



# NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 31, No 15 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • JULY 19-AUGUST 1, 2018



**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:  
CRIME IN THE BRONX | PG. 4**



**REMEMBERING A FALLEN  
NYPD DETECTIVE | PG. 8**

## NEW WHALEN PARK OPENS IN RECORD TIME

*Reconstruction finished in under a year, rare occurrence for Parks Dept.*



Photo by Adi Talwar

**THIS LITTLE GIRL** gets to be a kid at Whalen Park, which reopened following reconstruction of the park that took less than a year to complete.

**By CHRISTY RAE AMMONS and  
ANGEL MINDANAO**

Whalen Park quietly reopened to the public in June with a colorful, brand new playground that features two slides, monkey bars, and toddler-friendly climbing blocks. To the delight of parents, the area previously known as the “sitting park” was revamped into a more traditional play-

ground.

Though the project was first proposed seven years ago, building the Norwood park took less than a year, an unusual time frame given the city Parks Department’s poor track record in completing projects promptly. In 2017, there had been seven projects delayed since 2009, including a bathroom for Ferry Point Park

that had been in the works for more than 10 years, according to a report by the *Daily News*.

Iris Rodriguez-Rosa, commissioner of the Parks Department for the Bronx, is thankful for the smooth, speedy construction. “By the grace of God we did not meet up with any impediments in terms of unusual circumstances that sometimes delay a project,”

she said. “We didn’t have any impediments, and Commissioner [Mitchell] Silver is committed to doing the best that he can with the agency to try and fast-track any and all projects moving forward.”

A review by the *Norwood News* shows completion times for several projects were severely delayed in the past,

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# NORWOOD NEWS

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## Why I Switched Parties

All of my adult life, I had been a member of the Democratic party, the party of FDR that brought us Social Security, providing old-age and widows' benefits; the Wagner Act, which protected the right of workers to join unions and engage in collective bargaining with employers; the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) that provided temporary jobs, employment on construction projects, and youth work in the national forests; the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to combat the housing crisis of the Great Depression; and let's not forget the Glass-Steagall Act, which prohibited commercial banks from participating in the investment banking business, etc.

So, here it was, the summer of 2016 and so many of us thought that Bernie Sanders had a winning chance. Much like FDR's dream, Bernie's dream was our dream: Medicare for all, free higher education for all, \$15 minimum wage, full employment, cut military spending, abortion rights, dealing with climate change, ending "endless" wars, gun background checks. He opposed (and still does) the monopoly of the big banks, private prisons, militarized police, unconditional military support for oppressive regimes. But, the fix was already in. The DNC had decided, long before any primary, that their chosen candidate would be Hillary Clinton—with all her baggage.

He should not have run on the Democratic ticket, for, if anything, the Democrats have shown themselves to be something other than democratic. If anything, the Democratic party, much like the Republican party, has shown itself to be duplicitous, corporatist, opportunist, militarist, xenophobic, neo-liberal disaster capitalists, more interested in the support of their deep-pockets contributors than the welfare of the people, more in keeping the US fighting endless wars—yes, the US is involved in 76 wars worldwide—than supporting education, affordable health, rebuilding our infrastructure.

What was one to do? The choice was between a war monger and a moron. I was desperate, drifting, not knowing where to turn. Then I read all about the positions of the Green Party. They were those of Bernie Sanders and the Presidential candidate, Jill Stein, just like Bernie,

# Letters To The Editor

had not accepted one cent from corporations. Her support had all come from individual contributors. I sent her \$25. But, more importantly, I decided to divorce the Democratic Party and enroll as a Green Party member. I have not regretted it. What is happening all across the country is that people are waking up to the realities of the Democrats and Republicans—two sides of the same counterfeit coin, and that those who support working people are in another, viable party, the Green Party.

**Irene Díaz-Reyes**

**Van Cortlandt Village**

## Approve Animal Shelter

As expected, on June 18, Bronx Community Board 10 voted against the city's proposal to construct a state-of-the-art full scale animal shelter at 2050 Bartow Ave. Now the matter will be reviewed by our Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., who called a public hearing to be held on Thursday, July 19 at 6 p.m.

Even though the Community Board is advisory with no real powers, their no vote shields the developer and elected officials from community backlash. After the vote, City Councilmember Andy King is quoted that he "would not support a plan that the community opposes." Yet before the vote, Councilmember King sat in front of the table alongside the community board members and facilitated the opposition with chants of "people over animals." Soon after, the community board chair closed public testimony and took the vote even though over 50 persons signed up to speak, many in favor, yet just six persons spoke. It was apparent the community board failed to maintain their objectivity.

Also, the Board and City Councilmember Andy King failed to disclose First Hartford Realty Corporation is eyeing this site to develop supportive housing. As *amNewYork* reported, the developer paid Patrick B. Jenkins & Associates, \$200,000 since 2016 to perform "government relations and consulting services related to the potential development of 2050 Bartow Ave." Per records, the lobbyist raised this matter to elected officials including City Councilmember Andy King and Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. Also, Mr. Jenkins was present at CB 10 Housing & Zoning Committee

on May 24 when the Animal Shelter Issue was on the agenda and the board members expressed strong opposition even before the city presented its proposal for a full scale shelter at this site.

At the Community Board 10 Housing & Zoning committee meeting, the board members, City Councilmember Andy King and even the lobbyist Patrick Jenkins stated they would provide an alternative location for the animal shelter. Yet last month they voted against the animal shelter without providing an alternative site. The city stated it took close to three years to find this site after over 50 sites were visited. The 2050 Bartow site meets all the criteria for the animal shelter including ample space, public transportation accessibility, and no rent costs since it is city owned property.

The Bronx animal advocates will have a chance again at Borough President Ruben Diaz's public hearing on July 19. We look forward to be heard and not be denied to speak as we were at the community board. We also need support from outside the Bronx and from all advocates besides animal lovers.

**Roxanne Delgado**

**Pelham Parkway**

## CORRECTIONS

*The print version of the editorial from the previous edition was published in error as it was not the finalized editorial. The printed editorial, relying on previously published material from the U.S. Attorney's Office along with other published reports, states that the co-founding leader of the Trinitarios is still giving orders while still in prison. However, it remains unclear who is the national leader.*

*In the story entitled "CB7, Along With Other Boards, Get Funding Boost" the article erroneously stated Community Board 7 would receive \$25,000. They will be receiving \$42,500.*

*The Norwood News regrets these errors.*

# Norwood Man Honored for His Taíno Roots

By ANGEL MINDANAO

The aboriginal descendants of Puerto Rico, known as Taínos, are getting some recognition through Bobby González, a storyteller, proud Taíno and soon-to-be “Indian of the Year” recipient by the Thunderbird American Indian Dancers. This year’s distinction is unique as the group usually honors native North Americans.

González, who was raised in the South Bronx by Puerto Ricans parents and lives in Norwood, will be honored at the group’s Mid-Summer Pow Wow in association with the Queens County Farm Museum on July 29. The event will feature Native American dancers, drummers, and singers dressed in their native clothing, as well as vendors. The name of the event refers to a North American Indian social gathering. González is being honored for his years-long contributions to Native Americans in the fields of education and social justice.

For González, the recognition of his Taíno heritage allows him to underscore the history of Taínos, Puerto Rico’s original inhabitants who were enslaved by the Spaniards during the 1500s.

“We are the indigenous people of the Caribbean,” González said of Taínos. “For many years, the history books have said that we were extinct, but we’re still around. [This award] is remarkable for its acceptance and recognition of the Taíno.”

González will be honored for his involvement in the Native American community in New York City, which began about 30 years ago. “I was one of the organizers of the Native American Pow Wow at Inwood Park in the Bronx,” he said. “Now I’m organizing Native American festivals all over the Bronx.”

The Thunderbird American Indian Dancers is the oldest Native American dance troupe in New York. The company was co-founded by 10 members of the Mohawk, Hopi, Winnebago and San Blas tribes in 1963. Past Native American honorees represented the Iroquois and Navajo tribes.

“The Pow Wow also offers a unique opportunity for non-natives to interact personally with Native Americans and hopefully dispel a lot of commonly held misconceptions and stereotypes,” said González. González will be hosting



Photo by Angel Mindanao

**BOBBY GONZÁLEZ, OUTSIDE** the Keeper’s House (headquarters of the Norwood News) in Norwood, will be honored for spreading awareness of the Taíno culture.

several free upcoming Pow Wows, including those at Pelham Bay Park on Sept. 30 and Fordham University on Nov. 10.

González’ prowess as a storyteller has allowed him to either per-

form or lecture at famous institutions including Carnegie Hall, Yale University, the National Museum of the American Indian and the Detroit Institute of Arts Museum. According to his website, Bobby-González.com, his lectures encourage audiences to be “more sensitive to the various cultures and belief systems of their neighbors and colleagues.”

Native Americans are widely underrepresented in the Bronx. Figures from the U.S. Census show 2.9 percent of Bronx residents identify as Native American. The number is higher than the overall city figure of .04 percent. “The majority of Indian Pow Wows in the tristate area are now run by Taínos—me included,” said González. “So we’re very, very active in the native community.”

It wasn’t easy for González, who overcame a stammering issue after being inspired by famous stutterers James Earl Jones and Winston Churchill. “Now, I’m a professional public speaker and I feel no anxiety to speak to the public.”

*Additional reporting by David Cruz.*

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## INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week we asked readers about the latest NYPD statistics that show overall crime is down, but homicides, shootings and rapes are all up substantially.



I think it's worse than ever. I'm going to be honest with you, I was telling people it seems like we're going back to the '90s a little bit, when something was always happening in every neighborhood. It wasn't just pinpointed in one area, it's just everywhere now. They need to have more cops patrolling on foot, not driving by. They need to walk through neighborhoods that they know violence is happening and drugs being sold. I use to live in Bedford Park and back in the day it used to be safe, but now it's back.

**Anthony Correa**  
New Rochelle (works at Montefiore)



I actually do believe that the streets of Norwood are safer. I'm actually out here every single day working. Sometimes I do come out at night to go to the stores or go to the bank; this is my area. I can't really say anything about the rapes. I do know there are occasional stabbings in certain areas around here where they sell drugs and I don't want to say turf wars are not necessarily gang-related. People that live in the area tend to try and make money together and when other people come from different areas and steal money from other people's pockets, that's when people retaliate.

**Alberto Cedano**  
Norwood



Unfortunately, we are facing a major depression that people don't realize yet so jobs are scarce, mental illness is a problem, suicide rate is up and a lot of people need help. There's a lot of guns out here, a lot of drugs, legal and illegal. Aside from this morning's shooting, overall my biggest complaint is parking and noise complaints in the area. I see more of a police presence with officers on foot patrol, but most precincts don't have the manpower, so they use vehicles. But now with the new Neighborhood Coordination Officer program, they are working together with the community trying to lower crime. Yes, I think it's working.

**Lamont Parker**  
Van Cortland Park South



I often go shopping along Fordham Road with my sister, but I feel that during the summer things get a little wild so I try not to go out on days when it's crowded. I try and go out on days when I know not too many people are going to be around. I do get a sense there are more murders from the newspapers and we've heard of some other gang-related type things. It's frightening, but it's a way of life here in the Bronx.

**Maria Ayala**  
Fordham



Crime seems to escalate during the summer months when more people are out and around and I guess that's an invite for those that are criminals to set on their prey. Everybody is being watched, so it's very easy for them to pick a prey. Crime down? Only in the winter when [the streets] are isolated. I'm all over the city and I do see the police and they are out...basically in the white neighborhoods and in the low-income areas. I don't see them and a lot can happen when they're not around.

**Robert Knight, Jr.**  
Van Nest

## CRIME FILE

### Murder Rap for Norwood Man



The suspect wanted for the shooting death of Dwayne Saunders on May 1, pled guilty to second-degree murder, according to Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark.

Tyrone Frank above, 33, is scheduled to be sentenced to 20 years to life on Sept. 12. Along with pleading guilty to second-degree murder, Frank was indicted on first-degree

manslaughter and second-degree criminal possession of a weapon.

In the May shooting, Saunders, 37, was fatally struck in the stomach and groin following a violent foot chase. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

### Bronx Robbery Pattern



The NYPD needs help identifying two individuals believed to be part of a slew of robberies across the Bronx in recent months.

The first reported incident happened May 5, when two suspects approached a 24-year-old man from

behind. The victim was threatened with a gun, punched in the face, and robbed of his iPhone and \$50. The suspects quickly took off.

Six incidents followed involving two unidentified men committing armed robbery. In the latest incident, on May 31, the suspects approached a 51-year-old man with a gun, demanded money, and fled with \$167 from the victim's wallet.

Three of the six incidents matching the pattern happened inside French Charley's Park.

The two male suspects are described as black, between 17 and 25 years old, approximately 6' tall with skinny builds.

*Anyone with information on the suspects is asked to call CrimeStoppers at (800) 577-TIPS. All calls are kept confidential.*

## BY MARTIKA ORNELLA



### City Touts Low Crime Stats

Overall crime is at record lows, according to newly released stats by the NYPD. Speaking to a room of reporters in the 40th Precinct on July 10, Mayor Bill de Blasio said total crime in the city is down 1.8 percent for the year to date compared to last year's numbers.

However, not all crime is down. Rape has gone up over 33 percent this year compared to the first six months of 2017, and shooting deaths have also risen. In the Bronx, fatal shootings are on the rise, with 12 more this year than at this time in 2017.

### Attempted Rape Suspect Caught

Police have arrested a 14-year-old boy wanted in connection to the attempted rape of a woman jogging inside Bronx River Forest Park. The July 9

incident occurred near Burke Avenue and Bronx Park East.

The boy, whose name was not released to the public, was arrested in his home by officers at the 48th Precinct. The crime happened within the borders of the 52nd Precinct.

The 35-year-old female victim was jogging in the park around 7:50 a.m. when she was ambushed from behind by the suspect. The victim fought him off and ran deeper into the park, escaping the suspect. She came across him again, took a photo of him with her phone, then fled the park. She was treated for minor injuries by EMS at the scene.

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# “Junior’s Law” Orders Bodegas to Keep Minors Safe

By SOPHIA EBANKS

Following the brutal murder of 15-year-old Lesandro “Junior” Guzman-Feliz outside a bodega in Belmont, two Bronx lawmakers look to ensure small businesses step it up to protect young children in the community.

State Senator Luis Sepulveda and Assemblyman Victor Pichardo announced the “Safe Havens for Endangered Children” law, nicknamed “Junior’s Law,” alongside community advocates, religious leaders, and some of Junior’s family members outside the bodega where Junior attempted to seek refuge but was forced out. He was dragged outside the bodega and killed by alleged members of the Trinitarios gang. The bodega employees eventually faced major backlash and have not opened the store since Junior’s death.

The proposed law would require small businesses to provide refuge and call police if a minor in danger were to seek their help.

Another measure of the bill will call for inspections of small businesses to make sure that first aid kits are stored on site as required by the federal government through the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA).



Photo by Sophia Ebanks

**SENATOR LUIS SEPULVEDA** (at podium) announces the “Safe Havens for Endangered Children” law, flanked by father of Lesandro “Junior” Guzman-Feliz (right of Sepulveda, wearing cap) and Assemblyman Victor Pichardo (left of Sepulveda).

“These measures will help our communities become safer,” said Sepulveda. “While we know that a lot more needs to be done to prevent gang violence and bullying in our communities, a combination of these efforts is a step in accomplishing this goal and possibly saving the life of a young resident or child in our community.”

Details of the law are still being

worked on, including how these safe havens will operate and the penalties for business owners who fail to follow the law’s regulations.

The lawmakers stressed that protecting children in danger must be a community effort. “The people in our community need to be part of the solution,” Pichardo told the *Norwood News*. “We have to legislate this because we

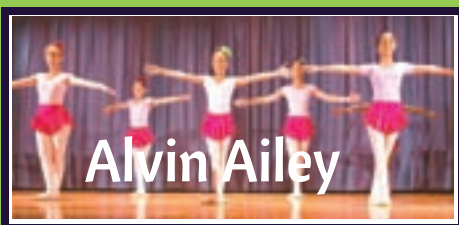
have to create an affirmative responsibility for individuals that if they see something, say something. The city has been harping on this since 9/11, that if you see something, you call the cops to prevent a tragedy. This is simply in that same vein.”

Some Norwood businesses express support for the law. Nick Dasou, a worker at One Legend Deli on East Gun Hill Road, said, “It’s what you’re supposed to do.”

“I have stopped a lot of fights,” said Dasou, who has worked at more than 10 deli stores for the past 28 years. “You can tell them to take it outside. You can call the cops. There’s a lot you can do to protect the kids.”

Junior’s father said he is happy that such a law is being proposed to prevent something like what happened to his son from happening to another child.

Meantime, the New York City Police Foundation has set up a scholarship in honor of Junior, who was an NYPD Explorer and wanted to become a police detective. The scholarship, given annually, will award up to \$5,000 each to two NYPD Explorer high school graduates who are expected to attend an accredited college or university.



**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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**Capoeira**  
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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



## Summer Blood Drive At Lehman College

Lehman College wants your blood! The Kingsbridge Heights/Bedford Park academic institution is teaming up with the New York Blood Center to host its annual Summer Blood Drive at the end of the month.

Prospective donors must first fill out a form regarding their personal health, lifestyle habits, and recent travel experiences. A brief screening is also required to assess blood count, blood type, blood pressure and pulse. The visit should take between 45 minutes to an hour. Donors will only spend about 10 minutes donating one pint of blood.

Lehman College hosts four blood drives yearly to fill a need. The number of donations decreases during the summer months as regular donors may experience schedule changes and college students spend more time away from campus.

According to the New York Blood Center website, blood donations support the four and a half million Americans who receive blood transfusions a year. Approximately 40,000 pints of blood are transfused daily in the United States to save cancer patients, accident and trauma victims, newborn babies, surgery patients and others in need.

The Drive will take place on Wednesday, July 25 and Thursday, July 26 from noon to 6 p.m. in the East Dining Room of the Music Building. Refreshments will be served afterwards and those who donate will receive a \$5 Dunkin' Donuts gift card.

--Sophia Ebanks

## Montefiore Art Gallery Merges Healthy Eating With Empowerment

By SOPHIA EBANKS

"You are what you eat" is the classic adage on the power of food to affect the quality of life. For Jodi Moise, curator of the Montefiore Fine Arts Program and Collection, it is also the message of the ARTViews Gallery's latest photo exhibition, "Growing Your Own Food, A Declaration of Power," on display through August.

The exhibit looks to promote health and wellness in the Bronx, the unhealthiest county in New York State. The Bronx is known to have high rates of diabetes and asthma. In Kingsbridge and Bedford Park, the rate of diabetes is 15 percent, higher than the citywide rate of 10 percent, according to data from the city Department of Health.

Moise believes that the exhibit will show Bronx residents that the remedy for a lot of these health complications can be found in their own backyards.

"There are big problems of obesity and diabetes and asthma in the Bronx," said Moise. "And a lot of that can be helped by eating healthy food. So it teaches people that going to a local farmers market is a possibility. You don't need to buy pre-packaged food."

The four-month exhibit showcases urban farmer and community activist Karen Washington as captured by freelance photojournalist Marisol Diaz. Diaz and Washington spent a full year working on the project, with Diaz commuting regularly to Washington's farm in Ches-



Photo by Sophia Ebanks

**URBAN FARMER KAREN** Washington (r) and photojournalist Marisol Diaz (l) share a heartfelt moment at the unveiling of Montefiore's art exhibit, "Growing Your Own Food, A Declaration of Power" on June 28.

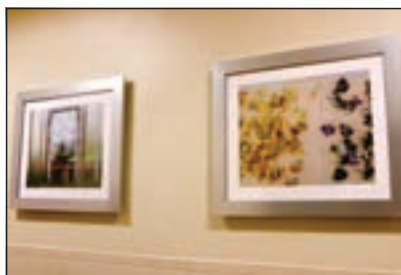


Photo by Sophia Ebanks

**SOME OF THE** photos Marisol Diaz took are on display at the gallery.

ter, NY, about an hour out from the city.

Framed photos featuring fresh tomatoes, peaches, and oranges harvested from the farm are hung throughout the gallery as well as those of Washington and her fellow farmers working at their own farmers market on Tremont Avenue.

According to Moise, compared to the other exhibits that have been in the gal-

lery, this photo series "has a message behind it and it's also telling Karen's story."

"When I first met Karen, I was taken by her passion for urban farming," said Moise, who reached out to Washington for this collaboration after reading about her work in a newspaper. "And she sends a very strong message in a very clear way. And you can see, she's very passionate, a very passionate soul."

Washington has been a community activist since 1985, working with Bronx neighborhoods to transform empty lots into community gardens. Born and raised in the Bronx, Washington speaks about the power that comes with owning land and growing your own food. She frequently has school groups visit her farm, many of whom she says have never had the chance to see a farm.

At the unveiling of the exhibit on June 28, Washington stood overwhelmed as she viewed the photos. It was her first time. "This is beyond words," said a teary-eyed Washington. "Look how far we've come."

Montefiore's Fine Arts program, created in 2014, aims to reduce stress and create a calming and healing atmosphere through visual arts. "Growing Your Own Food, A Declaration of Power" will be on display in the area called Rosenthal at the Montefiore Medical Center-Moses Division on East Gun Hill Road and Bainbridge Avenue, through August. It will move to Montefiore's Wakefield Campus and Weiler-Albert Einstein location after that.

## Bronx Bike Share Program Gets Rolling

By SOPHIA EBANKS

The city Department of Transportation has picked five companies for the pilot bike share program in boroughs outside Manhattan. Two of those companies, the Hong Kong-based Ofo and Brooklyn-based JUMP, will supply bikes to the Bronx.

The program will bring at least 200 bikes to the central Bronx and Fordham area.

"Our goal is to make cycling accessible to anyone anywhere," said Jordan Levine, head of northeast communications at Ofo. "We want to make it both as affordable and approachable as possible by taking away traditional barriers like having bikes being stolen or dishing out a few hundred dollars to buy a bike."



Photo courtesy Ofo

**BIKE SHARE PROGRAM** will bring Ofo and JUMP bikes to the Bronx starting in mid- to late-July.

Bike riders can rent a bike for \$1 per half hour using the Ofo app. Through the app, users just need to scan the barcode on the back of the bike. A credit card is required.

When finished riding for the al-

lotted time, riders can leave bikes at the bike racks that the city has installed. Levine said that it is likely that the racks will be set up near subway stations so that it is "quick, easy, and seamless" for cyclists to pick up and drop off bikes. Otherwise, cyclists can leave bikes in the "furniture zone" near fire hydrants and benches.

For avid cyclists, unlimited passes are also available for \$25 a month or \$49 for three months. These offers allow for unlimited rides in two-hour increments.

Pedal-assist bikes provided by JUMP, will be available after July 28. City officials are still finalizing the start date of the program, but it is set to start in mid- to late-July.

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# JGHBID Unveils “Norwood Column”

By MARTIKA ORNELLA

Browsing the collage of colorful posters that make up the “Norwood Column,” Senator Jamaal T. Bailey, who represents the 36th New York Senate District which covers Norwood, came across one that caught his eye.

“This is what the Bronx is about,” Bailey said at the unveiling of the public art installation on July 16, pointing to a poster describing the Bronx as a “mini United Nations.” “This is the world’s borough,” he said.

The “Norwood Column,” located at the southeast corner of East Moshulu Parkway and the Grand Concourse, across from the Pickwick Arms, is a temporary installation of the city’s Transportation Department art program (DOT Art), in collaboration with the Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District (BID) and artist Jenny Hung.

While technically in Bedford Park, the “Norwood Column” marks an entry point into the Norwood section of the Bronx, adding a colorful gateway into the BID that serves the Norwood area. The creation of this could not have happened without community input.

“The fact that they’re able to translate that idea from a thought to something visual, is incredible,” said Bailey.

Norwood residents were asked to respond to questions about the neighborhood. Select responses are featured on the posters that will interchange three times during the column’s 11-month stay on the parkway, bringing a different tone to each set.

Stressing the importance of public art in diverse communities like Norwood, Hung said, “So much of the art that is popular and famous, ends up in galleries and a lot of people don’t have access to it. It’s nice to have public art for people to converse about, for people to live and be in same space with.”

Incorporating beauty into those spaces is part of the mission, said BID Executive Director Jennifer Tausig.



Photo by Adi Talwar

**ARTIST JENNY HUNG** (l) speaks with Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District Executive Director Jennifer Tausig following the unveiling of the “Norwood Column” (background).

“One of our big initiatives this year is to do more beautification around public art,” she said. She added that people interested in having their words featured on the column can respond to the “Norwood Column” questionnaire on the Jerome Gun Hill BID website.

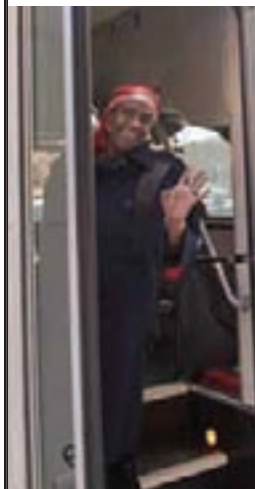
Designed after the European advertising columns of the late 19th century, the collection of quotes on the column is displayed in fonts inspired from signs, advertisements, and storefronts taken from Norwood.

“We’re constantly repurposing public space and envisioning how to make it a better experience for the public,” said Emily Colasacco, the director of the DOT’s Public Art Program. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the program and Colasacco promises more public art works in the Bronx, including one planned at East Tremont Avenue and Boston Road.

For now, Hung says the first iteration of the “Norwood Column” features a mix of historical facts and residents’ thoughts on the neighborhood. “It’s sort of like a nice intro to Norwood,” she said.

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# A Fallen Officer Honored

*Fordham Heights street renamed for NYPD Det. Miosotis Familia*

By JOSE A. GIRALT

Top city officials were once again in the Bronx to rename a street, this time to honor fallen NYPD Det. Miosotis Familia, who was shot to death by an assailant with an apparent mental illness. Familia, 48, posthumously promoted to detective, was remembered with a street sign on Ryer Avenue and East 181st Street, in front of the 46th Precinct, where she was stationed.

Familia was killed while completing an administrative report inside a mobile command post truck at Creston Avenue and East 183rd Street during the overnight hours of July 5, 2017. Her death sparked an outpouring of support, with out-of-state officers paying their respects at Familia's funeral.

This was the second street renam-



Photo by Jose A. Giralt

**A STREET SIGN** bearing the name of NYPD Det. Miosotis Familia is unveiled at the corner of East 181st Street and Ryer Avenue in Fordham Heights.



Photo by José A. Giralt

**A MEMORIAL WREATH** and portrait of NYPD Det. Miosotis Familia are on display on the corner of Ryer Avenue and East 181st Street during a street renaming honoring Familia.



Photo by José A. Giralt

**GENESIS VILLELLA, 21**, the daughter of Familia, speaks at the street renaming ceremony in front of the 46th Precinct alongside twin siblings Peter and Delilah Vega, 13.

spoke from the podium with her younger brother and sister nearby. "My mom was the embodiment of courage and strength," Villella said. Villella has sole custody of her twin siblings, Delilah and Peter, 13.

On the night of Familia's killing, a sergeant and patrol officer chased the shooter, ex-con Alexander Bonds, and fatally shot him.

"I'm glad they killed him [Bonds]," said Villella. As the crowd in front of the 46th Precinct grew, Villella continued, "That's why you see the whole community is out here supporting her."

Among them was Calvin McCarter, 44, who remembers Familia joking that she was going to "kidnap" his black Chihuahua, because she loved his pet. "She'd say 'Your dog's so cute I'm gonna kidnap him when you're not looking,'" said McCarter. "She was a sweetie pie; that's why I'm here today."

ing in recent weeks for a fallen civil servant. On June 15, the late Yadira Arroyo, an EMT in the Bronx, was honored with a street renaming ceremony on Boston Road and East 169th Street.

Flanked by Familia's mother, sisters, and three children, NYPD Commissioner James P. O'Neill acknowledged that renaming a street does not ease the pain of loss. He pointed out that whenever people walk by the corner and ask who Familia was, the people of the neighborhood, cop or resident, will tell her story.

"They will know what everyone there today already knows, that Mio-

sotis's life though it ended tragically was lived brilliantly. Our job now is to continue her legacy, to finish the work she started, and to make sure that no one ever forgets," said O'Neill.

Familia's sister, Adriana Sanchez, hopes that the renamed street will help Bronx residents remember how much Familia loved her job. "My sister was such a loving person. She always wanted to keep people safe. That's the main memory I want everyone to have about my sister," Sanchez told the *Norwood News*.

Holding back tears, Familia's oldest daughter, Genesis Villella, 21,



Photo by José A. Giralt

**A CROWD OF NYPD** officers walks down East 181st Street on their way to the 46th Precinct for a street renaming ceremony honoring the slain Familia.



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# Months After Jerome Avenue Rezoning, an Eviction

## *New Landlord Pressures Business to Vacate After Jerome Avenue Rezoning*

By JOSÉ A. GIRALT

When Francisco Moran, owner of American Tires at 1331 Jerome Ave. in Mt. Eden, received notice that he had a new landlord, he had no idea he would be asked to close his business at the location by August so the property can be redeveloped.

The new property owner sees Moran as an impediment to his plans for a new 15-story building at the location. Peter Fine of Atlantic Development Group bought the property in May for \$11.1 million and is the first developer to take advantage of the City Council's rezoning laws for the neighborhood designating the properties as compliant for residential construction.

The new building will have a total space of 186,000 square feet with 98,000 square feet set aside for 255 residential units. There are 110 units designated as supportive housing.

Fine has partnered with the DOE Fund, a \$61 million social service non-profit for the homeless, to develop the project. They believe that the recent rezoning will help create more affordable housing in the neighborhood.

In a statement to the *Norwood News*, John McDonald, COO of the DOE Fund, said, "We're thrilled to partner with Atlantic Development Group in building 255 units of desperately needed affordable housing on Jerome Avenue in the Bronx."

But Fine hasn't been exactly a welcoming landlord to tenants.

He's known to some Bedford Park residents for his aggressive year-long battle with the families at 267 E. 202nd St. Those residents eventually lost their home to a three-alarm fire and remember Fine as a combative landlord forcing them to go to Housing Court every other week to get repairs done before the fire. Tenants have since settled with Fine for an undisclosed amount of money and moved from the property.

Back at American Tires, Moran is inundated with piles of legal notices from Fine. Some days, Moran receives multiple envelopes from Fine's attorney reminding him that he is expected to vacate the premises by the end of July.

When Fine bought the property he offered Moran \$5,000, two months rent-free, and the return of \$5,200 in security deposits. Moran did not seriously consider the offer because of the much higher cost of relocation. "I'd need four times as much to even think about mov-



Photo by José A. Giralt

**FRANCISCO MORAN INSIDE** his business, American Tires, on Wednesday, July 11. Moran's business at 1331 Jerome Ave. has been ordered to move out within months of the sale of the property to Peter Fine of Atlantic Development Group.

Association, has helped the automotive businesses throughout the city be in compliance with city regulations. "The problem facing many of these businesses is that they either operate without a lease or work on a month-to-month basis with their landlords," Estevez said. Moran had a one-year extension with the previous landlord, an entity that went by Drinks Galore.

Still, Estevez believes the city should have done a better job of preparing these mostly mom and pop shops as they faced possible eviction under the new zoning laws. "We did a study and found that 79 percent of the employees and business owners along Jerome Avenue live in the same neighborhood as they work. The city doesn't care what rezoning is going to do to these people," Estevez said.



Photo courtesy Francisco Moran

**MULTIPLE LEGAL NOTICES** pile up from Moran's new landlord, Peter Fine of Atlantic Development Group. Fine wants Moran out of his business located at 1331 Jerome Ave. by the end of July.

ing. I don't think he [Fine] knows how much it takes to move," Moran said.

With Moran and the other tenants fighting for more time and considering legal options, Fine is now suing for non-payment of rent. As of press time he has informed Moran that his electricity will be turned off on July 20.

Last month, Fine showed up at American Tires with a translator letting Moran know that he did not want to go to court or have them go to the press with this matter. "Of course, I felt threatened," said Moran.

For over a decade Pedro J. Estevez, president of the United Auto Merchants

As for the \$1.5 million the city offered businesses to relocate, Estevez divides that amount by the 200 shop owners along the rezoned area of Jerome Avenue between 167th and 184th streets. "That comes out to \$7,500 per shop. That just isn't enough to help them relocate," Estevez said.



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# Ice Cream Social at Bainbridge Nursing & Rehab



Photo by Miriam Quinones

**AN ATTENDANT (L) TAKES** an order from this ice cream-loving child at the Bainbridge Nursing & Rehabilitation clinic's annual ice cream social on July 9. The event served as a big thank you with a cherry on top to the community by the senior citizens home, which has been in Norwood since 1972. More photos can be found on the Norwood News' Facebook page.



## Safe Swimming in the Summer

By **MELINDA MARQUEZ, MPH, CHES**

Summertime fun includes activities such as swimming, biking and just being in the great outdoors. But it's important to remember to remain safe. Swimming is a great way to get exercise and stay healthy. Children especially enjoy spending time in swimming pools and playing on sandy beaches. Even if children know how to swim, it is safest to keep them in a life jacket, particularly when at the beach or in large bodies of water like lakes and ponds.

Children should also be kept out of the water if they are not feeling well or become sick. It's important to keep children out of swimming pools when they are sick especially if they have diarrhea. If diarrhea gets into the pool water and someone swallows contaminated water, they can get an infection from a parasite called Cryptosporidium. While most germs are killed by chlorinated water this parasite does not, and therefore it's important to keep children out and away from pools when they are sick.

Preventing swimming injuries is also important to keep in mind when enjoying pools and beaches. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drowning is a leading cause of unintentional injury death among children 1 to 14 years old and drowning kills more young chil-

dren 1 to 4 years old than anything else except birth defects. You should never take your eyes off your children during any water time activity; accidents can occur within seconds.

### Summertime Safety

#### Swimming Tips:

**Avoid Swallowing:** Remind your children to avoid swallowing pool or sea water.

**Break Time:** Take kids on bathroom breaks every hour. This is also a great time to reapply sunscreen!

**Checkup:** Check diapers frequently, and change them in a bathroom or diaper-changing area—not poolside—to keep germs away from the pool.

**Shower First:** Rinsing off in the shower before jumping into the pool for just one minute helps get rid of any germs that might be on your body.

**Stay Vigilant:** Never leave children unsupervised. Do not leave an older child in charge of younger children.

**Floating Helps:** Teach children how to float to avoid possible drowning.

For more information on healthy swimming please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/features/healthyswimming/index.html>.

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

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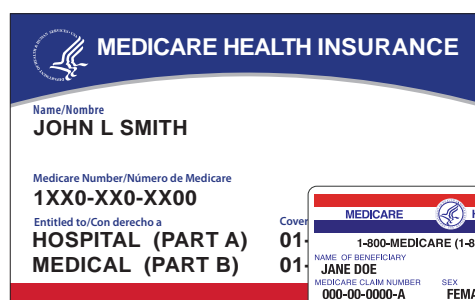
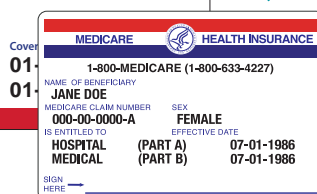




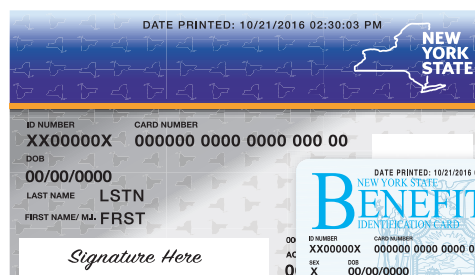
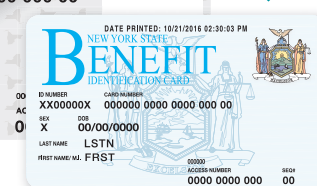

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*Letters should be 400 words max, and include writer's name. Anonymous letters will not be published, but names will be withheld upon reasonable request.*

# \$18M Earmarked for Bx. Youth Programs

By **JOSE A. GIRALT**

Five blocks from where Lesandro "Junior" Guzman-Feliz was killed by members of the Trinitarios gang, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced an \$18.4 million investment for youth-based programs in the Bronx.

The initiative, dubbed New Opportunities for Bronx Youth, will offer kids a variety of activities from academics to sports to the arts, in the hope that gang-related activities will decrease. The murder of Lesandro "Junior" Guzman-Feliz was still fresh on the minds of the speakers as every official who spoke mentioned it. Cuomo called the fatal stabbing "heartbreaking."

"It is also a call to action for the rest of us to strike back at the causes and conditions that produce violence," said Cuomo, delivering remarks inside Madison Square Boys and Girls Club in Belmont.

Junior died from his wounds at nearby St. Barnabas Hospital. The NYPD has arrested 12 suspects ranging in age from 18 to 29.

The hope officials have in the initiative is to make gangs an unattractive route for youths who feel neglected. "We know gangs fill the void, let's get there first," said Cuomo. "We have put together a package of services and assistance in Junior's community as part of the justice effort that will start to fill that void that we've left."

The initiative is wide-ranging, with \$1 million earmarked to improve infrastructure at community centers and \$175,000 community school funding including mental health support. The bulk of the funds will go towards sports-related programming, with \$8 million designated to help triple the

number of youth served by Roberto Clemente State Park, revamp the baseball and softball facility, and create an academy to provide activities for at least 1,500 kids.

Cuomo also set aside \$250,000 to support an anti-violence youth development program targeting schools and areas with the highest rates of crime and gang activity. Peer educators will serve as mentors to youth at risk of violence and gang involvement.

The Bronx has seen a rise in gang involvement. The borough is home to over 4,500 parolees with almost 10 percent described as gang-affiliated.

Robert Brunson, 60, is a 39-year member of the Black Spades for Peace, a group once known as the Black Spades. The group delivers food to the elderly, organizes coat drives for the homeless in Hunts Point, and speaks out against violence at precincts throughout the city. "I wish I had seen this kind of money invested in the Bronx back in the day," Brunson said. "Eighteen million dollars can go a long way to help the Bronx."

NYPD Explorers in attendance praised the initiative. Aileen Pichardo, 15, has been an Explorer for eight months and says the money can be put to good use. "There are some kids that can't afford the uniforms, but like the program. I know this money will help. We want to represent our community in the best light," she said.

The hope for a better Bronx can be heard in Moises Giron, 18, a lieutenant in the NYPD Explorers. "Anytime you can get kids off the streets and make them work hard for a positive result, it's a good thing," he said.



Photo by José A. Giralt

**MEMBERS OF THE** NYPD Explorers listen to New York Governor Andrew Cuomo announce the \$18 million initiative dubbed New Opportunities for Bronx Youth at the Madison Square Boys and Girls Club in Belmont.



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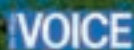
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### Free Legal Help

Councilman Andy King hosts a mobile van offering free civil legal services on Saturday, Aug. 4, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. outside the Evander Childs football field, 800 E. Gun Hill Rd. Legal assistance includes domestic violence/family law, orders of protection, divorces, custody/visitation, child/spousal support, and immigration. For more information and required appointment, call (718) 684-5509.

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# Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

## EDITOR'S PICK

### Free Annual District BBQ

Senator Jamaal T. Bailey presents free Annual District BBQ, July 21 from 1 to 5 p.m. at 959 E. 233rd St. Events include games, constituent services, food, musical entertainment, health screenings, and more. For more information and to RSVP by July 20, call (718) 547-8854 or email [ngaray@nysenate.gov](mailto:ngaray@nysenate.gov).

## Onstage

The Bronx Arts Ensemble presents **two free concerts** at 2 p.m.: July 22 - featuring Beethoven serenades, at Fordham University's McGinley Center; and July 29 - Mary Ann McSweeney's Urban Fado ensemble performing Urban Fado, a mix of contemporary jazz and Portuguese folk music, at Rockwood Drive Circle in Van Cortlandt Park (Mosholu Avenue and Broadway) near the stables (rain date: Aug. 5). For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. presents free **Bronx Summer Concert Series**, Sundays through Sept. 2, 1 to 5 p.m. on Orchard Beach's main stage at Section 9. Music includes salsa, calypso, reggae, bachata, merengue, R&B, and pop. For more information, call (718) 590-3500.

## Events

PBBX Community Affairs presents **Harmony Day Picnic**, July 24 starting at 9:30 a.m. at Van Cortlandt Park South and Broadway. Activities include free giveaways, games, refreshments, sports and more. Free admission with camp registration. For more information, call (718) 299-4503/4.

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 outdoor films at 8:30 p.m.: July 24 - "Boss Baby" and July 31 - "Lion King" (bring blankets and chairs). For more information or a detailed schedule, call (718) 534-8672 or visit [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov).

## Movie Night at Oval Park



Photo by Miriam Quinones

**NORWOOD RESIDENTS KICK** back during a free outdoor film screening of the new "Jumanji" movie playing at the summer movie night event at Williamsbridge Oval Park on July 12. The event was hosted by Friends of Williamsbridge Oval Park and funded by Councilman Andrew Cohen.



Photo courtesy Wave Hill

**CLEAR YOUR MIND** with evening walks at the Wave Hill. A listing of other things to do at Wave Hill can be found under the "Events" section.

[gov/parks](http://gov/parks) or email [sara.bishow@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:sara.bishow@parks.nyc.gov).

Jerome-Gun Hill BID offers free **Summer Chill on Gun Hill Weekend Walk**, along East Gun Hill Road from Perry Avenue to Webster Avenue, July 28 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 **Old, New, & Blue: Celebrating Gershwin's Rhapsody**, July 27 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on the Conservatory Lawn (bring blankets and chairs; rain or shine), featuring American jazz, pop, and rock music (\$43/members; \$48/non members); **Film Screenings Hawaii Past and Present**, July 22 and 29 at 2 p.m., showcasing history and culture; **Hawaii Weekend: Fashion & Design**, July 28 and 29 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., featuring performers, artists, and artisans from Hawaii, including a variety of activities; and the following on July 21 and 22 and 28 and 29: **Hula With Music**, at noon, 1, 2, and 3 p.m., featuring live performances; and **Foldscope: The Paper Microscope**, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., to make a portable microscope to take home. For more information, call (718) 817-8700.

**Wave Hill**, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Spray a Garden, to make paper flowers, July 21 and 22; and Cool-Off Colors Collage, to make a collage from a variety of materials, July 28 and 29; 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 25 - **Smokey's Secret Family**, featuring Smokey Hormel and his band performing '50s and '60s Latin; and Aug. 1 - **Phoebe Hunt & The Gatherers**, featuring jazz and swing music (rain location for both: indoors). 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, through 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](http://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, located in Starlight Park; and **Bronx Now**, through Sept. 8, featuring Bronx-based artists' works including sculpture, photography, painting, and live performance. For more information, call (718) 589-5819.

## Library Events

Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents **films**: "Darkest Hour," July 21; and "The Glass Castle," July 28; both at 2:30 p.m.; and "Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist," July 27 at 2 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children ages 5 to 12: **Crafty Fridays at 3 p.m.**: crafts, July 20 and 27; **STEM: Kids Science at 3 p.m.**: July 24 and 31 (electronics/electricity); and **Harry Potter Birthday Celebration**: to enjoy games and activities, July 31 at 4 p.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy **films at 1:30 p.m.**: "Peter Rabbit," July 21; and "Black Panther," July 28. Adults can attend **Knitting Circle**: Thursdays at 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road, offers for adults: **Computer Basics**: July 19, 26 and Aug. 2; all at noon; and July 31 at 5:45 p.m. The entire family can enjoy **film**: "The Wiz," July 21 at 2 p.m. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

**NOTE:** Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org), and should be received by July 23 for the next publication date of Aug. 2.



# New Whalen Park Opens in Record Time

(continued from page 1)

sometimes for upwards to a year or more. Delayed projects included the reconstruction of basketball courts at Soundview Park. That project took an extra three years to be fully completed. In Norwood, residents had to wait an extra two years for the Oval Park Recreation Center to be renovated. The original completion date was summer 2011. It did not open until November 2013.

Barbara Stronczer, the Parks Committee chair for Community Board 7, explained that the Parks Department has been working to "expedite" the building process, and that could be why Whalen's construction was rapid. "The average time [to complete a project] is usually five years, or it has been in the past," Stronczer said. "What actually happens is they start off with a certain amount of money in the budget, and then it takes three, four, five years. And by the time they get to that fifth year, more money is needed. That sort of slows the

process down also."

A small park that rests at the corner of East 205th Street and Perry Avenue next to the Mosholu Library, Whalen Park was one of 61 parks that benefited from a \$42 million initiative to improve parks between 2010 and 2017, and its \$1.6 million renovation created not only a playground for children, but also a ring of benches adjacent to the playground. Funding for the project stretches back to the Bloomberg Administration, and to former Councilman Oliver Koppell, who represented Norwood. The Bronx Borough President's Office also contributed.

The park is named after Henry A. Whalen, a World War II veteran and local activist who lived a block away and was famous for lobbying the federal government to bring the James J. Peters Veterans Hospital to Kingsbridge. Whalen's daughter, Eileen, has seen the park evolve over time. "My friends and other mothers sat there to watch their kids. Those kids are all

in their 40s now," she said in a telephone interview with the *Norwood News*.

Eileen is concerned that the elderly who have always enjoyed reading and socializing on the benches will be chased out by the noise, but believes the playground will be good for the community. "It was always a nice park, so I'm just glad it's being taken care of," she said. "People would get tired of sitting in their apartments and sat in the park... Now there are kids running all around and that makes me really happy."

Whalen Park was on a downward spiral for the last several years leading up to renovations. When ground broke for the project in 2017, former Deputy Borough President, Aurelia Greene, referred to the park as being "plagued with drugs and homeless individuals," and in 2010 a homeless man who frequently sat on one of Whalen Park's benches was believed to be beaten to death.

"If the Parks Department follows through and locks it

at dusk, it'll be fine. If it's left open all night, it may create a problem," said Stronczer. "And I just heard that the 205th Street [D] station is going to be closed for a while for renovations. So that may help a lot because the park used to attract homeless from the train since it was right at the last stop." Rules posted at the park's entrance prohibit adults from entering the playground section of the park without a child, making it safer for families.

At the park, Sophie Henderson, a long time resident, remembers the days when Whalen Park was simply a place to sit down. "Before, we'd just sit here, you know. The kids had nothing to do; they used to bring their scooters," she said.

Parents, including Kana Sugamori, appreciate the park's close proximity to their homes, compared to the seven-minute walk to the other nearby park. "It's a good location for me because I usually go to Oval Park, which is a little far," Sugamori said.

Henderson agreed. "It's very nice, you know. When it's not too hot, I'd walk up there [to Oval Park], but I only live right around the corner," she said, laughing. She was also surprised that it was opened without any apparent announcement. "I kept googling it and it didn't give me any opening dates. My daughter was coming out of the train one day and she said, 'Ma, it's open already.'" Henderson added that she goes to Whalen Park early in the day because later on it becomes crowded.

Maria Florencio, a resident who was sitting in the circle of benches, believes the sitting area could have been smaller to allow for "some swings for the kids." Florencio was also concerned about park goers who need to relieve themselves. "There should have been a small bathroom, at least," she said. "Every park has a bathroom. Those are things that could have been improved."

A ribbon cutting ceremony for the park is expected on July 24.

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