



NORWOOD NEWS

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"WHAT DOES NORWOOD MEAN TO YOU?"

Schoolwide project looks at Norwood and the power of community



Photo by Adi Talwar

BLESSING OWSU, AN eighth grader at Bronx Community Charter School, shows off her comic book project on gentrification. The comic book was part of a school-wide study into Norwood.

By **DAVID CRUZ**

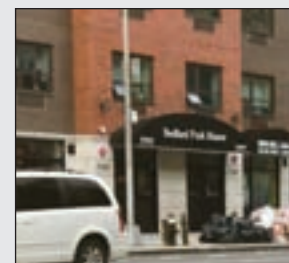
In the space of six weeks, Amanda Vasquez, a seventh grader at Bronx Community Charter School (BCCS) learned that pigeons are vital to Norwood's ecosystem, especially

near Tracey Towers. Inban Devados and Grace Ildelfonso, second grade students at BCCS, familiarized themselves with A&A Grocery at East 204th Street, learning that the 24-hour deli's marquee dish is its bacon,

egg, and cheese sandwich. Inban took what he learned a step further, proudly showing off replicas of the deli's bacon, egg, and cheese meal and Goya cans on display using Model Magic Clay, visualizing his takeaways.

For BCCS, the study served as an anthropologic exercise for the student body, gleaning its culture, history, and the social setting that makes up Norwood, a neighborhood that's seen ma-

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Webster Avenue
Stagg Buildings | pg 6**



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In the Bronx
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Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC)
3400 Reservoir Oval East
Bronx, New York 10467
Phone: 718 324 4998
Fax: 718 324 2917

E-mail: norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org
Web.: www.norwoodnews.org

Publisher

Mosholu Preservation Corporation

Senior Director of MPC

Melissa Cebollero

Executive Director of MPC

Jennifer Tausig

Editor-in-Chief, Norwood News

David Cruz, dcruz@norwoodnews.org

Proofreader

Judy Noy

Interns

Sha-Nia Alston, Michael Turay,
Jonathan Custodio

Regular Contributors

David Greene, Adi Talwar

Contributors

Miriam Quinones, José A. Giralt

For Display Advertising

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IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

In Lifting the Seal of Police Personnel Records, Norwood Senator at the Helm

By DAVID CRUZ

Repealing the non-disclosure of personnel records of police officers, known under state law as 50-a, is taking center stage in the era of criminal justice reform, with advocates and opponents of the law debating the merits that could drastically change law enforcement.

And at the center of that debate is Norwood's state Senator Jamaal T. Bailey, chair of the Codes Committee and lead sponsor of a bill that would see the law completely abolished, clearing New Yorkers in reviewing disciplinary records of NYPD officers.

Bailey has heard from both sides following two hearings that examined the 43-year-old law, sifting through the benefits and weighing its consequences. The bill is not intended to embarrass police officers or go so far as to ask for their home addresses, Bailey said, but rather a push for greater transparency.

"As members of the public, we have a right to know who's patrolling our streets. Do you have a prior disposition towards violence? Have you had prior bad acts in terms of what you've done while on the force? It's not casting aspersions about somebody's position," Bailey, a Democrat who has represented the 36th Senate District since 2017, told the *Norwood News*. "This is not an anti-police piece of legislation."

The hearings represent Bailey's ongoing attempts toward adding greater balance to the criminal justice system, which saw major changes during the last legislative session that included the elimination of bail for most low-level of-



Image still courtesy New York State Senate
STATE SENATOR JAMAAL T. Bailey, chair of the Codes Committee, is also the sponsor of a bill that would repeal the 50-a law.

fenses, speedy trial reform, and discovery reform. Come January, when the Albany Legislature convenes, repealing 50-a stands among Bailey's top priorities.

Enacted in 1976 as a way of protecting officers who testify in court if cross-examined by defense attorneys who may want to discredit an officer's testimony, the law has since extended to limit the disclosure of information during cases of police misconduct.

Representatives from various law enforcement unions and conferences were among those testifying against the repeal of the measure at the second hearing on Oct. 24 (the first hearing occurred on Oct. 17), arguing it poses a risk to officers and their families.

"It diminishes victims' rights, and victimizes them yet again when

the trial becomes not about the misdeed but about the police officer who effected the arrest. In addition to that, we believe the appeal of 50-a would create unprecedented attacks on police officers and their families. Instead of dumping water on us, or spitting at us, or throwing objects at us while we work, anti-police activists will attack our homes and our families," said Michael Meara, president of the New York State Association of Police Benevolent Associations.

Bailey represents sections of the Bronx that are covered by the 52nd, 45th, and 47th precincts, where high-profile cases of controversial police-involved shootings occurred. In 2012, 17-year-old Ramarley Graham was killed by Police Officer Richard Haste inside Ramarley's home after Haste believed he had a gun. Ramarley was not armed. After repeated denials for Haste's NYPD personnel record, Ramarley's mother, Constance Malcolm, sued to have the personnel records released, but was denied.

"50-a is dangerous to all New Yorkers because it protects officers who kill, officers who rape, and sexually assault; officers who disrespect and brutalize us. It lets them hide behind secrecy that the government shouldn't allow," said Malcolm at the second hearing. "When my son Ramarley was murdered it took us three years to find out the misconduct history of Richard Haste, the officer who shot and killed him and that was only because a whistleblower leaked to the media."

Malcolm wasn't the only speaker

(continued on page 13)

Public and Community Meetings

COMMUNITY BOARD 7 committee meetings will be held at 229A E. 204th St. at 6:30 p.m. on the following dates unless otherwise noted: Education, Youth & Libraries Committee meets on Nov. 7; Traffic & Transportation Committee meets on Nov. 7; Housing, Land Use & Economic Development Committee meets on Nov. 12; Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Committee meets on Nov. 13; Public Safety & Quality of Life Committee meets on Nov. 14 at 7 p.m.; Health & Human Services Committee meets on Nov. 19; Veterans Affairs Committee meets on Nov. 19; and Executive Committee meets on Nov. 21. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

The 52nd Precinct's **BUILD-THE-BLOCK** meeting is scheduled for the following dates, times, and locations: Nov. 7 at 6:30 p.m. at 290 E. 196th St. for residents living in Bedford Park, Fordham Heights and Kingsbridge Heights; and Nov. 26 at 6 p.m. at Tracey Towers, 40 W. Mosholu Pkwy. for residents living in Norwood and Bedford Park. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week we asked readers their thoughts on early voting, allowing them 10 days to cast a ballot ahead of Election Day.



I was aware of it, and I think it will help a lot of people. I'm used to going on Election Day; I've been doing it for 40 years, so I will continue to do it on Election Day. But it's convenient for some people who can't vote because it's late, or they rush, or some people don't take it seriously. Now some people will say they have time before the big day, so it's convenient.
Melvin Roseborough
Parkchester



I always vote early on the day of the election, but okay, why not? Yes, I think being able to vote early would be good. It's good because things happen at the last minute, so now you can get it out of the way.
Germia Maldonado
Pelham Parkway



I really don't know about the early voting. I feel like the election will be decided on that one day, with physical paper ballots that can give a real count. I think with electronic ballots the numbers can move and there will be no way to correct it. I also think that including votes from days or weeks earlier will be too difficult. I don't like the idea and prefer everyone votes on the one day; the old way.
Rafael Tolanteno
Norwood



No, I hadn't heard about that, but I would vote early if I could. I think it would be a lot better. I think it would help the elderly and the disabled and it should also eliminate the long lines on Election Day.
William White
Charlotte Gardens



Things can happen before Election Day, so I'm wondering if a vote would be wasted. Someone could die, things could change and anything can happen. So what happens to those votes?
Roberto Garcia
Kingsbridge



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NEWS BRIEFS

Update: 52nd Pct. Shooting

Very little was said about the fatal shooting of a Yonkers man at the last 52nd Precinct Community Council meeting, with local activist Sirio Guerino expressing concerns for the officers involved in the Oct. 17 shooting at Bainbridge Avenue and East 211th Street. While there has not been an official statement from NYPD on their status, fellow officers in attendance reassured the audience that they were “doing fine” and taking a little time off before returning to duty. A lawsuit has now been filed against the NYPD and officers involved in the shooting of Allan Feliz.

—José A. Giralt

Site Safety

The city Department of Buildings (DOB) is implementing new safety training procedures for construction workers and supervisors working on large construction projects beginning Dec. 1. Workers are now expected to obtain 30 hours and supervisors are expected to obtain 62 hours of site safety training as required by a 2017 law. This comes a few months after a partial building collapse in Norwood that killed 48-year-old Segundo Huerta, a construction worker at the site on 94 E. 208th Street on Aug. 27. Huerta was on site when the building's third floor collapsed, crushing and killing him. By September 1, 2020, all workers on major construction sites in New York City will be required to undergo 40 hours of site safety training.

—Michael Turay

African-American Museum Proposal

A bill introduced by Councilman Fernando Cabrera would create a task force to create a New York City's first Museum of African-American History. The task force would include the commissioners of the city Department of Cultural Affairs

Major Construction Along East Mosholu Parkway North Hurting Local Businesses

By MICHAEL TURAY

Several rows of sewer pipes, stacked wood, and metal lay on the sidewalks of East Mosholu Parkway North heading toward Jerome Avenue. A loader operated by a construction worker swiftly scoops up dirt and places it on top of newly placed pipes. A second worker waves an orange flag alongside a sign that reads, “Road closed local & emergency traffic only,” directing drivers to turn right onto Kossuth Avenue, which has been converted to a one-way street in the opposite direction.

Located near the Mosholu Parkway #4 train entrance, this active construction site is visible to many in the community. The operation being performed, a water main and sewer are being replaced, adding to the number of major construction projects happening around Norwood.

The city Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is working with C.A.C Industries to conduct a sewer installation project, though the agency provided very few details on the scope of the project. Based out of Long Island City, C.A.C is a construction company that lists the development of complex sewer lines a main part of their business model.

“DEP is working to repair the sewer running under the roadway. In order to do that, first the 8” diameter water main needed to be moved and replaced. Work to replace the existing 12” sewer is now



Photo by Michael Turay

CREWS AT THE site of a sewer construction project at East Mosholu Parkway North near Jerome Avenue.

under way,” DEP spokesman Ted Timbers wrote in a statement to the *Norwood News*.

Multiple flyers indicate no parking on the block Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Workers appeared to begin work without a notice or some sort of alert to the community. The job is expected to be completed by Nov. 9-10, according to the DEP. The lack of parking on the block and misdirection of roads has left many store owners and customers abutting the project in disarray.

“They have been working here since the 15th [of October],” said Carlos, an electronics salesman who works out a storefront at 5 E. Mosholu Pkwy. N. “It gets real loud and we noticed a drop in customers since they started working,” he said.

Other local businesses on the block have experienced similar effects.

“I have had clients who are sched-

uled to meet with me, but end up not showing. They see all the construction in the area and assume our store is closed,” said Nate, a customer service representative at the Metro PCS store at 7 E. Mosholu Pkwy. N.

Gabriel, a barber who works out of Agustín Barber shop at 3 E. Mosholu Pkwy. N., has had multiple customers cancel their haircut appointments. “They tell me they’re on the way. Then I forget to tell them that parking is blocked off and they have to wait an extra 30 minutes to find

a meter. They end up not making it to the shop in time and ultimately not showing up,” he said.

Construction in Norwood has been quite the norm lately, especially along Jerome Avenue. Another sewer replacement job on Bainbridge Avenue between Jerome Avenue and East 211th Street, is also under way. The city has temporarily converted the two-way street into a one-way as workers with the city Department of Design and Construction have been replacing old trunk water mains since mid-October.

In front of the Citibank at 3454 Jerome Ave., crews have ripped up a portion of the sidewalk, though there are no indications on what exactly is happening. “I just hope whatever has to be done, that it’s completed fast,” said Gabriel, as he pointed outside the barbershop window to orange barricades and caution tape.

and city Department of Parks, the chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission and five members appointed by the mayor and three members appointed by the Speaker of the City Council. Members of several organizations connected to African-American heritage and history and culture will also be on the task force. Backers of Cabrera’s bill say the museum would generate revenue, serve as an education institution, and create jobs.

—Sha-Nia Alston

Jerome Avenue Apartments

Officials hailed the groundbreaking ceremony for Jerome Avenue Apartments, a new 175-unit supportive housing mixed-use building in Morris Heights, lying at the epicenter of a major rezoning effort by the city. The 16-story complex, complete with a solar rooftop panels, has set aside retail space while providing affordable

housing to formerly homeless people and their families, offering supportive housing services. Out of the 175 units, 20 of them will remain permanently affordable. The new housing comes a year and a half following the Jerome Avenue Rezoning, which saw dozens of blocks rezoned to make way for taller housing.

—David Cruz

NYPD Top Cop to Retire

Police Commissioner James O’Neill, who had a stint as the executive officer at the 52nd Precinct, announced he will retire from the Police Department to take a job in the private sector. He’ll be replaced by Chief of Detectives Dermot Shea effective Dec. 1. O’Neill spent nearly 37 years as an NYPD officer, first working as a Transit Officer in 1983 before rising to become the 43rd police commissioner for New York City, succeeding Bill Bratton. Shea, who grew

up in Queens, has had several stints in the Bronx as commanding officer for the 44th and 50th precincts. At a news conference announcing his ascension, Shea said he looks “forward to working with all New Yorkers to make this great city even safer. It will not be easy.”

—David Cruz

Death Certificate Bill

Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed a bill requiring death certificates in cases related to opioids specifying which opioid was involved in the death. The new law is intended to keep a data trail for officials to better address the opioid crisis. Cuomo said the “common sense law will go [to great lengths] to ensure” there’s greater accuracy in quelling any opioid-related deaths. Prior law did not have a requirement for death certificates to specify which opioid was the case for an overdose.

—David Cruz

State, Under Orders by Governor, to Investigate Bedford Park Manor on Webster Ave.

By JOSÉ A. GIRALT and
DAVID CRUZ

Governor Andrew Cuomo is expanding his investigation into Five Star Management, the subsidiary management organization of The Stagg Group, owners of three troubled buildings on Webster Avenue in Bedford Park, over allegations the management firm has completely mismanaged a portfolio of properties.

"No one deserves to be subjected to these conditions and I am ordering the relevant state agencies to expand their investigation to all properties managed by this company," Cuomo said in a written statement on Nov. 2. "If true, we will take all steps within our power to remedy this situation and help ensure these New Yorkers have a safe and decent place to call home."

The complaints include reports of non-working elevators, broken locks on common space doors, mold and bedbugs inside apartments, and drug use by outsiders within the properties. The Stagg Group, a prolific builder of properties across the Bronx, has a litany of properties in and around Norwood.

The investigation began after tenants at another property managed by Five Star Management complained to the *New York Daily News* of poor quality of life conditions. The building at 3677 White Plains Rd. is connected to the



File photo

CONDITIONS AT THE Bedford Park Manor have now attracted the attention of Governor Andrew Cuomo, who's ordered a top-down review of the properties managed by Five Star Management, a subsidiary of The Stagg Group.

Acacia Network, a social services provider with state contracts hired to provide visiting mental health professionals and other services to individuals transitioning from homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. A second report by the publication, this time focusing on the Webster Avenue properties, attracted Cuomo's attention. The *Norwood News* first began reporting on conditions since October last year.

The investigation is no surprise to Xzavier Simpson, a tenant organizer who lives at 2985 Webster Ave., one of the

buildings now under investigation. "I'm happy this [the investigation] is happening," Simpson said in a phone interview.

Over the past year Simpson, with the help of local elected officials and community activists has organized the Bedford Park Manor Tenants Association in an attempt to rectify complaints brought to the attention of management. The Bedford Park Manor is comprised of three buildings at 2985, 2987, and 2999 Webster avenues.

Since last year, Simpson

has approached the Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BMCA), Community Board 7's Housing, Zoning & Land Use Committee, the offices of Councilman Andrew Cohen and State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, and the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, in a campaign to publicize the conditions and get The Stagg Group to remedy their complaints.

"[The Stagg Group] met with us, but they don't listen to us," said Simpson. "We've complained about a leaking roof and it still leaks. We complained about mold, they come paint over it and it reappears. It's like they don't want to work with you."

Barbara Stronczer, president of the BMCA, which connected Simpson to the various agencies and groups he met, remembers when Simpson initially came to the group's meeting with complaints about living conditions at the Bedford Park Manor.

"I'm somewhat surprised to hear about these investigations. It was my understanding that things were getting better," Stronczer said in reference to Simpson's original complaints at 2985 Webster Ave.

Five Star Management ve-

hemently disputes the Cuomo's characterization of their properties. In a written statement to the *Norwood News*, Javier Monroy, property manager at Five Stars Management, describes the complaints as carried out "by a handful of disgruntled tenants," singling out Simpson. He counters that management has records and security camera footage showing that they "have been denied access, gotten redundant and unsubstantiated claims of floods, mold, lax security and infestation." Monroy further describes the group's record keeping as "flawless."

"We are very proud of every building we manage and welcome visits and inspections at any time," Monroy said, adding that state agencies have begun its investigations at the White Plains Road building only to find no traces of bedbugs.

Simpson, however, is grateful that Cuomo is looking into the complaints against the Stagg Group and Five Star Management. He admits that his constant work on the matter has taken a toll on him. "I moved to the Bronx from Harlem because of the promise of better housing. Now I don't know if it was worth it," Simpson said.

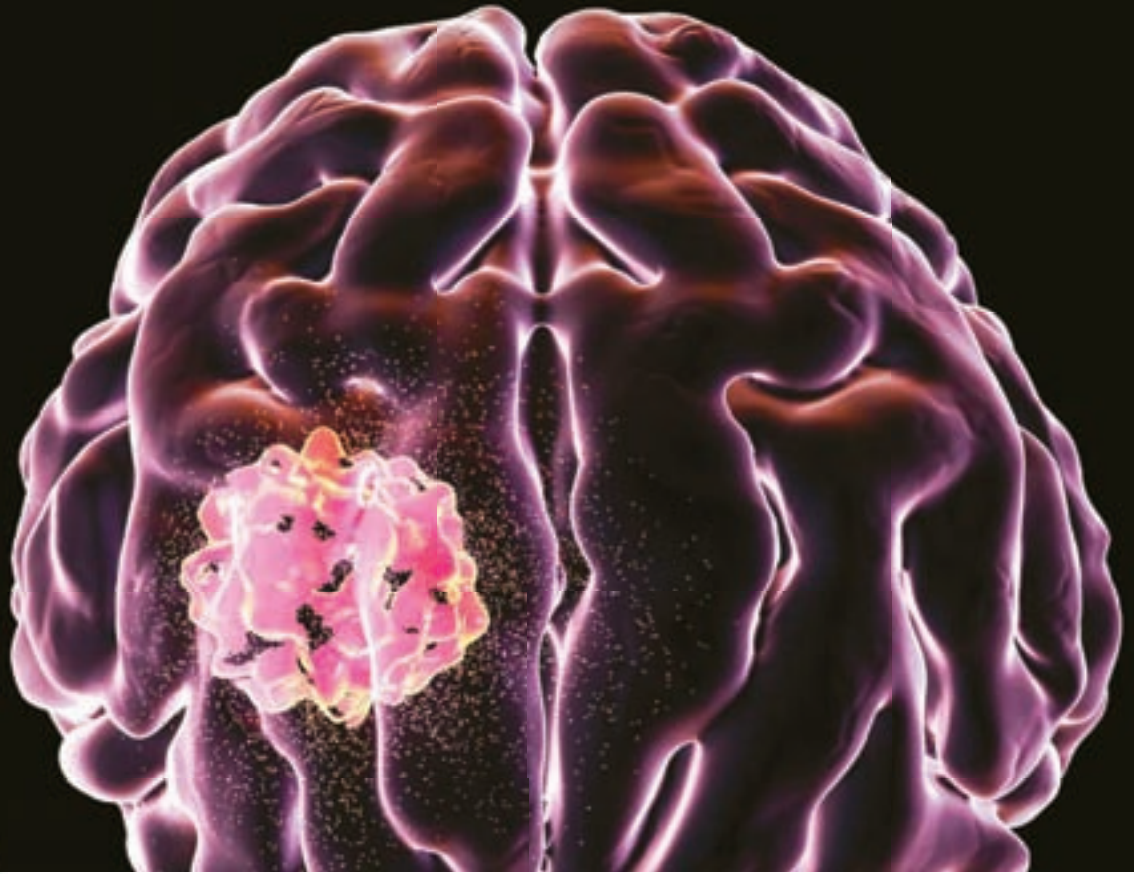
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CRIME FILE

By JONATHAN CUSTODIO

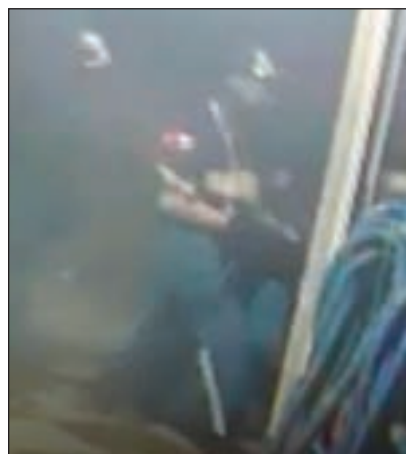


woman reportedly had her cell phone snatched from her back pocket by an unidentified male while she was opening the door to her car. The suspect fled the scene in an unknown direction.



Jerome Avenue Burglary

Police are searching for a man (pictured above) in connection to a burglary that occurred on Oct. 3 at 10:30 p.m. around Jerome Avenue and East 196th Street in Bedford Park. According to police, a 37-year-old woman reported seeing, while in her home, an unidentified man reaching into an open window and taking a purse, then taking off on foot. The purse contained \$180 worth of items, including electronics and identification. The man was last seen wearing a baseball cap and dark-colored clothing and is described as Hispanic, according to police. A photo was taken of the suspect prior to the incident at said location.



Car Wash Robbery in Bedford Park

Police are investigating an overnight armed robbery inside of Bedford Car Wash on Oct. 2. Police say the robbery occurred at 12:20 a.m. when a 29-year-old victim, a car wash employee man-

ning the booth, was reportedly struck on the head. The pair of suspects (above) fled north on Jerome Avenue after stealing approximately \$800. The victim was deemed to be in stable condition despite bruising and swelling after being transported to St. Barnabas Hospital.

Burlington Robbery

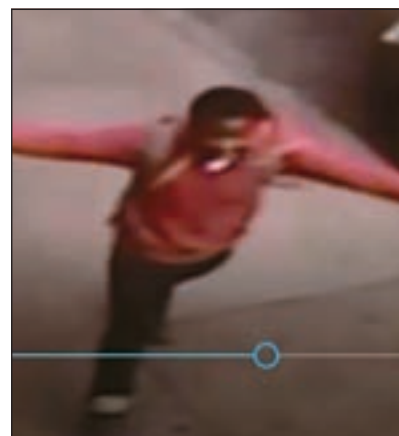
Police at the 52nd Precinct need help tracking a man (right) wanted for stealing clothes at the Burlington Coat Factory store in Fordham. The suspect entered the store on Oct. 21 at 2543 Webster Ave. swiping five men's shirts and stuffing them inside a bag and leaving without paying for them, according to the police. When two workers spotted the thievery and confronted the suspect, he flashed a knife and walked out of the store, taking off on foot. The suspect is described as black, around 5' 9" to 5' 10", heavyset, and last seen wearing a red baseball cap, a light colored sweater with the New York Yankees emblem thereon, blue jeans, and blue sneakers.



Anyone with information regarding 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). The public can also submit their tips by logging on to the CrimeStoppers website at www.crimestoppers.com, or on Twitter at @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.

17-Year-Old Attacked/Robbed

Police need help identifying two young men (one pictured above) wanted for questioning in the beating of a 17-year-old boy just outside the Mosholu Parkway #4 train station. The incident occurred on Oct. 16 just before 10 p.m., according to police. The victim tried to ignore the men, but was immediately punched, grabbed, and dragged down the station stairs and into Mosholu Parkway, where they took his cell phone and school bag. One of the men wanted for questioning was captured on video, though no description was given.



Cell Phone Theft

NYPD needs help identifying a suspect (above) wanted for stealing a cell phone on Oct. 10 in Norwood. The incident happened at about 10:15 a.m. across from 3351 Steuben Ave., according to police. There, a 28-year-old

Crime Ticks Up in the 52nd Precinct

The commanding officer of the 52nd Precinct reported an increase in crime over the last year. Deputy Inspector Thomas Alps updated the public on the crime spike at its latest precinct community council meeting on Oct. 24, adding that it's one of four precincts where crime has risen.

NYPD CompStat figures show that there have been 30 more crimes this year than during the same period last year at the Five-Two, accounting for a two percent increase in major crime. Alps emphasized the increase in grand larceny incidents, broadly defined as thefts over a \$1,000. These crimes have increased 6.8 percent from the same period in 2018, from 556 last year to 594 incidents so far this year.

According to Alps, most of the crimes have involved property that has been left unattended by the owner, break-ins at the storage facility at 301 W. Fordham Rd., and the snatching of cell phones. "Sometimes we're seeing people grab the cell phone and take off running, specifically in and around the Kingsbridge corridor," Alps said.

Another concerning trend is an increase in robberies on the #4 train line between the Kingsbridge Road and Mosholu Parkway stations. The precinct is working with the NYPD Transit Bureau District 11 to increase police presence at the stations.

The precinct has also seen an increase in transit crime from 43 incidents reported in 2018 to 70 in 2019, an increase of 62.8 percent. "We're taking a lot of thefts from people sleeping on the train and then the theft occurs at the last stop," said Alps.

Additionally, Alps mentions that not all sectors of the precinct are experiencing increases in crime. Sector B, the area bound north to south by East 198th Street to Fordham Road and east to west by Webster to Jerome avenues, accounts for most of the increase. "Thirty-five percent of all index crime in this command happens in that area [Sector B]," said Alps.

Although Alps describes the Five-Two as "struggling" at the moment, he is confident that they can turn around the latest spike in crime.

--José A. Giralt

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Rivera Honors Kingsbridge Heights Eatery, Bolsters Mandatory Commercial Lease Bill

By JONATHAN CUSTODIO

State Sen. Gustavo Rivera wants to mandate written leases between business owners and landlords, an issue that remains a dominant problem in one stretch of his district.

The bill is in the early stages. Rivera, who heads the Senate Health Committee, is currently seeking a co-sponsor in the Assembly. If passed, the measure would grant business owners the right to request a written contract, stay on as tenants until a contract is produced, and hold the right to withhold or suspend payment.

Rivera's bill bears similarities to the Small Business Job Survival Act, a decades-old bill in the City Council that would provide a 10-year lease renewal to small business. It was reintroduced as a bill in the New York City Council last month.

Numerous businesses in the area operate on month-to-month leases. According to a survey of Kingsbridge Heights business owners by the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC) and the Association for Neighborhood Housing and Development completed early this year, 48 percent



Photo by Jonathan Custodio

SENATOR GUSTAVO RIVERA (c) meets with Com Tam Ninh Kiêu owners John Nguyen (l) and Nhu Ton (r) at the restaurant. Nguyen and Ton are two years into a 10-year lease.

of commercial tenants are on very short leases or do not have a lease at all.

At Com Tam Ninh Kiêu, a Vietnamese restaurant on Jerome Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights, owners John Nguyen and Nhu Ton, are one of the few in the area with a long-term lease after buying the decade-old eatery from the previous owner two years ago. The pair was awarded the NY State Senate Empire Business Award by Rivera on Oct 28.

"It's always gonna be a struggle because the landlords are always

going to want to maximize their income, their revenue," says Nguyen. "Unfortunately, that leaves a lot of small businesses kind of out in the cold. And hopefully, with [Rivera's] help, that'll change."

NWBCCC's Evy Viruet and Leah James say most of the businesses on the block where Nguyen and Ton's restaurant is located, only have month-to-month leases.

"His bill is important because we helped pass all these city bills but we don't have a lease bill," says James, an outreach coordinator for NWBCCC, referencing the group's support of several City Council bills aimed at reducing storefront vacancies and tenant harassment.

"We're creating a series of laws that would establish something akin to what [residential] tenants have, as far as guarantees," says Rivera, who had never met the owners prior to handing them the award but says he eats there regularly. "There needs to be a standard that every business should have a lease. It's just common sense. It's not only stability for the business owner themselves, but it's stability for the community as well."

With the Kingsbridge National Ice

Center (KNIC), a \$355 million project slated to be built inside the five-acre Kingsbridge Armory, in the early stages of securing financing and architectural design, small business owners have more reason to need more protection, says Rivera.

According to James, as part of the KNIC deal, a \$250,000 community grant will be available to businesses housed inside the complex.

Kirsten Theodore of TakeBack NYC, a political coalition focused on protecting small businesses, notes the existence of a version of the City Council's Small Business Job Survival Act in the State Senate.

The bill, sponsored by Brooklyn State Senator Julia Salazar, focuses on the long-term security of commercial tenants with existing leases, as well as those looking to renew. It also allows landlords to null and void a lease if the tenant is behind on rent.

Rivera's office was in the process of drafting their bill when Salazar's was introduced and says that both bills aim to address security of the small business market. Rivera says the bill could potentially be passed in the next legislative session.



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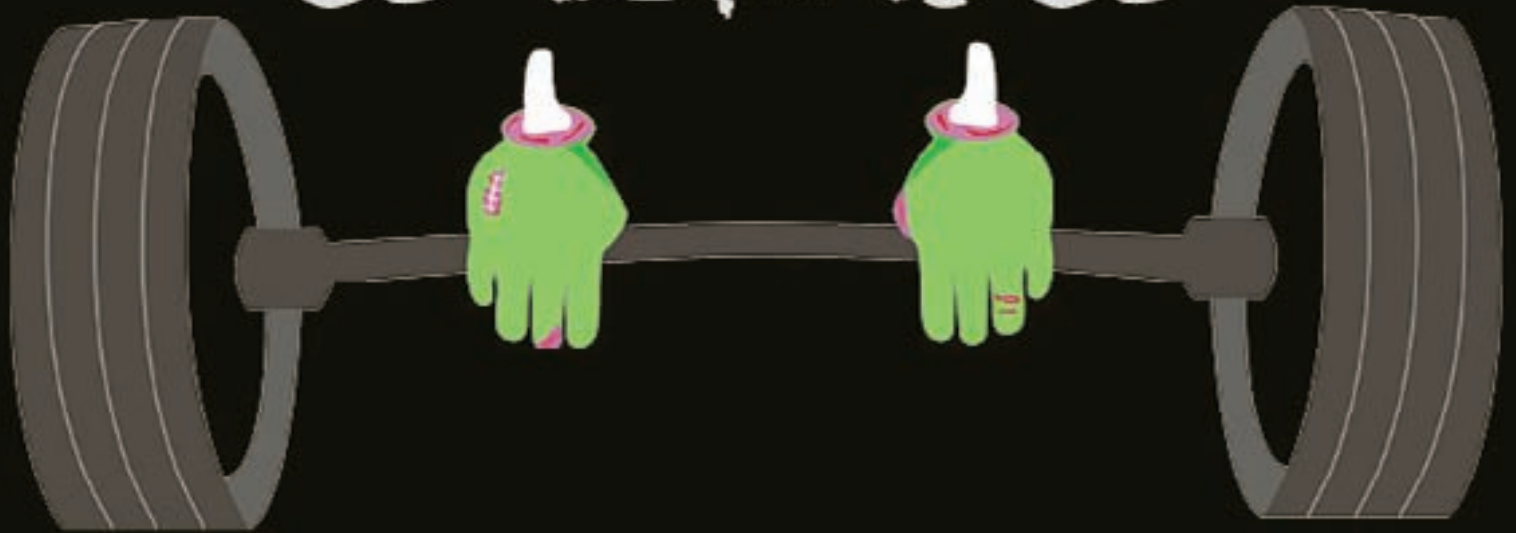
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Councilman Andy King Given 30-Day Suspension From the Council for Ethics Violations

By DAVID CRUZ

The New York City Council voted to suspend Councilman Andy King for 30 days without pay following a damning 48-page report that outlined gross violations of public office while retaliating against former staffers for speaking out against him.

In a 44 to 1 vote against King, the Council also stripped King of committee assignments (King serves as chair of the Juvenile Justice Committee), ordered him to pay a \$15,000 penalty, and instituted a monitor to ensure the Council workplace rules at King's Bronx office are properly followed. The move is a rare vote for the 51-member Council, which hasn't voted to suspend a member in modern Council history. Council Members Fernando Cabrera and Rev. Ruben Diaz Sr., both representing parts of the Bronx, were not present for the vote. The rest of the Bronx Council Delegation voted in favor of the sanctions.

King will be barred from entering his office during his suspension.

The recommendations were set forth by the New York City Council's Standards & Ethics Committee, which first investigated sexual harassment



Picture courtesy New York City Council/John McCarten
COUNCILMAN ANDY KING (pictured at mic) is given 15 minutes to rebut the allegations he abused his office at a City Council meeting on Oct. 28.

claims made against King in 2017, resulting in King taking mandatory sensitivity training courses.

The news renders King virtually powerless in a district that covers the northernmost section of the Bronx, which covers Williamsbridge, Edenwald, Co-Op City, and Olinville. King, a Democrat, was sworn into office in January 2013 after succeeding his predecessor, former Councilman Larry Seabrook, who was convicted of extor-

tion and bribery charges in July 2012.

The new investigation determined that King arranged to have staffers reimbursed to attend a yearly retreat that King and his wife, Neva Shillingford-King, hosted in the U.S. Virgins Islands. Part of the official itinerary included the wedding of Shillingford-King's daughter happening at the U.S. Virgin Islands as well, according to the report, which had substantiated the findings. Shillingford-King, an executive vice president for 1199 SEIU, was also a fixture at King's office, giving orders to his staff, a violation, according to the report. Shillingford-King did not respond to a request for comment.

Two of King's staffers also confirmed that he approved one-time Council payments to them, to cover airfare, food, and lodging costs linked to the retreat.

King was also accused of retaliation against staffers for cooperating with the 2017 investigation, even call-

ing out one of his accusers at a meeting he held at his home. He also demanded to know which staffers cooperated with other investigations. When some staffers said they spoke to the Council ethics committee about him, King retaliated. Other staffers who spoke up were told to go home while their emails were terminated without their knowledge, according to the report. One staffer waited at home for five weeks before learning her email account had been terminated.

Before the vote sanctioning King, Queens Councilman Jimmy Van Bramer, introduced a motion to expel King, but was defeated by a vote of 34 to 12.

In a 15-minute speech, King said he did nothing wrong, criticizing the lack of "due process" afforded to him, calling the allegations "downright lies." The ethics chair, Councilman Steven Matteo, said King was given numerous chances to meet with investigators, but refused to do so. There have been calls for King to resign, notably Mayor Bill de Blasio and Speaker Corey Johnson.

Prior to the New York City Council convening, Johnson said that the monitor will ensure business at King's office will continue from the time King serves his suspension to when he returns.

Johnson, who arrived to the Council the same year as King called King's actions the "most egregious thing I have ever seen in my six years in the City Council." "Retaliation, a culture of fear, potential misappropriation of Council resources, all of these things and not cooperating with the City Council all along, which shows total disregard for our process," he said.

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Photo by David Greene

COUNCILMAN ANDY KING (C) gets a hug from a supporter after vowing to fight a blistering 48-page report by the City Council's Standards and Ethics Committee.

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In Lifting the Seal of Police Personnel Records, Norwood Senator at the Helm

(continued from page 2)

to share deeply personal moments involving police actions. Gwen Carr, the mother of Eric Garner who died while placed in a chokehold by police officer Daniel Pantaleo, and Valerie Bell, the mother of Sean Bell, who died in a hail of gunfire by plainclothes officers in Queens in 2006, also spoke at the second hearing.

As did Bailey, speaking nearly midway through the second hearing, recalling to representatives from police unions two uncomfortable moments involving police officers when he was younger. One of them included a stop by police while

awaiting a bus. The other encounter resulted in Bailey placed in a police van when he was 13 years old shortly after leaving his dentist following a brace tightening. In each case, he was not arrested (he's never been arrested).

"I don't want anybody to go to any of your homes and harass your children or any members in your employ," said Bailey. "[I]f something happens at their hands we should know what's happening. That's all we're saying. I don't want personal records out. I don't want your addresses. And I'll stand with you." He received a brief round of applause.

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HALLOWEEN IN NORWOOD

The Bronx knows how to celebrate Halloween and the Norwood News was there to capture some of the best moments.



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TOP ROW left to right - (1) **THE LINE EXTENDS** out of the tunnel as attendees await their turn to visit the haunted house at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center on Oct. 25. Photo by Miriam Quinones (3) **MOM TAKES THE** kids through the haunted house at the Williamsbridge Recreation Center on Oct. 25. Photo by Miriam Quinones **MIDDLE ROW** left to right - (1) **AT SABOR LATINO** restaurant, Scarecrow Briseis Montes, 23 months, doesn't shy away from *The Bride of Chucky* movie. Photo by Miriam Quinones (2) **AT SABOR LATINO** restaurant, Scarecrow Briseis Montes, 23 months, doesn't shy away from *The Bride of Chucky* movie. Photo by Miriam Quinones (4) **AT SABOR LATINO** restaurant in Bedford Park, kids have their hands out as a worker does out cash instead of a worker. Photo by José A. Giralt (6) **CLOWN COSTUMES WERE** a popular choice during Halloween on Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood, which was part of Abbie's Halloween Health & Wellness Fair. Photo by Miriam Quinones **BOTTOM ROW** left to right - (1) **THE ABAD FAMILY** chose an astronaut theme for their Halloween celebration. Photo by Miriam Quinones (3) **FOUNDER AND CEO** of Miss Abbie's Halloween Health & Wellness Fair, Logan Barrino, poses with a pitbull on Halloween. Photo by Miriam Quinones (6) **HOTDOG!** LOGAN BARRINO, Founder and CEO of Miss Abbie's Halloween Health & Wellness Fair. Photo by Miriam Quinones

IN THE BRONX

Some events in the days leading up to or happening on the spooky holiday.



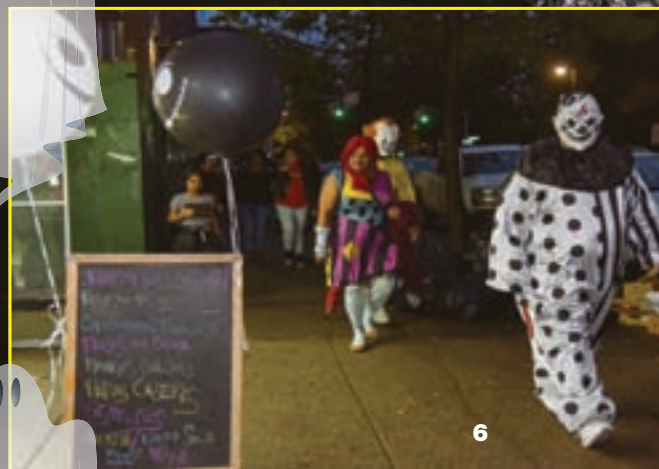
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on Center on Oct. 25. Photo by Miriam Quinones. (2) SOME PARTICIPANTS AT the Oval are decked out in ghoulish makeup ready to scare the living on Oct. 25, and it seems she's the only one having a good time. Photo by Miriam Quinones (4) THIS DAD CARRIES his daughter, who clings for safety as NO restaurant on Halloween, Jayamarie Lopez (l), dressed as Wednesday Addams, hangs with her buddy Ameena Omsby (r), dressed as Tiffany from the camera on Halloween. Photo by Miriam Quinones (3) AT SABOR LATINO restaurant, Wondergirl Jayleen Vargas, 20 months, strikes a pose of candy on Halloween. Photo by Miriam Quinones (5) DINOSAUR COSTUMES MAKE an appearance during the Halloween celebration along saw dozens of families out in the neighborhood. Photo by José A. Giralt (7) THIS LITTLE GIRL dressed as a cop books a pinstriped con at Miss Fair costumes for this year's Halloween, where they went around Norwood. Photo credit: José A. Giralt (2) SPIDER-MAN AND Captain America team Fair Shanequa Charles takes a moment to have some fun at the event. Photo by Miriam Quinones (4) INSPECTOR THOMAS ALPS (r) commanding on Oct. 22. Photo courtesy 52nd Precinct Twitter Account (5) MISS ABBIE'S Halloween Health & Wellness Fair on Halloween sees Christopher dressed as a frankfurter, with his dad LeRon Barrino, dressed as a hamburger, show off their costumes at Miss Abbie's Halloween Health & Wellness



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A Civics Lesson on Impeachment, Courtesy of Norwood's Congressman

By DAVID CRUZ

Constituents within the 13th Congressional District, which covers Norwood, got a lesson on impeachment from Congressman Adriano Espaillat, who spent more than an hour covering the impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump.

Espaillat, a Democrat who sits on the Foreign Affairs Committee, one of three bodies conducting the impeachment probe on Mr. Trump, outlined the process of an impeachment at a forum on Oct. 17.

"I hope that this process will be expedited but that it will be fair and that it will be one where the American people gain a level of confidence in government again," said Espaillat.

In a 20-minute presentation, Espaillat outlined the steps to impeachment, while dispelling perceptions behind holding the inquiry behind closed doors much to the anger of Senate Republicans who are demanding greater transparency.

"If an investigation is opened, a witness can come in and testify and the next witness may be intimidated if they see that the testimony that the previous witness gave now becomes public," said Espaillat. "And so that's why it needs to be confidential."

Espaillat was joined by Jamal Greene, a law professor at Columbia University with a background on constitutional law. Greene mentioned that impeachment inquiries are sparked by whether a president has committed bribery, other high crimes and misdemeanors, and treason.

"Within the meaning of the Constitution, there's nothing that we know of what constitutes treason. We're not actively in war with many countries right now," said Greene, adding that an impeachable offense falling under "other high crimes and misdemeanors" does not have to be criminal in nature.

"It's very easy to think of examples of conduct by the President that would very clearly be impeachable, but would not necessarily be a crime under criminal law," said Greene. "If...[for example] the President said any federal official who beats on my enemies will be pardoned -- should they be convicted of doing so -- . That's not a crime for the President



Photo by David Cruz

CONGRESSMAN ADRIANO ESPAILLAT (at podium) speaks at a forum outlining the steps in the impeachment inquiry process at Vladeck Hall at Amalgamated Houses on Oct. 17.

to do that. He could say that--the First Amendment gives him the right to say that if he wants to, but that would very clearly be an abuse of his office."

Unlike prior impeachment inquiries, this inquiry doesn't have a special counsel, leaving it to the committees to carry out the impeachment. Once the Foreign Affairs and Intelligence committees complete their investigation, the evidence is turned over to the Judiciary Committee to determine whether to draft articles of impeachment. A trial is then held in the Senate, which is Republican controlled. An impeachment happens when two-thirds of Senators vote in favor of impeaching.

Espaillat added the closed-door approach is akin to a grand jury convening to hear testimony that's usually held behind closed doors.

In September, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced an impeachment inquiry against Mr. Trump after a whistleblower came forward to report Mr. Trump had recommended to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that his administration should investigate former vice president and Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, a prospective rival in the general election, and his son Hunter in exchange for military aid.

Espaillat reminded attendees that impeaching Mr. Trump was on his mind back in November 2017, citing Mr. Trump's suggestion to then-FBI director James Comey that he drop a case against former National Security Adviser Lt. General Mike Flynn. Though Espaillat and several other congressional members introduced a motion to draft articles of impeachment against Mr. Trump, the attempts were unsuccessful.



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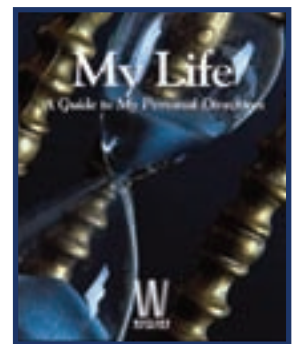
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Norwood's Graffiti Fighter Turns Attention to Domestic Violence

By SHA-NIA ALSTON

Heather Guerino and her husband Sirio are well known for cleaning up graffiti in Norwood. Now Heather is taking on a new cause by advocating for domestic violence survivors, and putting greater attention toward the issue.

"I am on the frontline of this issue because I am working with parents that have gone through domestic violence situations," Heather said. She even mentioned still seeing the effects of abuse on men and women who are no longer with their abuser.

Heather's advocacy was inspired by the tragic story of Lisa Marie Velasquez, a young woman from the Bronx who intended to aid her friend in a domestic violence attack in August last year but ended up losing her life. Velasquez was beaten to death with a hammer and dismembered. Her body parts were spread across two Bronx parks.

From 2010 to 2017, the Bronx saw the highest number of murders related to domestic violence cases at 153, according to a report by the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence. But there were some glimmers of improvement as the homicide rate related to cases involving domestic violence dropped in 2017 with 9. There were 16 the year before.

Heather has already gone to work spreading awareness about the issue. During a graffiti cleanup event on Parkside Place on June 1, Heather had a collage set up to remember the

victims of domestic violence with Velasquez at the center. She sees her community outreach as remembering the victims, but is taking steps to see victims protected further.

Heather sent letters to Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez, State Sen. Jamaal Bailey, and Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark, pitching ideas for further protections. She's requested she receive more training to be better equipped to speak to victims, and having events every month to spread awareness. Heather even suggested they introduce a bill similar to Connecticut's domestic violence law, arguing New York's laws are weak.

New York's Domestic Violence Justice Act allows victims of domestic violence who commit crimes under coercion from their abusers to receive a shorter sentence and/or attend alternative incarceration programs. These include the victim suffering physical, sexual, or psychological abuse inflicted by a spouse or intimate partner at the time.

Heather is currently trying to receive funding to provide a 24-hour daycare service for children whose parents are victims of domestic violence. This would allow parents to be able to go to a hospital, or find temporary housing as of way of leaving their abuser.

"If we don't push for change, everything is going to be stagnant. It's going to remain the same," Heather said.

David Cruz contributed to this report.



Photo courtesy Heather Guerino

HEATHER GUERINO (PICTURED) at an event promoting domestic violence awareness, encouraging anyone who's a victim of domestic violence to speak up.

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At Kittay House, Missionary Sisters Celebrate Century of Established Order

By DAVID GREENE

After 100 years of service in the United States, the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (ICM), the surviving sisters marked a century of its established order with special mass and special Papal blessing from Rome.

Currently eight ICM sisters call The New Jewish Home, Kittay Senior Apartments on Webb Avenue in Kingsbridge their home. On Oct. 10 those members were remembered for a lifetime of service. Although retired, they still perform outreach to other seniors at the home. The group settled at the home in 2015, finding it an ideal place to live, according to ICM General Councilor Sister Tellie Lape.

ICM was originally founded by Marie Louise de Meester in India in 1897 and the sisters came to America and founded their first chapter in Manhattan's Hell's Kitchen in 1919.

Vicar Rachel Oommen, a member of the group's General Council, began her mission in Texas and was now returning from Rome with the special blessing from Pope Francis.

"This is like a homecoming for



Photo by David Greene

AN ICM MEMBER (Immaculate Heart of Mary) (c) proudly holds up a Papal Blessing from Pope Francis to members of the ICM, where its US chapter celebrated its 100th anniversary at Kittay House.

me," Oommen said, adding "This is the first time I'm coming to New York, and to meet our sisters is a real thrill for me because at this age they're full of life and their missionary series is really alive. Our mis-

sion is life long."

Sister Emily Jocson added, "They're elderly themselves, but they live here like missionaries to their neighbors." She mentioned the sisters are relentlessly helpful.

The director of the New Jewish Home at Kittay House, Eli Skoczylas, told the sisters after the mass, "Today on behalf of the New Jewish Home, I congratulate and celebrate the ICM Sisters as they celebrate this wonderful milestone. We celebrate your mission and hard work in the communities that you serve and making a difference in the world."

"There's so many wonderful orders here," beamed a jubilant Maryann Sullivan, a member of the Archdiocese and Council of New York for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Manhattan. Looking around the room at the gathering of different visiting orders, Sullivan continued, "The Sisters of Mercy I grew up with and in grammar school I had the Dominican Sisters and the Sisters of Charity and the Ladies of Charity, who are all an extended family. Yes, it's amazing."

Today, ICM is currently in 19 countries. Besides the chapter at Kittay House, the group also has chapters in North Carolina, Texas and California. ICM celebrates their anniversary on Oct. 10, the day Mother de Meester passed away.



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Opinion

A Love Letter to the Bronx Should Serve as an Inspiration

By DAVID CRUZ

For anyone who hasn't had the chance to catch HBO's documentary, *The Bronx, USA*, I have two words: see it. For 90 minutes you'll be spellbound by the essence of the Bronx, captured beautifully in this dazzling documentary that follows famed Hollywood producer George "Georgie" Shapiro, and his Bronx buddy Carl Golub, who travel back to Norwood, embracing its halcyon past.

The documentary is a parallel story of sorts, with a portion of the documentary dedicated to Shapiro's adolescent days in Norwood (strangely, the neighborhood isn't referred to as Norwood, but "the neighborhood") and the other to a group of friends—namely Richeal, Tiffany, Joseph, Yhaqueri, Ronice, Clejen, Alexander, Estefany, Danielle, and Javid—all enrolled at DeWitt Clinton High School and entering at a cross-

roads, sharing the burden of responsibility. The two stories converge toward the end, with the octogenarians espousing the meaning of fellowship, which they conclude didn't have to be taught to the young group.

In both stories, Norwood, and more broadly the Bronx, is celebrated, serving as a cherished part of their upbringing and forming that conduit for friendships. In Shapiro's case, they're lifelong. In the case of former Bronxite Rob Reiner, the famed actor/movie director who shared his thoughts for the documentary, Norwood was the village. For Richeal, who looks after her one-year-old twin siblings, it's a place of lasting friendships.

On top of Reiner, other famed Bronxites, including Grandmaster Melle Mel, actor Chazz Palminteri, retired General Colin Powell, producer Ced Gee, artist John "Crash" Matos, actor Alan

Alda and his wife Arlene, a book author, music producer Steve Jordan, all muse about the Bronx.

Throughout the documentary the word "neighborhood" is mentioned, serving as a cocoon from the outside world and a place where traditions are established (one interesting activity I learned about was sunning on Tar Beach, where residents tanned on tar-covered rooftops).

Palminteri, who grew up in Belmont's Little Italy, offers a word of caution. "I think the word 'neighborhood' is dying now. There are no more neighborhoods," says Palminteri.

But is it that so?

The Bronx sure has shed the version of neighborhood that Palminteri knew—the one where doors were unlocked and stickball was the quintessential street game—but that hasn't completely vanished. Families have planted roots in the Bronx, and it was evident this past Halloween where mothers and fathers from varied ethnic backgrounds ushered their kids down East 204th Street for some trick-or-treating. It's evident in the North Bronx Islamic Center, where, in the last six months, worshippers have arrived to form community. And it's evi-

dent during winter time at Mosholu Parkway. The funny thing about nostalgia is the sheen that's applied to those memories.

Are people keeping their head low these days? Yes. Are residents attending community meetings? Not much. There are a million reasons behind that, which can't be covered in this single opinion piece. But that doesn't mean inspiring more people to care about your neighborhood can't be reclaimed.

The documentary resonated with me, inspiring me to publish the front page story you see in this edition. It's a story of students taking stock of Norwood, the beauty of the Bronx, and not just living in it with their head down.

It'd be great if residents can do what these students did and soak in what's around them, chronicling what makes Norwood a special place. It can be made even more special by attending community meetings, forming civic associations, taking a day out of their lives to contribute to their neighborhood, and sharing ideas. Perhaps they'll have the same long-lasting love as what George Shapiro has.

David Cruz is the editor of the Norwood News.



Letters To The Editor

Keep Bus Stops Close

An article in your previous edition (Oct. 24-Nov. 6, 2019) reports that the MTA will redesign some Bronx bus routes. Also mentioned was possibly eliminating hundreds of bus stops by extending distances between the stops from the current "relatively close spacing" of over three city blocks to possibly four city blocks in order to improve bus speeds between stops.

When exiting a bus, a passenger must walk to a destination, and lengthening the distance between stops means a longer walk. The passenger may be carrying packages or a child, be elderly, unwell, or even disabled. Chances are none of them would consider over three city blocks to be "close spacing" between stops. Having to walk longer distances either to or from a bus stop causes more hardship for riders and is not a good trade-off for the MTA's "hopes" of improving bus speed between stops. Vehicle speed does not depend on how far apart bus stops are but rather is determined by traffic at any given time.

How many of those making these decisions actually ride public transportation?

Changing spacing does not guarantee bus speed. Perhaps a rider poll is warranted before any final decision is made.

**Judy Noy
Norwood**

Being Politically Savvy

Your October 24-November 6 Inquiring Photographer reminds me of Jay Leno's Jaywalking segment from when he was hosting "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno." Like Leno, you found people off the street who know nothing about politics.

Tony Apospolos supports President Donald Trump, whose tax cuts benefit mostly the rich and have run up the deficit to \$1 trillion. But he thinks Democratic candidates' proposals would bankrupt the country.

Michael Horowitz thinks Senator Elizabeth Warren is too far to the left. That seems to be the criticism for anyone who proposes policies that will

help most people. Horowitz also expresses no desire to learn about the best candidate, Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, because he assumes she can't win. Ex-Vice President Joe Biden proposed freezing Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and veterans' benefits back in 1995. He supported the Iraq War, is against marijuana legalization, and was for the attempted coup in Venezuela. He also voted for Clarence Thomas, John Roberts, and Samuel Alito for the Supreme Court.

But Biden is the only candidate Luis Figueroa thinks is qualified.

But when we hear from a professional politician, City Councilman Fernando Cabrera, he doesn't make any more sense. Either he's just as ignorant or he's just another political lackey for corporate America. Cabrera says, "Government does not do nearly as good a job as the business community does." Really? Then how come the collection of private trash, done by private companies, is such a mess?

Perhaps Cabrera needs to listen to one of his colleagues, Council Sanitation Committee Chair Antonio Reynoso, who said "The private sanitation industry that services businesses has been engaged in a horrific race to the bottom for decades, endangering their workers and the public."

The New York Council is expected to pass legislation that would divide the city into 20 zones, allowing only three companies in each zone collection of residential trash is done by the city. So there's one truck per area. Drivers have better salaries, safer conditions, pensions, job security and health care coverage.

Also, Cabrera is either ignorant of American history or is deliberately ignoring it. Before the government intervention during the administration of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the organizing of workers by unions, the norm was seven-day work weeks and 12-hour work days. Pensions? Social Security? Nope! You worked until you died. But if Cabrera, as well as like-minded Democrats such as the Clintons, really believe what they preach, let them join the Republican party. I'm tired of being told we must choose between the Republican who calls himself or herself a Democrat and the Republican who calls himself or herself a Republican.

**Richard Warren
Van Cortlandt Village**

Upon research, former Vice President Joe Biden voted against confirming US Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, and US Supreme Court justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito.

In Stretch of Two Decades, BX Sports Builds Apparel Empire

By JEROME GUN HILL BID

The Cafaro Brothers—Alberto, Vincenzo and Angelo—is also the team behind BX Sports, a sneaker and lifestyle apparel retailer found across the Bronx, including the Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District. Since 1997 the trio has been hard at work building a sneaker and style empire across the Bronx.

BX Sports is a “true family business” with the three brothers at the helm supported by their sister and mother. For Alberto, “family is what makes the engine run.”

When Alberto’s brother Vincenzo first decided to open up a sneaker store he was just 22 years old. At the time, the brothers were working in a shoe store in their native Queens, learning the ins and outs of the fashion retail world. But they wanted more. So they headed up to the Bronx, settling in a former Super Cuts at 2181 White Plains Rd.

“[Vincenzo] just wanted to see if he could do it; to see if he could run a successful small business at the age of 22,” said Alberto.

With the support of his family, the BX Sports brand grew to include a second store two years later, and a third



ALBERTO CAFARO POSES in front of a mural painted inside the BX Sports headquarters on White Plains Road.

Photo courtesy BX Sports

store a year after that. At present BX Sports operates stores in Norwood, Mott Haven, Soundview, and Pelham Parkway with over 40 employees.

The location at 3476 Jerome Ave. in the BID has been open since 2003. For the first 10 years of its operation Alberto was in the store every day, rare for a store owner, meeting with customers and connecting with neighbor-

ing small business owners. He’s seen customers grow up, start families, and have kids. Those kids who’ve grown up are now BX Sports employees. “It is generational,” said Alberto.

Alongside a changing industry and changing consumer habits, the BX Sports team has had to innovate and adjust. “The business has always been buy, sell. You see a pair of shoes on the

rack, you buy them,” said Alberto. But now Alberto says BX Sports has to be more creative in their engagement with customers, relying more on multimedia content and marketing to get shoppers’ attention.

“The goal hasn’t changed. The goal is always to make sure the family is good, to do the things we want to do in life,” said Alberto. However, “the vision has changed, because the world has,” said Alberto. BX Sports’ next move—a community space dedicated to fashion, art, and music—reflects this changing vision. Inspired by the Italian social clubs of yesteryear and the community arts spaces of today, their next venture will open on White Plains Road in January 2020.

The new location will serve as a space for performances, photoshoots, art shows, and events. The first of its kind in the neighborhood, Alberto wants to show that BX Sports is a “hands on, community driven brand” dedicated to providing “people from the Bronx a place to showcase their talents.”

Follow BX Sports on Instagram @ [bxsportsny](https://www.instagram.com/bxsportsny), or visit their online store at [bxsportsny.com](https://www.bxsportsny.com).

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Literacy Fair

The Children's Hospital at Montefiore hosts a literacy fair on Nov. 26 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., featuring book giveaway offers for children under age five, registration for a New York Public Library card, and reading awareness table. A book vendor fair takes place from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Both events take place at 3415 Bainbridge Ave. For more information, call the Family Learning Place at (718) 741-2357 or email familylearningplace@montefiore.org.

Canned Food Donation

The office of Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz is hosting a canned food drive through Nov. 13 to support two local food pantries for the holiday season: Kingsbridge Heights Community Center and St. Frances of Rome Food Pantry. Canned fruits and vegetables, cereals, dried beans, rice, tuna, coffee, teas, canned juices, powdered milk, Jell-O, and soups will be accepted. Donate food at 3107 Kingsbridge Ave. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 796-5345.

Tenant Help

The Mayor's Public Engagement Unit will have members of its tenant support unit on hand to inform tenants of their housing rights and connect with a range of free resources to address landlord harassment at the following dates, times, and locations: Nov. 16 and 30 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the New York Public Library Sedgwick Branch at 1701 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.; Nov. 12, 19, and 26 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the NYCHA Customer Contact Center, 478 E. Fordham Rd. For more information, call 311.

Compost Leaves

Residents living in Norwood, Bedford Park, Fordham, Van Corlandt Park, University Heights, and Kingsbridge Heights can have their collected tree leaves picked up by the New York City Department of Sanitation. Leaves must be placed in a brown bin, paper lawn and leaf bag, or yard waste only bin, and left out at the curb after 4 p.m. on Nov. 16

and 30 only. For more information, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/leafcollection.

Financial Empowerment

Part of the Solution (POTS) will host a series of personal finance workshops at 2759 Webster Ave., second floor, at the 2 p.m. on the following dates: how credit works on Nov. 8; and banking on emergency savings and connecting food and finances workshop on Nov. 15. Sessions include free drinks and snacks. For more information, contact hesteban@pots-bronx.org or call (718) 220-4892 ext. 135.

Book Sale

Sistas & Brothas United and Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition host a book sale at 103 E. 196th St. on the following days: Thursdays and Fridays from 4 to 6 p.m.; and Saturdays and Sundays from 12 to 4 p.m. Book genres will include short stories, dramas, fiction, horror, kids' books, and more. For more information, call (718) 584-0515.

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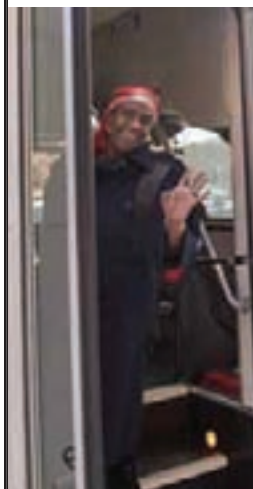
Applications for neighborhood improvement grants through Citizens Committee for New York City and New York City Service are now open to New York City resident-led groups that have a membership roster of 20 or more. Projects that could be funded include tree stewardship training, tree planting or removal, graffiti removal, bicycle rack installation, or a speed bump installation. The deadline to apply is Nov. 12. To learn more and to apply, visit nyc.gov/loveyourblock.

Crib Bumper Exchange

Parents and caregivers can dispose of their crib bumper pads—known to cause injury to infants or possibly death—in exchange for a baby sleep sack at the Administration for Children's Services' (ACS) Bronx office at 2501 Grand Concourse, fourth floor. It's recommended to call the Bronx ACS office at (718) 933-1212 ahead of receiving the sleep sack. For more information, go to www.nyc.gov/safesleep.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Free films at NYPL

People of all ages are welcome to visit the New York Public Library to enjoy the following free films:

"Casablanca," - Nov. 9, and *"Rebel Without a Cause"* - Nov. 16, both at 2:30 p.m. at the Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., for adults. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

"Dumbo," - Nov. 16 at 1:30 p.m. at the Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., for teens/young adults. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

"Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," - Nov. 16 at 2 p.m. at the Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Pl. (near Kingsbridge Road), for ages 5 to 12. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

Onstage

Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center presents free Shakespeare's **"Measure for Measure,"** Nov. 14 at 7 p.m. For more information and to RSVP, call (718) 543-8672 ext. 307.

Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents **Celia Cruz, the Musical**, featuring singer, dancers, actors and orchestra, performing salsa, Nov. 16 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$45 to \$65; \$100/VIP. VIP fee includes preconcert wine and hors d'oeuvres reception at 6:30 p.m. and best seats. For more information and tickets, call (718) 960-8833.

Events

This fall, seasoned guides and staff experts

lead walks in Wave Hill's fall gardens, offering an intimate look at garden design, fall foliage, birding and an outdoor art installation. The Avian Adventures Family Walk takes place Nov. 9 from 1 to 2 p.m. and the Garden Walk: Birds and the Winter Garden is set for Nov. 11 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Woodlawn Conservancy holds free **Trolley Tour**, Nov. 21 from 2 to 4 p.m. at Woodlawn Cemetery to visit historic gravesites including Sir Miles Davis, Duke Ellington, Celia Cruz and more. For more information, visit www.WoodlawnTours.org.

St. James Recreation Center, 2530 Jerome Ave., offers a variety of **adult and senior programs** through Dec. 21. For more information or a detailed listing, call (718) 367-3657.

Bronx NYC Parks Department presents free



Photo courtesy Lehman Center for the Performing Arts

A TRIBUTE TO Celia Cruz is scheduled for the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts. See Onstage for more details.

Flag Football for kids ages 9 to 17. Girls Invitational Tournament, Nov. 11. For more information, locations, and details, call (718) 430-1824.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Painting to Migratory Bird Songs, to use natural materials as a paintbrush while listening to the music of migratory birds, Nov. 9 and 10; and Three Sisters Companion Planting, to sample crafts that use corn husks, squash and beans, Nov. 16 and 17; both in the WH House 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Also scheduled are **Falconry Presentation: Skyhunters in Flight**, to see live hawks, falcons and owls perform and live raptors from around the world, Nov. 11 at 1 p.m. on the grounds; and **Concert: The Alonso Brothers**, Cuban brothers/pianists perform featuring a variety of Latin music, Nov. 17 at 2 p.m. in the WH House (tickets: \$28/adults includes admission to the grounds; WH members save 10%; \$12/ages 8 to 18 (info: ext. 251). Grounds admission is free until

noon Tuesdays and Saturdays all year. For more information and a schedule of events including tours and walks, call (718) 549-3200.

Exhibits

The Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street), presents **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 adults: **Computer Basics**: Nov. 12 at 1 p.m.; and **Microsoft Word for Beginners**: Nov. 13 at 1 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for kids: **Crafty Fridays at 3 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12): crafts, Nov. 8 and 15; **Toddler Storytime at 11 a.m.**: (ages 18 to 36 months): stories, songs, fingerplays and crafts, Nov. 14, 18 and 21; and **STEM: Kids Science at 3 p.m.**: (ages 5 to 12): Nov. 12 and 19 (Building). Adults can join: **Knitting**: 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**: Nov. 14 and 21. 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 Nov. 11 for the next publication date of Nov. 21.



Photo courtesy Wave Hill

NOVEMBER FEATURES PLENTY of hiking activities at Wave Hill, the Bronx Oasis (see Events for more information).

"What Does Norwood Mean to You?"

(continued from page 1)

for changes in its last 25 years given the wave of foreign-born New Yorkers planting roots in a community once dominated by Irish and Jewish neighbors.

It's also a project that comes full circle for BCCS, a K-8 school that opened its doors nine years ago in Fordham with the strong desire of relocating to a large building at 3170 Webster Ave. in Norwood. It did just that in 2012.

The subjects ranged across the K-8 school, and tailored to a child's general learning ability. Kindergarten students, for instance, brainstormed their most enjoyable places to have fun in Norwood, with students Acellese Acosta and Evan Velilla crafting sketches and dioramas of swings at Oval Park. Acellese named her swing "The Ace" in honor of her name. Eighth graders delved into gentrification, a timely subject given the worries over it across the Bronx.

The study—illustrated through dioramas and artworks that was later presented at a pop-up, hands-on museum exhibition at BCCS on Oct. 25 dubbed "A Celebration of Norwood"—is part of a yearlong look into one topic each grade will embrace. Sasha Wilson, BCCS' co-principal, said studying Norwood was long overdue, giving students the chance to familiarize locales they've passed dozens of times, which included the neighboring Family Dollar store.

"It pushes them towards inter-activity. Anyone can do the classic, science-fair thing where you put up poster boards that explains something, and you say, 'That's nice.' We pretend to appreciate it, it's not that engaging," said Wilson. "[W]hat's exciting about the museum is... this—you walk into that Family Dollar classroom and you're given a cart and then you go towards the stock room, and then you can pick things off the shelf ... There's an element of being immersed in it."

Among them was the subject of activism, which the fifth grade class took on. It also saw a visit by Norwood elected officials.

"[Councilman] Andrew Cohen came in and [Assemblywoman] Nathalia Fernandez, which was great. And they had real conversations and how do you deal with them," said Wilson, mentioning the subjects within that topic ranged from handling community problems while pointing to the individual roles citizens can take.

Blessing Owsu, an eighth grader, sought a clever way of explaining the subject of redlining and gentrification through an original story presented in

comic book format. Blessing's piece told the generational story of grandmother and her granddaughter, Loraline, two Bronx residents dealing with redlining and gentrification respectively.

"To me, it's two-sided," said Blessing, 13, of gentrification. "It's both good and bad. They fix the community because the Bronx needs fixing up. It's easy to make improvements, pretty much. On the other hand, I don't like how when only the richer benefit here. I feel like they should give power to the lower people too."

Part of the lesson involved learning about Robert Moses, the master city urban planner who transformed the Bronx in the 1960s with the creation of the Cross Bronx Expressway. For Blessing, Moses—who's buried at Woodlawn Cemetery touching Norwood—his Bronx-based projects were "both good and bad."

Having absorbed the subject, Blessing now draws links between prices and gentrification, pointing to a corner store bodega in Norwood that's selling chips at \$1.50 when they once cost .50 cents. "They're building new stores and everything's costing more and more," said Blessing.

Wilson beamed with pride over the subject and the students' willingness to learn about gentrification. "Those are thorny, complex issues that there are no good answers to," said Wilson, adding that the subject was simplified even further for the lower grades through pop-sicle stick puppets. "It allows them an access point; it allows them to engage on what this issue is."

Some of the grades plan to spend the rest of the year poring over the topics, while others will find new ones. Amanda, who is in the seventh grade, will stick to the ecology of pigeons and its interaction with Norwood, a neighborhood she feels has something for everyone.

"Norwood is a place where everyone could connect in their own way," said Amanda, who wants to be a teacher at BCCS when she grows up. "If you're looking for a place to connect with people and eat foods, and visit things, you can come here."

Connection is vital toward community-building, said Sasha, who looks to revisit the topic over the next semesters. "[Connectivity] is a big thing; sort of building connection and building understanding and empathy and if it means that the next time you're in the Family Dollar just like doing your business and not even picturing the people there as people and you look at them a different way."

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