



# NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 30, No 23 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • NOVEMBER 23-DECEMBER 6, 2017



**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:**  
THANKSGIVING THOUGHTS | PG. 4



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THANKSGIVING IN THE BRONX | PG. 10

## NORWOOD'S WORST LANDLORD IS...

*Narsinh Desai places 70th in citywide 100 Worst Landlords Watchlist*



Photo by David Cruz

**PUBLIC ADVOCATE LETITIA JAMES** (at mic) says those on worst landlords watchlist "subject their tenants to dangerous and unsanitary conditions." She's flanked by Bronx legislators, including State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (in pink tie) and Councilman Andy King (right).

**By DAVID CRUZ**

The worst landlord in Norwood award goes to Narsinh Desai, according to this year's worst landlord watchlist compiled and released by the New York City Public Advocate's Office.

Desai, listed as the head officer for Norwest Realty, is

ranked the 70th worst landlord in the 100 Worst Landlords Watchlist by Public Advocate Letitia James. The shame list was first conceived by Mayor Bill de Blasio when he served as public advocate.

"There are some unscrupulous property owners who have chosen to exploit the market

and the dire need for housing," James, flanked by housing advocates and legislators, said at a news conference announcing the list. "They subject their tenants to dangerous and unsanitary conditions."

The landlords were placed on the list for either having at least three open serious vio-

lations inside buildings with fewer than 35 units, or two violations per unit in buildings with more than 35 units. C violations are considered the most egregious as determined by the New York City Housing Preservation and Development agency (HPD), and are in need of immediate re-

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Norwood News is published  
bi-weekly on Thursdays by

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## IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

## KNIC State Loan Formally and Finally Approved

By AARON MAYORGA

On Nov. 16, the Board of Directors for Empire State Development (ESD), New York State's economic development arm, voted to approve the agency's \$138 million capital loan to the Kingsbridge National Ice Center (KNIC).

Under the terms of the loan, KNIC agrees to pay a commitment fee totaling one percent of the loan's principal (or, \$1.38 million) at the loan's closing. KNIC also has agreed to hire a construction monitor to be "selected at ESD's sole discretion."

KNIC must also contribute at least \$20 million to the project's development, which boasts a \$353 million price tag. The capital loan will carry a seven percent annual interest rate at a 30-year term, and funds from the state loan will be given to KNIC, "when the project is substantially completed."

The affirmative vote came a month after a public hearing at Lehman College on Oct. 12, where residents and Community Board 7 members largely expressed support for the state's plan to intervene in the project. It also came after the Public Authorities Control Board (PACB), a five-member supervisory board that oversees state public authorities, approved the measure as well.

"After review and consideration of comments received, the ESD staff believes that the [ice center] is an important part of the local revitalization of the area," said Thomas Conoscenti, ESD's vice president of real estate development and planning. "The project is expected to have a positive impact on the community."

In addition to the \$138 million loan, KNIC is also expected to receive \$26.4 million in tax credits and \$20.7 million in other preferred equity.

ESD's vote to approve the loan now advances the project, which has languished in delays since being approved almost four years ago by the New York City Council in a 48 to 1 vote.



Video image courtesy Empire State Development  
**THE ESD BOARD** meets to approve a state loan for the Kingsbridge National Ice Center project.

Shortly after the ice center's approval in 2013, KNIC chairman Kevin Parker, a former executive at Deutsche Bank, claimed that the project "was destined to awe and inspire," but the years since have shown a much different story as KNIC has struggled to obtain the cavernous Armory's lease from the city, which has owned the Armory since 1994.

Initially, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) agreed to transfer the lease to KNIC, pending KNIC's ability to bankroll the ice center's construction. However, KNIC failed to satisfy NYCEDC's demands despite insisting publicly that "fundraising [was] on schedule," having only raised \$20 million in private funds—well short of the \$158 million NYCEDC demanded KNIC have to begin the first phase of the project.

In October 2014, NYCEDC decided to place the lease in escrow; without the lease, KNIC could not obtain construction permits from the city's Department of Buildings, effectively delaying the project. An NYCEDC spokesperson defended the action, pointing out that "KNIC [was] obligated to demonstrate full funding to complete the first phase of the development before they start construction."

Under the escrow terms, KNIC was required to demonstrate its ability to

finance construction by March 2016. While ESD's Board of Directors voted to approve a smaller \$30 million loan to KNIC in January 2016, the city remained steadfast in their decision to withhold the lease. As a result, the March 2016 deadline came and went with little progress made on the ice center's development.

In September 2016, KNIC offered to purchase the Armory from the city, appraising the historic landmark property at \$17.4 million, but NYCEDC refused, again leaving the dispute between the two unresolved.

Then, in January 2017, a breakthrough: Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that the state would provide an additional \$108 million in funding to the ice center's development in one of his many State of the State addresses. Cuomo's public comments prompted Mayor Bill de Blasio to instruct the NYCEDC to transfer the lease to KNIC once the \$138 million state loan received public approval.

With the loan now approved, it remains unclear what the timetable is for the city to transfer the lease to KNIC; however, according to Conoscenti, KNIC has informed ESD that "they're in conversations with several lenders... [and] they hope to have a signed term sheet by Christmas." Conoscenti also added that KNIC has received term sheets "from at least three construction lenders."

According to ESD, the first phase of the ice center is scheduled to be completed in late 2020, three years behind schedule. The Kingsbridge Armory has remained vacant since 1996.

Even so, KNIC Chief Executive Mark Messier, a former New York Rangers captain, remained optimistic about the project. "Nothing has changed from KNIC," Messier testified during the October hearing. "We're using sports as a vehicle through education to inspire our children and, hopefully, give them a future."

## Public and Community Meetings

**COMMUNITY BOARD 7** committee meetings are held on the following dates at the board office, 229 E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Economic Development Committee meets on Nov. 28; Community Relations and Long Term Planning Committee meets on Nov. 28 at 7:30 p.m.; and Website, Acknowledgement and Media Committee meets on Nov. 29. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

**RESIDENTS LIVING WITHIN** the 52nd Precinct's Sector C division are invited to a Safety Summit Meeting organized by Neighborhood Coordination Officers Stephen Urbanowicz and Tara Convery on Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. at Lehman College's Music Building, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W. Sector C encompasses from West Gun Hill Road at Jerome Avenue to Webster Avenue at Mosholu Parkway and from Goulden Avenue south to Kingsbridge Road and west to east along East 196th Street. For more information, email [Stephen.Urbanowicz@nypd.org](mailto:Stephen.Urbanowicz@nypd.org) or [Tara.Convery@nypd.org](mailto:Tara.Convery@nypd.org).

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Bronx	Date	Time
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	12/1	9am–11am 3pm–5pm
	12/5	8am–10am 4pm–6pm
<b>Montefiore Medical Group—Bronx East</b> 2300 Westchester Avenue, Bronx, NY 10462	11/27, 12/4	1pm–3pm
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## INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



# This week we asked readers their thoughts about the Thanksgiving holiday.



Thanksgiving I spend with my family, my daughter, and it's one of the best holidays because it's also my birthday. I was born on Thanksgiving Day. So Thanksgiving is special to me because it's about gratitude and about all the things to be thankful for.

**Merrill Robert**  
Van Cortlandt Park South



I am a religious person and we're planning a gathering at the church and we're going to share the day with the homeless. We will prepare meals for them and we will give them a gift bag that contains a toothbrush, toothpaste and sanitary pads that will be helpful to them. I will be at the church from morning to evening, meeting the needs of these people for them to have greater hope.

**Olamide Orhue**  
Allerton



Will be here working, but we'll go home early to be with the family. Eating turkey for sure. That's it. We'll be with the kids in the evening.

**Jihed Quteibi**  
Bedford Park



I will go to my daughter Melody's house on Long Island to celebrate Thanksgiving with my grandson who's coming home from college, so I am very happy. I will be there with the whole family. My daughter will cook the turkey and I will enjoy that with all the grandchildren. She's going to make potato salad and gandules (peas). I wish everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving.

**Sonia Martinez**  
Van Cortlandt Heights



In my family we celebrate Thanksgiving to celebrate God for everything that he's given us and we remember the pilgrims, the first people who celebrated Thanksgiving. To us it's very important, that's when the family gets together. We have pernil instead of turkey. It's like roast pork instead of turkey. The truth is I like football a lot; I'm crazy about it. My wife watches the parade with the kids, and I watch the football.

**Jesus Santana**  
Bronxville, NY

## CRIME FILE

Police in the Bronx have identified a suspect wanted for robbing at least eight women in the Norwood section and surrounding neighborhoods. The man, known by police but unidentified by the public, remains at large.

Officers with the 52nd Precinct's Neighborhood Coordination Officers assigned to Sector C, where the majority of the crimes happened, are now patrolling the neighborhood during the day. Six of the eight robberies have happened during the daytime, two in the late hours. Sector C usually covers West Gun Hill Road from Jerome Avenue to Webster Avenue at Mosholu Parkway and from Goulden Avenue south to Kingsbridge Road and west to east along East 196th Street.

"He has been identified," Crime Prevention Officer Frank Pacella of the 52nd Precinct, said. "We believe he



Images courtesy NYPD

**THE SUSPECT WAS** captured on surveillance video on two separate occasions.

pawned some stolen property. We've been able to get an ID off that. Hopefully, with the help of warrants he will be apprehended."

Police have since stopped by the home of the suspect, who was not there. Police said the suspect lives within the 47th Precinct. This stationhouse covers Woodlawn,

Wakefield, Williamsbridge, Baychester, Edenwald and Olmville.

The suspect has struck throughout the month of October and first week of November. In one instance, he knocked a woman to the ground at the corner of the Grand Concourse and East 204th Street and took \$1,300

By DAVID CRUZ

in cash.

Video surveillance taken Oct. 21 shows the suspect walking down the street. "He knows we're looking for him," Pacella said.

Despite the eight robberies reported, statistics show overall robberies have dropped 25 percent over the last year within the Five-Two. The precinct covers Norwood, Bedford Park, Fordham, and University Heights.

*Yara Palin contributed to this report.*

**Editor's Note:** *Anyone with information on the above suspect is asked to call Crime Stoppers at 1(800) 577-TIPS. The public can also submit their tips by logging on to the Crime Stoppers website at [www.nypdcrimestoppers.com](http://www.nypdcrimestoppers.com) or by texting their tips to 274637 (CRIMES), then enter TIP577.*

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This building is being constructed through the Extremely Low & Low-Income Affordability Program of the New York City Housing Development Corporation and the **Supportive Housing Loan Program** of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. Eighty two percent of units in this building are set aside for formerly homeless individuals who are referred by city agencies. The remaining 18% of units in the building are made available to the public through lottery. The units listed in this notice are only those made available to the general public.

#### Who Should Apply?

Individuals or households who meet the income and household size requirements listed in the table below may apply. Qualified applicants will be required to meet additional selection criteria. Applicants who live in New York City receive a general preference for apartments.

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  - Municipal employees (5%)

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					2 people	\$ 26,949 - \$ 38,200
2 bedroom	60% AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) UNITS	\$1,058	17	→	2 people	\$ 38,880 - \$ 45,840
					3 people	\$ 38,880 - \$ 51,540
					4 people	\$ 38,880 - \$ 57,240

<sup>1</sup> Tenant pays electricity.

<sup>2</sup> Household size includes everyone who will live with you, including parents and children. Subject to occupancy criteria.

<sup>3</sup> Household earnings includes salary, hourly wages, tips, Social Security, child support, and other income. Income guidelines subject to change.

<sup>4</sup> Minimum income listed may not apply to applicants with Section 8 or other qualifying rental subsidies. Asset limits also apply.

#### How Do You Apply?

Apply online or through mail. To apply online, please go to [nyc.gov/housingconnect](http://nyc.gov/housingconnect). To request an application **by mail, send a self-addressed envelope** to: **The Apartments at Landing Road, 5925 Broadway, Bronx NY 10463**. Only send one application per development. Do not submit duplicate applications. Do not apply online and also send in a paper application. Applicants who submit more than one application may be disqualified.

#### When is the Deadline?

Applications must be postmarked or submitted online no later than **January 18, 2018**. Late applications will not be considered.

#### What Happens After You Submit an Application?

After the deadline, applications are selected for review through a lottery process. If yours is selected and you appear to qualify, you will be invited to an interview to continue the process of determining your eligibility. Interviews are usually scheduled from 2 to 10 months after the application deadline. You will be asked to bring documents that verify your household size, identity of members of your household, and your household income.

<b>Español</b>	Presente una solicitud en línea en <a href="http://nyc.gov/housingconnect">nyc.gov/housingconnect</a> . Para recibir una traducción de español de este anuncio y la solicitud impresa, envíe un sobre con la dirección a: <b>The Apartments at Landing Road, 5925 Broadway, Bronx NY 10463</b> . En el reverso del sobre, escriba en inglés la palabra "SPANISH." Las solicitudes se deben enviar en línea o con sello postal antes de <b>18 de enero de 2018</b> .
<b>简体中文</b>	访问 <a href="http://nyc.gov/housingconnect">nyc.gov/housingconnect</a> 在线申请。如要获取本广告及书面申请表的简体中文版，请将您的回邮信封寄送至： <b>The Apartments at Landing Road, 5925 Broadway, Bronx NY 10463</b> 。信封背面请用英语注明“CHINESE”。必须在以下日期之前在线提交申请或邮寄书面申请 <b>2018年1月18日</b> 。
<b>Русский</b>	Чтобы подать заявление через интернет, зайдите на сайт: <a href="http://nyc.gov/housingconnect">nyc.gov/housingconnect</a> . Для получения данного объявления и заявления на русском языке отправьте конверт с обратным адресом по адресу <b>The Apartments at Landing Road, 5925 Broadway, Bronx NY 10463</b> . На задней стороне конверта напишите слово "RUSSIAN" на английском языке. Заявки должны быть поданы онлайн или отправлены по почте (согласно дате на почтовом штемпеле) не позднее <b>18 января 2018 г.</b>
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<b>Kreyòl Ayisyien</b>	Aplike sou entènèt sou sitwèb <a href="http://nyc.gov/housingconnect">nyc.gov/housingconnect</a> . Pou resevwa yon tradiksyon anons sa a nan lang Kreyòl Ayisyen ak aplikasyon an sou papye, voye anvlòp ki gen adrès pou retounen li nan: <b>The Apartments at Landing Road, 5925 Broadway, Bronx NY 10463</b> . Nan dèyè anvlòp la, ekri mo "HAITIAN CREOLE" an Anglè. Ou dwe remèt aplikasyon yo sou entènèt oswa ou dwe tenbre yo anvan dat <b>18 janvye, 2018</b> .
<b>العربية</b>	تقدم بطلب عن طريق الإنترنت على الموقع الإلكتروني <a href="http://nyc.gov/housingconnect">nyc.gov/housingconnect</a> . للحصول على ترجمة باللغة العربية لهذا الإعلان ولنموذج الطلب الورقي، أرسل مظروف يحمل اسمك وعنوانك إلى: <b>The Apartments at Landing Road, 5925 Broadway, Bronx NY 10463</b> . على الجهة الخلفية للمظروف، اكتب باللغة الإنجليزية كلمة "ARABIC". يجب إرسال نماذج الطلبات عن طريق الإنترنت أو ختمها بختم البريد قبل <b>18 يناير 2018</b> .





# Carrier Barriers

## USPS Can't Access Some Buildings, Compromising Delivery

By AARON MAYORGA

This holiday season, you might miss out on that Christmas package you've been expecting.

The United States Postal Service admits that its carriers can't deliver packages to some 2,000 apartments in the Bronx.

"Carriers cannot get into buildings," said Diane Jones, a USPS customer relations coordinator, at the latest meeting of Community Board 7's public safety committee. "And we're going to have an issue once the holidays come in and the packages start coming."

The issue arises from a lack of keys. While letter carriers typically have the keys to all of the buildings along their route, package carriers do not. Instead, they often find that the parcel they're hauling can't be delivered.

Under USPS rules, once a delivery is attempted and not accepted for any reason, the package is returned to the main neighborhood post office, which will then hold it for just over two weeks. Recipients who are left with a notice telling

them that a package is waiting for them have a chance to pick up their package before it's returned to its sender.

In Norwood, most undelivered packages are brought to the Williamsbridge Post Office at 711 E. Gun Hill Rd.

Having to hold more undelivered packages could mean longer lines and wait times at nearby post offices during the holiday rush. Jones warned that if packages aren't picked up it could mean no space at local post offices.

Although she wasn't clear about what might happen in that scenario, Jones was clear that the looming possibility has driven USPS to "put some pressure on building management" to fix the issue.

An internal list of buildings provided to the *Norwood News* shows 92 out of 192 buildings within the 10458 zip code—covering Bedford Park and parts of Fordham—are inaccessible to carriers.

Fortunately, a solution may be in order.

The "Key Keeper" is the first solu-



Photo by Diego Barcacer Peña

**USPS PACKAGE CARRIERS** have a tough time accessing some buildings along their route, compromising delivery of a person's mail or packages.

tion. As its name suggests, the Key Keeper—a small, metal lockbox—stores a given building's front door key. According to the USPS, the lockbox can be installed on a doorjamb or mounted on a wall.

An electronic key is also an option, which enables package carriers to allow themselves into a building through its buzzer system.

Lastly, building owners could opt to install parcel lockers in their lobbies. Normally, if a recipient isn't available, package carriers would leave the par-

cel locker key inside a mailbox telling the recipient that a package is waiting for them inside the parcel locker.

The average USPS-approved parcel locker runs in the thousands of dollars. Meanwhile, key keeper boxes retail for significantly less, around \$50. It's unclear who would pay for the service, though Jones said that the federal agency won't fund it despite having done so in the past.

Currently, there is no law requiring landlords to make their buildings accessible to USPS package carriers.

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# Tequilaz Restaurant in Norwood Closes After Fights And Violations

By YARA PALIN

A popular go-to spot in Norwood permanently closed after a number of infractions were reported including selling alcohol to minors and numerous health violations.

Tequilaz at 3489 Jerome Ave. had closed days before it lost their liquor license on Nov. 8. This followed three reports of illegal activities, says the New York State Liquor Authority (SLA). The NYPD reported that a large fight broke out inside the restaurant that spilled onto Jerome Avenue during an inspection on Oct. 22. This is in violation of The Alcoholic Beverage Control Law which bars licensees from allowing their premises to become disorderly.

Prior to that incident, SLA had three pending cases against Tequilaz. The first case was for selling alcohol to a minor in May. The second case came after two more incidents of selling alcohol to minors in June and also included another fight that happened in May. The third case was for another alcohol sale to a minor, in addition to employing unlicensed bouncers in July.

Their license remained suspended from Oct. 25 until the SLA Board voted to permanently revoke the license.

On top of the SLA violations, Tequilaz scored poorly in an inspection by the New York City Department of Health (DOH) on Sept. 12. The eatery racked up 93 violations, way more than the 13 points permitted to score an "A." According to DOH, the violations included food not being stored at the right temperature,

the presence of filth flies, and the facility not being vermin-proof. In a graded inspection that took place on Sept. 28, however, the restaurant scored a 3, which would equate to an "A." The final grade from DOH was still pending by the time the restaurant closed its doors.

Some residents have paid little attention to the restaurant closing. Ana Gonzales, a Norwood resident, says she had grabbed drinks there once or twice, but that the restaurant was "too expensive to frequent." Another resident, Eva Perez, says that she didn't even notice the restaurant there in the first place. "I thought it was a clothing store," she says.

Other residents say that they are glad to see the establishment go. Bryan, an employee at Amazing Linen that's two doors down from Tequilaz, says, "That restaurant brought problems here." He says that a lot of people would smoke marijuana outside of the restaurant, spilling out to other parts of Jerome Avenue. "[Tequilaz] had health issues, they lost their liquor license. Anything bad, they got it."

The restaurant served Mexican food along with Latin fusion and sushi, boasted "an array of various Latin Fusion flavors that are new to Norwood," according to their website. The eatery is now one of two restaurants that have closed in the neighborhood in a span of over a month, along with VIP Café.

Attempts to reach the restaurant owner, Harold Richardson, were unsuccessful.



File Photo

**TEQUILAZ RESTAURANT & LOUNGE** at 3489 Jerome Ave. closed its doors.



Photo by Miriam Quinones

**MEMBERS OF CCRB** convene their monthly meeting at Bronx Community College.

## Bronx Locals Sound Off At CCRB Meeting

By DAVID CRUZ

Bronx locals came to Bronx Community College on Nov. 9 to tell the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) that more Officer Friendlies are needed on the force.

The 13-member CCRB, which handles and investigates complaints made against NYPD officers, convened at the Bronx college to hear concerns by residents. Among its chief demand is a more understanding Police Department. In some instances, CCRB members heard from alleged victims of police abuse who have reported being thrown to the ground by police for no apparent reason. The CCRB has found that 59 percent of complaints deal with officers being extremely rude to civilians.

Of the 12 precincts in the Bronx, the 44th Precinct ranks number one with the most complaints. The South Bronx precinct had 99 complaints this year. The 40th and 46th precincts in the

South and Central Bronx are not far behind, having received 91 and 87 complaints made against NYPD members stationed at each respective precinct. The 45th Precinct, covering the entire East Bronx, has the fewest number of CCRB complaints this year with 30.

Meantime, the 52nd Precinct, covering the Norwood, Bedford Park, Fordham and University Heights sections of the Bronx, has 76 complaints, landing towards the middle in terms of the number of complaints. But when it comes to cases turning out to be true, the 52nd Precinct has 23 percent of CCRB cases substantiated. That's 10 percent higher than all Bronx precincts, which saw 13 percent of CCRB cases ending with an officer facing disciplinary action.

Still, CCRB complaints have dropped significantly over the last 10 years.

*Additional reporting by Miriam Quinones.*

## Let the Hacking Begin



Photo by Miriam Quinones

**HACK ATTACK! (L-R)** City College of New York juniors James, Vincent, Jamie, Abigail and Chris spend their weekend at Lehman College on Nov. 10 and 11 for the fourth annual Hackathon. The students worked on a variety of projects related to the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

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# Prepping for Thanksgiving

**COMMUNITY-BASED NONPROFITS AND** legislators stepped up to help the less fortunate prepare for this year's Thanksgiving with a number of turkey giveaway events across the Bronx.



Photo by Deborah Cruz

**JAY GARCIA (L)** opens a bag to fit a turkey in with help from this volunteer from the DEA Explorers program at a giveaway event hosted by MMCC. The turkeys were donated by the community-based nonprofit group Greater Opportunities Start Here (G.O.S.H.) on Nov. 18.



Photo by Miriam Quinones

**STATE SEN. GUSTAVO** Rivera (l) poses with recipient of a free turkey at a giveaway event hosted by Rivera and Assemblyman Victor Pichardo (r). The event happened at St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church in Fordham on Nov. 20.



Photo by Miriam Quinones

**BRONX RESIDENTS WAIT** with shopping carts at the turkey giveaway event sponsored by State Sen. Gustavo Rivera and Assemblyman Victor Pichardo on Nov. 20.



Photo courtesy Assemblyman Luis Sepulveda's Office

**MEMBERS PART OF** a contingent of sanitation workers that helped in Puerto Rico's hurricane recovery efforts hold up turkeys they gave away on Nov. 16. The turkey giveaway event was hosted by Assemblyman Luis Sepulveda. Members pose with First Deputy Sanitation Commissioner Steven Costas (second from right).



Photo by Deborah Cruz

**VOLUNTEERS (L-R) NORA FEURY** and Melani Garcia help distribute this bounty of fresh turkeys at a giveaway event hosted by MMCC and sponsored by Greater Opportunities Start Here (G.O.S.H.) on Nov. 18.

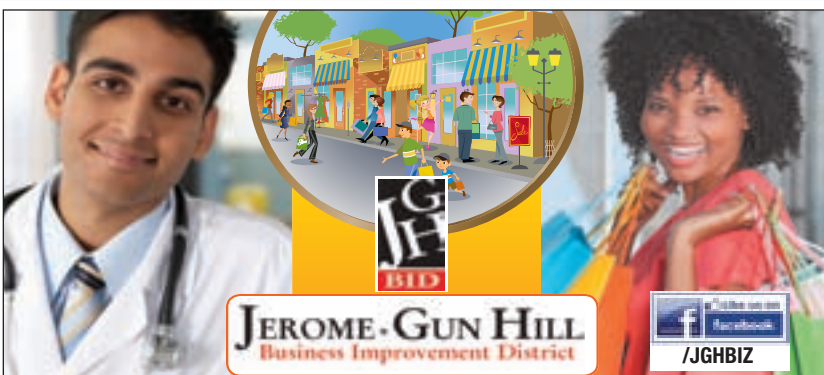


Photo courtesy Office of Councilman Andy King

**HANDING OUT FROZEN** turkeys at an event on Nov. 20 are (center left to right) Councilman Andy King alongside Senator Jamaal Bailey, with 47th Precinct Inspector Ruel Stephenson and volunteers.







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### WORSHIP SPACE WANTED

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## NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

### Canned Food Drive

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz holds annual Holiday Canned Food Drive until Dec. 13. Donations, which are given to Bronx non-profits for families in need, can be dropped off at his office, 3107 Kingsbridge Ave. For more information, call (718) 796-5345.

### Excelsior Scholarship

The Excelsior Scholarship application for students to attend SUNY or CUNY tuition free this spring semester is open through Dec. 4. The scholarship is open to New Yorkers with household incomes of up to \$100,000. Students must agree to be enrolled in college full time and complete 30 credits per year (including summer and January semesters). To learn more about qualifications, visit <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/excelsior/>.

### Heating Assistance

Sign up to receive free heating assistance through the New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). Eligible households can receive assistance of up to \$725. A family of four with a yearly income of \$53,482 can still qualify for help. For more information about eligibility, and to sign up, call (212) 331-3126.

### JGH-BID Annual Meeting

The public is invited to the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District meeting on Dec. 6 at 6 p.m. at a location to be determined. The BID will outline its list of accomplishments, discuss new initiatives and plan for the new year. Food and refreshments will be served. For more information and to RSVP (required), call (718) 324-4946 or email [jeromegunhillbid@gmail.com](mailto:jeromegunhillbid@gmail.com).

### Toy Drive

The Office of Councilman Andy King is accepting new toys for its 11th annual "Sharing is Caring" toy drive collection for young Bronx residents. Toys must be new, unwrapped, and appropriate for children ages 18 and under. Donations can be dropped off at 940 E. Gun Hill Rd. from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, through Dec. 21. The holiday event is scheduled for Dec. 24. For more information, call (718) 684-5509.

### Parkinson's Seminar

Mosholu Montfiore Community Center, 3450 DeKalb Ave. holds an information session for those living with Parkinson's or caring for some-

one with the disease, Nov. 28 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Registration starts at 5:30 p.m. Refreshments will be provided. For more information and to register, call (267) 229-1836 or email [BronxPDgroup@gmail.com](mailto:BronxPDgroup@gmail.com).

### Dance Scholarships

The Dance Studio at Bronx House, 990 Pelham Pkwy., So., offers full year scholarships to 10 students in grades 3 to 5 for comprehensive dance training. To apply, parents must schedule a mandatory interview with the dance administration. Interviews are currently being scheduled for the weeks of Dec. 12 to 15 and Jan. 9 to 12, 2018. For more information about requirements and to schedule an interview, call (718) 792-1800 ext. 235 or visit [www.bronx-house.org](http://www.bronx-house.org).

### Donate Clothes

The Office of Councilman Andy King is accepting warm clothes for the winter season through Jan. 5, 2018. Coats, sweaters or any other warm clothing can be dropped off at 940 E. Gun Hill Rd. from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. They must be clean and in wearable condition. For more information, call (718) 684-5509 or (718) 684-5511.

### Free Personal Financial Counseling

The New York City Department of Consumer Affairs's Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) offers free one-on-one financial counseling by appointment. To schedule an appointment, and to find a Financial Empowerment Center near you, go to <http://bit.ly/2yQd1lR>.

### Crime Victims Support

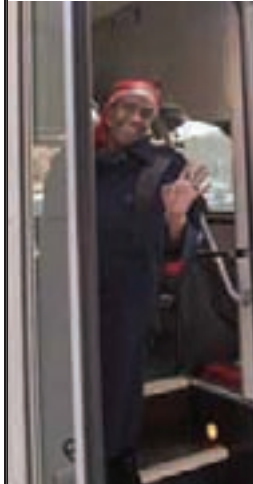
Crime Victims Support Services offers victims help in navigating the criminal justice system. Free confidential services include claim assistance, case follow-up, crisis counseling, and victim advocacy. For more information, call (718) 823-4925.

### Naloxone Training

A free workshop on how to use naloxone to prevent drug overdoses takes place at the St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction, 886 Westchester Ave, from 10 a.m. to noon on Dec. 6. For more information and to RSVP, call Marisol Reyes at (718) 960-7691 or email [mareyes@acacianetwork.org](mailto:mareyes@acacianetwork.org). Participants will receive a free rescue kit.

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# Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

## EDITOR'S PICK

### Tree Lighting

Community Board 7 presents its annual tree lighting on Dec. 7 at 6 p.m. at Mosholu Parkway and Bainbridge Avenue. Events include CB7 choir and Mount St. Ursula and PS/MS 20 choirs. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

### Onstage

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents salsa superstar vocalist **Oscar D'León** and his orchestra, Nov. 25 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$50 to \$65 and \$100/VIP which includes reception and pre-concert drinks and d'oeuvres at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

Lehman College, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents the following free events: **Lehman College and Community Jazz Big Band**, Nov. 27 at 12:30 p.m., featuring students, alumni, professional musicians and community members; and **Lehman Percussion Ensemble**, Nov. 30 at 2 p.m., featuring contemporary, classical and folk music; both in the Music Building's Hearth Room, 3rd floor; **Lehman College Jazz Ensemble**, Dec. 1 at 12:30 p.m., performing a variety of genres, in the Music Building's basement cafeteria; **Lehman College & Community Chorus, Symphony Orchestra**, Dec. 3 at 2:30 p.m., featuring winter concert of classical music, in the Concert Hall; **Faculty Jazz Ensemble**, Dec. 5 at 3:30 p.m., in the Music Building's Recital Hall, 3rd floor; **Student Recital**, Dec. 6 at 12:30 p.m., featuring seasonal music

from the Middle Ages and Renaissance, in the Music Building's Recital Hall, 3rd floor; and **Passing Strange: The Musical**, Dec. 6 at 3:30 p.m. and Dec. 7-9 at 7 p.m., theatrical performance featuring student musicians with choreography, in the Lovinger Theatre, 1st floor, Speech and Theatre Building. For more information, call (718) 960-8247.

The Riverdale Choral Society presents **concert**, Dec. 10 at 3 p.m. featuring classical music, at Christ Church Riverdale, 5030 Henry Hudson Pkwy. at West 252nd Street (\$25). For more information, call (718) 543-2219.

BAAD! (Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance), 2474 Westchester Ave., presents **Los Nutcrackers: A Christmas Carajo**, a play that combines "The Nutcracker" and "A Christmas Carol," and creates a queer, Latino play about a gay couple, Dec. 1, 2, 7-9, 15 and 16 at 8 p.m. and Dec. 9 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$25 (discounts for seniors and students). For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 918-2110.

### Events

The Williamsbridge Oval offers a variety of **free**



Photo courtesy Wave Hill

**THE SWINGTIME BIG BAND** concert at Wave Hill will feature popular swing music (see under Events for more information).

**classes for youth** ages 6 to 12, this fall, after school and Saturdays, including drama, sports, dance, art and more. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 543-8672.

The Williamsbridge Oval offers **Urban Park Rangers: The Box Turtle**, Nov. 30 at 3:30 p.m. Learn about the box turtle's habitat, lifestyle, and what they eat, followed by feeding session; and **Literacy Day**, Dec. 8 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Bring your favorite book and enjoy stories and snacks; both for ages to 13 years. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

Montefiore Medical Group offers a **free respiratory workshop**, Nov. 28 from 1 to 2 p.m. at the Dreiser Loop Community Center, 177 Dreiser Loop, 2nd floor, room 8. For more information, call (800) 636-6683.

New York Botanical Garden presents the **Annual Holiday Train Show**, through Jan. 15, featuring model trains and miniature replicas of NYC landmarks. For more information and to purchase tickets, call (718) 817-8512.

The Woodlawn Conservancy presents **Illuminated Mausoleums Moonlight Tour**, Dec. 2 and 3. For more information and rates, and to RSVP, call (718) 408-5600.

**Wave Hill**, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Natural Weavings for Harvest Time, to gather leaves, cones and pods and weave them together to create a wall hanging, Nov. 25 and 26; and Candles, Snowflakes and Stars, to make an image out of a candlestick or weave a snowflake, Dec. 2 and 3; both in the WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also scheduled is **Concert: Swingtime Big Band**, featuring popular swing music, Dec. 3 at 2 p.m. in the WH House (tickets are \$45/\$35 member (info: ext. 251). 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.

### Exhibits

The Bronx County Historical Society presents **What Lies Beneath -- Cemeteries of the Bronx**, through April 8, 2018, at the Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street), For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (165th Street), presents the following exhibits: **Gordon Matt-Clark: Anarchitect**; and **Susannah Ray: A Further Shore**; both through April 8, 2018; and **Black Documents: Mosaic Literary Conference**, Nov. 25, 10:30 to 6 p.m. The following additional exhibits are at the Andrew Freedman Home, 1125 Grand Concourse: **Jamel Shabazz: Black Documents** and **Black Documents: Freedom**, both from Nov. 25 to Dec. 15; **Black Documents Exhibitions Opening Reception**, Nov. 25, 6 to 9 p.m.; and **Artists Talks**, Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

### Library Events

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children: **Hands on Projects** (ages 7 to 12; preregistration required): Collage Poem Making, Nov. 26 at 3:30 p.m.; and Secret Box Making, Nov. 30 at 4 p.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy **film**: "Divergent," Nov. 25 at 2 p.m.; **Favorite Reads**: to chat about books; includes free book giveaways and new books, Nov. 29 at 4 p.m.; and **Cookie & A Snack Book**: to eat cookies and receive new books, Dec. 4 at 4 p.m. Adults can attend **film**: "Billy Lynn's s Long Halftime Walk," Nov. 25 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for teens/young adults: **Film**: "A Dog's Purpose," Nov. 25 at 1:30 p.m.; and **Craft-eens!**: Different craft every Wednesday, Nov. 29 at 3:30 p.m. (all materials are provided). 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, Nov. 24. 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 Nov. 27 for the next publication date of Dec. 7.



File photo

**KIDS WILL BE** amazed at this year's tree lighting event sponsored by Community Board 7 (see Editor's Pick for more details).



# Norwood's Worst Landlord Is...

(continued from page 1)  
pair.

Desai's building at 236 E. Gun Hill Rd. in Norwood racked up 204 violations, with 18 classified as C violations from the time the report was compiled in October. The total number of violations has since grown to 235. The public advocate's office listed Desai as the landlord since the company is listed as a limited liability corporation, making it difficult to identify the true owner.

Desai is also listed as the head officer for nearby 3414 Knox Pl., where the 36-unit residence currently has 118 open HPD violations. Violations pegged to Desai's buildings fall in the 10467 zip code, which has the second most HPD complaints on record, according to an analysis of the report. An assistant at Norwest Realty, just across the street from the troubled Gun Hill Road building, said Desai was not around to comment.

Tenants at the East Gun Hill Road building told the *Norwood News* that they weren't acquainted with their landlord. "I don't have any relationship with the landlord so I don't know if he's that bad. I can tell you that the floods are occurring," said resident Francisco Alcantara, who lives in the building with his wife, Maria. "We've had four floods in the three years that we've lived here. It gets resolved quickly but it happens here."

Meanwhile, Jessica Zevor, another tenant, blamed the frequent flooding on her neighbors. "One person's little girl dropped a ball in the toilet and it caused a major flood," Zevor recounted. A self-professed supporter of Letitia James and the annual list, Zevor said management typically resolves any quality of life issues but admitted "not the rats and roaches."

Francisco's wife, Maria, said vermin sightings are commonplace. "Management comes and plugs a rat hole, but the rats will just open a new hole. The whole building is infested," she said. Francisco added that they've occasionally seen rats jump in bed with them.

Some landlords placed in last year's top ten worst landlords list have since been replaced, after showing they've made improvements to their properties, James said.

For Desai, his company has already gone to work on making improvements at 3414 Knox Pl. The building now has 36 violations.

Outside the building, some tenants said Desai's placement is undeserved. Don Jose, who recently moved in with his daughter, says that he can't complain about the living conditions. He says,



Photo by Aaron Mayorga

THE BUILDING AT 234-236 E. Gun Hill Rd. is managed by Norwest Realty.

BY THE NUMBERS		
A LOOK AT THE WORST OF THE WORST IN THE BRONX		
<b>10453</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10467</b>
Zip code with most open HPD violations, covering Tremont neighborhood.	Number of open HPD violations for lowest ranking worst building.	Zip code with second most open HPD violations, covering Norwood, Allerton and Olinville.
<b>10474</b>	<b>10454, 10456 10458, 10459 10460</b>	<b>293</b>
Zip code with least open HPD violations, covering Hunts Point.	Zip codes overlapping with most prolific worst landlord in the Bronx, Zev Solomon.	Median number of open HPD violations for buildings on watchlist.

(Source: NYC Public Advocate's Office)

"There's always heating and I always have water" despite the 36 open violations on file with HPD.

Another resident, Natalie, who always has her family over for Thanksgiving, is also shrugging off Desai being on the list. She says, "I've lived here for 35 years and I've never had a problem with the landlord or management." Her brother, Dave, has been visiting Natalie for 30 years and says he also hasn't noticed any issues with the building. He says, "The super is cool. He's painting right now, actually. But as far as the landlord being the worst, I don't think so."

## Worst Bronx Landlord

This year the worst Bronx landlord went to Rawle Isaacs, who owns four buildings in the Mount Hope and Morris Heights sections of the Bronx. In all, 26 landlords of the number of landlords placed on the watchlist operated in the Bronx. A total of 67 problem buildings were found in the Bronx, representing 15

percent of the total number of buildings on the list. And while Isaacs is at the top of the worst landlords list, Ari Friedman, another bad landlord on the list, reportedly has the most buildings with HPD violations at 10.

The news comes amid a housing affordability crisis the de Blasio adminis-

## Housing Issues Mount

Locally, housing issues represent the biggest problem staffers from State Sen. Gustavo Rivera and Councilman Andrew Cohen's offices respectively handle daily. Cohen finds that while residents understand their housing rights, some are "afraid to assert those rights."

Taking on landlords can cost residents time, which could be precious for some. For those pursuing their landlord, many times the matter winds up in the hands of Bronx Housing Court.

"I make it a point every year of using some of my discretionary money to fund legal services, particularly in the event, which happens with some regularity, that someone will come in and say that their landlord is not providing some essential services," Cohen told the *Norwood News*.

In some cases, Cohen has personally gone to Housing Court on behalf of tenants who he feels are "unable to navigate housing court on their own."

From his four years representing the 11th Council District, he has noticed ominous patterns where landlords often neglect affordable apartments. "Where conditions are poor, it is often not an accident or sort of natural, it's sort of part of a bad landlord who has a systemic plan to try to get out rent-stabilized tenants," Cohen said.

Aaron Mayorga and Yara Palin contributed to this report.

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