

NORWOOD NEWS

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Family Fitness Fun!



Photo by Adi Talwar

ON A SWELTERING JUNE 28, these kids sprint their hearts out in the annual Family Fitness Fun event, sponsored by the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District. A full-page photo spread capturing families, fitness and fun can be found on page 9.

Future Uncertain For Norwood Church

By PAMELA SEGURA

There is speculation that Shrine Church of St. Ann's, a neighborhood staple in Norwood, could shut its doors. The church, on Bainbridge Avenue at Gun Hill Road since 1927, serves as the foundation for St. Ann's School, a middle school located above the church.

The Archdiocese, having oversight of the church, has been involved in a months-long review of St. Ann's through its *Making All Things New* program, a kind of evaluation and restructuring of an individual parish's administrative hierarchy.

VibrantCommunity

Father Frank Scanlon has been pastor at St. Ann's for eight years now. He first learned about the *Making All Things New* program more than a year ago at a meeting in Cardinal Spellman High School. There, Scanlon and four other parishioners from St. Ann's gathered with representatives of all the parishes in the Bronx. "From that meeting, we were given an idea of the scope of this *Mak-*

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NCBH, Torres Deliver on Baby Ward pg. 3



Should Water Pumps Stay Open? pg. 4

Fordham Newsstand Bans Coffee After Starbucks Opens

By DAVID CRUZ

Business at this coffee shop's been grounded.

Profits have tanked for the operator of a newsstand in the lobby of One Fordham Plaza, the enormous 12-story complex that's home to offices occupied by city, state and medical agencies. That's because the owner of the stand was ordered to stop selling coffee following a deal struck between the management company and the newly-opened Starbucks coffeehouse in the building's ground level. The Starbucks opened last month, considered somewhat of an encore for the Seattle-based coffee company. Several years ago a Starbucks had opened on West Fordham Road, then closed.

The move by management has now inspired an online petition demanding that 1 Fordham Plaza Management Co. re-institute the newsstand's right to sell coffee, having generated several hundred signatures in support of the stand. The petition on the www.change.org website detailed the owner's plight, which forced the owner to take desperate steps.

"After speaking with the operator of the newsstand I have been informed that he had to lay off his only employee, who has been with him for five years, because business has drasti-



Photo courtesy change.org

COFFEE DRINKERS AT One Fordham Plaza were stunned by this sign at a newsstand days after a Starbucks opened on the ground level of the building.

cally decreased already," wrote Geisa Martinez, the lead petitioner.

So far, 500 petitioners have joined the battle to bring back the brew, believing the policy unfairly forced the hand of the newsstand. The management company is overseen by Tony Wallace. A secretary at the office told the *Norwood*

News that Wallace refused to comment on the decision to cut off the newsstand from selling coffee.

But along the streets of the bustling Fordham Business Improvement District was mixed reaction over the move.

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Be Healthy: Lesson on Childhood Obesity, pg. 6



Business Beat: Report Shows Potential for Webster pg. 8

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In The Public Interest

For Arts Education, a \$23 Million Boost

By DAVID CRUZ

Carrying on his agenda for public school reform, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a \$23 million boost for arts education. The earmark adds a major boost for an arts component that dwindled through the school system in recent years.

“For so many young people, their coming of age, their moment of awareness, their moment of really believing in themselves and locking into their overall academic path, came through arts and culture,” said de Blasio, flanked by officials, including Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina, at the Bronx Museum of the Arts on July 1. It’s the same day the New York City Budget kicked in for Fiscal Year 2015-16.

De Blasio was inspired to increase funding by a report released in April from City Comptroller Scott Stringer entitled “State of the Arts,” showing the disparities of art class in some parts of the city, including the South Bronx. There, roughly 42 percent of schools lack a full-time, certified art teacher.

“[F]or too long, we had under-invested in arts education and cultural education in our schools,” said Stringer. “And it was time to right that wrong and do something aggressive about it.”

Funds would go directly to hire 120 full-time teachers at middle and high schools, art supplies, and improve art-related facilities such as classrooms and auditoriums, where students perform.

“One of the things we did...is to ensure that all the auditoriums in the city would get a little



Photo by David Cruz

MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO (at podium) was in the Bronx to announce \$23 million in new funds earmarked for public school art programs.

sprucing up,” said Farina. “One of the core curriculum mandates is that kids perform before an audience, that they have a point of view, that they have a sense of confidence. This happens when you get on the stage.”

She added that attendance rates tend to increase when a thriving arts component exists.

The announcement also underscored the smoother relationship between de Blasio and Stringer, particularly when compared to

the animosity displayed by then City Comptroller John Liu and former Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

“Comptrollers and other elected officials can issue all the reports in the world. Everyone can crunch the data,” said Stringer. “But many times, those reports don’t get to the main person. But Bill de Blasio understood when he looked at the report that action was needed.”

Easier Access Coming for Fordham Metro-North Riders

By BRITTNEY WILLIAMS

As part of a major reconstruction project, Metro-North will expand the platform at the Fordham Road station as construction of a new ramp on 193rd Street and Webster Avenue gets under way.

The Fordham Metro-North station is the third busiest station in the system, serving roughly 6,000 daily commuters who head into Westchester County. It works mostly as a feeder for the neighborhood, serving as one of the larger nexuses of travel in the neighborhood.

The new entrance is intended to make the station more wheelchair-accessible, connecting the sidewalk on Webster Avenue and 193rd Street to the station, allowing riders living north of the station to get to it faster and save time traveling. In addition, with people approaching the station from different entrances, the passenger load on the train will be more spread out.

“I love Metro-North. It’s not crowded and it’s more comfortable,” said Jasmin Jennings, 31, who often rides the Metro-North.

However, some residents voiced concern, telling the *Norwood News* that the new entrance is a bad idea. Several residents pointed to the large number of homeless people loitering, and the drug activity that has been reported.

“That’s a bad spot. I know what happens on Webster,” said a Fordham resident, who declined to give his name.

“It would be better because people wouldn’t have to navigate the traffic. There’s a very killer highway, so it is very treacherous to cross,” said Peter Kendrick, a teacher at Taft High School. Kendrick also uses the Fordham

station when he teaches at Fordham University and when he goes to the dentist.

Construction for the \$120,000 ramp will begin next month and be finished by the fall.

This is only part of rehabilitation and will offer an alternative option for access to the platform before the elevator construction is completed.

MMCC Expands MS Based Programs With City Funding

The Mosholu Montefiore Community Center is expanding its after school programming, thanks to this year’s city budget.

Nine school-based grants were awarded to the Norwood nonprofit, which will help bring programs this fall to MS 95 on Hellman Avenue/Van Cortlandt Village, MS 20 on Webster Avenue, Bronx Dance Academy on Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood, MS 19 on Katonah Avenue, One World Middle School, Baychester Middle School and Bronx Alliance Middle in Edenwald, the Equality Charter School located at PS 160 in Co-op City, and MS 244 at 231st Street and Sedgwick Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights.

“We believe Mayor [Bill] de Blasio’s

vision for the middle schools’ after school programming is inspiring,” said Don Bluestone, executive director of MMCC. “We welcome the opportunity to offer these services to our community.”

The services coming to these nine schools include art, dance, reading, math, homework help, sports, leadership development, computer programming, music, and photography.

All students from these schools will enjoy up to five free weeks at Mosholu Day Camp in Harriman State Park. This will afford them an opportunity to continue with their academics so they do not fall behind as well as enjoy summer activities such as swimming, boating, sports and creative and performing arts.



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NCBH, Torres Deliver on Maternity Ward

By IMANI HALL

What began as a saga filled with harranguing, turmoil and uncertainty ended with celebration after a cadre of community leaders, elected officials and hospital administrators at North Central Bronx Hospital unveiled a plan to revive the neighborhood hospital's delivery unit by fall.

The plan, estimated to cost \$2 million, was further helped by Councilman Ritchie Torres, who campaigned to get \$600,000 to assist in the re-opening efforts. The funds, approved by Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, were included in the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget. The rest of the funds, \$1.4 million of it, came from capital monies the hospital had reserved for other projects. The funds have helped NCBH officials set a September opening for the ward.

The funds have been earmarked for several upgrades, including the installation of an updated security system for newborns and a new Post Anesthesia Care Unit. The updated ward will also include an eight-bed Labor and Delivery Unit, a 26-bed Post-Partum Unit, and new windows, floors and lighting.

"We want to ensure that mothers and newborns here in the north central Bronx receive the highest standard of medical care," Torres said, standing alongside hospital officials on July 2 outside the hospital on 210th Street and Kossuth Avenue. "The lesson here is that never underestimate the power of mothers to make things happen."

Monies will also go towards a mar-



Photo by Imani Hall

FUNDS TO RE-OPEN North Central Bronx Hospital's delivery unit have come through, largely due in part to Councilman Ritchie Torres (at podium).

keting blitz on behalf of NCBH to ensure word spreads about the re-opening.

End to a Crisis

The latest news ends what would've been tough news for Norwood residents—the potential closing of the hospital. The ward was suspended last year because of lack of funding, along with an exodus of the unit's medical staff, a blow to many Bronx mothers who utilized the ward to monitor their pregnancy. Expectant mothers, many of whom schlepped to nearby hospitals for care, took the ward's suspension as a sign the hospital would ultimately close. NCBH had faced fina-

"The lesson here is that never underestimate the power of mothers to make things happen."

-Councilman Ritchie Torres

cial turmoil in 1999 when the hospital's in-patient pediatric and rehab units were shut down.

Lorraine Brown, a representative from the Health and Hospitals Corporation, spoke at the announcement over how critical the ward was for Bronxites, particularly women. "When we had to suspend the services for women in this community at this facility, we learned very quickly how personal this was," she said.

Torres, along with councilmembers Andy Cohen and Andy King, soon joined the battle to re-open the ward, known to have delivered 10 percent of

the borough's newborns.

"The reason why we have gotten to this point where we are today is because people pay attention to people who participate," said King. The three legislators were on hand for a series of community meetings that explored options over how to restore services.

Northwest Bronx Committee Clergy Coalition Vice President Jhanet Sosa gave birth to her daughter at NCBH 15 years ago. She attended the gathering and spoke about the reemergence of the maternity board. "It's great to see that all of us together have worked this hard to make sure that an asset here in the Bronx is being preserved for not only my daughter who was born here but all future children who are going to be born here," Sosa said.

But the ongoing theme running for many officials who spoke was the power of collaboration, an example of what took place during NCBH's darkest hours. Sheldon McCleod, CEO of North Central Bronx Hospital, told guests that "what came out of this was integration with the community."

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Inquiring Photographer

By DAVID GREENE

This week we asked readers their thoughts on the long-standing practice of using fire hydrants to cool off in the summertime.



Obviously when the cap is not on the fire hydrant and it's turned on and not even at full capacity, it's dangerous. In the summertime, kids are going to want to cool themselves off, and going toward a hydrant that doesn't have a cap, the pressure of the pump can push them into oncoming traffic or push them out further in the street than they'd like to be. If the cap is on, it's a pretty good thing because even if you don't participate, the sprinkler cools off the block.

Erroll Henry, Jr.



Il think that opening the fire hydrants without a cap is wrong because we could have a water shortage. We need water and wasting water like that is foolish. I understand that people can go to the local firehouse and request a sprinkler cap that turns the pump into a sprinkler system. It saves water, it's safer, and it shouldn't cause any flooding.

Anthony Boyd



I think that people should get up extra early and go to Orchard Beach if they want to go swimming.

Anthony Riveccio



I just think it's one of those New York experiences. When you think of New York in the summertime, you think of the fire hydrants and the water coming out, but they should have something to make sure the children are safe. Generation after generation, everybody does it.

Brian O'Hare



I believe that the fire hydrants used to keep the neighborhood cool is a very good thing for the neighborhood so long as there's somebody responsible to monitor and supervise the fire hydrant and the kids' activities. But unattended, it can cause a danger. Personally, I was involved in an accident due to an open fire hydrant running consistently under the Grand Concourse overpass. I hit the wall and a lot of people got hurt in the car because it [the hydrant] was unattended.

Roberto Jackson

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School Briefs

PS 94 Raises \$6K for Cancer Research

That spare change collected by local stations will help change a lot for some leukemia patients. It's a lesson third graders from PS 94 learned after collecting an unprecedented \$6,174 on behalf of Pennies for Patients, a program run by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society that raises money for leukemia and lymphoma research and treatment.

Each student was given a small box to collect donations from friends and family, according to teacher Nicole Zippo, who led the penny-collecting effort. In some instances, students gathered dollar bills over pennies.

"Usually they just come back with spare change but this year they came back with bills," said Angela Martinez, the school counselor who facilitated the project. "This is by far the most money we've ever raised for Pennies for Patients in all the nine years we've been doing this."

The third grade students were brought into the gym on June 25 to present a novelty check to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. They heard a presentation by Jennifer Avedon, a campaign manager for the non-profit. "It's very important to get children involved in work like this so they can not only understand these diseases,



Photo by Richard Bucey

P.S. 94 STUDENTS PRESENT a \$6,000 check to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

which even at their age they can be affected by, but to get a sense of giving back," said a very pleased Avedon. "I'm extremely happy about these results. All of the faculty really came together to promote Pennies for Patients, and for that I am grateful."

The fund-raiser started earlier in the school year with a schoolwide assembly explaining Pennies for Patients to the students. When the fund-raiser ended, everyone involved was pleasantly surprised with the discovery that such young children col-

lected so much in such a short amount of time.

After Avedon congratulated the students on their ability to gather the funds for those in need, they were treated to a pizza party.

--Richard Bucey

Arts Festival Brightens Lives

Under the leadership of Serge Marshall Davis, principal of PS/MS 95, the much-anticipated three-day annual Arts Festival at the school wrapped up on June 13 with a performing arts show that featured a performance by the school's young talent, capping a school year's worth of preparation for students.

The festival serves as a kind of variety show, showcasing visual and performance art forms in a school art gallery. Stage performances have been routinely shown, saluting how much the arts contribute to the well-rounded education that the Sheila Mencher School is known for over the years.

Davis introduced the event with the advice to the students that "your potential is limitless." He complimented them on their hard work and imagination and then the students showed off their efforts and achievements.

Five different orchestras from a kaleidoscope of music genres were showcased, all directed by multi-talented music director Andre Devero. He opened the show with several selections from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, later fast forwarding to the 1930s with a sampling of "When the Saints Go Marching In."

The female middle school quartet sang a rendition of Bruno Mars' "Treasure," accented by compelling drumbeats. A middle school male duet sang a medley of "Groove Me," "Wake Me Up," and "Happy," joined by a female artist for the last section.

Dance teacher Melissa Perez showed off pastel-costumed students who were taught classic tap dance, including shuffle steps

with crisscross toe tapping and heel lifts. Students of Julie Waters, the school's music teacher, performed two songs by the Beatles in light musical theatre style, punctuated by pulsating rhythm sticks. The lead singer carefully reeled in the crowd during his rendition of John Lennon's classic, "Come Together." The mood changed as Gianna Conrad and Chelsea O'Toole's Rhythm Nation group dove into their step dance, needing no accompaniment as they delivered enthusiasm and energy to the audience.

A highlight of the show came from the 95 Chorus, student singers directed by Assistant Principal Eileen Rivera, who commented that she is "always in awe of how dedicated and professional the students become when they are showing their talent. They are like little pros." The singers performed a rendition of "When I Look Into Your Eyes," "I Won't Give Up on Us," "Money, Money, Money," and "The Eye of the Tiger" that brought the audience to its feet.

The Afro Five dancers surprised the audience with an African dance routine enhanced by rock influence. For all numbers, computer teacher Matt Pansy handled the electronics and lighting, creating a spectacular scene for each performance.

Hip Hop Soldiers, a large team of boys and girls from both the elementary and middle schools, capped the performance. They espoused the philosophy that "they never let anyone down." Teachers Jessica Rivera and Melayne Vestal have built up the program over the years and the team danced their hearts out as the last act to perform

-Brittney Williams



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Be Healthy

33%

Percentage of public school students in New York State who are obese.

Source: New York State Dept. of Health

Vital Stats

A Lesson on Childhood Obesity

By Richard Bucey

Obesity in the Bronx is getting a run for its money.

Food Fight, a nonprofit that works to reduce obesity rates in the five boroughs hosted a conference entitled “Educating America’s Teachers,” or E.A.T. at Montefiore Medical Center. Throughout the day, guest speakers schooled city teachers on nutrition, food politics, and sustainability so that they may share these values to their students.

Since 1997, the United States has had what the World Health Organization refers to as an obesity epidemic. The U.S. has the second highest obesity rate in the world with nearly one in three adults suffering from obesity, and one-third of children are either overweight or obese. “For the first time in human history, this generation of children is expected to have a shorter life span than their parents,” said Carolyn Cohen, the co-founder and executive director of Food Fight.

The Bronx in particular has a problem with obesity, a stigma that has been linked to the Bronx for well over a decade. Health experts consider the Bronx the most overweight borough. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), over 20 percent of Bronx adolescents are obese. Health experts say that this is partly due to the steep lack of

healthy dining options in the borough, with the Bronx also home to more fast food restaurants than the rest of the city.

“Kids these days are often able to recognize logos better than they are able to differentiate different vegetables,” said Melinda Hemmelgarn, a well known dietitian who spoke at the conference on July 2.

Access to cheap healthy food was a recurring theme throughout the conference. It became increasingly clear that school lunches are the frontline in the fight for access to healthier food, thereby serving as a key weapon in the battle for a leaner Bronx. At one point, improving school lunches became the focal point.

“How can the richest country in the world treat their children like this?” asked James Costa, director of *Lunch Hour*, an investigative documentary about public school lunches. Costa is referring to the dismal state of public school lunches in the US, which are notoriously unhealthy.

Why are school lunches so unhealthy? One needs to look no further than school budgets which allocate 90 cents for each child’s meal. “Of course school lunches are unhealthy. With a budget that small, it’s impossible to provide anything that doesn’t come out of a can” reiterated Cohen of Food Fight.

BronxWorks Opens Farmers Market



Photo courtesy BronxWorks

A LOOK AT LAST YEAR’S Heights Community Farmers Market, a pop-up market at University Avenue and West 181st Street that once again opens for this season on Thursday, July 10. The market will be open Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. until Nov. 13. Sponsored through BronxWorks’ FreshConnect initiative, the market received a \$10,000 state grant to help enhance a customer’s healthy food shopping experience.

The federal government appears to be listening to activists like Costa. New regulations passed by Congress are set to drastically improve school lunches with new nutrition standards. The House of Representatives is pushing back on the guidelines, following protests and lobbying by large food corpora-

tions that currently supply school lunches.

Towards the end of the conference, the mood was hopeful. The teachers at the conference were encouraged to make pledges to promote healthy eating among their students, and to set an example by changing their own eating habits for the better.

Mess of the Month



Photo courtesy Miosotis Munoz

A BIZARRE GRAFFITI scrawl showing devil worshipping tags at a staircase at Williamsbridge Oval. The vandalism is rare given the many gang-affiliated writings spray painted about the northwest Bronx.

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Fordham Newsstand Bans Coffee After Starbucks Opens

(continued from page 1)

The Fordham Road BID, which is vying to expand its borders to incorporate the massive building, did not respond to questions for comment. Ruby James, a retired employee for the Department of Social Services, blasted the decision from management, citing the prospect of a free marketplace.

"Everybody should be able to make their living the way they want to," said James. "People should be able to have a choice. If they want to go to Starbucks, let them, but if they want a cheaper place, that's fine too."

Bukola Shonuga, working as an independent journalist, said the decision by management shows Starbucks gaining a monopoly over the rest of One Fordham Plaza. "This is an example of what Starbucks will do in other places," said Shonuga.

But Frank Greene, a Manhattan street vendor, praised the decision by management as the price of doing business. "When it comes to competition and you're selling the same items, it's the manager's right to say they can't sell there," said Greene. "If you're selling the same product, it's out of respect that you move. It's common sense."

Schlepping to Starbucks

With newsstand coffee no longer an option, building tenants and its employees head to Starbucks for a cup of java at nearly double the price of the cup of joe originally purchased.

The coffee chain is not new to the Bronx, though sights of the chain in the borough are rare. It's currently at three other loca-



Photo by David Cruz

STARBUCKS COFFEE HAS moved into One Fordham Plaza, forcing the newsstand inside to halt its sale of coffee.

tions--the Gateway Mall in Melrose, Wood Avenue in Parkchester, and Eastchester Road by Calvary Hospital in Morris Park. Prices run on average \$4, with many customers often sticking around the coffeehouse to take advantage of the comfortable atmosphere and free wifi service.

Experts believe the coffeehouse is a sign of the changing retail face at the Fordham Road corridor, which has seen a number of large retail chains open for business in the past several years while mom and pop

businesses pepper the BID. Among new stores include a Burlington Coat Factory, Applebees, Best Buy and American Eagle Outfitters.

Carlene Joseph has seen the changes. A Fordham resident, Joseph began noticing a shift when the Zales outlet jewelry store opened several years ago. "When I saw Zales come to Fordham, I knew something was going on," said Joseph. "The community is getting more expensive."

IFP On Its Own

Speculation ran rampant over whether the coffee giant twisted arms to persuade IFP to ban the newsstand from selling coffee to building tenants. A spokesperson for Starbucks said the management's policy conflicts with its own position. "Starbucks welcomes competition and has helped to create a market where independent stores and small chains can continue to grow along with Starbucks," wrote the spokesman.

Additional reporting by Brittney Williams.

Neighborhood Notes

Recycle Clothes and Food

Recycle old clothes, food scraps for compost, and other textiles at GrowNYC's Poe Park Greenmarket, 192nd Street and the Grand Concourse, Tuesdays from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., through Nov. 25. For more information, call (212) 788-7964.

Participatory Budgeting

Residents can provide input in how a portion of city tax dollars can be spent for next year's budget at a workshop at Williamsbridge Oval's Recreation Center, July 10 at 7 p.m. For more information, including other locations and dates, call (718) 549-7300.

College Internship Fair

Monroe College's King Hall's Mintz Auditorium, 2501 Jerome Ave., will host a College-wide Internship Fair on Wednesday, July 16 from 4 to 6 p.m. Check-in begins at 3 p.m., employer reception at 3:30 p.m. To register, go to <https://monroe-csm.symplicity.com/employers/>. For more information, call (646) 393-8618.

Promote Paid Sick Leave Law

Join the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs Day of Action on Wednesday, July 16, from 7 to 9 a.m. and from 5 to 7 p.m. Spread the word by

participating at a nearby subway station about the new law allowing for taking paid sick leave for oneself or a family member. Starting July 30, New Yorkers will be able to use earned leave under this new law. For more information, visit nyc.gov/PaidSickLeave.

Free Financial Education Workshop

The University Neighborhood Housing Program offers a free 5-week course to help you get in control of your finances with its Getting Ahead Financial Education Workshop, Thursdays from 6 to 8 p.m. beginning Aug. 7, at the Concourse House, 2751 Grand Concourse. Learn about credit building, debt management, and more. Graduates receive help with a savings plan, access to one-on-one financial coaching, and more. For more information, (718) 933-2539 or RSVP at www.unhp.org.

BronxNet Internships

BronxNet has openings for summer internships to its public access television program *OPEN 2.0* for high school students. For more information, call (718) 960-8769 or contact marisa@bronxnet.org.

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

Living It Up at "Senior Prom"



Photo courtesy Councilman Fernando Cabrera's Office

MEMBERS OF THE BRONXWORKS East Concourse Senior Center at their prom on June 30. After last year's successful prom at the center, Councilman Fernando Cabrera hosted the second annual senior prom for members, giving many a fun opportunity to dance and eat with friends. A professional photographer was also present, adding to the excitement and taking individual photos of everyone.

Business Beat

Report Outlines Potential Future of Webster Ave.

By DAVID CRUZ

To build an eclectic commercial corridor involves plenty of intelligence gathering, reviewing aspects that render a series of recommendations solely for the neighborhood. It often takes the work of someone required to immerse himself in the neighborhood, and Larisa Ortiz did just that.

For three months, Ortiz, founder of Larisa Ortiz Associates, an urban planning think tank, assessed the needs of Webster Avenue. It specifically looked at the stretch between 195th Street and Mosholu Parkway East, one portion of Webster Avenue that underwent major rezoning in 2009 as a way to entice developers to build mixed-use properties.

The results were compiled into a 29-page report entitled “Retail Market Analysis,” exploring factors that included the neighborhood’s socioeconomic demographics, shopping trends, accessibility to pedestrians and the lack of available commercial amenities. Ortiz took the audience through her findings at Community Board 7 on June 27.

The report, which serves as a kind of primer to be shared with existing and future merchants along the corridor, home to small businesses and auto repair shops, confirms the link between the 950 new residential units projected to be built under the new rezoning, and the larger rev-



Photo by Pamela Segura

MEMBERS OF THE Mosholu Preservation Corporation and Jerome-Gun Hill BID meet with community and business leaders to review a report on the financial future of Webster Avenue. The report was produced by Larisa Ortiz Associates.

enue share merchants would receive as a result.

Report

“Retail Market Analysis” indicates that the corridor’s strong suit is “convenience shopping,” a type of shopping trend that caters to the needs of the local neighbors, the neighborhood’s “bread and butter,” over out-of-towners. “...Anyone who wants to go to a business needs to know they can get in and out really quickly and can afford to park,” said Ortiz.

Ortiz collected data from Webster Avenue merchants who own grocery stores, automotive shops, and general merchandise establishments. She concluded that merchants prefer “some lighting in the evening, things like trashcans, and improved store signage” to serve the immediate needs of its neighbors. “So even if you have lower incomes, customers are looking for basics, they’re looking for convenience, and there’re going to be businesses that are going to spring up to meet their needs,” she said.

Improvements have been under way along the corridor, including the installation of medians and plantings seen in parts of Webster Avenue.

Leakage

Among the revealing aspects of the report is the amount of revenue that merchants are losing as the result of limited businesses, and indicates that Webster Avenue is suffering from so-called leakage—money that’s being spent elsewhere.

Ortiz told stakeholders that “when there’s a gap, it means that there’s money leaking out of the community,” a reason why the report recommended existing and future merchants on Webster Avenue focus on general merchandise, affordable clothing, and food and beverage industries to attract a general audience. The sectors are what’s now in demand, based on the

description of the average local customer.

For now, Marcia Cameron, doubling as deputy executive director of the Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC) and the executive director of the Jerome-Gun Hill BID, said the data is available on www.mpc.org for review. The Lehman College Business Incubator will also share the report to prospective entrepreneurs. “So this is going to be a template for them to say, ‘Well, these are the needs we have seen in the community,’” said Cameron.

Private Investment

Ortiz’s conclusion—Webster Avenue is primed for major change, though much of that change will largely depend on a combination of private and public partnerships. She cited examples of Columbia Heights in Washington, D.C. and Washington Street in Boston as prime examples of change.

Ortiz foresees Webster Avenue to follow that track, given the city Economic Development Corporation’s approval to transform the neighborhood into a vibrant strip under its Vision Plan. The initiative will take further support by private and public partnerships, which MPC’s executive director, Roberto Garcia, is pursuing. “This is the beginning of a long conversation,” said Garcia.

Editor’s Note: An expanded version of this article can be found on www.norwoodnews.org.



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1ST ANNUAL FAMILY FITNESS FUN



1

All photos by Adi Talwar

FAMILY. FITNESS. FUN. The words say it all, and it happened on June 28 as the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District, Tiga Pediatrics, Friends of the Williamsbridge Oval, Mosholu Preservation Corporation, and the NYC Parks Department presented the first annual Family Fitness Fun event at the Williamsbridge Oval. Organizers engaged neighbors on the merits of healthy living throughout the event that included music, face painting, and relay races.

1 - DOZENS OF NEIGHBORHOOD kids stroll around the Oval, an exercise that promotes healthy lifestyles.

2 - DR. TOSAN ORUWARIYE (far left) of Tiga Pediatrics and lead organizer for Family Fitness Fun, shares a moment with Jerome-Gun Hill BID Executive Director Marcia Cameron (second from left), Norwood News editor-in-chief David Cruz (third from left), Montefiore Medical Center Community Affairs Manager Miosotis Munoz (seated), and three young volunteers (standing right).

3 - THESE YOUNG GIRLS take part in one of many friendly track races happening at Family Fitness Fun at the Oval.

4 - FACE PAINTER STEPHANIE Rodriguez works her skills on this would-be Spider-Man.

5 - THOUGH SWEATY AS the day went on, this zumba instructor is still all smiles as she leads neighbors through one knee-bending session.



2



4



3



5

Crime File

Serial Groper Still on the Run

Police in the 47th Precinct are still on the hunt for a serial groper wanted in nine separate attacks on females between the ages of 12 and 21 in Wakefield, Edenwald, Williamsbridge and Eastchester. His crimes stretch back to the beginning of the year.

The NYPD has since distributed a flier with a police composite sketch of the suspect, described as a 20-year-old black male, 5' 10" tall, thin build, and was last seen wearing a black hooded jacket, blue jeans and black sneakers. Investigators say the suspect also has a scar under his right eye.

The first incident was reported on Feb. 13 at 7:50 a.m., when a 14-year-old female was attacked on her way to the subway along Eastchester Road, according to police. Two days later, a second attack was reported by another 14-year-old girl who was assaulted as she walked past the intersection of Burke Avenue and Eastchester Road at 9:30 a.m.

The offender later struck again, this time on Friday, March 28, assaulting a 13-year-old as she walked along Magenta Street during the morning hours. A month later, police reported a fourth incident linked to the suspect—a report of a 13-year-old attacked from behind while walking along Baychester Avenue at 8 a.m. Another month went by until his next attack on Thursday, May 29, when he jogged up to an 18-year-old victim on Burke Avenue and forcibly touched her.

The suspect struck again the following day when he approached and attacked a 12-year-old victim in the area of East 233rd Street. On Monday, June 9, a 16-year-old reported she was attacked at 6:55 a.m., along Boston Road.

In the last two attacks, reported on Wednesday, June 11, at 8:15 a.m., a 21-year-old woman reported a forcible touching attack as she walked along Fish Avenue. Fifteen minutes later, a 12-year-old reported a similar incident as she walked along Schieffelin Avenue.

None of the victims was physically injured.

The attacks have prompted a local citizens group called the New York Hero Initiative to patrol the affected neighborhoods in search for the suspect and passing out flyers to residents. One group member, "Spectre," said the group was encouraged by the community's reaction to their presence, and added, "We're going to re-visit a few areas



POLICE HAVE RELEASED this police sketch of a man wanted for a string of sexual assaults within the 47th Precinct since February.

Sketch courtesy NYPD

where we had some promising leads on this case."

One source at the local community board told the *Norwood News* that the local community was informed of the attacks in mid-May. One police official questioned could not explain the delay in alerting the public to the pattern of sexual attacks. The source says detectives and police are in the process of going back to all nine locations while searching for surveillance footage of the suspect.

Meantime, 50 additional cops began hitting the streets at the Four-Seven, hoping the extra manpower can combat the spike in violent crime happening within the borough. -- **David Greene**

Overnight Shootings in Five-Two

The 52nd Precinct is investigating a pair of separate shootings that happened during the overnight hours of July 6. The first incident happened at 198th Street and Jerome Avenue, a residential neighborhood near Lehman College, where a man was shot in the torso once before the suspects fled. He was rushed to St. Barnabas Hospital and remained in critical condition.

Police say they're now looking for two suspects—one described as a male Hispanic, wearing a white T-shirt. The second suspect is described as a male black wearing a red T-shirt.

As the morning wore on, police reported a man shot at the corner of Evelyn Place and Davidson Avenue, a residential area that's home to six-story buildings. Police are unsure why the victim was shot since he did not know his assailant.

The latest shootings cap yet another bloody weekend in the 52nd Precinct, though the number of shootings has remained relatively unchanged since last year when police reported nine shootings, the same number as last year's around the same time. For now, police are continuing their investigation of the shootings.

--**David Cruz**

Police Collar Assault Suspects

A duo suspected of kicking a man so hard he later died, has been apprehended by officers from the 52nd Precinct. Angel Monegro, 17, and Noel Martinez, 24, were arrested July 1 and charged with the fatal beating of Miguel Dircio, a 41-year-old man who dozed off on the steps of Saint Nicholas of Tolentine Church on June 19.



Video still photo courtesy NYPD

BLURRY SURVEILLANCE VIDEO still photo shows three men approaching a man sleeping by St. Tolentine Church. Two would later be charged with his death.

Police say the suspects approached Dircio at the church on West Fordham Road and University Avenue, unexpectedly kicking the victim in the head. He was rushed to St. Barnabas Hospital, where he remained in critical condition before passing away 10 days later.

Monegro and Martinez were later found, living in walking distance from the church. They were charged with man-

slaughter. --**David Cruz**

Editor's Note: Anyone with any information about any of these crimes is asked to call CrimeStoppers at 1 (800) 577-TIPS. The public can also submit tips by logging on to the Crime Stoppers website at WWW.NYPDCRIMESTOPPERS.COM or by texting their tips to 274637 (CRIMES), then enter TIP577. All calls are strictly confidential.



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Future Uncertain for St. Ann's Church

(continued from page 1)

ing *All Things New* program," Scanlon said in an interview with the *Norwood News*.

One aspect of this program involves the forming of so-called clusters that help identify church-related challenges such as attendance, sacrament rites, ministry, and community outreach. Those issues are often passed on to a 40-member advisory board. Scanlon came into contact with his cluster during the spring, which includes St. Brendan's Church, Our Lady of Refuge, Our Lady of Angels, and St. Philip Neri.

"We submitted much information about the parish and what happens here in the parish," Scanlon said. "We sent in our recommendations that we wanted to work collaboratively [in the clusters]. When the committee sent it back to us, they said they accepted part of it, but they [also] wanted St. Ann's parish to consolidate with St. Brendan's."

The advisory board told the cluster that this parish would have a new name. It would also be located at St. Brendan's Church, which is about a 15 minute walk from St. Ann's. This potential consolidation also means the closure of St. Ann's. The school, which rests on top of the church, could likely be closed as well.

Scanlon said that the committee gave three reasons for this suggestion. "One [reason] was that it's only a 15 minute walk from St. Ann's to St. Brendan's, which is completely untrue. Most of our parishioners...have a lot of difficulty walking."

The second reason was financial. "[The



Photo by Pamela Segura

THE SHRINE CHURCH of St. Ann's remains a staple in Norwood after having opened its doors in 1927.

committee said] we were not financially stable," said Scanlon. "And, the third was that the registered Catholics and those who attend mass were dwindling."

There's also the issue of retaining membership to the church, which Scanlon said is different in city churches when compared to the suburban towns. The five churches in the cluster, according to the Father, rejected the suggested consolidation of St. Ann's and St. Brendan's Church. "There has to be a Catholic presence in this neighborhood," said Scanlon.

In mid-June, the advisory board made

final recommendations to Timothy M. Dolan, Cardinal Archbishop of the Archdiocese, who is expected to review the findings over the summer and make a public recommendation in September.

Making All Things New

Joseph Zwilling, a spokesman for the Archdiocese of New York, declined to directly comment on St. Ann's prospects. "I cannot...discuss any individual parish situation," Zwilling told the *Norwood News* when asked about the specific status of St. Ann's. "One, it's not fair to the parish at this point. And, second, there have been

no decisions made."

Zwilling did break down the process of determining the future of a parish under the *Making All Things New* initiative. The Archdiocese's website says that the program ultimately seeks to rejuvenate the spiritual, religious and pastoral needs of neighborhoods. This encompasses various factors of a parish, including the financial status of a church and parochial schools.

Local Response

Many Norwood residents are aware of this uncertainty. To them, St. Ann's is not simply a church underneath the Archdiocese's strength, but a part of their lives as Catholics or neighborhood employees.

Luijany Feliz, who has lived in Norwood her whole life, told the *Norwood News* about the first time she learned about the church's uncertain future. She was sitting on the sidewalk a block away from the church as she reflected on this experience. "I felt bad," she said. "It's the only church I know."

Alfan Krasniqi, who works at Marconi's Pizzeria on East Gun Hill Road, said that he'd heard about the speculation for a while. "It'd be bad for everybody," said Krasniqi while smoking a cigarette outside his Marconi's. "I do business there." Flor Sanchez owns D'Flor Salon, which is on the corner of Bainbridge Avenue. She's lived in Norwood for over 30 years. Her son attends St. Ann's School. "I feel so comfortable [and] safe here," Sanchez said.

An expanded version on this article can be found at www.norwoodnews.org.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Job Fair at DeWitt Clinton HS

Those seeking employment of all ages and experience levels are welcome to the job fair to be held at DeWitt Clinton High School, 100 W. Mosholu Pkwy., So., July 10 from 4 to 7 p.m. Wear professional attire and bring at least 5 resumes. For more information, call (718) 828-2880.

Onstage

- The NY Philharmonic performs a **concert** featuring classical music, July 15 at 8 p.m. at Van Cortlandt Park's Parade Ground, followed by a fireworks display. For more information, call (718) 760-6969.
- The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **Chinese Red Silk Dancers**, July 12; and **The Papo Pepin Quartet in Concert**, July 19; both at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Events

- St. Ann's Church, 3519 Bainbridge Ave., holds a summer **flea market**, July 11 to Aug. 23, Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Vendors are wanted. For more information, call (718) 547-9350.
- Van Cortlandt Park presents several events including **Pool's Open**, offering swim instruction, lap swim, and water aerobics, through Sept. 1; **Barefoot Dancing**, to learn traditional dances with live music, July 10 to Aug. 7 at 6:30 p.m.; **Summer Stage Kids**, for free dance, music, puppet and sing-along shows (visit calendar for locations), July 10 to Aug. 14 at 10:30 a.m.; and two events presented by Friends of VC Park on July 13: **FVCP's City of Water Day**, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., including hands-on activities for all ages, guided hike around the park, and ecocrafts (at VC Lake near the VC Golf House; enter park at VC Park So. and Baily Ave.; and **Babar the Little Elephant**, at 1 and 2:30 p.m., including children's performance by Bronx Arts Ensemble mime/storyteller (at VC House Museum Lawn; enter park at Broadway and West 246th Street); (call (718) 601-1553 for both events). For more information, call (718) 760-6969.

- City Parks Foundation presents free **Summer Stage Kids**, July 9 to Aug. 15, featuring music, dance, circus and performances. Performances at Van Cortlandt Park's Classic Playground (VC

Park South and Orloff Avenue) take place on July 10 and 17, and at VC Park's Southwest Playground (VC Park South and Broadway) on July 24; all at 10:30 a.m. Mt. Hope Playground events (at East 177th Street and Walton Avenue) take place at 10:30 a.m. on July 9, 16, and 23. St. Mary's Park, 450 St. Ann's Ave., holds **Bronx Family Day**, July 13 from 4 to 7 p.m. (visit www.SummeStage.org for details). Schedule is subject to change. For details, more information, and events in other locations, visit www.CityParksFoundation.org.

- The Bronx Terminal Market, 610 Exterior St., hosts free **film**, "The Odd Life of Timothy Green," July 15 at sunset (around 8:30 p.m.). Pre-film festivities begin at 7 p.m. Bring beach chair or towel. For more information, call (718) 243-1414.

- The COVE, 3418 Gates Place, presents Shotokan Karate Do world champion **Abdul "Aziz" Shihan**, Saturdays from 1 to 3 p.m. for ages 5 and up, to learn to defend and protect yourself (\$20/month; \$45/month for family of 3); **Zumba Classes**, Fridays 6:45 to 7:45 p.m. (\$20/month); and **Health and Beauty Workshops**, 3 to 6 p.m. for ages 13 and up (\$20/month; 10 slots only), to learn hair extension techniques. For more information, call Starr or Michelle at (718) 405-1312.

- The Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, 3225 Reservoir Oval E., offers ongoing **zumba sessions**, Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. and Sundays at noon. No registration is required. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

- The Police Athletic League (PAL) offers its free **Playstreets Program**, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., through Aug. 22. Locations include 182nd Street between Valentine and Ryer avenues and 196th Street between Briggs and Bainbridge avenues. There will be no event on Friday, Aug. 1. For more information, call (212) 353-9585.

- Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and the Bronx Tourism

Council launch the **Bronx 100 Scavenger Hunt**, July 12 at 9 a.m. at the Bronx County Courthouse. Teams earn points by taking pictures of various Bronx landmarks with the highest scoring team winning \$2,500. Event closes with a party for participants. For more information and to enter at \$40 per team, visit ilovethebronx.com.

- The public is invited to **Community Disability Day**, July 12 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., at Crotona Park (Crotona Avenue and Crotona Park South). Free tabling is available. For more information, call (347) 590-1080.

- Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Arts Projects**: Luminous Paper Lanterns, to make papier mache lanterns from cutout color paper, July 12 and 13; and Appleton Animal Books, to make your own animal book, July 19 and 20; both in WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also scheduled is **Stories in the Garden at 2 p.m.**, featuring interactive readings, sing-alongs, and puppets for ages 3 to 6: **Plant, Grow and Blossom**, July 10; **How Does Your Garden Grow?**, July 17; and **Six Legs Too Many**, July 24 (\$2 additional admission starting at 4 p.m.). In addition, there is **Sunset Music from 7 to 8 p.m.**: **Mitch Froman Latin-Jazz Quartet**, July 16; and **The Drum of the World**, July 23. More events include: **Cooking Demo: Licorice**: to sample dishes by chefs, July 20 at 1 p.m.; and the **Sunroom Project** offers a series of events through Nov. 20 (call for a detailed schedule). Grounds admission is free Saturdays until noon all year, and free all day in July. 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.

Exhibits

- The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (at 165th Street) presents **Beyond the Supersquare**, through Jan. 11, featuring 30 artists and more than 60 artworks. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 681-6000.

Library Events

- The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents programs for adults including: **Advance MS Word 2010**: July 10 at 2 p.m.

(advance in-person registration required); **Law Help.org**: (advance in-person registration required), July 14 at 2 p.m.; **Computer Basics**: (in-person registration required), July 15 at 2 p.m.; and **Celebrating Heritage: Mask Making**: July 18 at 4 p.m. Children can enjoy **Reading Aloud at 11 a.m.**: July 10, 11, 14-18, and 21-25; **Fan Book Making**: July 10 at 2 p.m.; **Animal Door Hanger Making**: July 17 at 2 p.m.; **films at 2 p.m.**: July 15 and 22; **The Industrious Mr. Franklin**: (ages 3 to 12), play about Ben Franklin, July 18 at 2 p.m.; and **Summer Magnet Making**: July 24 at 2 p.m. Teens/young adults can attend **Let It Fly! Lift and Aerodynamics**: July 24 at 5 p.m. For foreigners: **Free English Classes at noon and 6 p.m.**: July 14 and 22. 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.; **Wii Program**: Tuesdays at 3 p.m.; and **Zumba**: Fridays at 10:30 p.m. Children can enjoy **Reading Aloud Story Time at 2 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12), July 14 and 21; and **Bilingual Birdies at 11 a.m.**: (French; ages to 12 years), featuring music, puppetry, games, and a bubble dance party, July 15 and 22. Teens/young adults can attend **film**: "Oz, the Great and Powerful," July 12 at 1 p.m.; **From Planes to Silly Putty: How Things Work, at 3 p.m.**: (advance in-person registration required), July 16 and 23; and **Urban Art Workshop**: July 17 at 4 p.m. For foreigners: **English Conversation Groups**: July 18 at 10:30 a.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

- The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for kids: **Active Health at 2 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12), yoga and zumba, July 11 and 18; **Chess Program**: (ages 5 to 12), July 15 at 2 p.m.; **Toddler Time at 11 a.m.**: (ages 18 to 36 months), July 16 and 23; and **Pajama Party**: (ages 5 to 12), July 21 at 6 p.m. For adults: **Computer Basics: Open Lab at noon**: July 10, 15, 17, 22 and 24. For teens/young adults: **Teen Science**: July 10 at 2 p.m.; and **film**: July 17 at 2 p.m. For foreigners: **English Conversation Groups at noon**: July 14 and 21. 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 July 14 for the next publication date of July 24.



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Business Improvement District



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