Officials from the New York City Health Department announced a three percent decrease in overdose deaths from 2017 to 2018. But of the 1,444 overdose deaths citywide, the Bronx saw an increase with 391 in 2018, an eight percent increase, designating it as the only borough with more than 300 overdose deaths in 2018, continuing the unbreakable trend of opioid-related fatalities.

In the written announcement, Dr. Oxiris Barbot, commissioner of the Health Department, said, “The decrease in drug overdose deaths is promising, but far too many New Yorkers are still dying.”

The news came three weeks after state senators held a public hearing at St. Barnabas Hospital on Aug. 8, featuring a variety of experts tackling the responsive rate of opioid overdoses and reduce the rate of addiction to drugs. Sen. Gustavo Rivera is one of the co-chairs of the task force. “It’s not just a problem in Staten Island. It’s not just a problem in the Bronx. It’s a problem everywhere,” Rivera said in his opening remarks.

Rivera represents the 33rd Senate District, covering Fordham, an area that consistently ranks among the top neighborhoods for fentanyl use. The district also covers Kingsbridge Heights, home to a known drug use spot referred to as “The Tunnel,” a gloomy underpass that leads to the Kingsbridge Road subway station on the B/D line. Directly across the entrance, used hypodermic needles can be spotted along the pathway, cordoned off by construction barricades. Several homeless men and women were found sleep-

(continued on page 27)
There will not be a special election for the 11th Council District. At least, not this year.

The Bronx Democratic Party nominated three candidates to the Bronx Supreme Court at a judicial convention on Aug. 8. None of the nominees were Councilman Andrew Cohen, delaying the long-anticipated campaign to succeed the term-limited councilman for at least another year and theories of party orchestration.

Instead, Bronx Democrats nominated Bahaati Pitt and John Higgit to two open seats and re-nominated Wilma Guzman to the seat she’s held since 2006. Gov. Andrew Cuomo appointed Higgit to the New York State Court of Claims in 2018, but he was moved to the Bronx Supreme Court shortly after to serve on an interim basis. Pitt was first appointed a judge by Mayor Bill de Blasio in 2016, serving on the city’s civil and criminal courts.

A former court attorney for the Bronx Supreme Court and a professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Cohen long made it known publicly he hopes to become a judge. An apparent play to make Cohen a judge last year was scuttled after media reports indicated the Bronx Democratic Party planned to put former state Sen. Jeff Klein on the court after his primary loss. Party boss Marcos Crespo and other county officials vehemently denied any plan was in the works at the time.

“Trying to put together the slate of judges to represent the Democratic Party in Bronx County is an art form,” Cohen told the Norwood News ahead of this year’s convention. “There are a lot of constiuencies that want to be represented on the bench. It’s just not as simple as ‘you, you, and you.’ It doesn’t always come together that way.”

The Norwood News and other outlets previously reported there was a plan afoot to nominate Cohen for a judgeship, so Eric Dinowitz, a candidate to replace him and son of Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, is one of the top officials eyes of reformers, one Bronx politico suggested.

Speculation the swap might happen this year instead triggered increased activity from the candidates for the 11th Council District, which includes Norwood, parts of Bedford Park, Kingsbridge, Riverdale, Fieldston, and Woodlawn. Daniel Padernacht and Eric Dinowitz revved up their campaigns despite the nearly two years left until the Democratic primary in June 2021.

“If it comes this year, I’m going to be ready; if it comes next year that would be good,” Cohen told the Norwood News in July 2018. That same month, Padernacht and Dinowitz launched their campaigns.

The belief inside Padernacht’s camp was the increased activity of the Dinowitz campaign indicated the special election was coming. Dinowitz’s father Jeffrey Dinowitz, is one of the top officials in the Bronx Democratic Party and plays a role in selecting judicial nominees.

Another candidate, Dio Then, announced in recent weeks. Then currently works in the mayor’s community affairs office, according to this LinkedIn page.

Cohen told the Norwood News in April 2019 he was considering a run for Bronx Borough President in 2021. Fellow term-limited council members Vanessa Gibson and Fernando Cabrera are reportedly considering a run for the seat. The current occupant of the borough president’s office, Ruben Diaz Jr., is term-limited and launched a run for mayor.

Padernacht is a lawyer and a former chair for Community Board 8, where he currently serves as chair of the transportation committee. In 2010, Padernacht challenged infamous state Sen. Pedro Espada Jr. in the Democratic primary. He backed out in the days before the election and threw his support behind Gustavo Rivera, who ultimately won.

The younger Dinowitz also serves on C8 as the board’s aging committee chair, the position Cohen held before he ran for City Council in 2013. Dinowitz is also the Male Democratic Council Leader for the 11st Assembly District, which is represented by his father. By day, Di-nowitz is a special education teacher in Kingsbridge.

Though the campaign to succeed Cohen will continue, the candidates will have to wait until their regularly scheduled election to find out who will emerge victorious.

“There is no guarantee the planets are going to line up perfectly that I can work my last day as a city council member and then go to the courthouse,” Cohen said recently. “It may work out that it’s a year earlier, it may work out it’s a year later. I don’t know.”

Judicial Convention

The convention saw the nomination of two candidates for two open seats on the Bronx Supreme Court and Guzman re-nominated to a second stint on the bench, further reflecting the demographics of the borough. On primary day, each Assembly district votes on judicial delegates.
Opinion

Housing, Legal & Financial Resources at Your Doorstep!

Inquilinos de Norwood - Propietarios de Casas - Personas De la Tercera Edad - Recursos Legales y de Inmigración

By UNHP

Have you heard about services that might help when applying for that new apartment in a building being built down the street, reducing your property taxes, or helping you save on bus fare? It’s hard to keep up with available programs – even if they might help you deal with important housing or financial struggles.

Maybe you think you don’t qualify or you don’t have time to wait on hold or go downtown or you just need more information in your language? On Tuesday, Sept. 17, many of those programs are coming to your neighborhood. The free Norwood Community Resource Fair will be held in the community space of Holy Nativity Church located at 3061 Bainbridge Ave. from 2 to 7 p.m. Bangla & Spanish speakers will be onsite. Hablarán español.

What Can You Do at the Norwood Community Resource Fair?
- Seniors and people with disabilities can freeze their rent if they qualify (that’s right, no future rent increases)
- Homeowners can find out and enroll in one of the many reduced real estate tax programs
- Seniors citizens can apply for a reduced fare MetroCard
- Get your blood pressure checked and find out about low-cost health insurance
- Find out about programs serving the Bangladeshi community in Norwood
- Get screened for SNAP (food stamps) and enroll in a local food pantry
- Attend a workshop about the New York City online affordable housing lottery
- Enroll in the New York City affordable housing lottery
- Complain about or praise local city services to Community Board 7
- Meet with an eviction prevention specialist
- Talk with a legal advisor about your tenant, homeowner, or immigration issues
- Learn how to lower your energy costs
- Learn how pregnant women and new mothers can enroll in WIC – a mother/child food and health program

Co-sponsored by University Neighborhood Housing Program (UNHP), a community-based group and the Legal Aid Society, the event will host counselors and staff from New York City Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), NYC Finance, Part of the Solution (POTS), West Bronx Housing, NYC Tenant Support Unit, Legal Aid

Political & Civic Retirement

Well, your last “letter to the editor” (“Keep Parkway Pristine”; Norwood News, Vol. 32 No. 16 Aug 1-28) made my mind up.

In the last 10 years, we have had a lot go wrong in our old neighborhoods of Bedford Park, Norwood, or as I knew it, five decades ago, Bainbridge.

We have had new residential and commercial rezoning on Webster Avenue, which now has, in 10 years, at least eight new buildings, more than 650 new units, over 1300 residents, and only three pieces of commercial businesses.

We now have a new Norwood merchant strip in place of the one originally established in 1956, the East 204th Street/Bainbridge Merchants Association.

We now have homes all over our side streets that are gone and 11-story buildings taking their place, standing next to the six-story buildings, many of them there since the 1920s.

But maybe most importantly, like it was stated in the last Letter to the Editor, these are not old neighbors, generational neighbors, but new neighbors, many from other parts of other boroughs; many just moving in within the last five to 10 years.

Old neighbors around here have always said, “Don’t move. Improve!” Our new neighbors say, “Hey, there’s grass. Let’s have a barbecue and let the Parks Department clean up afterwards.”

But when law enforcement has one hand tied (by the new decriminalization of the quality of life laws), and the other hand having tunnel vision, we have the potential to take what I moved away from on Tremont Avenue in 1974: the burning fires, the dirty streets, the lack of government oversight for close to 10 years.

I am proud to have lived in the northwest Bronx for close to 40 years. I am very proud to own a financial planning practice in the hood (for 23 years) and teach business and finance in local institutions for close to 10 years.

I am more even humbled to have been a community, political, and appointed leader in our hood as a former merchant president, former Community Board 7 member, and founder of a local political nucleus.

Which is the reason for this letter.

Thank you Bedford Park/Moshulu/Norwood. Its beautiful greenery, its wonderful old neighbors, its beautiful eat-off-the-floor streets were amazing. But it’s all gone now.

It’s now over. And I will be community and politically retired.

Anthony Rivieccio
Bedford Park

Letters To The Editor

Political & Civic Retirement

Well, your last “letter to the editor” (“Keep Parkway Pristine”; Norwood News, Vol. 32 No. 16 Aug 1-28) made my mind up.

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Anthony Rivieccio
Bedford Park
This week we asked readers their thoughts on the Child Victims Act that became law in New York State, allowing victims to file civil cases against abusers upwards of 50 years from the time the abuse occurred.

Kay Cardona
Pelham Gardens

"For 15 or 16 years I have been fighting to amend case law. The legal system, when it comes to victims, they’re more concerned with defending the rights of the accused, who most of the time have actually perpetrated acts of violence against an animal or an individual or a group of individuals. I feel the laws have been too lax. Enough already. The laws have to have teeth."

Jonathan Martey
Bedford Park

"Of course it’s a good thing. If you think about it, if you get molested, you need to seek justice. I don’t really care how long it’s been. Twenty years, 30 years? Justice needs to be served. Money is not the only way to complete total compensation, but at least you get something for what happened to you and what you went through. You can never restore someone’s dignity for what you did to them, but they need to be compensated either way."

John Palacio
Norwood

"I think it’s good that they passed it because there’s a lot of child molesters out here that people don’t know about. And the way they do it is [by getting jobs at] the Board of Education, through our churches, it happens every day. I’m a witness to things like that, so I love this law because it helps people who couldn’t do anything about it after a long time, and now they can actually speak up and come out and talk about it. But what happens when the accuser has passed away, like Jeffrey Epstein?"

William Roman
Fordham Heights

"I think it just opens up a Pandora’s box. I think it keeps women, or anyone that has been sexually assaulted or abused as a child or as an adult, in victim mode. I’m not a victim. I don’t dwell on it. It happened and it’s over and done with. People have been brainwashed into thinking they’re owed something. They need to seek help to get them to a place of forgiveness and acceptance."

Grace Lovaglio
Allerton
**NEWS BRIEFS**

**BY DAVID CRUZ**

**Public Charge Suit**

Attorney General Letitia James is suing the Trump Administration’s Public Charge Rule that potentially denies immigrants a green card or visa if the federal government determines they will be taking advantage of government entitlement programs such as food stamps. James argues the rule not only would have short- and long-term impacts on public health and the economy, but underhandedly targets immigrants of color. “Quite simply, under this rule, more children will go hungry, more families will go without medical care, and more people will be living in the shadows and on the streets,” said James.

**Sexual Harass Law Takes Effect**

Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed a bill that increases penalties against workplace sexual harassment and discrimination. The bill will hold New York employers and its agencies accountable for all forms of sexual harassment and discrimination. This comes after many advocates have been fighting for a change for over a decade. In a statement, state Sen. Alessandra Biaggi said, “Finally New Yorkers will not have to suffer the horrific, severe, or pervasive standard which allowed workers to be abused for too long.”

**Poe Cottage Gets $450K**

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. allocated $450,000 in capital funds for improvements to Edgar Allen Poe Cottage. The funds will be earmarked for the installation of a roof and exterior woodwork to the Poe Cottage in Fordham. Poe Cottage was once the home of famed scribe Edgar Allan Poe, who lived in the Bronx during the 1840s.

**Sealed Pot Convictions**

Several New Yorkers will not have to worry about previous marijuana convictions after a Manhattan Supreme Court Justice ordered the sealing of the records. Sealing the convictions will make it easier for those convicted to apply for housing, employment, and restore other rights.

**Daniel Pantaleo Fired**

The officer involved in the fatal chokehold death of Eric Garner in 2014 was fired. NYPD Commissioner Jim O’Neill ended the career of Daniel Pantaleo, the officer who had placed Garner in a chokehold after Garner refused to be arrested for allegedly selling untaxed cigarettes. The firing came after an NYPD trial judge recommended Pantaleo be fired following a weeks-long administrative trial.

“In carrying out the court’s verdict in this case, I take no pleasure,” said O’Neill. Pat Lynch, president of the Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association, criticized O’Neill’s decision to carry out the court’s recommendation, stating “O’Neill chose politics over the police officers he claims to lead.”

**IDNYC Change Proposals**

The city is considering a rule change to the IDNYC program, which would allow its users to renew their cards online instead of in person. Bitta Mostofi, who runs the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, which processes IDNYC cards, said the roll-out would happen in December if the rule is adopted. IDNYC is the city’s official identification card for New Yorkers and available to users as young as 10 years old. The card also offers discounted memberships to cultural institutions across the city. Another rule under consideration is allowing users as young as 10 years old to apply for a card at school.

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**Finally Here**

*Skateboard park formally opens at Williamsbridge Oval, ending a 15-year Endeavor*

**By DAVID CRUZ and MICHAEL TURAY**

Skaters rejoiced at the opening of the much-anticipated skateboard park in Norwood’s Williamsbridge Oval Park, a project many agreed had been a long time coming.

Mitchell Silver, Commissioner for the New York City Department of Parks, led a ribbon cutting ceremony that included skaters who had advocated for the park from its very beginning.

Even before the park was ceremoniously opened on Aug. 27, skaters were already found zipping and speeding along the park’s concrete slabs. Silver, reading off a list, said the park includes quarter pipes, half bowls, and a manual pad.

“I have no idea what I just described, but I’m sure it’s here in this park,” joked Silver, in his opening remarks.

The completion of the skateboard park ends years of false starts and delays for a project valued at close to $1 million. Eusebio Baez, 29, a skateboarder who saw the project through from the beginning, remembered heading to Councilman Andrew Cohen’s office to finally get the project off the ground. Cohen earmarked $750,000 towards the project in July 2014 with Mayor Bill de Blasio throwing in another $227,000.

The genesis of the project began even before Cohen’s tenure, dating back to 2004 when predecessor, Oliver Koppell, but when interest for the skateboard park fell in favor of a dog run, the project stalled.

“My sure those youngsters today are parents,” said Barbara Stronczek, chair of Community Board 7’s Parks Committee. “We heard nothing more about it for years.”

Doug Condit, a community activist, would reignite the project once again, bringing a contingent of skateboarders to Cohen’s office. It eventually became the first project Cohen would allocate funds toward. Condit, who was present at the ribbon cutting, was praised by Friends of Williamsbridge Oval Park activist, Betty Diana Arce, for serving as a mentor to the persistent skateboarders.

“You ask, why a skateboard park in the Oval? Well, we’re out here in the Bronx, which I’m not sure whether you people know it or not, it’s the least healthy county in the entire state of New York,” said Condit in his remarks. “The kids need activity. Young people need activity, and there’s no people to get it, in my opinion, than right here in the Oval.”

But the project stalled significantly, particularly during the procurement phase where the first contractor chosen bowed out of the project, causing the Parks Department to re-start that phase.

Towards the tail end of construction, another snag: an unreliable concrete job. Crews with LC Construction Consulting Corp. were forced to dig up a portion of the skateboard park to fix it, pushing the completion date from winter to summer this year.

“It’s rare that we now have a project delayed,” said Silver, adding that the agency has learned from its past mistakes. “So, a lot of our skate parks, if you check our website, they’re all on time, on budget moving forward.”

Cohen had previously knocked the process. This time, he reserved criticism of the process, thanking the community for their advocacy instead.

“The community was involved every step of the way in making this project happen, and it’s really just when things really came together that we get an amenity that the community really wants, designed by the community, advocated for by the community, and I’m very thrilled and gratified that I [had] an opportunity to bring this to fruition,” said Cohen.

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Photo by Sha-Nia Alston
By MICHAEL TURAY

A building under construction at 94 E. 208th St. near Steuben Avenue partially collapsed, leaving one worker dead and two injured. Police and fire crews flocked to the scene within minutes.

The incident took place just before noon on Aug. 27. Multiple eyewitnesses recalled hearing a loud noise, but assumed it was a normal construction protocol. However, cries for help from the workers confirmed otherwise.

“Three of them [workers] ran out. The initial person who told us to call 911, he had lacerations to the head, a lot of blood leaking down on his face. I think he was trying to assist whoever was trapped inside, to help him get out,” said Anika James, an employee at Montefiore Hospital located several blocks up from the scene.

Two other workers were taken to local hospitals for non-life threatening injuries.

It took FDNY firefighters about an hour to dig and find the body of the trapped worker, who was found dead under the rubble from severe injuries. Prior to it collapsing, neighbors could overhear workers complaining about the durability of the scaffold.

“It’s not safe, it’s really not safe. It’s too small of a space to try to cram everything. When walking past, you could hear them this morning, they were struggling to keep things in control. I think they couldn’t,” said Dr. Violet Wallace, director of a nearby church.

“We were kind of scared because we saw the bricks, they were crashing down,” added Wallace who was walking past the building with two co-workers as it collapsed.

The workers had been about three to four months in on the project, as permits for the property were issued in May by the city’s Department of Buildings (DOB). Building permits show that workers were building a new four-story residential building with eight units.

A preliminary investigation by the DOB determined that the third floor of the building was overloaded with concrete ma-

sonry blocks, causing it to collapse onto the second floor below, ultimately trapping the worker who died. They also revealed that prior to today, no violations were reported to this construction site.

“This was a preventable tragedy and our hearts go out to the family of the worker who died. No building is ever worth a person’s life. We will continue to investigate this incident aggressively and bring all appropriate enforcement actions against those responsible,” DOB said in a statement.

The DOB has issued a full stop-work order for the project and ordered the building owner to secure the site overnight. Pioneer General Construction group is listed as the current general contractor for the property. Residents were left wondering whether the site was safe enough for workers, given what they saw and the speed at which the building had gone up.

“I call it negligence. They didn’t have the required equipment for the job, you could see the metal was bent,” said Elisa Luna, a Norwood resident familiar with the construction site, often visiting her mom who lives in a building directly across the street. “It’s hurtful. Somebody is dead because you couldn’t get the proper tools, because you couldn’t create a safer environment for these people to work in,” said Luna.

Additional reporting by Sha-Nia Alston and David Cruz.
FREE NORWOOD COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

Co-sponsored by University Neighborhood Housing Program & The Legal Aid Society

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 | 2:00 PM TO 7:00 PM
HOLY NATIVITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
3061 BAINBRIDGE AVE. NEAR ROCHAMBEAU

Norwood Tenants - Homeowners - Seniors - Housing - Legal & Immigration Resources

Inquilinos de Norwood - Propietarios de casas - Personas de la tercera edad - Recursos legales y de inmigración

POTS, NYC TSU, NWBCCC, NHS, Ariva (Ready to Rent), DOF, NWBRC, NYC HPD Affordable Housing Lottery, Bronx Community Health Network, Norwood News and more!
CRIME FILE

Suspect Arrested in Jerome Ave. Crash
A Morrisania man faces a litany of charges, including driving while intoxicated, vehicular assault, and reckless endangerment, related to the death of a Brooklyn woman who was near a bus stop when she was hit. Police say Francisco Rosario drove his Nissan minivan southbound along Jerome Avenue on Aug. 11 at around 10 p.m., mounted a sidewalk at the corner of Bainbridge Avenue and struck two people at the bus stop by the Woodlawn train station. One of them, Natasha Mar, was struck. She was later transported to St. Barnabas Hospital where she died. Rosario was also charged with assault, failure to take a breath test, and reckless driving.

Chokehold Robbery
The NYPD needs help identifying a man (pictured) seen putting a 46-year-old victim in a chokehold and then robbing him. The victim had finished cashing a $200.00 check at the Pay-O-Matic check cashing business at 11 E. Gun Hill Rd., and was then followed and robbed in front of 3578 Jerome Ave. on July 24 just before 10:30 p.m., according to police. The perpetrator came from behind, placed the victim in a chokehold, took the money, and drove off in a vehicle. The suspect is described as Hispanic, in his 20s, and last seen wearing a white T-shirt.

Cell Phone Theft
The NYPD needs help identifying a man (pictured below) wanted for questioning in connection to a stolen cell phone that happened at the Moshulu station on board a #4 subway train heading downtown on Aug. 5 after midnight. The victim, a 46-year-old woman, said a man simply snatched the phone from her hand and took off.

Missing Man
Police within the 52nd Precinct have reported the disappearance of Musa Camara, 28 (pictured below), of Norwood. He was last seen near Montefiore Hospital’s Moses Campus at East 210th Street on Aug. 11. He is described as black, standing at six feet, and about 160 pounds. He was last seen wearing an orange T-shirt and black pants.

Wallet Stolen
Police seek a man (pictured at right) wanted for questioning in the theft of a woman’s wallet stolen in front of C&N Liquor at 6 E. Gun Hill Rd. in Norwood a month ago. He is described as black and last seen wearing a dark T-shirt and a backpack. Police say the woman’s wallet contained $250 and several credit cards and was stolen on July 11 just before 1 a.m.

Anyone with information on the above mentioned crimes and missing person is asked to call the NYPD’s Crime Stoppers Hotline at (800) 577-TIPS. All calls are kept confidential.
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www.Agapetransportation.com
Norwood Man Fatally Shot, Marking Sixth Homicide Within 52nd Precinct for 2019

By DAVID GREENE

Police are looking for two gunmen wanted in a pair of unrelated killings along Bainbridge Avenue, taking place just nine days apart, marking the 5th and 6th homicides of the year for the 52nd Precinct.

In the latest incident, police say that officers responded to a 911 call, reporting a male shot at 3:21 a.m. at Bainbridge and Rochambeau avenues, near the entrance to Williamsbridge Oval Park, on Aug. 25.

EMS transported a man with one gunshot wound to the back. He was rushed to Montefiore Medical Center, where he died a short time later.

Police would identify the victim as Edgar Perez, 46, of Decatur Avenue. Friends say he had attended a baptism celebration at the Holy Nativity Episcopal Church and had lived in the area for many years.

The church apparently rents out a banquet hall for late night parties.

Fatal shootings have happened along the stretch before. Across East 204th Street by Bainbridge Avenue, Michael Vermong was shot and killed, allegedly by his friend Jamel Burney, who was charged in his March 29, 2017 slaying. A decade ago, a store owner next to the church was shot and killed.

Nine days before the most recent shooting, about a half mile south on Bainbridge Avenue, police say Isael “Izzy” Lagares, 27, of Bedford Park, was shot outside of 2734 Bainbridge Ave. by East 196th Street in the Fordham Manor section at 10:27 p.m. on Aug. 16.

One witness confirmed Lagares crossed East 196th Street and collapsed at the Bx34 bus stop.

Lagares is believed to have been shot two times in the chest and once in the abdomen. He was rushed to St. Barnabas Hospital, where he was also declared deceased on arrival.

Several residents claim the block is influenced by several gangs who control the local drug trade. As officers from the 52nd Precinct responded to Lagares’ shooting, sources reported that several men refused to leave the crime scene. Moments later officers were pelted by garbage from windows and rooftops and needed additional officers from the 48th and 50th precincts as well as at least one helicopter, before order on the block was restored.

Officers from the 52nd Precinct quickly hung two wanted posters, one featuring the victim and the other a surveillance photo of a dark Dodge Charger, the apparent getaway vehicle used by the gunman. All of the posters disappeared from the block within a day.

With Lagares’ death, the one block stretch of East 196th Street, between Bainbridge and Briggs avenues have now recorded three homicides in the last 12 months.

On Dec. 10, Angel Reyes-Godoy, 17, was beaten and pushed in front of a passing ambulance along East 196th Street. Angel coincidentally lived in the building where Lagares was shot.

Police would later charge Mario Almonte, 21, and Obeb Adames, 19, in Angel’s death. Police said at the time that both men were members of the dreaded Trinitarios gang.

On Aug. 17, 2018 Eric Shaw, 55, a resident on Briggs Avenue, was slashed in the neck in broad daylight. The following day police arrested Travis Mason, 18, who lived in the same building as Shaw. Mason is currently facing murder and manslaughter charges.

Perez’s death marks the sixth homicide within the 52nd Precinct and current statistics now exceed last year’s homicide rate, as there were just five killings during the same time period last year.
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6th floor, Room # 6A-44, MIRECC Office, 130 W Kingsbridge Rd, Bronx NY 10468

PI: Dr. Erin Hazlett  MIRB#: 01708
NCBH HOSTS ANNUAL BACK-TO-SCHOOL HEALTH FAIR

Norwood residents came out on Aug. 21 for the annual Back-to-School Health Fair courtesy of NCBH. And it wasn’t just health- or school-related giveaways handed out at this event. Stakeholders were honored and there were numerous raffles! Check out these photos by Miriam Quinones.

TEN-YEAR-OLD Miriam Cruz shows off the new bike she won in the raffle at NCBH’s Back-to-School Health Fair.

THESE KIDS SHOW off their new bikes and bookbags courtesy of NCBH’s Back-to-School Health Fair.

(T-L) COMMUNITY BOARD 7 member Betty Diana Arce, North Central Bronx Hospital executive director Cristina Contreras, Councilman Andrew Cohen, newly appointed Community Board 7 chair Emmanuel Martinez, state Sen. Gustavo Rivera, Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz, Deputy Borough President Marcia Scott-McFadden, and Community Board 7 district manager Ischia Bravo pose for a shot at the annual Back-to-School Health Fair hosted by North Central Bronx Hospital.

THESE KIDS ARE all smiles as they show off their bookbags they received at NCBH’s Back-to-School Health Fair.

IT’S NEVER TOO early to learn CPR as this young girl demonstrates at NCBH’s Back-to-School Health Fair.

IT’S NOT JUST about staying healthy. It’s also about staying safe, and these kids pick up some of those pointers from (left to right) 52nd Precinct anti-crime Officer Frank Pacella, and Community Affairs officers Stephen Echevarria and Crystal Reveron.
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Back to School in Norwood

By MICHAEL TURAY

The onslaught of homework and pop quizzes will soon be on the agenda for young people as the first day of school approaches. Students are scheduled to return to the classroom on Sept. 5, which means parents should double check their school supply lists and preferred bookbag requests.

Thousands of students in the Norwood area are preparing to attend one of the 11 local schools in School District 10. School officials have taken baby steps to chip away at its overcrowding issue. A 2016 capital projects report by the School Construction Authority (SCA), a city construction entity tasked to build more seats, stated 5,692 seats are needed to fix it. The city has allocated some of the funds needed for more seats and construction for more space is under way for several campuses in the district.

The Norwood News has assembled a list of schools in the area for any readers who might be unfamiliar with their child’s school. Contact information, student population, graduation rates, and other facts about the schools can be found in this compilation. The numbers were obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics and the New York City Department of Education.

Thanks to the Free Meals for All initiative launched in 2017, all New York City public school students are eligible for free breakfast and lunch. An application must be filled out here https://www.myschoolapps.com/Application.

PS 94
Kings College Public School
Address: 3530 Kings College Pl.
Grades: K-5
Admissions Process: Zoned School
Student Body: 1,210
Principal: Diane Daprocida-Sesin
Parent Coordinator: Miriam Seminario
Main office phone number: (718) 405-6345

JHS 80
Isabel Rooney School
Address: 149 E. Mosholu Pkwy. N.
Grades: 6-8
Admissions Process: Zoned School
Student Body: 624
Principal: Emmanuel Polanco
Afterschool activities: Drama, screenwriting, spoken word, and field trips
Main office phone number: (718) 405-6300

PS 280
Address: 3202 Steuben Ave.
Grades: K-8, Special Education
Admissions Process: Zoned School
Student Body: 901
Principal: James Weeks
Parent Coordinator: Nyvesann Rodriguez
Afterschool activities: Music, visual arts, chess, and dance
Main office phone number: (718) 405-6360

DeWitt Clinton High School
Address: 100 W. Mosholu Pkwy, S.
Grades: 9-12
Student Body: 1,666
Principal: Pierre Obre
Parent Coordinator: Ines Carino
School Specialization: Small Learning Communities (SLCs) or personalized education
Graduation Rate (within 4 years): 46%
Main office phone number: (718) 543-1000

PS/MS 20 P.O.
George J. Werdann, III
Address: 3050 Webster Ave.
Grades: Pre-K through 8
Admissions Process: Zoned School
Student Body: 1,098
Principal: Carla Ling
Parent Coordinator: Jael Ravenell, Izabela Kaczmarek
School Specialization: Professional Development
Main office phone number: (718) 515-9370

PS 56
Norwood Heights
Address: 341 E. 207th St.
Grades: K-5
Admissions Process: Zoned School
Student Body: 693
Principal: Maureen O’Neill
Parent Coordinator: Carmen Garcia
Main office phone number: (718) 920-1100

Bronx School for Continuous Learners
Address: 3177 Webster Ave.
Grades: K-4, Special Education
Admissions Process: District 75 School
Student Body: 351
Principal: Janine Tubiolo
Main office phone number: (718) 696-6640

Bronx Community Charter School
Address: 3170 Webster Ave.
Grades: K-8
Admissions Process: Charter lottery
Student Body: 410
Principals: Martha Andrews, Sasha Wilson
Main office phone number: (718) 696-6440

Bronx Dance Academy School
Address: 3617 Bainbridge Ave.
Grades: 6-8
Admissions Process: Zoned School
Student Body: 276
Principal: Sandra Sanchez
Parent Coordinator: Gabriel Santiago
Afterschool activities: Hip-Hop Dancing, LEGO Robotics, ELA Lab, and more
Main office phone number: (718) 515-0410

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TO REPORT A STORY TO THE NORWOOD NEWS, CALL US AT 718-324-4998
By MICHAEL TURAY

An 18-wheeler truck beeps as it slowly backs into a construction lot at 2751 Jerome Ave. “Danger zone, hard hat area,” reads one sign as two men with bright orange helmets urge pedestrians to stay put as the truck moves onto the grounds of P.S. 340. Above, a Woodlawn-bound #4 train rumbles past to its next destination. Across the street a noisy retaining wall job is also underway.

This project however, is strictly for the kids, as a Kingsbridge Heights elementary school is set to expand. P.S. 340 will get more space, as a new four-story annex equipped with a so-called gymnatorium is set to be built by September 2021. The move to extend its current campus is a product of the Universal Physical Education Initiative first introduced by Mayor Bill De Blasio in June 2017.

The city’s School Construction Authority (SCA) and city Department of Education (DOE) are working together to accommodate approximately 200 schools that lack “adequate physical education space” through the initiative. The goal of the initiative looks to “ensure all students have access to appropriate physical education space by 2021,” according to the New York City Council’s management report.

The $46 million annex will include 17 new classrooms, a reading room, a project room, a new gymnasium, an exercise room, a new library, a medical suite, additional staff rooms, a community room, and a new cafeteria with a kitchen for the Kindergarten through fifth grade school. The school had an enrollment of 628 students for the 2018-19 school year.

Community District 10 elementary schools are notoriously overcrowded classrooms. Kevin Ortiz, manager of external affairs for the SCA, mapped out how the city has been working on this issue. “As you know District 10 is an overcrowded district especially when it comes to elementary school seats. This is part of what we’re doing to address overcrowding in the district and to provide more seats,” said Ortiz in a phone interview with Norwood News. “We just wrapped up the 2015-2019 Capital Plan and the SCA funded 2,948 new seats for District 10 during the FY’s 2015-2019 period,” said Ortiz.

Along with the annex at P.S. 340, an annex will also be built for the Tim Dwight School (P.S. 33) at 2424 Jerome Ave. for September 2021 and a brand new 478 seat elementary school is anticipated to be built at 2355 Morris Ave. for September 2023.

“We just started the fiscal years 2020-2024 capital plan. We have allocated funds for an additional 3,036 seats across District 10. Anytime that we provide space and new seats and provide a good learning environment for our students, it’s a win-win for everyone,” said Ortiz.
By DAVID CRUZ
And MICHAEL TURAY

The Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BMCA) received quite the financial bump from their local assemblywoman.

Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez, whose 80th Assembly District partially covers Bedford Park, gave BMCA a $10,000 allocation. The group was one of three organizations—including the Pelham Parkway Neighborhood Association and the Allerton Avenue Homeowners & Tenants Association—falling within Fernandez’s district to receive a separate grant in the same amount.

“These organizations have brought service and attention to our neighborhood for collectively over 40 years,” said Fernandez. “They have given us different programs and events such as neighborhood beautification, civic engagement, and programs for our seniors.”

Barbara Stronczer, BMCA’s fifth and longest-serving president, was thrilled to receive the state funds, a rarity for the group.

“The Bedford Mosholu Community Association has been in existence for over 40 years, we cover the Bedford Park area and some of Norwood, and meet once a month. I want to thank [Nathalia] Fernandez for this grant,” said Stronczer, “They have given us different programs and events such as neighborhood beautification, civic engagement, and programs for our seniors.”

Barbara Stronczer, BMCA’s fifth and longest-serving president, was thrilled to receive the state funds, a rarity for the group.

“Thank you again for all your dedicated service to your neighborhood and this community, I look forward to seeing what better projects, and just in general good things to come,” said Fer-

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ASSEMBLYWOMAN NATHALIA FERNANDEZ (at podium) announces a $10,000 allocation for the Bedford Mosholu Community Association, represented by Barbara Stronczer (2nd from right, holding check).
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Women Candidates Look to Make History At 15th Congressional District Race

By DAVID CRUZ
And JOSEPH KONIG

It was only recently that the Bronx began to see a gender shift in representation on the legislative front, with more women representing districts at all levels of government.

Last year, the borough elected state Sen. Alessandra Biaggi to replace Jeff Klein while Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez became the first woman to represent the Bronx/Queens 14th Congressional District. Nathalia Fernandez and Karines Reyes were also elected to represent their Assembly districts in 2018, doubling the number of women in the Bronx Assembly Delegation.

Melissa Mark-Viverito, the former Speaker of the New York City Council, and Marlene Cintron, president of the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, and former New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito are vying for the 15th Congressional District seat.

In the 2018 election, Fenceclimber Marc-Viverito ran against incumbent Jeff Klein, who lost. Mark-Viverito was the first woman to hold the seat, which Klein held since winning it in 2006.

Mark-Viverito feels similarly. One of Cintron and Mark-Viverito’s opponents, Councilman Rev. Ruben Diaz Sr., is a strong opponent of abortion. Bronx Democratic Party boss and Assemblyman Marcos Crespo has voted against bills protecting women’s reproductive rights, including a bill that codified Roe v. Wade in New York earlier this year.

“Why should men be telling me what to do with my body? It defies logic,” Mark-Viverito said when asked about Crespo and Diaz Sr. “To have anyone running in a Democratic primary that does not support women’s reproductive rights should be dismissed outright. It’s not within the core values of the Democratic Party. It’s a real concern. Its highly offensive to me, as a woman.”

Supporting women for public office is something of a sticking point for Mark-Viverito and Bronx Democrats. Party leaders, sans Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., backed Assemblyman Robert Rodriguez over Mark-Viverito’s preferred successor, former aide Diana Ayala, in the 2017 race for 8th Council District. Ayala won.

She also encouraged Bronx Democratic leadership to back a female candidate in the special election to replace Maria del Carmen Arroyo after the 17th Council District representative retired in 2015. Instead, they backed eventual stunning victor Rafael Salamanca.

“I told [Crespo] the count of women in the Council was diminishing and that they should really work hard to identify a woman to replace” Arroyo, Mark-Viverito said. “It all falls on deaf ears.” Despite Mark-Viverito’s protestations on the party doing little for women, it did back Fernandez and Reyes.

Cintron is a lifelong resident of the Bronx and grew up in the Burnside Park neighborhood, which remains the country’s poorest congressional district after the current seat holder, Jose Serrano, was elected nearly 30 years ago. For a time, Serrano and Cintron lived in the same Grand Concourse apartment building.

Women Candidates Look to Make History At 15th Congressional District Race

(continued from page 2)
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A TASTE OF BROADWAY AND FINE DINING AWAITS YOU AT THE WESTCHESTER BROADWAY THEATRE
Eye Health: Tips to Remember

By PAULETTE GIAMBALVO, MPH, CHES

We don’t always think about our eyes when we think about health, but the months highlighting eye health awareness, such as Low Vision Awareness Month in February, Contact Lens Health Week in August, and Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month in November, reminds us to also focus on the organ that helps us see the world.

The National Eye Institute (NEI), part of the National Institutes of Health, says there are many things one can do for their eye health. First, a full eye exam each year can look for both vision problems and eye diseases. These exams are also important to find eye conditions that develop with age. In addition, healthy habits, such as eating right and not smoking, are key. Also, allowing eyes to rest from the phone and computer every day, as well as washing hands often, are good tips to follow.

Good care of contact lens and glasses is also important for eye health. There are many different types of contact lenses, such as soft and hard lenses, disposable lenses, and extended wear lenses. An eye doctor can help a patient determine if contact lenses is right for them. If wearing contact lenses, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following habits:

- Wash hands with soap and water and dry them with a clean cloth before touching lenses
- Don’t sleep with lenses in, unless a doctor prescribes them to be worn during sleep
- Keep water away from contact lenses by not showering or swimming with them inserted
- Replace contact lens cases at least once every three months, and rinse cases with contact lens solution, not water, for storage

In addition, the CDC recommends carrying a back-up pair of glasses with a current prescription.

For more information about eye health, visit the NEI website at http://nei.nih.gov or call (301) 496-5248.

Paulette Giambalvo is director of Associate Wellness at Montefiore Health System.
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Call today for more information and to request your free copy of the “My Life” planning guide, an invaluable resource for organizing and making your final wishes known.
Back-to-School Health Fair
A free back-to-school health fair is scheduled on Sept. 4 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at NYC Health + Hospitals/Jacobi, 1400 Pelham Pkwy. S., at the Pirate Ship Playground at Building 8 Courtyard. Free back-to-school supplies, music, and giveaways will be on hand. Anyone interested in signing up for affordable health insurance can do so. For more information, call Pitrina Moseley at (646) 335-8645.

Free Paper Shredding
Shred sensitive paperwork at a free shredding event happening on Sept. 8 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Office of Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz at 3107 Kingsbridge Ave. For more information, call Dinowitz’s office at (718) 796-5345 or email dinowitzj@nyassembly.gov.

Census Jobs
The U.S. Census is hiring individuals for join its 2020 Census Team to help with the Census’ official count. To apply, visit 2020census.gov/jobs or call (855) 562-2020.

Community Resource Fair
Norwood seniors, tenants and homeowners are invited to this free event co-sponsored by University Neighborhood Housing Program (UNHP) and Legal Aid Society on Sept. 17 from 2 to 7 p.m. at Holy Nativity Episcopal Church, 3061 Bainbridge Ave. Free housing, financial, legal and health services and information from eight non-profits and two city agencies. There will be a workshop by New York City Housing Preservation and Development about the affordable housing lottery. Contact UNHP at (718) 933-5650 or Biaggi’s office at (718) 822-2049.

Youth-led Farmer’s Market
The Norwood Youthmarket is open Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the corner of East Gun Hill Road and DeKalb Avenue through Nov. 11. Cash, SNAP/EBT, debit/credit, FMNP checks, and Health Bucks are accepted.

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.

Constituent Services
State Sen. Alessandra Biaggi provides constituent services at Community Board 7, 229-A E. 204th St., every second Thursday of the month from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call Community Board 7 at (718) 933-5650 or Biaggi’s office at (718) 822-2049.

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 are to undergo a background check and commit six months to the program. For more information, call 311.

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Chorus Rehearsals
Open rehearsals for The Riverdale Choral Society are scheduled for Sept. 4 at 7:30 p.m. at Christ Church Riverdale, 5040 Henry Hudson Pkwy. at West 252nd Street. Attendees will be practicing Aaron Copland’s “In the Beginning,” and Ralph Vaughan Williams “Fantasia on Christmas Carols.”

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ANNIVERSARY EVENT

The Bedford Park Congregational Church invites you to its 130th anniversary concert and dinner on Sunday, Sept. 22, 2019. Back by popular demand: Sergey Pobedinski (guitar and vocals) and Ludmila Fesenko (vocals). The concert will be at 3:30 p.m., followed by a delicious catered dinner in our hall. Tickets $40. Please contact Reverend Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj for tickets (718) 367-8996.
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EDITOR’S PICK

Freebies at the Oval

Williamsbridge Oval (info: (718) 543-8672) presents the following free events:

Aug. 30 from 11 a.m. to noon - Puppet Show – Bessie’s Big Shot
Aug. 31 at 8:30 p.m. - Outdoor film – “Uncle Drew”

Woodlawn Cemetery holds free outdoor concert featuring Boricua Legends performing the music of Queen of Salsa, Celia Cruz and other Latin American artists, Sept. 15 from 3 to 5 p.m., rain or shine. Bring chair or blanket; chairs will not be provided. Bags are subject to search. The Celia Cruz and Pedro Knight mausoleum will be open for viewing from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the Woodlawn Conservancy Trolley will escort passengers to and from the concert. Registration is required. For more information and tickets, call (718) 430-1824.

Back-to-School Tournament, sponsored by NYCCAL and New Life of NYC, takes place Aug. 31 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Devoe Park, West 188th Street. Events include 3 on 3 basketball tournament, 3 point shootout, skills competition and more. Free school supplies while supplies last. For more information, call (914) 309-8494 or visit www.nyccal.org.

Run for a Cause, Woodlawn’s 13th annual 5k, takes place on Sept. 14 at 10 a.m. Registration is at Healy Field at 8:30 a.m. (Van Cortlandt Park East and Kepler Avenue). Proceeds will support Yonkers Partners in Education Foundation and National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Entry fees: $25/pre race until Sept. 13; $30/day of. For more information and to register, visit www.woodlawnrunforacause.org.

Council Member Andrew Cohen, Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz, State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, and AARP present free Paper Shredding Event, to safely shred personal and confidential documents, Sept. 8 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the office of Dinowitz, 3107 Kingsbridge Ave. For more information, call (718) 796-5345.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers Family Art Projects: Shadow Play, to create art, Sept. 1; and Herds, Schools and Bevys, to explore how animals exist and work together and to create animal puppets, Sept. 7 and 8; both in the WH House 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 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.

NY Botanical Garden presents its largest exhibition ever, Brazilian Modern: The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx, through Sept. 29, featuring lush gardens with a curated gallery of his vibrant paintings, drawings and textiles. In addition, the sights and sounds of Brazil and its lively contributions to music and dance are included. Musical performances take place Saturdays from 1 to 4 p.m. and dance on Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m. including Monday, Sept. 2. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 817-8700.


The Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street), presents A History of the Bronx Latino, ongoing. Hours: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays 1 to 5 p.m. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Library Events

Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for teens/young adults: film: Aug. 30 at 4 p.m. Adults can attend: Computer Basics at 1 p.m.: Aug. 29 and Sept. 5; Microsoft Word for Beginners: Sept. 12 at 1 p.m.; and film: “The Boy in the Striped Pajamas,” Sept. 7 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Moshulu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children: Toddler Storytime at 11 a.m.: (ages 18 months to 3 years), interactive stories, action songs, fingerplays, and crafts, Sept. 5, 9, 12; and for ages 5 to 12: Crafty Fridays at 3 p.m.: crafts, Aug. 30 and Sept. 6; and STEM: Kids Science at 3 p.m.: Reaction, Sept. 3 and 10. Adults can enjoy: Knitting Circle: Thursdays at 3 p.m.. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Pl. (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for adults: Computer Basics at noon: Aug. 29, Sept. 5 and 12. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Sept. 2 for the next publication date of Sept. 12.

Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

Woodlawn Cemetery holds free outdoor concert featuring Boricua Legends performing the music of Queen of Salsa, Celia Cruz and other Latin American artists, Sept. 15 from 3 to 5 p.m., rain or shine. Bring chair or blanket; chairs will not be provided. Bags are subject to search. The Celia Cruz and Pedro Knight mausoleum will be open for viewing from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the Woodlawn Conservancy Trolley will escort passengers to and from the concert. Registration is required. For more information and tickets, call (718) 430-1824.

Back-to-School Tournament, sponsored by NYCCAL and New Life of NYC, takes place Aug. 31 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Devoe Park, West 188th Street. Events include 3 on 3 basketball tournament, 3 point shootout, skills competition and more. Free school supplies while supplies last. For more information, call (914) 309-8494 or visit www.nyccal.org.

Run for a Cause, Woodlawn’s 13th annual 5k, takes place on Sept. 14 at 10 a.m. Registration is at Healy Field at 8:30 a.m. (Van Cortlandt Park East and Kepler Avenue). Proceeds will support Yonkers Partners in Education Foundation and National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Entry fees: $25/pre race until Sept. 13; $30/day of. For more information and to register, visit www.woodlawnrunforacause.org.

Council Member Andrew Cohen, Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz, State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, and AARP present free Paper Shredding Event, to safely shred personal and confidential documents, Sept. 8 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the office of Dinowitz, 3107 Kingsbridge Ave. For more information, call (718) 796-5345.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers Family Art Projects: Shadow Play, to create art, Sept. 1; and Herds, Schools and Bevys, to explore how animals exist and work together and to create animal puppets, Sept. 7 and 8; both in the WH House 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 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.

NY Botanical Garden presents its largest exhibition ever, Brazilian Modern: The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx, through Sept. 29, featuring lush gardens with a curated gallery of his vibrant paintings, drawings and textiles. In addition, the sights and sounds of Brazil and its lively contributions to music and dance are included. Musical performances take place Saturdays from 1 to 4 p.m. and dance on Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m. including Monday, Sept. 2. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 817-8700.


The Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street), presents A History of the Bronx Latino, ongoing. Hours: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays 1 to 5 p.m. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Library Events

Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for teens/young adults: film: Aug. 30 at 4 p.m. Adults can attend: Computer Basics at 1 p.m.: Aug. 29 and Sept. 5; Microsoft Word for Beginners: Sept. 12 at 1 p.m.; and film: “The Boy in the Striped Pajamas,” Sept. 7 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Moshulu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children: Toddler Storytime at 11 a.m.: (ages 18 months to 3 years), interactive stories, action songs, fingerplays, and crafts, Sept. 5, 9, 12; and for ages 5 to 12: Crafty Fridays at 3 p.m.: crafts, Aug. 30 and Sept. 6; and STEM: Kids Science at 3 p.m.: Reaction, Sept. 3 and 10. Adults can enjoy: Knitting Circle: Thursdays at 3 p.m.. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Pl. (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for adults: Computer Basics at noon: Aug. 29, Sept. 5 and 12. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

NOTE: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org, and should be received by Sept. 2 for the next publication date of Sept. 12.
Bronx Opioid Crisis Gets Senate’s Attention

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In 2017, the Bronx overtook Staten Island with the highest rate of overdose deaths in New York City. The latest published figures show that four of the six neighborhoods with the highest rates of overdose deaths are in the Crotona and Mott Haven sections of the Bronx.

In response to the alarming number of overdose deaths in the borough, Mayor Bill de Blasio pledged $8 million last November for drug treatment programs in the Bronx. The funds are part of the Bronx Action Plan, which creates teams of first responders that include a social worker and peer advocate to accompany the emergency medical technicians.

Additionally, $1 million is designated for more naloxone kits, support groups, and ad campaigns warning residents about the dangers of fentanyl, the drug commonly mixed with heroin to pack an even greater and potentially lethal high.

Joining Rivera as co-chairs during the day-long hearing were senators Pete Harckman representing parts of Dutchess, Putnam, and Westchester counties, and David Carlucci representing most of Rockland County and parts of Westchester County.

The panel also included five other senators—John Liu, Patrick Galvan, George Amedore, Jr., Diane Savino, and Shelley Mayer.

“The goal is to produce a report ... which is comprehensive, and which will very likely produce a policy agenda for next year,” said Rivera.

Among those invited to appear before the panel was Deborah Fletcher-Blake, a family nurse practitioner and CEO of VIP Community Services. Founded in 1974 as the Vocational Instruction Program, the organization uses an integrative approach to treating addiction by including services such as education, job training, and life skills in addition to specific rehabilitation treatments.

Fletcher-Blake sees a complex regulatory system as an obstacle to offering addicts a more permanent solution. Some doctors may see addicts for a physical ailment but cannot implement addiction treatment on the same day.

“For example, Medicaid laws prevent same day billing for patients that seek physical health treatments and behavioral health care,” Fletcher-Blake said. “Requiring patients to come back another day leads to missed opportunities.”

Savino represents parts of Staten Island that have been ravaged by the opioid crisis. She said that the epidemic has to be seen in a different light and that no family is immune from the addiction crises.

“Thirty years ago, Savino started as a case worker during the height of the crack epidemic.

“We’ve come a long way in our understanding since then. Addiction is a disease, not a character defect,” Savino said.

A better understanding of addiction is also promoted by Fletcher-Blake. She sees a lack of compassion towards patients as creating unnecessary hardships. “We ask people whose brain chemistries are twisted to sit with us to develop treatment goals that we use to determine success or failure,” Fletcher-Blake said.

On the law enforcement front, Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark joined the rest of her counterparts across the city in urging state lawmakers to take action against the unregulated distribution of all fentanyl analogs. In a joint statement released on Aug. 26, the DAs pointed to the “dangerously potent synthetic opioid fentanyl and its variants, known as fentanyl analogs, [as] largely responsible for the spike in drug-related deaths in recent years. In New York City in 2018, fentanyl analogs were involved in 60 percent of all overdose deaths.”

The DAs hope to increase law enforcement tools such as search warrants, wiretaps and arrests in their effort to remove fentanyl analogs from the streets. “By improving our ability to link overdoses and deaths to fentanyl analogs in autopsies and drug evidence, we can better protect the public and focus strategies on saving lives in our communities,” the DAs said in the statement.

During the task force hearing, senators also pointed to a lack of action from Washington as a contributing factor to the overdose epidemic. “We do not have faith in the federal government,” Carlucci said referring to the lack of funds and services needed by the state to effectively combat the opioid abuse epidemic.

Not all of the suggestions, however, revolved around governmental and medical interventions.

Carlucci described the community residents as valuable assets in the fight against addiction and overdoses. “We have to get more regular people involved,” Carlucci said.
Comprehensive Services Include:

- 24-Hour Skilled Nursing Care
- Physician Services
- Neurology, physiatry, cardiology, pulmonology, dermatology, podiatry, orthopedics, vascular, ENT, dentistry, psychology, psychiatry, ophthalmology
- Long and Short-Term Rehabilitation
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Respiratory Therapy
- Pre- and Post-Operative Care

Sub-Acute Care

- I.V. Therapy
- Tracheostomy Care
- Cardiac Rehabilitation
- Bariatric Services
- Pain Management
- Enteral Nutrition Therapy
- Wound Management

Other services

- Therapeutic Recreation
- Geriatric Care Management
- Age Well: Continuum of Care
- Beauty Parlor + Barber Shop
- Pet Visitation (Pet therapy)
- Religious Services for all
- Dining
- Outdoor Patio
- Family and Friends Transport Program
- Trips + Entertainment
- On-Ste Dialysis (Wormen's & Morningside)