



NORWOOD NEWS

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**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
GETTING INVOLVED | PG. 4**



**NORWOOD NEWS HONORED AT
JOURNALISM AWARDS | PG. 10**

TRINITARIOS HACK TEEN NEAR NORWOOD

Same gang behind murder of Lesandro “Junior” Guzman-Feliz, police say



Image courtesy NYPD

A SCREEN GRAB of video released by the NYPD shows members of the Trinitarios gang attacking a 14-year-old on the Bronx River Parkway by the East Gun Hill Road exit. The victim suffered up to 16 stab wounds, according to reports.

By **DAVID CRUZ,**
ANGEL MINDANAO
CHRISTY RAE AMMON,
SOPHIA EBANKS,
and **JOSE A. GIRALT**

In the past two weeks, the brutal murder of 15-year-old Lesandro “Junior” Guzman-Feliz, caught on surveillance

footage, captured the city’s attention over its senselessness. In a case of mistaken identity, gang members dragged Junior out of Zesarina Grocery Store on June 20 and stabbed him to death. His stabbing led to a major outpouring of support, with hashtags reading, #justicefor-

junior.

Two days before Junior’s death, over a dozen men, some shirtless, were seen beating and stabbing a 14-year-old boy with sticks and machetes before taking off. The incident was also caught on video.

Police say both incidents in-

volved the deadly Trinitarios gang, whose mob-style attacks in the separate crimes mirrored one another. The cases also involved young people victimized by gang assault.

The brutality of the cases combined with the fact both

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**EDITORIAL**

Time to RICO the Trinitarios Again

In the aftermath of the street murder of 15-year-old Lesandro "Junior" Guzman-Feliz, the U.S. Attorney's Office should once again take a hard look at the gang responsible for his murder, the deadly Trinitarios gang.

It has been done before, with help from RICO. And it can be done again.

An investigation under RICO, acronym for Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, certainly fits well for the Trinitarios. The machete-wielding group, with roots in the Bronx, has engaged in racketeering, murder, attempted murder, illegal gun carrying, and drug dealing, according to an indictment by the U.S. Attorney's Office in 2013. The first such RICO case was tried in New York in 1979, with

union boss Anthony Scotto convicted on racketeering charges.

A RICO case applies when a criminal enterprise with such reputes such as the Trinitarios engages in high crimes, such as racketeering or murder. The group's leaders could be tried for crimes they ordered others to do or assisted in doing. The idea crushes the layers of protection against criminal leaders who, while not physically involved in a crime, are culpable by mandating a crime to proceed. The idea, in the case of the Trinitarios, could dismantle the organization.

But how do authorities dismantle a syndicate that began in prison with orders still given by Leonides Sierra, its co-founding leader? Sierra, jailed

since 1989, is serving two back-to-back sentences for crimes related to his stature as a national leader in a gang.

The likely answer is to go after its existing top leadership. Its street lieutenants and captains who carry these orders.

This crime has certainly gained widespread attention, as it deserves. But are we missing the big picture? On a ground level, crimes involving young people have noticeably climbed in the Bronx over the last few weeks (see Crime File on page 4 of this edition), where victims and suspects are incredibly young. Is this just a wave or a trend the NYPD should pay further attention to these days?



Letters To The Editor

Keep Special Schools Special

This is in reference to the article in your latest issue dated June 21 - July 4, 2018 about the admissions test for specialized high schools.

Much has been said about not relying on one test to determine a student's abilities, that some aren't good test takers. While this may be true, those students who do well on the entrance exam do so based on their knowledge of the subject matter, not on their test taking ability.

If, somehow, the "poor" test takers were accepted into the specialized high schools, how would they subsequently fare on tests given for each academic subject which undoubtedly would have a harder curriculum than in standard high schools? Those students could end up struggling throughout their four years (or more) of high school, if they don't drop out altogether. Being accepted into the school is no guarantee of success nor would entering necessarily be doing them any favor. They might very well be more successful in a standard high school with a less difficult curriculum. It's known that there are students attending "regular" high

schools who either drop out or take longer than four years to graduate. This scenario would be exacerbated in a specialized high school.

If blacks and Latinos haven't been accepted into the specialized high schools, it's due to not scoring high enough on the admissions exam. Making it easier to be accepted would do a disservice to those who do score high. Asians and whites and even the few minorities who do well should not be faulted for their scholarly abilities. There may even be high scorers who do not get accepted simply because there are many others who have scored even higher and the school has a cutoff on how many students they can accept. This maintains the school's reputation for being elite.

Competition is very high. For those students seeking academic assistance in preparation for the exam, any additional knowledge acquired will be temporary. Those students had eight years of schooling to retain enough knowledge to prepare for the test. Last minute cramming doesn't guarantee a high enough score to be accepted. Suggestions and advice on how to achieve a high score on the en-

trance exam may possibly get them into the school, but it doesn't increase their academic knowledge to help them succeed once they enter.

It's common knowledge that the exam focuses on math and English. In general, courses are based on accumulated knowledge from previous grades. If a student is accepted into the school without enough previous knowledge, he or she may not be able to keep up.

There's a reason some high schools are called special and prestigious. They're interested in accepting the highest achievers. Changing legislation to allow more minority students who may not be academically qualified, entry into the specialized high schools, will no longer make the special schools special.

If legislation does pass, kudos to Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz who was right on point when he said in part, "...there will certainly be a perception that they've lowered the standard and therefore the school will be less desirable." My sentiments exactly.

**Judy Noy
Norwood**

Clergy and Bronx Electeds Slam Trump Immigration Policy

By ANGEL MINDANAO, SOPHIA EBANKS, and MARTIKA ORNELLA

Clergy, community leaders and Democratic elected officials interlocked arms as they sang “We Shall Overcome” at a prayer vigil and rally on June 22, calling for the reunification of immigrant families detained at America’s southern border.

The event saw legislators from the city, state and federal governments weighing in on a policy that, up until June 20, saw families of illegal immigrants separated. It was a policy done away with by an Executive Order President Donald Trump had signed. Legislators saw this as a moment to pounce on Mr. Trump despite the reversal.

“There is no substitution for the care of a mother or a family,” said Congressman Joe Crowley. “We are starving the souls of these children.”

Crowley expressed his outrage in the aftermath of the Trump administration’s policy to arrest and separate families who’ve come to the country illegally. “They must be reunited with their parents. Nothing else matters,” Crowley said. He compared these events to the experiences of African slaves.

Senator Jamaal Bailey, who represents Norwood, empathized with the parents afflicted by the “zero tolerance” policy that mandates criminal prosecution of illegal immigrants, triggering the separation. U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions, with the approval of President Donald Trump, instituted the policy on April 6.



Photo by Jose A. Giralt

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Ruben Diaz Jr. (at mic) speaks at a prayer vigil and rally outside the Bronx County Building on June 22. He is flanked on his right by NYC Public Advocate Letitia James and on his left by U.S. Congressman Joseph Crowley, from the 14th District. The event was organized by Diaz and co-sponsored by the Bronx Clergy Task Force.

“Yes, an Executive Order was signed, but what about the thousands of families who need to be reunited? We don’t know what steps we’re going to take to remedy that,” said Bailey. “This isn’t a political issue. This is simply what’s right.”

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. said that he has been assured by leadership of both the Catholic Guardian Services and Lutheran Social Services of New York, two nonprofits contracted by the federal govern-

ment to provide services for children who have been separated from their parents at the US-Mexico border, that they’re receiving proper treatment.

“The damage has been done,” said Diaz Jr. “The long-term psychological scarring is something that children will suffer from for the rest of their lives.”

The borough president went on to demand the return of the 2,300 children separated from their parents. According to published reports, several hundred undocumented minors who’ve been separated from their families have been relocated to New York. It’s unclear where these children are being held.

Lutheran Social Services of New York, a 130 plus-year nonprofit, is federally funded to provide services to minors who arrive in the U.S. without parents or guardians, according to its website. The program provides temporary shelter and foster care services to unaccompanied children, supporting 58 children in 2016, in addition to putting together teams of clinicians, teachers, and child care workers to offer case management services to children.

The *Norwood News* reached out to the group’s Fordham branch, and left a message with its president and CEO Damyn Kelly, who did not return a message.

The *Norwood News* also reached out

to Catholic Guardian Services (CGS). David Koller, director of fundraising at the CGS headquarters, said he could not confirm the information at this time and referred us to Paul Costiglio, the director of marketing and communications. The *Norwood News* left a message for Costiglio but has not heard back.

CGS has various locations in the Bronx. One of those facilities is located in Norwood, on 202nd Street near the Grand Concourse, across the street from a daycare center.

An elderly black woman, who declined to give her name, said she worked in the CGS facility and that it was an adult group home. “There are no children here,” she said. At the rally, clergy members raged over the separation. Bishop Angelo Rosario of the Bronx Clergy Task Force said, “The way they use the Bible to defend their actions is an abomination.”

Fr. Eric Cruz of the Catholic Charities of New York spoke after arriving from McAllen, Texas, where he and 39 other faith leaders visited the Catholic Charities of Rio Grande Valley where undocumented immigrants were held.

Cruz said of the Trump administration, “They think that God is there to serve them, but they are there to serve God and his people.” He continued, “If we don’t help them now, then when? If not us, then who?”



Photo by Jose A. Giralt

A PROTESTOR HOLDS a sign at a prayer vigil and rally outside the Bronx Borough Hall on June 22, 2018. The event was organized by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and co-sponsored by the Bronx Clergy Task Force.

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week we asked readers their thoughts on the death of 15-year-old Lesandro Guzman-Feliz, and if the workers in the bodega where he was dragged out of did enough to prevent his murder.



They say that the owner could have done more. I don't know the owner's story, I don't know how much the owner did or didn't do, so I can't say that I would hold him accountable for it. It's a tragedy and we need to do something about it; it doesn't make sense to me. I think the NYPD is the best in the world, because they caught the kids and they did it fast. I'm sure they're doing the best they can do with all of the cases they have

Ralph Beck
Norwood



I feel that a lot of people dropped the ball here. I think the people in the deli should have helped him and it shows they didn't have any spine. They could have given him some protection; I would have. But it seems that it was a case of mistaken identity. Now I grew up in the days of the gangs in the Bronx in the 1970s, when the gangs were organized. I had no affiliation with these gangs. But I think they could have protected him.

Robert "Bobby DJ" Lorber
Melrose



I think they tried. I think under the circumstances, they tried. I don't think they should be responsible for things that go on inside our community. We have to be responsible for that. We don't know where the store owner is from, or if he comes from that community. The people from this community, this is their issue, not an outsider. You can't put the blame of something like this on someone from outside the community. On some things the NYPD is doing too much, because they're locking people up who aren't doing anything and going too far with it.

Michael Justice
Bedford Park



The people in the deli didn't do enough because the kid ran in there asking for help. The man in the store probably didn't understand him and he gave him to those people, and they chopped him and stabbed him and the kid still got up. I watched it on Facebook. He went back in the store again and they still wouldn't help him. They could have locked the door, call 911 and maybe put their fingers in the vein where he was bleeding the most to stop the bleeding. And maybe the kid would still be alive. I don't understand why these kids are killing each other. Don't they know life is beautiful and precious and there is so much to live for.

Sandra Reyes
Belmont



When he's trying to get in the store, you can see the bodega guys. They're pushing him back out and he forced his way in. But they still grabbed him from behind and they pulled him out; but they didn't do anything. I think maybe they should be arrested because they are partially responsible for this. Not just the kids, it was also them. The gangs gather a little bit on each corner and they sell drugs and no one else should go there because that's their spot. And they have their little clique and everybody is scared to go there. We get some (police) officers walking the beat for a few hours, but as soon as they leave they're back out.

William Albano
Belmont

CRIME FILE

**Teen Stabbed**

Police need help locating a man wanted for allegedly stabbing a 17-year-old boy at a bus stop.

Police say the victim was on the corner of West Fordham Road and University Avenue on June 5 at 2:22 p.m. when he was approached by the suspect and stabbed once. The teen was then taken to a nearby hospital where he is in stable condition.

The suspect is described as Hispanic, thin, and last seen wearing a white tank top, jeans, and red sneakers.

—Angel Mindanao

**Another Teen Stabbed**

Several young men are wanted for attacking a 17-year-old near East 196th Street and Jerome Avenue on June 8 at around 8:30 a.m. Police say the victim was approached by several teens ranging between the ages of 14 and 18, and was slashed with a knife to the head and punched. The victim was sent to the hospital and treated.

—David Cruz

**Teens Rob Deliveryman**

Police need help tracking two teens wanted for allegedly robbing a deliveryman and pistol whipping him before taking off. One teen was captured on surveillance.

Police say the deliveryman was inside a residential building in the area of East 203rd Street and Valentine Avenue in Bedford Park on June 14 just before 6 p.m. when the two suspects, both 17, robbed and attacked him. They took \$40 and a cell phone after break-

ing the phone. They then took off in an unknown direction. The victim was treated at a nearby hospital and released.

Both teens are described as dark-skinned Hispanics, each standing at 5'10"; one with Afro hair and last spotted wearing a white T-shirt with an Adidas logo on the front and wearing black sneakers (captured in the surveillance photo).

—Angel Mindanao

Anyone with information on the above incidents is asked to call CrimeStoppers at 800-577-TIPS. All calls are kept confidential.

Suspect Dead Following Robbery

Police reported the death of a man who died at the #4 subway line's Fordham Road station after cops were chasing him for allegedly robbing a grocery store. Police say this happened on June

30 just before midnight after cops stopped a man who fit the description of a thief wanted for robbing a grocery store at 2587 Jerome Ave. The suspect quickly ran off, losing the officers. When they checked the subway station, an MTA worker said the suspect jumped onto the tracks between two train cars where he was found dead by EMS. A gun was recovered.

—David Cruz

**TO REPORT A
STORY TO THE
NORWOOD NEWS,
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Excessing at Clinton H.S. Means Teachers Must Reapply

By JOSE A. GIRALT

For some teachers at DeWitt Clinton High School, the last day of school means cleaning out desks until the fall semester. For other staffers, they had to clean their desks out permanently.

The city Department of Education (DOE) confirmed to the *Norwood News* that several teachers were let go. When repeatedly asked how many, the DOE did not provide the number. The DOE spokesperson classified the ousted teachers as “excessed,” a term describing a staffer that “no longer has a position at the school.” June 26 was the last day of school, with teachers seen hauling boxes full of paperwork, stationery, and plants.

At the end of the previous academic year, school officials classified Clinton as a low-performing school and subject to restaffing procedures under the DOE’s Renewal School Program.

The program, created in 2014 by Mayor Bill de Blasio, requires personnel at low-performing schools, namely teachers, guidance counselors, social workers, and paraprofessionals, to re-apply for their jobs. Final decisions are made by a committee comprised of the



Photo by Jose A. Giralt

DEWITT CLINTON H.S. (pictured) is seeing major changes, including the restaffing of its teachers and a \$27 million façade renovation.

principal, union representatives, and education department officials.

“The process was pretty clear throughout,” said Claire Hagan, who has taught at the school for 22 years and was rehired after reapplying. “The union also helped prepare us with workshops about updating résumés and improving interview skills.”

Hagan noticed that some of her fellow teachers did not reapply. “I had no idea what to expect, but I’m glad that the teachers I love teaching with were rehired,” Hagan said.

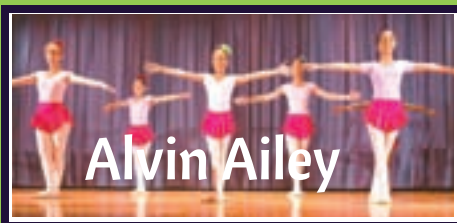
For some schools identified as low-performing, the turnover rate can be significant and become disruptive to school administrators. For example, 74

percent of the teaching staff at Brooklyn’s Boys and Girls High School did not return in 2015. And 63 percent left at Automotive High School, also in Brooklyn.

Although there hasn’t been much to celebrate academically at Clinton in recent years, the school does have a long history of producing notable alumni. They include Spider-Man creator Stan Lee, fashion designer Ralph Lauren, Congressman Charles Rangel, and author James Baldwin.

As recently as 1999, Clinton was named by U.S. News & World Report magazine as one of the top 100 high schools in the nation. By the next decade, however, the school received an overall grade of F as published by the DOE’s Progress Report for 2010-11 and continues to receive low marks. Early this year, a case was opened by the DOE’s Office of Special Investigations into accusations of grade manipulations by administrators at the school.

A representative from the United Federation of Teachers, the union representing public school teachers, did not return a message for comment.



Alvin Ailey
Alvin Ailey Dance Registration starts:
Monday, September 4th for Members
Wednesday, September 6th for Non-Members
Classes are 1x week for 16 weeks
Pricing Starts at \$176 for members



Swim Lessons
Swim Lessons Registration starts:
Monday, July 23rd for Members
Wednesday, July 25th for Non-Members
Classes are 1x week for 8 weeks
Pricing Starts at \$80 for members

New Settlement Community Center Register For Summer Programs

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718.758.5901 | www.NewSettlementCommunityCenter.org

Visit our Website for Schedules & Pricing



Capoeira
Capoeira Registration starts:
Monday, July 30th for Members
Wednesday, August 1st for Non-Members
Classes are 2x week for 8 weeks
Pricing Starts at \$112 for members



Yoga
Yoga Registration starts:
Monday, July 30th for Members
Wednesday, August 1st for Non-Members
Classes are 1x week for 8 weeks
Nonmembers: \$88; Members: FREE



Salsa
Salsa Registration starts:
Monday, August 20th for Members
Wednesday, August 22th for Non-Members
Classes are 1x week for 8 weeks
Pricing Starts at \$96 for members

Wait Times Down at Mont

BY SOPHIA EBANKS

Bronx residents are spending less time waiting to see their primary care doctors during medical visits at Montefiore Health System.

Montefiore Medical Group has reported an average 10 percent reduction in patients' arrival to departure time from appointments. Namita Azad, the systems transformation manager at Montefiore, said that technological resources have strengthened communication between Montefiore team members and patients. "Pre-planning for patient visits is essential," Azad said.

Before patients arrive at Montefiore clinics, nurses and clerical staff spend time familiarizing themselves with corresponding medical information. Montefiore's online system MyChart has helped to streamline this process. Created in 2015, MyChart manages communication between patient and provider. Patients can use the system to pick appointment times that work best for them and browse educational material and resources easily. Medical personnel can design templates of care plans and look into medical goals of patients before they even enter the waiting room.

According to Azad, having this information ready and accessible online allows doctors and providers to be more flexible when developing regimens for patients, taking a holistic approach to treating patients. "We're not only asking questions about the clinical part of the patient," she said. "We're asking what happens out of the clinic and what abilities do they have to manage that."

Montefiore clinics have recently received a new rating from the National Committee on Quality Assurance, a nonprofit that assesses the quality of service provided by health care facilities every three years. According to the nonprofit's website, health care facilities receive the level three rating, considered the highest ranking, for meeting standards for better patient experience, better health, and lower costs. The organization has certified Montefiore Medical Group practices as level three patient-centered medical homes.

Azad attributes this achievement to the practice's entire network. "It's a multidisciplinary approach," she said. "This is a result of all the work that our full care team has put in."

Montefiore Medical Group has more than 20 locations across the Bronx and Westchester counties.

Shocker! Bronx/Queens Congressman Loses in Major Upset

By MARTIKA ORNELLA

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Democratic primary victory over incumbent Congressman Joe Crowley left many stunned, including members of the Bronx Democratic Party.

Referring to the freshly defeated Crowley, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. told a *The New York Times* reporter, "We need [Crowley] in Washington, DC. Washington is about consistency and seniority." Assemblyman Marcos Crespo, the Bronx Democratic Party chairman, told *Politico* that Ocasio-Cortez's win "rattled" some members of his party. "I think we don't have to view it all as a negative," Crespo said. "There is an energetic new base that identifies as Democrats that are demanding and expecting change."

Ocasio-Cortez, a Bronx native of Puerto Rican descent, won over 57 percent of the vote to become the Democratic candidate for New York's 14th Congressional District, which includes parts of Queens and the East Bronx. Ocasio-Cortez ran on a Democratic-Socialist platform that includes universal Medicare, tuition-free college, and abolishing the Immigration Customs and Enforcement agency (ICE).

Ocasio-Cortez, 28, ran a grass-roots campaign, focusing her efforts on door-knocking, canvassing, and using social media to get her message out. Her Twitter has more than 561,000 followers, to Crowley's 31,000.

In a Twitter post from June 19, Ocasio-Cortez drew attention to Crowley's absence at a local debate. Crowley instead sent former Bronx Councilwoman Annabel Palma in his place. Using a surrogate to represent him, along with his residence in Virginia, bolstered Ocasio-Cortez's argument that Crowley was out



CONGRESSMAN JOE CROWLEY

of touch with his district, which is 51 percent Hispanic.

Yet, Ocasio-Cortez's win wasn't simply propelled by Hispanic voters. According to data gathered by the Center for Urban Research at the CUNY Graduate Center, Ocasio-Cortez was the favorite in socioeconomically diverse Queens neighborhoods of Astoria, Sunnyside, and Woodside. In the Bronx, Crowley outperformed Ocasio-Cortez in Country Club, Edgewater Park, and Throgs Neck; Bronx neighborhoods which are also predominantly white and upper-middle class.

Also, in a reversal of home court advantage, Queens-born Crowley did better in the Bronx than in his home borough. In the Bronx, Crowley won 46 percent of the vote, to only 40 percent in Queens, according to the New York State Board of Elections. Ocasio-Cortez performed better in both boroughs within the district.

For some, Ocasio-Cortez's primary win sets the precedent for the sort of



ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ

grass-roots campaigning Democrats look to duplicate to unseat the Republican majority this November. Her ability to galvanize enough potential voters to give Crowley his first primary challenge since 2004 made national news. But for the Bronx, her win also underscores the lackluster turnout in the borough's voting bloc.

Only five percent of active voters in the Bronx's 14th Congressional District voted in the June 26 primary. In Queens, over eight percent of likely voters went to the polls.

Still, voter turnout in the Bronx for the primary was better than in recent years. In 2016, only four percent of active voters in the Bronx's 13th Congressional District voted in a primary that ultimately led to the election of the nation's first Dominican-American congressman, Adriano Espaillat.

In 2016, the Bronx Democratic Party didn't foresee Espaillat's primary victory, instead backing former Manhattan assemblyman Keith Wright.

Say Hello to New Norwood News Sales Exec

By NORWOOD NEWS

Janet Geller, a seasoned sales executive with nearly 30 years' experience, has joined the *Norwood News* team as the official sales executive for the neighborhood paper. Her hiring comes amid the publication's 30th anniversary milestone.

"Janet began on June 18 and has hit the ground running ever since," said



Norwood News editor-in-chief David Cruz. "Her expertise and drive will help grow the Bronx's best

paper." "I am delighted to join the team of *Norwood News*, and I am looking toward becoming a wonderful asset and use my persistence, diligence, and resourcefulness to be able to grow all businesses that advertise with us while growing the newspaper," Janet said.

Janet has worked at several locations, most recently serving as sales

manager for coffeemaker Kafetto Gourmet. She also had long stints at Money Mailer and Val Pak. A Westchester County resident, Janet was born in the Bronx, briefly living in Norwood before moving.

Anyone interested in taking out an ad can speak to Janet who can be reached at jgeller@norwoodnews.org for any advertising inquiries.



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Lehman College Art Gallery Doubles as Resource for Community Schools

By **CHRISTY RAE AMMONS**

The Lehman College Art Gallery (LCAG) was empty early one June morning when the *Norwood News* visited. The doors had just opened for the day, and artwork that included paintings on social justice to lifelike sculptures and stop-motion videos were on display. Attached to one of the glass walls in the gallery was a small donation box, the only suggested fee one could pay.

Beyond serving as a hub for local art, the center also thinks outside itself, looking to inspire the surrounding communities through educational programs for children and their families. LCAG has been working with Bronx schools for over 30 years, including PS 36, PS 86, PS 94, and PS 340, and plans to continue developing new ways to bring art into the community. That first starts with the gallery itself, which is free to the public.

Access to free, educational outings in the Bronx is vital to Deborah Yasinsky, Curator of Education for the gallery. Yasinsky has been with LCAG since the fall, and develops programs for children and families while also working with them directly. "There's definitely a need because the numbers have increased so rapidly in who's coming," she said, adding that guests usually mention "there's not a lot to do in the community that is free."

The current exhibition is about human rights and photography, highlighting the struggles and journeys of people around the world. Upcoming exhibitions this year include fantasy architecture and a series on money, debt, and its relationship to art.

Six Sundays throughout the year, LCAG holds free family days. Unlike the typical visit to an art gallery, these family days include a guided tour and an art-making session in a workshop. While viewing the gallery's exhibit, families are encouraged to discuss and interpret artwork on display. In the workshop, materials and space are provided to make visual art, with an instructor to help if needed.

The gallery strives to educate students, and they want to build strong connections in all of the community. Through the SU-CASA grant from the city Department of Cultural Affairs, senior homes



Photo by Christy Rae Ammons

DEBORAH YASINSKY (PICTURED) has served as the curator of education at the Lehman College Art Gallery since last fall.



Photo by Christy Rae Ammons

PS 36 STUDENTS join elementary school teacher Yolanda Almanza at the unveiling of the mural they made with LCAG.

can bring teaching artists to have classes with residents.

Another grant by the city Department of Education allows public schools to partner with art groups, such as LCAG. These partnerships focus on students learning English

and those with disabilities. The grant allows for an experienced artist to visit the school for an extended period of time. Many of these collaborative projects become permanent art installations in the school, decorating the hallways and displaying

work students are proud of.

When schools choose to partner with the gallery, they get more than the residency. They will receive professional development for teachers, a guided trip to the gallery, and time in the gallery workshop. The experience is tailored to the age of the students, and they are encouraged to lead discussions.

Susana Valera is one of the local artists that LCAG contracts to do these programs. She is currently working with second and fifth grade students from PS 340, located in Kingsbridge Heights, and seniors from Bay Eden Neighborhood Senior Center. Valera has been working with the elementary school students since March, and is integrating art into their social studies classes. The mural they are painting in the school will be a visual timeline of immigration in the Bronx, teaching the students about the heritage of their community as they complete the artwork. "I think they will be more aware of their community and who they are, and how everyone is unique," Valera said. "Especially doing this kind of work, discussing issues with immigration... They learn to appreciate their ethnicity and be proud of it."

Working with the students has also had a strong impact on Valera. "I feel like I want to do more work like this because it just brings so much richness. It brings kids together, and makes them appreciate their community and where they come from."

LCAG's program also helps teachers develop curricula and explore art personally. Yasinsky sees art as a way to help students understand every subject. "The idea is not just for the kids to have that great experience, but for the teachers to be able to infuse that into what they're doing...I really believe in the capacity for art as a way to learn about all other subjects and make them come alive."

Yasinsky said many students who visit the gallery come back. "We get a lot of families from our partner schools... It definitely builds community."

Editor's Note: For more information on LCAG educational programs, contact Deborah Yasinsky at Deborah.Yasinsky1@lehman.cuny.edu.

CB7, Along With Other Boards, Get Funding Boost

By JOSE A. GIRALT

Community boards in the Bronx will see an average increase of \$42,000 in their operating budgets starting in July.

For Community Board 7, one of the smaller boards in the borough, it raises their budget from \$223,000 to \$240,000 annually, an increase of \$25,000.

Councilman Fernando Cabrera, presented the news to Community Board 7 at their last general board meeting before going on hiatus. Cabrera chairs the Governmental Operations Committee which is responsible for funding community boards.

With rising costs and stringent budgets, community boards across the city have been asked to do more with less. Initially, Mayor Bill de Blasio's 2019 budget did not include any increase for community boards.

Over the years, Andrew Laiosa, chair of the Budget, Personnel and Ethics Committee at CB7, has seen these negotiations about budget increases play out between the mayor and city council. "I've seen this so many times, the mayor threatens to cut our budget and the city council finds a way to restore or increase it," says Laiosa.

After hearings before Cabrera's committee, the councilman pushed for \$2.5 million to be dispersed among the city's



Photo by José A. Giralt

MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY Board 7 pose for a group photo at the conclusion of the monthly general meeting at Ross Hall at the New York Botanical Garden on June 18. Jean Hill (front row center, wearing red beaded necklace) was elected chairperson.

59 boards. Cabrera is a former community board member of CB7 and knows firsthand the operational difficulties they face. "It is a struggle that I see in all community boards every year just trying to nickel and dime their way through," says Cabrera.

In the yearly Statement of Community District Needs and Community Board Budget Requests for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 that CB7 submitted to City Hall, three issues were identified as the most pressing in the district: affordable housing, quality

of life (i.e., noise, graffiti, petty crime), and schools.

CB7 says there are no plans yet to determine funding because they have not convened since the announcement and these decisions are usually proposed by the chair and later discussed to reach consensus.

One potential need that Laiosa sees at CB7, as in many other boards, is for consultants specializing in data analysis. "There is now so much data related to the issues we face that we need consultants to help go

through data that is dense and complex in order to understand how it can affect land use and zoning decisions," Laiosa said.

The increase does not include any raises for existing staff, but instead is earmarked for updating technology, improving accessibility to meetings, increasing office space, hiring more staff, and improving outreach efforts to constituents. The individual boards will have discretionary power over how to best use the additional funds.

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Norwood News Wins First Place Prizes at Ippies



Photo courtesy Marco Poggio

(L-R) CO-DIRECTOR OF THE Center for Community & Ethnic Media Jehangir Khattak joins *Norwood News* editor-in-chief David Cruz, WFUV Radio reporter Julia Rist, and BronxNet Television Executive Director Michael Max Knobbe for a photo at the Ippies. The three Bronx media outlets won an Ippie for their collaborative project dubbed The Bronx Develops.

By NORWOOD NEWS

The *Norwood News*, the community publication covering the Bronx and celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, won a first place prize once again for Best Small Circulation Publication at this year's Ippies Awards.

The contest, now in its 16th year, celebrates the work of community and ethnic media outlets across the city. The Center for Community & Ethnic Media, which has its offices at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, has organized the show since its inception.

Tom Robbins, investigative reporter in residence at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, cited the paper's 2016 February 16 to March 1 edition that covered the closing of St. Ann's School and the involvement of the Bronx Democratic Party's lawyer in a proposed mall project.

"This is exactly the kinds of stories that Errol Louis was talking about a few minutes ago—[Stories] that go unnoticed and uncovered in papers like the [*New York Daily News*] and the [*New York Post*], which usually would've been on something like this," said Robbins, referring to Errol Louis, the NY1

political commentator and host who delivered the Ippies keynote address.

"We are once again thrilled to be recognized for the hard work that our newspaper has achieved," said David Cruz, editor-in-chief of the *Norwood News*. "This couldn't have happened without the hard work from our rotation of interns and freelancers that made it happen."

The *Norwood News* also took home a first place prize award for its "Bronx Develops" collaborative project with WFUV Radio and BronxNet Television that examined development across neighborhoods in the Bronx. Randall Pinkston, the award show's master of ceremonies, described one of the series pieces detailing the Jerome Avenue Rezoning as a story chronicling "the tension between revitalization and displacement."

"This series was so well-received we look to do another collaboration, and another, and another," said Cruz, who shared the prize with WFUV reporters Julia Rist, Andrew Seger, Jacob Shore, and Diana Nelson.

George Bodarky, news and public affairs director at WFUV, said, "I am super excited to see our collaboration

receive this recognition. By pooling our talents and resources, we are able to make a bigger impact in the communities we serve."

"I really can't be more delighted that our efforts to dig deep into issues affecting Bronxites has been honored in this way," Bodarky said.

The series was the second collaborative project between the paper and radio station. Bodarky had reached out to BronxNet Television the second time around to bring them on board.

"We at BronxNet are proud of our partnership with WFUV and the *Norwood News*, and we look forward to building on the success of this exemplary community focused multimedia series," said Michael Max Knobbe, executive director of BronxNet. "This project benefits the public we serve, provides experiential learning, and encourages outstanding student achievement."

The *Norwood News* was established in 1988 by the Mosholu Preservation Corporation as a way of delivering news to residents in the Norwood section of the Bronx. The newspaper's coverage has expanded throughout



Photo courtesy *Norwood News*

THE NORWOOD NEWS also earned a prize for Best Small Circulation Publication, with judges singling out the February 16-March 1, 2017 edition of the paper (front cover pictured).

its 30-year history by including Bedford Park, Kingsbridge Heights, Fordham, and University Heights.

The paper wishes to thank several people and institutions for making these wins possible: Mosholu Preservation Corporation Executive Director Jennifer Tausig, *Norwood News* proofreader Judy Noy, *Norwood News* designer Mauro DeLuca, and freelancers Adi Talwar, David Greene, and Miriam Quinones.

The *Norwood News* also wishes to thank 2017's interns Adeline Hanssen, Dylan Croll, Aaron Mayorga, Diego Barcacer Peña, Yara Palin, Stephanie Luciano, Devin Dae Tucker, and Reggie Francois for all their hard work in making this paper the Best Small Circulation Publication.



HEALTH CHECK

Health Check: Work Related Stress

By MELINDA MARQUEZ, MPH, CHES

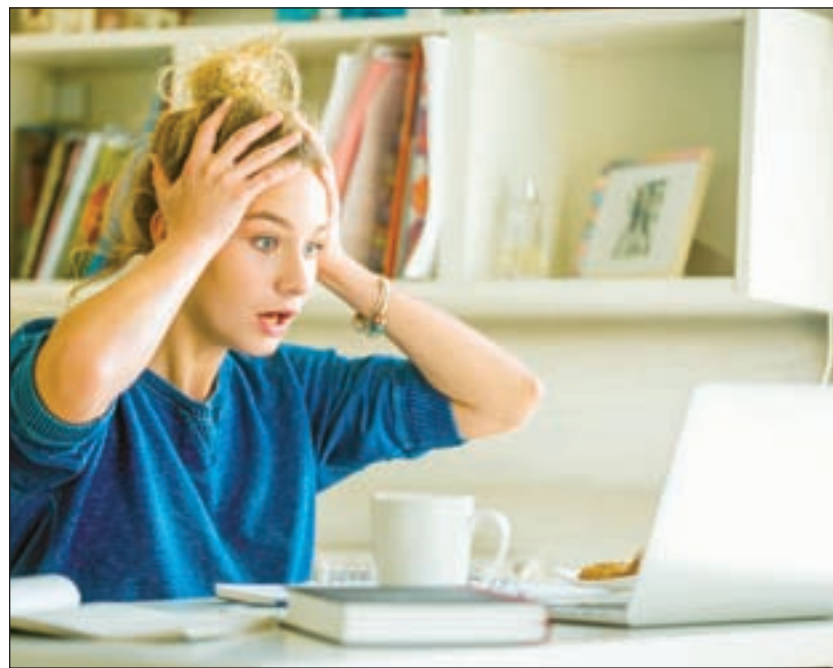
Stress is a physical response to an adverse or very difficult circumstance; it is the body's natural defense against danger, real or perceived. Work related stress is a person's perception to the work environment involving feelings of inability to cope. There are several factors involved in work related stress for example pressure from a boss, unsteady schedules, deadlines and work assignments.

Work related stress is a real problem across many industries and organizations. According to the Center of Disease and Prevention Control (CDC), one-fourth to one-third of U.S. workers report high levels of stress at work. Americans spend 8% more time on the job than they did 20 years ago (47 hours per week on average),

and 13% also work a second job. Two-fifths (40%) of workers say that their jobs are very stressful, and more than one-fourth (26%) say they are "often burned out or stressed" by their work.

Work related stress can have a negative impact on health and safety. Work related stress can present in many different forms and may be different for everyone. The first signs of work related stress are low energy, upset stomach and frequent colds or infections. The most common symptoms of work related stress are fatigue (tiredness), muscular tension, headaches, heart palpitations and insomnia.

The first step in preventing work related stress is to recognize that stress does not have to be part of a normal work environment or job. Additionally, work related stress



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can be prevented through changes within organizations, utilizing employee health supportive programs and stress management services. It's important to pay attention to symptoms of stress early on in order to stay healthy and be effective at work. When issues arise that may cause stress communicating with your boss or co-workers can help mini-

mize stress levels.

If you or anyone you know is struggling with work related stress seek help immediately by talking to your doctor, use employment programs or call your human resource department.

Melinda Marquez works for Montefiore Health System's Office of Community & Population Health.

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Rare Flower on Display at NYBG



Photo by David Greene

THOUSANDS OF FLOWER fans paid a visit this past weekend to the New York Botanical Garden as kick-off to the rare "Corpse Flower" 24-hour blooming event. At one time the unusual flower was designated as the official flower of the Bronx by Stanley Isaacs in 1939 until the daylily took the title in 2006. Also known as the titan arum, the flower gets its name from its scent, that many say smells like rotten meat. The scent apparently attracts pollinators that feed on the carcasses of dead animals.

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Centenarians Share Secrets to Vitality at St. Patrick's Home

By **SOPHIA EBANKS**

Julia Bizzarri has been a resident at the St. Patrick's Home Rehabilitation and Health Care Center for over 10 years. This year, she celebrates her 105th birthday. "I can't believe I am this old," said Bizzarri. "I give thanks to God for living this long."

Every third Tuesday in June, St. Patrick's Home hosts its annual Centennial Celebration to honor residents who had and are close to reaching the centennial milestone. This year, 10 centenarians, including Bizzarri, were celebrated at the event on June 19.

The *Norwood News* asked Bizzarri and another centenarian what's the secret to a long and happy life. "Liquor, before or after dinner," said Bizzarri, soon laughing.

A native New Yorker growing up in Manhattan, Bizzarri shared her experience as the child of two Italian immigrants. She expressed her undying love of the New York Yankees and the homemade wine that she and her six siblings enjoyed regularly.

"It was the best," Bizzarri, who had once worked at a newspaper, said of the family wine, with a wide, growing smile. "Nothing tasted like it."

Another resident, Willie Mae Trimble, had different thoughts about what makes for a long-lasting life. "Eat, pray, dance. And don't drink too much liquor," said Trimble, 99, a former

nurse's aide and seamstress.

"And rest. Find that balance in life." Trimble, who was born in Jackson, Georgia, moved to the Bronx with her husband and raised their four children in the Bronx neighborhood of Parkchester. She hasn't left the Bronx since and has been a resident at St. Patrick's Home for two years.

Honorees were seated at a table in front of a gathering of other residents, family members, and friends. The event, organized by the home's director of recreation, Janet Kibassa, offered food and entertainment for all in attendance. Bronx Borough Director at the Mayor's Office Joshua Cortes also attended the event and offered greetings from Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Kibassa worked to keep spirits high at the celebration, organizing gifts for the centenarians and encouraging guests to dance with their loved ones. In particular, family members were encouraged to share remarks during the event. One of Trimble's four children, Pat Trimble-Rogers, shared her thoughts. Trimble-Rogers told the *Norwood News* that the transition for her mother and her family has been difficult but she believes that her mother is in good hands at St. Patrick's Home.

"We are a team," said Trimble-Rogers when she spoke to the audience. "And that's what makes St. Patrick's special."



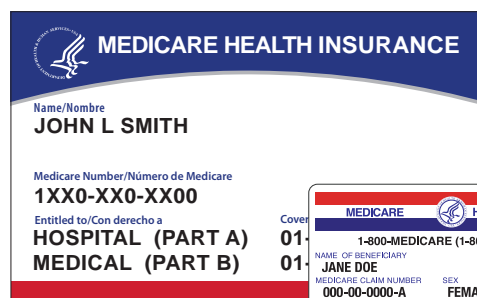
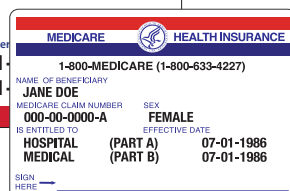
Photo by Sophia Ebanks

NURSE ANDREA JOHNSON (top left) and Administrator Sister Kevin Patricia (top right) pose for pictures after giving gifts to Antoinette Cortina (bottom left), 101, and Sister Benigna (bottom right), 101, during the Centennial Celebration at St. Patrick's Home on June 19.

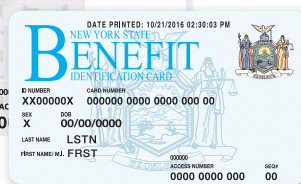

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Monday–Sunday, 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. from October 1–February 14

Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Free Concert at VC Park

The Bronx Arts Ensemble presents free concert featuring oldies, pop and R&B on July 15 at 2 p.m. at Van Cortlandt Park's Rockwood Drive Circle (Mosholu Avenue and Broadway) near the stables. In case of rain, concert postponed to Aug 5. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

Events

Lehman College, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd., W., presents **Summer Jazz Institute**, July 11 to 13, for educators, to learn teaching methods including improvisations, active listening, and syncopation.

For more information and to register, visit JazzPower.org.

Williamsbridge Oval presents the following events for ages 6 to 13: **Art in the Park classes**, Wednesdays in July and August from 4 to 6 p.m., in front of the recreation center; and **free sports**, daily through Aug. 30. Also scheduled is **Special Events** including film, "Jumangi: Welcome to the Jungle," outdoors on July 12 at 8:30 p.m. (bring blankets and chairs); call for detailed program. For more information, call (718) 534-8672 or visit nyc.gov/parks or email sara.bishow@parks.nyc.gov.

Jerome-Gun Hill BID offers free

Summer Chill on Gun Hill Weekend Walk, along East Gun Hill Road from Bainbridge Avenue to Putnam Place, July 14 from noon to 5 p.m., featuring family friendly activities emphasizing health and wellness. Streets will be car-free. For more information, call Ariana at (718) 324-4946 or visit <http://www.jeromegunhillbid.org>.

The New York Botanical Garden's **Farmers Market** is scheduled to be held Wednesdays 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 are **An American Tribute**, concerts on July 13 and 27 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. (bring blankets and chairs; rain or shine; \$43/members; \$48/non members); **Hula With Music**, live demonstrations, July 7 and 8, both at noon, 1, and 2 p.m.; **Artisan Demonstrations**, featuring puppet and lei making, Hawaiian instrument crafting, storytelling, and more, July 7 and 8, both from 1 to 4 p.m. (bring your own ukelele); **The Paper**



File photo

STAY COOL INSIDE Mosholu Library this summer and take advantage of some of their listed activities (see Library Events for more information).

Microscope, for ages 8+, at the Discovery Center, weekends this summer, to make portable microscopes to take home, July 7 and 8, both from 2 to 3:30 p.m.; and **Aloha Night**, featuring live music and interactive hula lessons (ages 21+: \$28/members; \$38/non members; and ages 2 to 12: \$13/members; \$18/non members), July 7 from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 817-8700.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Billowing Sails and Handmade Boats, to make a sail from colorful paper and construct a handmade sailboat from various materials, July 7 and 8; and Felting the Earth's Atmosphere, to create a landscape using wet felting, July 14 and 15, both in the WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also scheduled is **Sunset Wednesdays: Live Music on the Great Lawn at 7 p.m.:** July 11 - Slavic Soul Party, Balkan brass band featuring jazz music; and July 18 - Mary Courtney & Morning Star, featuring music from traditional Irish to rock 'n' roll. Concerts will move indoors in case of inclement 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.

Derfner Judaica Museum at Hebrew Home at Riverdale, 5901 Palisade Ave., presents **Swords Into Ploughshares**, free sculpture exhibit by Jay Moss, July 15 (opening reception 1:30 to 3 p.m.) to Oct. 7, in the Pauline and William Goldfine Pavilion Lobby Gallery. For more information and

to RSVP, call (718) 581-1596 or visit art@hebrewhome.org. Photo ID required for admission.

Bronx River Art Center (BRAC), 1087 E. Tremont Ave., presents **River Rising**, through June 30, 2019, featuring an exposition of science, art and technology, to be located in Starlight Park. For more information, call (718) 589-5819.

Library Events

Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for teens/young adults: **Maker Mondays**: July 16 at 2 p.m. - Mini pillows. Adults can enjoy **Computer Basics**: July 10; and **Microsoft Word 2010 for Beginners**: July 17; both at 2 p.m. All can attend **films at 2:30 p.m.:** "The Beguiled," on July 7; and "Beauty and the Beast," on July 14. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children ages 5 to 12: **Birds of Prey (Summer Reading Program)**: Encounter hawks, owls, falcons or others and touch raptor artifacts, July 6 at 3 p.m.; **Crafty Fridays at 3 p.m.:** crafts, July 13; and **STEM: Kids Science at 3 p.m.:** July 10 and 17 (electronics/electricity). Teens/young adults can enjoy **Chess Instruction**: from beginners to master level, July 13 at 3 p.m. (materials provided). All can attend **film**: "Peter Rabbit," July 14 at 1:30 pm. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road, offers for adults: **Computer Basics at noon**: July 5, 12 and 19. 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 July 9 for the next publication date of July 19.



Photo courtesy Bronx Arts Ensemble

CARDINAL THEORY WILL perform in Van Cortlandt Park this month (see Editor's Pick for more details).

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Saturday, August 4: Resort Casino, Atlantic City. "Celebrating Eddie & Kancella's" Birthday; Departs from Bronx at 9:30 a.m. \$46 pp.

Friday, August 10: Niagara Falls & Thousand Islands; departs from Bronx and Brooklyn at 6 a.m.; returns August 12. \$429 pp.

Sunday, September 16: One Day Lobster Feast & Seafood Buffet at Nordic Lodge Restaurant in Rhode Island and Foxwoods Casino; \$179.00 per person.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

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>.

BronxNet Workshops

Residents can sign up for hands-on training workshop in video production using professional equipment and studios. Certification provides producers with access to broadcast time on BronxNet channels. The summer 2018 training cycle begins on July 9. To register, go to www.bronxnet.org or email training@bronxnet.org for more information.

Free Meals Application

Breakfast and lunch are now free for all students in NYC public schools. The New York City Department of Education (DOE) asks all parents, regardless of income, to complete a School Meals Form at <http://nyc.applyforlunch.com>. A hard copy is available at your school's main office.

Public Hearing on Construction Site Noise

The NYC Department of Environmental Protection is asking residents to comment on how to mitigate noise during construction projects. The public is invited to the meeting from 2 to 3 p.m. on July 23 in the Department's 8th floor hearing room at 59-17 Junction Blvd., Flushing, NY. Anyone wishing to speak must sign up by calling (718) 595-6531. Those unable to attend can make their views known by emailing nycrules@dep.nyc.gov. Find out more about the issues scheduled for discussion at <https://rules.cityofnewyork.us>.

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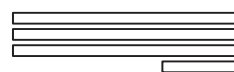


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STABBINGS ROCK

(continued from page 1)

victims were under 18 led Councilman Ritchie Torres to announce a \$1 million allocation to preventing further gang violence through an initiative called Cure Violence.

“The value of Cure Violence lies in recognizing that gang violence is not only a problem that falls in the domain of criminal justice, it’s also a problem that falls in the domain of public health. Gang violence is a public health epidemic, and we must do more to cure it,” said Torres, at a news conference outside Mt. Carmel Church on June 28, several blocks north from where Junior was killed, in a district that Torres represents.

Through Cure Violence, former gang members caution young people between the ages of 16 to 25 years old about the dangers and consequences of gang life as a deterrent to joining them.

“We target high risk individuals, kids who are likely to be shot or shoot somebody,” said Marcus McAllister, a training specialist for Cure Violence. “They really look to these individuals for guidance. It’s not like your average social worker or parole officer.”

The program looks to keep young people occupied, thanks to its recreation centers, art activities, and job search assistance. According to McAllister, not everyone in Cure Violence is a former gang member, but many are. “It’s gotta be somebody from the community that is respectable and trusted,” he said.

Yeshiva University, with locations in the Bronx and Manhattan, is also establishing a satellite clinic at Mt. Carmel Church where mental health experts will help the community cope with Ju-



Photo by José A. Giralt

A LITTLE GIRL STANDS amid memorial candles for 15-year-old murder victim Lesandro “Junior” Guzman-Feliz in Belmont on June 25. Junior was dragged out of Zesarina Grocery Store at 526 E. 183rd St. on June 20 and stabbed to death.

nior’s death.

Trinitarios

The NYPD has said the two incidents involved the Trinitarios Gang, a criminal enterprise with roots in the Bronx. Co-founded by Leonides “Junito” Sierra, the gang formed in 1992 on Rikers

Island to protect Dominican inmates from other violent gangs. Since then, the group has been involved in racketeering, drug dealing, gun sales, and murder, according to federal authorities. The U.S. Justice Department has launched cases against the Trinitarios, often for violating the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), where top leadership of a criminal organization can be prosecuted if they ordered an illegal activity to proceed.

Sierra has been serving two back-to-back sentences since 1989, beginning with a murder conspiracy charge. The U.S. Attorney’s Office under Preet Bharara tacked on a racketeering charge in 2014. In all, Sierra faces a combined 42 and a half years to life in prison.

In most incidents involving murder, the gang uses machetes on their victims as was the case in the murder of Junior and the near-fatal assault on the 14-year-old.

the Bronx River Parkway near the East Gun Hill Road exit in Norwood, where the 14-year-old victim was stabbed multiple times. Police say the beef of the 14-year-old victim, whose name was not released, began at French Charley’s Park. The fight started over a girl, according to a police source, with the incident capping months of harassment towards the boy. The *Daily News* reported the victim was inside the park smoking hookah with friends when he was chased by a group of young people, pursuing him into a wooded path that ultimately led to the parkway.

Officers found the victim unconscious before being rushed to Jacobi Medical Center, where he was listed in critical condition. The victim lost a kidney from the assault.

One out of the dozen or so suspects, 21-year-old Ramon Paulino, was arrested and charged for attempted murder, assault, and gang assault by federal agents. It’s unclear why they took the case. According to the *Daily News*, he confessed to being a Trinitarios member, which



Photo by José A. Giralt

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Ruben Diaz Jr. visits the makeshift memorial for Lesandro “Junior” Guzman-Feliz and faces a concerned crowd.

Bx. River Pkwy. Stabbing

Police received a call at 5:30 p.m. from

THE BRONX



Photo by Miriam Quinones

A LARGE CROWD of mourners turns out for Junior's funeral at Ortiz Funeral Home, with some wearing Junior's school T-shirt.

rivalled a Bloods-affiliated group called the Grizzlies—which the victim is a part of. Paulino is to be released on \$100,000 bond.

Kisha Hoke, the mother of the 14-year-old boy, also created a GoFundMe page to raise money for the attack on her son with a goal of \$20,000. In nine days, 331 people raised \$7,887 to go towards the victim's hospital bills.

French Charley's Park is usually not a place for street violence, according to residents who frequent the park. "I see the police back and forth over here so I don't have no worries," said Michael Martinez, a resident, adding that fights never happen.

Emelinda Sanchez, a resident sitting on a park bench, said "more police security" is needed in the area. "I work with kids so I bring them here a lot in the summer," she said.

Sulejn Cela, a married father of two, characterized the park as "generally safe."

Others remained skeptical of the park's safety. Delia Ramirez and her boyfriend Carlos Hernandez told the *Norwood News* they barely go past the park's baseball field. "[We] don't go further into the woods," said Hernandez. "We don't go deeper."

Miguel Alvarez, who lives by Williamsbridge Road and Pelham Parkway, usually comes to French Charley's Park twice a week. He said that there were incidents in the past where bodies were found with multiple stab wounds and dumped in the river.

"The police don't frequent this park as much at night as they do in the day," he said, adding that there are many drug

users that frequent the park, which can make it unsafe.

Assaults in the 52nd Precinct, where the incident occurred, have climbed 10.6 percent since the same time in 2017, according to police statistics. Murder jumped 50 percent from the same time last year. Among the victims this year was 18-year-old Damion Gilbert Jr., who was fatally stabbed at the corner of East 212th Street and DeKalb Avenue in Norwood on May 29.

On June 8, Five-Two officers responded to the stabbing of a 17-year-old near East 196th Street and Jerome Avenue at around 8:30 a.m. The victim was treated at a local hospital. Police say the attack was carried out by the Trinitarios.

Junior's Death

Though the incident came two days before the 14-year-old at the Bronx River Parkway, it was Junior's death that galvanized the Bronx. Much of the attention was driven by the graphic way Junior, a member of the NYPD Explorers program, was killed while also being the apparent victim of mistaken identity.

A massive outpouring of support for the victim's family led to \$329,823 in donations made to them via a GoFundMe page as of press time. The incident grabbed the attention of hip-hop singer Cardi B, who gave \$8,000. Meantime, a mural of Junior was created in his honor.

Eight men—Antonio Hernandez-Santiago, Manuel Rivera, Daniel Fernandez, Jonaiki Martinez-Estrella, Jose Muniz, Jose Tavarez, Elvin Garcia, and Kevin J. Alvarez—were arrested and arraigned

at Bronx Criminal Court. They're all alleged to be part of the Trinitarios. On July 3, police arrested two more men in connection to the case.

While the men were arraigned, a tribute to Junior grew in in front of Zesarina bodega by the corner of East 183rd Street and Bathgate Avenue in Belmont. Cars slowed to take in the scores of candles laid at the steps where Junior drew some of his final breaths. Alongside the candles were written posters hanging on the bodega's shutters, with some calling the store owners cowards and a declaration that they were no longer welcome in the neighborhood. A chorus of lawmakers have since called for the store to permanently close, a call that began with Junior's mother, Lean-

dra Feliz.

Lawmakers showed up to pay their respects, though they were met with criticism. In front of the shutters at the bodega, Belmont resident Jennifer Pagan got the attention of Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., who visited the site with Congressman Adriano Espaillat, who represents Norwood.

"You're a father, you know what it has to feel like," Pagan told Diaz, reminding him that the men who killed Junior treated the victim like he was "less than a dog."

"These killings can't go on," said Michael Cabrera, a resident. "It took Ruben Diaz five days to finally show up but at least he came. He needs to make our children's safety top priority."

Summit Identifies Warning Signs of Gang Culture

By **ANGEL MINDANAO**
and **SOPHIA EBANKS**

It was a full house at the meeting hosted by the Bronx Gang Squad and the 48th Precinct's Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCOs) to educate parents on gang awareness. The timing of this event, planned in April, comes more than a week after two teens were viciously stabbed in apparent gang attacks.

After a workshop led by Sgt. Leo Nugent and Detective Belinda Delgado, which detailed the reasons why children join gangs, Nugent said that parents should know who their children's friends are so that they can check out their social media accounts. If they are throwing up gang signs or wearing gang-affiliated colors, they may be part of a gang.

He also showed guests at Mt. Carmel Senior Center, how gang members can use social media to provoke other gangs, such as using Facebook Live to record themselves and others crossing territorial boundaries.

Delgado and Nugent stressed that parents should intervene when they see their children hanging with a certain group and monitor their children's phones. "They may have secret apps that look like calculators that are locked with codes

and they may speak with emojis. It's not straightforward. The important thing is to communicate and educate yourself," said Delgado.

"If you find out about something your child did, don't blow up in their faces and harass them about it, because they're going to put a wall up and you won't be able to communicate," said Nugent. He suggested diverting their children's attention to an after school activity such as sports. "By the time they get home, they'll be too tired to do anything else."

"Parents need to make themselves aware because it starts at home and it starts at school," Nugent said. He suggested that parents familiarize themselves with school safety officers who have knowledge of what gangs are present in their kids' schools and could provide information on colors and beaded necklaces associated with the gangs.

Nugent said that to catch criminals, the Squad goes undercover and puts GPS tracking devices under cars. "Locking gang members up? That's easy. We want you, the parents, to get to them before we do."

Editor's Note: A list of apps commonly used by gangs is available on www.norwoodnews.org.

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