

NORWOOD NEWS



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SONGS AND DANCE AT KLEZFEST



Photo by Adi Talwar

PAULA TEITELBAUM and Zachary Mayer demonstrate a traditional Jewish wedding dance at the 2nd annual Sholem Aleichem Yiddish Klezfest celebration happening at the Sholem Aleichem Cultural Center on Bainbridge Avenue at 208th Street, on Dec. 29. The Yiddish-spoken event showcased Yiddish culture through music, songs and dance. Check out a slideshow of the event on www.norwoodnews.org.

Tribute Set for Famed Yiddish Poet

By **DAVID CRUZ**

A memorial is slated for Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman, the borough's lifelong authority on Yiddish art, music and poetry, who passed away on Nov. 28 from natural causes. She was 93. Her son Itzik, a Yiddish studies professor, has organized a Jan. 12 tribute in her name hoping guests will learn about his mother's "widespread influence on the younger generation of Yiddish poets, singers and songwriters."

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Andy Cohen Takes Oath of Office for 11th Council District

By **DAVID CRUZ**

With his wife and energetic daughter by his side, Andy Cohen took the oath of office as the next Councilman for the 11th District, succeeding term-limited Oliver Koppell. Well-wishers, community leaders and nearly the entire Bronx Democratic Caucus were on hand to witness Cohen sworn to office by his friend and former colleague Bronx Supreme Court Justice Edgar Walker.

"The campaigning is over, the rhetoric is over, no more campaign promises—it's time for the real work to begin," said Cohen, 44, delivering remarks from a prepared speech in a nervously quick yet emotional tone.

His inauguration at Lehman College's Lovinger Theater on Jan. 5 was what 81st Assembly District Leader Bruce Feld called "the wedding." Just several days before, Cohen obtained the Council's "marriage certificate" after taking the oath of office in front of the NYC Clerk, formalizing his ascension as leader of the 11th Council District. The district oversees an area with an eclectic economic spectrum, where working class neighborhoods such as Norwood lie in the shadow of other communities such as affluent Riverdale.

The ceremony was a rally of sorts, with Cohen's fellow city, state, and federal colleagues offering advice on how to balance a career and leadership. Carl Heastie, the borough's Democratic Party boss, advised Cohen to keep to his roots. "You are always going to be Andy Cohen even after your days as Councilman," said Heastie. "So never let this job change who you are and you stay the principled man that you are."

Cohen's Climb

Cohen's rise to the Council caps several years of community in-



Photo courtesy Office of Councilman Andy Cohen

ANDY COHEN, with his wife Heather, prepares to be sworn in by Bronx Supreme Court Justice Edgar Walker as Councilman for the 11th District.

volvement and solid relationships he's made with several key political players. He arrived to the Bronx from Queens in 2000, settling in Spuyten Duyvil with his wife Heather. A lawyer by trade, Cohen's exposure to the Bronx political scene was helped by Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, who hired Cohen to serve as his legal counsel. He eventually left to work for Walker, though he maintained close ties to the community by serving as a member of Community Board 8. Cohen also served as an adjunct professor at John Jay College.

He was also a member of the influential Benjamin Franklin

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NORWOOD NEWS

In The Public Interest

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NORWOOD NEWS

In The Public Interest

A Who's Who in de Blasio Cabinet



Photo courtesy Rob Bennett for the de Blasio Transition Committee

WITH HAND on Bible, Bill de Blasio is sworn in as New York City mayor by friend and political ally, former President Bill Clinton.

With Mayor de Blasio officially sworn in as the Big Apple's executive chief, vacancies in his cabinet continue to outweigh the number of filled posts within his executive hierarchy. As of press time, there have been only 16 of over 100 current positions filled, discounting the other authorities or boards overseen by the deputy mayors. Among the chosen is Gladys Carrion, the only Bronxite on his cabinet thus far. And don't be surprised by de Blasio's turtle-like speed in his appointments—he has said he intended for a slow, deliberative method of selecting.

For now, here's a roundup of the first ten:

1. Gladys Carrion (Commissioner of Children's Services): We give props first to the only Bronxite in de Blasio's cabinet so far. Carrion will now manage a largely troubled agency with a history of gross negligence (i.e. Nixzmary Brown, Marchella Price). Carrion had been the state's commissioner of children and family services, which was under fire for allegedly allowing foster kids to throw a wild party at a juvenile facility.



2. Lilliam Barrios-Paoli (Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services): Longtime NYC bureaucrat who just left her post as Commissioner of the Department for the Aging. She will now oversee a dozen city agencies. She's no stranger to city government, having worked for the Koch and Giuliani administrations.

3. Bill Bratton (NYPD Commissioner): The former NYPD Commissioner during the Giuliani Administration helped dramatically reduce crime and maintain a friendlier demeanor with NYC reporters, unlike his successor/predecessor Ray Kelly, who's kept mainstream reporters, and weeklies and biweeklies (like the *Norwood News*), in the dark over many issues. The big ques-



tion, however, is whether Bratton will follow through on de Blasio's campaign promise of scaling back stop-and-frisk.

4. Carmen Farina (Schools Chancellor): Farina's been in the trenches of a largely chaotic school system, serving as a career teacher and principal. Unlike her predecessor, Dennis Walcott, Farina holds experience in the classroom, which could score brownie points for parents initially skeptical of her. She's already made the rounds, visiting M.S. 223 - The Laboratory School of Finance and Technology.



5. Dean Fuleihan (Budget Director): The city's moneyman had worked in both the private and public sectors, serving as the principal fiscal and policy advisor to the Speaker of the NYS Assembly, Assembly leadership.



6. Alicia Glen (Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development): A former Goldman Sachs executive, Glen's new role is looking to solve two issues greatly impacting the Bronx—more affordable housing and more jobs.



7. Laura Santucci (Chief of Staff): The youngest of the bunch, Santucci, 32, was a former union official with 1199 SEIU and acting director of the Democratic National Committee, who personally handpicked several of de Blasio's staffers.



8. Anthony E. Shorris (First Deputy Mayor): Arguably the second most important position in the de Blasio cabinet, Shorris has some experience in city government, having worked as executive director of the NY/NJ Port Authority, commissioner for finance, and deputy budget director. Shorris will now leave his post as vice president of NYU



Langone Medical Center.

9. Zachary W. Taylor (Corporation Counsel): Taylor will be the city's top lawyer and de Blasio's chief advisor on legal matters, and has already pledged to drop the city's appeal on the stop-and-frisk case currently lumbering through the legal process, while looking to settle the Central Park Five case, further distancing himself from the Bloomberg Administration's policy.



10. Emma Wolfe (Director of Intergovernmental Affairs): De Blasio's former chief of staff during his Public Advocate days, Wolfe is a community organizer and union leader, having worked at 1199 SEIU.



Let's look at some of the major vacancies up for grabs as of press time:

1. NYCHA: As expected, NYC Housing Authority Commissioner John Rhea left his post on Dec. 31 following several years of turmoil for this Harvard-educated leader. He was largely criticized for providing an unclear look at why some housing complexes were in dire shape, with some earmarked funds for upgrades waiting in limbo.

2. Parks: So many projects remain on hold in the Bronx, given some shortfall promises from the Bloomberg Administration to earmark \$200 million for park improvements in exchange for building the Croton Water Filtration Plant. With no Parks commissioner picked yet, where would that leave Bronx Parks Commissioner Hector Aponte?

3. Homeless: With the Bronx home to the most homeless shelters in the city, one would wonder whether the de Blasio camp will listen to Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.'s recommendation to ease up in the number of men only and family shelters that have skyrocketed throughout the Bloomberg years. Last count, according to numbers from former Comptroller John Liu, showed the borough with 148 of 370 citywide shelters in the Bronx. Whoever is picked will have to conform to de Blasio's position in finding alternate ways to house homeless families.

Overall, de Blasio's picks appear to be a reflection of his progressive politics, and only time will tell whether his progressive stance will be rejected or praised by New Yorkers.

—DAVID CRUZ

Public and Community Meetings

- **COMMUNITY BOARD 7** will hold its general meeting on **Tuesday, Jan. 21 at 6:30 p.m.** For more information, call the board office at (718) 933-5650.
- **The 52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** will meet on **Thursday, Jan. 23 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Concourse House, 2751 Grand Concourse.** For more information, call (718) 220-5824.

All meetings are subject to change. Call to confirm.

Crime File

5-2 Precinct on the Lookout for Gang of Thieves

By DAVID CRUZ

Just before midnight on Dec. 14, Donald Smith of Norwood lay on the floor with a gun pressed against his temple inside his own home. A group of thieves had just forced their way into his apartment. Smith, a retired public safety officer who retired the day of the World Trade Center attacks, prayed he would get out of this one alive.

"I started to make peace with the man upstairs, and told my mom and dad I'll be seeing you soon," said Smith, recounting in a telephone interview the night a brazen group of thieves stormed his apartment at 3366 Decatur Ave. to ransack the place.

The act is what the NYPD describes as a push-in robbery, a type of home invasion where thieves barge into a home to rob the occupants. In Smith's case, the gang quickly ordered Smith to the floor as they entered his bedroom where his girlfriend was sleeping. She soon woke up, shocked to see the thieves demand that Smith open his safe. The gang left with Smith's jewelry and a couple of cell phones, one of which was later retrieved at a pizza place near Jerome Avenue and East 233rd Street with help from the NYPD's Anti-Crime Division, and another was found in a sewer in Woodlawn.

The incident crushed Smith's weary sense of security to the point where he only buzzes in guests who first call his cell phone. Smith viewed the crime as an emblematic moment of how bad conditions in the building have become from the time he moved in 18 years ago. "There was a waiting list for the apartment building," recalled Smith, who's been victimized numerous times in separate carjacking incidents. Just weeks before, a neighbor

was burglarized inside the apartment building.

The incidents point to a larger problem in the building—no tenants association or video cameras, and a management company, Total Realty Associates, that appears to half-heartedly attempt to assuage any security flaws.

"Word gets around that this is a soft building because of the lack of lighting, and security cameras that are non-existent," said Smith, adding plenty of "undesirables have infiltrated the building's empty apartments, making it very hard to determine who's living here and who's squatting illegally." This has left the building vulnerable to drug dealing activities that have run rampant in the area. For Smith, the 54-year-old retiree may have been an unintended victim as sources said the gang of thieves might have been targeting one of Smith's neighbors, known to peddle drugs inside the apartment.

Progress But No Dent

The overall robbery numbers have dropped during 2013 in the Bronx within the 5-2's jurisdiction, which saw 454 robberies in 2013, compared to 524 in 2012, according to the latest NYPD crime stats. But Smith disputes the numbers since many neighbors tend not to call the police to report because of the "lack of interest that's shown for those types of incidents."

In Smith's case, the gang of five—four men and one woman—has so far eluded cops from the Robbery Unit and the Five-Two, still dealing with a major spike in the number of shooting victims and murders falling within its jurisdiction. Smith argues the priority in solving this case is very low, though the police did release in-



Photo by David Cruz

THIS BUILDING in Norwood at 3366 Decatur Ave. has been a beacon of crime, with drug deals and robberies the norm.

formation, albeit misinformation, regarding the robbery.

In a police report emailed to reporters, the description only mentioned that one thief had robbed Smith. Luckily, a video surveillance camera from a nearby business captured a photo of the suspect—a male black, wearing what appeared to be a fur-lined purple hat and coat. Any-

one with information is encouraged to call 1-800-CRIMESTOPPERS. A reward is available for the suspect's capture.

As Smith replays the incident in his head, the time has come for him to rethink where he would want to live, just as he received a renewal lease application from the management company.

"You gotta be kidding me," said Smith.

GRAND CRASHES ON GRAND CONCOURSE



Photo by David Greene

THE GRAND CONCOURSE can be one scary thoroughfare. Bronxites were reminded of that with a pair of accidents that happened during a 25-hour period leading up to Christmas Eve. In the first incident, a victim crossing the street on the Grand Concourse at 198th Street in Bedford Park was rammed by the driver of a 1999 BMW SUV just before 7 p.m. on Dec. 23. The driver, Freddie Rodriguez of Cold Spring, NY, was arrested and charged with DWI. A day later, a woman crossing the Grand Concourse at 196th Street was mowed down just before 8 p.m. on Christmas Eve. Read up on what happened next on www.norwoodnews.org.

HULL AVENUE APARTMENTS

The **Postgraduate Center for Mental Health** has applications available to persons with limited income for **studio and 2-bedroom apartments** located at **3525 Hull Avenue in the Bronx**. Income qualifications will be based on Federal Low Income Guidelines. Which are as follow:

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Interested persons may obtain an application by writing to:

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c/o PCMH
158 East 35th Street
New York, NY 10016

Applications may also be picked up at:

3525 Hull Avenue
Bronx, NY 10467
Monday to Friday
10 AM to 4 PM.

Completed applications must be sent by **REGULAR** mail (NOT registered or certified mail) to the address indicated with the application.

Call **212-889-5500 x204** with questions.



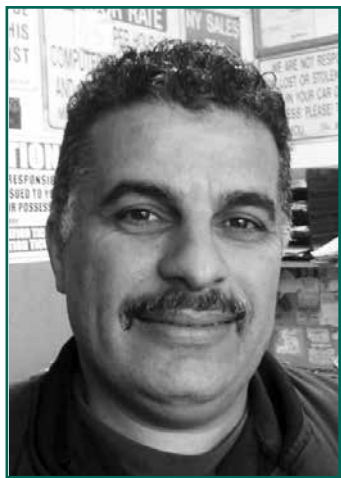
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By DAVID GREENE

A new year, a new set of resolutions. This week, the *Norwood News* interviewed several neighbors with hopes, plans and resolutions for 2014.



The first would be to stay healthy, and the second is to get ready for med school. I'd also like to better cultivate relationships with family.
Aaron Apafio



I hope it's going to be a good New Year and that we start making more money. I wish everyone a Happy New Year. I hope the new mayor does a good job and I hope they reduce the taxes so things can improve.
Assad Riham



I have no resolutions, but my hopes for the New Year is just to get a good job. I hope the new mayor takes better care of the Bronx instead of just focusing on downtown Manhattan.
Ralph Gil



Yes, to stop smoking and to lose weight. Hopes for the Bronx... I live on Clinton Avenue and they're doing a lot of holdups over there. I've been there since I was seven years old. There's a lot of bad stuff going on and I'd like it to stop.
Gladys Robles



To be a better person in general and I hope that everyone comes home from war, safe and sound, to their families who are waiting.
Eva Rodriguez

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Prominent Yiddish Poet To Be Remembered

(continued from page 1)

Well over dozens are expected for the commemorative ceremony at the Sholem Aleichem Cultural Center on Bainbridge Avenue at 208th Street at 1:30 p.m., where they will be presented with Yiddish-language songs and a video presentation showcasing the life of Schaechter-Gottesman, who for decades advanced Yiddish culture through her lyrical body of poetry and songwriting she penned exclusively in Yiddish. The language, derived from ancient German and Hebrew tongues, is heard mostly in Jewish enclaves, though the customs tied to the language are slowly eroding within Jewish communities, according to Itzik.

Schaechter-Gottesman's contributions as a spirited writer earned her worldwide admiration, establishing a reputation that attracted singers from all over the world to visit her home on Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood just to learn more about Yiddish. "She believed that Yiddish reflected the Jewish world, experience, history—it all can be found in the language and in its literature and culture," said Itzik. "And it's a great treasure that should be kept up."

Early Life

Schaechter-Gottesman was born Aug. 7, 1920 in Vienna, though raised in Czernowitz, Ukraine, formerly in Romania. She "grew up in song," exposed to music as a young child, thanks to her mother, Lifshe Schaechter, who sang Yiddish folk songs at home. But Schaechter-Gottesman, a Jewish woman, soon experienced the bru-

talities of World War II, crammed into a Romanian ghetto with her family and husband Jonah during the height of the war.

She eventually left Romania for Austria, eventually flying to the states to carve out a life for herself in the Bronx. She first settled in Tremont in 1951 before moving to Norwood in 1964.

Bainbridge Ave.: A Yiddish Cultural Center

Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood served as the lynchpin to Yiddish life in the Bronx, with a half dozen Yiddish-speaking families buying up the two-story homes that lined the block. Yiddish presence was so dominant there that neighbors eventually coined the block "Bainbridgikfe," inserting an eastern European style akin to the play on words read and seen in "Fiddler on the Roof." Schaechter-Gottesman felt at home there. As Itzik remembered, "We had a little Yiddish community here," with notable figures such as social linguist Dr. Joshua Fishman, his wife Gela, a Yiddish cultural leader, presiding there. Several doors down was Schaechter-Gottesman's brother Mordke, a renowned Yiddish professor and linguist at Columbia University.

Down the block on Bainbridge was the folkshul (at 208th Street), formerly an after school institution, now occupied by the Sholem Aleichem Cultural Center. Schaechter-Gottesman served as a teacher there, authoring plays and songs while teaching neighborhood children lessons in Yiddish, the preferred language for



Photo courtesy Itzik Gottesman

BEYLE SCHAECHTER-GOTTESMAN (pictured) died on Nov. 28, leaving behind a lasting legacy of Yiddish poetry and songs she crafted while living in Norwood.

many in the community.

Life's Work

It was on Bainbridge Avenue that Schaechter-Gottesman developed her life's work—an enormous body of poems and songs written strictly in Yiddish, earning her recognition as a Yiddish folklorist. She's quoted in several published articles that declare her first passion in the arts was drawing, sketching her works in charcoal or pen. Indeed, she was known never to leave the house without a pen and paper.

She later composed children's songs and poems, serving as a vehicle for her children to learn about Yiddish, said Itzik. She later explored a spectrum of themes in her works, often writing about European life or the eclectic hustle and bustle of the Bronx, offering stirring prose that emoted a sense of meditation and reflection.

In all, Schaechter-Gottesman wrote seven poetry books, and composed three CDs of her songs that were published with help from Itzik. Her most famous musical piece, Harbstlid or Autumn Song, was sampled by singers from all over the world. Her works had attracted attention from several noteworthy musicians, including Austrian-born folk singer/composer Theodore Bikel.

"There aren't that many people singing in Yiddish," said Itzik. "So she was a model for them." She earned critical acclaim for her devotion to Yiddish arts, eventually earning a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2005. She was also invited to the Yiddish Summer Weimar in 2004, a week-long workshop devoted to her songs.

With Schaechter-Gottesman's passing, Itzik believes her life's work, disseminated around the globe, will help preserve Yiddish culture. Indeed, Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood has served as the epicenter to Yiddish culture, a distinction arguably borne from Schaechter-Gottesman's love for the culture.

"She helped make Bainbridge Avenue world renown," said Itzik.

Cohen Sworn In As Councilman for 11th District

(continued from page 1)

Reform Democratic Club, remaining on the inside of Bronx politics. On his campaign website, Cohen explained how it was community leaders within the district that convinced him to run for office. He appeared to be a shoo-in for the Council seat from the time he announced his candidacy in December 2012, thanks to his involvement with the club, and arguably his allegiance to Dinowitz, who also serves as Chair of the Bronx Democratic County Committee. Through a secret ballot, Cohen won the support from club members, putting him ahead against any other contenders. Dinowitz

soon helped Cohen secure endorsements from unions, later getting the final blessing from the Bronx County.

With help from the Bronx political machine and a big campaign war chest, Cohen won the September primary by 68 percent, defeating leading opponent Cliff Stanton. With the Bronx overwhelmingly Democratic, Cohen went on to win the general election in November.

Progressive Politics

In his inaugural speech, Cohen outlined a platform that's in line with the progressive politics primed to be promoted by Mayor de Blasio, who ran a

campaign that intends to close what many city legislators call inequity gap. On Cohen's agenda is fixing his district's schools, emphasizing the link between a better quality of life and a decent education.

"I will be on the front lines with our students, parents, teachers and administrators," said Cohen. "I began meeting with all the principals in the district, and I will meet with every parent association to take their concerns directly to City Hall."

Cohen also made assurances he will bring in more capital funding to improve parklands in the district, ensuring to secure funds for some park projects along with realizing the city's 20-year master

plan for Van Cortlandt Park. But notwithstanding a Councilmember's intent to bring in more funding for his district, Cohen's biggest test would be fixing the perceived divide between working class Norwood and the more middle class Riverdale.

Dinowitz disputed the divide, calling the 11th District a "close-knit community," with an outlook that's derived from Cohen's opponents. "If you ask somebody on the street where they live, I don't think most people are gonna say, 'I live in Norwood, I live in Kingsbridge, or I live in Riverdale,'" said Dinowitz. "They're going to say they live in the Bronx. And that's what Andy represents—somebody who can bring us together."



Photo courtesy Office of Councilman Andy Cohen

NEWLY SWORN IN Councilman Andy Cohen delivers his inaugural speech before supporters at Lehman College's Lovinger Theater on Jan. 5.



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Be Healthy

Flu Season in Full Swing

By **NORWOOD NEWS**

With sub-zero temps blanketing the Bronx in recent days, Montefiore Medical Center wants you to heed this warning: get your flu shot! The state Department of Health confirms that flu season has now settled in, with this year's bug scuttling all corners of the Bronx. Infectious disease specialists have identified the most dangerous flu viruses for this year with about 90 percent of these strains believed to be well-matched to the current vaccines. However, there are several important factors Bronxites should know about the 2013-2014 vaccine:

The standard "three-strain" vaccine is offered to healthy children and adults. This widely available dose includes two strains of the more common A virus and one of the B virus.

The new "four-strain" or quadrivalent vaccine was designed this year to include two strains of the A and B virus in response to two predominant B virus strains circulating the past two years rather than the usual single strain. The vaccine is intended for people with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma or heart disease and those with compro-

mised immune systems.

Montefiore Medical Center has led by example when it comes to getting the shot. The hospital recently activated its influenza vaccine and mask policy across its network of six hospitals, ordering staffers to wear a surgical mask if they haven't been vaccinated. Signs can be spotted all over the campus on East 210th Street, urging employees to get their shot if they've avoided it.

The policy comes after four months of preparation through an internal and external campaign, compelling employees and members of the community to get the shot as a way to keep the flu bug at bay. Montefiore is still offering workers to get their flu shots. Its effect usually kicks in two weeks after receiving it, protecting folks from the four-month-long flu season.

The 2012-13 flu season was deemed more intense than expected and resulted in the deaths of more than 110 children across the United States. Experts recommend the flu vaccine as the best option to reduce a person's risk of contracting the virus.

—Data provided by Montefiore Medical Center

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Opinion

Editorial

Why Community Journalism Matters in the Bronx

A recent article by *City Limits* low-lighted the lack of news coverage and newspaper distribution for the Bronx. Sure, dailies are sold here, but there's barely any mention of the borough except from the *New York Daily News*, which has had a dedicated bureau shop in the Boogie Down for decades, though the number of staffers has dwindled. The article sourced several bean counters over the lack of coverage on the borough, mainly from the free daily *Metro New York*, explaining that the newspaper is driven by advertisements, and working poor readers are less likely to buy the advertised products, hence the small distribution of its papers here.

This is why community journalism in the Bronx matters—we're the only ones out there. Certainly, dailies do cover the borough, but coverage tends to primarily follow the if-it-bleeds-it-leads format or the Bronx's maligned history of shady power relationships.

As we keep hearing, newspapers are becoming a dinosaur primed for extinction. Publishers are in survival mode, going after readers with money. Statistically, the ones with the most money are in Manhattan. Nothing wrong there. But journalists should not be in the business of providing coverage to the highest bidder.

In any event, regardless of the state of the press, this editorial is a rallying cry for the borough's community newspapers to continue doing what they're doing—keeping an eye on

charlatans and propping up neighborhoods to remind them they're not forgotten. We're here to provide an ad hoc watchdog service to disadvantaged neighborhoods that may very well be exploited and not even know.

Of course, an underlying quest for profits is on community newspapers' mind (except for the *Norwood News*, we're not-for-profit). Yet it's perhaps the best bargain in town for in-depth coverage on a borough brewing with

Without [community journalism], the Bronx would be a reportage desert, devoid of the fourth estate. Resolutions and changes, therefore, would lumber.

progress, though still marred with issues of homelessness, sky high unemployment and health issues. Without us, the Bronx would be a reportage desert, devoid of the fourth estate. Resolutions and changes, therefore, would lumber. That insight was made clear after a conversation I had with a member of the city Conflicts of Interest Board who revealed that many of their investigations are often sparked by a newspaper article. In short, community journalism inspires change. Case in point, the *Norwood News*' "Armory Clock" used to indicate how long it would take the state to relocate

the National Guard housed in the Armory to make way for a new venture. It stayed fresh in the minds of legislators who pressed then-Governor George Pataki to act.

So if it's a column on borough politics read by all the power players, a student-run newspaper, or an online newspaper startup focusing on one particular neighborhood, the borough is in need of them. A 2012 study by Pew Research Center, a media think tank, showed that news is consumed less by the low-income earners, which account for 28 percent in the Bronx, according to U.S. Census data. One major reason, as far as the *Norwood News* is concerned, is because there are fewer stories about the area.

For me, I often wonder what would happen if there was no coverage of this borough. What then? I imagine the elected officials would run wild, city agencies would go completely complacent, and there would be less discourse. What would ultimately happen is a borough completely in the dark on critical issues that often need fixing through mass media. Community journalism is much like a watchdog—we will bark on behalf of the community. And should on-the-ground journalists root out the negative, inspire more and more Bronxites to be civic minded and make government honest, then perhaps metros will notice and ramp up their coverage efforts.

—DAVID CRUZ, Editor-in-Chief

MIRACLE ON THE DEEGAN: PLANE MAKES EMERGENCY LANDING ON BUSY HIGHWAY



Photo by David Greene

THE STARS must have been aligned perfectly as a single-engine fixed-winged plane with three passengers on board made an emergency landing on the northbound Major Deegan Expressway, just a 1/2 mile south of the East 233rd Street exit. More coverage on this rare story can be found at norwoodnews.org.

Letter to the Editor

Euthanized Cat Deserved Better

My complaint is against Riverdale Veterinary Group (RVG) who treated my cat, Buttons. She was euthanized by my daughter's vet in Delaware in September from a diffused lung and cancer tumor so big it blocked the x-ray. I only wish that she would've been under their care from the beginning. Perhaps there wouldn't have been such negligence.

Buttons was a stray in Westchester County, later living a good life in my home. Several vets diagnosed her as a diabetic feline, though her primary vet was from RVG. Buttons seemed to be doing very well. Her diabetic insulin had been regulated and I believed she was under the best care. Though the office staff was very helpful, it wasn't until her last visit in February of 2013 that Buttons' demeanor changed, experiencing loss of appetite and energy. Despite her worsening condition, the doctor should've suspected something was wrong. But no one would listen. After some blood work, Buttons had been treated for a urinary infection and was ordered an appetite-inducing medication. However, her appetite steadily decreased.

When I re-visited Delaware, I decid-

ed to get a second opinion by Rehoboth Beach Animal Hospital in August. She had lost four pounds, barely eating and so lethargic she hardly made it to the litter box. Her diabetes regiment was later adjusted, a recommendation never made by RVG. They only recommended an x-ray that cost \$430. Plus, they refused to see Buttons until I paid the bill I repeatedly asked for. I always paid Riverdale's bills, however this doctor's actions were grossly negligent and insensitive. My question to the vet was why didn't he diagnose the cancer sooner with the steady weight loss, decreased appetite, lethargic behavior? What more signs did they need?

I filed a complaint with the Better Business Bureau, with the head vet rebutting my claims, saying his staff "went above and beyond what would have reasonably been expected of us." This isn't something that happens overnight. There's no compassion there for the animals or their owners. The fact that he wouldn't return my calls and more concerned whether or not I would pay my bill than treating Buttons shows this man's lack of integrity. Buttons may have had cancer, but she didn't need to suffer as long as she did.

Joan Stepanich
Norwood resident

Classifieds

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Neighborhood Notes

BRIO Awards Application Workshops

Application workshops for The Bronx Council on the Arts' BRIO (Bronx Recognizes Its Own) awards will be held Jan. 10 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd.; and on Jan. 22 from 5 to 8 p.m., at Hostos Community College, room C-391, 450 Grand Concourse (149th Street) Application deadline is Jan. 31. For more information, call (718) 931-9500 ext. 35.

Free Testing for HS Equivalency Prep Program

Grace Outreach, at 378 E. 151st St. (5th floor), will conduct free placement tests for its HS Equivalency Test Preparation program on Jan. 16 and 17 for the 2014 semester for women 18 years and older. For more information, please call (718) 328-0580.

Coat Drive

New York Cares is collecting coats for the needy this winter through Feb. 7. Bronx donation sites include the Office of the Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. at 851 Grand Concourse (room 209) from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Other drop-off sites include the 52nd Police Precinct, 3016 Webster Ave. For more information, visit www.newyorkcares.org.

Computers at the Oval

Computer access is now available at the newly-opened Williamsbridge Oval Computer Resource Center; Mondays through Saturdays (subject to change). Call to confirm. For more information or a detailed schedule, call (718) 543-8672.

Apply to Your Community Board

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. invites Bronx residents to join their local community board. Applications are

available at your local board office or at Diaz's Community Board office and will be accepted for all 12 Community Boards for Bronxites who reside, work or have professional or other significant interests in the Bronx. Deadline is Feb. 7. For more information, call (718) 590-3543/8977, or apply online at bronxboropres.nyc.gov.

Free GED Prep & Transition Programs

Pathways to Graduation offers free GED educational services to diploma seeking students 18 to 21, in advance of NY's new Common Core-aligned Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) which offers educational services from the DOE's Adult Transition Centers at age 22. Centers are located at 1010 James A Polite Ave. For more information, call (212) 374-5141.

Photo Workshops at Fordham U

The New York Botanical/Zoological Photographic Society holds bi-weekly photo workshops for avid photographers two times a month on Saturdays at 9:45 a.m. at the Fordham Preparatory School (room 243) on the Fordham University Campus through June. For more information, call (718) 543-3115.

Lehman Art & Design Workshops

Lehman College's Art Gallery, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., offers an after-school art & design program for middle and high school students. For more information, call (718) 960-8732.

For more Neighborhood Notes online, go to www.norwoodnews.org and click on "Neighborhood Notes."

Classifieds: \$12 for the first 20 words and 25 cents for each additional word. **Professional Directory:** \$144 for six months; \$260 for one year. To place an ad, call (718) 324-4998 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

FIRST MONTE DELIVERY OF 2014



Photo courtesy Montefiore Medical Center

THE FIRST MONTEFIORE baby of 2014 was born Jan. 1 at 12:15 a.m. Kairi Evany Cid Bravo, seen with first-time mom Kaori (r.) and Nurse Christine Palazzo, was born at Montefiore's Weiler Hospital on the Einstein Campus, weighing 7 lbs. 13 oz. and measuring 19 ½ inches. Best wishes to the entire family!

Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Free Music at NYPL

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **NY Opera Forum**, featuring music by Mozart, Jan. 11; and **Latin Jazz Concert**, featuring Papo Pepin y Su Orchestra, Jan. 18; both at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers **Music by Hasan Bakr**, Jan. 11 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

Onstage

■ Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **The O'Jays**, soul music group, Jan. 11 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$50 to \$100); **The Bronx Opera Company**, featuring Mechem's The Rivals, Jan. 11 and 12 at 7:30 p.m. in the Lovinger Theatre (tickets are \$15 to \$30; students/seniors receive \$5 off); and **Doo Wop - Rock & Roll Is Here to Stay**, featuring a variety of performers, Jan. 18 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$35 to \$50). For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

■ The Albert Einstein Symphony Orchestra presents **classical music**, Jan. 19 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 Bronx Council on the Arts presents a craft workshop, **Journal Making**, free, at the Huntington Free Library, 9 Westchester Square, Jan. 18 from 12:30 to 3 p.m. (bring images, fabric and items to personalize). For more information, call (718) 931-9500 ext. 33 or (718) 829-7770.

■ Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Arts Project**: Kandinsky Colors and Toscanini Sounds, to listen to Toscanini music, Jan. 11 and 12; and Mapping Freedom, to draw a secret

map of the places you want to go, in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, then transfer the map to muslin and decorate it, Jan. 18 and 19; both at the WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also offered is **Concert: Sinfonietta of Riverdale**, a string orchestra playing classical music, paying tribute to former WH resident, Toscanini, Jan. 12 at 3 p.m., in Armor Hall, WH House (\$45; \$40/seniors; \$35/WH members; reserve at ext. 251). Grounds admission is free Saturdays until noon all year, and free all day Tuesdays in January. Glyndor Gallery **tours** take place Tuesdays and Saturdays at 2 p.m.; garden **walks** are held Tuesdays and Saturdays at 11 a.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m., from the Perkins Visitor Center. For more information and a schedule of events, call (718) 549-3200.

■ The NY Botanical Garden presents its **Holiday Train Show**, model trains traversing replicas of NY landmarks created from plant materials, through Jan. 12, in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory. For more information, call (718) 817-8658.

■ The Bronx County Historical Society, 3266 Bainbridge Ave., presents **Happy Birthday Edgar!**, Jan. 15 at 6:30 p.m., to celebrate Edgar Allan Poe's 205th birthday with an illustrated presentation and short reading of one of his works. For more information, call

(718) 881-8900.

■ NYC Parks Department presents **Go Green and Treecycle at Mulchfest 2014**, Jan. 11 and 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The public may recycle their trees at various sites into woodchips that will nourish city trees and gardens. Drop-offs are at Poe Park, Grand Concourse at Kingsbridge Road; St. James Park, West 192nd Street at Jerome Avenue; and Williamsbridge Oval, Reservoir Place and Van Cortlandt Avenue. Chipping site at Van Cortlandt Park, Bailey Avenue at VC Park South offers free mulch and free collection bags to take home for your own garden. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/parks and search for "Mulchfest."

Exhibits

■ Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse, offers free, **Whimsical Winter Wonder Exhibit**, through Jan. 31, showcasing the works of 16 artists from around the world, including paintings, photos, and sculptures, Tuesdays to Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 365-5516.

■ The NY Botanical Garden presents **Close: A Journey in Scotland**, through March 16, featuring creations of 21 notable contemporary designers and artists

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MULCHFEST THROUGHOUT BRONX PARKS



Photo courtesy Department of Parks and Recreation

WHAT TO DO with the old Christmas tree drooping about? Take it to your local Bronx park. The city Department of Parks and Recreation is hosting Mulchfest, where Bronxites can drop off their old tree, which will be recycled into mulch. Pictured are several park workers hauling discarded trees for their journey to the grinder. See Out & About under "Events" for details.

working in the Scottish landscape. For more information, call (718) 817-8700 or visit nybg.org.

■ Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, 2nd floor North Wing, between 161st and 164th streets, presents free: **Paulo Bruscky: Art is Our Last Hope**, through Feb. 9; and **Tony Feher**; and **Orchard Beach: The Bronx Riviera**, both through Feb. 16. For more information, call (718) 681-6000 ext. 131.

■ The Bronx County Historical Society's Museum of Bronx History at the Valentine-Varian House, 3266 Bainbridge Ave., presents **History Woven Into Cloth**, selections from the Society's textile collection, through April 6. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Library Events

■ The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents programs for adults including: **2010 Computer Classes for Beginners at 2 p.m.**: MS Excel : Jan. 10; MS Word: Jan. 16; and MS Powerpoint: Jan. 21;

and **Business Workshops at 2 to 3:30 p.m.**: offered by the Small Business Administration, Jan. 13 and 14. Children can enjoy **Preschool Story Time at 11 a.m.**: Jan. 9, 16 and 23; **Toddler Play Time at noon**: Jan. 9, 16 and 23; **Family Time**: (ages 3 to 6), reading aloud and crafts (preregistration required), Jan. 11 at 11 a.m.; and workshops for ages 7 to 12 at 4 p.m. in: **Winter Frame Making**: Jan. 9; and **Ship Book Making**: Jan. 23. English language learners can join **ESOL Program**: free English classes, Jan. 13 at noon; and Jan. 21 at noon and 6 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

■ The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for seniors and adults: **Knitting Circle**: Thursdays at 3 p.m.; and **Wii Program**: Tuesdays at 3 p.m. Children can enjoy **Toddler Story Time at 11 a.m.**: (ages 18 to 36 months), Jan. 9. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Jan. 13 for the next publication date of Jan. 23.



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