



NORWOOD NEWS

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
SCHOOL STABBING | PG. 4



SEE PICS: NORWOOD NEWS
SNAPSHOTS | PG. 11

SPECIAL REPORT

FACES OF THE NW BX. HOMELESS



Photo by Adi Talwar

SUNNY, WHO'S BEEN homeless since 2006, sits on a bench inside Dead End Park on Oct. 6. Sunny is among the many homeless settled in Norwood and its adjacent neighborhoods.

By **DAVID CRUZ, AARON MAYORGA, and YARA PALIN**

From the freneticism of Fordham to the more bucolic parts of Mosholu Parkway, the uptick in homelessness has not gone unnoticed by residents. In many in-

stances, makeshift beds can be spotted in parts of Fordham while a camp for the homeless is commonly used in a leafy section of Dead End Park by Allerton Ballfields.

For the number of home-

less the *Norwood News* spoke to, living on the streets is a life more familiar than a roof over their head. It also presents the safest option. And as the city Department of Homeless Services (DHS) mulls over the site of an-

other shelter in Norwood, a move that has roiled community stakeholders, convincing the homeless to abandon the outdoors for a homeless shelter remains the hardest part. Many of

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NORWOOD NEWS

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Letters To The Editor

Mosholu Public Library

As stated in the *Norwood News* [Sept. 28 - Oct. 11 issue], I am infuriated by the sudden gap in services at the Mosholu - NYPL Branch. We no longer have Baby Lap Sit, Lego Club, STEM Workshops, Storytime, activities celebrating literary milestones, children's book club, or an adult book group. Our neighborhood's library has been stripped of its ability to serve a population with the largest need today. Even more, our communities' ability to encourage intelligent discourse and evaluate sources of information has been hampered by NYPL's lack of planning; toys put out during story time and a security guard treating curious children like criminals is no way to foster a literate, innovative community.

The implications of NYPL's poor planning are indeed dire. The first children's librarian left on Aug. 4. When his transfer was approved weeks before, a posting should have been posted to replace him. When the second children's librarian left around Labor Day (the week of schools starting), a posting should have been posted when her transfer was approved. It is now October and still, we have no children's librarian. This sets a dangerous tone in our community; it insults our community.

In a city where institutions encourage artistic and intellectual pursuits, I am angry with the NYPL. As a donor (I have spent the last 10 years donating modestly and supporting it frantically with my consistent patronage, contacting elected officials to make sure the NYPL has adequate funding, and constantly lecturing students [I teach at CCNY]

and neighbors about the virtues of a system that offers unlimited access to knowledge). I am outraged that, today, when our democracy, citizenship, and intellectual health depends upon literacy, our children are shut out. Our community is sacrificed by inefficiency and indifference from NYPL.

Move a temporary children's librarian into the Mosholu Branch while you "search" for replacements. Demand the branch manager facilitate the programming that was cut when NYPL decided our community was not valued enough to replace what it had lost in a timely fashion.

**Elisabeth von Uhl, MFA
Norwood**

The Reelection of Mayor de Blasio

Mayor Bill de Blasio said he would fight income inequality while bragging about settling 99 percent of the labor contracts with city workers. But all those contracts gave workers real money pay cuts.

He promised to crack down on police misconduct. But Daniel Pan-teleo, the cop who choked to death a non-threatening Eric Garner, remains on modified duty collecting a paycheck. But Police Sgt. Hugh Barry, who killed a woman swinging a bat at his head, has been fired.

In his debate against the truly honest and independent former City Councilman Sal Albanese, de Blasio told the following whoppers, that violence was down in Rikers Island and school graduation rates were at an all-time high. Then he had the gall to claim Albanese had his facts wrong.

As Albanese pointed out, de Blasio's idea of building affordable hous-

ing are apartments a woman making \$30,000 a year or a young firefighter making less than \$60,000 a year cannot afford.

De Blasio says Senator Bernie Sanders shows the correct direction for the Democratic Party. But de Blasio supported Hillary Clinton over Sanders in the Democratic Primary. But Albanese will be on the ballot in November as the Reform Party candidate, so you can vote for him.

**Richard Warren
Norwood**

R.I.P. Andrew Sandler

I read with sadness the articles about the late Andrew Sandler in [a] recent edition of the paper [Aug. 17-30 issue]. He is missed throughout the neighborhoods where he worked for the good of the entire community.

I was especially heartened by his assistance with the Land Use and Zoning Study Report by the Collective for Community, Culture and Environment (CCCE). I felt that both Andrew and the Board realized the potential destruction my neighbors and I face due to the R8 zoning we currently live with. The CCCE made recommendations to limit zoning in and around the narrow, one way, lower density streets of Bedford Park.

I hope the Board and the City will continue to honor Andrew's memory by taking seriously the recommendations from one of the last major projects of his tenure. I will always remember him fondly and with gratitude for his concern for our community's needs.

**Lois Harr
Bedford Park**

Public and Community Meetings

COMMUNITY BOARD 7 will hold its general board meeting on Oct. 17 at 6:30 p.m. at North Central Bronx Hospital, 3424 Kossuth Ave. Committee meetings are held on the following dates at the board office, 229 E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Executive Committee meets on Oct. 12; Website Acknowledgement and Media Committee meets on Oct. 25; Economic Development Committee meets on Oct. 31; and Community Relations & LTP Committee meets on Oct. 31 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 944-5650.

More Stop Work Orders, More Violations for Stagg Project

By DAVID GREENE

Although the latest stop work order for a troubled building under construction in Norwood has been lifted, unpaid fines levied against the developer are expected to pass \$83,000.

The property at 3084 Webster Ave., at the corner of East 203rd Street, an 11-story residence under construction by The Stagg Group, currently has a total of 19 violations, seven which are still pending before an administrative court, according to records by the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB).

The most recent stop work order was issued on Oct. 2, when inspectors found a construction elevator, also known as a hoist, that was not operational at the site. DOB rules mandate that construction elevators must be operational when work is under way. The stop work order prevented any work from being done above 75 feet. The needed elevator repairs were made and construction workers were back at the site on Oct. 5.

The site also had a stop work order issued on Sept. 27, for an illegally erected "supported scaffold." The outcome of that violation will be determined at a proceeding by the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH).

The DOB issued the fines to Be Bronx Builders, the construction arm of the Stagg Group, which has offices on Pitman Avenue and White Plains Road. Should OATH find the firm guilty, Be Bronx Builders could be hit

with more than \$83,000 in fines. So far, OATH has not issued the fines. In seven instances, the firm failed to appear before an OATH proceeding.

The latest fine adds on a history of troubles for the building going as far back as April when a crane dropped a load of concrete three floors, causing the project to halt construction for nearly a month. According to building records, fines for that day alone topped \$47,000-- \$25,000 for not having a site safety coordinator on scene, \$12,000 for construction debris scattered on the floor at the time of the accident and \$10,000 for having caused the accident.

The Stagg Group has led in the number of new buildings popping up in Norwood and Bedford Park. Its signature construction project at the corner of Van Cortlandt Park South and the Grand Concourse, the Mosholu Grand, has not yet started.

Meantime, the Webster Avenue project is now one year behind schedule as the anticipated completion date was planned for late last year, according to a sign posted at the site.

A DOB spokesman told the *Norwood News*, "Whether you pay the fine or not, we want to make sure at the Department of Buildings that if you are issued a violation... that everything is code compliant and safe and we want to make sure that that violation has been corrected."

Repeated calls for comment to Be Bronx Builders and The Stagg Group were not immediately returned.

Have an Opinion On What You've Read in Our Paper?

The Norwood News loves, welcomes and encourages letters to the editor.



Write To:

David Cruz,

Editor-in-Chief

Norwood News

3400 Reservoir Oval East

Bronx, NY 10467



Photo by David Greene

THIS FUTURE STAGG property (pictured), currently under construction at 3084 Webster Ave. at the corner of East 203rd Street, may have to foot \$83,000 in fines for violations filed by the New York City Department of Buildings.

Letters should be 400 words max, and include writer's name. Anonymous letters will not be published, but names will be withheld upon reasonable request.

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



Following the first killing in a NYC public school in 25 years, we asked readers: Besides the newly installed metal detectors, what could have prevented this tragedy?



They should have seen the situation clearly, knowing that the school didn't have metal detectors. This kid was bullied and everybody knew about it. The school, security and police should have all gotten together, like Bob Marley said, "One Love," because we're all one together. I think it would have been much better if they had talked to the kid. I was bullied myself; my mother taught me how to fight, but I didn't want to fight after school. I could have done the same thing that he did and thank God I used my head and they stopped the guys from bullying. It's the school's fault and the security's fault and it's a shame.

Bless Cruz
West Farms



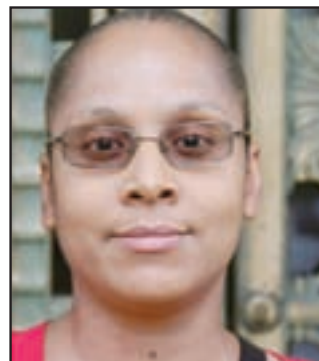
Well, bullying has always been a big issue. I was one who was taunted. I can't say I was bullied because I'm the type of person who will put my foot down after a certain point. But here in the city, the bullying and intimidation, I believe it all stems from overcrowding in the classrooms. If the class is overcrowded, how do you get that one-on-one attention? And how do you find that kid that might need that attention? There are always telltale signs, but how you pinpoint it is the problem.

Richard Fienney
Sugar Hill (Manhattan)



This killing could have been prevented if the school was more involved and aware about what was going on and prevented the bullying. One thing they could have done was to speak out against bullying. Mediation or conflict resolution within the school could have helped. Because they had no metal detectors, the school should have had a zero-tolerance policy for fighting.

Liana Perez
Norwood



I feel that in the cafeteria and throughout the school there needs to be better monitoring of [students] where bullying is not seen, like in the hallways. They need to be more alert. If they see a child being bullied, they have to do something about it. You just can't ignore it. Parents also need to be having these conversations with their children.

Noemi Gerena
Castle Hill



I believe the teachers in the school system need to get more involved, because they have gotten to be laid back and a lot of our kids need to be heard. Some of them are bullied, some are having issues at their home with their families and these kids are not being listened to. Back in the day they were cracking the whip, because I grew up on a check-your-nails, ruler-type of environment. What is your kid doing on the Internet? Where is he at? The parents have to be involved and the teachers have to unite with the parents and together we can change our youth.

Annette C. DeJesus
West Farms

Fighting the Scourge of Graffiti, One Wall at a Time

By STEPHANIE LUCIANO

A Kingsbridge Heights couple has had enough with the scrawls of graffiti on property walls. For the last two years they found a way to combat it—taking it down themselves. They methodically remove graffiti from the neighborhood on a continuous basis.

Sirio and Heather Guerino have a small office at the corner of West 197th Street and University Avenue, Guerinos Against Graffiti (GAG), named after the family efforts to wipe out graffiti, and which has been operating for almost two years.

Born and raised in the Bronx, Sirio, 61, has always had a pet peeve against graffiti, which led to his involvement with Norwood Against Graffiti until that got dissolved. With help from Heather, what was once an idea was the beginning of their own endeavor.

For a negotiable fee, GAG is hired to paint over graffiti and monitor the property for a month to ensure it doesn't get spray painted again. The family handles the job themselves, sometimes with the help of their kids



Photo by Stephanie Luciano

SIRIO AND HEATHER Guerino founded Guerinos Against Graffiti (GAG) two years ago in an effort to stamp out graffiti, a major negative quality of life issue in the Bronx.

Duval, twins Hendrix and Spartacus and daughter-in-law Jessica Kracko. For everyone's convenience they ask owners to supply the paint for guaranteed customer satisfaction.

Last year, GAG was hired by Project Renewal, an organization whose mis-

sion looks to end homelessness while empowering adults and children. GAG hopes to secure more contracts in an effort to clean up the community.

Sirio's annoyance with graffiti echoes Heather's. Unhappy with the quality of life in the Bronx, Heather,

who grew up in the Midwood section of Brooklyn, is new to seeing all the graffiti in the Bronx. "This is just abnormal to me," she said. "The kids in our neighborhood got to be exposed to it, so what happens? They think it's a normal way of life."

According to 311 data for this year, the Bronx has seen a total of 867 complaints made against graffiti as of press time. Community Board 7, covering Norwood, Bedford Park, Kingsbridge Heights, Fordham and University Heights, saw 57 complaints filed. That's fairly low compared to Community Board 1, with 122 graffiti related complaints, 71 percent more than those found in CB7.

The Guerinos are persistent in covering up graffiti tags in the hope of encouraging vandals to move on. They work hand in hand by pushing murals to be painted and ensure properties stay graffiti free. They also stay vigilant in keeping mailboxes and lamp-posts free of graffiti. "If it doesn't stop, the Bronx is going to go back to how it used to be in the '70s," said Heather.

Fall for the BID

Pumpkins, Puppies, and Brew Slated For Oct. 14 JGH-BID Fall Fest

"We wanted to embrace the fall theme this year and change up some of the standard activities, hence the cider, pumpkins and puppies."

-- Jennifer Tausig, JGH-BID Executive Director

By DAVID CRUZ

Thousands of people are expected to walk up and down Norwood's largest commercial strip on Oct. 14 as the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District is set to host its annual Fall Festival. That day, the commercial corridor will be cleared of vehicles for visitors to browse through all the offerings available by the BID's pool of local merchants and street vendors.

As most signature BID events go, the Fall Festival aims to draw a crowd in hopes of familiarizing patrons with the commercial district's many shopping options. The BID, spanning Jerome Avenue between Mosholu Parkway and East Gun Hill Road, and East Gun Hill Road between Jerome and Webster avenues, is home to some 200 retailers that include clothing stores, restaurants and salons.

"The BID provides convenient, affordable shopping for residents and the workforce," Jennifer Tausig, the BID's executive director, said. "You can finish all your errands here."

Tausig and her team have spent the last few months preparing for the event, adding new attractions such as pumpkin decorating, and a pet adoption center for the borough's pet loving population. The team has kept plenty of mainstays, including live perfor-

mances. This year, musical headliners Alive and Kickin', La Orquestra Jeryco, and Music With a Message will lay the soundtrack to the daylong festival. For those in the mood to kick back and relax, the festival's first-ever beer garden can be found at 3489 Jerome Ave., with beer-makers from Gun Hill Brewery selling the rounds. Meantime, cider drinks courtesy of DOCS will be on tap.

For the last 16 years, Norwood residents would expect the event to land sometime in mid-September. But Tausig saw something wrong in the timeline—the event is called "Fall Festival," yet it technically fell on a summer day. "We wanted to embrace the fall theme this year and change up some of the standard activities, hence the cider, pumpkins and puppies," Tausig said.

Some of the event's major sponsors include HealthFirst, Ridgewood Savings Bank, Montefiore Health System, the *New York Daily News*, and United Healthcare.

Editor's Note: *The event is scheduled for Oct. 14 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. There is no rain date. For more information, call the Jerome-Gun Hill BID at (718) 324-4946.*

Additional reporting by Suzanne McCormick



File photo

FALL FESTIVAL ORGANIZERS hope to draw a sizable crowd to the stage with musical headliners slated to perform all day. Pictured is a moment during the 2015 Fall Festival.

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Norwood Locals Unite to Help Out Hurricane Maria Victims

By **DIEGO BARCACEL PEÑA**

As Puerto Rico continues to recover from the effects of Hurricane Maria, leaving many native Puerto Ricans without food, water, electricity, and more, Norwood residents and business owners have come together to donate goods to the island.

After hearing a sermon about the power of giving, Bronx residents Martha Salas and Sylvia Garcia decided to team up with Lexa Bar at 357 E. 204th St. to set up a donation site. "The response has been great," said Garcia. "We started posting posters in Bedford Park, where we live on 201st Street, and people have filled up three huge boxes already."

Neighbors have been coming into the bar to donate goods. Local businesses have also done what they can to help the hurricane victims. Price Busters donated six cases of water. On Sept. 26, the day of the last shipment, Foodtown donated two cases of water and Leroy Pharmacy donated \$50 worth of toiletries.

Lexa Bar & Garden has been working with Evo Lounge and Salsa Con Fuego to organize the donations to let La Mega 97.9 radio send the supplies to Puerto Rico.

Hector Trinidad, co-owner of Lexa Bar, had his own experience with a natural disaster and knows the importance of donating. "I lived over in Puerto Rico for several years and there was a hurricane that



MARTHA SALAS POSES at Lexa Bar & Garden in front of donations for Hurricane Maria victims.

Photo by Diego Barcacer Peña

passed through called Hugo," said Trinidad. "We were without water and light for several days, and we had to deal with what we had."

"[We've] gotten clothing, water, canned goods, stuff for infants, [and] we still have more left over to send," said Trinidad.

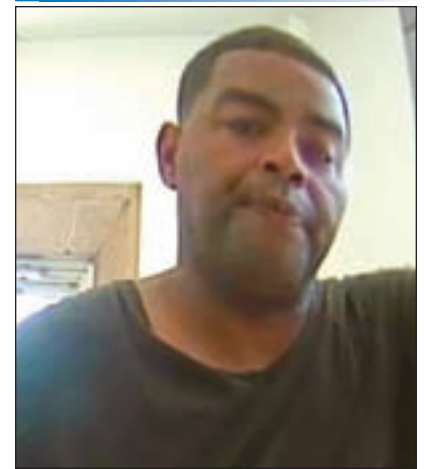
Norwood residents have also been donating medical supplies. "A man came alone with a whole box full of diabetic strips, a machine, and adult diapers," said Garcia. "This one poster brought all the community together."

The hurricane has ripped

through cities, has flooded crops, and has destroyed most communications with Puerto Rico. Roughly 300,000 Puerto Ricans live in the Bronx and have family members on the island that they have not been able to contact.

"We struggle every day to put dinner on the table, to pay those bills every month, but you want to know something?" said Garcia. "It's not as terrible as you having your roof torn from your home, or having [farm] animals that you raised for food drown—you just can't survive."

CRIME FILE



Bank Account Theft

Cops are looking for a man who allegedly made a hefty \$22,000 withdrawal from a bank account belonging to an 86-year-old man.

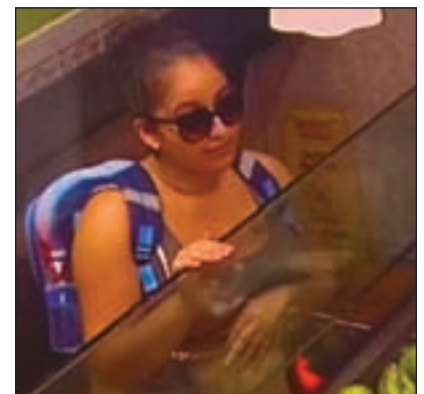
The theft happened at the Bank of America at 299 E. 204th Street in Norwood on Sept. 14, cops say. The man, captured on surveillance video (pictured), took the money and left. He's described as Hispanic, around 40 to 50 years old, standing at 6', and weighing about 250 to 300 pounds.

Wallet Stolen

A woman is wanted in connection with allegedly making off with a man's wallet that had \$300 and a debit card inside.

Cops say the incident happened at Fruit Paradise at 31 W. 183rd St. on Sept. 27 at around 5 p.m. The 47-year-old victim had left the wallet unattended when it was taken off the counter.

Pictures provided by the NYPD show the woman (pictured) wearing sunglasses and a child's backpack, and sporting a ponytail.



--David Cruz

Editor's Note: *Anyone with information on either of these crimes is urged to call Crimestoppers at (800) 577-TIPS. All calls are kept confidential.*

Let There Be Light at E. 204th St. and Decatur Ave.

By **DIEGO BARCACEL PEÑA**

The intersection of East 204th Street and Decatur Avenue is finally getting a traffic light, which could ease congestion at the busy crossroad. There is currently a stop sign, but Norwood residents still cross with caution.

The crossroad is located near a commercial strip that is home to many businesses including Lexa Bar & Garden, Price Busters, and Leroy Pharmacy. Because of this, there is constant traffic among pedestrians and drivers there.

There are four schools in the surrounding areas of the intersection, including PS 20, Headstart Archdiocese of New York, Bedford Park Elementary School, and PS 566.

"It was because of safety," said Edgar Ramos, the Traffic and Transportation

Chair of Community Board 7. "There are a lot of schools in the area and there was only one stop sign there, which created a [hazard]."

Councilman Andrew Cohen stated his support for replacing the stop sign with a traffic light. "Councilman Cohen had written a letter about it," said Lowell Green, former Traffic and Transportation Chair for Board 7, which had done much of the legwork to get a sign approved. "He almost got hit one time when he was out walking the streets with a bunch of constituents." According to the New York City Department of Transportation, which also approved the light, there were a total of 15 accidents at the junction from 2010 to 2014.

Norwood residents have taken up different measures on how to deal with the absence of a light. Some choose to face the

intersection head on while others prefer to ignore it. "I don't cross over there," said one resident who went by Luz. "I always try to find the corner where there is a light."

Johnnie Bowie was extremely furious and annoyed with the constant close calls that happen there. "Stop means stop, you don't roll and stop," said Bowie, president of the Bronx-based Five Stars Exterminating Company.

Crossing the intersection can be especially difficult for the elderly and the disabled. "It would be great to have a light here," said Bladimir Peña, who crosses the intersection about five times a day. "When my father and mother come down, I make sure to cross with them to be more secure."

The \$100,000 traffic light was approved on Aug. 8 and is scheduled to be installed by the end of the year.

HEALTH CHECK

People With Diabetes Can Live Full, Rich Lives

By **ARCY SEGURA, MA, CHES, CDE**

Diabetes is so common that most people know at least one family member or friend with this chronic illness. There are roughly 30 million Americans with diabetes (about 1 in 10 people). The Bronx has very high rates with approximately one in seven people, or 15 percent of the population, diagnosed with diabetes and many more who have not yet been diagnosed.

In order to help your body store and use the sugar and fat from food, your body produces insulin. Diabetes occurs when the body either produces too little insulin or when the body does not respond appropriately to insulin. This results in high levels of sugar in the blood which can damage organs like the kidneys, brain and the eyes, as well as blood vessels. A simple blood test can tell you whether you have diabetes, or whether you are on the road to developing diabetes (this is called "prediabetes").

While diabetes has no cure, making lifestyle changes and working with a care team can make significant improvements. Here are some tips that could help:

1) Get Tested Regularly

The A1C is a blood test that gives insights into how a diabetes management plan is working. It is also the primary test used for diabetes diagnosis.

If you haven't had your blood sugar tested in the last year, visit your doctor and ask them to check

your A1C levels. If you have diabetes, make sure you are getting your A1C tested every 3 to 6 months and if you have prediabetes, make sure you are getting checked twice a year.

2) Take Control

Drink water (regular or sparkling) and avoid sugary juices and sodas. Drinking calories can increase your risk for diabetes and often does not satisfy cravings the same way food does.

Keep starches to only 1 to 2 servings per meal. A serving is one slice of bread, ½ cup of rice, or 4-6 crackers. Stick to whole grain starches. The fiber is higher in these types of starches and this helps slow down the release of sugar in our body.

Eating lots of vegetables is a great way to satisfy your hunger and nourish your body without impacting your blood sugar levels.

Choosing fruits instead of sugary or salty snacks is a great way to stay healthy, particularly if you eat fruits low in sugar like blueberries.

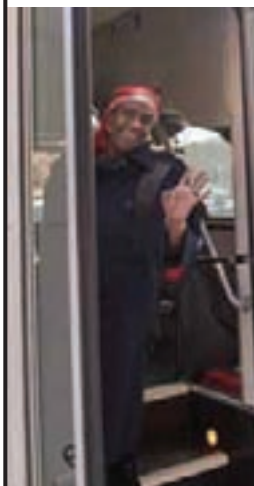
Exercising 30 minutes five times a week can also help your body use more energy and help maintain a healthy weight.

Small changes to our diet and physical activity can make a world of difference. Our behavior can help us live the life we deserve.

Arcy Segura is the health education manager for the Office of Community & Population Health at Montefiore Health System.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

JGH-BID Fall Festival

The Jerome-Gun Hill BID presents its 16th Annual Fall Festival, Oct. 14 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., along Jerome Avenue between Mosholu Parkway and Gun Hill Road. Events include musical performers, hula hoops, jump rope, caricatures, face painting, food, free health screenings and giveaways. No rain date. For more information, call (718) 324-4946.

Onstage

Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents the following events: **Santo Domingo Tiene Salsa**, featuring a number of known performers playing salsa music, Oct. 14 at 8 p.m. (tickets are \$50 to \$75; \$125/VIP includes reception with food and drinks at 6:30 p.m. and seating; info: (718) 960-8833); and **Lehman String Quartet**, Oct. 15 at 2 p.m. in the Music Building's Recital Hall, featuring classical music performed by faculty and staff from Lehman and Celia Cruz Bronx H.S. of Music (free; donations are welcome; info: (718) 960-8247).

Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture, 450 Grand Concourse, presents **Latin Jazz Trio** and **Bronx Arts Ensemble** performing Afro-Cuban music, Oct. 14 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. (tickets: \$15). For more information, call (718) 601-7399.

Events

The Williamsbridge Oval offers a variety of **free classes for youth** ages 6 to 12, after school and Saturdays, including drama,

sports, dance, art and more. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 543-8672.

Bedford Park Congregational Church, 311 E. 201st Street (at Bainbridge Avenue) presents its annual **fun fair and flea market**, Oct. 21 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Events include raffles and lunch. Sale items include household goods, jewelry, electronics, toys, and books. For more information, call (718) 733-3199.

The Bronx Tourism Council is holding Tour de Bronx, free cycling event, Oct. 22 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Riders can select either 25 or 40 miles to explore Bronx neighborhoods, starting at 161st Street at the Grand Concourse and ending at the NY Botanical Garden for yoga, music and food. Come early to register or register in advance. For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 590-3518

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: October Treasures, to decorate a recycled box or metal tin with buttons, small stones and woodland findings, Oct. 14 and 15; and Leaf Crowns and Fairy Houses, to enjoy fairy stories by



Photo courtesy Lehman Center for the Performing Arts
SALSEROS WILL TAKE to the stage at Lehman Center for the Performing Arts for the Oct. 14 Santo Domingo Tiene Salsa musical event (see under Onstage for more information).

storyteller playing harp, followed by creating a teeny dwelling out of sticks, leaves, moss and bark, culminating in performance at 11 a.m. and noon by guitarist/singer and bagpiper in concert of Irish jigs, reels and songs including fairy parade, Oct. 21 and 22; both in the WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 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.

The Bronx County Historical Society presents the following events: **special Archtober Tour of the Valentine-Varian House**, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street), Oct. 27 from noon to 1:30 p.m. to see the current exhibitions; and **Open House NY**, free admission to the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage (Grand Concourse at Kingsbridge Road) and the Museum of Bronx History/Valentine-Varian House; both Oct. 14 and 15. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Halloween Events

The Williamsbridge Oval presents the following free events: **Haunted House** (for ages 10+), to be spooked by ghosts, zombies and creatures, Oct. 27 from 7 to 9 p.m.; and **Pumpkin Party** (to age 12 years), to enjoy arts and crafts, carnival games, prizes, and candy, Oct. 31 from 4 to 6 p.m. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

The New York Botanical Garden presents **Scarecrows and Pumpkins**, through Oct. 31 from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the Everett Children's Adventure Garden. Events include guided activities featuring a puppet playhouse and weekends include interactive demonstrations featuring bats, reptiles, and other creepy creatures. For more information, call (917) 817-8700.

The Fordham Road BID presents **Halloween Giveaway Event in Bryan Park** (Fordham and Kingsbridge roads), Oct. 30 and 31 from 2 to 5 p.m. For more information, call (718) 562-2104.

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children: **Hands on Projects** (ages 7 to 12; preregistration required): Pumpkin Book Making, Oct. 12, and Halloween Bag Making, Oct. 26, both at 4 p.m.; Wreath Making, Oct. 15; Scarecrow Making, Oct. 22; and Ghost Making, Oct. 29, all at 3:30 p.m. Also for children: **Family Time**: (ages 3 to 5; preregistration required), reading aloud and crafts, Oct. 14 at 11 a.m.; **Lullaby Song Circle**: (ages to 3 years; preregistration required), to sing with other families, Oct. 21 at noon; **The Not So Spooky Ghost**: (ages 3 to 12), interactive puppet show, Oct. 21 at 2 p.m.; and **Fire Safety Education Program**: presented by the FDNY, Oct. 24 at 3:30 p.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy **Favorite Reads**: to chat about books and receive a free book and snacks, Oct. 24 at 4 p.m.; and **Halloween Party**: to watch spooky movie, decorate pumpkins, come in costume, receive free book, Oct. 31 at 6 p.m. Adults can attend **film**: "World War Z," Oct. 21 at 2:30 p.m.; and **Computer Basics**: Oct. 24 at 2 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 teens/young adults: **Craft-eens at 3:30 p.m.**: Craft projects every Wednesday (materials are provided), Oct. 18 and 25; and **film at 1:30 p.m.**: TBA on Oct. 14. Adults can attend: **Knitting Circle**: Thursdays at 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for children: **Preschool Storytime and Crafts at 11:15 a.m.**: (ages 3 to 5), including puppetry, dramatics, crafts and flannel boards, Oct. 19 and 26. Adults can attend: **Computer Basics at noon**: Oct. 12, 19 and 26. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Oct. 16 for the next publication date of Oct. 26.



File Photo

SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE are expected to visit the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District for the annual Fall Festival. Here, a look at 2015's yearly event (see Editor's Pick for more details).

Library Events

NORWOOD NEWS



Photo by David Greene

STUDENTS OF ST. Catharine's Academy marched in the rain down Morris Park Avenue during the 41st Annual Christopher Columbus Day Parade on Oct. 8. The parade came amid controversy surrounding Columbus' background as a historical figure.



Photo by Stephanie Luciano

APART FROM THIS eye-catching car painted with the Puerto Rican flag, the East 204th Street/Bainbridge Avenue Merchants Association and The Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade Inc.'s Hurricane Relief Effort and Car Show featured kids' zones, giveaways, health screenings, bounce castles, and a long list of performances. The event took place on Oct. 7 from 1 to 6 p.m. at East 204th street between Bainbridge and Decatur avenues.



Photo by Bob Kappstatter

BRONX RESIDENTS COME together on Sept. 30 during the donation drive hosted by the New York Hispanic Clergy Organization, to help victims of Hurricane Maria. Throughout the day, hundreds of volunteers filled four shipping containers and donated so many materials that it took two days to completely pack and ship them all.



Photo by Aaron Mayorga

A CHILD TAKES a Harvest Ride during the annual Kossuth Playground Fall Festival on Oct. 7. The event, decorated in a Halloween theme, was open to the public and included music, a mime, arts and crafts, face painting, photo ops, kiddy activities, and the Parks Fitness Mobile. The Kossuth Playground recently received a total of \$2 million in grants from the city for renovations.



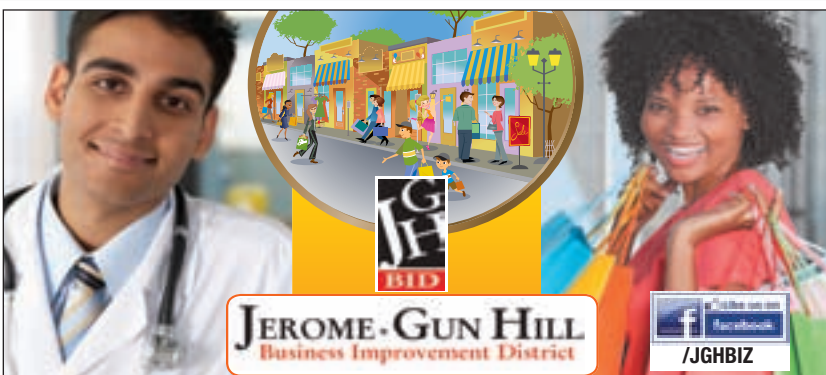
Photo by Diego Barcacer Peña

DR. JOSE LUIS CRUZ (center) with former Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer (l) and current Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. (r). Cruz was inaugurated on Sept. 27 as the third president of Lehman College. Cruz laid out the 90 by 30 plan, which will see the college confer 90,000 degrees by 2030. Cruz also pledged to expand Lehman College for its student population. A full story can be found at www.norwoodnews.org.



Photo by Yara Palin

CRISTINA CONTRERAS, Dr. Susan Papera, Dr. Chinyere Anyaogo, and Community Board 7 Chair Adaline Walker-Santiago pose for a picture during the North Central Bronx Hospital Midwifery's 40th anniversary. The midwifery program has provided women's health services to Norwood, as well as the rest of the North Bronx. A full story can be found on www.norwoodnews.org.



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SAVE THE DATE

Annual Fun Fair and Flea Market, Saturday, October 21, 2017, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come for bargains, raffles, lunch, and fun. Household goods, jewelry, electronics, toys and books, and more. Bedford Park Congregational Church, corner of 201st Street and Bainbridge Avenue. Bargains, Bargains, Bargains.

TRIPS

Kancella's Travel & Tours: Trip to Nordic Lodge Restaurant, Rhode Island and Foxwoods Casino on Sunday, Oct. 29, 2017. Depart at 8:30 a.m. from 940 Southern Blvd. and 163rd Street, Bronx. 2-Hour All-You-Can-Eat buffet at Nordic Lodge, Foxwoods Casino bonus buffet and \$10 Keno play, and shopping at Tanger Outlet Mall on premises. \$179.00 per person - \$50 deposit required ASAP. For reservation and to purchase tickets, please contact Eddie at (718) 757-5485 or Kancella's Tours at (347) 405-2017.

Eddie Rosa's Enterprises

Trip to Six Flags Great Adventure - "Halloween Fright Fest" in Jackson, NJ on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2017. Depart at 11 a.m. from 940 Southern Blvd. and 163rd Street, Bronx. Returning at 9 p.m. Price \$89.00 per person - \$40 deposit required ASAP. For reservation and to purchase tickets, please contact Eddie at (718) 757-5485.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Free Flu Shots

Free flu shots will be available on Oct. 16 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Vladeck Hall, 74 Van Cortlandt Pk. So. Participants should bring their insurance card, be at least 18 years of age or older and cannot be allergic to eggs. Residents must contact the office of Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz at (718) 796-5345 to be guaranteed a flu shot.

Health Insurance Workshop

A free health insurance workshop will be held on Oct. 25 at NYC Health + Hospitals/Lincoln at 234 E. 149th St. from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for those who need help understanding the open enrollment period. Registration is required by Oct. 18. To register, log on to <https://lincoln.health.eventbrite.com>.

Tenant Resource Fair

Representatives from the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development will be available to help residents with housing issues at a Tenant Resource Fair on Oct. 25 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the East Dining Room at Lehman College, 250 Bedford Park Blvd., W. Learn about tenant associations, rent protection for low-income senior and disabled tenants, HPD housing lotteries, eviction protections, and more. For more information, call the office of Councilman Andrew Cohen at (718) 549-7300.

Improving Seniors Lives

The New York City Department for the Aging will host a public hearing on Oct. 18 from 10 a.m. to noon at Casa Boricua Se-

nior Center, 910 E. 172nd St., seeking recommendations and comments that would improve the lives of senior citizens living in New York City. The information will be included in the agency's Annual Plan Summary.

Shelter Town Hall Mtg.

A public town hall forum on the Fordham Landing affordable housing/homeless shelter set to open in December will take place Oct. 25 at 7 p.m. at St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church, The Father Smith Center, 2345 University Ave.

Cleanup Volunteers Wanted

The Bedford Mosholu Community Association seeks volunteers for annual cleanup of Mosholu

Parkway on Oct. 28 beginning at 10 a.m. Volunteers will meet at the pump station on Webster Avenue and Mosholu Parkway. Those interested can email bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

Job Recruitment Events

Pop-up recruitment events where job seekers can meet with potential employers will take place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. as follows: Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., on Oct. 18 (info: (718) 579-4244); Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., on Oct. 16 (preregistration required; info: (718) 882-8239); and Belmont Library and Enrico Fermi Cultural Center, 610 E. 186th St., on Oct. 25 (no registration required; info: (718) 933-6410). Attendees

are asked to bring plenty of résumés and dress professionally. In addition, job seekers can meet with a career coach, get free resume help, and participate in formal mock interviews. To schedule an appointment, call (718) 549-4260 or email ceis@nypl.org.

BID Survey

The Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District is conducting a survey through November to determine what stores are needed for the neighborhood business strip on Jerome Avenue between Mosholu Parkway and East Gun Hill Road and East Gun Hill Road between Jerome and Webster avenues. To take part in the survey, go to <http://bit.ly/2ffXnfg>.

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Faces of NW Bronx Homeless

(continued from page 1)

the homeless the *News* interviewed prefer the outdoors to a bunk bed, becoming recurring faces to a borough burdened by a homeless crisis.

With traditional shelters making a comeback, getting people like Sunny, a 53-year-old homeless man, into one may be a tough sell. A Guyanese native, Sunny was found sitting on a park bench at the entrance of Dead End Park by East 204th Street and Webster Avenue on Oct. 16. Though he has been homeless since 2006, Sunny has had very little faith in the shelter system since 2007.

Clutching a worn out portable radio and pulling a shopping cart filled with recyclables, Sunny recalled having his backpack stolen after leaving it inside a shelter in the Concourse section of the Bronx a decade ago. At the time, Sunny had been collecting cans and had missed the shelter-mandated curfew. His bag contained his green card and other forms of identification. Since then, he has remained distrustful of the homeless and those employed in city-run homeless shelters. These days, Sunny, who emigrated to the United States 26 years ago and has a son, sleeps on the subway – usually preferring the longer distance route of the D train, which terminates in Norwood.

Counting the Homeless

DHS contracts with the non-profit BronxWorks to talk to people like Sunny, a familiar face around Norwood. So-called HOME-STAT teams persistently canvass Norwood, Bedford Park, Fordham and University Heights currently making repeated contact with 15 people who are or believed to be homeless.

Isaac McGinn, a spokesman for DHS, said teams visit those neighborhoods “three to six times daily to identify and engage individuals who may be homeless and encourage them to accept services.” McGinn added that, “Through compassionate persistence, those teams have made nine recent placements from this area to transitional or permanent housing opportunities.”

DHS has attempted to get a



Photo by Aaron Mayorga

DAN O'CONNELL SITS on the ground near Fordham Road and Webster Avenue panhandling with the help of this sign.



Photo by Diego Barcacer Peña

DANIEL McALEAVEY SITS at a bench on Mosholu Parkway near Decatur Avenue. He wears clothes given to him by the New York City Department of Sanitation.

fullpicture of the problem. During this year's annual HOPE Count, which estimates the number of street homeless in New York City on a given winter's night, DHS saw the Bronx's number of homeless go from 43 individuals in 2016 to 255 individuals, a 453 percent surge. DHS has noted this year to be somewhat of an outlier. The night of the count, which happened Feb. 6, the temperature had been 40 degrees, 12 degrees warmer than when the HOPE Count was conducted on Feb. 10 2016, suggesting an anomaly in the number.

The count works to ensure more federal funding arrives to combat homelessness. With some 61,000 homeless out on the streets, the city has increased the number of HOME-STAT teams.

Daniel McAleavey

While DHS teams have notched a few successes, luring the homeless back is ongoing work that needs to remain consistent. In one day they could miss someone like Daniel McAleavey, a homeless man who arrived to Norwood recently. Sitting sleepily at a park bench on Mosholu Parkway near Decatur Avenue, McAleavey has been in and out of places he's slept in but never quite called home. For the last 20 years, McAleavey has been homeless.

A former drug addict, McAleavey was born in Brooklyn, later spending a few years in upstate New York, crashing at the homes of friends he's since lost contact with. He's briefly held down jobs at fast food restaurants, though not for long. An un-

disclosed illness kept him from becoming a steady employee. “I tried to keep the job, but I couldn't. I started seeing blindness and hallucinating a lot,” McAleavey said.

When he eats, he usually downs “extra so I don't get hungry.” McAleavey, who appears malnourished, loads up on hamburgers, French fries, and chicken sandwiches in one sitting. “I had an egg sandwich from Burger King,” said McAleavey. “Some people bought me egg with cheese. I think it had bacon on it.”

As for staying in a shelter, McAleavey has tried them, but prefers the outdoors. His true wish is for an apartment. “No big place because I'm only one person and I'm alone,” he said.

Mosholu Parkway remains a frequent location where the homeless are publically spotted. McAleavey has noticed this too. They often settle there for the night, picking a bench that lines the parkway. Residents around the area notice them mainly at night. “They mind their business,” said Lamont Taylor, a Bedford Park resident who usually sees the homeless sleep at the parkway.

Other homeless people prefer a more obscure location.

Camps

Back at Dead End Park, a few yards from where Sunny was spotted, a bushy section serves as makeshift camp for the homeless. There, cans of Goya beans, beer bottles, gallons of water, toothpaste, aluminum trays used for cookware, and a bed fashioned out of blue rug were found. The setup is similar to a camp found at a hilltop on Mosholu Parkway North, where bedsheets, water bottles and pans are scattered about.

The Dead End Park camp is familiar ground to Hung Vo, a homeless man who visited the park on Oct. 3 to drink a can of beer. Having emigrated to the United States from Da Nang 25 years ago, Vo said he originally lived and worked in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Unable to secure a job and having lost his Section 8 support, Vo soon found himself living on the streets. He's been homeless in the Bronx ever since.

When asked why he didn't go to

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

the one of the city's homeless shelters, Vo explained that the homeless are often treated poorly inside the shelters. "When you come there, they don't respect you because you have no job, no money," Vo recounted. "They don't respect you... I don't go no more."

Fordham

While Dead End Park serves as a hidden haven for the homeless, some prefer to be out in the open. Dan O'Connell, a 32-year-old who's usually found panhandling in front of the Fordham Road Metro-North station with his fiancée, who is also homeless, says that it seems like there are "two new people every week." The lanky O'Connell, who sits cross-legged with a sign that reads, "Please help. Any change, food is appreciated. Thank you, God bless," said he started living on the corner of Fordham Road and Webster Avenue by Rose Hill Park more than a year and a half ago.

The inflow of new homeless people has often forced O'Connell, who collects change in a dirty cup from the nearby McDonald's, out of the park. According to the native Californian, the homeless regard Fordham as a good place to stay. "There's a lot of us here and people don't really bother us," O'Connell told the *Norwood News*. He does, however, say that being stopped by the police is a common occurrence.

Daniel Bernstein, co-executive director of the Fordham Road Business Improvement District, whose borders occupy Fordham Plaza where the homeless tend to sleep,



Photo by Adi Talwar

A CAMP COMPLETE with this makeshift sleeping area was found in a section of Dead End Park in Norwood.

said that there were about 20 homeless people who set up camp inside the empty plaza. Early this year, there were broken windows and people sleeping in unsupervised kiosks, according to Bernstein. "[The Business Improvement District] wants to beautify Fordham," Bernstein said in a phone interview, "but we also want to make sure that we do whatever we can legally to rectify the situation for the homeless

in a positive way too."

But the BID's efforts are limited. Bernstein said bureaucratic red tape has limited the NYPD's ability to do something about the growing problem. Under the New York State Mental Hygiene Law, the homeless in New Yorks cannot be involuntarily removed from the street unless they pose a threat to themselves or others.

To fend off the homeless, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation closed off the restrooms near the Fordham Metro-North station across from the plaza. Previously, it was a common spot for the number of homeless sleeping inside. Since they were locked in mid-September, the station has remained empty and locked.

In some cases, those who panhandle in the streets aren't necessarily homeless, a factor DHS teams consider when distinguishing the homeless from those who have shelter. But many are edging towards homelessness or have been there before.

At the mouth of the Gun Hill Road exit of the southbound side of Bronx River Parkway, James Kent Jr., a New Jersey-born and Virgin-

ia-raised 28-year-old who has been living on the streets intermittently for the past five years, was found panhandling. Kent, who is HIV-positive and bisexual, currently lives in housing provided by the New York City Human Resources Administration. He told the *Norwood News* he would often avoid homeless shelters out of fear of being harmed due to his sexuality and his illness. Through a Southern drawl, Kent recounted an experience at a shelter in Georgia, N.J. and said, "I got scared because they tried to rob me and slice me with a knife so I don't like going... because I'm scared it's going to happen again."

Portchester native Tylek Jones, who panhandles just a stone's throw away from Fordham Plaza, said that he finds the community's concerns understandable. Jones, who describes himself as being freshly released from prison, admitted that despite his love for his poverty-stricken peers that he wouldn't want a homeless shelter in his neighborhood either. "It just doesn't look good," Jones quipped. "I think it lowers the property value of the area."



Photo by Adi Talwar

ALTHOUGH FORMERLY HOMELESS James Kent Jr. is currently living in a facility provided by the Human Resources Administration, he was spotted at the Gun Hill Road exit by the southbound side of the Bronx River Parkway panhandling on Oct. 6.

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