



NORWOOD NEWS

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
ROAD 'DIETS' | PG. 4



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THE NW BRONX | PGS. 10-11**

PRESSURE'S ON BEDFORD PK. HOUSING PLAN

Community Board 7 wants plans altered for 202nd and 203rd sts. projects



Photo by Adi Talwar

A VIEW OF the now empty lot between East 202nd and East 203rd streets by East Mosholu Parkway South looking northwest. A Brooklyn-based developer looks to fill the space with two buildings.

**By JOSEPH KONIG,
DAVID CRUZ, and
CHRISTY RAE AMMONS**

A non-profit housing developer is open to reducing the size of planned projects on long-contested lots on East 202nd and East 203rd streets after push-back from Community Board 7, according to a revised proposal draft obtained by the Norwood News.

The new proposal would shorten the building on East

202nd Street from 11 stories to 9 stories, shrinking the number of units from 164 to 139. In the original proposal, the East 203rd Street building was planned to be 8 stories with 164 units. It is unclear if the revised proposal will reduce the size of the 8-story building, but the units will be cut to 138 to relieve some of the expected burden on community infrastructure in Bedford Park.

"There's not that many re-

sources for everyone around here," remarked Jesus Moran, a 20-year resident of Bedford Park. "You have to build more business, whether it's grocery stores or pharmacies and all that."

The reassessment by CAMBA, the Brooklyn-based non-profit developer, stems from a raucous November CB7 Land Use Meeting of the project that drew ire from residents who've had enough of the on-

going development projects in Bedford Park. The building projects represent a kind of last straw by the board, given the sheer size of the projects on incredibly narrow streets initially meant for smaller homes.

"I think that when projects get erected in certain communities, we need to know the impact, considering this neighborhood, particularly, has had a lot of buildings go up," CB7

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IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Bronx State Senators, Now in Majority, Get Committee Chair Assignments

By JOSEPH KONIG

The incoming Democratic majority in the state Senate handed out committee chair assignments on Tuesday, with several Bronx senators getting tapped to lead key committees by incoming state Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins of Yonkers. As committee chairs, the Bronx Senate Delegation can set the agenda for the upcoming legislative session.

Sen. Gustavo Rivera will head the Health Committee, Senator-elect Alessandra Biaggi will chair the notoriously ineffective Ethics Committee, and Sen. Luis Sepulveda will preside over the Crime Victims, Crime and Correction Committee. Sen. Jamaal Bailey, who represents most of Norwood and Bedford Park, will chair the Codes Committee, which oversees all criminal justice legislation.

"I look forward to true criminal justice reform that is predicated on fairness for ALL – not for the powerful, not based on wealth – for all," Bailey tweeted.

Bailey, the Democratic ranking member on the Republican-controlled committee, has sponsored dozens of bills related to criminal justice since he took office in 2017, particularly related to bail reform, women's prisons and speedy trial laws. In October, Bailey appeared at a town hall on criminal justice at the Parkside Houses hosted by the Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez campaign. At the event, Bailey spoke alongside Black Lives Matter of Greater New York president Hawk Newsome; Akeem Browder, former mayoral candidate and brother of Kalief Browder who killed himself after spending three years at Rikers Island while awaiting trial and whose case was ultimately dismissed; and other criminal justice activists.

"Criminal justice reform affects each and every one of us, whether it's happened to you personally or not," Bailey said at the Oct. 4 event. "It mat-



Images courtesy New York State Legislature/Alessandra Biaggi Campaign

(L-R) STATE SEN. Gustavo Rivera, state Senator-elect Alessandra Biaggi, and state Sen. Jamaal Bailey will each run a respective state committee.

ters not whether your house is clean, if the house next door is unkept."

Biaggi, who will represent the 34th Senate District including Riverdale, Kingsbridge, parts of Bedford Park and much of the East Bronx, ran as a hard-line progressive and a grassroots alternative to Independent Democratic Conference head Jeff Klein, a legislative leader accused of sexual harassment and who spent over \$3 million on his primary campaign.

"Now New York finally has the chance to clean up," Zephyr Teachout, perennial progressive office-seeker and Fordham law professor with an expertise in campaign finance reform, tweeted. "[Biaggi is] up against fierce real estate interests and political machines that die hard. Can't wait to see her beat 'em like she beat Klein!"

With legislative leaders convicted every few years, it is no surprise ethics and Albany do not mix well, but the state Senate Ethics Committee has met only twice since June 2009. The committee last met under Elaine Phillips, a Long Island Republican who currently chairs the committee, on June 15, 2017. Outgoing state Senator Tony Avella of Queens was the chair of the committee for five months in 2015 and testified in the trial of former state Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos that he was reassigned by Republican leadership after trying to call a committee meeting in

the wake of Skelos' arrest.

Rivera, who represents parts of Fordham, Bedford Park and University Heights, will now be responsible for guiding healthcare legislation to the senate floor, potentially including the Women's Reproductive Health Act and any universal healthcare or Medicaid expansion proposals that emerge in the next legislative session.

"I will not cease my efforts to continue building a stronger, more efficient healthcare delivery system that treats healthcare as a right for the 20 million New Yorkers we serve," Rivera said in a statement.

Sepulveda tweeted he was looking forward to serving as the Chair of the Senate Committee on Crime Victims, Crime and Correction which oversees the parole and correction systems in New York. Sepulveda has made reducing prison populations and reforming the parole system central focuses of his tenure as a state senator.

State Sen. Jose Serrano, the ranking member of the Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation committee, will be promoted to chair come January. Serrano's district – which spans parts of the South Bronx and uptown Manhattan – includes popular tourist destinations like Central Park, Randall's Island, and Yankee Stadium, but only two state parks, according to the New York Park's Department website.

Public and Community Meetings

COMMUNITY BOARD 7 committee meetings are held on the following dates at the board office, 229A E. 204th St. at 6:30 p.m. or unless otherwise noted: Traffic & Transportation Committee meets on Jan. 2; and the Education Committee meets on Jan. 3 at Fordham Hill Oval Cooperatives, 2455 Sedgwick Ave., community room, at 6:30 p.m.. For more information, call the Board office at (718) 933-5650.

The **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meets Jan. 2 at 8 p.m. at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy. So., apt. B#1. For more information, email bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

EDITORIAL

Expanding Discovery is the Right Course, But Don't Exclude

Mayor Bill de Blasio's plan to expand the Discovery program as a way of increasing enrollment of black and Latino students in the city's elite specialized high schools has drawn the ire of Pacific Legal Foundation.

The group is now suing the city in federal court, relying on an argument similar to an affirmative action case it has against Harvard University: Discovery essentially discriminates against Asian students who overwhelmingly represent the specialized high school student population.

Expanding the Discovery program—essentially offering rigorous summer classes

for students who missed the cutoff in passing the specialized high school test—takes effect in 2020, when 20 percent of specialized high school seats will be reserved exclusively for black and Hispanic students who pass Discovery. As it stands, 10 percent of black and Hispanic students are enrolled. At the much coveted Stuyvesant High School in Lower Manhattan, for instance, only 10 black students were offered placement into the freshman class of 2018. There are 902 seats in all.

Discovery, as an immediate substitute for repairing deep-seated problems within the school system, at least at-

tempts to make things equal. Pacific Legal Foundation is having none of it.

While other factors could hamper upward mobility, it's clear that a quality education is a critical key towards that change in socioeconomic status. And with 54.1 percent of blacks and 33.7 percent of Hispanics comprising the jail population at Rikers Island, according to 2018 statistics, it's clear something has to be done.

Pacific Legal Foundation's argument that the program violates equal protection under the law could be neutralized by equally offering Discovery across the entire

system and not to black and Hispanic students, but to every poor student. Expanding it to the entire system provides equal protection. This should at least net a better percentage of the 67 percent of black and Hispanics students that make up the system. Discovery's exclusivity is as problematic as a specialized high school's.

Pacific Legal Foundation doesn't care about that. Their winner-take-all mentality ignores decades of structural racism that's led to the economic disenfranchisement of minorities. Much of that has impacted black and Hispanics. It's been tough to untan-

gle that from New York City culture. But it still persists. The best schools are typically found in affluent neighborhoods, with poorly performing schools in low-income neighborhoods, a status quo the city is rightfully attempting to fix.

It can take decades to undo the damage of dividing over diversifying. De Blasio, good or bad, is attempting to do that. Any student who feels they've been left out of the program should consider lobbying their New York Council members in building another specialized high school. The demand is clearly there.



Letters To The Editor

Bronx DA's Stance on Gangs

Among the cases Julia Rist deals with in her excellent article in the December 6-19 *Norwood News* about Private Detective Manuel Gomez is that of Enger Javier, his first client. Javier spent two years at Rikers Island awaiting trial for involvement in a murder he had nothing to do with.

Gomez found video proof that the murderer was Jose Muniz and the charges were dropped. But he could not convince District Attorney Darcel Clark to prosecute Muniz. Now she's prosecuting Muniz for later killing Lesandro "Junior" Guzman-Feliz.

In the Dec. 9 *Daily News* is an article by Shayna Jacobs and Thomas Tracy concerning the dropping of robbery and assault charges against Pedro Hernandez. According to law enforcement sources, Hernandez and his sister robbed an 18-year-old man who was wearing an "R.I.P." shirt mourning the death of Edwin Molina, who was murdered by Hernandez' brother, Jesswill. Jesswill is currently

serving 20 years to life. So you can kill somebody and get out in 20 years.

Pedro's deal will have the charges dropped this coming May if he proves he enrolled in college. When I enrolled at Baruch College in 1975, nobody told me I was entitled to assault and rob somebody.

The DA's history of leniency toward thugs includes the case of Jose Adorno, a superintendent at an East 176th Street building who stabbed Ronald Griffin, blinding him in his right eye. This assault happened Jan. 2, 2017 when Griffin came to the aid of his gay stepson, Joey Brown. The homophobic Adorno had been harassing Brown. Clark thought that 60 days in jail served on weekends was enough punishment for Adorno.

Who was Clark tough on? She tried to get NYPD Sgt. Hugh Barry, who shot dead a woman swinging a bat at his head, convicted of murder. Thankfully, the judge wasn't buying and he acquitted Barry.

Richard Warren
Van Cortlandt Village

Post Office Reliability

I just read your article in the *Norwood News* about the closing of the post offices in our area. It was very well done, thank you. I am a senior citizen who has lived in this area for over 35 years. I can't get around very well as I have a bad back problem, and I use the Van Cott Station all the time (I still write letters and cards).

I have another problem for you to investigate if you can. We have not received mail in our building since about Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2018. I have been trying with my landlord (62 Realty Corp. P.O. Box 926, Monsey, NY 10952) to contact the post office at Williamsbridge. They never answer the phone. I finally got an answer from the main post office, it took three days and hours on hold or callback.

We are a three-building complex [in Norwood]. It seems that the delivery person paid the super. The super refused to give her keys to the buildings. Our building was

open most of the time. She said because she couldn't get in the other two it wasn't fair that we got our mail, and the others didn't because she couldn't get in. If they can get in a building, they are supposed to deliver the mail. I can't walk to Gun Hill or afford to "cab" it. I shouldn't have to.

I was told yesterday that she was offered the "master key" and still didn't deliver mail, and said she didn't have it and that she would come on Monday, Dec. 17, 2018 to get the key. What's wrong with today, Friday, Dec. 7, and Saturday? I don't understand how she is getting away with this, but the post office is no help in this matter. I better get all my mail.

Is there any way you can get some answers on this? I think it's important to get it out in the open, I would appreciate it. Feel free to call me if you have questions I haven't answered.

Joanne Perry
Norwood



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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week we asked readers their thoughts on the city Department of Transportation (DOT) plans for a “road diet” which calls for converting two-way Morris Park Avenue from a double lane to a single lane roadway for each way.



Somewhere along the line our elected officials at City Hall forgot that they serve the people. They got into office by saying that this was a tale of two cities and now it's a tale of one city, run by a king: [Bill] de Blasio. Start listening to what the people have to say, they're the ones that pay your salary. It's not going to work. It didn't work on East Tremont [Avenue]. It slows everything down. You're really asking for trouble doing this. It pushes traffic into the side streets. It's already a problem. If you try and get down Morris Park Avenue from White Plains Road to East 180th Street, it can take you 20 minutes. If it goes to one lane it will be even worse.

John Bonizio
Morris Park



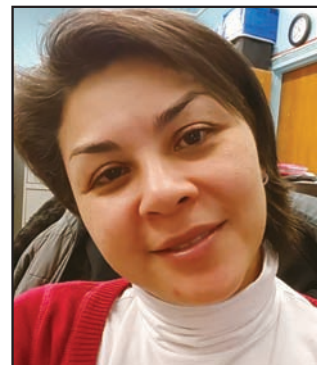
It creates more traffic. It doesn't make it safer. Drivers need two lanes, they need the space to go left or go right and there has to be a way for the pedestrians to cross the streets. The driver has to be in the street, so the pedestrians need to stay in the crosswalk. They are constantly eliminating space for drivers.

Gabriel Santos
Bedford Park



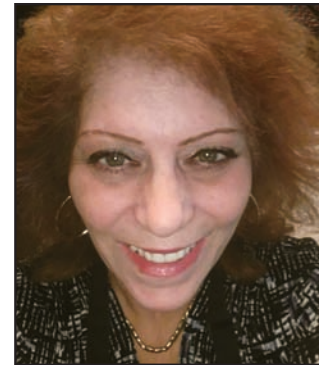
Being that it's a heavily trafficked area, the residents should be taken into consideration when such things are done! Who makes these types of decisions? Obviously, no one who lives in the area. How is making two lanes into one helping? It's causing more congestion. Anyone with half a brain can figure that out. Come on and get your act together Department of Transportation.

Michelle Clancy
Pelham Bay



Converting Morris Park Avenue into one lane definitely worsens the problem. I own the Casa Restaurant on East Tremont Avenue, and we've seen an increase in traffic and accidents in the area. Drivers are in their cars trying to park and there's no room to maneuver around. Passing vehicles are crashing into vehicles that are parking and cars are not slowing down for traffic. Due to the congestion, driving conditions have worsened as traffic spreads to the backroads, where drivers are running stop signs and speeding.

Vanessa Lopez-Beltron
Throggs Neck



I think [the city] should always ask permission from the communities, because they could suffer from these decisions. It just backs up the surrounding areas and they're crazy to do that. Who the hell is running the city? Everything is going downhill fast. Morris Park will be a total mess all the way to White Plains Road. These people in charge are all nuts.

Mary Raffa
Pelham Manor



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Two Men Linked to Trinitarios Charged in Death of Bedford Park Teen

By DAVID GREENE

Police have arrested two men they say assaulted and robbed a 17-year-old from Bedford Park before throwing him into oncoming traffic, causing his death. The fatal toss ranks as the seventh homicide within the 52nd Precinct, which had a 200 percent homicide increase this year. The Bronx continues to lead the city in homicides in 2018.

Police confirmed that the two suspects charged in the killing were members of the Trinitarios gang.

Officers from the 52nd Precinct responded to calls of a pedestrian struck outside of a private home at 2670 Bainbridge Ave., between East 194th and East 196th streets, at just after 6 p.m. on Dec. 10.

Officers discovered Angel Reyes-Godoy, a resident of the block, with serious head trauma. He died a short time later at St. Barnabas Hospital. The following day the case was ruled a homicide by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME).

Thanks to a tip to the CrimeStoppers hotline, police officials announced the arrests of Mario Almonte, 20, of East 201st Street and Obob Adames, 18, of Marion Avenue. Almonte was charged



Photo by David Greene

A MAKESHIFT MEMORIAL IS established in the area where the victim, Angel Reyes-Godoy, was struck by a vehicle on Dec. 10.

with murder, robbery and assault, while Adames was charged with assault and disorderly conduct.

The unidentified driver of the white 2009 Ford Econoline ambulette that struck Angel, stopped at the corner of East 196th Street and remained at the scene for police. One resident said the driver was seen "pacing back and forth" after striking Angel, but was not

charged.

The entire block was shut down for the rest of the night as the NYPD's Crash Investigation Unit processed the crime scene. One woman looking to park her car on the block was told of the cause for the street closure, and she responded, "These kids are going crazy, I swear." Asked if the group of teens or young men often seen playing basketball dur-

ing the summer months are gang members, she replied, "I'm not going to talk about that."

The area of Bainbridge Avenue and East 194th Street is notorious for drug dealing. Last October seven people were rounded up and charged with distributing potent amounts of the opioid fentanyl.

One elderly resident not afraid to speak out, claimed, "The kids sell drugs over there and we told the police about it during a meeting in the spring. They knew about it."

Police identified the two suspects as members of the Trinitarios, the same gang authorities said killed 15-year-old Lesandro "Junior" Guzman-Feliz in Belmont this past June.

"The common denominator here again is, we have Trinitarios gang members. Some of the same set that was mentioned in the earlier 'Junior' Guzman case," said NYPD Chief of Detectives Dermot Shea at a Dec. 12 NYPD press briefing, referring to the teen who was pulled out of a deli and killed in the Belmont section in June, in a case of mistaken identity.

Investigators believe the killing had

(continued on page 7)

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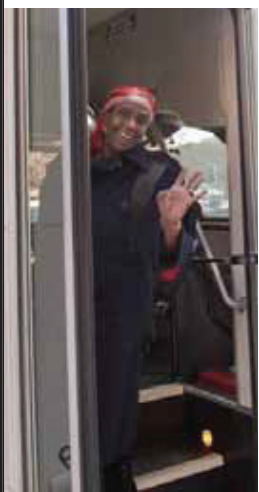
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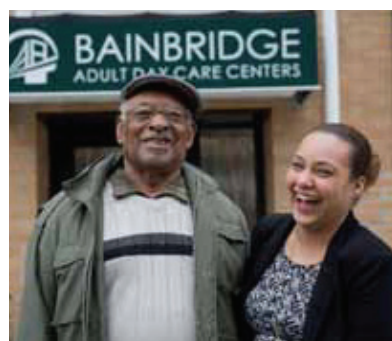
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A Historic Sign for the Namesake Behind Risse Street Park

By DAVID CRUZ

Learning about Risse Street Park's ancestry is not exactly common knowledge to Norwood residents. In a few months, residents passing the tiny park will know the name. Psst: it's the grandfather of the Grand Concourse.

Tom Campanella, a Cornell University professor and city Parks Department Historian in Residence and his assistant, Zachary Falk, a student from Cornell University, have been tapped to draft a brief history of the Norwood park.

The findings will be included in a new signage slated to be installed by the Parks Department as part of its Historical Sign Program. The almost 20-year program has acknowledged nearly every park, tracing the origins of each park, a biography after whom the park is named, and other interesting facts.

Risse Street Park's namesake comes from Louis Aloys Risse, a city engineer and Frenchman who designed the Grand Concourse in 1890. The park, less than an acre, is formally known as Risse Street Triangle. It rests appro-

priately on Risse Street, overlooking the northernmost section of the Concourse near Jerome Avenue.

The sign is welcome news to members of Risse Street Community Garden, who primarily use the space to cultivate vegetables and other green plants. In a joint statement, members of the garden expressed pride that the garden gets its name “after such an inspirational man who had the vision to design such a magnificent boulevard giving our Bronx its very own Champs Elysees.”

“Highlighting Mr. Risse's name will certainly help give our community a sense of pride and connection to the past,” the statement concluded.

Mosholu Parkway and Williamsbridge Oval Park are among those with historical signs. Risse Street Park represents some of the last few parks without a historical sign on display.

Campanella was unavailable for comment. A spokesperson with the city Department of Parks did not return emails seeking comment on when the sign would be unveiled.



Photo by David Cruz

RISSE STREET PARK is home to Risse Street Garden.

Bainbridge Water Project Enters Second Phase

By DAVID CRUZ

Travelers driving through the northern edge of Bainbridge Avenue finally can breathe: the massive construction project is no longer blocking drivers going northbound towards the Major Deegan Expressway.

But the project is not nearly over.

Construction crews for the massive water pipe replacement project have entered

into the second phase of the project, with EIC Associates Inc. set to install a massive trunk main that won't disrupt service, but will likely expand the search for parking.

Crews have knocked out street parking between the intersection of Jerome and Bainbridge avenues to Jerome Avenue and the entrance of Allen Shandler ballfield, to make way for a 48-inch wide pipe that

connects to a distribution system.

A spokesman for the city Department of Design & Construction (DDC), the agency overseeing the project, said no water service will be disrupted during the yearlong project.

A similar project is happening further south on Bainbridge Avenue near East 205th Street, which has been happening since the summer.



Photo by Joseph Konig

CREWS ARE SETTLED IN to the second phase of the Bainbridge Avenue water project. Pictured is the northbound side of Jerome Avenue near Bainbridge Avenue with bulldozers standing by.

Editor's Note: The DDC has assigned Yosha-belle Desulme to be the community construction liaison to answer any questions or concerns. She can be reached at (718) 644-2065 or email at Bainbridgeprojectccl@gmail.com.

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Two Men Charged in Teen's Killing

(continued from page 5)

more to do with the suspect's mistakenly believing that Angel spoke to police about the recent theft of a motorized scooter.

Angel had rented a fourth-floor bedroom from a friend on the block, on and off since arriving in New York in June 2017, after immigrating from Honduras.

One published report quoting Angel's roommate, said the teen had joined a gang, but had recently "tried to quit." When confronted with his comment about Angel joining and quitting a gang, the roommate backtracked, telling the *Norwood News*, "I don't know," with a forced laugh. He added, "I don't know... no."

Inside the fourth-floor apartment, the roommate said that Angel was unemployed, but often spent time with a brother and sister who live in the New York area, and that Angel "enjoyed playing the guitar and piano," adding, "he was very good."

The roommate said that the

family was busy raising money with a cousin expected to arrive in the Bronx in the coming days to claim Angel's body and return him to Honduras for burial.

A GoFundMe page set up for Angel's flight home and burial has so far raised \$1,735 of the \$15,000 friends had hoped to raise.

A video of photos from Angel's life that was posted by his brother Julio, has so far received over 6,000 views. Julio wrote, "Nobody leaves this earth without paying this pain I have in my chest. I would like to face the cowards and tear off their heads one by one." When contacted through social media, Julio said, "I have nothing to say. I reserve my comments, but thanks for asking."

Appearing before a judge late Sunday night, Almonte was held without bail, Adames' bail was set at \$50,000.

Meantime, a makeshift memorial comprised of candles and photographs was set up near where Angel died.

BRONX CONNECTIONS: THE GANG IMPACT

PART 5 of 5

The Norwood News, WFUV radio, and BronxNet TV conclude their five-part series on the impact of gangs in the Bronx.

In Gang Attacks, Bodegas Lobbied to Serve as Line of Defense

By JULIA ROSE HERMAN of



As gang-related spats touch off on Bronx streets, leading to bloody consequences, they can spill inside the oft-omnipresent local bodegas, putting owners and employees on the front lines. Edward Lara knows this first hand.

Lara, owner of Deli Grocery in the Highbridge section of the Bronx, fended off an attack of a teen by a mob of teens on Oct. 29 at around 6:30 p.m. In that instance, he put his life on the line.

"A young guy, 15 years old, he came asking for help. 'Please help me, they are going to kill me,' those were the only words he said to me," recalled Lara.

Video surveillance showed the mob rushing into Lara's bodega and attacking the young boy. Lara and several employees pushed the attackers out of the store,

locking the front door.

"They tried to break the glass door," said Lara. "They were going to kill the guy. So I grabbed a pipe and went outside to face them. What are you going to do? It's a life. It's a kid."

Lara said the 15-year-old, "tried to stand up three times. He couldn't because they hit him in the head. They hit him only for like five seconds. If they hit him for two minutes they would have killed him."

Lara said he had no time to think about consequences, he just acted. "It's a human being. I didn't have time to think about it, it's a life," Lara said.

For Councilman Andy King, Lara's situation presents the ideal outcome behind his Safe Haven Initiative he began three years ago. The initiative, according to King, would allow owners to use their bodegas to protect young children from



Image still from surveillance video

EDWARD LARA (PICTURED facing camera) keeps a young man from entering his bodega to attack a 15-year-old on Halloween.

attacks.

The initiative, King said, offers the chance for "neighborhoods to be neighborhoods, and getting our storefront owners to be a part of it...It kind of stalled a little bit." After the death of Lesandro "Junior" Guzman-Feliz at Cruz and Chiky Grocery in the Belmont section of the Bronx in June, King revisited the initiative.

Junior was misidentified by the Trinitarios gang as a rival gang member. The gang members grouped up in cars and began chasing Junior. He ran into the bodega for safety but was denied help from the shop owner. Video surveillance captured Junior brutally killed outside the doors of the bodega. Now, Cruz and Chiky Grocery is under new management with a new name - Waggy's Grocery. Three store clerks declined to answer questions on its reception by the community.

When pressed on specifics of the initiative, King simply had an outline with no discernible platform on training. "Right now, we are kicking back the conversations again, bringing the resources in, to move full steam ahead," he said. "We are in the pipeline of early planning and putting it all together."

King's initiative has not happened without false starts. Over the summer, he hosted a training session in the Edenwald section of the Bronx where two officers from the 47th Precinct Community Affairs Unit began a workshop session where no questions on safeguarding children from attackers was raised.

Store owners from the North Bronx and Woodlawn, King said, have expressed interest. He conceded that no bodega owners have "received any training at this point."

King said installing panic buttons in stores will be part of the initiative. "I've spoken to technology companies who are interested in trying to help in this process," said King, but declined to release the names of the companies he is speaking with, "because we are still at the early stages."

Lara said he has never heard of the Safe Haven Zone Initiative or spoken to King. Saving young people from gang attacks, Lara said, is a lot simpler than it is being made out to be. He said that there is not much bodega owners themselves can actually do during a crisis situation.

"The responsibility is on the police. We call the police, 911, because we really need it," Lara said, adding he's called the police at least once a year since he's been in business for the last 30 years.

Police were slow to Lara's call to 911, he said. It took 20 minutes for officers to arrive at his store the night of the incident, he noted. "We would like to get the same service as when you call and say 'police down, police down,'" said Lara.

For now, he's on his own, ready to fend off attacks.

"The bodega is the only place in business that the customer is like family. Kids come here after school to wait for their parents. Sometimes parents leave the house key for the kids here," Lara said.



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Photo by José A. Giralt

AFTER COMMUNITY BOARD 7's Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony, children play underneath the tree.



Photo by José A. Giralt

SIMONE EVANS EL holds on to some goodies while being held up by her grandfather, Quentin Evans El, during Community Board 7's Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony on the Mosholu Parkway Lawn.

Holiday in the Bronx

The Bronx sure knows how to celebrate the holidays! Throughout December, several organizations, including Mosholu Preservation Corporation (publishers of the Norwood News), were out in full force, hosting a number of Yuletide events meant to cheer everyone up during the season of giving.



Photo by José A. Giralt

STUDENTS FROM PS/MS 20 sing as a chorus during Community Board 7's Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony on the Mosholu Parkway Lawn.



Photo by Miriam Quinones

SANTA MAKES AN appearance at the 52nd Precinct holiday flotilla event on Dec. 7. The float started off at the precinct on Webster Avenue before making stops at several locations throughout the neighborhood.

Photo by Miriam Quinones

(LEFT) SANTA CLAUS is surrounded by this group of kids posing with their presents courtesy of Old Saint Nick and the Jerome Gun Hill BID.

Days The OnX



Photo by Miriam Quinones

PLENTY OF FACES can be seen at the flotilla, among them newly appointed commanding officer of the 52nd Precinct, Deputy Inspector Thomas Alps (fourth from left).



Photo by José A. Giralt

SANTA CLAUS STOPS by to hand out goodies with help from an assistant (l) during the Bronx Community Board 7 Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony on the Mosholu Parkway Lawn.



Photo by Miriam Quinones

ASSEMBLYWOMAN NATHALIA FERNANDEZ (l) and Councilman Andrew Cohen (r) share a moment with Santa Claus at the annual Jerome Gun Hill BID tree lighting on Dec. 11.



Photo by Mosholu Preservation Corporation

(L-R) KINGSBRIDGE ROAD MERCHANTS Association Vice President Christian Ramos, Mosholu Preservation Corporation Executive Director Jennifer Tausig, and Councilman Fernando Cabrera pose in front of the brightly lit holiday tree situated at Barnhill Square on Kingsbridge Road near Reservoir Avenue.



Photo by Mosholu Preservation Corporation

LIGHTS UP! The holiday tree at the corner of White Plains Road and East Gun Hill Road glows for the first time at the annual holiday tree lighting, courtesy of Mosholu Preservation Corporation and the East 233rd Street and White Plains Road Merchants Association.



Photo courtesy Gloria Bent

(L-R) THE TREE LIGHTING event at the Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District (JGHBD) puts smiles on the faces of JGHBD Executive Director Jennifer Tausig, Santa Claus, Community Board 7 Chair Jean Hill, JGHBD Community Liaison Ariana Cipriani, and North Central Bronx Hospital Register Dietician Gloria Bent.



Why Good Relationships Are Good for Your Health

By **BRENDA BOATSWAIN, Ph.D., CGP**

Research shows that having positive close relationships throughout your life has a positive effect on your physical health, mental health, and lifespan.

In infants, warm and nurturing parents help them grow into adults that can successfully manage their lives. For young children and adolescents, close positive family relationships can serve as a buffer against stress. Reducing stress lowers the chance of developing chronic conditions such as heart disease. In adults, being socially connected and having access to so-

cial support is related to better health and self-care. For aging adults, social ties reduce risk for mental and physical decline and early death.

Strengthen your relationships now to reap the benefits for years to come. To boost the quality of your relationships:

- Spend time with those you care about and those who care about you.
- Choose to do things together that bring joy to you and people you care about.
- Take time to participate in religious, community, and workplace activities.
- Check in with friends and



family, exchange ideas, and provide support.

Research and the medical community have given clear guidelines of lifestyle choices that promote good health; eat fruits and vegetables, get adequate sleep, ex-

ercise, and manage stress.

We can now add to this list – have good and close relationships.

Dr. Brenda Boatswain is the Wellness/Wellbeing Coordinator for Montefiore Health System's Community & Population Health.

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Report: Bedford Park and Norwood Residents Among Most Rent-Burdened in City

By JONATHAN CUSTODIO

Residents in Bedford Park and Norwood are among those in the most rent-burdened neighborhoods in the city, according to a report by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

The report, which Diaz unveiled at the steps of City Hall on Dec. 13, focuses on preferential rents, part of the state's rent laws that allows landlords to charge tenants in rent-stabilized units less than the legal rent. If landlords were to raise the rent to the legal standard, known as the legal rent, the increase may be too much for tenants to bear and could result in eviction or displacement.

According to the report, the Fordham-Bedford Park area in zip code 10458 is home to 5,516 rent-burdened tenants. Further north in that area, which also includes University Heights, 4,694 residents have a tough time paying rent. There are 5,336 rent-afflicted tenants in the 10467 zip code, covering Norwood, Allerton, Edenwald, and Olinville.

Diaz is calling for the removal of preferential rent and proposes developing landlord tax credits to compensate for the loss of potential revenue.

"In the coming year we can protect tenants from dramatic increases in their rents while also providing landlords with compensation for a loss of potential revenue through a comprehensive reform of our current housing laws surrounding preferential rents," said Diaz. "Eliminating the preferential rent loophole in conjunction with new tax breaks for landlords will help our city prevent displacement and keep our neighborhoods intact."

The suggested tax credit is estimated to cost over \$93 million per year, according to the report, which also notes that the hefty price tag would be offset by saving billions of dollars toward housing initiatives. However, this assumes that landlords will be receptive and accept the tax credits, which remains unclear.

Notwithstanding the preferential

rent issue, the report largely ignores other factors that contribute to displacement, mainly vacancy bonus, high-rent vacancy decontrol and major capital improvements, which all serve as incentives to raise rent and eliminate rent-stabilized units.

High-rent vacancy decontrol encourages landlords to raise rents up to \$2,700, the max for a rent-stabilized apartment before becoming market rate, and is supported by the vacancy bonus, which allows landlords to increase rent by up to 20 percent after a tenant vacates. Rent increases are also permitted to compensate landlords for major capital improvements (MCIs), such as a new boiler or new windows. MCIs are not temporary.

Diaz's announcement comes on the heels of a Democratically-controlled state legislature, which is expected to review the state's existing rent laws set to expire in 2019.

Editor's Note: The full report can be found at <https://on.nyc.gov/2Qwz5PH>.



Photo courtesy of Bronx Borough President's Office
BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Ruben Diaz Jr. identifies areas outside the Bronx with possible high numbers of rent-burdened tenants.



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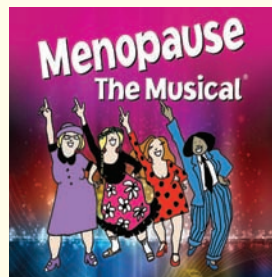
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manza, **TAKE NOTICE** that a pleading seeking relief against you has been
filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is
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ney for Plaintiff. **PROBST LAW FIRM PA** 301 N. Main Street, Suite 2222,
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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Free Oven Safe Knob Covers

The Office of Councilman Ritchie Torres is giving away free safe oven knob covers to prevent accidental fires in apartments. Free knob covers can be picked up at 2546 Hoffman St., Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. while supplies last. For more information, call the office at (718) 842-8100.

Nonprofit Grants Now Available

Resident-led groups in low-income communities and Title I public schools can apply for a Neighborhood Grant of up to \$3,000. A workshop in how to fill out the application correctly takes place on Jan. 8 at 6 p.m. at 4035 White Plains Rd. For more information, call (718) 547-8854 or go to the Citizens Committee website at www.citizensnyc.org/grants.

Heating Assistance

Applications for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) for older adults and low- and middle-income New Yorkers will be accepted by local departments of social services. Eligibility is based on income, household size and how the home is heated. Residents can apply online at <https://on.ny.gov/2Fn062M> and mail it to NYC DSS/HRA/HEAP, P.O. Box 1401, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008. For more information, call (212) 331-3126.

Toy Drive

Donate a new, unwrapped toy at the Bronx Zoo to receive a voucher for one free general admission ticket to the zoo (maximum of four vouchers per family). Donations can be dropped off at the park entrance (no admission necessary) or inside the Bronx Zoo Store in specially designated bins during the hours of operation. Vouchers can be collected at the drop-off locations and are valid for redemption from Jan. 1 to June 1, 2019. The donations are being collected through Dec. 31 for families of veterans, military members on active duty,

and NYC families in need. For more information, call (718) 220-5100 or go to www.bronx-zoo.com/giveback.

Excelsior Scholarship

Applications for the spring 2019 term for tuition-free college at a CUNY or SUNY school are available through Jan. 14. To qualify, students must be pursuing an undergraduate degree at CUNY or SUNY, be enrolled in at least 12 credits per semester, and live in a combined federal adjusted gross income of \$110,000 or less. To apply, go to <https://on.ny.gov/2o6ZOzL>, or call (518) 473-1574.

Right to Counsel

Right to Counsel (RTC)—which assigns a free attorney to those sued for eviction in housing court and in NYCHA termination of tenancy hearings and who are income eligible—is available to tenants who live in Bronx zip codes 10457, 10467, and 10468. If a tenant is not income-eligible, they have the right to a one-off legal consultation or advice session. Tenants facing eviction or harassment from management can call Nova Lucero at the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition for support at (917) 952-5494.

Orchard Beach Survey

A survey on what the Pavilion at Orchard Beach is currently used for is available to be filled out. It's part of an effort to revitalize the Pavilion through a multi-million dollar project. Respondents are encouraged to make suggestions for uses in the future. Questions can be answered at <https://bit.ly/2SOrMiS>.

Crime Victims Support

Crime Victims Support Services, a 501(c)3 group at 1138 Neill Ave., offers victims help in navigating the criminal justice system. Free confidential services include claim assistance, case follow-up, crisis counseling, and victim advocacy. The group accepts donations. For more information, call (718) 823-4925.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Gift of Knowledge Event

The public is invited to a Holiday "Gift of Knowledge Event" presented by Mas Productions on Dec. 22 from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Lexa Grill and Garden, 357 E. 204th St. Distributed will be books, piggy banks, and school supplies (while supplies last). Refreshments will be served. For more information, call (718) 409-0109 or visit info@masproductionsny.com.

Events

The New York Botanical Garden offers its annual **Holiday Train Show** through Jan. 21, 2019, featuring miniature replicas of many NYC building replicas made from natural materials including bark, twigs, fruit and pine cones. For more detailed information, show schedule, and rates, call (718) 817-8700.

St. Helena's Church 1315 Olmstead Ave. in Parkchester will hold a **Kwanzaa Celebration** on Dec. 29 from 4 to 8 p.m. in the downstairs gym featuring speakers, singers,

dancers, and musicians. Included will be African attire, African market, raffle and free dinner. Please bring educational or handcraft gifts for children. For more information, call (347) 525-4943.

Exhibits

Lehman College Art Gallery, Lovinger Theatre in the Speech and Theatre Building, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Castles in the Sky**, free, from Jan. 2 to 26, 2019, Tuesdays to Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 960-8710.



Photo courtesy Bronx River Arts Center

STOP BY THE Bronx River Arts Center to see a "River Rising/Sube el Rio: An Exposition of Science, Art and Technology," featuring a series of sculptures inspired by 1918's Bronx International Exposition of Science, Arts and Industries (see Exhibits for more information).

The Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street), presents **Women's Suffrage and New York City: A Centennial Celebration**, through April 11, 2019; and **His Muse: The Women of Edgar Allan Poe's Life**, through April 7, 2019. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (167th Street), presents **Image of an Image**, featuring the work of Bronx-born native Rochelle Feinstein, through March 3, 2019. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

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. For more information, call (718) 589-5819.

Library Events

Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children ages 5 to 12 (preregistration required): **Arts & Crafts at 3:30 p.m.:** Hands on projects using a variety of skills, Dec. 23 and 30. Adults can enjoy **films at 2:30 p.m.:** "Holiday Inn," on Dec. 22 and "The Caine Mutiny," on Dec. 29. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children: **Crafty Fridays at 3 p.m.:** (ages 5 to 12), crafts, Dec. 21 and 28; and **Toddler Storytime:** (ages 18 months to 3 years), interactive stories, action songs, fingerplays, and crafts, Dec. 27 at 11 a.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy: **film:** "Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again," on Dec. 22 at 1:30 p.m. Adults can attend **Knitting Circle:** Thursdays at 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

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NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Dec. 24 for the next publication date of Jan. 3, 2019.



Image of "Q: How Was Africa?" courtesy Rochelle Feinstein

SEE ABSTRACT and contemporary images blend together at **IMAGE OF AN IMAGE**, an exhibition at the Bronx Museum of the Arts (see Exhibits for more information).

Pressure's on Bedford Pk. Housing Plan

(continued from page 1)

District Manager Ischia Bravo, a Bedford Park resident, told the *Norwood News*. "What are we doing in the city of New York? We're just building buildings and we're not thinking about education and our kids because these buildings are ultimately bringing in families and we want to make sure our CB7 residents or residents of the city of New York are receiving the proper resources."

Bravo said she believes that any development accepting city funding should go through a process similar to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), the approval process developers must go through when applying to use or alter city-owned land. ULURP requires many layers of community and government approval, as stakeholders determine how a new structure and influx of residents will impact the community. Oftentimes, a ULURP application can take six months without any interruptions.

"I think you should be forced to do an environmental study at the beginning of that project especially when you're requesting money," Bravo said.

CAMBA is a non-profit that runs economic and legal assistance programs, mainly for homeless individuals and ref-

ugees. Their housing development arm was established in 2005, with the goal of providing affordable housing for low income, disabled or homeless New York City residents.

The Bedford Park locations would be CAMBA's first housing development in the Bronx and, according to the city's Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) agency, the project has not yet applied for city financing. In the past, CAMBA construction projects in Brooklyn have used funding from the Brooklyn Borough President's Office, HPD's Supportive Housing Loan Program, City Council "Reso A" capital funds, and other state and federal housing programs. Once in operation, CAMBA buildings work in concert with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the New York City Department of Homeless Services.

"When these monies are given to some of these developers they need to take into consideration what does a project of this size mean for the community," Bravo said. "What impact will it have on the schools, the local businesses and any other local resources that right now might be scarce for the community as it is?"

Bravo pointed to existing strain on

schools and businesses in Community Board 7 as a reason for a scaling back of this project. School District 10, which encompasses Norwood, Bedford Park and most of the Northwest Bronx, is the most overcrowded district in the borough.

Bedford Park has been at the center of a development furor over the last decade, but some projects are more welcome than others. Just around the corner from the CAMBA site, a 68-unit apartment building at 3188 Villa Ave. received a conditional letter of support from CB7 before its groundbreaking ceremony on Dec. 7. That project is being handled by the DOE Fund, a non-profit that provides services and opportunities similar to those offered by CAMBA.

The site of the proposed CAMBA buildings is owned by Peter Fine, a notorious Bronx developer who consistently clashes with the communities he works in. The now-bulldozed lots once included 267 E. 202nd St., a two-story building whose tenants went to war with Fine over evictions and mistreatment. In December of 2016, the building burned down in an accidental fire, according to FDNY.

Fine's construction company, Boli-

var Builders, LLC, is listed as the "General Contractor" in CAMBA's initial proposal.

According to CAMBA's revised presentation, the non-profit will reduce tenant recreation space to add parking spaces and a double-width driveway that will allow "vehicles to enter on 202nd Street and exit onto 203rd Street." One of CB7's major concerns was the flow of traffic on the narrow streets the buildings are being built on.

Anna Hernandez, a resident at 253 E. 203rd St., one of the buildings adjacent to the proposed site, said that finding parking on the block can sometimes take hours already. "The parking is going to be limited," Hernandez said. "My boyfriend comes on the weekend and he has to leave because of the frustration of not finding parking."

Bravo said she believes CAMBA is doing good work, but insisted the continued development of Bedford Park is a threat to the limited resources the community has to offer. "We need more affordable housing, we need permanent housing and there's a big need and we understand that," Bravo said. "At the same time, we don't need to do it at the expense of other residents in that particular community."



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Classes are 1x week for 8 weeks
Prices Starting for Members: \$176

Mixed Martial Arts Registration is Open:

Registration ends on December 2nd
Classes are 1x week for 8 weeks or
2x week for 8 weeks
Prices Starting for Members: \$65

Capoeira Registration Starts:

Monday, November 19th for Members
Wednesday, November 21st for Non-Members
Classes are 1x week for 8 weeks
Prices Starting for Members: \$112

**Annual
Memberships
Starting
as low as \$50**



Swim Registration Starts:

Monday, January 2nd for Members
Wednesday, January 4th for Non-Members
Classes are 1x week for 8 weeks
Prices Starting for Members: \$80

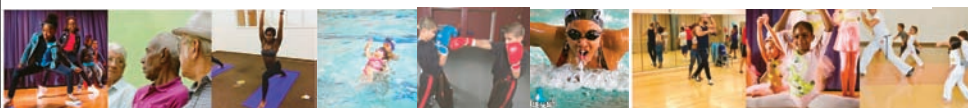
STEM Registration is Open:

Registration ends on February 9, 2019
Classes are 1x week for 8 Weeks
Payment plan is available
Prices start from \$450

Salsa Registration Starts:

Monday, December 3rd for Members
Wednesday, December 5th for Non-Members
Classes are 1x week for 8 weeks
Prices Starting for Members: \$96

WWW.NEWSETTLEMENTCOMMUNITYCENTER.ORG



ADIRA AT RIVERSIDE

REHABILITATION

Our mission is to provide our patients, residents, and their families with superior, personalized care delivered by highly trained staff dedicated to the principles of compassion and excellence.

Adira at Riverside

120 Odell Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10701

Adira is located right behind St. John's Riverside Hospital

914.964.3333

www.adirariverside.com

Sprain Brook Manor

77 Jackson Avenue, Scarsdale, NY 10583

Sprain Brook is just four miles away from St. John's and is located right off the Sprain Brook Parkway

914.472.3200

www.sprainbrookmanor.com

Adira at Riverside and Sprain Brook Manor Rehabilitation Programs

- Rehab Services (Including Pulmonary & Cardiac Rehab)
- Post-Surgical Care
- Wound Care Management
- Neuropsychiatry & Psychiatric Services
- Tracheostomy & Oxygen Management
- Pain Management
- Nutrition
- Enteral Therapy
- Ostomy Care
- **Certified Vent Unit (Adira Exclusive)**
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- IV Therapy
- Social Work/Case Management
- Follow-Up Care
- Caregiver Education
- Specialty Consultants Evaluation On-Site
- EKG Service On-Site

SPRAIN BROOK MANOR

REHABILITATION