



# NORWOOD NEWS

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**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:**  
**SOLVING THE HOMELESS CRISIS | PG. 4**



**NORWOOD NEWS SPECIAL:**  
**BUSINESS MATTERS | PGS. 9-10**

## SECTOR SHAKEUP AT 52ND PRECINCT

*Restructured sector maps seek to improve neighborhood policing*



File Photo/David Cruz

**THIS PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN** in May 2015 shows officers investigating a gang-related shooting at 194nd Street and Decatur Avenue within the 52nd Precinct. Shootings increased 31 percent in 2015 compared to the year before.

**By BOB KAPPSTATTER**

*Special to Norwood News*

As crime remains a stubborn problem for some areas of Norwood and its surrounding neighborhoods, the 52nd Precinct is set to embrace some radical crime fighting methods. The news comes amid a year where the Five-Two won

the year, though barely.

While the number of victims last year was low compared to the precinct's more problematic days, the Five-Two was hit with a surge of homicides and shootings, as well as bumps in other major crime categories.

It still managed to show

a four percent drop when the seven major crime categories were lumped together, but it ranked within the top 10 of the city's 77 precincts for overall crime complaints, more so for its murders, shootings, robberies and felony assaults.

"The Five-Two has always

been a tough precinct," said one Bronx borough command police source. "Thankfully, the actual numbers are a lot lower these days."

Under a new policing plan now in the works, the NYPD hopes to dramatically change policing strategy there, both

*(continued on page 15)*



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## IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

# At Kingsbridge Armory Hearing, Rehashing Unresolved Worries

By DAVID CRUZ

Though the Kingsbridge National Ice Center (KNIC) was approved to occupy the Kingsbridge Armory in 2013, loose ends relating to the mammoth project were brought up during a hostile public meeting involving an approved loan for the enormous project.

In what was a barely publicized public hearing Jan. 14, residents and special interest groups testified before officials representing the Empire State Development (ESD) agency. The ESD's Board of Directors had voted to approve a \$30 million construction loan for the project, part of a larger \$130 million project before the economic development agency.

The Board's approval of the loan sparked questions over the logic of the public hearing, intended to provide an overview of the \$348 million project while soliciting comments relating to the project. The comments would be "taken into consideration as part of the final approval of the proposed project" as the ESD's present attorney, Michael Forte, explained, though he didn't elaborate further.

"How do you approve a loan before the hearing, and then tell us, 'Hey, we approved a portion of a loan, what you think about that?'" said Jay Espy, a leader of the People Power Movement, a group that's spent the last three years pushing for an improved quality of life for Kingsbridge Height's impoverished residents. "What kind of kangaroo court is this?"

The tone of the hearing veered from cordial to hostile, with activists coming to the forum with several agendas that intersected but not uniformly pre-



Photo by Jasmine Gomez

**JAY ESPY, A** community organizer with People Power Movement, testifies at a hearing over the state's \$30 million loan to the Kingsbridge National Ice Center.

sented. The hearing brought to a boil simmering frustration towards KNIC, where developers were absent during the hearing. The last public meeting to be held relating to the project happened in April 2015. Since then, much activity relating to the project had taken place behind the scenes.

"The fact that there's no one here representing the developer is indeed disappointing," said Ivan Braun, a resident and member of the KNIC Community Advisory Council.

Braun was one of 26 signatories to a Community Benefits Agreement that KNIC had agreed to sign. Stipulations included at least 51 percent local hiring for Bronx residents, hiring of unionized labor force, the formation of the CAC, and an allocation of 50,000 square feet of

community space.

"We look forward to the project going forward, and this loan being a part of that but only if, and in conjunction with the complete and full implementation of the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA)," said Braun.

Members of Community Board 7, the civic body that approved the project in 2013, were also absent from the hearing. The hearing took place at 3 p.m., a common criticism many argued made it impossible for community members to attend.

With so few community forums related to the Armory project, activists used the moment to lay out a progressive agenda, which was indirectly tied to the project. Since the start of the project, pegged as a driver of impending gentrification in Kingsbridge Heights, activists have demanded KNIC assist in keeping existing Kingsbridge Heights residents and merchants from getting evicted. Some of the more idealistic proposals laid out in agendas noted for the record included across-the-board affordable housing and an end to the NYPD's stop, question and frisk policy.

But Evy Virnet, a member of the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance (KARA), offered a more middle-ground resolution that involved embracing the project so long as gentrification "does not take over."

"It's gonna happen," a spectator jumped in.

In the meantime, Espy is demanding developers organize another hearing utilizing his group's "community-controlled agenda" prior to Feb. 14.

"If you love us, then you will meet with us," said Espy.

## Public and 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: Budget/Personnel & Ethics: Jan. 25; Community/LTP Committee: Jan. 26; and Economic Development Committee: Jan. 26 at 7:30 p.m.

**THE BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meets Feb. 3 at 8 p.m. at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy So., Apt. B1 (lobby floor).



# Debate Over Locking Oval Park Ignites

By JASMINE GOMEZ

Following a series of fires, the Bedford Mosholu Community Association wants to light a fire under the New York City Department of Parks, demanding they lock Williamsbridge Oval Park nightly.

The group's president, Barbara Stroncz, told members she plans to draft a letter asking the Parks Department to close the park at dusk. In recent weeks, at least seven intentional fires were set, causing community residents to be uneasy regarding safety in the park.

The fires led to the apprehension of one teen, but it remains unclear whether he is responsible for all the fires. The Parks Department increased Parks Enforcement Patrol in response to the vandalism and safety concerns.

In a statement, a Parks Department spokesperson said, "NYC Parks is committed to keeping our parks safe and enjoyable for the communities in which they serve. We coordinate closely with NYPD on all safety issues."

The debate concerning whether parks should close at night has stretched to Brooklyn following the highly publicized gang rape of an 18-year-old woman at a playground.

## CB7 Votes In New District Manager



Photo by Wendy Joan Biddlecombe

**COMMUNITY BOARD 7** has a new district manager several months after its former manager resigned. Following an exhaustive search, the Board unanimously approved the hiring of Andrew Sandler, currently the director of community relations and constituent services for Councilman Andrew Cohen. Sandler has a public service background, having worked for Cohen's predecessor, former Councilman Oliver Koppell. District managers are paid city employees who serve as a liaison between the community and city agencies. The *Norwood News* will have a full report on its website, [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org), and in the next edition of the newspaper.

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# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



## With winter settled in, and temperatures plunging, this week we asked readers their thoughts on the current homeless crisis.



Well, I still think there are a lot of homeless on the streets and when I go to White Plains Road, there's this one lady who's been there for at least 10 years. She sits in front of Key Food supermarket and it's a shame. Lots of times I give her a dollar, but she's still there. I think it's a good idea to get them off the streets. I don't think anyone should be out in the cold and to go without food or proper clothing.

**Dotty Sharff**  
Williamsbridge



I have been seeing less homeless on the street. There has been quite a number of homeless and it's gone down considerably, so I do think it's improving. I think during the cold weather there should be more shelters that they can go to even if it's just for a day.

**Hector Rodriguez**  
Williamsbridge



I feel that I see more people on the street that are homeless. You see it in their face that they are needing and asking all the time for a dollar and they don't have a place to stay, but they do need clothing and food. I see them at Jacobi Hospital on a 24-hour basis and it's a big problem. With so many giving, there's always going to be a problem of corruption.

**Raymond Villano**  
Pelham Parkway



I think (former Mayor Michael) Bloomberg hid them and now that he's out of office, they're somehow being let out. I take the trains every day and I see them everywhere. It's out of control; People are always asking me for money. What can the city really do? I read somewhere that they're going to have shelters for teenagers and if you were homeless, would you really want to be in the shelter? You'd be better off trying to live in a park or wherever you can go to survive. I'm sure the shelters are unpleasant. It's a sad situation.

**Steve Bobker**  
Van Cortlandt Park South



To be honest with you, there are more homeless now than ever before I think. I see them everywhere and people would rather play Lotto than buy them a slice of pizza. The city tries to do the best it can, but it's also up to the homeless to accept the help and go into the shelters. A shelter is never safe and they carry everything they own with them.

**Mike Marquez**  
Soundview

**Editor's Note:** Have an idea for an Inquiring Photographer question? Send suggestions to [dcruz@norwoodnews.org](mailto:dcruz@norwoodnews.org).

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# More Senior Housing to Abut Serviam Gardens

By **WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE**

New units of senior housing are coming to Bedford Park on the grounds of Mount St. Ursula, abutting the Serviam Gardens senior facility, to address the growing need of affordable housing for the elderly.

Once complete, the impending Serviam Heights will add 195 new affordable units of housing to the neighborhood. A new, nine-story tower is planned for 2848 Bainbridge Ave., just north of Serviam Gardens and Serviam Towers. The project will also rehabilitate the convent on the grounds to include apartments, while crews will repurpose the chapel into a senior center.

John M. Reilly, the executive director of Fordham Bedford Community Partners (FBCP), told the *Norwood News* that the majority of the \$90 million price tag is coming from the city. Construction is expected to start by the end of January, and last until late 2017.

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) will subsidize the units, and priority will be given to seniors already on its waiting list, Reilly



Photo by Wendy Joan Biddlecombe

**SERVIAM GARDENS**, A senior housing facility that's become a staple in Bedford Park, will have new neighbors via Serviam Heights, an affordable senior housing site expected to open in late 2017.

said.

Rosanna Viera, senior project manager at FBCP, said the organization partnered with NYCHA because the housing organization executed a Section 8 project-based contract. "I can't say all these apartments are going to Bronx residents, unfortunately," Viera said. "But it was the only way we could build."

Viera said the new project addresses the need for senior housing in the bor-

ough. The developers received 5,000 applications for 243 apartments that became available in 2011 via HPD's lottery, and Viera said FBCP continues to get calls and inquiries on the affordable apartments. The first phase of the senior housing, built on nine acres of land acquired from the Ursuline Sisters Christian order, opened in 2009.

Most of the apartments in Serviam Heights will be one-bedroom and some studio apartments, with the same

green and sustainable building features and amenities as the rest of the complex. Parking will also be available.

Reilly said crews will first renovate the inside of the convent—which is expected to last through the rest of the winter—and said every effort will be made to minimize the construction impact on neighbors. "I think it's a beautiful project. We're preserving the convent, and making the exterior of the new building look similar," Reilly said.

A NYCHA spokeswoman said canvassing letters will be sent to eligible seniors on the NYCHA waiting list about six months before the building receives its temporary certification of occupancy.

During an early January meeting of the Bedford Mosholu Community Association, president Barbara Stronczer said she understood the construction would not "interfere with the school" and would mean "a lot more people in the area." "I'm glad they're keeping the convent—it's like a fortress on the hill there," Stronczer said.

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### NEWLY REHABILITATED APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Mt.Sharon LLC is pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted to fill vacancies and create a waiting list for affordable housing rental apartments under rehabilitation at **2432 University Avenue, 2085 Walton Avenue, and 3058 Bailey Avenue**. These buildings are being rehabilitated through the Low-Income Affordable Marketplace Program (LAMP) of the New York City Housing Development Corporation and the Participation Loan Program (PLP) of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. The size, rent and targeted income distribution for the apartments are as follows:

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	4		\$38,538 - \$51,780
3 Bedrooms	3	\$1,247	\$44,640 - \$46,620
	4		\$44,640 - \$51,780
	5		\$44,640 - \$55,980
	6		\$44,640 - \$60,120

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## Oval Staircase Restored



Photo by David Cruz

**THE PARKS DEPARTMENT** has restored the staircase on the northeast end of Williamsbridge Oval Park, months after it mysteriously collapsed. Crews spent the past few weeks replacing the wall's stone slabs and smoothing out the staircase. They've now turned their attention to the staircase opposite the newly repaired one.

## International Film Festival Ushers World Premiere to Lehman College

**WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE**

When "Graffiti: The Bronx Street Art Renaissance" screens at the Bronx International Film Festival later this month, filmmaker Dan Perez will finally see his own work in the borough where he was born and lived for the first 27 years of his life.

"This feels really good, I really wanted this film to be in the Bronx festival," said Perez, who now lives in South Florida.

The film follows several renowned street artists from the Bronx and Baltimore over four days as they painted walls in the Bronx, chronicling the "anarchistic" tradition of graffiti in the borough, and a shift toward more positive murals aimed at building up underserved neighborhoods.

"Street art has become such a phenomenon, in every part of the world you have your street art district," Perez said. "In the ghettos of Mexico and Brazil, street art has helped turn the mentality of people in those communities around. In the Bronx

I think it would be well-received--we're still [holding on to the] badge as the birthplace of graffiti."

Perez, who regularly scours Instagram for street art, is seeing a boom in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn but "rarely sees anything coming from the Bronx." "They have their work cut out for them if this is a badge of honor they don't want to relinquish," he said.

With 70 films being shown over nine days, the 2016 Bronx International Film Festival is the largest and longest in the past 14 years, said festival co-founder and program director, Hector Olivieri.

Last year's festival lasted for three days in two different locations. Olivieri said the extra days allow him to screen more films; there were 700 films submitted for the 2016 festival consideration.

And, unlike Perez's short, many of the films in the festival are from filmmakers around the world who have no previous connection to the

Bronx. Films, many of which are having their world premiere, are coming to the Bronx festival from Australia, France, Canada, China and Japan.

"A lot of the films have themes that I recognize having been born and raised in the Bronx. Others have nothing to do with that, but I still walk away with something," Olivieri said. "It's important to pick films that you walk away with something--and you may or may not like it. I don't pick films with nice, happy Hollywood endings; we have plenty of that."

"I believe there are movies and there are films, movies are black and white, films tend to live in the gray area. I like to pick films," Olivieri added.

The Bronx International Film Festival runs from Jan. 22 to 31 at Lehman College. A festival pass is \$30; a day pass is \$7. More information and ticket sales at [bronxstage.com](http://bronxstage.com).

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# Celebration, Among Friends and Family, for Bedford Park Centenarian

By JASMINE GOMEZ

In a playfully decorated room filled with pink balloons and bright tablecloths, friends and family of Mary Lauria gathered to hail her 100th birthday.

But if anyone were looking for a centenarian, it was pretty tough to spot her. That's because for a 100-year-old, Lauria moves like lightning, a fitting description for "Fast Mary" as many of her friends call her. But with a tiara placed on her head, Lauria was the center of attention at her birthday bash, hosted by the Sister Annunciatina Bethell Senior Center in Bedford Park.

Lauria, a tiny woman with golden curls and the spirit of a young woman, lives on her own, atypical for a woman her age. Asked what the secret to such a long life was, Lauria laughed. "I walk every day," said Lauria. "I do a lot of walking. I don't stay still."

As guests poured into the birthday celebration, Lauria greeted each with a smile, standing up several times from her seat at the center of her birthday table for photo ops and handshakes.

Patricia Burlace, executive direc-



Photo by Jasmine Gomez

**MONSIGNOR KEVIN O'BRIEN** of St. Philip Neri (l) gives birthday wishes to Mary Lauria, who turned 100 years old in January.

tor of the senior center, described Lauria as very active, adding she's attended the center for over 25 years. "She comes every day. Even when we had some snowstorms and we closed, Mary came to check just to make sure" said Burlace.

Invited guests included her great grandchildren, grandson, and daughter. Carol Camille Roca, Lauria's daughter, described her mom as very energetic, friendly, and a people lover. "She needs to be where the action is," said Roca.

A slideshow of pictures of Lauria attending a variety of the center's events over the years was presented, with each slide coinciding with tiny blurbs about her life and music from "What a Wonderful World." In one blurb, Lauria describes giving birth to her daughter, Roca, as her favorite memory in her 100 years of living.

At the celebration, Lauria also received several honors from Councilman Andrew Cohen's office, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz's office, Community Board 7, and from the New York City Department for the Aging, who sent over a representative to recite a poem called "Longevity Rap."

The celebration included a meal consisting of rice and a ham and cheese filled baked chicken, chosen by Lauria. At the end of the meal, Lauria was able to blow out the candles on her birthday cheesecake and pose for pictures showcasing the smile that makes Lauria such a spritful character.

Asked what her one piece of advice to others would be, Lauria said be kind, come to the center every day, and to "help everyone when they need help."

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# NORWOOD NEWS

# BUSINESS MATTERS

Photo courtesy Neighborhood Trust Financial Partners

**FERNANDO DURAN (ABOVE RIGHT)**, a financial literacy coach for Neighborhood Trust Financial Partners, leads a “Getting Ahead” class on personal finance.

## Choices, Not Sacrifices, Learned at UNHP Personal Finance Class

By **DAVID CRUZ**

Susan Mohan of Bedford Park admits to having teetered toward overspending. Her take-home pay, which never seemed to go far enough, had somehow slipped into a deep abyss wrapped in mystery. For her sake she realized that taking control of her finances, and envisioning a home she hopes to own in a few years, was a key to unlocking the mystery.

For Greg Lobel of Co-op City, cash withdrawals from ATMs not linked to his bank certainly cut into his costs, though looking back, he dismissed how far they were setting him back. “It’s one of those things you don’t think about sometimes,” said Lobel, a substitute teacher.

The two, having never met, decided they needed help. After all, Mohan was a single mother and sole breadwinner while Lobel was facing \$43,000 of student loan debts.

Achieving financial zen would take five weeks, soul searching, and discipline through the University Neighborhood Housing Program’s (UNHP) “Getting Ahead” personal finance workshop. The free sessions are just a sample of the many financial workshops offered in the Bronx, including one-day financial literacy classes held at a number of New York Public Library branches each month. Area colleges also offer personal finance courses, but unlike those offered by UNHP and the public library system, they come with a fee.

To conduct the class, UNHP secures pro-bono services of Neighborhood Trust Financial Partners, a 21-year nonprofit that teaches personal

finance skills to low-income residents of communities across the city. The group works at 40 sites, dispatching a trained financial literacy coach tasked with both assessing a client’s current understanding of money management and offering tools to improve upon it.

Workshops are geared to a clientele that’s largely working poor, whose spending typically exceeds savings. The tough financial circumstances create a nasty debt cycle – people who’ve declared bankruptcy may take the class, and often are mandated to do so by their bank. Today, 30.5 percent of the borough’s population is deemed working poor, a status defined by the federal government as individuals in New York state earning \$12.69 an hour for full-time, year-round work. For a family of two in the Bronx to be self-sufficient, that is, to be able to cover all the basic housing, food, transportation and other costs of living, required \$37,488 in 2014, according to the Center for Women’s Welfare at the University of Washington. While that self-sufficiency standard was lower than in other parts of the city, it remained unattainable for many in the Bronx.

The mechanics of personal finance are taught weekly, and the topics covered include the benefits of setting short- and long-term financial goals, various savings and investing techniques, the benefits and drawbacks to credit card use, and budgeting.

Disclosing one’s personal finances can be daunting, even embarrassing, in front of a group of unfamiliar

faces. But Fernando Duran, a financial literacy coach for Neighborhood Trust Financial Partners, notes that the experience, a kind of financial catharsis for many, can create a bond among members of the group. “After those five weeks we talk about the ins and outs of our financial lives together, which is stressful, exciting, sometimes sad, sometimes frustrating. And then we sort of dig out and make improvements,” said Duran.

Classes are interactive, steering away from a lecture-based format, with participants engaged in various activities that involve creating budgets, an exercise during which Duran casts little judgment about what’s considered worthy or frivolous. The session, usually held in the third class, comes down to simple do’s and don’ts.

“If someone’s spending \$400 a week going out to eat, and that’s important to them, we’ll say, ‘All right, we’ll try to find the money elsewhere so that’s feasible.’” But if it’s not important to them, and they find this is something they didn’t even realize they were doing, “like \$20 here, \$5 there, adds up over the course of a month, then maybe they decide to make that change,” said Duran. “It’s all about the choices that are important to the client rather than sacrificing something for something else.”

Throughout the workshop, participants follow the fictional story of Emma, who transformed herself from a debt-ridden individual to a financial literacy maven. Her personal finance stories on budgeting or credit cards are made up but grounded in

real-life experiences of others, and form the basis of each week’s two-hour topic.

Tweaking one’s financial habits doesn’t end at the fifth week. Even after participants pick up their certificates upon completion of the course, applying what’s learned comes next. For some, like Mohan, practicing the art of money tracking involves self-discipline during moments of temptation.

“Most of the time I’m at the clearance racks with whatever money I have left,” said Mohan, whenever the urge to buy clothes arises. There are days when buying is out of the question. “When you’re tight with the money...you have to say, ‘You know what? I don’t need that. I’m gonna put that there.’”

With the help of UNHP, Mohan set up a savings account at a credit union.

Lobel now travels to his bank’s ATM to load up on his weekly spending money, avoiding additional fees charged at convenience ATMs. He does slip from time to time, heading to a convenient bank, though he’s made a point to stick with his bank. Two years have gone by, and he’s since imparted what he’s learned to others. His girlfriend plans to register for UNHP’s next scheduled personal finance class.

**Editor’s Note:** UNHP’s next personal finance class is scheduled for Jan. 28, at 2751 Grand Concourse. For more information, and to sign up, call (718) 933-2539.

# In the Bronx, Presence of Chain Stores Grows

By DAVID CRUZ

The Bronx's commercial landscape is becoming home to a growing number of chains across the borough, according to a recent report by a New York City-based think tank.

But while some stores have firmly placed their commercial footprint in the Bronx, other establishments are leaving it altogether.

The Center for an Urban Future, a nonprofit research group, reports that the presence of national retailers – defined as a retailer having at least two locations in New York City and at least one location in another state – rose by three percent, or 30 stores in the Bronx last year, the most for any borough. Their findings were outlined in their annual “State of the Chains” report, which tracks changes in the number of stores in all five boroughs utilizing the store locator feature on a chain's website.

The findings represent improved spending power among Bronx residents and renewed interest in a borough that still lags in the number of chain stores compared to the rest of the city.

“All sorts of national companies that, until fairly recently, have stayed away from the borough are now seeing dollar signs,” said Jonathan Bowles, executive director for the Center for an Urban Future. “They're seeing a relatively untapped market.”

Growth in the number of business outlets has also been helped by higher earning power among Bronx residents and a reduced crime rate, consistent with a trend across the city over the past two decades.

Dominating the list of new establishments is MetroPCS, a cell phone company whose commercial pres-



Photo by David Cruz

**METROPCS, THE AFFORDABLY** priced cell phone store, led the way in commercial expansion, opening 10 stores in the Bronx in 2015, according to the Center for an Urban Future. This store at 326 E. 204th St. in Norwood is frequented by many shoppers.

ence in the Bronx grew from 52 stores in 2014 to 62 to stores in 2015, according to the report. At one of its stores in Norwood, Fernando Peguero, the store manager, credited the borough's cheaper rents with convincing owners to set up shop in the Bronx.

“The rent in Manhattan is too expensive for a business to grow,” said Peguero.

Among other national stores that expanded in the Bronx is GNC, the vitamin supplement shop, which opened four stores in 2015. A spokesperson for GNC said its larger presence is due to the Bronx's “size and diversity of its population.”

“We will continue to invest there, both in terms of company-owned stores as well as franchise stores,” the spokesperson added. “Additionally, the density of the population allows for

continued development.”

Dunkin' Donuts has also opened at more locations. A perennial favorite, the coffee and donut purveyor has 80 stores scattered around the borough, maintaining a higher number than any other retail business.

Justin Drake, senior manager of public relations at Dunkin' Brands Group, said the brand will continue to “strategically expand our presence in the borough.” Drake declined to disclose the financial status of its establishments in the Bronx.

But while some national names are making their mark in the Bronx, others have scaled back. Rite Aid, McDonalds, Subway and Duane Reade/Walgreens all either shut some of their Bronx stores down or did not expand their number of stores in the Bronx in 2014. A spokesperson for Rite Aid simply said that it simply did not renew the lease for one of its stores in the neighborhood of Soundview. Still, Rite Aid's presence is very much felt in the Bronx with a current tally of 39 locations.

How many stores are opened often is linked not only to economics and demographics within neighborhoods, but also to the ease of starting a franchise, which varies from one company to another.

For example, the criteria for opening a Dunkin' Donuts store involves the franchisee having some experience in the restaurant industry and startup monies in the amount of \$250,000 minimum liquid assets and \$500,000 mini-

mum net worth, according to its website. GNC, on the other hand, requires an estimated \$200,000 in net worth, with a \$40,000 startup fee and \$100,000 in liquid assets.

The growth of chain stores in the Bronx is not welcomed by those who see the data as further proof of an eroding small business sector. Kirsten Theodos with Take Back NYC, a lobbying group supporting mom and pop stores, pointed to a 30 percent increase in the number of small business court evictions in the Bronx last year, with more than 1200 small businesses ordered closed.

“[S]adly, it is not all surprising that the Bronx is also outpacing every other borough in the increase of chain stores,” said Theodos, in a statement. “The first victims of gentrification are almost always a neighborhood's mom and pop business and their employees.”

For several years, the group has attempted to convince the New York City Council to introduce a bill that would require commercial landlords to offer its tenants minimum 10-year leases. So far, the bill remains in committee.

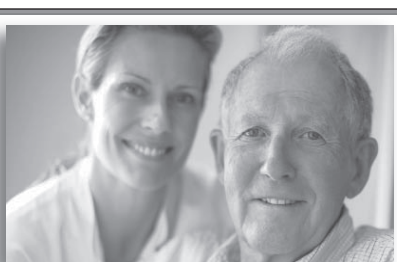
Bowles suggests small and big businesses can co-exist in the Bronx, given that there are still so few stores in pockets of the borough. “Bronx consumers certainly have more choices than they had in a while,” he said. “They don't have to leave the borough for some things.”

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# A View of the Harlem River, From Montefiore's Moses Campus

By DAVID CRUZ

A picture is worth a thousand words. It's also worth a moment of tranquility.

At Montefiore Medical Center, a first-of-its-kind visual arts program looks to enhance and support a sense of calm for patients, their families, and employees of Montefiore. Dubbed the Montefiore Fine Art Program and Collection and founded in 2014, the program seeks to find new and challenging ways to integrate contemporary artwork into the daily life of the health system. Jodi Moise serves as founder and curator of the Fine Art Program, which is built through acquisitions, commissions, exhibitions and other related visual arts programming.

Montefiore has now entered the world of art curating, with its first public gallery showcasing photographs of Bronx-bred artist Duane Bailey-Castro. The current exhibition Connecting People, Strengthening Communities: The Harlem River Bridges, features 26 photographs, chronicling the story of New York City's consolidation and growth through the 15 scenic bridges that span the Harlem River, an eight-mile tidal strait between the Bronx and Manhattan that seldom receives attention from



Photo courtesy Montefiore Health System

**DR. STEVEN SAFYER, CEO** of Montefiore Health System, stops by the ARTViews Gallery at the Moses Campus to view works from the Bronx Artists Documentary Project. He's given a tour by Jodi Moise, curator of Montefiore's Fine Art Program and Collection, founded in 2014.

the art world.

Bailey-Castro's photographs invite the viewer to pause, explore, and appreciate the surprising beauty of these little-known engineering marvels and their surrounding landscape. This exhibit of NYC's Harlem River Valley represents the main body of Bailey-Castro's photographic work.

"I'm actually a cancer survivor myself, so I pretty much understand the im-

portance of needing to be inspired when you're going into your treatment or going through some kind of medical illness or problem," said Bailey-Castro, a Concourse Village resident who works as a history teacher.

Rotating exhibition programs is a main feature of the Montefiore Fine Art Program, which can be viewed at the ARTViews Gallery. Launched in fall 2015, the gallery seeks to enrich the lives of all

those in the medical center as well as the community by juxtaposing contemporary art in a medical environment. The gallery sponsors four exhibitions each year featuring artists of the Bronx.

"We try to not only recognize the immediate community, but also to recognize the artists of the Bronx," said Moise.

The Bronx Artists Documentary Center helped launch the work of artists at the ARTViews Gallery recently.

"The arts and artists of the Bronx are among the borough's greatest resources. Our ARTViews Gallery at Montefiore seeks to recognize and celebrate the visual artists of the Bronx, providing this extraordinary opportunity for creative expression unprecedented in a medical environment," said Rachelle Sanders, VP and Chief Development Officer.

The ARTViews Gallery is located at Montefiore's Moses Campus, 111 E. 210th St., and is open to the public seven days/week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The exhibition is on view through Apr. 1.

For more information, visit The Montefiore Fine Art Program and Collection webpage at <http://www.montefiore.org/artprogram>.

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### HELP WANTED

**Bronx Arts Ensemble**, a well-established Bronx-based music performance/arts organization and a leading provider of arts-in-education programs for New York City schools for over 40 years, **seeks a part-time bookkeeper**. Responsibilities include: Payroll Service - Processing and tax filing for staff, pay payroll tax liability and file payroll forms quarterly (NYS-45 and Form 941) and yearly W-2 and W-3 forms. Accounts Payable - Processing and paying bills. Account Receivable - Coordinate preparation of invoices with program coordinator and the collection process. File 1099 and 1096 from contractors and vendors. Bank/Investment accounts reconciliation monthly. Prepare and provide reports and analysis of program spending as it relates to program budget. Prepare budget modifications as necessary. Maintain the journals, subsidiary journals and ledger accounts in Quickbooks. Perform other duties as assigned. Qualifications: Must be proficient in Quickbooks and computer literate with a working knowledge of spreadsheets, Excel and Word. Please send a cover letter and resume Attention to David Nussenbaum by email to [davidn@bronxartsensemble.org](mailto:davidn@bronxartsensemble.org). Please write Part-Time Bookkeeper on the subject line.



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## NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

### Bronx Youth Heard

The *Norwood News* is accepting applications for Bronx Youth Heard, a free afterschool program that teaches journalism skills to Bronx high school students ages 14 to 18. Applications are available online at <http://bit.ly/BYH-Fall2015>. For more information, contact David Cruz, program director for Bronx Youth Heard and editor-in-chief of *Norwood News*, at [dcruz@norwoodnews.org](mailto:dcruz@norwoodnews.org) or at (718) 324-4998. The deadline is Monday, Jan. 25.

### Immigration/Legal Services

Immigration and legal services are available at the Office of Councilman Fernando Cabrera, 107 E. Burnside Ave. Appointments are required. To schedule one, call (347) 590-2875.

### Free 2016 NYC Parking Calendar

Free 2016 parking calendars are available at the office of As-

semblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, 3107 Kingsbridge Ave., between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. The calendars are also available on his website by going to <http://bit.ly/AJDCalendar>. For more information, call (718) 796-5345.

### Foreclosure Prevention

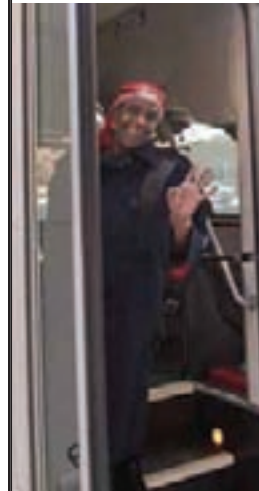
The Northwest Bronx Resource Center, 2715 Bainbridge Ave., hosts a foreclosure prevention workshop every first and third Thursday of each month from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Speak to a specialist from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to learn how to stay in your home. To schedule an appointment, call (718) 933-2539.

### Free Income Tax Guide

A free copy of the "2015 Income Tax Guide" by the Financial Advisors Group is available to anyone. The guide covers current tax law provisions, capital gains and losses, and plenty more. Call (347) 575-5045 to request a copy.

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# Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

## EDITOR'S PICK

### Get Your Groove On at Lehman

Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W. presents **Rock and Roll is Here to Stay**, concert featuring a number of groups performing doo wop music, Jan. 23 at 8 p.m. in the Concert Hall (tickets are \$45 to \$55). Programs are subject to change. For more information and program details, call (718) 960-8833.

## Onstage

The Riverdale Children's Theatre presents two musical performances at Lehman College's Lovinger Theatre, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W.: **Madagascar the Musical**, Saturdays, Jan. 23 and 30 at 8 p.m. and Sundays, Jan. 24 and 31 at 1 and 5 p.m., featuring a cast of 3rd to 9th graders; and **Thoroughly Modern Millie**, Feb. 4 at 7 p.m., Feb. 6 at 8 p.m., and Feb. 7 at 1 and 5 p.m. Tickets for each is \$15 online and \$16 at the door. For more information, call (646) 436-3045 or visit [www.riverdaletheatre.org](http://www.riverdaletheatre.org).

The Riverdale YM-YWHA, 5625 Arlington Ave., presents **Concert**, Jan. 26 at 10:30 a.m. featuring pianist/singer performing **The Best of Broadway**. For more information, call (718) 548-8200 ext. 204.

## Events

The Family Learning Place at The Children's Hospital at Montefiore, 3415 Bainbridge Ave., presents **Movie Day**, Jan. 30 at 10 a.m. For more information and to register, call (718) 741-2357.

Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd., Pelham Bay Pk., presents **Poetry**

**in the Parlors**, Jan. 24 at 4:30 p.m., featuring two poets reading from their works, followed by guitarist. Tickets are \$10/adults; \$8/seniors/students; free/members. For more information, call (718) 885-1461 or visit [www.bpmm.org](http://www.bpmm.org).

The New York Botanical Garden presents **All Aboard With Thomas and Friends**, through Jan. 24, featuring sing-alongs, mini performance adventure, and crayons and coloring for the kids. Kids can be photographed with Driver Sam and Thomas the Tank Engine which can be printed out and purchased onsite. They also receive a certificate and temporary tattoo. For more information, call (718) 817-8700. For more information, call (718) 817-8716.

The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation presents free: **Seasonal Crafts**, each Friday through Jan. 29 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at Poe Park's Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse (at Kingsbridge Road). For more information, call (718) 365-5516.

The Bronx International Film Festival will screen **independent films** at Lehman College's Studio Theatre, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., Jan. 22 to 31. This includes 70 short and feature narrative and



Photo courtesy Lehman Center for the Performing Arts  
**MUSICAL DOO WOP** troupes will take the stage at the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts for the third annual "Rock & Roll is Here to Stay," Jan. 23.

documentary films; audience may chat with filmmakers in attendance. \$30/all screenings; \$7/daily pass. For more information and film details, trailers and schedules, visit [bronxfilmfestival.com](http://bronxfilmfestival.com).

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Hoot and Howl, to sculpt an owl and a coyote in air-dry clay, Jan. 23 and 24; and Sweet Dreams, Hibernators, to hear tales, then make a bear, bat, toad, mask, or woodsy home, Jan. 30 and 31; both in WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also in the WH House, at 2 p.m. is: **Family Nature Program: Whoo's Who in Your Neighborhood**, to meet a live owl, Jan. 24, and **Piano Concert**, Jan. 31, featuring classical music (tickets: \$28; \$22/member; \$15/ages 8 to 18; \$12/member. 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 the following events for children: **Hands-on Projects at 4 p.m.:** (ages 7 to 12; in-person preregistration required), Cotton Ball Polar Bear, Jan. 21; Winter Tree Collage Making, Jan. 28; and Valentine's Card Making, Feb. 4. Teens/young adults can attend **From the Neck Up:** to create miniature busts using fire or self-hardening clay,

Feb. 4 at 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

The Moshulu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children: **Winter Wonderland Puppet Imagination Station:** (ages 5 to 12), to make a puppet, Jan. 22 at 3:30 p.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy film: "Jurassic World," Jan. 30 at 1:30 p.m. Adults can attend **Free Computer Classes** to learn email and basic computer information, Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for kids: **Toddler Story Time and Craft at 11:15 a.m.:** (ages 3 to 5), stories, songs, then create a craft, Jan. 21 and 28; **Kids Get Active Fridays at 3 p.m.:** (ages 5 to 12), to enjoy dance and zumba, Jan. 22 and 29; and **Kids' Pajama Party:** (ages 18 months to 12 years; registration required), read-alouds and create a craft, Jan. 25 at 6 p.m. Adults can attend **Computer Basics at noon:** Jan. 21, 28 and Feb. 4. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

**NOTE:** Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org), and should be received by Jan. 25 for the next publication date of Feb. 4.



Photo courtesy Riverdale Theater

**GET YOUR TICKETS** for **Madagascar the Musical** at Lehman College's Lovinger Theater.



# Sector Shakeup at 52nd Precinct

(continued from page 1)

geographically and tactically.

While precinct patrol coverage is now broken up into 15 geographic sectors, the new Neighborhood Based Policing plan calls for it to be divided into four sectors. Each new sector will have two Neighborhood Coordinating Officers--in effect, super beat cops--assigned.

"Their job will be to get involved with the community, attend local meetings, get to know the neighborhood and its crime problems," said precinct commander, Inspector Nilda Hofmann. Each sector will also have two dedicated sector car teams, giving them free time to deal with local issues while other precinct patrol cars respond to 911 emergency calls, she added.

Hofmann said she is working to keep neighborhoods geographically intact within each new sector in the precinct, which also covers Bedford Park, Kingsbridge Heights,

University Heights, and Fordham.

The new plan, already in effect within the 47th Precinct in the northeast Bronx, and to be running in four other Bronx precincts by April, is expected to get rolling in the Five-Two sometime late this spring or early summer, she said.

Community Board 7 Chair Adaline Walker-Santiago is eager to see the plan come to her precinct. "We know the plan will work because it's been very successful in the 47th Precinct," she said, "and it's involving the community organizations and the business leaders of the community in helping to solve crime. We love working with our precinct. They've done an excellent job."

Besides the new policing plan, Hofmann said she's hoping a recent major takedown of a local drug gang, along with now active investigations into other gangs in the hot zone running along Decatur

and Jerome avenues, north of 192nd Street, will help reduce crime this year.

The precinct racked up 12 homicides last year, compared to seven in 2014. Shootings were also up, from 28 in 2014 to 33 last year, with a number of those gang-related.

Hofmann attributed most of last year's felony-level assaults--558 compared to 542 in 2014--to domestic and gang-related violence. Rapes increased 7.1 percent, with 30 last year compared to 28 in 2014.

But helping to win the year was a 26 percent drop in robberies, from 371 to 275, while grand larceny, which lumped cell phone and laptop thefts into the category, dropped 5.8 percent, going from 710 in 2014 to 669 last year.

Besides the new Neighborhood Based Policing plan, each precinct cop has received a department-issued cell phone connected to NYPD



## 52nd PRECINCT CRIME STATS COMPARISON

Crime	2015	2014	%Change
Murder	12	7	71.4%
Rape	30	28	7.1%
Robbery	457	439	4.1%
Fel. Assault	558	542	3.0%
Burglary	275	371	-25.9%
Gr. Larceny	669	710	-5.8%
G.L.A.	111	102	8.8%
Shooting Vic.	33	28	17.9%
Shooting Inc.	31	24	29.2%
Rape 1	23	22	4.5%

Source: NYPD

databases.

"They can run the address while responding to a 911 call, giving them information about the location, the number of times 911 has been called, the number of domestic and wanted cases in the building, and any orders of protection," said Hofmann. "It'll all pop up for them."

While cops in general have been taking a beating in some of the public's eyes, Hofmann said she stresses to her officers how their image is perceived. "I tell them to treat people the same way you'd treat your family," she said. "Build community relations and you won't have a problem."



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