elected officials — as key to advancing the borough. As the lights came back on at the end of his address, “Come Together,” by the Beatles was played over the loudspeakers.

“We are working together, as a team, to implement the good ideas our borough needs to grow in the short term, and thrive in the future,” Diaz said.

Editor's Note: For more photos and audio coverage from the Bronx State of the Borough, visit www.norwoodnews.org.

Churches Can Meet in Schools Through June

Churches and religious groups that meet in public school buildings will be able to keep doing so, at least until mid-June, after a federal judge last week rejected the Department of Education's request to lift a preliminary injunction on its policy banning worship in school buildings during off-hours.

Many religious groups had been locked out of the schools after the DOE's ban went into effect on Feb. 12, which sent many churches scrambling to find a place to hold services. Some of them held mass on the sidewalks outside the school buildings.

Lawyers for the Bronx Household of Faith, a University Heights parish that has been waging a lawsuit against the Department of Education for 17 years for the right to keep holding services at PS/MS 15 on Andrews Avenue, argued in their latest legal maneuver that the city's policy violates freedom of religion, a notion that Federal Judge Loretta Preska said had merit.

“Losing one's right to exercise freely and fully his or her religious beliefs is a greater threat to our democratic society than a perceived violation of the Establishment Clause,” she said. She then ordered that the churches could return to schools while she deliberated further on the issue, a decision the city's Law Department appealed. Preska denied that appeal last week. A final decision is expected by mid-June.

The DOE argues that allowing the churches to remain could give the impression that the city promotes one religion over another, a violation of the Constitution's Establishment Clause. But opponents of the ban say the religious services are only taking place during non-school hours, and that the city's policy is unfairly discriminating against religious groups, since other community organizations are permitted to rent school space.

“When we're there on a Sunday, no one's around and we don't have access to classrooms,” said Pastor Mark Gregori, of Cross Way Church and Christian Center, which has held services in the auditorium of MS 101 on Lafayette Avenue for the last year and a half.

Religious leaders and a number of local politicians are looking to have the issue resolved legislatively. A bill that would reverse the DOE's ban was passed by the State Senate earlier this month, but has not been approved by the Assembly. Speaker Sheldon Silver, who decides what bills come up on the Assembly floor for a vote, is looking for a narrower version of the bill than the one that's been proposed, according to a spokeswoman.

“The bill has 74 formal co-sponsors in the assembly, and others who support it,” said Bronx City Councilman Fernando Cabrera, who has been waging a campaign on behalf of the churches. “If it were brought to the floor today, it would pass.”

City Releases Teacher Evaluation Data

For the first time in its history, the Department of Education reluctantly released data on thousands of school teachers at the end of February, includ-

ing individual teachers' names and evaluations score.

In 2010, over a dozen news outlets had asked for the data through Freedom of Information Law requests, and after two years of appeals, a court ultimately ordered the DOE to hand over the information last month. News organizations like the *New York Times* and DNAinfo.com have published the data and created search tools for parents to locate individual teachers' ratings.

The release of the evaluations has been highly controversial, criticized by the DOE and the United Federation of Teachers, the union representing public school teachers, as flawed and inaccurate representations of a teacher's effectiveness.

“The data does not tell the whole story of your work as a teacher,” Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott wrote in a letter to teachers and principals, sent the night before the data was released. “These reports were never intended to be public or to be used in isolation.”

The reports were issued by the DOE to approximately 18,000 math and English teachers, in grades 4 through 8, for the 2007/2008 and 2009/2010 school years. Evaluations were based on students' state test scores.

Public and Community Meetings

- **COMMUNITY BOARD 7's general board meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 20 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, located at 3450 DeKalb Ave. For more information about CB7 meetings and events, call (718) 933-5650 or go online to bronxcb7.info.**
- **COMMUNITY BOARD 7's committee meetings will be held at the Community Board office, 229A E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. on the following dates (unless otherwise noted): Monday, March 12 – Youth Services; Tuesday, March 13 – Economic Development; Thursday, March 15 – Environment/Sanitation and Long Term Planning; Wednesday, March 21- Senior Services will be held at 2 p.m. (Scott Tower- 3400 Paul Ave.)**
- **THE 52ND COMMUNITY PRECINCT COUNCIL will meet March 22 at 7 p.m. at St. Philip Neri School auditorium, 3031 Grand Concourse. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.**

Neighborhood Notes

Norwood Food Co-op

Consumers interested in fresh, organic vegetables and community-supported agriculture, can join the Norwood Food Co-op and receive food every week from June through November. Choose shares of organic vegetables and fruits, plus options for milk, eggs, cheese, and yogurt for less than green market prices and in exchange for a few hours' work with other Co-op members during the season. Share prices vary according to family size. Registration deadline is May 1. For more information or to register, go to norwoodfoodcoop.org.

Free Wood Chips, Mulch

The Bainbridge Avenue Community Garden, located at 2978-80 Bainbridge Ave., is offering free wood chips and mulch to anyone interested in filling in their garden or tree pit. Mulch is good for keeping down weeds. Bring plastic bags for pickup. For more information or to arrange a pickup, call Janice at (646) 271-4310.

Bronx Water Conference

The Bronx Council for Environmental Quality will be hosting its free 11th Annual Water Conference on March 14, from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Soundview Park Field House, between Colgate and Story avenues. The event includes the annual membership meeting and board members' swearing in, discussions by the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, networking, tabling and refreshments. For more information, call Dart Westphal at (917) 805-9566 or to RSVP, e-mail rsvp@bceq.org.

NYBG Open House

The New York Botanical Garden is offering two free adult education open house events in floral design, botanical art, landscape design, and gardening, Saturday, March 10, from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Garden, and Wednesday, March 14, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the NYBG Education Center, 20 W. 44th St. (between Fifth and Sixth avenues), 3rd floor. For more information, call (800) 322-6924 or visit nybg.org/AdultEd.

Free Tax Prep Help

• LIFT-The Bronx, a non-profit organization serving the Bronx for the past 12 years, offers numerous services for those in need, including job searches, housing, childcare and healthcare services, and legal services. The new office at 2381 Belmont Ave., will host several tax prep events to assist low-income individuals and families. For more information or to sign up, call (718) 733-3897 or email Bronx@liftcommunities.org.

• The University Neighborhood Housing Program, is sponsoring free Federal and State Income Tax Assistance to low-income residents of the Bronx provided by IRS certified tax preparers at Refuge House, 2715 Bainbridge Ave. (near East 196th Street), by appointment only. Services are provided on Wednesdays from 3 to 8 p.m. on March 28, April 4, and 11; and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 24, 31, and April 14. For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 933-2539.

For more Neighborhood Notes online, go to www.norwoodnews.org.

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After Renovations, Poe Cottage Opens Its Doors

By DESTINY DEJESUS

Edgar Allan Poe Cottage, where the famous writer spent the final years of his life, recently reopened after more than a year of renovation.

The 200-year-old cottage now sitting inside Poe Park, on Kingsbridge Road and the Grand Concourse, was repaired due to the "wear and tear" of its interior and exterior, said Angel Hernandez, Bronx Historical Society's education coordinator. The low-ceilinged house with petite-sized rooms received a fresh coat of paint as well as repairs to the stairs, cracks and holes in walls and even the rotting beams in the tiny kitchen.

"In total, the restoration cost \$480,000," said Franklin D. Vagnone, executive director of the Historical House Trust, which provided funding for the project along with the Bronx Historical Society and the federal government. Apple Restoration contracted out the work on the house.

The cottage was originally located on the other side of Kingsbridge Road, closer to what is now Fordham Road, and was moved to its current location in 1913. Poe lived in the Bronx at the cottage during the last years of his life, from 1846 to 1849. He moved to the Bronx with his wife in hopes of saving her from dying of tuberculosis. (She died in 1847.)

The cottage is filled with period pieces as well as two actual pieces of furniture that Poe used himself: a rocking chair and his bed. The cottage is the oldest and last remaining building in what was once called Fordham Village. During the years that Poe stayed at the cottage the area was mostly farmland. At the cottage, Poe wrote many of his most famous stories, including "Landon's Cottage," a short story based on his time in the Bronx.

Hernandez said the Historical Society is looking to expand its programming at the cottage. During the week, school groups are able to go on tours of the cottage. There are poetry readings inside and a short film is offered in one of the top floor rooms.

In order to further expand its audience, "We are planning on starting a bilingual program in Spanish and French," said Hernandez.

In a modern twist, Hernandez said they plan on setting up a toll-free number to allow people to listen to audio tours from their own cell phones.

Ed. Note: Poe Cottage is open for tours on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and costs \$5 for adults and \$3 for students, children and senior citizens. For more information, visit historic-housetrust.org and click on "Houses."

Visitors Center Still Closed

The Parks Department completed work on a brand new Poe Park Visitors Center last summer. But the agency did not have the money to fund its operation, so it has closed since the end of the summer. Now, the agency is working with a group of local stakeholders that includes Fordham University, Lehman College and the Municipal Arts Society to come up with a plan for staffing and programming at the center. The group's initial goal is to provide programming on the weekends.

A spokesman for the Parks Department said it is holding long-term visioning sessions with the stakeholder groups, community members and elected officials. "We are also working on a long-term strategy to reinvigorate the existing Friends of Poe Park group, the Ravens, to provide a steady advocate for the building and surrounding park, and enable us to raise funds to support the full-time programming of the facility," the spokesman said.



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Inquiring Photographer

By DAVID GREENE

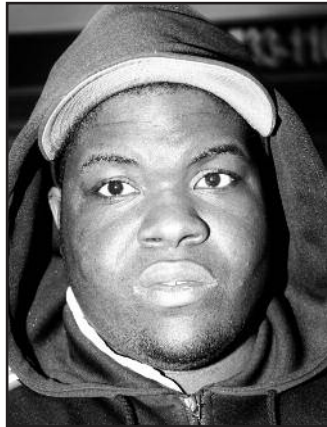
This week we asked readers what they think of the NYPD's controversial "stop-and-frisk" policy.



I feel like it's hard enough on the streets, you know? Honestly, I feel safe until [cops] pass by me in the street.
Brandon Vializ



They really need to figure out what they're doing with all the taxpayer money. Stopping us and frisking us is not helping anybody, and it's making us go crazy.
Eddie Hand



It makes no sense. They stop people for no reason sometimes. You could just be walking, and they stop you. They say, 'Put your hands in the air.' They tell you a lot of stuff, then they tell you, 'Go home.' Cops are locking up a lot of people, for no reason, at any precinct all over the city.
Keshawn Saddler



In a way it's stupid, and in a way it makes sense. When I go downtown to my daughter's house, I don't get touched. Guess what? She lives on Fifth Avenue, but up here in the Bronx where I live, I get pulled over or stopped. I don't get frisked downtown, in a predominantly white neighborhood, yet in my own neighborhood, I get stopped and patted down.
Bobby Johnson



My opinion is very simple: it doesn't really work. Most of the people they stop and frisk have no prior crimes or haven't committed a crime and it's just a way to demoralize people. A policy that doesn't work is a waste of money and time. They could actually be out here stopping crimes.
Ian Charles

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Judge Forced to Draft Congressional Redistricting Lines

(continued from p. 1)

on Tuesday. Her proposal eliminates a district in the Hudson Valley and another that straddles Brooklyn and Queens.

In a letter sent to Mann last week, Bronx Borough President Ruben, Diaz, Jr. and a number of other local elected officials had urged the judge to maintain the Bronx districts of Congressmen Jose E. Serrano and Eliot Engel, something the proposed maps largely do.

“Both Rep. Serrano and Rep. Eliot are lifelong

east Bronx and Queens, would retain those neighborhoods and would also acquire Riker’s Island.

By press time, Diaz had not had time to analyze the new maps, according to spokesman John DeSio.

His father, State Senator Ruben Diaz, Sr., said he thought Mann’s proposed maps were a significant improvement for the Bronx compared to those proposed by the majority parties in the State Senate and State Assembly. Bronx officials had criticized those — particularly the maps drafted by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, which had the Bronx divided across five districts — as unfairly carving up the Bronx, and in turn diminishing the borough’s electoral power.

“Those two were disastrous,” Diaz, Sr. said of the legislature’s proposals, adding that Mann’s maps “show more respect and more consideration for the black and Hispanic communities of the Bronx.”

Still, lawmakers might have the last say. If the Senate and Assembly can come up with compromise maps for the State Senate, Assembly and Congressional lines, and if those maps are accepted by Gov. Andrew Cuomo before a federal deadline of March 20, it would remove the courts from the process, according to Michael McDonald, a redistricting expert at George Mason University.

Cuomo, who has pushed for the idea of an independent body to control the redistricting process, had vowed to veto any maps proposed by lawmakers that showed evidence of gerrymandering, or done in a way that protects incumbent candidates.

But McDonald predicts that if a compromise plan is reached, Cuomo may be likely to approve it.

“The threat of veto is really to force the legislature to produce a better map,” he said.

Norwood and Kingsbridge would share a representative with Manhattan.

Bronxites who have represented parts of our borough for their entire careers,” Diaz said. “If the Bronx were to lose their collective seniority in Washington — and the clout that comes with it — it would do our borough tremendous harm.”

Under Mann’s proposal, Serrano’s south Bronx district will be renumbered as Congressional District 15, but will remain contained entirely within the borough, and will remain majority Hispanic. Engel, whose proposed district would encompass much of lower Westchester, would continue to represent the north Bronx neighborhoods of Riverdale, Williamsbridge and Eastchester, but he would lose Kingsbridge and Norwood to Manhattan Congressman Rangel’s newly expanded district. Congressman Joseph Crowley, who currently represents the

Business Beat

Raising Money for Healthy Smiles

By DESTINY DEJESUS

Norwood dentist Dr. Jay Fensterstock jumped into the holiday spirit early this past winter. By sponsoring a charity drive selling “Holiday Teeth,” Concerned Dental Care raised \$1,800 in donations that were sent to Healthy Smiles, Healthy Children, a charity sponsored by The Foundation of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Healthy Smiles, Healthy Children aids low-income families that cannot afford dental procedures.

The charity drive started Nov. 30 and ended on the last day of 2011. Concerned Dental Care printed out colored images of teeth and wrote the names of families who donated on the printout. The “Holiday Teeth” were displayed on the walls of Concerned Dental Care’s office on Mosholu Parkway.

In addition to the Bronx site, five other offices were involved with the charity work. Out of all five offices, Fensterstock’s Bronx office had the best turnout. Fred Madera, who works for all of the locations, said that although this was the first time Concerned Dental Care was involved with the holiday charity work, they plan on continuing the tradition next year in hopes of raising more money to help a good cause.

Ed. Note: Concerned Dental Care is located at 55 E. Mosholu Pkwy. No. For more information, call (718) 652-7370 or visit concerneddentalcare.com.



Photo courtesy Concerned Dental Care
SOME OF the charity teeth that helped Concerned Dental Care raise \$1,800 for charity.



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Be Healthy!

1,550

The number of fatalities each year caused by drowsy drivers, according to estimates by the National Department of Transportation.

Vital Stats

Be Healthy! Q&A With Sleep Expert Dr. Steven Park

By JEANMARIE EVELLY

March 5 to 11 is National Sleep Awareness Week, an annual public education and awareness campaign sponsored by the National Sleep Foundation, to promote the importance of sleep on your health and well-being. To get some expert advice on the topic, *Be Healthy!* recently chatted with Dr. Steven Y. Park, an otorhinolaryngologist (an ear, nose and throat specialist) and integrative sleep surgeon at Montefiore Medical Center.

What are some of the negative health effects associated with poor sleep?

Not sleeping enough significantly increases your risk of gaining weight, of diabetes, cancer, and of death in general. Lack of quality sleep causes you to crave fatty, carbohydrate-rich foods, and also affects your metabolism. When it comes to a transportation worker, or really anyone who operates heavy machinery or drives a car, not sleeping well can cause accidents and poor judgment. It's a huge problem, and huge burden on society.

What are the most common sleep disorders you see in patients?

There are many different kinds of sleep problems. There's not sleeping long enough—we recommend seven or eight hours. Then there's insomnia, when people just can't sleep at all, no matter what they do. Then there's sleep apnea, a major condition that's undiagnosed in 90 percent of people who have it.

What exactly is sleep apnea?



Photo by Lystria Hurley

CHILDREN AT the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center, in Crotona, recently got a lesson on dental care and proper toothbrushing from staff at the Amarilis Jacobo Dental Office.

Sleep apnea is when you literally stop breathing at multiple times throughout the night for 10 seconds or longer. You might not remember having any of these episodes — more commonly, bed partners are the ones that notice it — but it totally disrupts your sleep.

How is sleep apnea treated?

Losing weight is commonly recommended. There are CPAP, or Continuous Positive Airway Pressure, products, which keep your airways open while you're sleeping. A lot of people will use a little mask that gets stuck to your head. The last option is surgery, after you've

tried everything else.

What do you recommend for people who have trouble falling or staying asleep?

People try these over the counter remedies, herbal supplements, warm milk and chamomile tea. That works to various degrees for some people, but not for all people. We recommend cognitive behavioral therapy. These are behaviors and therapeutic techniques, sleep hygiene, like not eating or drinking before you go to bed, avoiding watching TV or anything stimulating, not staying in bed for more than 20 or 30 minutes if you can't fall asleep. Only use the bed for sleep or sex. This works better than most prescription pills.

You always hear stories about the dangerous side effects of sleeping pills and sleep aids like Ambien. Do you recommend patients use these?

All medicines have side effects. Everybody wants a pill that they can take — Ambien, valium, anxiety medications, melatonin-like medications — all these medicines, they do help, but it doesn't really cure the problem. It just covers it up. If you continue to engage in these unhealthy sleep habits, the effects of a pill can wear off.

What sleep advice do you find yourself giving the most often?

We just take sleep for granted. That's the first thing that gets sacrificed when we're busy with other things. You have to continuously be vigilant about it. I always tell my patients to think of it as your most important appointment of the day. You wouldn't stand yourself up, would you?



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Stop & Frisk Rates Spark Call for Reform

(continued from p. 1)

ders over the past 10 years than during the previous 10 years, Browne pointed out.

But opponents of the tactic say the stops amount to racial profiling and harassment. In the wake of these latest numbers, a police reform campaign — comprised of civil rights, minority, and activist groups, and including NYCLU and local Bronx groups like the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition and Picture the Homeless — was launched and is now pushing for legislation introduced by Brooklyn Councilman Jumaane Williams.

The Communities United for Police Reform says Williams' legislation would "crack down on discriminatory practices" by strengthening the definition of discrimination, ensuring New Yorkers

understand their rights when it comes to searches and requiring officers to identify themselves by giving those searched a business card. Williams, no stranger to police encounters having been arrested himself as a Councilman, plans on introducing further legislation that would increase oversight and transparency on NYPD stop and search practices.

The topic is touchy, says Brenda Caldwell, the president of the 52nd Precinct Community Council. Last fall, she tried to have the NYPD conduct a workshop on stop and frisk protocol but was told the topic was "too much of a delicate subject to bring up."

Caldwell said only a couple of people have complained at her monthly meetings about aggressive or unwarranted

stops. According to the most recent statistics compiled by the New York Civilian Complaint Review Board, between 51 and 89 stop, search and frisk complaints were filed from residents of the 52nd Precinct between January 2009 and June 2010. There were at least nine city precincts with higher complaint numbers.

Casenave, 34, filed his own complaint last spring after an encounter with police on East 193rd Street, near Kingsbridge Road. He and a Puerto Rican friend were sitting in his car on the side of the street, in front of a fire hydrant. While Casenave talked on the phone to another friend who lived on the block, he noticed four police officers approaching his car.

After asking for license and registration, an officer asked Casenave and his friend to get out of the car. Casenave asked the officers why he was being searched.

They told him he was "being frisked" and that his car was being searched.

Casenave said the officer who frisked him, Dionicio Brito, was "really aggressive," especially when grabbing around his crotch area. He felt violated. The search of his car came up empty, but the cops issued Casenave a summons for parking in front of a fire hydrant. Casenave took down Brito's badge number and later filed a complaint with the Civilian Complaint Review Board.

Months later, the board ruled that Brito had abused his authority by frisking Casenave and searching his vehicle. Sgt. Kimberly Motto, Brito's supervisor, was also convicted of abuse of authority for allowing the search.

Casenave said he felt validated, but it doesn't stop him from worrying about being stopped again.



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LGBT Chamber Opens Office in Bedford Park

(continued from p. 1)

youth, and I want to help. I believe with this collaboration, we can start pointing people in the right direction."

First-of-its-kind of experiences aren't unusual for Hernandez, "I'm proud of the fact that I was part of the first same-sex marriage performed here in the Bronx," she said. "The signed proclamation I received from Governor Cuomo means a

lot to me."

The NYC LGBT Chamber of Commerce is slated to open its second chapter in Brooklyn this March.

Ed. Note: *Bedford Park Tax, Inc. is located at 394 Bedford Pk. Blvd, just off Webster Avenue. The office number is (718) 584-3868. For more information on the NYC LGBT Chamber of Commerce, visit www.nyclgbtcc.com.*

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- 2) Weekend trip to Niagara Falls, Toronto, Canada on Friday, June 22, 2012; hotel in Canada near Niagara Falls and casinos. Price is \$359 per person.
- 3) 8-day trip to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

and Disney World, Florida, Saturday, Aug. 11, 2012; admission to Magic Kingdom and Universal Studios. Price is \$887 per person.
4) 5-day trip to Las Vegas, Nevada, Sunday, Sept. 16, 2012; includes hotel, tour and airfare. Price is \$859.
5) 8-day trip to Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, Sunday, July 15, 2012; includes hotel, transfer and airfare. Price is \$1,395 per person.
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The Bedford Park Congregational Church

located at 201st Street and Bainbridge Avenue, invites you to join us for our Easter Services: April 1, 2012 Palm Sunday, 11 a.m.; April 5, 2012 Maundy Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; April 6, 2012 Good Friday, 12 noon; April 8, 2012 Easter Worship, 11 a.m. For further information, please call Reverend Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj (718) 367-8996. All are welcome.

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RACING TO THE TITLE



Photo by Adi Talwar

THE PSAL basketball playoffs are coming to a close this weekend. Evander Childs, the last remaining northwest Bronx team in the hunt, moved into the quarter-finals with a 58-42 win over Benjamin Banneker Academy last Thursday. Evander is enjoying one of its finest seasons in years. They were scheduled to play Bedford Academy for a birth into the Final Four on Wednesday, March 7. For more Bronx sports updates, visit the Breaking Bronx blog at norwoodnews.org.

Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

Onstage

■ **Lehman College**, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents free events: **Variations**, music recital featuring piano and cello performing classical music, March 8 at 4:30 p.m.; and **Lehman Chamber Players**, performing classical works for violin and piano, March 18 at 2 p.m. (both in the Music Building Recital Hall, 3rd floor; call (718) 960-8247); and **FDNY Pipe and Drum Band**, March 22 at 12:30 p.m. in Carman Hall B-04 (call (718) 960-6722).

■ **The Pregones Theatre**, 575 Walton Ave., presents **Sabrina Lastman Quartet**, featuring jazz, South American rhythms, and new music, March 10 at 8 p.m.; and **Bobby Sanabria Multiverse Big Band**, featuring jazz, mambo, and beyond, March 17 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$12 and up; discount for seniors and students; **Meet the Artist Open Rehearsal**, free, March 16 at 1:30 p.m.). For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 585-1202.

■ **The Bronx Arts Ensemble** presents **Three Little Pigs**, a spoof of the children's story, where they meet Charlie's Angels, preceded by musical selections, at Lehman College's Lovinger Theatre, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., March 11 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$6. For more

information, call (718) 601-7399.

■ **Albert Einstein Symphony Orchestra** presents Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta, **Ruddigore**, March 11 at 2 p.m. in the Albert Einstein College of Medicine's Robbins Auditorium, Forchheimer Building, 1300 Morris Pk. Ave. Contributions are suggested. For more information, visit einsteinorch.tripod.com.

Events

■ **The Bedford-Mosholu Community Association**, will host a **flea market**, March 10 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Mary's Orthodox Church, located at Bedford Park Boulevard and Decatur Avenue.

■ **Lehman College**, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents two free **lectures** on March 21: Author Esmeralda Santiago at 11 a.m. in the Lovinger Theatre, followed by a book signing (call (718) 960-8350); and Irish Women Writers at 12:30 p.m. in Carman Hall 212 (call (718) 960-1160).

■ **The Bronx Museum of the Arts**, at 1040 Grand Concourse (165th Street), invites the public to submit up to five historical or con-



EDITOR'S PICK

World Performances at Lehman

The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., goes international with its upcoming performances:

- March 3 at 8 p.m. - **Forever Freestyle 6**, featuring a variety of performers (tickets are \$45 to \$60).
- March 4 at 6 p.m. - **Ballet Folklórico de Antioquia Colombia**, featuring music and dance (tickets are \$25 to \$40; \$10/12 and under).
- March 18 at 4 p.m. - **Swan Lake**, performed by the Moscow Festival Ballet (tickets are \$25 to \$40; \$10/12 and under).
- March 24 at 8 p.m. - **Sonoro Ponceña y Ocho y Más**, featuring old school salsa (tickets are \$45 to \$60).

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■ The Bronx Council on the Arts presents free craft workshop, **Recycle Art With Star Nigro**, as part of its third Saturday of the month series, at the Huntington Free Library, 9 Westchester Square, March 17, 12:30 to 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 829-7770 or (718) 931-9500 ext. 33.

■ Wave Hill, 675 W. 252nd St., presents two **Winter Workspace Workshops**: Botanical Block Prints - to create block print inspired by plants and flowers in the Marco Polo Stufano Conservatory, March 10 and 11; and Conceptual Seeing - for visitors to explore the art of collecting, photographing as they walk (bring a digital camera), March 17; all free with grounds admission, in the Glyndor Gallery, 1 to 4 p.m. Grounds admission on Saturday is free until noon. For more information, call (718) 549-3200 ext. 305.

Exhibits

■ The Lehman College Art Gallery, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Under the Influence: The Comics and Contemporary**

Art, featuring works of both established and emerging artists; and **Michael Ferris, Jr.: The Bronx Series and Other Work**, (figurative sculpture), free, Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., through May 12. Reception is on March 19 from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information, call (718) 960-8731.

■ Bronx Artspace, 305 E. 140th St., 1B, presents **Vital Signs**, through March 30. Artists reception is March 10 from 5 to 8 p.m. For more information, call (718) 401-8144.

Library Events

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. off Fordham Road, presents programs for kids including **Tales for the Teeny Tiny at 11 a.m.** (ages 3 to 12), March 10 and 17; **Global Partners, Jr. at 4 p.m.** (ages 5 to 12), students connect worldwide via the Internet, March 14 and 21; **Sojourner's Truth** (ages 5 to 12), March 10 at 2 p.m.; **Science Demonstrations at 4 p.m.** (ages 5 to 12; registration required), March 13: Harnessing Heat, and March 20: Magnificent Magnets; and **Robin Hood** (ages 5 to 12), live play performance, March 17 at 2 p.m. Adults can attend **Bronx Masquerade**, featuring art by Bronx artists, March 10 at 2:30 p.m.; **Effective Resume Writing: Part 1**, March 14 at 2 p.m.; **Arts & Crafts Workshops at 2 p.m. in room 505**: March 9: Scrapbook Making, March 16: Journal Making, and March 23: Book Making; **Digital Photo S.O.S.**, lecture/demonstration (online registration required), March 16 at 2 p.m.; **Movie Screening**, "Maid in America," March

17 at 2:30 p.m.; and **411 on Food Stamps**, March 20 at 10 a.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

■ The Moshulu Library, at 285 E. 205th St., offers **Knitting Circle**, Thursdays at 3 p.m., and **Wii Program**, Tuesdays at 3 p.m., each for seniors and adults; for children, there's **Toddler Story Time at 10:30 a.m.**, March 8 and 15; speakers of other languages (ages 16+) may attend free **English Conversation Program** (intermediate level), March 13 from 6:30 to 8 p.m.; and adults can enjoy "Phantom of the Opera," silent film, March 24 at 2 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239 or (212) 340-0918.

■ The Jerome Park Library, at 118 Eames Place, offers **Cooking at 4 p.m.** (for teens and young adults), March 8, 15 and 22;

Film, March 12 at 4 p.m.; and **Marvels of Motion** (science demonstration), March 20 at 4 p.m. (both for ages 5 to 12); and **Toddler Story Time**, March 21 at 11 a.m. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

Public Service Announcement

Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 11 at 2 a.m. Turn clocks ahead one hour.

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwood-news@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by March 12 for the next publication date of March 22.



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