



# NORWOOD NEWS

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## UNION: 'IT HAS GONE ON FOR TOO LONG'

*Comments come after worker dies in Norwood building collapse*



Photo by José A. Giralt

(L-R) **ANTHONY WILLIAMSON**, an auditor at Local 79 of the Construction & General Building Laborers, and Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez, listen to Corey Prentice, shop steward of Local 79, during a prayer vigil for Segundo Huerta on Sept. 5. Huerta, who was not a member of the union, was killed during a partial building collapse at the construction site at 94 E. 208th St. on Aug. 27.

By **MICHAEL TURAY**

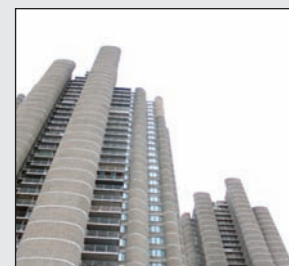
Over two dozen construction workers gathered at the site where a partial building

collapsed to honor Segundo Huerta, a construction worker from Ecuador who died in the collapse that crushed him on

Aug. 27. The workers assembled a vigil at 94 E. 208th St. near Steuben Avenue, the site of the collapse, that included

candles, flowers, a hard hat, and a T-shirt memorializing him.

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# NORWOOD NEWS

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# Two Cases of Legionnaires' Disease Discovered at Tracey Towers

By DAVID CRUZ

The city Department of Health (DOH) is investigating how two people contracted Legionnaires' Disease at Tracey Towers, the Bronx's largest Mitchell-Lama property, the Norwood News has learned.

DOH staffers slipped notices underneath the apartment doors of tenants living in Tracey Towers, specifically 20 W. Mosholu Pkwy. S., in Bedford Park alerting them of the investigation, where two people in one of the massive towers were determined to be infected with the fatal disease that is known to be waterborne. "People are stunned," said Jean Hill, president of the Tracey Towers Tenants Association.

The disease is known to remain active in cooling towers, which has left Hill unsure how the tenants contracted the disease since Tracey Towers has no cooling towers.

Tracey Towers opened in 1974 and houses middle-income earners. In the last few years the population has gotten older, leading to fears more can be infected. Symptoms of the disease include fever, chills, and a cough. It can lead to pneumonia and respiratory failure.

A DOH spokesman said the agency and building management "are promptly alerting residents of the situation, and providing guidance on how to prevent exposure, especially for those at higher risk for disease."



File photo by David Cruz

**TRACEY TOWERS (PICTURED)** opened in 1974. There are now two confirmed cases of Legionnaires' disease at one of the Mitchell-Lama towers.

They emphasize that the water is still drinkable, though DOH officials will be alerting residents they consider to have weaker immune systems to take extra precaution.

Some additional recommendations from DOH include:

- Individuals at higher-risk include those aged 50 or older (especially if they smoke cigarettes), people with chronic lung disease, and those with compromised immune systems. People in these groups should take the following precautions:

- Don't take a shower, even a cool shower—since it could create water vapor (mist). Instead, take a bath, but fill the tub slowly. Try to minimize your time in the bathroom while the tub is

filling.

- It's fine to wash dishes, but fill the sink slowly to avoid creating mist.

- It's fine to drink cold water from the tap, but start with cold water when heating water for tea, coffee or cooking.

- Tenants do not need to wear a mask.

- It is important to continue to wash your hands.

At an unrelated news conference in the Bronx, Mayor Bill de Blasio said, "It is a reality in this city that every year, just in the normal course of things, we have 100, 200 Legionnaires' cases. What we typically see is they're identified, they're addressed, people get the healthcare they need, and the situation is resolved. That's what I hope and believe is going to happen at Tracey Towers. It also is a day-to-day, hour-to-hour, thing as they investigate. As we learned from the past they literally have 'disease detectives' who go in to try to identify the specific source and make sure it is addressed and resolved."

Legionnaires' disease is routinely found in water cooling towers. The largest outbreak happened in 2015 when it claimed at least 10 lives across the city.

**Editor's Note:** A meeting was scheduled for Tuesday night, Sept. 10, to discuss the inquiry. A full story on the meeting can be found at [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org).

## City to Pick Up Tab on Tree-Damaged Sidewalks Near Homes

By DAVID CRUZ

Homeowners will be getting a reprieve from the city which will begin fixing sidewalks damaged by uprooted trees, a constant headache for homeowners.

"It will not happen overnight. I mean as much as I appreciate the gratitude, I also know my colleagues and I are all realistic," Mayor Bill de Blasio said at a news conference on Sept. 10. He was joined by Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and state Sen. Jamaal Bailey, who represents Norwood, for the announcement at Community Board 12 in Wakefield.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) holds oversight of sidewalks. In the past, if a city-owned tree damaged a sidewalk in front of a home, the homeowner would have to foot the bill, which ran upwards of several thousands of dollars to fix. Homeowners would also be hit with a fine if they didn't have it repaired themselves. If homeowners did not pay the city would put a lien on the home. The city has identified 50,000 homes that could have their liens

lifted under the new policy. De Blasio emphasized homeowners should be patient in determining whether their lien can be removed as the city handles the backlog.

If the city is found at fault, DOT crews will remediate the problem. If the tree has been so severely uprooted it cannot be saved, the city Parks Department will have the tree removed.



Photo by David Cruz

**MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO** (at podium) announces a plan to have the city cover the costs in repairing sidewalks damaged by city-owned trees.



## Letters To The Editor

### Oppose Gas-Fired Facility

Less than 50 miles north of our Norwood-Bedford Park community, residents of Newburgh, NY and nearby towns and cities are fighting a plan by Danskammer Energy LLC to turn a little used power plant on the shore of the Hudson River into a year-round, 24/7 fracked gas facility. The proposed gas-fired plant would generate air pollutants, including nitrogen oxides, which can cause serious respiratory problems, and carbon dioxide and methane, which trap heat in the atmosphere and are the key culprits in the warming of our planet.

Because air pollutants travel, residents of the Bronx (well known as the least healthy county in New York City) are likely to suffer significant adverse health effects if the project is approved. The toxic emissions generated by gas-fired power plants, problematic in themselves, also contribute to the formation of ozone, which the American Lung Association (ALA) identifies as a "lethal pollutant" that causes immediate respiratory harm and is likely to cause heart attacks, strokes, heart disease, and early death. The ozone level in our borough is already so high that it was graded "F" in the ALA's 2019 "State of the Air" report.

In addition to its impact on our health, the proposed Danskammer fracked gas power plant will undermine New York's recently enacted Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which commits the state to generating 100 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by

2040. If allowed to go forward, fossil fuel infrastructure projects like Danskammer (and the Williams fracked gas pipeline proposed for New York City's harbor) will lock us into the production and use of fossil fuels for decades to come. For the sake of all New Yorkers, we should demand that the Cuomo Administration stop all such projects.

**Joanne Koslofsky**  
**Bedford Park**

### Remembering Fare Boxes

This past Aug. 31 represented the 50th anniversary of New York City Transit bus drivers no longer having to use a coin collector to make change for riders. Aug. 31, 1969 was the first day that bus riders either had to deposit a subway token or the exact amount in coins directly into the fare box. Drivers would no longer be required to make change. They could concentrate on driving instead of multi-tasking. It became the passenger's responsibility to deposit the exact fare in cash or subway token directly into the fare box when boarding the bus.

All the driver had to do was look through the upper portion of the fare box and make sure that the fare was paid. Previously, drivers had to deal with potential robbery while in service due to carrying cash.

Safety increased for drivers, passengers, and buses. There were fewer traffic accidents involving buses. Bus operators spent more time concentrating on driving and less making change for riders. On-time performance improved as passenger boarding time sped up.

Drivers no longer had to deal with money when returning to the bus garage. Other transit employees known as "Vault pullers" would unlock the bottom of the fare box and empty the contents. Coins and subway token revenue would be sorted, counted, and wrapped within the safe confines of a secure money room within the garage.

**Larry Penner**

*Larry Penner is a transportation historian, advocate and writer who previously worked 31 years for the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration Region 2 NY Office.*

### Backing Andrew Yang

I'd like your readers to be made aware of a Democratic candidate for president who wants to give \$1,000 in cash per month, every month, to every adult American as a right of citizenship. That candidate is a fellow New Yorker named Andrew Yang.

A \$1,000 monthly "Freedom Dividend" would improve the lives of every Bronxite in Norwood.

Currently, a majority of Americans living in the Bronx could not afford an unexpected \$500 expense if one arose. That's alarming!

The Freedom Dividend would ease that economic distress for hundreds of thousands of parents in our borough and would yield immediate benefits. Students would do better in school; parents would have more time to read to their kids; churches, volunteer groups and community organizations would thrive, and the pooling effect of additional money in our pockets to spend on Bainbridge Avenue alone would rejuvenate the small business economy and clean up our community.

If your readers are interested I would urge them to check out

yang2020.com. This is an idea whose time has come and I am excited we are close to implementing it.

**Edgar Cisneros**  
**Bedford Park**

### Public Option Criticism

As reported by David Cruz in the Aug. 29-Sept. 11 Norwood News' News Briefs, New York State Attorney General Letitia James is right to sue the Trump Administration to stop them from denying green cards or visas to immigrants who have received SNAP assistance (formerly known as food stamps). What President Donald Trump ignores is that the poverty wages received by these workers are what entitles them to such assistance. Trump certainly knows this. His companies are among the employers who pay immigrants (some who are "illegal") these miserly wages.

SNAP recipients could be reduced tremendously if every employer was forced to pay only livable wages. Nowadays, that would start at \$30 an hour. But in New York State, it took great effort to get the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Nationwide, it's still \$7.25 an hour.

Immigrants pick our fruits and vegetables and sometimes get poisoned by pesticides, as well as caring for elderly people. They also do numerous other jobs requiring tough physical labor for

employers such as Trump. For this, they get poverty wages. They are not takers just because they get assistance that allows them to eat.

Some who hire immigrants to take care of elderly relatives that need help cannot afford to pay better wages. But every wealthy employer, like Trump, who does not adequately pay for the hard labor done for them is a true taker.

**Richard Warren**  
**Van Cortlandt Village**

# Public and Community Meetings

**COMMUNITY BOARD 7** will hold its general board meeting on Sept. 24 at the Sister Annunciata Bethell Senior Center, 243 E. 204th St. CB7 committee meetings are held at the following dates at 229 E. 204th St. at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Public Safety & Quality of Life Committee meets on Sept. 12 at 7 p.m.; Health & Human Services Committee meets Sept. 17; Housing, Land Use & Zoning Committee meets Sept. 18; and the Executive Committee meets on Sept. 19. For more information, call (718) 324-4998.

The **52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meets Sept. 26 at New Life Outreach International Church, 2757 Morris Ave., at 7 p.m. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.

# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

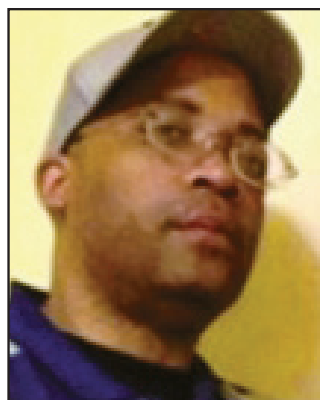
By DAVID GREENE



**This week we asked readers if they have noticed a union-suggested work slowdown by NYPD officers following the firing of Officer Daniel Pantaleo for using an illegal chokehold that killed Eric Garner.**



I actually haven't noticed any slowdown. Where I live, there's always cops; they just pass by all the time and they're always running around. They're very kind and we thank them all the time for being around. They're also always around when I see them at six in the morning. I don't believe there should be a slowdown because we still need the police around here to help us out. I really don't believe that anyone should [put a] chokehold [on] another human being.  
**Melisa Gee**  
**Bedford Park**



I called the [49th Precinct] about the slowdown last week because I don't see them as much. I did ask if there is a slowdown because of the decision handed down by the police commissioner, but they denied such a thing exists. They did pick up the phone. I do not support officers who break the law. However, I can understand if officers protect themselves from violent civilians that refuse to comply to simple orders, or civilians who curse them and wish them dead or those throwing water and other objects at them on a frequent basis. So yes, I can understand them taking longer to get to a job.  
**Keith Ramsey**  
**Eastchester Gardens**



I have seen a slight change in police response times, but overall no change in the progress. Yes, I've noticed less activity with police patrols and they're not doing as much community outreach. I don't support the slowdown because we need more cops patrolling our neighborhoods, protecting our neighborhood and children, and keeping crime out. What happened to Eric Garner was wrong and officers should be better trained.  
**Veronica Gonzalez**  
**Fordham**



I know some Bronx cops and they talk about each other to me. They won't look away on something if something is going on. They still feel like they are there to serve and protect and they won't turn away from an obvious crime or someone in danger, but they're also aware that their actions could be misconstrued or viewed by higher ups and it could be used against them.  
**Robert Kalfus**  
**Yonkers**



I guess I can say I have noticed more quality of life issues since the slowdown, like my car mirrors got stolen, as did a bunch of others on the same block. I don't support the slowdown because I think it's about the almighty dollar and feel we should be guaranteed proper coverage as tax-paying citizens. I think criminals are now becoming bolder in their quality of life crimes, like stealing mirrors and car tires, because they know the police response may be delayed.  
**Mike Gupta**  
**Wakefield**



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# NEWS BRIEFS

BY MICHAEL TURAY

## Jump Bikes Jump Ship

The bike program piloted by rideshare company Uber will no longer be available in the borough as of Sept. 3. Through Jump, users were granted easy access to rent electric bikes using the same mobile app they used to request a car. Council member Fernando Cabrera is upset that the bikes are leaving, as both Bronx residents and officials all believed Jump was a successful initiative.

## Measles Outbreak Officially Over

City health officials announced that the largest measles outbreak the city had seen in nearly three decades is over. The epidemic began in October 2018 and by April this year officials declared a public health emergency in parts of Brooklyn, including its Hasidic communities. Estimates show 654 individuals were diagnosed with measles since the outbreak started, with 80 percent of those diagnosed being 18 years or younger. "Ending the measles outbreak required extensive collaboration with community organizations and Jewish leaders. They helped encourage vaccinations and achieve record immunization levels in parts of Brooklyn," said De Blasio. The majority of the cases, 72 percent, occurred in four Brooklyn neighborhoods.

## Street Name for Bx. Teen

A teenager who died in June of last year after running into a burning apartment building to rescue a three-year-old girl who also died will have a street renamed in his honor. Lucas Silverio was only 19 years old when he died from third-degree burns three days after attempting to rescue Yasleen McDonald, a toddler stuck in the building. Councilman Ritchie Torres and the victim's family plan to honor Silverio for his brave acts at the

# Following Through on a Promise, Norwood Shelter to Get Peace Officers

By SHA-NIA ALSTON

The Jerome Avenue Men's Shelter (JAMS) in Norwood will finally receive peace officers following efforts from Councilman Andy Cohen, Community Board 7, and several other elected officials, following through on a promise made by the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) for some.

"I am really pleased they're coming. I am very optimistic that they are going to reduce the overall impact of the shelter on the community," said Cohen in a telephone interview with the *Norwood News*.

DHS hopes the peace officers, who are expected to report for duty on Oct. 1, will relieve the 52nd Precinct from constantly policing the area where the shelter resides, allowing peace officers to settle any disputes that require little involvement from the NYPD. John Betts, the residence director for Bronx-Works, which operates JAMS, said in a statement that the organization is committed to "being a good neighbor" by keeping order.

This isn't the first time the community has been vocal when it comes to JAMS. Residents fought against the shelter's original plans that called for it to be placed near PS/MS 20. After that, there were more community concerns when it was decided that the shelter would receive a clinic open to individuals who do not live in the shelter, causing uproar from Community Board 7 members who felt that this would lead more to panhandling and loitering. As it stands, the homeless have been spotted in greater frequency along the Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement

corner of Crotona Avenue and Grote Street in Belmont.

## Jail Proposal Advances

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. is outraged over the City Planning Commission's vote to close Rikers Island and build a new borough-based jail at NYPD Bronx tower in Mott Haven. Many residents have urged the city to explore building the Bronx jail at 900 Sheridan Ave., where Bronx Family Court is currently located, according to Diaz Jr. "It is unfortunate that the City Planning Commission has declined to listen to the serious concerns of



Photo by José A. Giralta

**THE JEROME AVENUE** Men's Shelter at 3600 Jerome Ave. (pictured) will receive peace officers roughly a year and a half after opening.

District.

The *Norwood News* spoke with local businesses adjacent to the shelter, who have experienced panhandling and petty theft from the homeless community. On a recent evening, the homeless were spotted sleeping inside a northbound #4 subway train heading to Woodlawn Station, the closest stop to JAMS. Outreach workers were also on hand, checking up on their welfare. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority recently announced the creation of a task force that looks to examine the homeless issue that's expanded across the system.

Many of these issues are why DHS peace officers were originally included

in shelter plans. In a statement, Cohen said, "The community has been advocating for there to be peace officers at JAMS since before the facility opened and I am thrilled that DHS has now recognized the need."

Cohen, whose 11th Council District covers Wakefield, has seen the difference that DHS peace officers make at the shelter.

"I have a shelter in the Wakefield section of the district operated by Project Renewal that has DHS peace officers, and I know that after they came into the site I had a significant reduction in 911 calls. I had a significant reduction in neighbor complaints, so I know that it works," said Cohen.

the people of my borough, and has instead chosen to move forward with a plan to close Rikers Island that builds a new jail in the wrong place," said Diaz Jr.

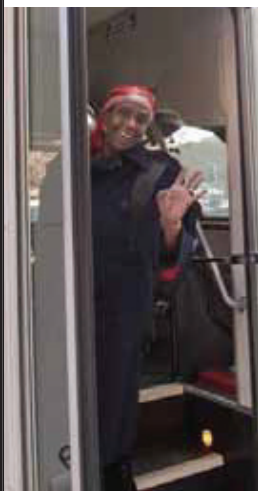
## DOE's Lead Paint Plan Progress

Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza announced that the city Department of Education and School Construction Authority (SCA) completed its remediation of lead paint in classes hosting 3-K, pre-K, kindergarten, and first grade students. The SCA said it recruited independent inspectors and custodians to oversee visual inspections of 8,438 rooms

across all five boroughs. 1,860 were successfully remediated. The development of a centralized database that requires custodians to log the status of a classroom three times a year was a new strategy implemented. The utilization of an online tool where staff and parents can report any issues of deteriorating paint also enhances transparency. "We're looking forward to a successful start of the year, and we're taking the next step in enhancing our protocols by inspecting, testing and remediating cafeterias and libraries serving kids under six in the next year," said Carranza.

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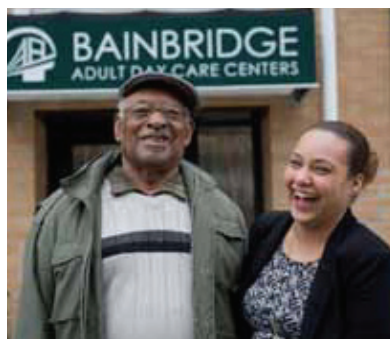
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## Two Under Arrest for Shooting Death of Bedford Park Man

By **BOB KAPPSTATTER**

Two men were under arrest in the shooting death of a 27-year-old Bedford Park man after detectives tracked them down through video security cameras, police said.

Israel Lagares became the fifth homicide victim in the 52nd Precinct so far this year after he was fatally shot twice in the chest shortly after 10 p.m. on Aug. 16 in front of 2734 Bainbridge Ave., just blocks from his home. He was pronounced dead at St. Barnabas Hospital.

After an investigation that a police source said involved scouring through a number of video security cameras in the area, detectives arrested Lucas Chajecski, 23, of Fordham, and Gary Ortiz, 31, of Kingsbridge, on Aug. 31 and charged both with murder. The pair is being held at Rikers Island.

Investigators are still trying to determine a motive for the murder, said a source. “Both suspects and the vic-

tim have criminal records, and the two suspects belong to a local drug crew,” they said.

Another source who knew Ortiz said Ortiz was spotted driving “nice cars.” First, a brand new white Land Rover and now a black (Dodge) Charger,” said the source who knew Ortiz.

Detectives searching local exterior video security cameras observed the two suspects getting both out and back in a car on the block at the time of the shooting. The source said that they had previously been circling the area a number of times, “like they were casing it.”

The Five-Two has seen a small increase in major crime, with 1295 reported crimes this year compared to 1285 the same time last year, according to NYPD stats. There have been six reported murders falling within the 52nd Precinct, which covers Norwood, Bedford Park, Kingsbridge Heights, Fordham, and University Heights.

## New Office, Same Constituent Services at Espaillat’s Bronx Office

By **JOSÉ A. GIRALT**

Bronx constituents of the 13th Congressional District now have a new district office location. Congressman Adriano Espaillat, whose coverage area also covers Norwood, has moved his Bronx office into the same location as his former colleague, state Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz at 3107 Kingsbridge Ave., just north of West 231st Street in Kingsbridge.

Since 2017, when he was sworn in, Espaillat’s Bronx district office was located at 2530 Grand Concourse inside

what was originally known as the Dollar Savings Bank, near Fordham Road. Renovation work inside the landmark building forced the congressman to find another location.

Espaillat said that the landmark status of the building made for an uncertain future for when the work on his office on the Grand Concourse would



Photo by José A. Giralt

**(L-R) ASSEMBLYMAN JEFFREY DINOWITZ** welcomes Rep. Adriano Espaillat (NY-13) at an event announcing the grand opening of the representative’s new district office in the Kingsbridge neighborhood of the Bronx. The two politicians will share office space at 3107 Kingsbridge Ave.

be finished. “We may be out of there for a significant period of time. So, we didn’t want to be out of the Bronx while that construction was going on,” he said.

**Editor’s Note:** *Espaillat’s Bronx office is open Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Their phone number is (646) 740-3632.*

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## CRIME FILE

By DAVID CRUZ

**Energy Drink Robbery**

The NYPD needs the public's help in identifying a man possibly linked to stealing three-dozen cans of Monster Energy at a store in Fordham after threatening the clerk with a hypodermic needle.

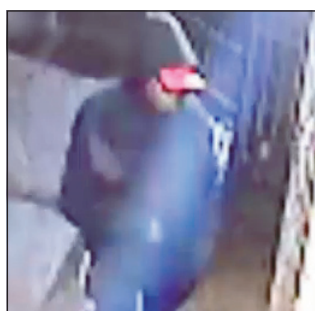
Police in the 52nd Precinct got the call around 5 p.m. on Aug. 24 at the Rite Aid store at 49 W. Fordham Rd. The 38-year-old suspect was stopped by the clerk until he flashed the needle. The suspect soon fled on foot on Grand Avenue. Police describe him as His-

panic, around 35 to 45 years old, weighing 170 pounds, and last seen wearing a white shirt, black shorts, and black sneakers (at left).

**Chain Snatching**

Police are trying to find a suspect who, along with several others, robbed a man at gunpoint in Kingsbridge Heights on Aug. 28. One was last seen wearing light colored pants and a rose colored hoodie (above). Another was last seen wearing dark pants and hoodie (top right) over a rose colored cap.

The incident happened at around 11:30 p.m. in the area



of Jerome Avenue and East 198th Street, according to police. The group approached the victim inside a building hallway and tried forcing the gold chain off him. The victim fought back leading to one of the suspects to take out his gun and begin firing. No one was hurt and the thieves made off with the gold chain.

**Sex Creep in Fordham**

Police are trying to ID a man wanted for climbing into a woman's basement apartment and grabbing her by the leg as she was sleeping. This happened on Aug. 4 just after midnight in the area of Bainbridge Avenue and Coles

Lane.

The 41-year-old victim quickly rose, screaming, causing the man to flee. Nothing was taken. The man is described as Hispanic, standing at 5' 4" with a slim build and a pony tail, weighting 130 pounds.

**Knifepoint Robbery**

A \$2500 reward is being offered to anyone who can identify and locate a man (above) wanted for robbing a woman's purse at knifepoint. The incident happened just before

midnight on Sept. 2 inside 2721 Morris Ave., according to police. The suspect fled with the victim's purse containing cash. Police have not released an official description, only surveillance video from the building. He is seen wearing light colored pants and a dark hoodie.

*Anyone with information in regard to these incidents is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). All calls are kept confidential. The public can also submit their tips by logging on to the Crime Stoppers website at WWW.NYP-DCRIMESTOPPERS.COM, or on Twitter @NYPDTips.*

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# Vagrancy in Whalen Park Raises Concerns

By JOSÉ A. GIRALT

In July 2018, Whalen Park was reopened amid fanfare with family members of the park's namesake present. At a cost of \$1.8 million, Councilman Andrew Cohen said at the time, "Today we have a park that's as good as any park in the city."

Now, some residents are worrying over activities inside the park that go beyond just "hanging out," with some fears the playground may revert back to the days when vagrancy was such a normal occurrence. Indeed, the park had been such an eyesore that it left then-Deputy Borough President Aurelia Greene to declare it was once "plagued with drugs and homeless individuals" during the 2017 groundbreaking of the park.

At the Sept. 4 meeting of the Bedford Mosholu Community Association, local residents spoke about observing drug dealing and public urination. Additionally, the association has received text messages complaining of these activities and more.

On a recent visit by two *Norwood News* reporters, two men were seen drinking from an open container. A woman accompanying them threatened one reporter holding a camera with physical harm if they took pictures inside the park.

Nestled between Perry Avenue on the east and the Mosholu Library branch on the west, the park had seen some rough times prior to the renovations.

Walking by the park on an almost

daily basis, Sheila Sanchez has come to know some of the people who hang out there. She admits to becoming angry when she sees how bold some of those people in the park are when they carry out illegal activities in broad daylight.

"About two months ago, I saw a group of adult men inside the playground area drinking a bottle of tequila while children played on the equipment," Sanchez said. "I couldn't believe that this was happening around noon-time, too."

Unafraid to confront some of these people, Sanchez also learned that some do not live in the neighborhood. "One lady that hangs out there told me she's from Yonkers and others [hanging out and drinking] have told me they don't even live in the area," said Sanchez.

Barbara Stronczer, chair of Community Board 7's Parks Committee, remembers some of the unsavory activities that took place in the park before the renovations and wants to take quick action to prevent any reverting to the past.

"People will be afraid to bring their kids there when they see a group of men sitting there drinking," Stronczer said. She promised to bring up the issue at the next meeting of CB7's Parks Committee on Sept. 11.

Community Affairs Officer Crystal Reveron of the 52nd Precinct said in an email statement that, "summons and arrest have been done when the officers have observed criminal activity in this park."

*Additional reporting by David Cruz and Jonathan Custodio.*



Photo by Jonathan Custodio

**WHALEN PARK (PICTURED)** reopened in 2018 after extensive renovations intended to turn the once shabby park into a family-friendly greenspace.

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# Back-to-School Backpack Giveaway in Wakefield

**THE NORWOOD NEWS** was in Wakefield on Aug. 30 to check out a back-to-school backpack giveaway ahead of the first day of public school on Sept. 5. This time, Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC, publishers of the Norwood News) partnered with the East 233rd Street/White Plains Road Merchants Association and Councilman Andy King in giving away the freebies. The group stopped by Elite Dream Vacations, S&L Realty Associates, Rivera's Auto Driving School, and Kaieteur Restaurant Bronx along the shopping strip running along White Plains Road. Check out these photos by Miriam Quinones. (Below) Councilman Andy King (c) with some young people who each snagged a backpack at the Aug. 30 event. MPC program manager Daniela Beasley stands at his right.



**FIVE-YEAR-OLD NIALAH WILLIAMS** (far left) gives the camera a full view of the backpack she received at the back-to-school giveaway event.

**GARRIELLA ENNIS HOLDS** (left middle) up her new backpack she got at the back-to-school event.

**DANIELA BEASLEY, PROGRAM** manager for MPC (near left), shows off a blue backpack, one of dozens she helped give away at the back-to-school event.



**COUNCILMAN ANDY KING** (l) leans forward to read suggestions residents posted on ways to improve their neighborhood, local government, and the local merchant strips, at the back-to-school event.



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# MMCC to Bring Head Start Programs Thanks to \$2.1M Boost

By JONATHAN CUSTODIO

Mosholu Montefiore Community Center's (MMCC) Child Development Center (CDC) is opening two new pre-kindergarten sites via federal funding provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Head Start program, which offers early childhood education and support services.

The two buildings housing the programs will be named after Natly Esnard and Nora Feury, two long-time employees with MMCC.

U.S. Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand announced that a total of \$9.3 million would be awarded to five community centers in the Bronx, with MMCC receiving \$2.1 million.

"[Head Start] is an early childhood education program but family comes first," said CDC Program Director Agnes Vendiola, who has worked in the Bronx for 20 years after

immigrating from the Philippines and notes their mission is to educate their children and educate the families. "We take them as a unit. We're not helping the child alone; we have to help the family."

Head Start is a child development and school readiness program geared towards low-income children mostly between ages three and five. The CDC prepares children for kindergarten and offers health, educational, nutritional, social and safety services to them and their families.

The \$2.1 million grant will cover expenses for Head Start locations at 934 E. Gun Hill Rd. in Community District 12 and 887 Crotona Park North in Community District 6, which includes staff salaries, educational materials for children and families, facility upkeep, consultants in mental health and nutrition, a nurse, training assistance, and workshops.

The rest of the grant has

been used on two Head Start classrooms, one at the CDC's main location at 3450 Dekalb Ave. in Community District 7, and the other near Van Cortlandt Park in Community District 8.

Feury, who used to live on East 201st Street and Perry Avenue, has worked in early childhood education for decades and was with the Head Start program in its nascent stages in 1965. "I'm honored. I'm deeply honored," said Feury, who now works as a consultant for MMCC and also grew up in poverty. "I feel so strongly about the program and children and families we serve. I, myself, was a poor child so I know what it's like."

Esnard taught early education in public school for 32 years and has been an MMCC board member for at least 25 years. Three experts in law, accounting, and early childhood are necessary to earn a Head Start grant; Esnard was



File photo by Jonathan Custodio  
**A PORTION** of the \$2.1 million grant to MMCC has gone to the construction of a Head Start program at 887 Crotona Park North in Crotona (pictured above), which will be named after Nora Feury (inset left).

MMCC's early education expert.

"I am beyond flattered," said Esnard, who lives in Norwood and spends a lot of time working with parents in the program. "I think Head Start is the best piece of legislation ever passed in this country. It's wonderful that we're able to

give this service to these kids."

Rita Santelia, CEO of MMCC, is ecstatic about the funding and partnership with Head Start. "We're thrilled we managed to pull this off."

The new branches of the Child Development Center are targeted to be ready by mid-October.



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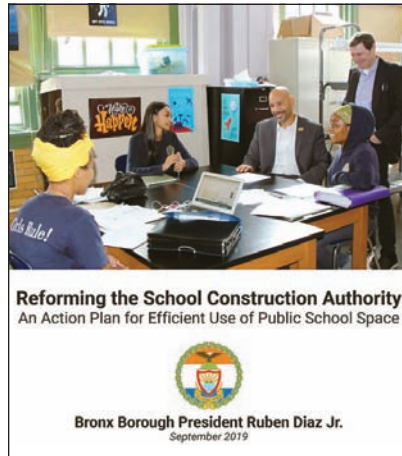
# Report: Reforms Needed for SCA

By DAVID CRUZ

A report released by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. ahead of the first day of school proposes major fixes to the School Construction Authority (SCA), the body tasked to build new schools across the city, pointing out “inefficiencies” at a time when the borough’s public school districts are grossly overcrowded.

After examining the SCA, which was created in 1988, Diaz Jr.’s office outlined 10 recommendations needed to streamline the authority. Among them is greater transparency, citing the lack of information that came out of a task force created by the New York City Council last year that studied the SCA’s procedures.

“The Task Force met only twice over its six months in existence; the first meeting was not open to the public. The SCA identified only two sites among city properties suitable for school construction; the SCA refused to provide its data to the public, and the report that the Task Force issued



Report image cover courtesy  
Bronx Borough President’s Office

**THE REPORT BY** the Bronx Borough President’s Office entitled, “Reforming the School Construction Authority,” issued 10 recommendations to improve the School Construction Authority.

was less than two pages long, not available to the public and not even reviewed by all members of the Task Force before it was submitted,” read the report.

The recommendations include ending the practice of educating students inside trailers, study-

ing the environmental impact of building a school in a neighborhood, improving projections for student enrollment, identifying more sites for gifted and talented programs, recruiting more property brokers to scout for schools, piloting a privately-managed request for proposals process for the design and construction of a new school building, leasing more space to alleviate school overcrowding, greater communication on the status of projects and the public, and enforcing enrollment caps at high schools.

Diaz Jr.’s calls for reform go back to 2001 when, as a member of the state Assembly, he voted in favor of mayoral control of schools, which gave New York City mayors greater oversight of the SCA, including the power to make appointments to the authority’s board.

A spokesman for the SCA rebutted all of Diaz Jr.’s recommendations, citing it has already worked toward greater efficiency. “We welcome the Borough President’s

report in that it reasserts that we are doing something right,” said Kevin Ortiz. “Each of the his SCA-specific recommendations are things we already do.”

Among them is its progress in removing 208 of 354 original trailers across the city, with an additional 72 identified for removal, working with city agencies to determine environmental impacts, providing five-year projections, issuing requests for proposals for expanding the real estate side of the SCA, working with in-house personnel on real estate matters, leasing over 300 locations across the city, providing quarterly progress reports, and holding public meetings on the status of projects across the city.

The SCA is attempting to address overcrowding in the Bronx by currently building three schools in the borough, including two as a result of the Jerome Avenue Rezoning, and building four annexes including one at P.S. 33 in Fordham and another at P.S. 46 in Kingsbridge Heights.

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# Bronx-Based Nonprofit Director Launches Mayoral Bid

By DAVID CRUZ

While political observers await news of former New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn will actually run for New York City mayor, which would have made her the first woman to launch a mayoral run in 2021, a Bronx-based nonprofit director has already made up her mind, with eyes of being the first woman mayor serving the five boroughs.

Dianne Morales, CEO and executive director of Phipps Neighborhoods in the South Bronx, announced a run for Gracie Mansion on the Democratic ticket early this month, telling the *Norwood News* the city's approach to helping the marginalized is broken. Solidifying that perspective was her firsthand experience helping the hurricane-ravaged island of Puerto Rico.

"The systems that are in place to actually help us are not always the most effective, to put it mildly," said Morales. "I'm just kind of over it and I feel like it's time to try to actually change the systems to work in the way they're intended."

On top of her agenda is ensuring women have greater support systems in place, and quality education is easily accessible.

On a micro-level, Morales has functioned like a mayor, operating and implementing policies at the social services nonprofit since 2011. Phipps Neighborhood helps low-income neighborhoods rise from poverty through its litany of career-readiness programs. The 47-year nonprofit operates in the Bronx, one of the more impoverished parts of the city.

Morales, a graduate of Harvard University's Graduate School of Education and Columbia University, has lent her experience in nonprofit work and education to the city, sitting on Mayor Bill de Blasio's Nonprofit Resiliency Committee and launching the city Department of Education's Office of Youth Development and School-Community Services.

The mission promulgating upward mobility is personal for Morales, the youngest of three chil-

dren from a Puerto Rican family and a single mom living in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, where she grew up. She is the second person of Hispanic descent to launch a run for 2021, with Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. already throwing his hat into the ring. In the post-Trump era, where unknowns have risen above established figures, Morales stands a chance at outperforming her opponents.

Should Morales make it to the ballot for the June 2021 Democratic mayoral primary, she could very well siphon some votes away from Diaz Jr., and Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, given her Brooklyn ties. But the Bronx Borough President has amassed a comparatively large war chest for his campaign. Name recognition and likely party backing can overshadow Morales' run.

But there are 22 more months before the primary, and Morales is beginning to fill her campaign coffers.



Photo courtesy LinkedIn  
**DIANNE MORALES (PICTURED)** looks to become the city's first woman mayor.

"The fundraising started a couple of weeks [ago]. I've actually been really, really moved, I guess, and humbled by the responses. I think it's been overwhelmingly positive, and people

seem to be very open, receptive, and excited about a fresh perspective and someone who's potentially coming in from the outside," said Morales.

She's also not looking beyond the mayor's race. Should she win, the fight is not a matter of using it as a springboard to higher office, but focusing solely on the job.

"I'm not looking to become mayor because I'm ultimately interested in pursuing being the president. I'm not looking to run for mayor because it's a race that I think I can win right now or that it's the next logical step," said Morales. "This is the place where I think I can have the greatest impact for the largest number people communities that I have served all my life. And so it's right for me now, and I think there's something to be said for having someone who's not sort of part of some larger machine and certainly not just another notch on the belt or another stepping stone along the way."

## Sea of Humanity at PS 56



Photo by Adi Talwar

**A KALEIDOSCOPIC VIEW** of parents and students at PS 56 Norwood Heights on the first day of New York City public schools on Sept. 5. The K-5 school on East 207th Street between Hull and Decatur avenues is home to 693 students. The building was built in 2011.

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# HEALTH CHECK

## Healthy Back-to-School Snack Ideas

By KATIE PANCZNER

With the school year in full swing, parents may be wondering how to keep kids nourished during the school day and after school. Providing your child with healthy snacks is an excellent way to keep them focused and full throughout the day. A healthy snack can include foods from all five food groups—fruits, vegetables, proteins, grains, and dairy—to give children the energy they need between meals.

Snacks can provide a great energy boost between meals and supply important vitamins and minerals. With a bit of planning and a little creativity, you can offer kid-friendly snack ideas that can please even your pickiest eater. Making healthy snacks to be packed or eaten at home does not have to be difficult or expensive. Here are a few simple recipes you can use to offer kid-friendly snacks that are healthy and fun.

- **Fruit:** Try easy-to-pack fruits like oranges, apples, grapes, and bananas, or pack diced fruit in a bag
- **Tortilla chips and dip:** Combine tortilla chips with salsa or guacamole. (Look for tortilla chips that are baked, with less than 200mg of sodium per serving on the label)
- **Trail mix:** Mix a combination

of nuts such as almonds or cashews; seeds such as sunflower seeds, or pumpkin seeds; and dried fruit such as dried cranberries, bananas, or raisins to make your own trail mix

- **Popcorn:** Homemade or store bought (look for brands with less than 200mg of sodium per serving on the label)

- **Fruit kabobs:** Cut your favorite fruits and place them on a stick. For added flavor, dip the fruit kabob in vanilla yogurt

- **Green smoothies:** Combine fresh and/or frozen fruits with spinach, 100 percent fruit juice, and yogurt or soy milk

- **Mini bagels:** Top mini whole wheat bagels with nuts (such as peanut, almond), or seed butter (such as sunflower seed butter)

Not only are these snack ideas delicious and healthy, but they can be prepared in advance and aren't very expensive. In addition to being kid-friendly, they are delicious enough that you might even find yourself snacking on them, too.

*Katie Panczner is an intern at Montefiore Health System's Office of Community and Population Health.*



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Photo courtesy Montefiore Health System

**HEALTHY SNACKS** SUCH as granola bits (pictured) are a good source of nutrition for kids who spend the entire day in class. They're easy to make and inexpensive.

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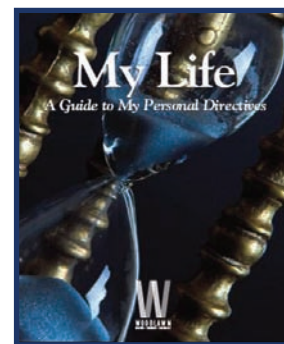
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## Get to Know Your Local Businesses at Annual Jerome Gun Hill Fall Festival

By JEROME GUN HILL BID

Mark your calendars! The Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District's 18th Annual Fall Festival is just around the corner!

On Saturday, Oct. 12, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Jerome Avenue between East Mosholu Parkway North and East Gun Hill Road will fill with thousands of festival-goers enjoying live music, free activities, and more than 100 vendors and small businesses selling their wares. This year's festival is generously sponsored by Montefiore Health System, Agape Luxury Corp., Ridgewood Savings Bank, Con Edison, HealthFirst, and MetroPlus.

"The BID provides convenient, affordable shopping for residents and the local workforce," Jennifer Tausig, the BID's executive director, said. "You can finish all your errands here. It's an important time to shop locally and support your neighborhood merchants!"

Last year's event saw a record number of participating vendors and attendees, and the BID team is hoping for an even bigger event this year. This Fall Festival will feature bounce houses and inflatable attractions, pet adoption vans, delicious food from all over New York City, and a wide variety of Norwood-based community organizations sharing information and resources to attendees.

Take advantage of free face-painting and art activities for kids and families as you stroll up and down Jerome Avenue, taking in the sights, sounds,

and smells of the biggest street festival Norwood has to offer. The festival also features a pumpkin patch with hundreds of pumpkins sourced from New York State farms for kids and families to decorate and take home for free. In addition, small businesses along Jerome Avenue will showcase their goods along the strip, some offering special discounts and deals for the day.

Beginning at noon, there will be a variety of musical acts that grace the Fall Festival stage. Longtime favorite Alive 'N Kickin', youth group Music with a Message, and local Bachata artist Luis La Fama are set to perform at the festival. These musical acts will have the crowd on their feet and dancing in the street. Also the festival will feature a special raffle onstage for free musical instruments from longtime small business Paradise Pawn. Don't miss out on your chance to win.

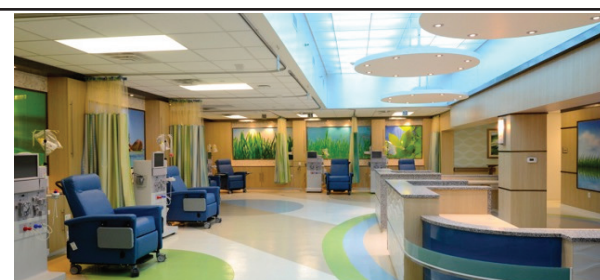
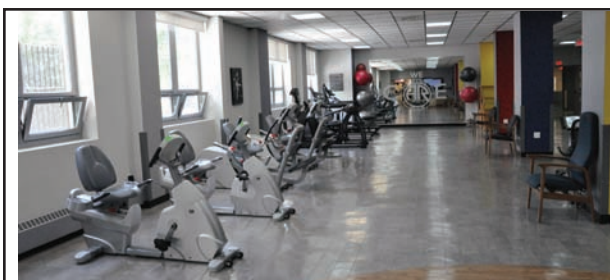
The annual Fall Festival aims to celebrate the diverse community of Norwood and the hundreds of merchants within the Jerome Gun Hill BID. Join the BID at the 18th Annual Fall Festival on Oct. 12 for a family friendly day full of fun.

**Editor's Note:** For more information about the Jerome Gun Hill BID's Fall Festival, call the BID hotline at (718) 324-4946, email [jeromegunhillbid@gmail.com](mailto:jeromegunhillbid@gmail.com), or visit [www.jeromegunhillbid.org](http://www.jeromegunhillbid.org). Follow us on Instagram at @jeromegunhillbid or Facebook at @jghbid.



File photo by Adi Talwar

**THE JEROME GUN HILL** Business Improvement District's annual Fall Festival takes place Oct. 12 with live performances that always draw crowds.



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## NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES



### Mayor's Public Engagement Unit

The Tenant Support Unit, offering tenant protection help, will be available in the Bronx at various dates and times: the Office of State Senator Gustavo Rivera at 2432 Grand Concourse from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sept. 17 and 24; Office of Assemblyman Michael Blake, 780 Concourse Village West, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sept. 17 and 24; and University Neighborhood Housing Program at 2715 Bainbridge Ave. from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sept. 19. For more information, call 311.

### Fridays With Fernandez

Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez hosts a "Fridays With Fernandez" meet and greet on Sept. 13 and 27 from 12 to 3 p.m. at her office at 2018 Williamsbridge Rd. By appointment only. To make an appointment, call (718) 409-0109.

### Friendly Visitor Program

RAIN senior centers across the Bronx are looking for volunteers to accompany the elderly for one hour per week for six months. Volunteers must be 18 years or older, be kind and compassionate, and interested in working with the senior population. Volunteers are subject to a background check. For more information, contact Tiontay Castillo at (718) 231-5717, ext. 300, or email Tiontay.Castillo@raininc.org.

### Free Paper Shredding Event

The Ridgewood Savings Bank branch at 1770 E. Gun Hill Rd. is hosting a free paper shredding event on Sept. 21 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Participants are encouraged to bring sensitive documentation for shredding, including paper files, old bills, and cancelled checks. For more information, contact the branch at (718) 671-4600.

### 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. Learn about 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) 933-2539 to RSVP/partner, or for more information. Resources will be available in English, Spanish, and Bangla. অতলাহিতৈ বাংলা বা। উত্তম! ¡Hablarán español!

### Youth-led Farmers Market

The Norwood Youthmarket is open Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the corner of the East Gun Hill Road and De Kalb 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.



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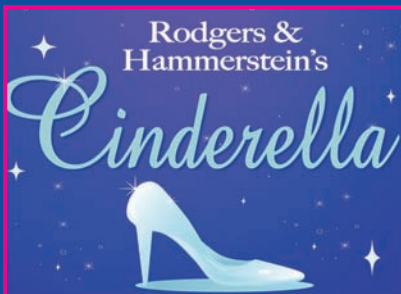
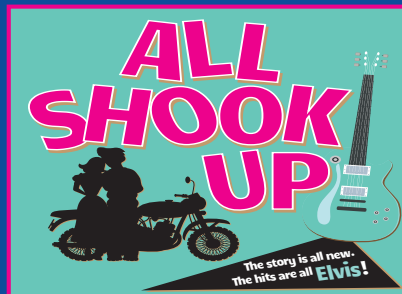
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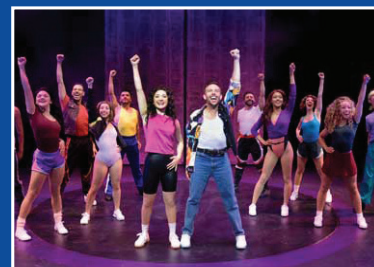
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### ANNIVERSARY EVENT

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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# Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

## EDITOR'S PICK

### Free Resource Fair

The public is invited to a free community resource fair, Sept. 17 from 2 to 7 p.m. at the Holy Nativity Episcopal Church, 3061 Bainbridge Ave. (near Rochambeau Avenue). Information includes Norwood tenants, homeowners, small businesses, and housing, legal and immigration resources. For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 933-2539.

## Onstage

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) 920-1470 or visit [www.WoodlawnEvents.org](http://www.WoodlawnEvents.org).

Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd., W., presents **Eddie**

**Palmieri & Afro Caribbean Orchestra** performing salsa, and the **Michael Camilo Trio**, Sept. 21 at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$45 to \$65. For more information and tickets, call (718) 960-8833.

## Events

Children's Hospital at Montefiore, 3415 Bainbridge Ave. (at Gun Hill Road), presents **Teen Health Fair**, Sept. 17 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the lobby. For more information and detailed information on events, call (718) 741-2357.

Van Cortlandt Jewish Center, 3880 Sedgewick Ave., hosts free **Town Hall Breakfast** for its elected officials, Sept. 15 at 11 a.m. This event is open to the public. Reservations are required. For more



Photo courtesy Boogie on the Boulevard

**BOOGIE ON THE Boulevard** will see several streets along the southern end of Grand Concourse closed off for pedestrians for a day of music, arts, and more (see Events for more information).

information and to RSVP, call (718) 884-6105.

**Boogie on the Boulevard**, a car free event, will take place on the Grand Concourse from 162nd to 170th streets on Sept. 15 from 2 to 6 p.m. in the center lanes. Events include free music, arts, fitness programs, and healthy food samples. In addition, there will be roller skating, free bike rides, and skateboarding as well as free bike parking and bike repairs. For more information and a complete list of activities, call (212) 633-0800 ext. 1296.

Bronx NYC Parks Department presents free **Flag Football** for kids ages 9 to 17. League through Sept. 19; Citywide Championships, Nov 2; and Girls Invitational Tournament, Nov. 11. For more information, locations, and details, call (718) 430-1824.

**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](http://www.woodlawnrunforacause.org).

Bronx County Historical Society hosts **The Bronx's Silver Screen Trolley Tour**, Sept. 21 from noon to 5 p.m., rain or shine, from the Jerome Avenue entrance gate of Woodlawn Cemetery (meet at 11:45 a.m.). A one-hour lunch break in Little Italy is not included in price. Advance purchase required. Sales are final. Refunds will not be issued. For more information and tickets, call (718) 920-1469.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Papermaking – Brilliance of Seeds and Weeds, to create paper pulp from used paper, then write stories, Sept. 14 and 15; and To Be a River, to join a workshop and write poetry, Sept. 21 and 22; both in the WH House 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also scheduled is **Fall Exhibition Openings**: featuring musicians interpreting art, in the Glyndor Gallery at 2 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.

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. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (718) 817-8700.

The Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave., presents exhibition, **The Bronx Goes to the Movies**, through Oct. 6. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

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 ages 5 to 12: **STEM Fridays at 4 p.m.**: Sept. 13 (Makerspace) and 20 (Bronx Birds). For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nysl.org](http://www.nysl.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. 16, 19, 23 and 26; and for ages 5 to 12: **Crafty Fridays at 3 p.m.**: crafts, Sept. 13 and 20; and **STEM: Kids Science at 3 p.m.**: Reactions, Sept. 17 and 24. Teens/young adults can attend **film**: "Shazam," Sept. 14 at 1:30 p.m. 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 ages 5 to 12: **film**: "WALL-E," Sept. 21 at 2 p.m. (snacks will be provided.) Teens/young adults can enjoy: **film**: "Raiders of the Lost Ark," Sept. 14 at 2 p.m. Adults can attend **Computer Basics at noon**: Sept. 19 and 26. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

**NOTE**: Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org), and should be received by Sept. 16 for the next publication date of Sept. 26.

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A RESOURCE FAIR exclusive to Norwood residents is set for Sept. 17 at the Holy Nativity Episcopal Church (see Editor's Pick for details).

# Union: 'It Has Gone on For Too Long'

(continued from page 1)

The crowd circled around the very spot Huerta took his last breaths. He was a father of five and had been working alongside other family members at the time of the accident. He was also the first reported construction-related death in the Bronx this year. Their family was not present for the Sept. 5 vigil.

The workers in attendance gathered in solidarity for their fellow construction worker calling attention to the safety hazards that apply to working at a construction site. Those present had ties to Local 79, a unionized labor group and the Bronx Brigade, a group of construction workers who advocate for safer work conditions.

"It is our job as construction workers to stand together and honor those who have fallen before us, to make sure that the 'should've' and 'could've' no longer continue to happen," said Corey Prentice, a Local 79 construction worker and member of the Bronx Brigade. "It has gone on for too long. It has gone on enough. We've lost too many good brothers and good sisters to contractors who cut corners at every cost."

Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez, who represents the area where the incident occurred, was also present and addressed the crowd stating, "This could have been prevented and that's the worst part about it. This could've been prevented with better safety measures."

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). The men were working on a four-story property expected

to house eight units when the third floor of the building became overloaded with concrete masonry blocks, causing it to collapse onto the second floor below, crushing Huerta. His nephew Manuel Huerta, suffered a serious spinal injury and his cousin Santiago Mayancela, experienced lacerations to his ear along with a bruised leg according to the *Daily News*.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is now investigating. Its mission for workers safety is in line with Local 79, according to market development department auditor Anthony Williamson.

"[W]e would like to see safety standards being enforced by the Department of Buildings. It's about profit over people and this stance has got to stop. Elected officials have to hold people responsible. They've got to ensure that when these contracts go to these contractors they have a good track history," said Williamson in response to the building collapse. The lead contractor, Pioneer Construction, did not respond to calls for comment.

The listed architect of the job, L&C Associates, is also under scrutiny.

Building records show Suresh Manchanda, one of the lead architects of the project, had his professional certification and Directive 14 privileges suspended on Dec. 4, 2017. A spokesperson from DOB reached out to the *Norwood News* and stated, "Professional Certification and Directive 14 privileges allows Registered Architects and Professional Engineers to file applications for work permits in New York City with limited DOB review."



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