The success of this spring’s “This Side of Paradise” exhibit, which took place at the Andrew Freedman Home on the Grand Concourse, has people talking about the emerging art scene in the Bronx like never before.

Curated by the nomadic non-profit arts organization No Longer Empty, “This Side of Paradise” brought over 9,000 people, over the course of two months, to the historic 1920s building that once served as a retirement home to the formerly wealthy.

The featured galleries and projects, created by over 30 artists, many based in the Bronx, weaved together themes such as history and socioeconomics.

“The positive energy generated by bringing artists together to create art works that reflect some aspect of the Bronx and Bronx history was a terrific idea,” said Linda Cunningham, one of the artists featured in the exhibit.

The once-lavish Andrew Freedman Home was a source of inspiration for many, including the staff at No Longer Empty.

“There’s really a sense of paradise here, not just in the building and its history, but to the first generation of people coming to the Bronx and making it their destination, the beginning of a new life,” said Naomi Herson-Ringskog, executive director for No Longer Empty. “The sense of paradise extends well into the art scene here that’s reemerging, rebirthing and there’s a lot of potential here in the Bronx to really showcase it to a wider audience.”

The exhibit was able to attract audiences not only from the Bronx, but Manhattan and beyond. In addition to the art installations, No Longer Empty also organized a variety of educational and cultural programs at the Home. Nearly 2,200 students attended hands-on workshops, free of charge. Other events included movie screenings, panel discussions and dance workshops.

“It’s creating a variety of entry points to experience the arts,” said Herson-Ringskog.

No Longer Empty also relied on other arts organizations in the Bronx to make “This Side of Paradise” a remarkable success.

Initially, Charlie Rangel wanted nothing to do with the Bronx.

The 82-year-old legislative icon, a symbol of black political power and one-time student at DeWitt Clinton High School on Mosholu Parkway, was comfortable with upper Manhattan as his district and Harlem as his base. The Bronx seemed like foreign territory, not, as it has become, an extension of the district he had loved and fostered as a Congressman for the last 42 years.

“I had a fierce identification with Harlem,” he said in a recent interview, just weeks after edging out a primary victory in the 13th Congressional District, which now includes the northwest Bronx. “As a kid, I always thought if anybody didn’t live in Manhattan, they didn’t live in the City.”

He fought the idea that the Bronx would become part of his district. But after a judge drew new Congressional lines earlier this year (after the state legislature failed to agree on lines) based on the 2010 Census, it didn’t matter. The Bronx would come to him.

Once he started reaching out to Bronx politicians, however, the unease started to melt away.

“I am very pleased to say all of my apprehensions about leaving Harlem,” he said, “were shattered because I went up there and my name was so well known, there were groups waiting to welcome me to the Bronx.”

Police are asking for help from the community in identifying a suspect who is wanted in connection with five recent robberies, all in and around northwest Bronx parks.

According to the NYPD, the suspect, who has been posing as a police officer, asks victims for their cell phones, ostensibly to check if the phones are stolen. He tells the individual to wait for him to return with the phone, but never does.

The robberies date back to May, when the suspect robbed a young teen girl just outside of Williambridge Oval Park in Norwood, at the corner Wayne and Reservoir avenues.

About a month later, he stole from another teen girl in the vicinity of Devoe Park, near the corner of University Avenue and Fordham Road. A teen boy had his cell phone stolen near St. James Park, on Creston Avenue and East 192nd Street, on June 11.

That same week another teen was robbed on Bainbridge Avenue and Reservoir Oval East, again, just outside of
In The Public Interest

NW Bronx Resource Center Ready to Help With Finances

After nearly 30 years, the University Neighborhood Housing Program (UNHP) celebrated a new milestone with the opening of the Northwest Bronx Resource Center last week.

The Center is a joint effort with six established non-profits (led by UNHP) to provide Bronxites with free tax preparation, financial coaching, foreclosure prevention assistance and small business help at one Bronx location, the Refuge House at 2715 Bainbridge Ave., near East 186th Street.

“Community work is a team effort,” said Jim Buckley, UNHP’s executive director.

Originally founded by Fordham University in 1983, UNHP works to preserve and create affordable housing in the community.

It is an uphill battle as the number of neighborhoods where the city’s working class can afford to live continues to dwindle. Despite rents in the Bronx being among the lowest in the city, about half of Bronxites spend half of their incomes on rent.

“The Bronx is underserved and continues to be underserved,” said Jumelia Abrahamson of UNHP.

In the past UNHP has hosted neighborhood resource fairs with representatives from non-profit partners, including the Financial Clinic, Neighborhood Trust Financial Partners, Ariva, Fordham Bedford Community Service and Project Enterprise, to provide residents with assistance with their finances. Still, the need for a central, constant presence was felt.

“The biggest thing is that in the past we had been referring people to a phone number [outside of the fairs],” said Buckley. “This way we’ll have a fixed number for people to call, get an appointment and come get help. The fact that we can offer services in the neighborhood was key.”

“(It’s important to) extend these services to a diverse population in the Bronx in a holistic manner,” Abrahamson said. “It comes full circle, all those organizations helping the same homeowner.”

At the ribbon cutting ceremony, locals who have previously used UNHP’s free tax prep services praised its programs.

“We’re here to give infinite thanks,” said Esbelin Guzman, who has been filing his taxes with UNHP for three years. “There are no words to express what the Center has done in terms of helping empowering myself and educating myself,” said Aneudy Encarnación. “This is another success for our community. On behalf of the community, thank you for having our backs.”

State Senator Gustavo Rivera also admitted to using services provided by UNHP.

“I’m a very good example of what a young professional of color in the Bronx needs,” Rivera said. “I have a 603 credit score – and that’s gotten better [since he’s received help from UNHP].”

Ed. Note: Free direct services from UNHP are available at the Center by appointment only. Call (718) 933-2539 or visit www.unhp.org for more information.

—SARAH RAMIREZ

Fall Primary Preview

The northwest Bronx saw an early and extremely competitive, primary in June for the 13th Congressional District. In September, there will be a handful of Democratic primaries for state races in northwest Bronx districts. Some will be competitive. Others, probably not so much.

Perhaps the most intriguing race will pit incumbent Naomi Rivera against challenger Mark Gjonaj in the 80th Assembly District, which stretches from Norwood through Morris Park.

Unseating an incumbent in the Bronx is never easy, especially one backed by the Bronx Democratic County Committee and the Rivera clan (Naomi is the daughter of Assemblyman Jose Rivera and brother of Council majority leader Joel Rivera). But Gjonaj is bringing serious resources to the table. According to his latest campaign finance disclosure report, Gjonaj has raised $167,818 from 369 donors. Meanwhile, Rivera has raised $193,647 from 109 donors.

Gjonaj recently opened a campaign office on Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood (and also has one in Morris Park), while Rivera is hosting a series of family-friendly outdoor movies on Moshulu Parkway.

Naomi’s father Jose Rivera is facing a considerably less-well-funded challenger in Ricardo “Ricky” Martinez, a longtime community presence in Bedford Park who is fighting cancer along with one of the Bronx’s most well political veterans in the elder Rivera.

But Martinez claims Rivera should be kicked off the ballot for putting his challenger’s name on his petition without Martinez’s permission as an alternate Judicial Delegate Martinez, the current State Committee member in the Fordham/Morris Park district, says he told Rivera specifically not to put his name on the petition in any capacity.

“It’s an illegal petition,” says Martinez, who has a hearing with the Board of Elections on July 30.

In the 3rd Senate District, Gustavo Rivera is facing a relatively unknown challenger in Manny Tavarez, who claimed in a Daily News article to have the backing of Congressman Charlie Rangel, whose own district now includes most of the 3rd District. Rivera backed challenger Adriano Espaillat in his failed bid to unseat Rangel. A Rangel spokesman disputed this claim.

According to his website, Tavarez is a sports agent who lives in University Heights and has worked on campaigns for District Leader Hector Ramirez and Councilman Fernando Cabrera.

After redistricting, the 3rd District no longer includes Norwood and Bedford Park. Those neighborhoods are now part of the 36th Senate District, which is currently occupied by Ruth Hassell-Thompson who isn’t facing a challenger in the primary. Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, who represents the 81st Assembly District, which includes Norwood, Woodlawn, Kingsbridge and Riverdale, is also running unopposed.

—ALEX KRATZ
Police Report

Three Wounded in Briggs Avenue Shooting

Police were getting little or no help from the three victims shot on a Briggs Avenue street corner; or the 100 or so residents who were outside enjoying the warm evening, even after the gunfire.

Police and paramedics were called to Briggs Avenue at East 199th Street in Bedford Park, and discovered three victims shot outside of a bodega at 2885 Briggs Ave., just after 8:30 p.m., on Saturday, July 21.

“The three victims were friends and standing on the corner when an unknown male approached them and fired several shots in their direction,” said a police source close to the investigation who wasn’t authorized to speak to reporters.

“They are stable,” the source said, adding that one victim was shot in the abdomen, another in his calf, and the third in the shoulder.” The source said the three victims had been “uncooperative” with the investigation.

The source described one victim as a male Hispanic, about 20 years old, another as a black male, also age 20. No information was available on the third victim or the assailant.

Grandfather Injured in Hammer Attack

A grandfather is recovering after being attacked by his grandson with a hammer in Bedford Park.

Police and witnesses say the victim, Richard Delgado, 66, was struck on the head with a hammer by his grandson in a 7th floor apartment at 3121 Villa Ave., at just before 2 p.m., on Thursday, July 12.

“He (the victim) just came outside the building with blood all over him and collapsed, right there in the street,” said one witness who asked not to be identified.

After the attack, the hammer and a knife lay a foot away from Delgado, who was surrounded by police and waiting for an ambulance.

A woman who arrived as paramedics were bandaging Delgado’s bleeding head said, “My God, I don’t know what’s happening with children today.”

The victim was rushed to St. Barnabas Hospital where he was treated and later released.

Police were still looking for the grandson by the time the Norwood News went to press.

—DAVID GREENE

Bus Pickpocket on Fordham Road

Police say a pickpocket is victimizing riders as they board the BX12 bus at the Fordham Road and Webster Avenue stop.

The NYPD confirmed two robberies at the stop and has video of a suspect wanted in the thefts. They are asking for help in identifying him. (See video online at norwoodnews.org.)

On Thursday, April 26, and Saturday, June 16, the victims, a Hispanic female and a black female, respectively, boarded the BX 12 bus at the Fordham Road and Webster Avenue stop. As they boarded the bus, the suspect reached into their pockets and removed their wallets. The suspect then went to the subway station and purchased Metro Cards with the stolen credit cards.

No injuries were reported.

The suspect is described as being a black male between 30 and 60 years old, 5-feet-11-inches tall, with salt and pepper hair.

—ALEX KRATZ

Suspect Poses as Cop, Steals Phones

(continued from p. 1)

Williamsbridge Oval Park. Earlier this month, an 18-year-old was robbed at 3549 Jerome Ave., also in Norwood and just a few blocks from Oval Park.

Police say all the victims were Hispanic.

The suspect is described as a Hispanic male in his mid- to late twenties, about 5-foot-9-inches tall and heavy set. He also has a mole on his left cheek and tattoos on both forearms. (See sketch.)

Oval Park, in particular, appears to be a magnet for cell phone thieves. Last fall, several people were brutally attacked and had their phones stolen in and around the popular Norwood-area park. Police arrested a couple of suspects in connection with those crimes and the attacks stopped. There is no indication that the two patterns are linked.

Ed. Note: Anyone with information about these incidents is asked to call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477). You can also send a tip by logging on to the Crime Stoppers website at www.nypdcrimestoppers.com or by texting your tips to 274637 (CRIMES), then enter TIP577.

A SKETCH of the suspect police say is victimizing Hispanics near Bronx parks.

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[Sketch courtesy NYPD]
Morris Heights Farmers Market Adds to Growing List

By CHLOE RICKERT

The BronxWorks-sponsored Heights Community Farmers Market at University Avenue and 181st Street is the newest addition to an increasing number of local farmers’ markets. Open every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. until Nov. 15, the market not only offers fresh produce for purchase with cash, credit, or benefit payment systems, but thanks to BronxWorks, customers can also get help applying for food stamps.

The idea for the market came from a small local farm stand run out of a BronxWorks office in the fall.

“We wanted to expand to a farmers market because the farm stand was doing well,” said market manager Robert Moore. Moore connected with GrowNYC to recruit farmers who wanted the business structure of a market to sell their produce. The market’s stands are filled with food from Gueliado Garcia of El Poblano Farm in Staten Island, Feliciano Gonzalez of Fresh Radish Farm in Goshen, and one urban grower in the community.

Garcia said he was interested in the market because he was looking for Spanish customers. He cheerfully pointed out each of his crops including four different kinds of lettuce, three types of onions, tomatoes, peppers, carrots, and more. Besides the produce stands and BronxWorks’ food stamps table, the market also provides cooking demonstrations provided by the non-profit organization Just Food.

Here’s a list of other local farmers markets, all open until Nov. 15:

**Harvest Home Echo Park Market**
(Berger Avenue and East 241st Street)
Details: Open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Bissel Gardens Farmers Market**
(Baychester Avenue and East 241st Street)
Details: Open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Crotona Park Greenmarket**
(Crotona Park South and Clinton Avenue)
Details: Open Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Kingsbridge Heights Youthmarket**
(West Kingsbridge Road between Aqueduct and Reservoir avenues)
Details: Open Fridays from noon to 6 p.m.

**La Familia Verde Farmers Market**
(East Tremont and LaFontaine avenues)
Details: Open Tuesdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Marble Hill Youthmarket**
(225th Street and Broadway)
Details: Open Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**New York Botanical Gardens Greenmarket**
(Between Bedford Park and Mosholu Parkway, inside gate)
Details: Open Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Poe Park Greenmarket**
(192nd Street between Grant Concourse and Valentine Avenue)
Details: Open Tuesdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

(continued from p. 1)

“This year, No Longer Empty has done a lot to bring this art and people together into this huge show, and I think that’s a big, big step,” said Hatuey Ramos-Fermin, who participated in the show.

“Organizations in the Bronx are coming together, weaving this cultural landscape,” Herszon-Ringskog said.

“The No Longer Empty project generated energy and interest in the arts that has now affected all of the arts institutions,” Cunningham said.

One recent offshoot of these collaborations is the formation of the Bronx Arts Alliance (BAA), a collective of 20 Bronx anchor art organizations, including the Bronx Council on the Arts, BronxArtSpace, The Point, the Bronx River Art Center and the Bronx Museum of the Arts.

The BAA aims to support a cohesive and vibrant arts presence in the Bronx, using its collective resources to bring more group exhibitions and events to the borough, as well as advocate for art and cultural policies.

This coordinated effort is a far cry from how the art scene in the Bronx was even a decade ago.

“When I moved here in 2000, if there was an art scene, it was nothing I knew about or participated in,” Cunningham said. “By 2001, artists like Wanda Ortiz and arts organizer Mitsu Hadeishi had begun putting on periodic events, video showings, performance and art exhibitions, and soon coordinated with the Bronx Council on the Arts.”

The growth in the art scene reflects the progress throughout the borough over the last 20 or so years.

“I started working in the Bronx in 1989, 1990 because I got a grant to do murals from the MTA from the early arts project Creative Station,” said Carey Clark, now the visual arts director at The Point and its representative to the BAA. “It was a very tough neighborhood when I started going there, and I’ve seen nothing but improvement since then.”

Clark, who resides in Mott Haven, said that even today’s economic roadblocks “won’t ever stop what’s going on in terms of this being an incredibly artful, soulful place.”

“I think everyone is doing the best they can with the circumstances, and there’s not a lot of economic support for the arts in the Bronx,” said Ramos-Fermin. “The [Bronx Museum of the Arts] is really trying to change the perception that art is only for certain people, that it’s only for the elite or something like that. They’re really trying to be more inclusive of people of different backgrounds.”

Just as before, an evolving art scene is changing some perceptions of the Bronx outside the borough.

“The Bronx has an amazing, rich history that people are not as well aware of as they should be and the more organizations and artists and even residents talk about it, and its beauty and dynamic quality, more people will come and more people here will be bolstering that borough pride,” said Herszon-Ringskog.

Many involved in the arts see even more potential for the Bronx.

“The most important thing is to work collaboratively, to create sort of festival days and you sort of have to keep pushing for those sorts of things and more and more,” Clark said. “It’s coming up with sort of promotional strategies [for the Bronx] to become more of a cultural destination.”
City Debuts Two Health Initiatives

By JALEESA BAULKMAN

City officials hosted a press conference last week at a Bronx supermarket to introduce two new health initiatives designed to help New Yorkers eat healthier foods.

At a Belmont-area C-Town supermarket, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Linda Gibbs, Health Commissioner Tom Farley, and Human Resources Administration Commissioner Robert Doar introduced the Shop Healthy NYC pilot program and the Cut the Junk campaign to shoppers. They were introduced as yet another effort to combat the obesity epidemic in the city.

“As is often the case, the city used the Bronx as a backdrop to push its fight against obesity. The Bronx, in particular, suffers from extremely high obesity rates. “In the Bronx, nearly 70 percent of residents are obese or overweight and at higher risks for certain cancers, diabetes and heart disease,” Farley said. “Communities need a healthy food environment.”

Shop Healthy NYC is a pilot program that asks bodega, delis and supermarkets to limit or minimize the availability of junk food and maximize the display of healthy food options and produce in their stores. It is funded by the New York City Center for Economic opportunity.

The program starts with a food retail “challenge” that asks store owners to commit to several store changes, which include stocking more w ater coolers instead of added-sugar drinks (like soda), displaying more low-sodium and no-added-sugar canned goods and offering a healthy sandwich and meal combination in the deli sections of the stores.

“This is a good thing, I guess,” C-Town employee Bethanny Clark said. “Obesity is growing [and] this is trying to educate people about being more healthy food-wise.” C-Town owner Jose Perez said that in the last three to four months the supermarket has already made some changes to the way they display their junk food. He said they’ve replaced the candy and sweets that are usually displayed at the checkout aisles with fruits and nuts.

Perez said he is in the process of organizing a large project that would rearrange the way his supermarket stocks food and displaying more produce and produce in front of the store.

Participating markets will receive shelf hangers and free-standing baskets to place and display their fresh produce. Officials say more than 100 retail venues in the Fordham and West Farms sections of the Bronx have agreed to cooperate with the initiative.

The Human Resources Administration (HRA) is also promoting healthier eating with its Cut the Junk campaign. “Cut the Junk” aims to highlight the risk of an unhealthy diet.

Doar said the goal of “Cut the Junk” is to get New Yorkers to trade in junk and fast food for healthier meals and emphasizes that healthier food choices can be more cost-effective than unhealthy alternatives.

As a part of this initiative, HRA created an illustrated “Cut the Junk” booklet that’s filled with information about healthier food options and cost comparisons to reinforce that a home-cooked meal can be healthier and less expensive than fast food or junk food. It also includes suggestions on portion control strategies, such as using smaller plates.

“It is critical that we make progress in increasing access to healthy food and decreasing access to junk food in [low-income] neighborhoods,” Gibbs said.

These initiatives come a month after State Senator Gustavo Rivera and Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. celebrated the second year of the Bronx Change Attitudes Now (CAN) initiative, which tackles issues of obesity and nutrition in the borough. That initiative is sponsored by Montefiore Medical Center.

Inquiring Photographer

By DAVID GREENE

This week we asked readers about the New York Knicks’ decision to allow point guard Jeremy Lin to go to the Houston Rockets.

I’m disappointed he’s leaving because I think he really helped fans rally around the Knicks, and got people really excited about the Knicks and people were excited about the upcoming season, and to see what would happen with Jason Kidd, so I’m sad.

Laurie Ray

I thought he was a great addition to the Knicks, so I think it’s a shame that he’s gone. That’s why Houston went after him, but with, “Lin-sanity,” it brought a lot of attention to the Knicks themselves and it got them playing at their best, definitely better than the way they had been playing for a while.

Georgia Denman

He made his choice, what can you do about it? He really brought non-basketball people to the game. It’s a shame he’s gone.

Yolanda Jones

I’m really disappointed about Jeremy Lin leaving New York because it was about the money, and what we need in New York is good players. Somebody that’s going to be a team player and he’s a team player. But now he’s at Houston because of the money and New York couldn’t match that money because we spent all the money on the other players.

Robert Beaty

I really wish he would have stayed on the team because he’s a great player, but now we have Jason Kidd and Carmelo Anthony. I think we have a pretty good team with them, but we’re going to miss Lin.

Joseph Cera
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New ‘Green’ Entrance to Shoelace Park

By CHLOE RICKERT

The resurgent Bronx River received another shot in the arm last week as the Parks Department and the Bronx River Alliance came together for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of a $1.46 million project that created a new entrance to Shoelace Park.

The new handicapped-accessible entrance is designed to capture storm water and channel it into the ground to prevent it from polluting the streets and river while connecting Shoelace Park and Bronx Park with new trees, plants, and benches.

“It’s part of the mayor’s efforts under PlaNYC to have a cleaner and more environmentally sustainable city and also part of the efforts of the Bronx River Alliance to protect the watershed around the Bronx River,” said Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe.

The Friends of Shoelace Park volunteer their time to improve the linear park that runs along the Bronx River from 211th to 231st streets and its playgrounds. They recently organized a 10K run and planted trees along the pathway. Friends member and local resident Carol Gaskill said it was nice to be able to help and provide something for the neighborhood.

The neighborhood is already enjoying the fruits of this labor as many pedestrians and cyclists made use of the pathway during the ceremony. “It’s a place to come bicycling where you can be safe from traffic, rollerblading, walking, jogging, and we’re lucky to have a very nice group of neighbors here,” Benepe said.

Although the Bronx River may still not be the ideal spot for a swim, it’s thanks to neighbors like these and the efforts of groups like the Bronx River Alliance, that it has come a long way from the abused, polluted waterway it used to be.
Editorial

Hiatus: Re-Charging Our Batteries

Following this issue, the Norwood News is taking a brief hiatus from publishing and will return promptly in four weeks on Aug. 23. We do this every year to get a short respite from the grind (and pleasure) of producing a newspaper every two weeks.

Aside from updating our website with original reporting, news roundups, community information and photos (check us out on norwoodnews.org, heck, make us your home page), we also use this time to take a step back and re-evaluate everything we do and how we do it.

We’ll try to determine what’s working and what needs fixing. Mostly though, we’ll think about how to provide you, our readers, with a better, more engaging, more informative, more thought-provoking, and more entertaining experience.

To do this, we’ll spend time researching and thinking, organizing and cleaning, beating our heads against the wall and taking walks around Williamsbridge Oval Park.

But we’ll also be talking to readers and listening to what they want out of their community news experience.

The Norwood News was created as a vehicle for community engagement and improvement. We can’t fulfill our mission without input from the community. So hopefully we’ll be hearing from you. Tell us what you want to see in the Norwood News or how we can improve our coverage.

There are several ways you can do this: Call us at (718) 324-8986. Email us at norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org. Tweet us @norwoodnews or message us on Facebook/norwoodnews.bronx.

Hope to hear from you and see you in a few weeks.

—ALEX KRATZ, Editor-in-Chief

Letters

District Manager Should Stay

We are writing in response to your recent article entitled “Community Board 7 Members Move to Oust District Manager” (in the June 28–July 11 issue). The article does not reflect the entire situation. It would be more accurate to say “Some Members” since many of us are grateful for the accomplishments which Mr. Tirado has brought to CB7.

During the past four years, Mr. Tirado has been responsible for moving the Board into the age of technology. Under his supervision, a website was created for CB7. Residents are now able to log in complaints, check our calendar for events, and keep abreast of board meetings.

Mr. Tirado has given valuable assistance to not-for-profits, merchant associations, cultural institutions, and various tenant and block associations. It was through his work that the Board partnered with Bronx Community Solutions and helped to improve the quality of life in the Kingsbridge area. Under his supervision, CB7 also worked with Lehman College to create maps for the development of information and economic resources for our district.

Many of us have served as committee chairs and found Mr. Tirado to be both helpful and efficient. In his capacity as district manager, he has always been a positive spokesperson for CB7 and has done much to improve community relations.

Sandra Erickson
Eleanor Lundeen
Nora Feury
Margaret Mack
John Franco
Bree Brown-Rosa
Helene Hartman-Kutnowsky
Barbara Stronger

Rangel Emerges Victorious, Part of Bronx Family

(continued from p. 1)

Rangel talks about taking on the Bronx as if he’s being married into a new family. He said he went to senior centers and other places with fellow Congressmen Jose Serrano (Rangel calls him “Joe”) during the campaign and found that people wanted him to be a part of that family.

“We may only make up one-fifth of the district,” he said Bronx residents told him, “but we all want all of your heart. They make up these things that are so beautifully said and so all of the awkwardness that I had thought about was just shattered.”

Fending Off A Challenge

As it turns out, the Bronx wanted Rangel’s closest challenger, State Senator Adriano Espaillat, even more than Rangel.

Although he lost the election by a mere 1,096 votes (less than 2 percent), Espaillat, vying to become the first Dominican-born member of Congress, won the Bronx by 233 votes (out of 5,386 votes in the borough). Less than 9 percent of registered Bronx voters showed up at the June 26 primary.

After uncovering some irregularities in the tallying of votes after an election night that ended with him conceding to Rangel, Espaillat filed a lawsuit claiming election fraud and asking for a re-vote. He pulled the lawsuit two days before the hearing, saying the vote difference was too great to make up. (Espaillat also needed to file petitions to run for re-election to his state senate seat, which he couldn’t do while technically running for Congress.) The Board of Elections finally certified Rangel’s victory a day later on July 10.

Rangel said he was surprised how close the race ended up being.

CHARLIE RANGEL in his office in Harlem.

After re-districting, Rangel’s new district became 55 percent Hispanic. Rangel thought he had spent enough time and energy working with and cultivating Dominican and other Hispanic leaders. But the opportunity to elect one of their own appeared to outweigh the good will he had sown.

“I started getting calls from [Dominican leaders] saying ‘Charlie, we love you, and we might not like this guy [Espaillat], but this is our chance,’” Rangel said.

Ascending to Power

Rangel started as an upstart himself, uneating another African-American legislator from Harlem, Adam Clayton Powell Jr. in a contentious primary in 1970. (Rangel’s district office is now in the Adam Clayton Powell state building on 125th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard.)

Before being elected, Rangel grew up in Harlem, but spent time in the Bronx during his adolescence. He attended DeWitt Clinton High School, but dropped out to join the Army and won numerous awards for his bravery during the Korean War. Rangel later finished high school, graduated from New York University and earned a law degree at St. John’s.

He entered politics as an Assemblyman representing Harlem in 1966, won re-election 1968 and then challenged and defeated Powell who was embroiled in an ethics scandal and had exiled himself to Bimini, an island in the Bahamas.

Rangel went on to form the Black Caucus in Congress and rose to prominence in the highly influential Ways and Means Committee, which sets the country’s tax laws. In the late 1980s, Rangel was credited with precipitating an end to South African apartheid after spearheading legislation, known as the Rangel Amendment, which encouraged several Fortune 500 companies to leave the country.

In 2007, he became the first African-American chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. But his run was short-lived. He stepped down from his chairmanship in 2010 amid an ethics investigation. After signing a plea agreement, the Congressional Ethics Committee found Rangel guilty of bringing dishonor to the House for improper solicitation of charitable donations and failure to accurately report some of his income. He was officially admonished by the House for his transgressions.

Rangel isn’t eager to discuss this, but in a recent New York Times, Rangel said he was pressure into signing the plea agreement by party leadership and that his lawyer is pushing to have it expunged from the record after new documents surfaced alleging significant misconduct by the Ethics Committees lawyers who were prosecuting Rangel.

Helping the Bronx

The ethics censure and recent health problems — he missed three months of votes earlier this year with back problems — have diminished Rangel’s considerable influence. But even so, political insiders say no one in New York is better at getting things done in Washington than Rangel.

Basil Smikle, Jr., a political consultant who grew up in the Bronx, said Rangel has deep connections in Washington, New York, and nationally, which he can use to help his district, which now includes the Bronx.

“Smart representatives know how to marshal resources back to the community,” Smikle said. “And Charlie has that more than any member. That’s why it’s always very hard to unseat him.”

Rangel admits things have changed in Washington. He won’t be able to bring back the millions of dollars in funding he used to.

“But he has the ability to get the attention of key Washington figures,” says Patrick Jenkins, a political consultant and part-time spokesman for the Bronx Democratic party. “There’s not anyone better to do that for Bronx residents.”

Rangel, who is almost certainly going to win the general election in November, says he will most likely open a district office in the Bronx and start talking with elected officials and community leaders about how he can help out his new family members in the northern borough.

In his warm, gravelly voice that sounds like chocolate being melted over hot coals, he said, “Now there has to be a rebuilding of the confidence that someone like me is making certain that all parts of the community, whether they’re from the Upper West Side, Central America, Mexico, South America, that they all feel comfortable and that they all feel like they can achieve their political ambitions.”
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**Good News Christian Church:** 3061 Bainbridge Ave. (basement of the Church of the Holy Nativity) Bronx, NY 10467 (347) 329-0023. Pastors James and Andrea Miller Sunday service at 2 p.m. Home fellowship bible studies on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Friday night prayer service at 7 p.m.


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Out & About

**Onstage**

- Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway, 810 Yonkers Ave., Yonkers, presents: Frankie Avalon, July 29; Village People, Aug. 5; and Pat Benatar and Neil Giraldo, Aug. 12 (main acts are at 6:30 p.m. preceded by opening acts at 5:45 p.m.); and on Aug. 9, Is Day and the Knights at 8 p.m. and Curbside Hustle at 7 p.m.; plus on Aug. 26: Sara Evans at 6 p.m. and Rachel Allyn at 7 p.m. For more information, call (914) 457-2431.

- The Bronx Arts Ensemble presents Magical Mystery Tour featuring music of the 1960s, July 27 at 6 p.m. at Pelham Bay Park (jenter at Middletown Road and Stadium Avenue; bring blanket or chair and pack a picnic; rain location is Knights of Columbus, 3243 Ampere Ave.; call (718) 931-1721 after 2 p.m. to confirm); and July 29 at 2 p.m. in Van Cortlandt Park's Rockwood Drive Circle (enter park at Broadway and Mosholu Avenue; seating is provided but visitors are urged to bring folding chairs), and at 4 p.m. at Fordham University's McGinley Center. Also scheduled for Van Cortlandt Park and Fordham University is Tango Magic on Aug. 5, and Romantic Summer Breezes on Aug. 12. In case of rain, the Van Cortlandt Park events will move to Vladeck Hall in the Amalgamated Houses at Hillman Avenue and Van Cortlandt Park South (call BAE office after 11 a.m. to confirm). For more information, call BAE at (718) 601-7399.

- The Shoshol Library, at 285 E. 205th St., offers Feraba African Percussion Duet, Aug. 18 at 2:30 p.m. African shakers and small drums will be provided for audience participation. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

- The New York Botanical Garden presents the Sedric Chourouni’s Jazz Trio, Aug. 16, 6 to 9 p.m. For more information or to purchase tickets, call (718) 817-8700 or visit www.nybg.org.

**Events**

- The Bronx Zoo presents Wild Forest - A Lego Safari, through Sept. 3 featuring life-like Lego wildlife sculptures with activities for all ages, and visitors are invited to create their own animal prints and puppets based on the zoo’s African animals with the help of artists. Events include a construction zone, daily from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Dancing Crane Plaza; Lego master builders, Aug. 11, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Reptile House Lawn; art workshop to make animal prints, Aug. 12 and 11, 12 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Dancing Crane Pavilion; wildlife theatre shows with puppets and music, Thursdays through Sundays through Sept. 9 at 11:30 a.m., 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 367-1010 or visit www.bronxzoo.com.

- St. Ann’s Church, 3519 Bainbridge Ave. (corner of Gun Hill Road), offers Flea market, Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., through Aug. 18. For more information, call (718) 547-9350.

- The Fordham Road B.I.D. presents Fordham Fever Fridays, taking place the first Friday of the month from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Muller Park’s Pedestrian Plaza on East Fordham Road and Creston Avenue: Aug. 3, Sept. 7 and Oct. 5. The series features free Native-American storytelling, sports and fitness boot camp demos, artists displaying their artwork, live musical performances, and more. For more information, call (718) 562-2104 or visit www.fordhamroadbid.org.

- The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (165th Street), presents its First Friday on Aug. 3 from 6 to 10 p.m., featuring film, art performances, music and other special events. Also offered is author Bobby Gonzalez who will discuss his latest book, “The Last Puerto Rican Indian: A Collection of Dangerous Poetry,” plus a book signing, slideshow, readings and conversations. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

- SummerStage Kids presents free performing arts events through Aug. 22, in a number of Bronx parks, featuring a variety of music, theatre, puppetry, entertainment, and more. For more information and a detailed schedule, visit www.summerstage.org.

- Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers tours through Aug. 18: at the Glyndor Gallery, Tuesdays and Saturdays at 2 p.m.; and Tuesdays at 11 a.m. from the Perkins Visitor Center. Also offered is Family Art Projects: Handmade River Rafts, to make a raft or boat, then see if it floats, July 28 and 29; Spray a Garden, to make a painting using selected colors, Aug. 4 and 5; Flutter With the Butterflies, to sketch butterflies, then make a butterfly hat, Aug. 11 and 12; and Roll Out the Landscape, to sketch the landscape onto a paper scroll to make a mini nature movie, Aug. 18 and 19, all from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Ecology Building. In addition, there is Bxhixie Music at Sunset 7 p.m.: (bring folding chair); Irish Folk Music, Aug. 1; Jazz Trio, Aug. 8; Bardekovka Classical Ensemble, Aug. 15; and Bodoma & the Garifuna Cultural Band, featuring musicians and dancers, Aug. 22. Grounds admission is free Saturdays until noon and all day Tuesdays. For more information, call (718) 549-3200.

- The New York Botanical Garden presents Greenmarket, the popular farmers market of GrowNYC, at the base of Library Allee inside the Garden’s Mosholu Gate entrance, Wednesdays, through Nov. 21, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Visitors may purchase affordable, locally grown produce and fresh, nutritious baked goods. For more information, call (718) 817-8658.

- The public is invited to ride the Aug. 1 free Bronx Culture Trolley, which transports visitors on the first Wednesday of every month (except January and September) to Bronx hot spots, all featuring a variety of entertainment options and ends at Sweetwater’s Bar & Grill for music, food and drink. Trolley night starts with a 5 p.m. reception at the Longwood Art Gallery at Hostos Community College, 450 Grand Concourse (at 149th St.). From there, the trolley departs at 5:30, 8:30 and 7:30 p.m. New attractions are added monthly; admission to most venues is free. Riders can get on and off at any scheduled stop and spend as much time as they wish at any or all of the featured venues. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 931-9500 ext. 33 or log on to www.bronxarts.org.

**Editors’ Pick**

**Free Family Fun**

Assemblywoman Naomi Rivera presents free summer events (subject to change), including movies which are shown on a huge outdoor screen starting at 8 p.m. (bring folding chairs and blankets), musical performances, and more. For more information, updates, rain dates, or to confirm, call (718) 409-0109 or visit BronxSpecialEvents.com.

- The Lorax” - Aug. 16, on Mosholu Parkway (between Van Cortlandt and Bainbridge avenues). Come early to make free cutouts and other nature-friendly crafts.
- “Mirror Mirror” - Aug. 23, at Loreto Park (Morris Park Avenue by Tomlinson Avenue). Come early for free makeup demonstrations and makeovers.
- “Spiderman” - Aug. 30, at Burns Playground (Mace Avenue between Lodovick and Gunther avenues). Come early for free face painting and get Sidney’s webslinger mask or a hairy spider crawling up your arm.

Merita Halili & Raif Hyseni Orchestra - July 27 at 7 p.m. at Pelham Parkway Lawn (Pelham Parkway North between Wallace and Bames avenues). Rain date is July 28.

Klezm er and Knishes Encore - Aug. 19 at 2 p.m., at Young Israel of Pelham Parkway, 2190 Muliner Ave. (at Pelham Southway). A kosher lunch at noon (free for seniors 60+; minimal- ly priced for others) precedes concert.

Klezm er and Knishes Encore - Aug. 19 at 2 p.m., at Young Israel of Pelham Parkway, 2190 Muliner Ave. (at Pelham Southway). A kosher lunch at noon (free for seniors 60+; minimal- ly priced for others) precedes concert.

- Alive n Kickin’ - Aug. 21 at 7 p.m., concert on the grounds of Lehman College (enter on Paul Avenue).

Allerton Avenue Festival - Aug. 26, noon to 4 p.m., on the concert stage at Boston Road. Event features live doo-wop, salsa, Motown, vendors, and kids’ activities.

Summer Stage Kids - Featuring live entertainment at Sacharakah Woods Playground in Van Cortlandt Park (corner of Gun Hill Road and Jerome Avenue), at 10:30 a.m.: Abada Capoiero NYC on Aug. 9; Imagination in Motion on Aug. 16; and The Red Trouser Show on Aug. 24. Info at cityparksfoundation.org.

Pool Programs - Swimming, including instruction, for ages 1-1/2 through 18, offered by NYC Department of Parks & Recreation. Call (718) 760-6969 ext. 6 for schedules and registration dates.

Bike Riding Instruction - For ages 5 to 92. Bring a bike, helmet and parent for ages under 16. Some loaner bikes will be available. Call (718) 409-0109 for schedule and locations.

Compiled by JUDY NOY

**Exhibits**

- The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse at 165th Street, presents two exhibitions featuring modern and contemporary art from Latin America: Revolution Not Televised (through Oct. 7) features contemporary Cuban art and takes the pulse of contemporary artistic practice in Cuba; and Rituals of Chaos (through Jan. 6, 2013) highlights the work of Mexican photographer Enrique Metinides and 11 contemporary artists who similarly take the human experience in the city as their subject matter. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

- The New York Botanical Garden presents Claude Monet’s Garden, featuring his
paintings, palette, and photographs, in the Rondina Gallery, through Oct. 21. Additional events include concerts, poetry, tours, film screenings, and family activities. For more information, call (718) 817-8656/8512.

The Bronx County Historical Society, 3309 Bainbridge Ave., presents In Style, Bronx Architecture, through Oct. 7, including Bronx landmarks. For more information and to reserve, call (718) 881-8900.

Library Events

The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. off Fordham Road, presents programs for kids including Bilingual Birdies: Spanish Language at 11 a.m.; (ages through 5 years), live music program including puppetry and games, ending with a bubble dance party, July 26, Aug. 2, 9, 16 and 23; Tales for the Teeny Tiny at 11 a.m.; (ages 2 to 5), July 28, Aug. 4, 11 and 18; Global Partners Junior Summer Program at noon; (ages 5 to 12), July 27, 30, Aug. 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14 and 17; Natural History of Owls; (ages 3 to 12), July 28 at 2 p.m.; “Peter Pan,” a play, Aug. 11 at 2 p.m.; Fire and Ice; (ages 3 to 12), science demonstration, Aug. 18 at 2 p.m.; and If You Really Love Polar Bears; (ages 3 to 12), story told through music, puppetry and physical comedy, Aug. 23 at 4 p.m. For teens and young adults, there is Art Workshop (1st floor conference room), July 27 at 3:30 p.m.; Wii Bowling; July 30 at 2:30 p.m.; and Biophilia Project: to experience science, technology and music (all materials provided), Aug. 1 and 8 at 3:30 p.m. Adults can enjoy Single Stop/Government Benefits at 9 a.m.; July 26, 31, Aug. 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21 and 23; Arts & Crafts Workshops at 2 p.m.; Mask Making, July 27, and Banana Hammocks, Aug. 10; Films at 2:30 p.m.; “The Blind Side,” July 28, and “Himalaya,” Aug. 18; Fame and (Mis)Fortune: Melissa Morgan and Christopher “Play” Martin, R&B diva and hip-hop veteran reveal how they overcame financial challenges, July 31 at 6 p.m.; and History Through Hats; (online registration required), includes hat making with all materials provided, Aug. 22 at 10 a.m. English Language Learners can join ESOL Levels 1 and 2; beginning July 30 (call for a detailed schedule of dates and times). For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Free Health Training for Teens

The Youth Advisory Board of the Bronx District Public Health Office, 1928 Arthur Ave., is offering free public health training for teens on Fridays in July and August from noon to 4 p.m., including sexual health, physical activity, and nutrition. For more information, contact Candida A. Bido at Chido@health.nyc.gov or call (718) 259-7576.

Adopt-a-Shop Workshops

The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is hosting Adopt a Shop workshops at the Bronx Library Center, room C-21, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., July 27, and Aug. 3, from 10 a.m. to noon., that would give New Yorkers the tools to successfully demand healthier food options at their food store. For more information or to RSVP (required), call (347) 396-4245 or e-mail shophealthy@health.nyc.gov.

Street Dedication for Five-Two Officer

The 52nd Precinct invites the public to its street renaming dedication in tribute to Police Officer Eric Hernandez, who was killed in 2006 by fellow officers who didn’t know he was a cop. The street sign, which will read “The PO. Eric Hernandez Memorial Corner,” will be placed on Webster Avenue and Moshulu Parkway North, on Saturday, July 28 at 11 a.m. across the street from the precinct which is located at 3016 Webster Ave. Lunch follows the ceremony. For more information, call (718) 220-5811.

National Night Out at Oval Park

The 52nd Precinct Community Council will celebrate its 29th annual National Night Out on Tuesday, Aug. 7, at the Williamsbridge Oval, from 5 to 8 p.m., featuring free entertainment, music, games, face painting, and refreshments. The event is dedicated to strengthening the relationship between police offices and the community. For more information, call (718) 220-5811.

Text for Health Tips

Montefiore Medical Center has created a new text messaging program called “Bronx4Bronx” in an effort to help Bronx residents take better care of themselves. Bronx4Bronx delivers health tips and information via text message three times a week to its users. The program is available in English and Spanish, and users can opt in or out at any time. To receive health messages, text BX4BX to 32075 (for Spanish, text BX4BXS to 32075). For more information, visit www.montefiore.org/bx4bx.

Training for Displaced Homemakers

Bronx Community College offers men and women who meet eligibility requirements under the Displaced Homemakers Act, a free four-week Excel training course as a part of the Displaced Homemakers Program. Classes start the second week of August at BCC’s Gould Residence Hall, room 309, 2315 University Ave. Upon successful completion of the course, students will receive further assistance in their job search. For more information call (718) 289-5828/5824.

For more Neighborhood Notes online, go to www.norwoodnews.org and click on “Neighborhood Notes” in the right-hand column.

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