

NORWOOD NEWS

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JEROME-GUN HILL BID FALL FESTIVAL
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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
HOW HOT IS THE EARTH
GETTING? | PG. 4

MOSHOLU BENCHES RIPPED IN HALF

Residents Demand Better Communication From Parks



Photo by Adi Talwar

PARKS DEPARTMENT WORKER (Zhou Li Kang) repairs a bench on the west side of Mosholu Pkwy near 203rd Street.

By **KASIA ROMANOWSKA**

Following a barely publicized bench removal project along Mosholu Parkway in mid-September, Community Board 7 is now demanding better communication involving future projects. The news comes as Parks admitted there was no plan to replace several of the benches that were cut in half.

As the *Norwood News* learned, several benches were sliced throughout

the lush freeway by the city Parks Department. The benches, ripped from the concrete sidewalk, blindsided residents in the area, mainly after seeing half a bench was left over. But Parks, having oversight on the parkway, never alerted members of Community Board 7, which usually relays information to residents.

The day before Parks began its repair process, confusion abounded for neighbors in the area. At Mosholu Parkway

North and Bainbridge Avenue, a group of folks huddled around one bench just by a hilltop, noticing wooden debris neatly piled. "Did they break it off purposely?" asked a man pushing a stroller.

"It looks well-organized, though. It must have been done by someone who does construction," guessed another neighbor.

"There was nothing wrong with the

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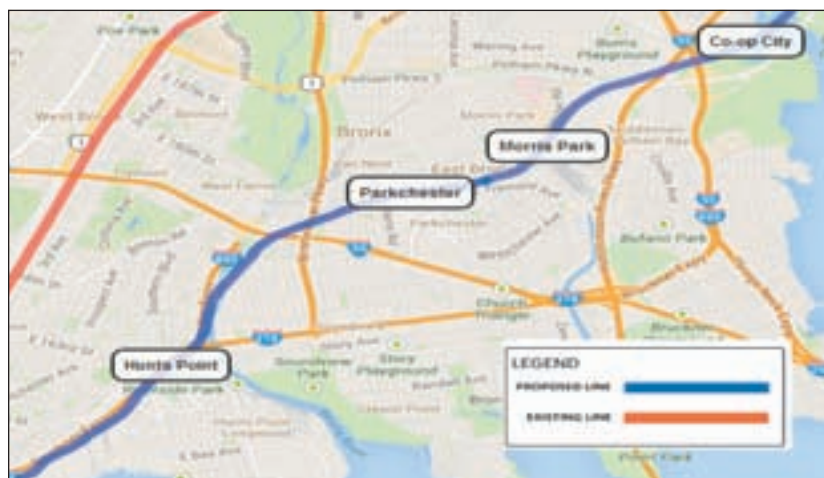
Metro-North Expansion in East Bronx Clears Another Hurdle

By DAVID CRUZ

Bronx pols are cheering over the MTA's plan to expand its Metro-North service in the borough. The transit agency voted to include in its five-year capital budget plan a \$737 million project to build four Metro-North stations on an existing track line in the east Bronx. Crews will build stations in Co-Op City, Morris Park, Parkchester and Hunts Point, neighborhoods known for their large populations. But the proposal is still under review by the Albany Legislature, which Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. expects will be in favor for the Bronx.

"As we make our final case to the State Legislature to approve the funding for this expansion, Albany will see an entire borough united in support of this revolutionary project," said Diaz in a statement.

Lobbying behind Diaz is Senator Jeff Klein (34th Senate District), who said the plan, once built,



would result in "quicker commutes and better job opportunities" for Bronxites. Klein's office released a report last year that predicted the benefits to this plan, including a rise in property values around the stations and the creation of jobs.

The plan is seen largely as a game changer for the east Bronx, a place Klein dubbed a "transportation desert" since subway and

bus service is limited. Train service would crisscross along the Amtrak's existing Hells Gate line that stretches to Boston, terminating at Manhattan's Penn Station.

The MTA submitted its plan to the Albany Legislature Oct. 1, which will take several months to render a decision. Should the proposal be approved, it's expected to be operational by 2019.

Pinnacle Tenants Still Owed Settlement Payout

By DAVID CRUZ

For tenants who lived or currently reside in Bronx buildings owned and managed by the Pinnacle Group, a payout awaits. But many have yet to claim it. It's a reason why Senator Gustavo Rivera is making the rounds in his district, reminding locals they may be entitled to a part of a class action settlement. Since Sept. 29, Rivera has visited hundreds of tenants reminding them of the settlement between the management firm and residents.

Lawyers for Pinnacle settled their class action suit filed by tenants who alleged tricky evictions tactics as a way to hike up rents. The case stretches back to 2006.

Despite notices distributed since the suit settled during the summer, lawyers representing the Bronx victims say only one percent of tenants have responded to the settlement, a reason why Rivera's been visiting Pinnacle-owned residences in

his 33rd Senate District since Sept. 29. Nearly half of the 62 Pinnacle-owned buildings are located in his district. Rivera is expected to show up at the following Bronx sites:

Sunday, Oct. 5, 4 to 8 p.m.

- 2185 Valentine Ave.

- 2028-32 Valentine Ave.

- 2340 Valentine Ave.

Thursday, Oct. 9, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

- 2800 Heath Ave.

Rivera will also visit two other buildings in mid-October. To find out more, call (718) 933-2034.

Public & Community Meetings

COMMUNITY BOARD 7 committees are held on the following dates at the board office, 229A E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Public Safety & Quality of Life committee meets on Thursday, Oct. 2; Executive committee meets on Tuesday, Oct. 7; Economic Development and Community Relations/LTP committees meet Wednesday, Oct. 8 (note: Community Relations/LTP meets at 7:30 p.m.); Traffic & Transportation committee meets Thursday, Oct. 9; Environment & Sanitation and Health & Hospitals committees meet Oct. 14 (note: Health & Hospitals committee meets at 7:30 p.m.); Housing/Land Use & Zoning committee meets on Wednesday, Oct. 15; For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

THE 52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL meets Thursday, Oct. 16 at the Fordham Hill Oval Corporation, 2455 Sedgwick Ave. from 7 to 9 p.m. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE

This week we asked readers their thoughts on climate change and New York City's plan to build eco-friendlier buildings.



I think it's great for the city, bad for the tenants because you know the more they fix, the more we pay. But in the long run, 10 or 20 years from now, our children will be able to appreciate it.

Lynette Knight
Highbridge



I think this is the best idea ever. I think the government can pay for it, but it will save money for all of us in the long run. It will be better for the children living in a world with clean air and water and maybe the weather won't be so erratic.

Altagracia Cohen
Tremont



I think it will help the earth a lot to stay cleaner and more people can live in the new buildings. It will also help the flowers, plants and other life. Eventually, it will pay for itself.

Natalie Gonzalez
Norwood



Well I agree with that, but not lights dimming. I don't think that's an area you should be shaving money. It should be bright all the time, otherwise some homeboy jumps out of a dark corner and mugs you as you go in your apartment.

Jerome Campbell
Woodlawn



Yes, I do support that, New York City is a mess. They should make an area to put little gardens where buildings store the garbage. Everything is contaminated and people throw garbage everywhere. The pollution is crazy here.

Dolores Encarnacion
Concourse

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Solar Roof Plan for Bronx Schools Underway

By **KASIA ROMANOWSKA**

Every year, the prevalence of climate change has increasingly become an urgent issue, with city, state and federal governments introducing initiatives to stem the global problem. It's a reason why Mayor Bill de Blasio talked about a new project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by investing in rooftop solar power at city schools.

Outside the John F. Kennedy Educational Campus in Riverdale/Marble Hill on Sept. 29, de Blasio outlined a new plan that will see 24 schools receive solar panels to help reduce the city's carbon footprint.

The announcement was part of the de Blasio Administration's "One City, Built to Last" plan, intended to promote further renewable energy alternatives.

"In the next 10 years, we'll retrofit every single public building with significant energy use," said de Blasio, standing outside the campus, which he considered a "solar pioneer." The panels help reduce non-renewable energy use by five percent.

According to the mayor's office,



Photo by Kasia Romanowska

MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO (at podium) stands alongside officials at John F. Kennedy Educational Campus to announce an expansion of solar panels for 24 schools. The JFK Campus is already home to those eco-saving panels (inset).

the planned installation is expected to save enough energy that's comparable to taking 600 vehicles off the road every year. De Blasio's overall goal is to reduce 80 percent of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The JFK campus is one of nine buildings already home for the rooftop solar installation. It serves also as a laboratory for teaching students how to develop habits for protecting

the environment. "The work here is sending a powerful message. It is setting examples for schools all over the city," noted de Blasio.

Dan Steiner, a science teacher devoted to the environmental sustainability for over 12 years, has incorporated the talk of solar panels as part of his curriculum. He's often known to hammer the point home that climate change is indeed happening.

"This is what you gotta do to save the planet," added Steiner, showing the photos of the JFK campus' existing rooftop panels along with a community garden.

The urgency to focus on climate issues was the central topic at the UN Climate Summit as well as the Climate March in New York City this September. "That's why it is so important to act quickly, boldly, with every tool we have," said de Blasio.

The renewable energy project "will keep New York City highly competitive as the world transitions to a low-carbon future," said Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and senior UN advisor on global energy.

Founded by the city and the NY-Sun Initiative, the project will cost \$28 million. Five million dollars of the funds comes through a grant from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

Stacey Cumberbatch, who heads the Department of City Administrative Services, estimates that the solar panels will ultimately save the city roughly \$2 million.

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Guarding Kingsbridge From Upzoning

By JANAKI CHADHA

Walking along Kingsbridge Road, one is able to get a good feel of the neighborhood. A bustling corridor, Kingsbridge Road boasts a small suburban vibe tucked within Aqueduct, Grand, and Davidson avenues, neighborhoods known for its quaint homes and six-story residences.

And looming overhead is the Kingsbridge Armory, now slated to become an ice skating center with nine sheets of ice and a 5,000-seat arena.

But some residents, such as former district manager of Bronx Community Board 7 Fernando Tirado, are proposing steps to help preserve certain parts of the area and halt overdevelopment. While he acknowledged that certain sections of the neighborhood could use some level of development, Tirado commented that preservation of portions of West Kingsbridge Road, and East Kingsbridge Road should be taken into consideration. He recently submitted a formal request to CB7, which included zoning recommendations and a narrative of why preservation is required. The proposal is expected to be re-

viewed at the next Land Use Committee gathering on Oct. 15.

"The parts that I had advocated strongly for down-zoning were the private homes from Kingsbridge Road to about 190th Street on Davidson, Grand and Aqueduct [avenues]," said Tirado. "Those homes, they're very beautiful homes, support a working class and middle class establishment in the community."

Slowing Down Gentrification

Tirado has been pushing for city officials to take a look at the proposal since last year, noting that hints of gentrification and exodus of existing businesses have begun to creep into the neighborhood. "We have businesses who have already been forced out. We have areas where, you know, they can't afford the rent anymore," said Tirado, fearing homeowners are next to leave.

While any major transformation within the Kingsbridge retail sector surrounding the Armory has not taken place yet, smaller changes have begun to occur. The *Norwood News* was first to report on Kingsbridge merchants

hit with nearly double the rent. The landlord has since reduced the amount at the behest of CB7. Still, the change in rent wasn't enough to keep Forever Young, a natural products and vitamin supplement, to stay in Kingsbridge. The store has now closed, having relocated in early October, citing rising rents.

that he has no plans to take any offers. "I've got family, I've got grandkids. That's one reason I won't sell—family."

The redevelopment of the Armory is bound to bring different businesses and establishments to the area, and potential efforts to rezone could follow. As city trends show, rezoning can



Photo by Janaki Chadha

FOREVER YOUNG in Kingsbridge relocates after a recent rent spike, an early sign of gentrification.

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Keeping Things the Same

On Davidson Avenue, 16-year-old Andrea Augustus admitted it's hard for her to "envision tall buildings around here." She continued that while change can be good, she didn't know how beneficial it would be. "People are gonna be uprooted from where they live," said Andrea, a lifelong resident. She added that though she is not personally a fan of the selection of stores in the area, she still wouldn't want to see them go.

Carlos Rodriguez, a homeowner on Davidson Avenue, acknowledged that new developments would likely raise the value of his home but still added

cause home values to increase, leading to more homogenous neighborhoods and essentially gentrifying them.

Tirado feels that the focus of the area should be on urban renewal. "The difference between urban renewal and gentrification is that urban renewal includes the people who are in the area currently as part of a solution for economic development and prosperity in the future," said Tirado. "Gentrification is pushing out existing groups, whereas urban renewal is trying to find a way to include them in the neighborhood's restoration."

Homecoming for Mind-Builders



Photo by Catharina Thuemling

HELPING TO CUT the ribbon for the renovated Mind-Builders center is Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. (center) flanked by visitors and Councilman Andy King (right).

By CATHARINA THUEMLING

Mind-Builders officially reopened their Creative Arts Center after a long and exhausting time of planning, fundraising and renovating.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony on Sept. 25 is the prelude to a new era for Mind-Builders, its founder Madaha Kinsey-Lamb, and of course for the children of the community.

"After 10 years of raising money and four years of renovating" the Creative Arts Center relocated to its former home in Williamsbridge, said Kinsey-Lamb with a touch of zest in her opening speech. For the past four years, the nonprofit had called St. Brendan's School in Norwood their home while construction crews gave a top-down \$9 million renovation to the original headquarters, once a municipal building followed by a Yeshiva school.

With an outstanding program to kick off its opening, Mind-Builders ushered in its inauguration of the renovated four-story center at 3415 Olmville Ave. with flair. With different acts like the performance of the African Dance Class or singer Dominique Garcia, Mind-Builders welcomed its guests and gave the audience, including Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Councilman Andy King and Commissioner of the city Department of Cultural Affairs, a glimpse into the remarkable work of Mind-Builders.

The growth of Mind-Builders has certainly come a long way since open-

ing its doors in 1978. Kinsey-Lamb, a former teacher, recognized the lack of arts education in schools throughout the Bronx and started the after-school program. The decision was a personal one--she wanted to offer her daughter a more enriched background in arts and culture.

At the beginning, there were some skeptical voices who didn't believe Mind-Builders could sustain itself, though Kinsey-Lamb thought otherwise. She envisioned something great. These days, she's come a long way, having opened the after-school program with a handful of kids.

In the end, she not only gives children an understanding of art and culture, but she teaches them "a sense of confidence," Diaz said.

The Center boasts programs that include dance, theatre, music, martial arts for children and adults at a nominal fee. "[But] that all didn't happen because I snapped my fingers," said Kinsey-Lamb, adding the success was due to children showing up.

"Mind-Builders was on the map," acknowledged Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs Tom Finkelpearl. It expressed the need for this after-school program and so Kinsey-Lamb was able to find people with the same vision who helped finance the nonprofit.

"Thanks for investing in the Bronx," Diaz told supporters of Mind-Builders.



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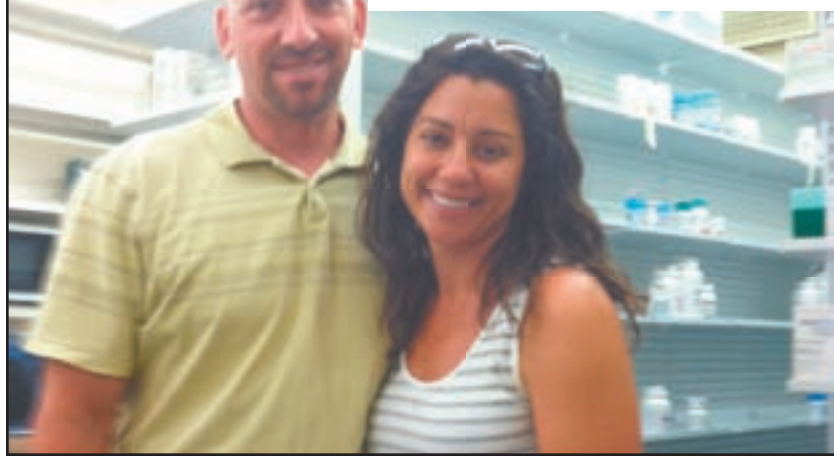
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Rob Ryan, Pharmacist
Allison Ryan, Pharmacist



Graffiti Comes, Goes, Returns in Norwood

By ANTON K. NILSSON

Graffiti tags stained on house walls, storefronts, and on public property are a common sight in New York, and Norwood is no exception. A blue plywood fence on a quiet, residential stretch of Perry Avenue served as a perfect example of graffiti at its worst.

Last week, the fence, which cordons off an empty lot at 3063-3065 Perry Ave., was covered in black graffiti tags that appeared to have been made with cheap spray paint. Among the tags were words like “Crack,” “Dyckman Up,” “Wil Money,” and “300 Block.”

A neighbor who went by the name Victor, living across the street from the empty lot, told the *Norwood News* that the graffiti had been on the wall for at least three months. Although the wall is regularly repainted, Victor said, the graffiti keeps coming back. “You get used to it. It used to be a lot worse around here. I’ve lived here for 13 years,” Victor said. “This graffiti is garbage. But at least it’s not as much as it used to be.”

“Garbage” is also the word that NYPD Officer John Repetti used to describe these kinds of tags. Repetti is the Graffiti Coordinator



Photo by Anton K. Nilsson

HARDWARE STORE ATTENDANT Juan Enamorado stands by a locked display case containing spray cans.

of NYPD’s 52nd Precinct and spearheads the Police Department’s effort to keep neighborhood walls free from unsightly graffiti.

“There is a difference between garbage and art,” Repetti said. He compared graffiti scribble seen on Perry Avenue with the colorful, large murals that emblazon many walls and storefronts in Norwood, and which often pay homage to locals who’ve passed away. “We try to clean up the neighborhood. But I would never take down a mu-

ral.”

Repetti, in fact, encourages it. He started a program where local artists can submit their drawings for the chance to paint a fully legal mural—if they supply the paint themselves. So far, there have been no takers.

Part of the five-two’s effort to curb graffiti vandalism involves identifying tags and entering them into a database managed by the City-wide Vandal Task Force, an NYPD branch that monitors and works to prevent vandal-

ism in all five boroughs. The task force has filed thousands of tags with at least 40 people linked to vandalism seen within the 52nd Precinct’s borders, Repetti noted.

Businesses Play Part

Norwood businesses have also stepped up to combat graffiti. At Jerry’s Hardware on the corner of Perry Avenue and East 204th Street, spray cans are locked in a steel cage. A notice informs customers that they have to produce an ID showing they are over 21 before being allowed to buy spray cans.

“We always check ID,” said Juan Enamorado, a store attendant. Nevertheless, he believes that it is young people under 21 who paint the illegal graffiti in the neighborhood. “They probably get someone who is over 21 to buy [spray cans] for them. They’re kids, but they are old enough to realize what they are doing,” Enamorado said.

According to Enamorado, the hardware store hands out free paint to local citizens who want to paint over ugly graffiti—a “hobby” of some, he said. Like Repetti, Enam-

orado believes that if there were more murals on the block, the number of illegal graffiti tags would decrease.

Fresh Once Again

As for the plywood wall on Perry Avenue, Repetti said, there is not much the city can do. Because it is a removable structure, the Department of Sanitation has no obligation to clean it up. The owners of the lot may sanitize it, Repetti said, but only “if they want to.”

The *Norwood News* reached out to Joseph Quintessenza, the owner of the Perry Avenue lot, explaining the complaints over the plywood wall’s appearance. He tries to keep the wall clean, Quintessenza said, but it is an “impossible task.” Still, last week Quintessenza re-touched the wall, now his seventh time doing so in three years, spending \$100 each time. “I want it to look pretty, for the neighborhood’s sake,” Quintessenza said. “I want to be considerate.”

Note: If you are interested in painting a mural in Norwood, contact Officer John Repetti of the 52nd Precinct at (718) 220-5824.

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BUSINESS BEAT

Diaz Jr.: Grade Salons, Barbershops and Spas

By DAVID CRUZ

The cosmetology business is often rife with CFC-laden hair sprays, nail polish fumes that pose a health risk to overexposed manicurists, and work stations improperly sanitized.

It's a reason why Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. crafted a bill that would institute a letter grade system to cosmetology businesses similar to those imposed on eateries in 2009. The system is intended as a public shaming and overall deterrent for negligent beauticians.

But it remains unclear whether Mayor Bill de Blasio, who championed for less stringent oversight on small businesses, would sign the measure. "I haven't seen the bill. I'll certainly look at it," said de Blasio, adding the city "wants to make sure that all facilities are safe."

In a statement, the Diaz Admin-

istration highlighted two respective reports that showed boutique cosmetology establishments were a breeding ground for contagious disease and toxic exposure to its employees.

"The procedures used in many salons can almost be medical in nature, yet oversight of these businesses is very minimal," said Diaz. "This new system will provide the consumer with necessary information they need to make informed choices about the safety of beauty salons, barbershops, spas and other similar businesses."

At Space Beauty Spa on East Gun Hill Road and Putnam Place, owner, Herman Rodas welcomed a new layer of regulation. His business, operating within the borders of the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District, takes a conscientious approach to maintaining cleanli-

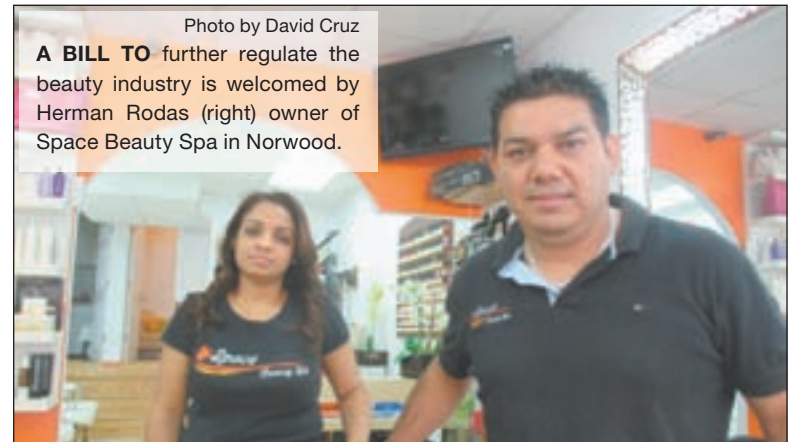


Photo by David Cruz
A BILL TO further regulate the beauty industry is welcomed by Herman Rodas (right) owner of Space Beauty Spa in Norwood.

ness, which includes locking chemicals in a confined space. "It's good for me, good for them," said Rodas. "We imitate what we do like that in Lower Manhattan."

The state Department of State already licenses beauty shops, having issued its own set of regulations for establishments, which includes restrictions on the type of beauty supplies used and mandated storage for sharp items.

Diaz has turned to Brooklyn City Councilman Rafael Espinal to

introduce the measure, still pending in committee.

The bill requires the signature of de Blasio, who, in his stint as the city's Public Advocate (PA), waged war on the Bloomberg Administration's aggressive ticket blitz on small business.

In early 2013, the PA's office released a report showing several city agencies practiced so-called "boroughism." The Bronx was hit with fines twice the citywide average.

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13th JGH-BID FALL FESTIVAL



TENS OF THOUSANDS of Bronxites shuttled to Norwood for the 13th annual Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District's Fall Festival, a daylong event showcasing the BID's best of the best. Singers, shoppers and honorees were on hand for the festival, with plenty of store owners selling their wares.

(1) SPONSORS WERE RECOGNIZED at the festival, with representatives holding up citations. Some of those sponsors included Pay-O-Matic, MetroPlus, Well Care, HealthFirst, Escape Lounge, and Montefiore Medical Center. Representatives stand alongside BID Executive Director Marcia Cameron (second from right).

(2) THE FALL FESTIVAL acknowledged several folks for their contributions to the BID. The honorees (holding plaques) include (l-r) music legend Sal Abbatiello, Juan Tavarez with Healthfirst, former NBA basketball player Kenny Anderson, Community Board 7 chairwoman Adaline Walker, and 52nd Precinct commanding officer Inspector Nilda Hofmann. They stand alongside the BID's Executive Director Marcia Cameron (second from right).

(3) WAVING IT AROUND like they just don't care are these energetic kids at the Fall Festival.

(4) BOROUGH PRESIDENT RUBEN DIAZ Jr. spits rhymes at the Fall Festival, singing a duet with this vocalist.

(5) COUNCILMAN ANDY COHEN (l.) was among the honorees at the Fall Festival, sharing a moment with fellow honoree, former NBA basketball player Kenny Anderson.

(6) HEADLINING A TROUPE of musical performers is George Lamond, singing his heart out during the annual Fall Festival.



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Number of people who die from
influenza each year.
(Source: Montefiore Medical Center)

Vital
Stats

Early Flu Shot, Early Protection

To get ahead of the upcoming flu season, one must pre-plan. It's a reason why experts at Montefiore Medical Center are raising awareness about the importance of the flu vaccine, which remains the best option to reduce a person's risk of contracting the virus. The flu season can start as early as late September and usually runs for about 12 to 15 weeks.

Infectious disease specialists have identified the flu viruses that are the most likely to cause illness this season and about 90 percent of these viruses are believed to be well-matched to the current vaccines. However, there are several important factors Americans should know about the 2014-2015 vaccine:

The new **"four-strain,"** or **quadrivalent**, vaccine is available to children and adults through fluzone inactivated single-dose syringes. This vaccine includes two strains of the more common A virus and two B virus strains. By comparison, last year's "three-strain" flu vaccine (two A strains and one B strain) reduced the risk of flu-associated medical visits from Influenza A viruses by one half and from the less severe Influenza B viruses by two-thirds for most of the population.

The egg-free **Flublok vaccine is available** for egg-allergic patients this year. It's free of egg proteins, antibiotics or preservatives and is **latex-free**.

"We don't yet know how severe this year's flu season will be, but we're preparing now to try and confront it head on," said Dr. Brian Currie, an infectious disease specialist and vice president and medical director for research at Montefiore Medical Center.

Influenza is a serious infectious disease that can lead to severe health consequences. People who have suffered a reaction to influenza vaccination in the past and people with a history of Guillain-Barre syndrome should not be vaccinated. Healthcare professionals are mandated by the state to do their part by getting the flu shot or don a surgical mask as an option.

Because of that, Mon-

tefiore has launched a campaign to urge employees and residents to get their flu vaccines. This year marks Montefiore's second annual "I Got My Shot" campaign, the goal of which is to have 100

percent of associates get a flu shot. The vaccine is now being offered at Montefiore locations across the Bronx and Westchester, since it takes about two weeks after vaccination for it to work.

MPC DIRECTOR HONORED



Photo courtesy Montefiore Medical Center

ROBERTO GARCIA HOLDS UP the accolade he received by the Bronx Chamber of Commerce on Sept. 23. Garcia, doubling as executive director of the Mosholu Preservation Corporation and Senior Director for Community Relations at Montefiore Medical Center, was one of six honorees at the Bronx Chamber of Commerce's Hispanic Heritage Luncheon. September was Hispanic Heritage Month.

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2 bedroom	\$1024	10	2 people 3 people 4 people	\$35,109 - \$40,320 \$35,109 - \$45,360 \$35,109 - \$50,340

* Rent includes gas for cooking

** Household size includes you and everyone who will live with you.

*** Household earnings includes salary, tips, pension, social security, child support, public assistance and other income for household members. Income guidelines subject to change.

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When is the Deadline?

Applications must be postmarked or submitted online no later than **November 10, 2014**. Late applications will not be considered.

What Happens After You Submit an Application?

After the deadline, applications are selected for review through a lottery process. If yours is selected and you appear to qualify, you will be invited to an interview to continue the process of determining your eligibility.



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AMSU Alumna Leads the School



Photo by Hayley Camacho

NEW YEAR. NEW PRINCIPAL. Sr. Jean Marie Humphries, new principal at Mount St. Ursula, shares a moment with students (left to right) Samantha Martir, Krisellie Acevedo and Jocelyn Garcia.

By HAYLEY CAMACHO

The start of a new school year is often met with a mix of excitement and anxiety for students. Those feelings are shared by principals as well, who grapple with raising student achievement, listening to uneasy students and helping parents navigate the high school system. For Sr. Jean Marie Humphries, her new role as principal of Academy of Mount St. Ursula (AMSU), the catholic girls high school on Bedford Park Boulevard, is both a homecoming and chance to redefine the school's role for students and the community.

Sr. Jeannie, as she likes to be called, is by all accounts a Bronx girl. She grew up on Briggs Avenue, and attended AMSU, graduating in 1989. She's since been on a path towards education that's not only external but internal, taking on several roles that included a teacher, mentor, curriculum developer and supervisor in elementary and special education within the catholic, public and charter school systems.

Sr. Jeannie attended the College of New Rochelle, where she "fell in love with teaching" while working with students struggling academically. She earned a BA in Education and MS in Reading and Special Education from the college. While teaching at St. Philip Neri in Bedford Park, Sr. Jeannie was compelled to explore a religious vocation with the Order of the

Ursulines, the group which founded AMSU nearly 160 years ago. She describes her time with the Ursuline Sisters in Ossining as a rigorous but satisfying time. "It was a time of serious prayer and work and also a time to see if this was a good mix for myself and the order."

Ms. Humphries soon returned as Sr. Jeannie, teaching three more years at St. Philip Neri. "It was important for the students to see me come back as a Sister," she said. As Sr. Jeannie learned, running into some common misconceptions of being a nun certainly came with the territory. "When they hear the word 'Sister,' they expect someone older," said Sr. Jeannie. "They also expect to see a habit. But since I've been alive, the Ursulines have not been in one. The core of my identity is I'm an Ursuline Sister. I'm part of a group that has a bigger goal than my own concerns."

Her office has a warm, welcoming feel. Children's books line the shelves. Among the titles are Thank You Mr. Falker by Patricia Polacco, The Oh The Places You'll Go by Dr Seuss, and You Are Special by Max Lucado, her favorite. They speak of bringing her love of literature to students, but also of its power to inspire. "Stories can really touch your life and your heart," she said.

Read more about Sr. Jeannie at www.norwoodnews.org.

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Mosholu Benches Ripped in Half

(continued from page 1)

benches,” said Carmen Corrigan, a neighbor across the street from the park. “I hope they replace them.” Corrigan witnessed crews with sledgehammers taking the benches and “tearing them apart.” “They drove away after they destroyed two benches,” said Corrigan. “Out of five, they left only two. And they said that’s what they’re going to do all over the parkway.”

The incident, though benign, exposes the systemic communication lapses between the community boards and the Parks Department. The practice differs from other agencies, such as the city Transportation Department, which sends daily notices about upcoming projects. Boards often serve as the “first line of defense” when it comes to learning about major projects happening in their communities. But the dialogue trend is at times scattered, with information distributed after the fact.

“The benches are having damaged slats repaired and damaged sections which are not repairable,” said a Parks spokesman. Routine maintenance is not always conveyed to community



Photo by Kasia Romanowska

MEMBERS WITH THE Community Board 7 Parks Committee hear from the city Department of Parks over its decision to cut down benches along Mosholu Parkway.

boards since it often can lead to a delay in repairs. Some issues, as Parks sees it, need to be handled immediately.

Getting Answers

Despite its policy, the bench project led to confusion among residents who expected to learn about construction projects ahead of time.

“We received many complaints from people and no word that the benches were going to be removed,” said Barbara Stronczer, chair of the Parks Committee with Community Board 7, which represents the area.

The panel brought up the incident during its Sept. 23 gathering, provok-

ing many questions and comments.

“We did remove those benches that were damaged,” said Valerie Francis, the Parks conservation manager. Asked what actions Parks would undertake to replace the demolished benches, Francis answered that “as of now there was no discussion regarding the case.”

According to many residents, the benches were in good shape.

Although two of them were split in half, “there was no reason to take the other six. They weren’t broken, they didn’t have no damage at all,” according to Sheila Sanchez, a resident who’s remained vigilant over projects hap-

pening along Mosholu Parkway.

Another resident remembered that some benches already had their wooden planks replaced, believing the “benches were all in a good condition.”

“I’m also hearing from the Parks that there’s no money and it has to go through the capital outlets. And you know how much it takes,” said Stronczer. “It’s very poorly done.”

Further Projects

The Parks Department has also marked several benches of the parkway with an orange line on the wooden slats and cement, an indication the bench needs some work.

It’s not the first time Mosholu Parkway endured a similar incident. Early this year, several residents complained to the Board after Parks chopped down Norwegian maples planted here nearly a century ago.

The latest incident conjured up memories of the now infamous “Mosholu Parkway Tree Massacre,” where city Transportation Department crews took out nearly 70 trees in the bucolic thoroughfare, angering residents.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month

The Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (at East 208th Street) presents its free inaugural celebration of **National Hispanic Heritage Month**, Oct. 11 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Events include exhibition showcasing famous Bronx Latinos, educational lectures and programming on the history of the Bronx, related exhibit produced by area elementary schools, and community and special services organizations catering to the needs of our audience. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Onstage

- The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **Anna Bolena** performed by the NY Opera Forum, Oct. 4 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 **Broadway Moves to the Bronx**, featuring Broadway hits in concert, Oct. 11 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 to \$25; \$10/ages 12 and under. (\$100 includes pre-concert reception, preferred VIP seating, and a meet/greet with the artists.) For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

Events

- Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (165th Street), presents free **First Friday**, Oct. 3, 6 to 10 p.m., featuring film, art performances, music and other special events. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.
- Community Board Athletic Leadership League (C-Ball) presents free **Battle of the Boroughs**, featuring the Bronx vs. Brooklyn, including live music with DJ, performances, giveaways, and more, Oct. 4. Pre-registration is at 11 a.m., female game is at 1:30 p.m. and male game is at 3 p.m. Present will be elected officials, celebrities and basketball players. For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 583-7017 ext. 150.
- Van Cortlandt Park's Sachkerah Woods Archway, at Gun Hill Road and Jerome Avenue offers **free classes** in zumba, Saturdays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. through Nov. 1 (wear

sneakers and comfortable clothes); and Drawing Nature classes, Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. through Oct. 12 (for ages 8+. Bring folding chair; materials will be provided). For more information, call (718) 430-1890.

- Fordham Fever Fridays invites the public to its **shopping district** at Muller Park and Plaza, East Creston Avenue and East Fordham Road, to explore different ethnic foods. For more information, call the BID at (718) 562-1269.
- Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Arts Projects**: Be a Bee, to wear wings and antennae, and hum with a kazoo, then join parade and dance at 12:30 p.m., weather permitting, Oct. 4 and 5; and Teddy Bear Caterpillars, to make a teddy bear caterpillar using a sock puppet covered with

fur, yarn, hair and button eyes, Oct. 11 and 12; both in WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. **Honey Weekend** will take place on Oct. 4 and 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Activities on both days include honey tastings (WH Shop, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.); candle making workshop (\$15/materials fee; WH House, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.), honey extraction demonstrations (Ecology Building at 12:30, 1:30 and 2:30 p.m.), and info about hives and honey (Perkins Visitor Center, 1 to 3 p.m.). Also offered is Nature Presentation Wonderful Woolly Bears, to meet them live, Oct. 11 at 1 p.m. at the WH House (registration required at ext. 251); and Family Insect Hunt, to hunt for insects, Oct. 12 at 1 p.m. (meet at Perkins Visitor Center). Grounds admission is free until noon Saturdays and Tuesdays all year. For more information and a schedule of events including tours and walks, call (718) 549-3200.

Library Events

- The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children: **Preschool Story Time**: (ages 3 to 5 years), Oct. 2 and 9 at 11 a.m.; **Toddler Play Time**: (ages 18 to 36 months), Oct. 2 and 9 at noon; **Little Red Riding Hood**: (ages 3 to 12), puppet show, Oct. 4 at 2 p.m.; **Door Hanger Making**: (ages 7 to 12), Oct. 9 at 4 p.m.; and **Family Time**: Oct. 11 at 11 a.m. (ages 3 to 6, pre-

registration required). For adults, there is **MS Word for Beginners**: (in-person registration required, Oct. 6 at 2 p.m.); and **film**: featuring roots of Tex-Mex music, Oct. 11 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

- The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children: **Toddler Story Time**: (18 to 36 months), Oct. 2, 9 and 16 at 10:30 a.m. For teens/young adults: **Film**: "Thor: The Dark World," Oct. 11 at 2 p.m. Adults can attend: **MS Word 2010**: Oct. 8 and 15 at 10:30 a.m. (in-person advance registration required). For more information, call (718) 882-8239. The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for kids ages 5 to 12: **Active Health at 4 p.m.**: Yoga and zumba, Oct. 3 and 10; and **Chess Program**: Learn to play, Oct. 14 at 4 p.m. For ages 18 to 36 months, there is **Toddler Time**: Oct. 8 and 15 at 11 a.m. For teens/young adults: **Film**: Oct. 16 at 3:30 p.m. For adults: **Computer Basics Open Lab at noon**: Oct. 2, 7, 9, 14 and 16. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

HAPPY ROSH HASHANA TO ALL OUR JEWISH READERS!

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



Photo by Joshua Bright

WAVE HILL GEARS UP for its annual Honey Weekend, a yearly staple for the floral institution. Visitors can learn from beekeepers like this one pictured (right) how to maintain bee cages.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Fitness Classes for Seniors

The City Parks Foundation offers yoga classes on Mondays/Wednesdays and Fitness Walking on Tuesdays/Thursdays; each free at 9 a.m. at the Woodlawn Tennis Courts on Jerome Avenue and 233rd Street to seniors ages 60 and over. For more information, call (718) 760-6999.

Williamsbridge Oval Classes

The Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center holds a variety of exercise classes, game room time, and computer classes for children, teens and adults this fall. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

Financial Ed Workshops

University Neighborhood Housing Program at 2751 Grand Concourse, offers a series of five free financial education workshops on Tuesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. beginning Nov. 4. Topics include credit building and debt management. For more information or to RSVP, call (718) 933-2539.

School Registration

The Department of Education has Registration Centers open at various sites in the Bronx from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for new and re-entering students. To find the center nearest you, call 311.

MMCC Services

The Mosholu Montefiore Community Center offers a number of services including food stamps (ext. 304) at 3450 DeKalb Ave. For more information and details of classes and programs, call (718) 882-4000. In addition, there is Head Start and Universal Pre-K at the Van Cortlandt Jewish Center at 3880 Sedgwick Ave. Call (718) 654-0563 for more information.

Food Bank Assistance

The Food Bank of New York offers free meals and food for the needy throughout the Bronx. They also assist with other services including food stamps, income tax returns, job training, and legal assistance. To find a location near you, call (212) 566-7855 or visit <http://www.foodbanknyc.org/news/find-help>.

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BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS
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**TUTORING
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(CHILDREN AGES 4-11)
SATURDAY'S 11AM - 1PM
REGISTRATION
SATURDAY OCT. 4TH

VOTER REGISTRATION
SATURDAYS, OCT. 11, 18
11 A.M. TO 1 P.M.



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Choice of Salad

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French Fries,
Mashed Potatoes or
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Choice of Beverage

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Soda (Cola or Ginger Ale), Water,
Iced Tea or Lemonade

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