

NORWOOD NEWS

Be Healthy

**City Looks to Raise
Smoking Age to 21**
page 7

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Armory to Become ‘Global’ Ice Sports Destination

By ALEX KRATZ

After nearly two decades of failed efforts to re-energize the massive Kingsbridge Armory and dire warnings that it may never happen, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced last week that the iconic, 575,000-square-foot brick castle in the west Bronx would be turned into the world’s largest ice sports complex.

“Through this redevelopment, the Kingsbridge Armory will now have an interior program befitting its iconic exterior architecture,” Bloomberg said.

When it is fully realized, the complex, known as the Kingsbridge National Ice Center, will house nine full-sized ice rinks for hockey, figure skating and other ice sports and include a 5,000-seat arena for major events and tournaments. The developers are expecting two million visitors a year, which Bloomberg and other officials say will provide a huge boost for the local economy and businesses.

The development group, which is made up of several hockey enthusiasts and investors led by former Wall Street executive Kevin Parker, will invest \$275 million in the project, which is scheduled to partially open with five rinks in 2018 and be completed by 2019.

Parker said the Kingsbridge National (continued on page 8)



Rendering courtesy Kingsbridge National Ice Center, Inc.

A RENDERING SHOWS what the Kingsbridge National Ice Center will look like at night. The ice center, which will be the largest ice sports facility in the world, when it’s completed in 2019, will house nine ice rinks and a 5,000-seat arena. For community reaction, see Inquiring Photographer on p. 5 and our story on p. 6. Read our editorial about the project on p. 10.

Armory Benefits Agreement Results From Marathon Negotiation Dance

By ALEX KRATZ

A couple of days after the mayor announced that the Kingsbridge Armory would be transformed into the world’s largest ice sports complex, Desiree Pil-

grim-Hunter sat across the street from the vacant building in a bustling diner and tried valiantly to stay awake.

“I’m exhausted,” she said, following an appearance on Bronxnet, where she talked about her own recent announcement,

which didn’t come with quite the same fanfare as the mayor’s.

Over the previous four months, Pilgrim-Hunter and a volunteer group of negotiators from the Northwest Bronx and Clergy Coalition hammered out what appears to be the strongest community benefits agreement in New York City history.

Pilgrim-Hunter took it one step further, saying its agreement with the Kingsbridge National Ice Center, which won the Armory bid, is “the strongest benefits agreement in the country.”

The agreement was fostered and fretted over by Pilgrim-Hunter, Alice McIntosh, the Rev. Que English, Elizabeth Ortega and Taleigh Smith, all members of the Northwest Bronx and Clergy Coalition, a decades-old organizing outfit that has been advocating for responsible development at the Armory for nearly two decades.

It includes a guarantee of living wage jobs (\$10 an hour plus benefits or \$11.50 an hour without benefits) for ice center employees, 52,000 square-feet of community space, targeted hiring for local residents, local procurement requirements, environmentally-friendly building practices, help for local businesses, and a free af- (continued on page 12)

NN Reports Lead to Crime Maps

By ALEX KRATZ

The City Council recently passed new legislation, born out of reporting by the *Norwood News* and introduced by Bronx Councilman Fernando Cabrera, which will allow New Yorkers to learn details about crime activity in their neighborhoods by logging onto a city website.

Cabrera’s “Crime Mapping Bill” is expected to be voted into law in the next couple of weeks. Cabrera, who is also a local pastor, says the interactive crime map’s impact will be enormous for residents, city agencies, nonprofits and elected officials (not to mention journalists).

At the same time, he says it will improve police-community relations, which (continued on page 4)

RUNNING WILD



Photo courtesy Montefiore Medical Center

Runners and animal enthusiasts take off for the Bronx Zoo’s annual “Run for the Wild” fundraiser on Saturday, April 27. This year’s 5K run/walk event went to help protect elephants and their habitats. For more, see p. 7.

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BREAKING BRONX



News • Politics • Policy

By ALEX KRATZ

'Serious' Vacca Protege Making Waves in Crowded Council Race

Ritchie Torres is so young that his mother named him after seeing "La Bamba," a movie about Mexican-American pop singer Ritchie Valens who died in a plane crash in 1959. The movie, starring Lou Diamond Phillips, was released in 1987.

Though he just turned 25 in March, the precocious Torres is fast making a name for himself as a leading candidate in the wide-open 15th District Council race to replace majority leader Joel Rivera. The district includes the Fordham-Bedford area, as well West Farms and Crotona.

The baby-faced Torres, who's as quick to flash a megawatt smile as he is to go off on obscure city housing regulations, leads all candidates in fundraising, having racked up more than \$60,000 for his campaign since the beginning of the year.

Last week he picked up the endorsement of the Teamsters to add to his growing list of union support, which also includes Communications Workers, Sanitation Workers, Council of School Superintendents and Administrators, the Hotel Trades Council, 32BJ SEIU and UFCW local 1500.

He also enjoys the backing of his current boss, east Bronx Councilman Jimmy Vacca, and Mark Gjonaj, the assemblyman who defeated Joel Rivera's sister, Naomi Rivera, in the 80th District Democratic primary last fall.

Despite his age, Torres says he's the

most experienced candidate in the race, although Rivera's longtime chief of staff, Albert Alvarez, who's backed by Rivera and his father, Assemblyman Jose Rivera, may beg to differ.

Torres got his start in politics early. As a 16-year-old high school junior, he was chosen to be Vacca's District Manager for a Day (this was back when Vacca was still district manager for Community Board 10). Vacca was immediately impressed.

"I was floored," Vacca says about his introduction to Torres. "This was a very bright young man."

Vacca later invited Torres to work on his initial campaign for City Council in 2006.

After graduating from high school, Torres enrolled at New York University, but says he left after a year because he couldn't afford it. Vacca hired him as a community liaison and he's been on his payroll ever since.

From the beginning, Torres has worked on housing issues for Vacca, essentially becoming a tenant organizer for the Councilman, developing tenant associations and identifying distressed buildings with bad landlords. He eventually became Vacca's official housing director.

Torres only recently moved out of his mother's place in Throgs Neck, leading to claims from rivals that he's not really



Photo by Alex Kratz

15TH DISTRICT Council Candidate Ritchie Torres at Pete's Café on East Fordham Road.

part of the district. But Torres says he's getting to know the 15th District through the campaign, which, like everything he does, he's taking very seriously.

"My greatest quality and what people should know about me, is that I'm a very serious person," Torres says. "While that doesn't make me great at socializing, it will make me great as a lawmaker."

Bronx Pols Start Picking Sides in Mayoral Campaign



Photo courtesy Quinn2013

LAST MONTH, Bronx State Senator Gustavo Rivera walked around his district with Speaker Christine Quinn, who he endorsed for mayor.

With the crowded race for mayor beginning to pick up steam this spring, Bronx elected officials are starting to divide into separate Democratic camps.

On April 11, State Senator Gustavo Rivera announced that he was backing City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, who's been beat up by other Democrats in the race for her cozy relationship with Mayor Michael Bloomberg and refusal to support legislation backed by labor groups, including a bill that would provide mandatory paid sick leave for employees.

But Rivera, who considers himself as progressive as they come, says Quinn is the right woman for the job and spent a Sunday last month walking around his northwest Bronx district with her.

"Speaker Quinn, throughout her career, has consistently fought for New York-

ers from all walks of life - particularly working class and low-income families," Rivera said in statement. "She has made it her mission to expand access to quality education, child care and after-school services, as well as to expand and prioritize affordable housing projects."

Meanwhile, two other Bronx Democrats, State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson (who now represents Norwood and Bedford Park, Rivera's former territory before redistricting) and Assemblyman Luis Sepulveda, have thrown their support behind Public Advocate Bill de Blasio.

"From fighting for an uncompromising paid sick leave bill to pushing for true universal early education, Bill de Blasio has consistently stood for progressive values that will help all New Yorkers," Hassell-Thompson said in a statement, clearly making a swipe at Quinn. "We can't afford to have a mayor that only listens to the needs of one borough."

Without mentioning her by name, Sepulveda also took the opportunity to point out how Quinn watered down "living wage" legislation born out of the fight for community benefits at the Kingsbridge Armory in 2009 (see front page story).

"From protecting New Yorkers against powerful slumlords to advocating for a real living wage to reforming Stop and Frisk, Bill has consistently stood on the side of our city's working people," Sepulveda said in a statement.

Public and Community Meetings

- **COMMUNITY BOARD 7** is scheduled to hold its general board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 21. For location and more information, call (718) 933-5650 or visit bronxcb7.info/calendar.
- **COMMUNITY BOARD 7 committee meetings** are held on the following dates at the board office, 229A E. 204th St. at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Traffic and Transportation, May 9; Housing, May 15. For more information, call (718) 933-5650 or visit bronxcb7.info/calendar.
- **The 52ND COMMUNITY PRECINCT COUNCIL** is scheduled to meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 23. For location and more information, call (718) 220-5824.

Water Main Break Deluges Fordham Heights Buildings

By DAVID GREENE

A broken water main in Fordham Heights on a recent Saturday morning flooded the backyards and basements of several buildings and also caused a partial street collapse that nearly swallowed a truck.

Officials were first called to a report of flooding at East 184th Street, between Ryer and Valentine avenues in Fordham Heights, just before 8:30 a.m., on Saturday, April 20.

Dozens of officials from the FDNY, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) responded as thousands of gallons of water quickly filled the basements of six buildings and a large, shared backyard.

Children's toys and garbage could be seen floating in the murky water.

As a large DEP work truck responded to the scene, a large sinkhole opened at the corner of Ryer Avenue and East 184th Street. The ground quickly swallowed the rear wheels of the truck.

Officials say the FDNY assisted in removing the truck



Photo by David Greene

A DEP TRUCK dispatched to a water main break in the Bronx neighborhood of Fordham Heights gets its rear wheels swallowed up by a sinkhole.

from the hole. Water to the area was temporarily turned off to 250 customers as DEP crews worked to locate and fix the broken six-inch water main and valve. A Department of Transportation crew fixed the hole in the street.

Man Wounded in Kingsbridge Heights Shooting

By DAVID GREENE

Police are looking for two suspects who recently opened fire on a male victim in the middle of the day, striking him in the arm inside a Kingsbridge Heights building that is close to the border between the 50th and 52nd precincts.

The victim, who, according to one source, lives in the building where the shooting occurred, 2835 Webb Ave., was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition. He is expected to survive.

Officers from the 50th Precinct and paramedics arrived at the seventh floor hallway of the Webb Avenue building at 12:36 p.m., on Saturday, April 20, and discovered the unidentified male victim with a gunshot wound to his arm.

Police canvassed the area for the two suspects, both wearing hooded jackets, who fled northbound on Webb Avenue towards the confines of the 52nd Precinct.

In an attempt to identify the shooter, detectives were in the process of obtaining surveillance video from buildings in the area.

According to the 50th Precinct commander, Deputy Inspector Kevin Burke, police have video of the two suspects entering the building and are working to identify the individuals. But no arrests had been made as of press time.

The affected homes were between Ryer Avenue and the Grand Concourse, from East 184th Street to East 187th Street. Officials also said that a truck providing water to the community would be available during this emergency.



Photo by David Greene

POLICE OUTSIDE 2835 Webb Ave. after a man was shot inside the building.

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PS 51 Parents Continue Push for Accountability

By WILL SPEROS

More than two years have gone by since dangerously high levels of the carcinogen trichloroethylene (TCE) were detected at PS 51, the Bronx New School, on Jerome Avenue, and parents are still searching for answers and living in fear of future illness.

Concerned parents have been involved in an ongoing campaign to ensure that their children will not be exposed to toxins while sitting in the classroom again. Alan Gary, one of the most active parents involved in this mission, has called the actions of school officials "criminal."

"We're not looking for anything but justice, and it's in short supply," said Gary, whose son attended PS 51 for six years.

PS 51 remained in session for a full five months after the TCE levels were discov-

ered to be 10,000 times higher than the legal limit. Parents are now backing legislation in the City Council that would require the Department of Education to inform parents as soon as toxins are detected at a school.

Parents say the DOE also needs to do its homework before leasing buildings.

The site of PS 51, which was formerly a lamp factory, was leased instead of purchased. Gary claims that "rented properties are not scrutinized as much," and the city has "dropped the ball" as a result of this "leasing loophole."

PS 51 has since moved to a former Catholic school site in Crotona.

TCE leaves no trace in the body, and is not detectable in blood or urine. The body usually rids itself of the toxin after 24 hours. However, because the children were exposed to the toxin for a long peri-

od of time, there has been major concern about the possibility of health problems later on in life.

"I'm praying that nothing happens," said Gary, who hopes that the odds of his son or his peers getting cancer from the contamination are slim, as the levels have decreased since the school opened some 20 years ago.

Unfortunately, those who attended PS 51 further in the past are potentially at a much greater risk. To make matters worse, outreach to former students and their families has been inadequate, according to Gary.

Teachers have also taken action against the injustice.

One PS 51 teacher is suing the Department of Education after losing her baby due to birth defects five months into her pregnancy. In 2011, the United Federation

of Teachers commissioned the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to create a health consultation report that would detail the health consequences of the contamination and recommend further interventions for the City to take.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has announced a proposed remedy for the site. The proposal includes plans for excavation, analysis of contaminated source material, and treatment of contaminated groundwater, among other measures.

At a meeting scheduled for this past Tuesday night at the Bedford Park Senior Center to discuss the remediation at the contaminated building, Gary and other PS 51 parents will be there to push the government to ensure that what happened to them, won't happen again.

Norwood News Reports Lead to Crime Maps

(continued from page 1)

have suffered with the recent proliferation of the department's wide use of stop and frisk tactics, especially in minority and low-income neighborhoods.

"It's really a win-win-win," Cabrera said.

The bill requires the city's Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) to "create and maintain an interactive crime mapping website to allow the public to receive in-

formation about recent crime activity in their neighborhood," according to a press release sent out by Cabrera's office.

Just like how the city maintains a map of 311 complaints on its website, it would now also have a map to track criminal complaints. The map would be updated at least monthly and would be searchable by address, area code and precinct.

"When the data is up [it] is going to be a way for the community to not feel misled; it will help elected officials, community

organizations, and the general public to really see where the problems are, so they can organize and put in place initiatives against crime. It will help to take away the stigma around certain neighborhoods," Cabrera said in a statement. "It will also change the way police and the community perceive each other because there is going to be transparency as to where crime is taking place, and this transparency will build trust, improving the police relationship with the community, making them a partner in the fight against crime."

For years, the *Norwood News* has advocated for making the NYPD's crime statistics within each individual sector of the city's precincts accessible to the public and journalists.

Each precinct in the city has about a dozen or so "sectors," usually coherent neighborhoods, within its boundaries. Police compile crime data inside each sec-

sense legislation. When they first introduced the bill two years ago, it called on the NYPD to provide the sector stats to local community boards on a periodic basis.

The sector stats bill evolved into the Crime Mapping bill that recently passed the City Council because Cabrera's office saw that advances in mapping technology provided an even better solution. Although the bill requires the city to publish the reports and statistics a month after they become available, Cabrera says he expects them to be updated daily because it will all be automated.

The new mapping system will allow elected officials and local leaders to identify problem areas.

"There's pockets, there's significant pockets, in some areas that had as much gun activity as areas in Afghanistan," says Cabrera, who is a member of the Council's gun violence task force. "Now,

**"There's significant pockets in some areas that had as much gun activity as areas in Afghanistan."
—Fernando Cabrera, Bronx Councilman**

tor to help them target their resources so they can attack crime where it's happening. But they don't publish this data or make it easy to acquire.

The *Norwood News* began banging the drum about this issue several years ago when James Alles, the commander of the 52nd Precinct at the time, abruptly stopped providing the sector stats to us as a courtesy, saying NYPD brass had admonished him for providing the information. When we first asked for it, they produced it in a matter of minutes.

The paper was forced to file a Freedom of Information Law request through regular mail (most city and state agencies allow you to file these requests via e-mail or fax -- not the NYPD). It took months for the information to be mailed back. The next time the paper "FOILED" for the stats, it took them nearly an entire year to produce the statistics.

When an editor for the paper talked about this at a local community board meeting, Cabrera's office was listening and saw an opportunity for common

we can say, 'Hey, what are you doing in this particular area?'"

It will also have the opposite benefit, Cabrera says.

"I think, finally, certain neighborhoods will be able to take away that mark, that stigma [of violence] because of something that might have happened years ago," says Cabrera, who's had several high-profile shooting incidents in his northwest Bronx district over the past few years.

Cabrera says the NYPD is officially "neutral" on his crime mapping legislation. They didn't respond to a request for comment on the pending legislation.

DoITT officials say it would take about six months to get the website and map up and running and wouldn't require much extra work on their end or from the NYPD, which is often the agency's excuse for not being more forthcoming with information.

The NYPD already compiles this detailed crime information and inputs it into a software program. Now, all they need to do is set it free. Cabrera's bill will require them to.

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Inquiring Photographer

By DAVID GREENE

This week we asked readers about the plan selected to turn the Kingsbridge Armory into an ice sports complex with nine skating rinks.



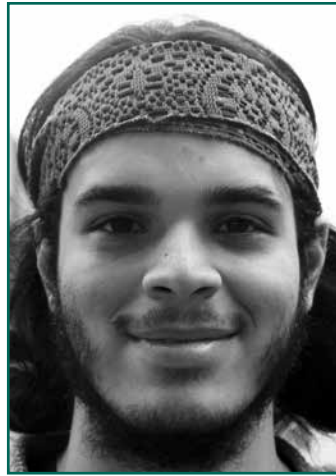
I think that having an ice skating rink will kind of bring the community together, it'll help boost the economy a little, in a way. And there's not a lot of recreational activities for people to do in that community, so it gives space for a little family time. I just think it's a positive thing with a lot of different options.

Zak Luna



I think it's a great idea. People will have jobs and the kids will have something to do because it's really boring around here. It will give them something to do.

Joan Richardson



I think that's probably the best idea and we do not need any more shopping malls or any more distractions, in that sense. Something like an ice rink will definitely help the community come together and do something nice for each other.

Junior Lucena



It's going to bring more people out here and it's good for the kids because there's nothing out here for the kids to have fun with. For the first time we're going to have a real skating rink in the Bronx, because we don't have one. I'm going to take my two boys skating; they got excited when they heard it on the news.

Yesenia Osorio



I feel that they should have done something more productive like something for the kids to be more active, especially during the summer. So far, I'm not with it, but I'm not against it. I just feel like they could have done something better like a mall, a movie theater or more things for kids to do, not five ice skating rinks.

Tasha Ayala

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Kingsbridge Reacts to Ice Center Plans for Armory

By SARA REGALADO

Plans to turn the Kingsbridge Armory into the world's largest ice sports complex, which were announced last week, drew a mix of reactions, most of them positive, from local residents, business owners, and students interested in the future of the Armory's neighborhood.

Rose Mangubat, who lives near the Armory on University Avenue, said the city's plans to turn the building into the Kingsbridge National Ice Center will bring the borough economic success.

But a local resident who identified herself as Jackie R. said that even though the future ice center will bring the Bronx a financial boost, she stressed that an al-

ready busy neighborhood will take on an additional traffic load.

"It's going to get a lot busier," she said. "I already feel safe here, but I don't know who's going to be coming in and coming out."

Business owners surrounding the enormous building, however, all agreed that the rink will only bring good things — that is, once the idea comes to life.

On West 195th Street and Jerome Avenue, in the shadow of the Armory, empanada stand owner Pilar Guzman said the rinks will provide breaks for people who are struggling financially.

"It [means] jobs for everyone that don't have jobs," she said.

In 2009, thoughts of turning the Ar-

mory into a massive shopping center circulated the neighborhood, but died out when City Council, with support from Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr and the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance, rejected the idea. They were concerned with two things — the negative impact it would have on local businesses and low paying wages.

Additional ideas, including one to use the building as a mixed-market space featuring a hip-hop museum, were all shot down when Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the borough president, along with the ice center's front man, Kevin Parker, announced the Armory's long awaited fate last week.

The Kingsbridge National Ice Center, featuring nine full-sized rinks, is expected to bring 260 new decent paying jobs to the Bronx when it's fully completed in 2019. As part of a community's benefit agreement signed by developers and the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance, employers must pay employees of the ice center a living wage of \$10 an hour plus benefits or \$11.50 an hour without.

Although Julian Barinas, a newsstand worker on the corner of Jerome Avenue and West Kingsbridge Road is welcoming the new creation, he is a little skeptical of its realization.

"They spent a lot of time saying they are going to do something," Barinas said

in Spanish, alluding to the long history of uncertainty surrounding the Armory and several failed attempts at revitalizing the vacant property. "But at least there is hope," he added.

The Armory is located on the southern end of the so-called Education Mile that runs from West 195th Street to Mosholu Parkway and is home to several public schools, Lehman College and thousands of students.

Many students passing the hulking building, for one of Guzman's empanadas or on their way to the 4 train station, were eager to strap on their skates at the coming rinks. Many will be able to do so free of charge with the coming center's youth program that will allow local youngsters to skate at the facility.

High school student Ash McCown expressed her excitement when she heard about the new rink, explaining that her school's proximity to the Armory will make future ice skating opportunities "convenient." Her friend and fellow classmate, Latifah Price, said she'd tag along.

Across the street from the Armory on West Kingsbridge Road, New Capital Restaurant manager Gabriel Vangelatos said he is looking forward to the rebirth of the building, and with it, the growth of the neighborhood.

"It's about time they do something with it," he said.

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Stats

Council Speaker Wants to Raise Smoking Age to 21

Joined by health and anti-smoking advocates, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn announced last week that the Council would introduce legislation that ups the minimum age requirement on tobacco purchases from 18 to 21. If passed, New York City will become the first major city in the United States to hold a 21 years of age minimum.

"By delaying our city's children and young adults access to lethal tobacco products, we're decreasing the likelihood they ever start smoking, and thus, creating a healthier city," Quinn said.

The idea behind the proposal is that the earlier a person begins smoking, the more likely they are to become a life-smoker. The less access youths have to these products, the less likely they are to ever start smoking. Raising the tobacco purchasing age would also essentially eliminate legal cigarette smoking at and around New York City high schools.

"Considering that 85 percent of U.S. smokers begin their deadly habit before they reach age 21, this legislation would help prevent more youth from succumbing to an addiction that could cost them their lives," said Jeff Seyler, president and CEO of the American Lung Association of the Northeast.

Health Department officials, who support the legislation, say people begin to move from social smokers to regular smokers around the age of 20, and most who are not smokers by 21 remain nonsmokers for life.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg has consistently battled for a non-smoking city by banning cigarettes in restaurants and bars, as well as public parks and beaches. His anti-smoking campaigns include commercials and advertisements showcasing the gruesome harms of smoking tobacco.

ing tobacco.

Under federal law, the legal smoking age is 18, but some states and towns have already increased their minimum to 19.

—SARA REGALADO

On Earth Day, Massive Hospital Shows Its 'Green' Stripes

Montefiore Medical Center, the Bronx's biggest hospital, celebrated Earth Day by hosting an event on April 22 to discuss how it reduces, reuses, and recycles.

Because Montefiore has close to 17,000 employees, Thomas Kelly, Montefiore's energy and sustainability manager, says he is conscious that decisions made by the hospital have "a profound effect on the Bronx community."

That's why he makes the effort to "go out and educate" the community on the benefits of energy conservation and sustainability and how Montefiore is doing its part.

During the past few years, Kelly says Montefiore has been a great example of energy efficiency.

For one, they have replaced the lighting on their main campus with more efficient LED lighting, which Paul Schooley, a rep from GE, spoke about at the Earth Day event.

According to Schooley, hospitals consume three times the energy of a typical commercial building. The lighting they installed at Montefiore may be expensive, but it also pays for itself with energy savings in less than a year.

Kelly also spoke about other green initiatives that Montefiore is currently prioritizing. Green roofs, for example, are becoming a popular option and sustainable strategy for reducing the amount of water that gets col-

lected in sewers during storms. Runoff during storms is especially problematic in the Bronx, as 82 percent of the borough is "hardscape," meaning there is less space for the water to get absorbed or utilized.

As far as recycling goes, Montefiore has been working with BD, a global medical technology company, on a fascinating waste management program. BD works with the hospital to recycle the plastic or glass from medical supplies and convert them into pellets that will later be used to construct new hospital equipment. Montefiore is the only hospital in New York City currently practicing this, Kelly says.

—WILL SPEROS



Photo courtesy Montefiore Medical Center

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE came to participate in the Run 4 the Wild fundraiser at the Bronx Zoo on April 27. Aside from the run, it also included other healthy activities like this Zumba demonstration led by Montefiore's Miosotis Munoz.

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Armory to Become 'Global' Ice Sports Destination

(continued from page 1)

Center will be the "largest ice sports facility on the planet" that will result in "transforming [the Armory] into a local, regional, national and global destination." He added that groups from Russia, Sweden, Germany, Canada and throughout the United States have expressed interest in using the facility when it's completed.

Jobs and Benefits

The project is expected to create more than 800 construction jobs while it's being built and some 260 permanent jobs that will pay employees a so-called "living wage" of at least \$10 an hour plus benefits or \$11.50 an hour without benefits.

In addition to jobs, the developers have also agreed to run a free after-school skating and tutoring program for local youth and provide more than 50,000 square feet of community space.

Just four days before Bloomberg's announcement, the wage guarantees, free youth programming and community space were all included, among other items, in a community benefits agreement signed between the developers and the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance (KARA, see front page story), which is made up of more than 30 community groups, including the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition.

Parker thanked KARA for helping build community support for the project.

"We said all along, if the community didn't want us here, we wouldn't come," Parker said. "Being part of this community and contributing positively to this community is what this project is all about."

It will also be about making money. The developers will pay \$1 a year to lease the Armory until the ice center is up and running. After that, they will pay a fee of 5 percent of its annual revenue, which is expected to be about \$1 million at the beginning. There will also be an option to buy the Armory at market rate, which is estimated to

be around \$20 million.

A Deal Delayed

Bloomberg, who didn't mention the benefits agreement, held the press conference in the middle of the darkened, frigid Armory drill floor, which is the size of three football fields. The military stopped using the main building in 1993. Since then it's been used as a place for storage, film production and random events.

Last Tuesday, during the press conference, hundreds of La-Z-Boy-style recliner chairs packed in plastic sat on the drill floor like refugees excluded from the world's largest Super Bowl party.

It was amid this backdrop that Bloomberg was joined

by Parker, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., local Councilman Fernando Cabrera, Community Board 7 Chair Paul Foster and two big-time ice sports stars in hockey, legend Mark Messier and figure-skater Sarah Hughes.

In his opening remarks, Bloomberg framed the announcement as the triumph of hard work over politics and as another symbol of how the "Bronx is building" and no longer "burning" as it was during the borough's most turbulent years in the 1970s and 1980s.

"We're going to have an announcement that a lot of people said we would never have," Bloomberg said at the beginning of the press conference.

He may have been speaking about himself. In late



Photo courtesy Mayor's Office

THE MAYOR made the announcement on the Armory drill floor, which is the size of three football fields.

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2009, the City Council, backed by Diaz and KARA, voted to kill a plan that would have turned the Armory into a giant shopping mall, mostly because the developer, The Related Companies, wouldn't agree to pay employees at the mall a living wage. It marked the first time during his tenure that the Council voted against a Bloomberg-backed development proposal.

The mayor, whose veto of the vote was overridden by the Council, was incredulous, saying he thought the Bronx had blown its best shot at developing the Armory. He said he didn't see the building being transformed into anything for the "foreseeable future."

But Bloomberg and Diaz both praised each other for putting the past behind and working to make the ice center a reality at the Amory.

"No, the road wasn't easy," Bloomberg said. "No major development project is. But the alternative — not making an effort and allowing this Armory to remain empty and stand as a symbol of the abandonment that has plagued the Bronx — was simply unthinkable."

Ice Idea Takes Hold

After the mall plan died, Diaz formed a task force to solicit and evaluate possible uses for the Armory. While that effort produced some interesting ideas, it didn't lead to any feasible proposals.

Soon after the task force went public with its report in the summer of 2011, Parker and his group of investors approached the city, including the mayor's office, the borough president's office and Cabrera, with their idea for an ice center. Over the past two years, Parker's group



Photo courtesy Mayor's Office

SMILING FOR the cameras (left to right) are Economic Development Corporation President Seth Pinsky, hockey legend Mark Messier, figure skater Sarah Hughes, Kingsbridge National Ice Center founder Kevin Parker, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., Councilman Fernando Cabrera and Community Board 7 Chair Paul Foster.

has spent nearly \$200,000 on lobbying efforts in New York, according to city records.

At the same time, Cabrera said he began talking to the Economic Development Corporation about opening up the Armory to another request for proposals (often referred to as an RFP).

In pursuing a solution at the Armory, Bloomberg said Diaz spent so much time working with deputy mayors Robert Steele and Howard Wolfson that they "could have built a shuttle between City Hall and Bronx Borough Hall."

From the beginning, Parker's team said it would finance the project without using subsidies and that it would pay its employees a living wage. (The mall proj-

ect was set to receive millions in tax subsidies before it died.)

After Bloomberg made the Armory's redevelopment a centerpiece of his State of the City speech last year, the city released the request for proposals in January of 2012.

Although the ice center was always considered the front-runner, another proposal emerged that began to draw interest. Young Woo & Associates, a Manhattan design firm, wanted to turn the Armory into a mixed-use futuristic market, with recreation, entertainment and business incubator space. Young Woo's project would have also housed a huge climbing wall, a youth basketball program and a National Hip Hop Museum that was supported by

the Zulu Nation and several Bronx hip hop legends.

CBA Paves the Way

Up until the week before Bloomberg's announcement, the EDC was saying it was still in negotiations with two developers looking to take over the Armory: KNIC and Young Woo.

In late August of 2012, Diaz, State Senator Gustavo Rivera, Councilman Oliver Koppell and others came out in support of the ice center proposal. But it was not initially endorsed by Cabrera, who will play a major role in getting it passed in the City Council and was on record saying he wanted to see the developer sign a community benefits agreement.

The Friday before the announcement, the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance announced that it had signed a community benefits agreement with KNIC. Diaz and Parker, however, both said the benefits agreement had nothing to do with the agreement hashed out between the city and KNIC. Still, Cabrera was at the press conference and on board with the project as KARA leaders sat in the front row, beaming.

Diaz said the main difference between the mall project that he opposed in 2009 and the ice center that he now supports is that the ice center won't directly compete with other Bronx malls, including the one being built in Co-op City, or Fordham Road's extensive retail corridor.

After Diaz spoke at the press conference, praising the mayor for putting politics aside and getting this deal done, he turned to shake Bloomberg's hand, then paused, and asked for a hug. The mayor obliged.

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Eric & Seb

Editorial

Armory Celebration Time!

The story of the “long vacant” Kingsbridge Armory stretches back into the early years of the *Norwood News*. We began publishing in 1988. The military left the main building in 1993. We’ve been writing about its emptiness and the efforts to fill that emptiness ever since.

There’s a reason for that. The Armory is not only a huge, beautiful, iconic building, its fate held all the promise of a revolution for the downtrodden area around it. That area includes lovely homes, nice buildings and hardworking people. But it’s also home to prostitution, drug dealing, slumlords and gun violence.

Simply put, it’s needed a shot in the arm(ory) since well before the Armory stopped being a place where bullets were stored.

Over the years, we’ve chronicled all the failed attempts and pipe dreams (including Councilman Oliver Koppell’s outlandish notion back in the day that the Armory should house a bunch of silly ice skating rinks), always with an eye on how any given project would benefit the community.

Now, with the Armory on its way toward becoming the world’s largest ice sports complex -- Koppell, you were so ahead of your time! -- which is coming complete with the city’s strongest community benefits agreement, it’s time to celebrate.

This isn’t to say that there won’t be hiccups and battles over the next five years as this thing gets built, but from what we can tell at this point, the Kingsbridge National Ice Center is poised to become a success and a catalyst for community development in the northwest Bronx.

Yes, there will be jobs -- 800-plus during construction and some 260 “living wage” jobs when it’s completed (although, five years

from now, we may have to re-think what that means).

But what we’re most excited about is the free after-school program for area youth.

The after-school program fills a huge need in an area inundated by youth who attend the public schools on the Education Mile, which stretches from West 195th Street to Mosholu Parkway.

These kids need something to do to stay out of trouble, to get exercise, to build their confidence, and to work with adult mentors, who will include hockey legend Mark Messier and superstar figure skater Sarah Hughes.

The area needed a shot in the arm(ory) since well before the Armory stopped being a place where bullets were stored.

The ice center developers say they will steal the playbook for the program from a successful model in Philadelphia, which gets nothing but rave reviews. We believe that with Messier, Hughes and the Wall Street connections of the developers, they will be able to fund the program for as long as the Armory is home to the planet’s destination ice sports complex.

How cool is that? Cool as ice.

Op-Ed

Too Much Emphasis on High-Stakes Tests

By JOHN C. LIU

This week New York City students in grades 3 through 8, with their No. 2 Ticonderoga pencils nervously in hand, are struggling through the math portion of the annual New York State tests. Once again, these scores—along with their English Language Test results from last week—will determine crucial educational outcomes in their lives.

In this elementary and middle school equivalent of “who will live and who will die,” these tests often decide whether a child can advance to the next grade, be held back or be required to attend summer school.

But this high-stakes testing has enormous implications for teachers and entire school communities as well. Mayor Bloomberg has repeatedly and publicly called for teachers to be evaluated based on these test scores. And his Department of Education has closed down more than 100 New York City public schools predominantly because their students did not perform well on the high-stakes tests.

All this, despite the fact that high-stakes testing results have been criticized as unreliable.

Tests are an important measure of student knowledge and the success that a teacher has had in getting concepts across to his or her class. But they are by no means the only way to measure teacher performance. Report cards that cover an entire quarter’s performance and several months’ worth of teacher commentary are also good evaluators.

High-stakes tests have become problematic because they now hold such a heavy sway in determining a child’s, a teacher’s and even a school’s future. Yet

they occur so infrequently as to be obviously susceptible to a bad day, a stomach-ache, or getting up on the wrong side of the bed.

The New York State tests in Math and English Language Arts are given over a two-week period once a year. The New York City Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHAT), which determines which students get selected to attend one of the city’s elite public high schools, is given on one day every winter.

The SATs have taken on too big a role in deciding whether a student will attend a good college. Too much power is invested in these tests and the price that our students, educators, and school communities pay because of their outsized influence is embarrassingly high.

I favor more frequent, low-stakes testing: the Friday spelling test with papers folded in half and a list of 10 words, five on each side, that are put on the blackboard the previous Monday; the history pop quiz that gets handed out as the high schoolers walk into their classroom. How about the impossible math problem up on the board that takes an entire period to unravel? These are all good methods for discovering how much our students know and whether their teachers are effective.

We need to remember that tests are merely tools, tools that are best utilized by educators to get a handle on how to do their jobs better, on a day-to-day, week-by-week basis.

High-stakes tests should not shape the destiny: for students, teachers or for entire school communities.

It is high time we break the yoke of high-stakes testing and broaden the conversation on public education in our City.

John C. Liu is New York City Comptroller

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For more information, call:
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Changes Coming, Affinity CEO Urges Collaboration

By SARA REGALADO

Bert Scott, the new president and CEO of Bronx-based Affinity Health Plan, says changes in the health care market will pose greater challenges for consumers, health plans and providers, and make effective collaboration essential among all stakeholders.

"Change sustains us as an organization and is what this business is all about," said Scott, speaking at an April 11 reception for community organizations in the northwest Bronx. "I am thrilled to lead this organization at a very critical time."

As Affinity prepares to participate in the New York Health Insurance Exchange, which was mandated by the Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare), Scott noted concurrent changes in existing government-sponsored programs.

"Not only is Medicaid expanding," he said, "but Medicare is also changing with the dual-eligible population."

Scott referred to Affinity's community partners as extensions of the health plan's own outreach to its service area. "You are the eyes and ears of the community," he told event attendees. "We see you as partners in helping to educate the community about these programs. We want to spend time with you and work with you."

For Scott, who joined Affinity in No-

vember 2012, the reception was the first meeting with Affinity's community partners. Affinity's federally-qualified health center partners also attended the event. A second reception is planned for community partners in the southern portion of Affinity's service area.

"This was a great opportunity for our partners in the community both to meet Bert Scott, and to better understand how we can help each other meet the growing need for care among the populations we serve," says Abbe Abboa-Offei, Affinity's senior vice president for customer and community connections.

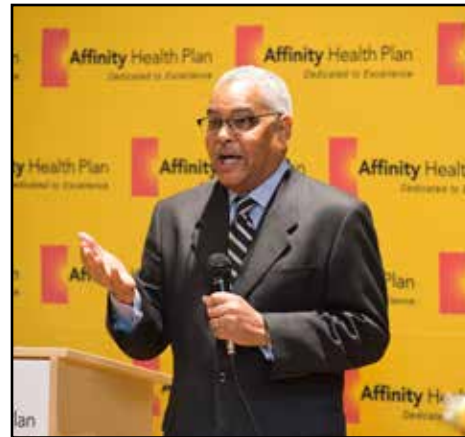


Photo courtesy Affinity Health Plan

AT AN APRIL 11 reception, new Affinity President and CEO Bert Scott urged closer collaboration between the health plan and its community partners.

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Neighborhood Notes

PS 33 Hosts Health Fair

The Timothy Dwight School, 2424 Jerome Ave., hosts its 21st annual Health Fair, Friday, May 17 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. in its schoolyard. Activities include face painting, arts and crafts, library card registrations, and information on health insurance and overall health. To participate, send an email to hsantia2@schools.nyc.gov. Participating agencies will be provided with table/chairs and light refreshments. For more information, call (718) 584-3926.

'Viva Mexico' Celebration

As part of its diversity campaign, St. Barnabas Hospital, 183rd Street and Third Avenue, hosts "Viva Mexico" to celebrate El Cinco de Mayo, Mexico's Independence Day, on Friday, May 3, from 1 to 2 p.m., in its auditorium. The festivities will include a mariachi band, guest speakers, raffle prizes and giveaways. For more information, call (718) 960-9000.

Affordable Care Talk

The Riverdale-Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture's Meeting House, 4450 Fieldston Rd., hosts a lecture on universal health care in the United States by Dr. Mirian Zavala, The Judicial Review of the Affordable Care Act, Sunday, May 5, at 11 a.m.. For more information, call (718) 548-4445.

Walkathon and Health Fair

Montefiore Medical Center and Doctors for a Healthier Bronx host a Commu-

nity Walkathon and Health Fair, Tuesday, May 14, at 3 p.m. at PS 89 Park, 980 Mace Ave. Events include a mile and a half walk, live music, information on health and nutrition, body mass index and blood pressure screenings, games, Zumba, and more. For more information, call (718) 920-4011.

Career Info Seminar

Lehman College's School of Continuing and Professional Studies, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd., W., hosts an information seminar for a variety of courses in career and business fields, Tuesday, May 14, at 6:30 p.m. in the Music Building on the 1st floor. For more information, call (718) 960-8512.

Stop Smoking Program

North Central Bronx Hospital, 3424 Kossuth Ave., offers free group counseling and nicotine replacement therapy for smokers looking to quit. No appointments are needed or required, walk-ins are welcome. The smoking cessation program runs weekdays at 10 a.m. or 2 p.m. in room 13A12. For more information, call (718) 519-2425/2490.

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Martial Arts Classes

The Cove & CTM Dreams offer martial arts classes for people ages 5 to adult at The Cove, 3418 Gates Place (in the basement, through the gate on the side of the building), at \$5/week. For more information, call Starr at (718) 405-1312 or e-mail anorris@ctmdreams.org.

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

Armory Benefits Agreement

(continued from page 1)

ter-school youth program for locals.

Julian Gross, who Pilgrim-Hunter refers to as "The Godfather" of community benefits agreements and advises on CBAs throughout the country, including this one, said the Armory agreement "is the first credible CBA in New York City. It's an important step forward for the Bronx and for the CBA movement nationally."

For more than a decade, while other municipalities around the country have made community benefits agreements a regular part of the development process, New York City has lagged behind. The agreements, which are signed between community stakeholders and the developers who are building into those communities, often include various local benefits, such as local hiring practices, job training programs, environmental impact mitigation and local infrastructure improvements.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg's administration has resisted attempts to forge strong community benefits agreements in the five boroughs, saying, essentially, development is good for development's sake — no additional benefits should be required.

This stance has led to flimsy and unenforceable benefits agreements for projects where the city has handed over valuable public property to private developers. That was the case at the new Yankee Stadium and the Bronx Terminal Market as well as the Atlantic Yards project in Brooklyn.

Pilgrim-Hunter became familiar with the CBA movement during the last attempt to re-develop the Armory back in 2009 when the Economic Development Corporation chose The Related Companies to turn the Armory into a giant shopping mall.

The Coalition, which had formed the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance (KARA) with dozens of community groups, made several attempts to negotiate with Related with the primary goal of guaranteeing that every job at the revamped Armory mall would be a living wage job.

Related considered the requirement a non-starter and KARA, along with Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, led the campaign to have the mall plan shot down when it came to a vote in the City Council.

This time around, the partners with the Kingsbridge National Ice Center said from the beginning they would pay all of its estimated 260 permanent employees a living wage, commit to providing a free youth program and give up tens of thou-

sands of square feet in the Armory for community use.

But they still needed to put that commitment in writing and iron out all of the details. There was also another group in the running for the Armory, Young Woo & Associates, which wanted to turn the Armory into a mixed-use market with a movie theater, recreational activities and a hip hop museum. They wouldn't commit to living wage job guarantees, and negotiations never got off the ground, Pilgrim-Hunter says.

It helped KARA's cause that local Councilman Fernando Cabrera, who had not endorsed the ice center proposal, was calling for the signing of a CBA.

In January, after garnering support from Community Board 7 and elected officials, KARA began engaging the partners with the ice center group, including the group's founder, Kevin Parker, a former Wall Street executive, in negotiations.

Pilgrim-Hunter said KARA and the ice center partners developed mutual trust over the course of countless hours of negotiations, which often included marathon sessions lasting into early morning. "Sometimes we'd go eight to 10 hours straight," Pilgrim-Hunter said.

She said they made an effort to see the deal from the developer's point of view as well.

"They're not seeing the money until five years down the line," Pilgrim-Hunter says. "Every dollar you ask for takes money out of their pocket."

The process was not always linear. There would be progress and then huge setbacks. At various points, the negotiators were sure everything had fallen apart and then the next day, everything was back on.

She didn't know the deal was done until Parker signed the agreement on Thursday, April 18. It includes various levels of oversight that Pilgrim-Hunter believes will hold the developers accountable.

"We have to give a lot of credit to the KNIC people," said Pilgrim-Hunter, who raved about the commitment and determination of her fellow negotiators as well as the support from local elected officials.

On the following Tuesday, the mayor made his announcement without once mentioning a community benefits agreement, although Pilgrim-Hunter and her crew watched the show from the front row and celebrated afterward at the Coalition's headquarters.

"There have been so many moving legs on this," Pilgrim-Hunter said. "It's been a dance."



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Out & About

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Onstage

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **Flamenco Music and Dance**, May 4 at 2:30 p.m.; and **Chamber Music Concert**, performed by members of the Bronx Symphony Orchestra, May 11 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

■ The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd., W., presents free programs as follows: In the Music Building Hearth Room: **Lehman Latin Jazz Ensemble**, May 7 at 4:30 p.m.; **Lehman Jazz Band**, May 8 at noon; and **Lehman Percussion Ensemble**, May 9 at noon. In the Music Building Recital Hall: **Student**

Recital, May 6 at 12:30 p.m.; and **Original Musical**, May 9 at 7 p.m., May 10 at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. and May 11 at 2 p.m. In the Lehman Center: **Lehman College & Community Chorus, Lehman Symphony Orchestra**, May 5 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are required for **Patti LaBelle**, May 11 at 8 p.m., in the Lehman Center (\$75 to \$100). For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

■ Albert Einstein College of Medicine, 1300 Morris Pk. Ave., presents **Symphony Orchestra**, May 12 at 3 p.m., in the Robins Auditorium of the Forchheimer Building (contributions suggested). For more information, visit Einsteinorch.tripod.com.

■ Bronx Council on the Arts presents **A**

Seniors Art & Performance Showcase, May 14 at 11 a.m. at Lincoln Medical Center Auditorium, 234 E. 149th St. For more information, call (718) 931-9500 ext. 12.

■ The Bronx Academy of Art & Dance (BAAD), 841 Barretto St., presents dance performances: **The Boogie Down Dance Series**: Proletariat Tales, May 4; and In the Bronx, May 11; both at 8 p.m. (each \$20). Also presented are: **Capoeira Dance Classes**, May 4, 11, 18, and June 1 from 9:30 to 11 a.m. (\$7/class). For more information, call (718) 842-5223.

■ Pregones Theatre, 571-575 Walton Ave., presents **Neon Baby**, musical about gays performed in English and Spanish, recommended for mature audiences, May 2 to June 2. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 585-1202.

Writers, to tell a story or poem to vie for prize (register at 1:30 p.m.). For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 931-9500 ext. 21 or visit www.bronxarts.org and click on The Big Read.

■ The Bronx County Historical Society, 3309 Bainbridge Ave., presents **Special Bronx Week Tour of Historic Mott Haven**, May 11 at 1:30 p.m. (\$10/members; \$15/non members). For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 881-8900.

■ The Bronx River Alliance presents **Amazing Bronx River Flotilla**, May 11 at 11 a.m., to canoe the Bronx River, free, at Starlight Park. Additional activities include canoe race, music and dance, guided tour, face painting, arts and crafts, field games, food vendors, and more. For more information, call (718) 430-4665.

■ United States Tennis Association (USTA) Eastern presents **Battle of the Boroughs Tennis Challenge**, for ages 19 and over. Bronx registration is May 11 in Crotona Park. Players compete against other teams in their borough before earning a slot in the citywide championships held in Queens on June 15. Registration is \$20/

EDITOR'S PICK

Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. invites the public to celebrate Cinco de Mayo on Saturday, May 4 from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 a.m. on Crescent Avenue (between 187th Street and Belmont Avenue). Events include live mariachi, face painter, clown, free refreshments, free bike raffle, all day giveaways, and more. This free event is sponsored by C-Town. For more information, call (718) 590-3500.

Events

■ The Bronx Council on the Arts, 2700 E. Tremont Ave., offers free Big Read in the Bronx, May 5 from 2 to 4 p.m.: **Word Forward: A Competition for**



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person. For more information, visit <http://eastern.usta.com/boroughs>.

■ **Wave Hill**, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Arts Projects**: Time to Hatch, to use clay to make spring babies, May 4 and 5; and Sachets and Floral Fantasy for Mom, to make paper flowers and floral gifts and decorate them, May 11 and 12; both from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Ecology Building. Also scheduled is **Family Walk: Spring in Full Swing**, to stroll and view garden creatures, May 4 at 12:30 p.m. (meet at Perkins Visitor Center). Grounds admission is free Saturdays until noon and free Tuesdays until noon in May. 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.

■ **Bronx Museum of the Arts**, 1040 Grand Concourse, presents **First Fridays**, featuring film, art performances, music and other special events, May 3, from 6 to 10 p.m., in the 2nd floor north wing; **Bronx Heroes Comic Book Convention**, workshops for all ages, May 4 and 5 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., in the north wing lobby, and 2nd and 3rd floors north wing; and **1040 Lounge**, to celebrate and promote the arts in the Bronx and enjoy drinks and artist talks and performances with your neighbors, May 10 from 6:30 to

9 p.m., in the north wing lobby. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

Exhibits

■ The Bronx Academy of Art & Dance (BAAD), 841 Barretto St., presents **Sinfonía del Color del Trópico**, paintings depicting life in the Dominican Republic, through May 31, Monday to Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 585-1202.

■ The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, presents **Joan Semmel - A Lucid Eye**, self portraits of a female aging through her 80s, through June 9. Also featured are **Honey, I Rearranged the Collection** (artwork from the museum's permanent collection) and **Bronx Lab: Style Wars** (featuring graffiti and its relation to style), both through June 2. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

■ The Bronx County Historical Society's Museum of Bronx History at the Valentine-Varian House, 3266 Bainbridge Ave., presents **Pastimes & Pleasures: Having Fun in the Bronx**, through Oct. 23. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

■ **Lehman College Art Gallery**, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd., W., presents **Contemporary Cartographies**, expressing an array of ideas in various styles, through May 11, Tuesdays through Saturdays from

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 960-8731.

Library Events

■ The Bronx Library Center, at 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents programs for adults including **Computer Basics**: May 7 at 2 p.m.; **Internet for Beginners**: May 9 at 2 p.m.; and **From Mambo to Hip-Hop**: documentary screening and Q&A, May 9 at 11 a.m. Teens/young adults can attend **On the Plate at 4:30 p.m.**: cooking workshop (all materials provided), May 2, 9 and 16. Children can enjoy **Global Partners Junior at 4 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12: phone or in-person registration required), May 8 and 15; **Preschool Story Time at 11 a.m.**: May 2, 9 and 16; **Films at 4 p.m.**: May 7 and 14; **Computer Technology Class**: (ages 7 to 12; preregistration required), May 9 at 4 p.m.; **Mother's Day Card Making**: May 2 at 4 p.m.; **The Hobbit**: (ages 3 to 12), a play, May 4 at 2 p.m.; **Family Time**: May 11 at 11 a.m.; **Cool Rainforest Connections**: (ages 3 to 12), a play, May 11 at 2 p.m.; and **Sticking People Making**: (ages 5 to 12), hands-on project, May 16 at 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

■ The Mosholu Library, at 285 E. 205th St., offers for seniors and adults: **Knitting Circle**: Thursdays at 3 p.m.; **Wii Program**: Tuesdays at 3 p.m.; and **Films at 4:30**: "The Guilt Trip," May 6, and "Gangster Squad," May 13. Children can enjoy **Baby**

Story Time: (ages to 18 months), May 7 and 16 at 11 a.m.; **Toddler Story Time at 10:30 a.m.**: (ages 18 to 36 months), May 2 and 9; **Read Aloud at 4 p.m.**: (ages 3 to 12), May 6 and 13; and **Bilingual Birdies: Spanish Language**: (newborns to age 5; phone or in-person registration required), music, puppets and games, concluding with a bubble dance party, May 14 at 11 a.m. Speakers of other languages can attend free **English Conversation Program**: intermediate level, Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m., May 7, 14, 21 and 28. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

■ The Jerome Park Library, at 118 Eames Place, offers **Cooking at 4 p.m.**: May 2, 9 and 16; **Film**: May 13 at 6 p.m.; and **Crafts**: (all materials provided), May 15 at 4 p.m.; all for teens/young adults. Children can enjoy: **Arts and Crafts**: (ages 5 to 12), May 6 at 4 p.m.; **The Hobbit**: (ages 3 to 12), a play, May 7 at 4 p.m.; **Film**: (ages 5 to 12), May 13 at 4 p.m.; and **Toddler Story Time**: (ages 18 to 36 months), May 15 at 11 a.m. Adults can attend: **Computer Basics at noon**: May 2, 7, 9, 14 and 16. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by May 6 for the next publication date of May 16.

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