



NORWOOD NEWS

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
NAT'L ANTHEM CONTROVERSY | PG. 4



SEE PICTURES:
AMAZING BRONX FLOTILLA | PG. 9

BREAKING GROUND ON SKATE PARK

Officials usher in construction of skate park at Oval Park, 15 years in the making



Photo by Jose A. Giralt

BREAKING GROUND ON the new skate part on June 5 in Norwood's Williamsbridge Oval Park include (l-r) skateboarder Eusebio Baez, Bronx Parks Commissioner Iris Rodriguez, Friends of Williamsbridge Oval Vice President Doug Condit, NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, Councilman Andrew Cohen, Community Board 7 District Manger Ischia Bravo, and skateboarder Awnimosa.

**By MARTIKA ORNELLA
and JOSE A. GIRALT**

"Today is a big day for the Norwood community," said city Parks Department Commissioner Mitchell Silver, standing at a podium in front of the future site of the neighborhood's first skate park. "We're starting con-

struction on something we've been waiting for for a very long time: A skate park right here in Williamsbridge Oval [Park]."

Together, with a number of skateboarding enthusiasts in the Bronx, local officials and community leaders gathered at a ceremonial ground-

breaking on June 5 to usher in construction of the long-awaited skate park.

Councilman Andrew Cohen, representing Norwood, funded \$750,000 in capital money towards the construction project back in 2014, with Mayor Bill de Blasio earmarking another \$227,000,

bringing the project's total cost at just under \$1 million. Queens-based LC Construction will build the skate park, which is set to open next February.

The construction represents 15 years of appeals by community stakeholders (continued on page 15)



**Another Norwood
Killing**
pg 3



**Remembering
Veterans at
Woodlawn**
pg 4



**Mind to Mind, Heart to
Heart**
pg 6



Out&About
pg 11

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Letters To The Editor

An Independent Press?

Your last editorial says about coverage of Eric Schneiderman's abuse of women: "And we're glad an independent press was there to chronicle it all."

Actually, we're glad reporting Schneiderman's abuses didn't conflict with the mainstream media's agenda. They often neglect to report things that are left for smaller, less read and truly independent media to cover.

The United States claims to support democracy, but often undermines and overthrows them when their election results displease our corporations. Sanctions against Venezuela and Nicaragua are examples. President Barack Obama absurdly declared Venezuela an "unusual and extraordinary threat" to national security.

They tell us about Palestinian violence and their leaders' anti-Semitic remarks. The wrongdoing of Israel is seldom mentioned. Israeli forces shooting 19 Palestinian doctors, locking up reporters as part of a policy of covering up wrongdoing and destroying or damaging three Palestinian schools that did not have the proper permits? Not covered by *The Daily News*.

We're told about alleged Russian meddling in U.S. elections. But 1996 meddling by President Bill Clinton in Russia's election that actually got Boris Yeltsin re-elected president has been ignored for 22 years.

American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier remains in prison for the 1975 killing of two FBI agents. But an FBI ballistics expert's test (that was withheld from the trial)

showed that the bullets didn't come from Peltier's gun

On Feb. 18, MSNBC "journalist" Alex Witt interviewed 2016 Green Party presidential candidate Dr. Jill Stein. Witt attempted to blame Hillary Clinton's loss on one Russian-funded pro-Stein ad. Stein questioned how ONE ad could cause Clinton's loss and how, out of thousands of ads on the internet, she was supposed to know who funded it.

Stein would then mention that corporate media gave Trump \$6 billion in free advertising. Witt responded, "But we're not the Russians." So it's okay for the U.S. media to rig an election

Going back a bit, to Oct. 16, 2014, CNN's Wolf Blitzer responded to Senator Rand Paul's criticism of the U.S. sale of weapons that Saudi Arabia was using to bomb civilians in Yemen, which is still going on today. Blitzer said, "So for you this is a moral issue. Because you know, there's a lot of jobs at stake."

If President Donald Trump had said we should continue to sell weapons that are used for war crimes to save jobs, this would be another front page *Daily News* headline.

Richard Warren
Van Cortlandt Village

Animal Shelter Plans

The Bronx has over 1.4 million residents, yet does not have its own animal shelter. Now, finally the city proposed a state-of-the-art facility located at 2050 Bartow Ave., that will have 200 homeless animals. Also it will provide low

cost veterinary services and programs to help owners avoid surrendering their pets for reasons that can be resolved. In addition, both youth and seniors can benefit emotionally and physically as animal shelter volunteers.

The need for this facility is evident in the long lines even in harsh weather around Fordham Plaza for the low cost vet mobile that treats limited number of pets on a first come, first served basis. This is not just a Community Board 10 issue but a borough-wide issue.

On May 20 at the Community Board 10 housing and zoning committee hearing, there were yelps of anger that people take priority over animals and that the city didn't consult with them first. The same sentiments were expressed by Community Board 7 in 2008 that voted against an animal shelter at the old library location. In addition, real estate interests and a hired gun lobbyist are part of the discussion to take the site away from the proposed Bronx animal shelter.

Without more community support at the next public hearing on June 15 and without the actions of elected officials who spoke words of support in the past, the Bronx will lose its animal shelter. An animal shelter is not a luxury but a necessity in a civilized society. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

Roxanne Delgado
Bronx Animal Rights Electors
<https://bit.ly/2JeAre8>

Public and Community Meetings

COMMUNITY BOARD 7 will hold its General Community Board Meeting on June 19 at Ross Hall in the New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Blvd. at 6:30 p.m. CB7 committee meetings are held on the following dates at the board office, 229 E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Traffic & Transportation Committee meets on June 7; Veterans Committee meets on June 7 at 7:30 p.m.; Housing, Land Use & Zoning Committee meets on June 12; Senior Services Committee meets on June 13; Parks & Recreation Committee meets on June 13 at 7:30 p.m. Executive Committee meets on June 14. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

Another Killing in Norwood

Cookout Turns Deadly on DeKalb Avenue

By DAVID GREENE

For the third time in six weeks, a life was cut short in Norwood, leaving grief-stricken family to plan for a funeral as detectives at the 52nd Precinct hunt for a killer. It's the precinct's third homicide this year, surpassing last year's total homicide rate at the Five-Two.

According to police, more than a dozen teens were holding a pre-summer barbecue at just after midnight on May 29, in the courtyard of a building along DeKalb Avenue and East 212th Street, when a fight broke out and a knife was plunged into the chest of 18-year-old Damion C. Gilbert, Jr.

Gilbert staggered across the street and collapsed outside of 3572 DeKalb Ave. A half-dozen bystanders and friends, some of whom were crying, attempted to give aid until paramedics arrived.

One police source said, "They discovered an 18-year-old male laying face up suffering from multiple stab wounds. He was then transported to Montefiore Hospital and was pronounced dead at 12:54 a.m." Neighborhood sources told the *Norwood News* that the murder weapon was tossed under a parked car and retrieved by police.

On June 4, 52nd Precinct Community Affairs officer Stephen Echevarria reported, "There has been a suspect identified in the stabbing on DeKalb, there is a suspect," but later stated that the NYPD will not be releasing that name until the individual is in custody.

Echevarria was asked if there were any special deployments of officers planned. He replied, "Not sure, usually when these things kind of happen



Photo by David Greene

MOURNERS PAY THEIR respects to 18-year-old victim Damion C. Gilbert Jr. at a makeshift memorial at the corner of DeKalb Avenue and East 212th Street.

when the summer comes about, we usually get more officers on the street."

The stabbing marks the third homicide the 52nd Precinct took this year, and the third one in Norwood. Last year, a total of two homicides were reported within the precinct covering Norwood, Bedford Park, University Heights, Kingsbridge Heights and parts of Fordham.

In a telephone interview, the victim's mother, Natasha Davis, 37, said Gilbert was born at Harlem Hospital in Manhattan, before his family moved to Kossuth Avenue. He attended PS 280, and the *Norwood News* featured him and his graduating class in a 2005 front page photo. Gilbert was an original member of the 2012

aBronx Knights football team, based out of Williamsbridge Oval Park. He also attended the Bronx Lab School at Evander Childs High School.

"He was an awesome kid with the greatest smile you could ever remember. He loved life and everything about it," said Davis.

Davis' sister Tikia Beckford recalled, "Even people that we don't know, they're just walking up to us saying how respectful he was and how he always had the biggest smile on his face. He was a lovable kid and it's just sad how his life was taken away so fast, snatched away from him."

"His mother is grieving and it's a lot on his family. He has two siblings—one is 13 and the other is seven--and they're really struggling to deal with this," Beckford added.

The family's heartbreak continued after the *New York Post* obtained a graphic video that shows the mortally wounded Gilbert slipping off the gurney and falling, nearly hitting the concrete floor. The *Post* reported that the two unidentified paramedics have been taken off active duty, but are not facing an investigation.

A wake for Gilbert will be held at the Unity Funeral Home located at 2352 Fredrick Douglass Blvd. in Man-

hattan on June 8 between 3 and 8 p.m. A funeral mass will be held on June 9 at 10 a.m., at the Salem Methodist Church, located at 2190 Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., also in Manhattan.

Meanwhile, police have identified the victim shot inside an apartment at 3152 Hull Ave. on April 23 as Rommel Goode, 38, of Brooklyn. Officials also announced the arrest of Derrick Johnson, 31, also of Brooklyn. Johnson was charged with murder, assault and possession of a weapon.

Police continue to search for suspects Tyrone Frank and accomplice Tanisha Banks after Frank chased down and shot Dwayne Saunders, 37, hitting him at least twice as he ran for his life along East 209th Street on May 1.

At a recent 52nd Precinct Community Council Precinct meeting, Commanding Officer Deputy Inspector Peter Fiorillo noted that most of the violent crimes he's seeing in the area is violence being carried out by acquaintances. Fiorillo previously told residents, "We can't patrol your homes and you don't want us to."

Editor's Note: The family of Damion C. Gilbert Jr. has set up a GoFundMe page to cover funeral costs. Anyone can donate at <http://bit.ly/2LqNjDR>.

Burglary at Norwood Food Market

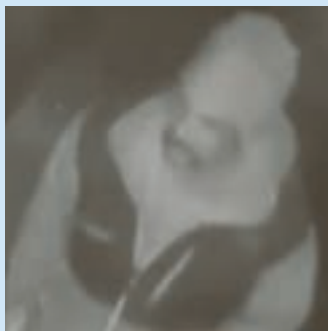


Image still courtesy NYPD

POLICE HAVE RELEASED a grainy surveillance video still showing a man breaking into the El Jalapeño Food Market eatery at 264 E. Gun Hill Rd. at 3:12 a.m. on May 23 and stealing \$350 from the cash register before taking off. Anyone who knows the suspect is asked to call CrimeStoppers at (800) 577-TIPS. All calls are kept confidential.

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week we asked readers their thoughts on the NFL's new policy of issuing fines to players who publicly kneel in protest during the singing of the National Anthem.



It's the American anthem and any NFL, NBA or players of any sport should have the right to kneel. I don't think it's fair that they're now penalized and all they are doing is respecting ordinary people-us. I think President [Donald] Trump is partially responsible for taking away their right of free speech. I am a football fan, I'll probably still watch, but not be into it as much as I was because it's not the same now.

Essence Smith
West Farms Square



Personally, I have family members who have served in the military and I think that they themselves feel that it shouldn't be a policy when it comes to sports. I think it's completely different. I don't think sports should be associated with something that's associated with racial inequalities and people not being treated equally. There shouldn't be a rule on whether they can or cannot; they should be able to express themselves. And by not wanting to honor that flag, because it's against their beliefs, then it's a violation of their own civil rights and they should be allowed to express themselves.

Meria Franqui
Bedford Park



It's ridiculous, Trump needs to stop it. It makes no sense at all. I think he likes many things that just aren't right. This all needs to be dropped and they should just let them kneel. What does that have to do against him? How's it harming him? It's petty.

Angel Colon
Bedford Park



Unbelievable. I'm not in favor of this. Why? They have every right to do this, they pay their taxes. It's their right as Americans. They have every right to their freedom of speech. It's a very complicated issue.

Luis Nuñez
Norwood



I definitely disagree. It definitely goes against the First Amendment and I think it's kind of ridiculous to me. It's peaceful protesting and they're not hurting anybody. I don't think there's anything wrong with that. It's a protest that's relevant today, when it comes to everything that's going on.

Bridgette Nuñez
Kingsbridge

500 Vets ID'd During Memorial Day 'Flagging' at Woodlawn Cemetery

By DAVID GREENE

Some 250 volunteers spent the week before Memorial Day carefully locating the more than 7,000 members of the U.S. military who are buried among the hundreds of thousands of individuals buried at the sprawling 40-acre site at Woodlawn Cemetery.

Washington Greys Military Cadets Major Fernando Maria joined 35 youngsters to locate the veterans at the landmark cemetery. They were given maps of the cemetery, identifying G.I.s with the placement of an American flag by their tombstone.

"We've been here since about 10 in the morning," said Maria. "We had four sheets, roughly about 500 graves. We completed one whole section and my other three team leaders completed good portions of their sections."

Asked if it was time well spent, Maria replied, "Absolutely. It's a great way to spend the weekend. It gives these



Photo by David Greene

MEMBERS OF THE Washington Greys Military Cadets, based at the Kingsbridge Armory, spent the weekend flagging the graves of U.S. military members.

kids a sense of respect for the people that served our country and gives them a little pride."

Notable military veterans at Woodlawn Cemetery include newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer, who came to America in 1864 to serve with the Union Army during the American Civil War; Bronx native Staff Sergeant Natale A. Greco, whose B-24 plane was shot down over Germany

during WWII and Sergeant Abraham Lincoln Colon-Perez, a Purple Heart recipient who was killed in action in South Vietnam.

Scouring for deceased veterans in a cemetery that's the final home to 310,000 individuals has proven to be a challenge.

"...[O]ne of our volunteers has been going through meaningful archives and looking at

death certificates and it will give the profession as being in the military or else it will show they died while in the military," Susan Olsen, the historian at the Woodlawn Conservancy, said. "Other volunteers have been reading obituaries, so they will find it in the obituaries."

Olsen noted that the website Ancestry.com provides many service records from

WWII. "So that's how we keep coming up with more names. It's really a challenge for a private cemetery, because we only have so many military markers, especially those buried in mausoleums. Nobody would know they served and this is how we're figuring it out."

The 150 members of the Woodlawn Conservancy are a dedicated group of volunteers who continue research on the architecture of the mausoleums, biographies of the individuals buried at Woodlawn and identifying military veterans.

Other groups that participated this year included Boy Scout Troop 25 from Yonkers, Girl Scout Troop 1185, the New York Bank of Mellon and workers from Jet.com.

Editor's Note: For more information on the Woodlawn Conservancy, visit their website at www.thewoodlawncemetery.org/woodlawn-conservancy/.

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Diaz to de Blasio: Speed Up Right to Counsel

A law that offers free legal help for low-income residents fighting eviction should be expanded faster, said Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

In late May, Diaz sent a letter to Mayor Bill de Blasio urging him to speed up the availability of the Right to Counsel Act, suggesting de Blasio move the provision by 2020 instead.

Right to Counsel is already in effect in some parts of the Bronx. It would be in full effect by July 2022. But Diaz, an early contender for mayor in 2021, finds the matter more pressing.

"Our city's tenants simply cannot wait," Diaz insisted in his letter to de Blasio. "We must work harder to keep them in their homes and neighborhoods, rather than deal with a crisis when they are evicted and forced into the shelter system."

Diaz's urging comes amid a homelessness crisis that's ballooned under de Blasio's tenure. Lack of affordable housing is to blame, but also the uptick in the number of landlords evicting their tenants out of their apartments. By fulfilling Right to Counsel two years early, Diaz hopes to stop the homelessness crisis at its root.

Diaz demands de Blasio to take responsibility, writing, "...it is incumbent upon your administration to show the leadership and managerial zeal to take the necessary action at a rapid rate to provide indigent tenants with representation in Housing Court."

Since 2013, city funding for legal assistance in Housing Court has increased from \$6 million to \$77 million, and since 2014 eviction rates are down 27 percent. The city plans to increase funding to \$93 million in 2019.

A statement from de Blasio's administration emphasizes improvements already made, but does not mention moving up the deadline for Right to Counsel. "We've already served over 200,000 New Yorkers and as we work to fully implement universal access, we continue to work aggressively to level the playing field for tenants..." said spokesperson Jaclyn Rothenberg.

—Christy Rae Ammons

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Mind to Mind, Heart to Heart

Teacher collaboration in the digital age

By PS/MS 95

When contemporary teachers decide to collaborate, they have a daunting task: to create and utilize curricula to make sure that each child has access to, that is an "entry point" or "stepping stone" into the learning, so that each child can be successful.

Under the leadership of school principal Serge Marshall Davis, PS/MS 95, teachers at the Sheila Mencher School have taken up the challenge of collaboration with a mission: to provide enhanced opportunities for student learning. The challenge is motivated *from the heart*: the teachers' sincere desire to improve the students' deeper learning *and by the mind*: the intellectual quest to find ways to teach children, to enable them to experience being a reader, a writer, a scientist, an artist, a learner. Coaches Dr. Desline Brown, Michelle DiRenzo, Andrea Faulkner, Nadim Farooqi, Anna Massaro and Brandi Nankivel work on many techniques such as blended learning, promoting peer questioning, tech buddies, vertical planning and "setting the frame" for sharing ideas, with systematic practice to assist the teachers in improving student skills.

The National Education Association



Photo courtesy PS/MS 95

A FIFTH GRADER at PS/MS 95 gives a computer lesson to this first grader (foreground).

tion is proud of teachers who connect, engage, share, collaborate with each other in moving learning forward. Collaboration at this school has many facets. Teachers collaborate through the mechanisms of peer observations, inter-visitations and meetings with coaches, small and large group conversations and scheduled formal meetings to discuss their collective students' progress, class tests, student accountability, teacher professional readings on methodology and their enjoyment of small and big moment successes through individual conferencing with

children. They also track student skill development through various technological programs such as Google Docs, Mastery Connect and I Ready.

Middle school students receive assignments, do assessments and projects and are marked on their work using technology. Middle school teacher David Horn poses the questions: "How does the improvement of teaching happen? How can we use face-to-face meetings, technology and other methods to get to deeper learning? How can we meet the needs of the students who are struggling?" He and his colleagues search for ways to meet the students' needs and address them in each lesson plan. Kevin McMahon brings strategies across the curriculum to give cohesion to the lesson planning process, which he calls "an organic collaboration" with Mr. Horn and others. Melissa Perez, dance teacher of the Elite Dance Team, finds cooperation throughout the whole school with colleagues, administrators, parents and school groups and utilizes these connections to solve problems and support the efforts of the dancers to put together their shows.

A stellar example or centerpiece of
(continued on page 11)

3-K to Expand More in the Bronx

By MARTIKA ORNELLA

More kids are expected to start 3-K this fall as the city's universal education program expands to cover more ground.

After a morning spent playing with three-year-olds at the Learning Through Play Pre-K Center in Longwood on May 23, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced further commitment to growing the 3-K for All program.

"We believe in a city that is fair for everyone. The goal of this administration is to make this the fairest big city in America," de Blasio said. Flanked by Schools Chancellor Richard Carranza and Assemblyman Michael Blake, de Blasio touted the 3-K program he believes is a springboard to creating a more equitable city.

A continuation of the city's 'Pre-K for All' initiative, the 3-K program extends early childhood education to three-year-olds. As of May 23, over 3,000 letters were sent out to parents offering their child one of the coveted 3-K seats for the 2018-2019 school



Photo by Martika Ornell

KENDACE BOWEN (R) reads the 3-K acceptance letter offered to her daughter Kayla Bowen by Mayor Bill de Blasio (l).

year. A series of two-year expansions are set to grow 3-K to 12 community school districts by fall 2021.

The free, full-day school program is currently available to all eligible three-year-olds in the South Bronx. Next year, 3-K for All will widen to applicants in Grand Concourse, Highbridge, and Morrisania; expanding to the Central Bronx in 2020.

Noting the uniqueness of the 3-K program, Carranza said, "This is not happening at this scale anywhere in America."

Kisha Rivers understands all too well the struggle of securing child care. "The costs can be astronomical. It can be more than your rent," Rivers said about private daycare service. At one point she paid more than \$1,200 a month for child care. Her daughter, Nyla Rivers, now attends the Longwood Pre-K Center.

School districts scheduled for a two-year 3-K expansion will offer select applicants seats in the program in the first year, then across-the-board acceptance in the second year. Of the 31 school districts in the city, 12 will receive full funding for 3-K for All by 2021. Plans to expand the program citywide will rely on additional state and federal funding, said the mayor.

"If we succeed in our goal, we want a New York City where our children are born into fairness," de Blasio said.

Amazing Bronx Flotilla

CANOERS STRAPPED ON their life vests, grabbed an oar, and hopped into a canoe for the annual Amazing Bronx River Flotilla hosted by the Bronx River Alliance. The May 26 event saw participants sail down the Bronx River from Shoelace Park to Riverside Park in Hunts Point. The event also calls attention to the progress made at the Bronx River, once used for major dumping. Photos by Adi Talwar



NEW YORK CITY Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver (l) addresses participants of the Bronx River Flotilla at Shoelace Park.



ON BOARD THE Mad River Canoe, this participant (foreground) is all smiles as she begins her trek down the Bronx River with her rowing mate. Other participants wait to cast off.



WHAT A SIGHT. Paddlers canoe down a largely leafy section of the Bronx River.



FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of the Bronx River Alliance, Linda Cox, drags a canoe through a shallow section of the Bronx River cutting through the Bronx Zoo.



PADDLER JOHN ROBINSON steers a canoe in rapid Bronx River water just south of the Bronx Zoo.



A VIEW OF Concrete Plant Park from the Bronx River during the flotilla event.



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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Reimagining Mosholu Parkland

Residents are invited to a brainstorming session on improving sections of Mosholu Parkland on June 9 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Sister Annunciata Bethell Senior Center, 243 E. 204th St. The event is hosted by Citizens Committee in conjunction with Friends of Mosholu Parkland. For more information, contact Elizabeth Quaranta at mosholuparkland@gmail.com.

Bronx Career Fair

A career fair will be held at Hostos Community College, C Building/East Academic Complex, 3rd floor gym, 450 Grand Concourse on June 20 from 1 to 4 p.m. For more information, email Lisanette Rosario, director of career services, at lrosario@hostos.cuny.edu.

New Social Security Cards

New replacement Social Security cards can be now obtained by going to www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount. The new cards will no longer include the Social Security number to further protect privacy. For more detailed information, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber_.

Free Immigration Service

West Bronx Housing, 220 E. 204th St., provides free basic immigration services. They offer application assistance for citizenship, permanent residence Green Card applications, renewals, and other basic services. Clients can bring an interpreter, if necessary. For more information, call (718) 798-0929 to make an appointment and to answer your immigration questions.

Excelsior Scholarship

Applications for the Excelsior Scholarship are now open for new applicants pursuing a college degree at city- or state-funded colleges/universities for the 2018-19 academic year. Eligible candidates must be New York State residents, take 30 credits per year (including summer and winter sessions), a family whose annual household income is below \$110,000, and be on track to graduate on time with an associate's degree in two years or a bachelor's degree in four years. Applications will be accepted

through July 23. For more information, and to apply, go to <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/excelsior/>.

Bird Walks

Free bird walk tours with guides provided by the New York City Audubon Society and Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy, are scheduled for every Saturday through July 21 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. at the Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy. Meet at the VC Nature Center. For more information, contact Joseph McManus at mcmanus638@aol.com.

Commercial Lease Help

Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition offers free legal help to small businesses in negotiating commercial leases with their landlords. Businesses have to be in New York City, must be non-franchise, have a household income below 500 percent of the federal poverty guideline, and have a new or renewal lease. For more information, contact Evy Viruet at (718) 584-0515 ext. 100.

Rent Freeze Programs

University Neighborhood Housing Program offers assistance in applying for a rent freeze through the state SCRIE/DRIE programs. Eligible applicants must be at least 62 years old, have someone in their house at least 62 years old, or disabled (receiving SSI/SSD benefits). Sessions are available Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Refuge House, 2715 Bainbridge Ave. (corner of East 196th Street). For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 933-2539.

Naloxone Availability

Individuals with prescription health insurance coverage, including Medicaid and Medicare, can receive up to \$40 in co-payment coverage for naloxone. This medicine is used to reverse opioid overdoses. Uninsured New Yorkers and those with no prescription coverage can get naloxone for free through New York's network of registered opioid overdose prevent programs. A listing of pharmacies accepting the new health insurance coverage can be found at <https://a816-healthpsi.nyc.gov/NYHealthMap>.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Family Fitness Festival

The public is invited to a free Family Fitness Festival at Williamsbridge Oval Park on June 16 from noon to 3 p.m. Events include zumba exercise, healthy cooking demonstrations, face painting, relay races and health workshops.

Onstage

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **Sonido Costeño Trio in Concert**, June 9 at 2:30 p.m. featuring Latin and other world music. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Riverdale Choral Society presents **Summer Sing** featuring two Requiems, June 13 at 7:30 p.m. (\$15), at Christ Church Riverdale, 5030 Henry Hudson Pkwy. (252nd Street). Singers can bring their own scores if they have them or scores will be provided. For more information, call (718) 543-2219.

Events

Williamsbridge Oval offers **free events** during June. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 543-8672.

Bedford Park Congregational Church, 309 E. 201st St. (Bainbridge Avenue), is holding a **Lawn Party** (cookout/picnic), June 24 at 1 p.m. Food offered includes hamburgers and hot dogs from the grill and a variety of salads and desserts; \$10/adults; \$5/children. For more information, call (718) 733-3199.

The 52nd Precinct, 3016 Webster Ave., holds its 4th annual **Open House**, June 15 from 4 to 7 p.m., to meet your local officers. Events include games, food, and music.

Unity in the Community **street fair** will take place June 16 from noon to 6 p.m. on Reservoir Avenue between West Kingsbridge Road and 195th Street. Events include giveaways, activities, and food. The public is invited to join the fun.

The Westchester Square Business Improvement District celebrates its 10th annual free **Fair @ The Square**, June 16 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. along East Tremont Avenue between Westchester Avenue and Silver Street. Events include an all-day concert series featuring musicians, dancers and singers. For more information, call (718) 597-4629.

The Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance

(BAAD), 2474 Westchester Ave., presents its 18th annual **Out Like That Festival**, June 8 through 26, celebrating gay pride in the Bronx. Events include dance, film, theater and performances. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 918-2110.

Bronx County Historical Society presents **Bronx Brewery Legacy Trolley Tour**, June 9 from noon to 5 p.m., leaving from Woodlawn Cemetery's Jerome Avenue entrance (\$40). For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

The Montefiore Moses Community Advisory Board (CAB) presents a **Walk at the Williamsbridge Oval**, June 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Events include physical activity, health information, raffle prizes and giveaways. Warmup stretches begin at 10 a.m.

The New York Botanical Garden's **Farmers Market** is scheduled to be held Wednesdays from June 13 through Oct. 31 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., just inside the Mosholu entrance and across the street from the Botanical Garden station of the Metro North commuter railroad. Also scheduled is the **dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony** for the NYBG's state-of-the-art Edible Academy on June 14 and **public opening weekend celebration** with hands-on family activities on June 16 and 17 including touring and hands-on craft-making and planting for children. For more information, call (718) 817-8700.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Paper Sky Lanterns, to sketch clouds and cut colorful tissue paper into sky scenes, then make lanterns using paper mache, June 9 and 10; and Pollinator Bats and Nocturnal Flowers, to paint nocturnal flowers in fluorescent colors, then make a furry paper puppet bat, June 16 and 17; both in the WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also scheduled is **Sunset Wednesdays: Live Music on the Great Lawn**, western swing band, The Brain Cloud performs everything from ragtime jazz to Appalachian old-time fiddling, June 20 at 7 p.m. (rain or shine). Concerts will move indoors in case of inclement



File photo

KIDS CAN GET a chance to hop on an NYPD two-wheeler at the 52nd Precinct's Open House event set for June 15 just like this one did at last year's Open House (see under Events for more information).

weather. Grounds admission is free until noon Tuesdays and Saturdays all year. For more information and a schedule of events including tours and walks, call (718) 549-3200.

Exhibits

The Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street), presents **Bronx Expo - The Starlight Park Story**, through Sept. 30; and **Women's Suffrage and New York City: A Centennial Celebration**, through April 11, 2019. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Library Events

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children: **Hands-on Projects**: (ages 5 to 12; preregistration required), Paper Popsicle Making, June 7; Father's Day Card Making, June 14; and Bookmark Making, June 21, all at 4 p.m.; and Paper Plate Watermelon, June 10 and Paper Tie Making, June 17, both at 3:30 p.m. Adults can enjoy **Microsoft Word 2010 for Beginners**: June 12, and **Computer Basics**: June 14, both at 2 p.m.; and **film**: "Selma," June 16 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children: **Crafty Fridays at 3 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12), crafts, June 8 and 15; **Summer Reading Kickoff DJ Dance Party 2**: (kids of all ages), games and prizes, June 8 at 3 p.m.; **Toddler Bilingual Storytime**: (ages 18 to 36 months), librarian will read, sing, and play songs in English and Spanish, June 11 at 11 a.m.; and **STEM: Kids Science at 3 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12), June 12 and 19. Teens/young adults can enjoy: **Teen Summer Reading Kickoff Party**: music, games and fun, June 7 at 3:30 p.m. Adults can attend: **Knitting Circle**: Thursdays at 3 p.m.; and **Adult Summer Reading Kickoff Party**: music, games and fun, June 7 at 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road, offers **Summer Reading Kickoff Celebration**: (ages to 12 years), featuring pizza, arts and crafts, games, and more. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY TO ALL OUR DAD READERS!

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by June 11 for the next publication date of June 21.

Celebrating Dominican Pride



Photo by Miriam Quinones

AHEAD OF THE 2018 Bronx Dominican Day Parade, the Dominican Parade Board hosted a recognition event honoring several accomplished Dominican-born recipients. Guests, including elected officials, Dominican Day Parade Scholarship recipients, and others were on hand for the May 29 event that took place at Bronx Borough Hall. Stanley Schlein, a non-Dominican lobbyist and lawyer for the Bronx Democratic County Committee (center, wearing sash), was honored with the so-called "Adopted Dominican" award.

Breaking Ground on Skate Park

(continued from page 1)

ers who've lobbied the city to get the skate park built in what's considered Norwood's leafy jewel.

"I've been to a bunch of skating parks and there are some nice ones out there, but I haven't seen one in the Bronx," says Eusebio Baez, 28, who is thrilled to see the city respond to the community's request for a separate space within the Oval.

One thing Baez thinks the Bronx had lacked was a modern skate park designed for skateboarders; a place where they can safely ride and perform their tricks.

When Baez attended the first visioning session to assess interest for a skate park in the Bronx, he was skeptical that his recommendations would be heard. By the second meeting, Baez was asked to sketch an idea for the park, and by the third meeting he was surprised to see a professional rendering for a skate park that incorporated his suggestions. "That's when I knew this thing could really happen," Baez said. "They were serious."

Incorporating locals into the design process of any park is always the goal, said Silver.

"We involve the community in all

of our projects, that's just what we do. We want authentic feedback to understand exactly how everything will fit in," Silver said.

According to Silver, skateboarders like Baez understand what makes a good skate park more than anyone else. Of the skateboarders, Silver said, "They know the challenges and what they need to have fun experiences."

Before plans for the skate park were drafted, skateboarders repurposed empty spaces in the Oval to create some challenging skating courses. A skateboarder who only went by Awnimosa, 28, remembers a time in the 1990s when BMX bikers built a halfpipe in Oval Park so they could practice of their tricks.

"It was just around this same space [where the new skate park will be built] that I saw the bikers and then some skaters do their own thing," said Awnimosa. "I've been skating since 2007 and I'm seeing a new generation of kids that are going to love this skate park."

For Cohen, the presence of skateboarders at an area where there was no official place to skate showed "evidence that there really is a constituency here that would like a skate

park."

The skate park will not just be a new recreational outlet for the neighborhood, it's also a way to give skaters a safe haven. "A lot of skateboarding takes place at night, off-hours, and this sort of brings it into the daylight," Cohen said. "You are welcome here. You have a designated space."

Creating a safe space for park visitors was also on the mind of Lorita Watson, a Community Board 7 member. "I think [the skate park] will attract more people and give them a safer environment. And for those who actually skate, it will raise their game."

But the new skate park isn't meant to alienate seasoned patrons of the Oval, but intended to draw new crowds to Norwood, Silver said. "Not everyone skates, and so we don't have them in every park, but where we do have them people from other neighborhoods go and check them out," Silver explained. "This is now adding to the portfolio of all of our skate parks in New York City."

The skate park has been in the making since 2003, said Doug Condit of the volunteer group, Friends of Williamsbridge Oval. Financing the project stood among the difficulties.

"When they had money from the [Croton Water] Filtration Plant [fund], they asked different parks what they wanted done," Condit recalled, referring to a now-expired \$200 million fund set aside for park improvements in exchange for construction of the plant underneath Van Cortlandt Park. A skate park at the Oval was on the list of needs, but was soon put on the backburner in favor of a dog run.

The project, once funded, fell behind schedule after the first contractor picked for the project turned it down. Work on a skate park in Van Cortlandt Park has also been delayed following its own groundbreaking ceremony last year.

When the park opens, skaters can expect ramps, quarter pipes, elevated curbs, mounds, rails, and other boarding options.

The Bronx already has four public skate parks, including the 10,000-square-foot River Avenue Skate Park near Yankee Stadium.

"We've had generations of skaters come and go," Watson said, reflecting on how far Oval Park has come. "A few years ago we didn't have all this. We have so many people coming here. It has become a destination park."

Mind to Mind, Heart to Heart

(continued from page 6)

collaboration at PS/MS 95 is the *Computer Coding Project* which introduces young children to basic computer programming skills. According to Steve Jobs, "programming a computer teaches you how to think." This project involves teacher collaboration, fifth grade-to-first grade student collaboration, computer teacher to classroom teacher collaboration and teacher to administrator collaboration, where administrators facilitate access to the equipment, materials, logistics and educational evaluation.

This computer curriculum puts the children through the paces of steering characters through a maze. Students need to concentrate on sequencing, direction and other math skills. Students participate in the elements of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) in this mental activity. The project involves the presence of older children (fifth graders), to assist younger children (first graders), on a one-to-one partner basis. The partners sit side-by-side at a shared computer and, step by guided step, first graders build a program, mentored by fifth graders. Parents can check out the website code.org for a sense of what the program looks

like. (Get ready for some angry birds, naughty pigs, zombies and other animated characters!)

The collaborating teachers, including the computer teacher Amanda Barelli and the fifth and first grade teachers, as well as the grade level administrators, have a vision of how the students should be working, and facilitate the activity on a weekly basis. They see an improvement in the students' abilities to make strategic choices, to think and to collaborate with fellow students. The experience fosters leadership skills of the fifth graders and develops a passion for the subject. A first grader said, "I like it because at first I felt nervous but when I got into the game I knew I could learn it."

The new schools chancellor is quoted as saying that, among other things, school must pay attention to "leadership, teaching, curriculum and joyful learning."

School Leadership Team Chair Francheska Ceballos sums it up by living the creed that the mission is "to be there for the students and their families, with a clear vision and unity across the board."

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