



# NORWOOD NEWS

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## SUVs & BUS CRASH INJURING 14



Photo by David Greene

**AN NYPD HIGHWAY** Patrol officer examines the front of a Bee-Line bus that crashed into a steel pillar supporting the elevated structure for the number 4 train on Jerome Avenue in the Norwood section of the Bronx on Thursday, July 29, 2021.

by **DAVID GREENE**

Fire department officials reported that 14 people were injured, one critically, after two SUVs collided in Norwood, in the vicinity of Woodlawn station,

sending one vehicle crashing into an oncoming passenger bus, which plowed into a steel pillar that supports the elevated number 4 train line.

FDNY officials reported that

the crash, which took place outside the community office of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection at 3660 Jerome Avenue, happened at 11:06 a.m. on Thursday,

July 29. Following the incident, police shut down Jerome Avenue between East 213th Street and Bainbridge Avenue, as NYPD detectives were joined  
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**Yemeni-Americans Celebrate 3rd Annual Parade** | pg 2



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**Bronx CB7 Officers Elected** pg 24

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# NORWOOD NEWS

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# Third Yemeni American Day Parade Held in Bronx's "Little Yemen"

by DAVID GREENE

Several hundred Yemeni Americans and their supporters in the Bronx celebrated the 3rd Annual Yemeni American Day Parade as they marched through the streets of "Little Yemen" on Sunday, Aug. 1.

The parade was led by two NYPD police officers on horseback, followed by an NYPD color guard and marching band, as well as the New York City Police Department's brass band.

Joining the Muslim American Society of New York (MAS), the organizers of the parade, were members of the Morris Park Business Improvement District, the Morris Park Community Association, and more than two dozen other groups and organizations, as well as local, elected officials.



Photo by David Greene  
Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark, District 16 City Councilwoman

Photo by David Greene  
**YARA AKY OF** Morris Park was selected as the winner of the "Best Traditional Costume" contest during the Yemeni American Parade Day on Sunday, August 1, 2021.

and Democratic nominee for Bronx borough president, Vanessa Gibson, Congressman Ritchie Torres (NY-15), Democratic nominee for City Council District 13, Marjorie Velázquez, Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernández (A.D. 80), and Democratic nominee for City Council District 18, Amanda Fariás, were among those spotted at the festivities.

Attendees were encouraged to wear traditional Yemeni dress, like Morris Park resident, Yara Aky, who won a prize for best traditional costume.

Meanwhile, Ahmed Ali of Intervale was seen handing out bags of imported potato chips from Yemen. He told the *Norwood News*, "We celebrate this nice day, so we give some chips and water," adding that Yemeni people knew the particular brand of chips being handed out from home.

At one point, within the crowd, two large groups of men gathered in circles and performed a traditional Yemeni dance, swinging plastic knives in the air as dancers moved simultaneously within the circles.

Many elected officials later took to Twitter to share photos of the day, with Torres saying, "It was an honor to be a part of the Yemeni-American Day parade. The Yemeni community is an important part of the #Bronx & we are honored that it is their home."

\*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.



Photo by David Greene

**BRONX DISTRICT ATTORNEY** Darcel Clarke and District 16 Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson (both top center) watch as youngsters wearing traditional Yemeni costumes hoist Yemeni and American flags into the air at the start of the Yemeni American Day Parade on Sunday, August 1, 2021.

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# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week, we asked readers their thoughts on the U.S. House Select Committee that is investigating the January 6th riots and the storming of the U.S. Capitol.



"I've been following it, and I notice the great partisanship that there is in both chambers, and it's something that obviously needs the eyes of both parties because the interest of democracy is at stake. We notice the lack of interest that the GOP has demonstrated in these instances and it's regrettable. It's regrettable for our democracy, it is regrettable for the generation to come. It is regrettable for the country that our children will inherit."

Francois Jeanty,  
Van Cortlandt Park



"We need justice, and the police officers were there to help the politicians and everyone that was in the Capitol so therefore, there should be justice, and something has to be done. This cannot ever happen again. Oh, we already know it was (former President) Trump and all the others with their lies. I just hope that they find out the truth because it's a lie what's going on... This is ridiculous. It's so sad."

Carmen Cavallero,  
Norwood



"Yes, they should investigate that riot. It showed America what it's all about. You just don't riot and storm the House of Representatives and change the result of an election. Then, the president sits back, and all these officers got hurt, and that shows the other countries that anyone can do whatever they want in the United States of America. Trump was a Republican, so they are all backing him up and they're all saying they had nothing to do with it. There was a riot, of course. You see the way they stormed, and people died, and officers got hurt. They should take the ex-president of ours and take him to the high court and Justice Sonya Sotomayor can make this final decision and knock him off."

Luis Figueroa,  
Bedford Park



"I do think that someone should be held accountable for that day. America is a great country and I feel that they will get down to the bottom of it."

Shanequa McKnight,  
Norwood



"I happen to be a registered Republican for about 40 years. There are, maybe, a handful of Libertarians here. I'm torn over the January 6 situation. Nothing excuses the behavior of those involved. However, we wouldn't have a nation if people didn't invite riots and coups. Countries all over the world have this going on all the time, and we cheer for those we think are right and curse those who harm or deny others' freedom. So, how does one decide what is right? I think the commission is a good idea. Let's get to the truth."

Kay Cardona,  
Pelham Gardens

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## Fernández Backs Adams for Mayor

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernández (AD80) has publicly declared her support for Democratic nominee for mayor, Eric Adams, saying, "With everything that New York City has gone through this past year, we need a strong leader at the helm to help guide us going forward. Eric Adams has a proven track record of getting results, and I know with his leadership, NYC will continue to thrive. I am proud to support him in his candidacy for Mayor of New York."

During the primary campaign, Fernández endorsed both Maya Wiley

and Kathryn Garcia for mayor. Adams kicked off his general election campaign flanked by dozens of elected officials and supporters on Monday, Aug. 2. Other endorsements by Bronx elected officials included those from Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie (AD83), Assembly Member Jeff Dinowitz (AD81), Assembly Member Victor Pichardo (AD86), Assembly Member Karines Reyes (AD87), Council Member Eric Dinowitz (CD11), and Council Member Vanessa Gibson (CD16). Mayor Bill de Blasio also formally endorsed Adams, at the kick-off event.

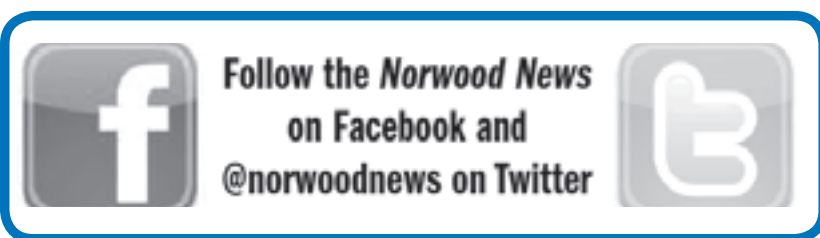
## Settlement for Students with Disabilities

A U.S. District Court approved a settlement with the NYC Department of Education (DOE), it was announced on July 30, to resolve a 2017 lawsuit brought by Bronx Independent Living Services and two students with disabilities in the Bronx, represented by Disability Rights Advocates. The class action lawsuit challenged the DOE's denial of legally mandated special education services, and the settlement provides broad relief for the affected people.

The settlement addressed concerns

raised regarding DOE's issuance of service vouchers to families of Bronx students with disabilities who needed special education services, such as occupational therapy or speech therapy. DOE issued vouchers when it did not have capacity to provide such services in schools, and it often issued the vouchers without providing families with the information and resources they needed to actually secure such services for their children, using the vouchers.

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# NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY

## NYC New COVID Vax App Liv

New York City's new app to check for COVID-19 vaccination or test status is now live. According to Manhattan City Councilman Mark Levine, the app is different from the State's Excelsior app in some significant ways. Excelsior checks against the State's immunization database. This reduces the likelihood of fraud. However, a not insignificant number of people can't get it to work because, for example, one letter of their name is different from the official record. Also, it doesn't work if you got vaccinated out of state. The City's new app simply stores a picture of a person's vaccination card, test results, etc. It doesn't communicate with any outside databases. This serves to allay some people's privacy fears, especially, for example, those of undocumented immigrants. The new app is accessible on iPhones via: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/nyc-covid-safe/id1565213506> or on Androids via: [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.nyc.doitt.covidsafe&hl=en\\_US&gl=US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.nyc.doitt.covidsafe&hl=en_US&gl=US).

## BCC Students Complete First Ever Cryptocurrency Seminar

When Bitcoin reached a high of \$63,000 in April, Bronx Community College was already teaching the basics of cryptocurrency. For two hours every Saturday beginning on March 27, "Crypto in Context" introduced BCC students to the world of digital assets. The non-credit seminar was a partnership between BCC's Offices of Academic Affairs and Student Success, and the Electric Coin Company and creator of the cryptocurrency, "Zcash." On Thursday, May 6, the participating BCC students were awarded certificates of completion for taking on such a complex field.

## Dinowitz Calls to Expand School Access to Vaccine

On Monday, Aug. 2, Councilman Eric Dinowitz wrote to both the City's health commissioner and the schools chancellor to ask for the expansion of the City's public school vaccination program for those aged 12 years and older, to include additional ZIP codes 10458, 10463, 10466, 10467, 10470 and 10471. He said, currently, the program is only available in one District 11

By ROXANNE DELGADO

Two months after New York State legalized e-bikes and e-scooters, the City Council passed a bill, on June 5, 2020, to create a pilot program for the operation of shared electric scooters to exist for a duration of no less than one year and no more than two years. Earlier this year, NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) announced the East Bronx as the program's pilot zone and selected three companies, Bird, Lime and Veo, to participate in the pilot project, starting with 3,000 e-scooters. Why NYC DOT chose an area that lacks biking infrastructure is so confusing.

NYC DOT proposed 24 e-scooter corrals which are not yet fully installed, according to the agency, along a stretch of Pelham Parkway. E-scooters are allowed on streets with speed limits no greater than 30 mph and which have usable bicycle lanes. They can't be ridden on sidewalks.

Pelham Parkway has no bike lanes, and the speed limit was recently reduced from 30 mph to 25 mph on Pelham Parkway from White Plains Road to Stillwell Avenue, since it was identified as one of the roadways that has some of the highest crash rates in the City. This should come as no surprise to many of the residents of Pelham Parkway who have not only heard of these crashes but witnessed many of them as well.

So, where can these e-scooters be ridden legally and safely, I and others asked the DOT. Their response was that Pelham Parkway has a greenway that is accessible to bicyclists and hence, e-scooters.

ZIP code, 10468, where only two schools serve as vaccination sites. He added that the excluded ZIP codes have some of the lowest vaccination rates in the borough. *Norwood News* reached out to the City to ask why these ZIP codes were excluded from the program. We did not receive an immediate response.

## NYC DOT Public Hearing

New York City Department of Transportation ("DOT") is proposing an amendment to traffic rules regarding the demonstration or testing of autonomous self-driving vehicles on any public highway in the City of New York. The public hearing will take place on Wednesday, Sept. 1, 2021, at 10 a.m. For more information, go to:

<https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/rule/autonomous-self-driving-vehicles/>.

To join the Zoom Meeting, go to: <https://zoom.us/j/99481658317?pwd=ZU10MjdNbk91a1V0dXl1UVQrTHNLUT09>, and enter the meeting ID 994 8165 8317 and password 043304. To join by phone only, dial 1-929-205-6099 or 1-646-518-9805 and enter the same meeting ID and password. Comments can be submitted in advance through the NYC rules website at <http://rules.cityofnewyork.us>, via email to [rules@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:rules@dot.nyc.gov), via mail to Patrick Smith, Policy Advisor, New York City Department of Transportation, 55 Water Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10041 or via fax to 212-839-9685.

# Opinion

## NYC Department of Transportation, Stay Out of Parks!

Our greenway path is accessible to bicyclists alongside pedestrians, runners, walkers, joggers, children playing, mothers with strollers, seniors, the disabled community, and pet parents. Our path is not dedicated nor reserved for bicyclists and is unmarked for such sole use. Our unmarked path measures between 9 and 10 feet wide and is too narrow for an e-scooter to travel safely side by side within the path.

Additionally, there is NO signage or lights directing riders to yield or stop for pedestrians who may be crossing through the Parkway on several of the crossing paths, from north to south or vice versa. Instead, there are yellow signs in our greenway prohibiting the use of motorized or electric bikes, scooters and ATVs.

Friends of Pelham Parkway, founded in 2017, is made up of residents and volunteers that care for our greenway through advocacy, clean-up events, tree care and planting. Our concerns are the insufficient number of park enforcement patrol officers and their inability to enforce, since they can't chase after these motorized or electric bikes or scooters without endangering others on the greenway. Also, we can't

support a pilot program that has not been carefully planned, had minimal community outreach, no announced launch date and while several questions remain unanswered. DOT should have addressed all this before the pilot zone and corrals were chosen.

NYC Parks prohibits the use of e-scooters on Pelham Parkway Greenway, and I don't expect them to change the rules to permit the pilot program to operate in their area. Parks may not listen to our concerns, but they are risk averse due to potential liability. It is NYC Parks, not the three companies participating in this pilot program, that will be held responsible and liable when, and not if, an accident occurs resulting in severe injuries and even death.

As an environmental group that advocates for equity in park maintenance and environmental justice with the park's tree planting, we support alternative transportations. E-scooters have a short lifespan, are disposable and not recycled, which makes them not that eco-friendly. Instead of DOT supporting venture capitalist-fueled toys, they should expand Citi Bikes that prioritize the wealthiest parts of our city.

Also, as a county that is the unhealthiest in the entire State, we should encourage physical activity instead of displacing people off the parkway with e-scooters. In short, we ask NYC DOT to focus on making our streets safe for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers and keep the problems on the streets out of our greenway.

*Roxanne Delgado is the founder of Friends of Pelham Parkway.*

## Rep. Ocasio-Cortez Secures \$393,839 for Jacobi Mental Health Services

Rep. Ocasio-Cortez confirmed on July 30 that her funding request of \$393,839 for NYC Health + Hospitals/Jacobi to add mental health services to its Stand Up to Violence (SUV) program was approved. SUV addresses youth violence by deploying outreach workers to respond to shootings, to prevent retaliation, and to assist family members of those who have been injured or killed. Additionally, they mentor at-risk youth on educational and job opportunities. The funding will cover the cost of an emergency room social worker, case worker, part time psychiatrist and a creative arts or music

therapist, all of whom are experienced in treating trauma/violence. It will allow them to offer wrap-around therapeutic treatment to patients to help address root causes of youth violence.

## Excluded Workers Fund

The application for the Excluded Workers Fund launches in August. Interested New Yorkers can subscribe to updates and get more information at [on.ny.gov/ewf](http://on.ny.gov/ewf). This \$2.1 billion State fund will provide financial relief for New Yorkers state-wide who have suffered income loss during the pandemic and were left out of the various federal relief programs, including unemployment and pandemic benefits.





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# “John W” Honored as Employee of the Month

by JEFFREY JACOMOWITZ & SÍLE MOLONEY

In well-deserved recognition of his 27 years as a stellar employee of University Center nursing home, John White was finally honored in July and declared June Employee of the Month.

White, a veteran who is also known as “John W” has been working at the nursing home, located at 2505 Grand Avenue in Fordham Manor, since before Centers Health Care took over the facility in 1999. He continues to work there as one of the heads of maintenance, kitchen, and housekeeping, and he also works in recreation.

According to University Center administrator, David Schorr, and the center’s staff, John’s happiness, good humor and over pleasantness never lose ground and his personality is “positively infectious.”

White’s colleagues said he takes on as many roles as are needed and does so flawlessly. They added that White also steps in at the last minute in emer-

gency situations, and always knows one hundred percent how to alleviate a problem.

Speaking to the *Norwood News* on July 27, “Zenny,” John’s colleague, who is relatively new at the facility, summed up White’s work ethic, saying, “He brings life to the party. He brings life to the facility.” Zenny said there are 46 residents at the center. Most are elderly but there are some in their 30s or their 50s.

The center’s goal is for all residents “to live a happier, healthier life in a beautiful facility with people who help them maintain their dignity and independence.” It covers short and long-term rehabilitation and skilled nursing care.

*Norwood News* also spoke to the Employee of the Month, himself, and asked what inspires him about his work. “I just like what I do. I work in all departments,” White said. Of the residents, he said, “I like hearing their stories. You learn a lot from them.”



Photo courtesy of University Center.

**JOHN WHITE, ALSO** known as “John W,” was recognized as June’s Employee of the Month at University Center, located in Fordham Manor. He has worked at the center for 27 years.

Asked if they had imparted any nuggets of knowledge to him over the years, he said, “Not so much. I just talk to, basically, the older guys, certain stories about being in the war and being addicts and recovering... stuff like that... the relationships that some of them had, how many kids they have, just the life that they used to live when

they were younger...nothing in particular you know because all of the different stories sound good to me.”

Meanwhile, Schorr said White’s hard work is noticed and recognized. “He has been such a great asset within the facility, always being able to count on him.” He added, “Thank you, John for all you do.”

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## FBI Warns of Fraudsters Swindling Investors

By SÍLE MOLONEY

The FBI warned residents on July 27 of fraudsters swindling investors while pretending to be registered brokers or investment advisers. They said fraudsters may falsely claim to be registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) or a state securities regulator in efforts to lure investors into scams, or even impersonate real investment professionals who are registered with these organizations.

Red flags include promises of guaranteed high investment returns, unsolicited offers, and suspicious or unusual requests relating to payment methods for investments. Report possible securities fraud to the SEC at [www.sec.gov/tcr](http://www.sec.gov/tcr). Report online fraud to the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center at <https://www.ic3.gov>.



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# CRIME FILE

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE



## Gunman Sought in Bedford Park Shooting

Police are looking for a gunman who fired several shots on Decatur Avenue in Bedford Park, apparently striking the front window of an apartment building. The NYPD confirmed that officers responded to a 911 call on Saturday, July 24, at approximately 4 a.m. following a complaint regarding shots fired in the rear yard of a two-family home located at 2850 Decatur Avenue, in the 52nd precinct, and carried out an investigation. No arrests were made following the incident and the investigation is ongoing. Police said no ballistics were recovered from the location. *Norwood News* located a resident in the apartment building next door at 2860 Decatur Avenue whose window was seemingly hit by a bullet at the same time and on the same date as the incident was reported at 2850 Decatur Avenue. The resident said police were unable to locate the bullet. When questioned about the second location, a police official confirmed they had no complaint on file for 2860 Decatur Avenue.

## Three Women Charged in Norwood Beating Incident

Officers from the 52nd precinct were called to a Norwood building on Saturday after a woman reported being beaten by three women inside an apartment. Officers responded to a 911 call at 12.50 a.m. on Saturday, July 24, after a female victim told police that during a visit to see a person at 3361 Decatur Avenue, located between

East 209th Street and East Gun Hill Road in Norwood, three women punched her and pulled her hair.

The victim sustained multiple scratches to her body and a bloody lip. EMS responded to the 52nd precinct on Webster Avenue and the victim was transported by EMS to North Central Bronx Hospital, where she was reported to be in stable condition. Police later arrested Alisette Cruz, 22, of Decatur Avenue in Norwood, Tatianna Meela, 21, of Tomlinson Avenue in Morris Park, and Gianna Mella, 19, also of Tomlinson Avenue in Morris Park. All three women were charged with a single count of assault. A person arrested and accused of a crime is innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

## Fordham Manor Armed Robbery

The NYPD is seeking the public's assistance in locating the unidentified men seen in the attached surveillance photos (top center) who are wanted for questioning in connection with a robbery at gunpoint which occurred on the border of Fordham Manor and Bedford Park, in the 52nd precinct.

On Friday, July 23, at around 7.10 p.m., a 44-year-old man was walking along the sidewalk in the vicinity of Briggs Avenue and West 196th Street when he was approached by the two men who displayed a weapon, struck his head with the firearm, and forcibly removed \$300 from him. The victim sustained minor injuries and refused medical attention



at the scene.

The suspects fled the location in a white van to parts unknown. The vehicle had front and rear, passenger side damage to it. The first suspect (Individual #1) is described as male, has a medium complexion, is estimated to be in his

early twenties, is 5 feet, 7 inches tall, weighs 150 pounds, and has a slender build. He was last seen wearing a white shirt, green shorts, black shoes, and a black baseball hat.

The second suspect (Individual #2) is described as male, has a medium complexion, is estimated to be in his early twenties, is 5 feet, 7 inches tall, weighs 150 pounds and has a slender build. He was last seen wearing a red shirt, black pants, black shoes, and a red baseball hat.

## Daylight Shooting in Kingsbridge Heights

Police confirmed a 26-year-old man was shot on the sidewalk at 8 West Kingsbridge Road on the border of Fordham Manor and Kingsbridge Heights on Friday, July 23, at around 4.36 p.m. The shooting evolved from a dispute between a 26-year-old victim, who was shot in the buttocks, and another man armed with a handgun,



who was unknown to the victim. The perpetrator fled the scene on foot in an unknown direction, and police confirm he has not been caught. The victim was transported to Montefiore Hospital where he is expected to survive the shooting.

The NYPD has asked for the public's help in identifying the man seen above in the attached surveillance video photo

taken from the incident location. He is sought for questioning regarding the non-fatal shooting. The victim was treated at Montefiore Hospital and has since been released. The suspect is described as male, has a thin build, a dark complexion, and short, dark, braided hair. He was last seen wearing a black t-shirt, gray jeans, and black sneakers.



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# Chase Branch on Burnside Avenue Reopens

by JOSÉ A. GIRALT

After an almost two-year wait, a new Chase Bank branch has opened at 7 E. Burnside Avenue, just east of Jerome Avenue on the border of Fordham Heights and Mount Hope, close to the University Heights border. A former Chase branch located at 5 W. Burnside Avenue closed in October 2019, serving a blow to the local community. The impact of that closure was compounded by the subsequent closure of a local Amalgamated Bank branch in September 2020.

Elected officials, including Congressman Ritchie Torres (NY-15) and Assemblyman Victor Pichardo (AD86) delivered remarks at the grand opening on Monday, July 26, welcoming Chase back into the community. Torres' visit was brief, but he thanked the bank for "helping [to] build a better Bronx."

For his part, Pichardo, who serves as chair of the banking committee in Albany, and who has worked to keep banks from divesting from low-income communities, reiterated Torres' thanks, praising Chase for staying close to the Mt. Hope and University Heights communities. "The fact that Chase not only is here, is hiring Bronxites, and more importantly,

is making a serious and incredible investment in our communities says something about what they're trying to do here," he said.

The communities in question make up some of Bronx Community District 5 (CD5). Data from NYC.gov shows that 35.6 percent of the population in this district have incomes that fall below the poverty threshold defined by the City. By contrast, just 26.2 percent of Bronxites have incomes below the poverty threshold. Meanwhile, only 19 percent of New York City residents have incomes which fall below the same poverty threshold.

Local community activists like Democratic nominee for District 14 City Council, Pierina Sanchez, who is also a member of the Jerome Avenue Revitalization Collaborative (JARC), have fought to push financial institutions from abandoning local branches that are desperately needed in these under-served neighborhoods. City Council District 14 includes CB5, and Sanchez has led several protests to keep institutions like Amalgamated and Chase from closing their branches.

After the event, she spoke with *Norwood News* about the economic impact on local communities of the closure of "brick



Photo by José A. Giralt  
(L to R) Congressman Ritchie Torres, Democratic nominee for District 14 City Council, Pierina Sanchez, and Assemblyman Victor Pichardo attend the opening of Chase Bank at 7 E. Burnside Avenue in the Mount Hope section of the Bronx on July 26, 2021.

and mortar" branches. "It is not a coincidence that they are closing here," she said. "We are one of many communities that are economically depressed, that are largely a community of color, that is seeing this flight of capital."

She described the physical presence of banks in neighborhoods as being integral to a thriving community. "We're also talking to them [Amalgamated and Chase banks] about ways that they can invest in our small businesses here," Sanchez said. "Whether that's making credit available ... as well as funding our local community organizations, these conversations are ongoing."

Sanchez added that community boards and local organizations, "see this as a

model for how these major institutions, with a lot of access to capital, can work with a community of color."

According to Deborah Charlemagne, market director for the Bronx West market of Chase Bank, finding a new Chase location in the neighborhood was relatively quick. She estimates the distance from the old address on West Burnside Avenue to the new one on East Burnside to be about 250 feet. "I don't think [the search] took long to get from that location to this one," Charlemagne told *Norwood News*.

Instead, she explained that the pandemic restrictions were to blame for a longer-than-usual timeframe in getting the construction work finished at the new branch. "[The new location] was a shoe store so we had to build it out to make it a bank and then COVID happened, so we had a little delay in construction."

With 6,000 customers, including some which are businesses, and \$300 million in deposits at the Burnside Avenue branch, Charlemagne expects room for growth. She is committed to making sure her employer gives back to a community where she, herself, has roots. "I grew up, actually, on the other side, East Tremont," she recalled. "So, I used to come here, Burnside [Avenue]. ... I definitely have a vested interest in making sure that this community survives."

In mid-July, CNBC reported that JPMorgan Chase posted Q2 revenues of \$31.4 billion, exceeding the bank's estimated revenue of \$29.9 billion.

*\*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*

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Photo by Sarah Huffman.

## Mother of Transgender Student Seeks Bullying Prevention Measures in Schools

by SARAH HUFFMAN

Anna Pagan is hoping the new school year will bring what she believes are some long overdue changes to the way P.S. 20, in Norwood, addresses bullying and LGBTQ+ awareness. Pagan's transgender son has faced multiple forms of bullying over the last two years since he started figuring out his transition.

On May 25, the seventh grader was struck by one of his classmates after school in front of fellow students and school staff. Pagan's son, whose name she prefers not to disclose, had previously been bullied by the same child. Despite this, the school had tried to get the two to work through their differences. However, she said her son was not interested because the other student has continued to use derogatory terms when referring to the LGBTQ community.

"My son is very advanced, you know? He's very intelligent," Pagan said. "So, he was like, you know, 'That's toxic, and I would rather not associate with somebody like that'."

Pagan said when the student in question found out why her son didn't want to interact with him, he started cursing him out one day, after school. She explained that her son tried to walk away from the situation, but it then turned physical.

Pagan said her son has been bullied by a certain group of students at the school since fifth grade, when he first

started to figure out his transition. She said the group even went as far as making an animated video in which they set her son on fire. Prior to this, she said her older child had also faced bullying in the school and was allegedly met with little support.

After the video incident, Pagan said she met with school officials and counselors and was told the students who made the video would have therapy recommended to them. She said she dropped the incident after that, but her son still continued to be bullied.

The concerned mother said at a certain point, her son stayed quiet about the bullying because he didn't want to have any more issues, despite being on the receiving end of slurs and mean comments from the students in question.

She said the school principal had called her to let her know about the physical attack on her son, and so she assumed the school would act quickly in response.

"And so, you know, I'm thinking things are going to get done and time is passing and nothing's happening," she said.

According to Pagan, the administration did nothing to reprimand the other student after the attack. After waiting two weeks for the school to take action, she said she reached out to the administrators of the school district, but did not receive a response from them for almost

**P.S./M.S. 20 IS AN** elementary and middle school in the Norwood section of the Bronx. Ann Pagan said her son was physically attacked by a fellow student outside the school on May 25, 2021.

two weeks.

Pagan said she believes the reason they responded to her eventually was because they knew she was doing an interview with *Bronx News 12* about what happened to her son. "So, now, you know, they're contacting me and listening to me, and hopefully creating some changes," she said.

She added that she has had a chance to speak one-on-one with the district now and tell them what she wants to see happen. "I did let them know, my main concern is the bullying and the LGBTQ awareness and safety. I said, not just for my son, but for all the kids, because my son is the first openly trans child in that school."

She continued, "But I'm pretty sure there are other children who are trans, and they're just not out. They don't feel comfortable, you know, because of the bullying or because the school hasn't made it clear that they are a safety net for those kids."

Pagan said she wants to see a more consistent, active effort put towards anti-bullying programs in the school. She said she has been in contact with "PFLAG" and "The Trevor Project," two organizations which work with LGBTQ+ youth about introducing awareness programs in the school and creating more support for impacted kids.

Pagan said her son wants to become an LGBTQ+ liaison to help support

other kids in his school facing similar issues. She added that she would like to see a support group or peer counseling for the impacted kids.

Meanwhile, the Department of Education (DOE) spokesperson told *Bronx News 12*, "Every child deserves a safe and welcoming school to learn in, and any allegation suggesting that a school is otherwise, is taken extremely seriously. The Borough safety director, Bronx climate and culture manager, and superintendent's office are working closely with P.S. 20 to provide additional support and resources."

The DOE did not respond directly to *Norwood News'* request for comment about Pagan's specific case.

*The Trevor Project* can be reached via live chat, text or by phone via the TrevorLifeline on 1-866-488-7386. More information can be found on the group's website: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now/>.

PFLAG is the first and largest organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people, their parents and families, and allies. Ways to get help are also listed on Pflag's website, which is <https://pflag.org/need-support>.

*Destination Tomorrow*, the Bronx's LGBTQ+ Center is located at 452 E 149th St 3rd floor, Bronx, N.Y. 10455, and can be contacted toll free on 833.DT.4LGBT, or on (646) 723-3325.



# Bronx Parents, Teachers Rally for Fall Remote Learning Option

by DAWN CLANCY

With bullhorns in hand, about 20 parents and teachers from the Bronx rallied outside the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) offices in Manhattan on Monday, July 26, to push for a remote learning option for New York City public school students this fall.

The rally, organized by the Bronx Parent Leaders Advocacy Group (BPLAG), follows Mayor Bill de Blasio's announcement on May 24 that all public schools which had shut down to curb the spread of the coronavirus in March 2020, will fully reopen in September, without any option for students to learn remotely.

"It's time for everyone to come back. It's time for us all to be together," the mayor said during a May press conference. "It's time to do things the way they were meant to be done – all the kids in the classroom together. So, I'm very pleased to announce New York City public schools will fully reopen in September. Every single child will be back in the classroom."

The mayor is full supported by those representing the highest levels of the City's educational leadership, including Meisha Porter, NYC schools chancellor, Mark Cannizzaro, president of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA), and Michael Mulgrew, president of the UFT.

However, the move has frustrated some Bronx parents, students, and teachers, from Norwood down to the South Bronx, who collectively say they weren't included or consulted in the decision-making process, and with the new school year scheduled to kick off on Monday, Sept. 13, BPLAG is urging all stakeholders to return to the negotiating table.

BPLAG is an education coalition comprising members which represent the six Community Education Councils (CECs) in the Bronx. Each of the six CECs has ten members who represent parents from that CEC. The CECs fall under the umbrella of the city-wide Education Council Consortium (ECC).

"We need the chancellor, the DOE, the UFT and the CSA to understand that while they may be a bureaucracy, children and parents are real people," said BPLAG's president, Farah Despeignes, at Monday's rally. "They're real people who are deeply affected by the policies and the decisions that they make, and when those decisions don't fit? Well, you know, what's going to happen. Parents are not going to obey. So, the biggest step that they need to take is to come and talk to us."

When given the choice this past academic year, 60 percent of the City's 1.1



Photo by Dawn Clancy

**FARAH DESPEIGNES (CENTER)**, president of Bronx Parent Leaders Advocacy Group (BPLAG) speaks during a Manhattan rally outside of the United Federation of Teachers offices on Monday, July 26, 2021.

million public school students opted to learn from home. In the Bronx, where the COVID-19 virus disproportionately impacted low-income communities of color, remote learning was one way of keeping students who live in multigenerational households from catching and spreading the virus to their elderly or immunocompromised relatives.

This is a concern that many parents in the Bronx still wrestle with, despite the availability of vaccines for those aged 12 years and older. Many fear that the highly transmissible Delta variant, combined with overcrowded classrooms and widespread vaccine hesitancy, will thrust their communities back to the darkest days of the pandemic when the Bronx carried the City's highest hospitalization and death rates.

"I remember back when COVID was really blowing up," said Thomas Sheppard, co-founder of BPLAG. "And the conversation was, 'Did you hear so-and-so died today? Did you hear so-and-so was in the hospital today?' I remember when the trucks pulled up outside the hospital and had bodies in them, and now they want to open up the school system, with a variant out there that is literally thousands of times as dangerous as the original strain of COVID."

He continued, "They want us to just forget about everything that's happened over the last 18 months. We're not ready to do that."

On the vaccine front, at a press conference on Monday, Aug. 2, the mayor announced that over 10 million doses of the COVID-19 shot have been administered across the City. To keep the momentum going, the mayor also introduced the city's back-to-school

vaccination blitz initiative, a \$1.3 million campaign to get children aged 12 to 17 vaccinated in time for a total return to the classroom in September.

Starting on Aug. 9 through Aug. 22, mobile vaccine units will be stationed at back-to-school shopping sites, "Saturday Night Lights" gyms, and athletic league, pre-season, practice locations across the five boroughs. In the Bronx, shopping sites with vaccine units will include Fordham Road, River Plaza Mall, and Bay Plaza Mall.

According to the mayor's estimates, well over 200,000 or 18 percent of the City's 1.1 million eligible, public-school students have been vaccinated.

Still, despite the mayor's efforts to increase vaccine availability to boost safety in schools, parents with children who thrived academically in a remote learning environment during the citywide lockdown now say that returning to the classroom has become as concerning as protection from the spread of the dominant Delta variant.

"During the pandemic, one of my children actually excelled in his work doing remote," said Amy Tsai, 36, a mother of five from Norwood who has a son who is legally blind. "The classroom was right in front of him rather than being in the classroom where he's feeling the stress of being bullied and the anxiety of having to walk around being known as someone who has a disability. It's a lot of anxiety."

In May and June, Chancellor Porter held forums in all five boroughs as part of the DOE's family engagement tour to address community concerns regarding a full reopening of schools in the fall. Additionally, the chancellor participated in a one-off virtual roundtable discussion with BPLAG members in July. However, the DOE's

support for a total return to in-person learning remains unchanged.

"We have thought deeply about our plan for the upcoming school year and decided on one that puts safety and our school community's needs front and center," wrote Nathaniel Styer in an email to *Norwood News*. Styer is the DOE's deputy press secretary. "The past eighteen months had put a stark spotlight on how nothing can replace a loving, caring, in-person educator and our health and safety measures have made our buildings some of the safest places to be during the pandemic."

Meanwhile, in response to a request for comment, Cannizzaro wrote in an email that the CSA values the parents' input, but that "it was the city's decision to do away with the remote option for the upcoming school year." He added, "Should the mayor choose to offer limited opportunities for some students to engage remotely, then school leaders will, of course, do their best to provide the highest quality education possible."

Ahead of Monday's rally, Despeignes said that Cannizzaro had confirmed that he would meet with representatives from BPLAG but said a date has not yet been set.

The mayor's office, and UFT president, Mulgrew, did not immediately respond to our request for comment. However, a UFT spokesperson did provide a statement to News 12 in response to BPLAG's rally, saying, "There is no substitute for in-person instruction. NYC educators want their students physically in front of them this fall. We are working with City and State officials and our own independent medical experts on what needs to be done to open schools safely."

Meanwhile, community advocate, Tajh Sutton, the program manager for "Teens Take Charge," a citywide, student-led advocacy group, says that for a successful return to the classroom, leadership needs to make adjustments, not based on the mayor's mandates, but when parents, students, and teachers say they're ready.

"We're on the ground. We're in the schools. We're in the street. We're going to parent/teacher nights. We're asking questions that they don't want to answer because they don't want to be accountable to families. So, the least they can do is to provide us with a remote option," said Sutton. "And if we do not get a remote option, they will be making it very clear who they serve, and it is not the majority of public-school parents, educators, and students. It's unacceptable."





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# NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SARAH HUFFMAN

## COVID-19 Updates

On July 27, the CDC issued an updated recommendation that all people, regardless of vaccination status, should return to wearing masks in indoor, public spaces in areas of high COVID-19 infection rates. To see the risk of transmission in your area, visit [covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view).

COVID-19 restrictions in New York State are lifted since 70 percent of adults have received their first dose of the vaccine. For the latest industry guidance, go to: <https://forward.ny.gov/active-industry-guidance>.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced on July 28 that patient-facing, healthcare workers at State-run hospitals are required to get vaccinated by Labor Day. All New York State employees have also been requested to get vaccinated, but have the option to submit testing, as an alternative.

As of Aug. 2, the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene reported a trend of increasing COVID-19 cases for both the 7-day daily average, and the 28-day daily average. Hospitalizations and confirmed death rates were

stable. Hospitalizations had been rising during July.

The open enrollment period for uninsured New Yorkers has been extended through Dec. 31, 2021. New Yorkers can apply for coverage through NYS Department of Health or directly through insurers.

Health care workers can text NYFRONTLINE to 741-741 to access 24/7 emotional support services. Any New Yorker can call the COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline at 1-844-863-9314 for mental health counseling.

An internal CDC document leaked by The Washington Post revealed that further research proved that the Delta variant causes more severe illness than other variants and is as contagious as chickenpox. Symptoms of the delta variant are different from the original strain of the virus. The most common symptoms include headache, sore throat, runny nose, and fever.

## \$100 Vouchers for Those Who Get Vaccinated

Starting July 30, anyone in NYC who receives their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at a city-run vaccination site will receive

\$100. The \$100 prepaid debit card is open to those living/working in NYC, and can be redeemed immediately in a digital wallet by those with an email address, while they wait in the observation area after being vaccinated.

## NYC Health Community Advisory Board

New York City Health and Hospitals is looking for volunteers to join its community advisory board (CAB). Volunteers are sought to represent their communities in voicing their healthcare concerns. CABs raise awareness about healthcare services, and advocate for the public healthcare system. Anyone interested in getting more information or scheduling an interview can email their name and contact information to Amir Abbady at [abbadya@nyc-hhc.org](mailto:abbadya@nyc-hhc.org).

## "Fun in the Sun" Festival

City Council District 12's community engagement "Fun in the Sun" festival will take place on Aug. 7 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at 800 East Gun Hill Road in the Bronx. The event will feature New York City Council Member Kevin Riley,

Rev. Paul A Peart, Papa San, Carlene Davis, Judith Gayle, Praise Xpressed, Heaven Sent and more. The event is free and will be both live and virtual.

## Friends of Aqueduct Walk Clean-Up Event

Join Friends of Aqueduct Walk (FOAW) on Saturday, Aug. 7, for an outdoor park clean-up from noon to 2 p.m. FOAW will meet at Aqueduct Avenue and W. 190th Street. FOAW also hosts monthly meetings. For more information, contact Pilar on (646) 647-6397 or Tara on (347) 316-3662.

## NYC Homecoming Week Concerts

Homecoming NYC is hosting a series of free concerts called, "It's Time for Hip Hop In NYC Summer 2021" throughout the city during August. The Bronx concert will be held on Monday, Aug. 16, from 3 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at Orchard Beach. The concert will feature KRS One, Remy Ma, Slick Rick, and Kid Capri. To reserve free tickets, visit [nyc.gov/HomecomingWeek](https://nyc.gov/HomecomingWeek).

## Norwood Library

Norwood Community Library opened a free library box at the Keeper's House at 3400 Reservoir Oval East. All community members are welcome to take and/or leave a book in the library for free.

## Parklet Event Series

Jerome Gun Hill BID is hosting a parklet event series throughout August and September. On Aug. 11, the BID is hosting an event called "Dance to the Rhythm of the Afro-Latineers," at 3498 Jerome Avenue from noon to 4 p.m.

## NYC Utility Moratorium

New York's statewide utility shut-off moratorium, which had expired on March 31, has been extended. The law extends the statewide moratorium on utility shut-offs, including water, heat, electric, telephone, cable, and broadband services until the conclusion of the COVID-19 state of emergency, or until December 31, 2021, whichever comes first. For New Yorkers suffering financially due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the law enshrines a further moratorium extension of 180 days.

# Bronxites Celebrate Their Dominican Heritage at Annual Dominican Day Parade

by SARAH HUFFMAN and MIRIAM QUIÑONES

The Bronx celebrated its many residents of Dominican heritage on Sunday, July 25, at the annual Dominican Day Parade which kicked off at the Grand Concourse and 172nd Street. The celebration brought together a host of Dominican Americans and Bronxites from all walks of life, many decked out in red, white and blue to honor the colors of the Dominican flag.

New York City Mayor Bill De Blasio and various elected officials, political candidates and community leaders led the parade behind a giant Dominican flag.

Congressman Adriano Espaillat (NY13), Bronx District Attorney, the Hon. Darcel Clark, State Sen. Jamaal T Bailey (SD33), Democratic nominee for mayor and Brooklyn Borough President, Eric Adams, District 16 City Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson, City



Photos by Miriam Quiñones

**PARTICIPANTS DRESSED IN** colorful costumes march in the Dominican Day Parade in the Bronx on July 25, 2021.



Photos by Miriam Quiñones

**BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT** and Democratic nominee for mayor, Eric Adams, and councilmember Ydanis Rodríguez pose for a photo with dancers at the Dominican Day Parade on July 25, 2021.

Councilman for Inwood in Manhattan, Ydanis Rodríguez, District 15 City Councilman Oswald Feliz and district director to Bailey, Kenny Agosto, were among those marching on the day.

Meanwhile, Democratic nominee for City Council District 13, Marjorie Velázquez, and Pierina Sanchez, Democratic nominee for City Council District 14, were two of the candidates to march

in the parade. Sanchez told *Norwood News* that she was born and raised in the Bronx and has been coming to the parade since she was a kid.

"It's an honor to, for the first time, march in it, and in it as a, hopefully, future elected official, if elected on Nov. 2 of this year," she said. Sanchez added that she was happy to be at the parade

(continued on page 17)



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**Reduced Fare MetroCard****Cash Transfer**

I recently read the article regarding MTA's proposal to potentially eliminate cash transactions from subway booths. I would like to add that customers who wish to transfer their money from a reduced fare MetroCard that is about to expire to a new card, can only do so at certain stations. On the D line, the designated station is 161st Street. It seems customer service isn't a priority with the MTA. Customers should contact their city council person, state senator and assembly member on this matter.

**Brenda Irizarry****Norwood****Article Ruth-less**

While I enjoyed the article on Clarence Duncan's 101st birthday, there was one thing missing. In listing what happened in 1920, the year of Duncan's birth, there was something that should not have been overlooked by a Bronx-based newspaper. In January of 1920, The Yankees would send \$125,000, and a \$300,000 loan to The Boston Red Sox for outfielder-pitcher George Herman (Babe) Ruth. In his first year with The Yankees, Ruth would end the dead ball era by easily eclipsing his 1919 home



# Letters To The Editor

**Editor's Note:** We reserve the right to edit letters for space, clarity, civility and accuracy.

run record of 29 by belting 54 home runs. Ruth also batted .376, drove in 135 runs, scored 158 runs, stole 14 bases, walked 150 times, while striking out only 80 times. But while he was an outstanding pitcher for The Red Sox, The Yankees had him make only one start. He pitched four innings, gave up four runs (only two earned) and got the win. In those days, starting pitchers did not have to go five innings to qualify for a victory. After that season, as the old cliché goes, the rest is history.

**Richard Warren,  
Van Cortlandt Park Village**

**A Call to Action on Global Poverty**

On average Americans believe the U.S. gives 20 percent of its funds to Foreign Aid. In fact, it's closer to one percent. We need to do more. I am an ambassador with the Borgen Project, a nonprofit which advocates, mobilizes, consciously campaigns and schools Americans on reaching out to congressional leaders to

make their thoughts heard, with the aim of reducing poverty globally.

Beyond a humanitarian standpoint, increasing Foreign Aid can enhance our economy, diplomacy, and countrywide safety. Think of investment in poverty as funding for up-and-coming customers. More customers of American merchandise will help grow our economy significantly and will also permit an expansion of foreign economies.

I urge readers to take 30 seconds to reach out to their congressional leaders and urge them to increase the Foreign Aid budget. I call on Rep. Adriano Espaillat and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand to co-sponsor the COVAX initiative and increase foreign aid as part of any subsequent COVID-19 relief packages in order to combat the pandemic, globally. Visit The Borgen Project Action Center to email Congress now!

**Ruth Garcia  
Norwood**

**Support Local Business**

It is important to patronize our neighborhood restaurants in Norwood during the extended NYC Restaurant Week, which runs from July 19 to August 28. My wife and I don't mind, occasionally, paying a little more to help our favorite restaurants survive. Don't forget your cook and server. We try to tip 20 percent against the total bill, including taxes, and usually round the bill up. If we can afford to eat out, we can afford an extra dollar tip. When ordering take out, we always leave a dollar or two for the waiter or cook. It is appreciated.

The restaurant industry employs several hundred thousand people. This includes bar tenders, waiters, bus boys, cooks and cashiers, wholesale food sellers, distributors, and linen suppliers. There are also construction contractors who renovate or build new restaurants. Our local entrepreneurs work long hours, pay taxes, and provide local employment, especially to students during the summer. If we don't patronize our local restaurants, they don't eat either.

**Larry Penner  
Great Neck**

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## Biaggi Calls for Cuomo's Resignation (Again)

**By SÍLE MOLONEY**

State Sen. Alessandra Biaggi (S.D. 34) issued a statement following the publication of the results of the independent investigation, carried out by Attorney General Letitia James, into allegations of sexual harassment by New York State Gov. Andrew Cuomo, allegations which the governor has denied.

On Tuesday, Aug. 3, Biaggi said the independent investigation concluded that the governor sexually harassed former and current staff, violating federal and state law.

"The report confirms what we already knew - the Governor has sexually harassed and intimidated employees while actively silencing the victims of his abuse and fostering a toxic and hostile work environment," she said.

"I commend the brave women who came forward in the face of actual and potential retaliation," Biaggi added. "I believe you. I support you, and I stand with you always. No longer can we let powerful

men abuse their positions without facing consequences. It is time for Gov. Cuomo to face accountability for his actions."

The senator said that as a New Yorker, a legislator, as chair of the senate ethics and internal governance committee, and as a survivor of sexual abuse, she was calling on Gov. Cuomo to resign. As reported, Biaggi previously called for the governor to resign in February 2021, when news broke of a second complainant. "If he refuses, I am calling on Speaker Heastie and the Assembly to move to impeach immediately," she said.

On July 28, CNBC reported that Biaggi was allegedly considering a run for governor, citing the fact that her website was being updated for a possible future campaign. The senator neither confirmed nor denied the suggestion, but when Nick Merrill later tweeted about her website, and asked if something new and exciting was in the offing, she replied on Twitter, "Stay tuned."



# Bronxites Celebrate Their Dominican Heritage at Annual Dominican Day Parade

(continued from page 14)

with fellow Dominican Americans, neighbors and friends of the Bronx, celebrating Dominican culture.

"To me, what this parade represents is the pride that we have in the Bronx of being from the Dominican Republic, making sure that, as we go on as Dominican Americans, here in the country, in the Bronx, in New York City, that we also remember our roots and everything that that comes with, in our patriotism, our happiness, our values of family," she said.

Later, Feliz spoke to the crowd on the day, expressing his pride in his Dominican heritage and thanking his Dominican constituents for supporting him and his campaign in the recent June primary election.

"[I] won the Democratic primary because of you, because of you," he said. "You came out, and you supported me like I never thought possible, and I cannot tell you how much I appreciate you, and if no one else in New York knows, I want them to know this, I'm a Dominican baby!" he said. The councilman re-



Photos by Miriam Quiñones

**DOMINICAN AMERICANS PARTICIPATE** in the Dominican Day Parade in the Bronx on July 25, 2021.



Photos by Miriam Quiñones

**VARIOUS ELECTED OFFICIALS** and community leaders march in the Bronx for the Dominican Day Parade on July 25, 2021.

cently announced that since first taking office three months ago, following his win in the March District 15 special election, he has delivered nearly \$15 million in funding for the district.

Meanwhile, dressed in red, white, and blue costumes to showcase their Dominican pride, a Dominican dance group performed for the enthusiastic crowd. The Dominican Day parade has been an

annual tradition in the Bronx for the last 32 years, although it was cancelled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to [littledominicanrepublic.com](http://littledominicanrepublic.com), the Bronx is home to the largest Dominican population in the United States (338,450), while Washington Heights/Inwood is still the most populous Dominican neighborhood in the country.

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## Public and Community Meetings

The 52<sup>nd</sup> **PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meetings are usually held on the **third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.** at the precinct at 3100 Webster Avenue. Masks and social distancing are required at the meeting. Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at 718-220-5824 for further details.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7** meetings have been held via ZOOM. The next full Board meeting will be held in **September**, after the summer break. Details will be circulated ahead of the meeting. Contact [mirosario@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:mirosario@cb.nyc.gov) to be added to the distribution list.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meetings have been held via ZOOM. The meetings are usually held on the **first Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m.** The last meeting for the season was held on June 2. The group breaks for July and August. For further details, contact [bedfordmosholu@verizon.net](mailto:bedfordmosholu@verizon.net).

## Wakefield Playground \$5.2 Million Renovation Begins

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

On Monday, Aug. 2, as part of the “City Hall in Your Borough,” NYC Parks first deputy commissioner, Liam Kavanaugh, joined Bronx Deputy Borough President Marricka Scott-McFadden, State Sen. Jamaal T. Bailey, Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz, City Council Member Eric Dinowitz, representatives from Bronx Community Board 12, and community members to break ground on the reconstruction of

Wakefield Playground in the Bronx.

The renovation will provide all new play equipment and a spray shower in the lower level of the playground. In the upper level, two new basketball courts, a painted junior soccer field and an additional entrance to increase safety will be installed. A new ADA accessible ramp will connect both levels, and new paving, plantings, seating, and drinking fountains will also be added.

## Notice to Readers

Norwood News will be on hiatus for the remainder of August. Our next edition will be out on Sep-tember 9.



# Woodlawn helps you plan ahead for peace of mind in person or virtually

Brookside Cremation Garden

**W**hen a death occurs, most New Yorkers aren't sure who to turn to or what to do. We recently spoke with The Woodlawn Cemetery about how they help individuals put their end-of-life preferences in writing ahead of time to prevent their loved ones from having to make decisions on their behalf.

**Norwood News:** How does Woodlawn help families with making difficult end-of-life decisions?

**Woodlawn:** Our Family Service Associates work with individuals and families to address their preferences about end-of-life arrangements. This includes offering our complimentary Personal Planning Organizer, to gather all the information needed for final arrangements in one place. Then, when the time comes for loved ones to make decisions, the process is easier. Not to mention you can secure today's payment rate with the decisions you make.

**NN:** What type of information is typically needed when making arrangements?

**Woodlawn:** Essentially, the location of all of your important documents. This includes social security numbers, marriage licenses, and military discharge papers. Where to find bank, retirement, and investment accounts. How to locate insurance policies, veterans, and social security benefits, and of course, preferences for funeral and cemetery arrangements.

We provide families with a Personal Planning Organizer so they can collect all the information that the funeral home or cemetery will need and ask for at the time of death. When properly filled out, this organizer can simply be handed over to the funeral home and cemetery so bereaved family members don't have to dig through documents for these details in their time of grief. We offer book-lets for singles, married couples, and a Spanish version.

**Woodlawn:** During these unusual times, our Family Service Associates are able to meet with families either in person (with safety precautions) or virtually. If you choose to meet virtually, our staff can walk you through property selection via our website. If needed, multiple family members can participate in a contactless appointment at the same time. We are here to make sure that all your questions are answered and that you receive the highest level of service whether you choose to meet with us in person or virtually.

**NN:** What are some of the options that Woodlawn offers for memorializing a loved one?

**Woodlawn:** There are many options for traditional burial and cremation including private mausoleums, community mausoleums, traditional burial with a headstone, cremation benches, niches, and more. It's important for an individual to express their preferences between traditional burial and cremation, and which type of burial is preferred: in ground, above ground, or cremation. This is a great example of a question

that can be addressed in the Personal Planning Organizer. Most people have a strong opinion on their own final disposition, and it's important to make sure those preferences are in writing.

**NN:** With the rise in cremation, what kinds of questions are you hearing from families?

**Woodlawn:** Most families want to know what their options are. After all, according to a 2019 report by the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA), the cremation rate in the U.S. is projected to be 78.7% by 2040. That is a huge increase compared to previous years. Families need to know there are meaningful options for cremated remains. We hear from so many who have the cremated remains of a loved one at home and aren't sure what to do with them. We'll make sure you understand all of your options and talk through what is best for you and your family.

**NN:** What do you say to these families?

**Woodlawn:** First, we explain how important it is to have a place they can come back to over the years to visit their loved one who has died. This is an essential part of the grieving process and one that is

often overlooked. Then we advise them to come to Woodlawn to see their options for themselves. We have something for everyone and every budget. We also make sure to tell families that Woodlawn is proud to be an exclusive provider in the Bronx of the Cremation With Confidence™ Guarantee. This means that we own and operate our own crematory and follow a 10-step process that ensures your loved one is treated with dignity and respect throughout the cremation process. We take our responsibilities very seriously and want families to know that.

**NN:** What is the next step families should take?

**Woodlawn:** Call us to make an appointment to meet with one of our Family Service Associates in person or virtually. They will help you know exactly what to do, and explain your options so you can ultimately reduce stress on your family. Call **718-920-0500** or visit **www.woodlawn.org** for more information.

The Woodlawn Cemetery is located at **4199 Webster Ave., Bronx, NY.**



In-person or virtual tours available. Visit [www.woodlawn.org](http://www.woodlawn.org).







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2 The Prime APR is variable based on the U.S. Prime Rate as published in the Wall Street Journal, plus a margin (if applicable). The minimum floor APR is 3.25%. If CLTV is 65% or less, the rate is prime for a primary or vacation home, prime plus 0.25% for an investment property. HELOCs are variable rate products and rates may not exceed the maximum APR of 10.99%. The Prime Rate as of 6/01/2021 = 3.25%. Loan products and services subject to credit approval. All loans secured by a mortgage/lien on the property. Rates and terms are subject to change without notice. Rates are effective as of 6/01/2021.

## NYC Urges Residents to “Shop Your City”



Photo by José A. Giralt

**(L-R) JONNEL DORIS**, COMMISSIONER of NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS), and Wilma Alonso, executive director of the Fordham Road Business Improvement District (BID), listen to the concerns of an unidentified pedestrian during a walking tour of Fordham Road on Tuesday, July 6, 2021. Doris and Alonso were on a walking tour of Fordham Road to promote the city’s “Shop Your City” initiative, which promotes shopping at local businesses.

By **JOSÉ A. GIRALT**

Last spring *The New York Times* described Fordham Road as one of the city’s retail zones that had “bounced back.” The article included data that described the Bronx as a borough that had lost 40 percent of its businesses, had the highest rate of COVID-19 deaths, and an unemployment rate near 18 percent. Yet, the biggest shopping district in the Bronx, Fordham Road with its 175 storefronts, located between Washington and Jerome Avenues, has retained a 3 percent vacancy rate, the same as before the pandemic hit.

The significance of the robust numbers is not lost on city officials like Jonnel Doris, commissioner of the City’s Department of Small Business Services (SBS). On July 6, Doris took a walking tour along Fordham Road, accompanied by Wilma Alonso, executive director of the Fordham Road Business Improvement District (BID), and Daniel J. Bernstein, the BID’s deputy director.

On what was a hot, sunny day, the group walked from the Grand Concourse to Webster Avenue, distributing boxes of face masks, canvas shopping bags, and leaflets explaining how residents could reach out for help from the Department of Small Business Services. Stopping at Bryan Park at the intersection of East Fordham and East Kingsbridge roads, the group stopped to speak with pedestri-

ans, explaining their goals.

“We’ve been going around our city and today we’re at Fordham [road] to really survey the comeback of New York City, and to talk to our local small business owners as part of our ‘Shop Your City’ campaign,” Doris said.

One aspect of the Fordham Road BID was singled out by Doris for special praise. “One great thing to know about the entrepreneurs in this district, which is key to, I think, why this is such a vibrant community [is that] over 60 percent of the business owners here are immigrants, like me,” he said.

The initiative known as “Shop Your City,” encourages shoppers to buy merchandise and groceries locally. Another program recently announced for small businesses, “NYC Business Quick Start,” aims to help small business owners cut through the red tap that hinders some prospective merchants from even trying to open a business in the city, because of what can seem like a bureaucratic maze.

The interagency program includes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the Department of Buildings (DOB), and SBS.

Among the main benefits to busi-  
(continued on page 22)



# PREPÁRESE PARA PAGAR MENOS POR LA ATENCIÓN MÉDICA

Hay nuevos fondos federales disponibles para ayudar a los neoyorquinos a ahorrar dinero en seguros médicos. Puede encontrar un plan médico de bajo costo y calificar para obtener más ayuda financiera para reducir sus primas, incluso si no era elegible antes.

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# Out & About

COMPILED BY SHANIA DEGROOT

## Events

Are you looking for a way to give back to your community by volunteering? A **Compost Collecting and Awareness** event will be hosted by the Bronx River Alliance on Friday, Aug. 6, 2021, from 8.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. at Starlight Park, Sheridan Expressway, between E. 174<sup>th</sup> Street and E. 172<sup>nd</sup> Street and Jennings Street. Join volunteers as they assist with food scrap collection, sorting, and community involvement in programming along the Bronx River. Masks are encouraged as is social distancing. For more information, visit [nycgovparks.org](https://nycgovparks.org) or call (718)- 542-4284.

Send your child on an adventure back in time this summer at Van Cortlandt House Museum (VCHM)'s **Adventures in Time Summer History Camp**. Located at West 246th Street in the Bronx, the camp takes place

on Monday, Aug. 9, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Campers will learn about the history of the Van Cortlandt family and how they relate to the history of New York City, all while having fun. Daily activities are designed in keeping with New York State 4th Grade curriculum standards and are appropriate for children aged 6 to 12. Campers bring their own lunches, but VCHM provides daily snacks and drinking water. Adventures in Time is a technology-free experience. For more information, call (718) 543-3344.

Check out the **Fordham Flea Market** and support hundreds of amazing local artists, creators, and merchants, selling their wares at Fordham Plaza, NY 10458, each Sunday from noon to 7 p.m. Small-batch specialized garments, accessories, packaged goods, gifts, jewelry, self-care products, unusual arts & crafts items, and more are available. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/fordhamflea/>.

## Art

Want to attend an arts event with your family and friends? **Pilobolus** is a rebellious dance company that pushes the boundaries of human physicality to explore the beauty and power of linked bodies. Since 1971, the group has performed in over 65 countries and collaborated with some of the world's most influential thinkers, innovators, and influencers. See the group perform at the New York Botanical Garden at 2900 Southern Blvd, Bronx, NY 10458 on August 7, 8, and 14. For more information, visit [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org).

Join the **Poe Park Visitor Center, Literacy Inc.** and New York Public Library for a reading & recreation event at Poe Park on Grand Concourse between E. 192nd Street and E. Kingsbridge Road, on Tuesday, Aug. 24, from 10 a.m. to noon. A series of outdoor readings will be held for parents and children. Reading, spelling, and writing activities will be offered, as well as bilingual "read aloud" sessions, reading suggestions for parents, and leisure activities. For more information, visit [nycgovparks.org](https://nycgovparks.org) or call (718) 365-5545.

## Music

If you're looking for something interesting to do before the summer ends, check out **Ghanafest NY12** on Saturday, Aug. 7, from noon to 6 p.m. at 1700 Crotona

Avenue, in Crotona Park East. The event showcases Ghanaian culture, including exhibitions, Ghanaian Dancers, a DJ and MC, a picnic, and a live band with artists like Edem, Dynamic, Wuza Wuza, Zeek Drummers, Dan Price and others. For more information, go to [bronxarts.org](http://bronxarts.org).

On Sunday, Aug. 8, Bronx Arts Ensemble (BAE) is proud to return with in-person concerts at 6036 Broadway, Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx, NY 10471. BAE is kicking off with a charming collection of 20th century French works, entitled "**French Music for Winds**," with the BAE Woodwind Quintet on Sunday, Aug. 8, at 2 p.m. For more information, go to <https://www.bronxartsensemble.org>.

## Movement

There are few things that compare to being out on the open water in New York City. The sound of the waves, the warmth of the sun on faces, and the thrill of slicing through the water combine to create an unforgettable experience. The certified Urban Park Rangers will take you on canoe trips ranging from the calm waters of protected lakes to the more demanding open waters of rivers and bays. Join the **Island Hopping by Canoe (Advanced)** event on Saturday, Aug. 14, from 11 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. at Pelham Bay Park. For more information, visit [nycgovparks.org](https://nycgovparks.org) or call (718) 319-7258

## NYC Urges Residents to "Shop Your City"

(continued from page 20)

Business owners who reach out for help are having a single point of contact to help with multiple city regulations as well as a guaranteed response to inquiries from small businesses within 48 hours. The wait time for responses will be cut by 50 percent, according to information on the NYC Business Quick Start's website.

For Alonso, it is critical to get this type of information out to the business owners along Fordham Road, if the Bronx is expected to make a full economic recovery. "We need to make sure that every business ... is open [and] they receive all the information as they receive access to all the grants, all the training, everything that SBS provides," she said.

Almost three years ago, Kirsten (last name withheld) opened a clothing store on the Grand Concourse, catering to women over 30. She knew the first year of running a business would be tough while she tried to establish a customer base, but she said closing the store under COVID-19 re-

strictions, and then gradually reopening to a small but loyal customer base has further hindered the growth she had originally envisioned as a small business owner.

The tour of the Fordham Road BID started inside her store, "Le\$\$ Clothing," located at 2484 Grand Concourse. She was thankful for the commissioner's visit and the media coverage on that day. "It's always good to get some sort of press," she said. "I'm hoping that with the article [in *Norwood News*], local people will read it so that will help increase our [customer] traffic," she said.

Kirsten praised the Fordham BID for checking in on her business. Her sales have yet to reach pre-COVID levels, but she estimates that her business is "70 to 75 percent back." She has applied for various loans and grants and expects to see sales increase as people become more comfortable going outside. Although her business is approaching a third anniversary, she still considers herself "the new kid on the block."



Photo by José A. Giralt

**(L-R) KIRSTEN (LAST NAME withheld)** owner of "Le\$\$ Clothing" store, located in Fordham Heights, voices her business concerns to Jonnel Doris, commissioner of NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS), and Wilma Alonso, executive director of the Fordham Road Business Improvement District (BID) on Tuesday, July 6, 2021. Doris and Alonso were on a walking tour of Fordham Road to promote the city's "Shop Your City" initiative, which promotes shopping at local businesses.

"We've had a lot of challenges since COVID began," Kirsten said. "Once they [customers] come in once, I feel

they will come in a second time. People are still discovering us, but we still need more business, more customers."



# ***The Fountain Diner & Cafe***

## **131 E Gun Hill Road**

Please join us in welcoming The Fountain Diner & Cafe to the neighborhood! Owned by Hasheem Yehiya, owner of popular neighborhood spots Tasty Picks and Tasty Caribbean Buffet, The Fountain Diner and Cafe will bring a whole new world of flavor to East Gun Hill Road.

On one side of the restaurant you will find grab and go options and on the other will be a sit down restaurant with a separate dine-in menu. Stop by today for breakfast, lunch, or dinner!



**The Fountain Diner & Cafe**  
**131 E Gun Hill Road**



# New Committee Elected to Bronx CB7

By SARAH HUFFMAN

The election of the various officer positions to Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) for the upcoming year took place at the last general board meeting of the year on June 23. Most of the incumbent officers were re-elected, apart from one. In addition, four motions were passed on various, different matters during the meeting.

Nominating committee chair, Sandra Erickson, gave each candidate a chance to pitch their candidacy to the board members at the beginning of the meeting before voting took place. Most positions ran uncontested, except for second vice chair and third vice chair. The board members in attendance subsequently voted, and the results were revealed later in the meeting.

Emmanuel Martinez was re-elected as CB7 chair, Barbara Stronczer was re-elected as first vice-chair, Andrew Laiosa was re-elected as second vice-chair, Chad Royer was voted in as third vice-chair, replacing Erick Ascencio, Edgar Ramos was re-elected as treasurer, and Yajaira Arias was re-elected as secretary.

The incumbent committee members and chairs remain the same since each appointed member serves for a term of two years before renewing their membership (or not) with the Bronx Borough President's office. Some have two roles as an officer and as a committee chair.

The committee chairs are Betty Arce for Environment & Sanitation, Jhenelle Robison for Education, Youth & Libraries, Ramos for Traffic & Transportation, Alex Karman for Housing, Stronczer for Parks, Victor Saldaña for Public Safety, Michelle Avila for Health & Human Services, Royer for Veterans Affairs, Laiosa for Budget, Personnel and Ethics and Cole Hawkins for By-Laws.

The meeting took place the day after the 2021 primary elections, on June 22, and District Manager Ischia Bravo was back in attendance, having taken some time out during 2021 to run for the District 15 City Council seat. Bravo finished as first runner-up in the primary race which was ultimately won by incumbent City Councilman Oswald Feliz. The councilman first won the seat in the March 23 special election. The seat had previously been held by Congressman Ritchie Torres who was elected to Congress in November 2020.



**MEMBERS OF BRONX** Community Board 7 (archive photo). Photo courtesy of Bronx Community Board 7

In terms of board business, two motions were presented by Karman, as Housing and Land Use chair. The first concerned a proposed health and fitness zoning text amendment. The amendment states that health and fitness establishments may open in commercial and manufacturing districts without a special permit.

"This will make it easier for gyms and other health establishments to open up, so they no longer need to obtain a special permit first," Karman explained. "They can simply open up like any other retail business."

In the context of the discussion, Martinez said that overall health in the Bronx was not the best, and that it was in the borough's best interest to make it easier for health-related establishments to open. "COVID is upon us, but at some point COVID will [sur] pass and we still have to keep healthy," he said. "You have to continue to have the lifestyle. So, at some point, business will begin to grow, and people will begin to go out. So, I think it's important that, in anticipation of that future step, we allow for things to run smoothly when the time comes," Martinez added.

Board member, Myrna Calderon, said she had thought that part of the solution to the health problem was bringing in new healthy eating establishments to the neighborhood, while also being vigilant about massage parlor openings because the board had had issues in the past with unlicensed people opening massage parlors. Laiosa agreed, saying the government had to be careful with allowing such establishments to open. In some cases, massage parlors have been found to be hubs for sex trafficking.

The board eventually passed the motion to support the proposed health and fitness zoning text amendment, with a caveat that officials would remain vigilant in ensuring that only

licensed massage therapists would be covered by the law, and that such health and fitness establishments should serve healthy food.

The second motion presented by Karman was to approve the "FRESH II" zoning text program. The Food Retail Expansion to Support Health ("FRESH") program brings healthy and affordable food options to communities by lowering the costs of owning, leasing, developing, and renovating supermarket retail space.

The program provides tax and zoning incentives to developers who bring supermarkets to areas facing shortages of healthy food. The FRESH II amendment is intended to prevent the clustering of supermarkets in certain areas, change some building requirements, including window requirements which are proving impractical in some cases, promote redevelopment projects, and modify parking rules in low density districts.

The FRESH II update provides a waiver from required parking for up to 10,000 square feet of FRESH retail area in lower density residential districts.

"The housing committee believes that CB7 residents would benefit from additional supermarkets selling fresh and healthy foods," Karman said. The motion passed to support the amendment without much discussion from the general board.

In the context of parks, recreation and cultural affairs, Stronczer then presented the "Design Build" procurement motion, which combines design and construction project bids into one contract, saving money on public construction projects and speeding up the projects. Stronczer said the program had been presented to the Parks' committee by the Laborers' Local 1010 union.

In the context of the discussion, Martinez said he thought the proposal would help improve the bor-

ough's parks over time. "Especially with the new class of city council members, it will be easier to get more resources into our parks and actually see the fruits of our input," he said.

Stronczer said the Parks' committee supported the motion because it would end up saving time and money on public projects. The motion was voted on and passed.

Royer presented the final motion as chair of the Veterans affairs' committee. The motion stated that CB7 should request Link NYC to dedicate advertising space on their kiosks for public announcements designed to reach out to veterans. LinkNYC is a free service as it's funded through advertising, and according to its website, generates "millions of dollars in revenue for New York City."

"Many veterans, citywide, may not know where to look for some resources or know what services are available," said Royer. He explained that the Veterans' committee discussed how current technology could be used to communicate to veterans throughout the city or through city agencies, even when veterans, themselves, did not necessarily have direct access to such technology. The motion passed with two abstentions.

Near the end of the meeting, board member, Gloria Bent, RDN and nutrition consultant, informed residents about a neighborhood farmers' market, located at E. Mosholu Parkway North and Jerome Avenue, and about certain nutrition outreach vouchers which aim to encourage Bronxites to purchase and eat more fresh produce. Bent said the market is open Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Nov. 24.

Before the meeting came to a close, Karman referred to the extension, on May 11, of New York's statewide utility shut-off moratorium, which actually expired on March 31. The law extends the moratorium on utility shut-offs, including water, heat, electric, telephone, cable and broadband services until the conclusion of the COVID-19 state of emergency or until December 31, 2021, whichever comes first.

Karman suggested that anyone affected by the moratorium contact their utility service provider and inform them that they have been financially impacted by the pandemic, ensuring further protection for 180 days.





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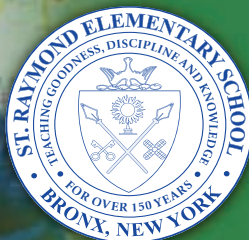
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# Dog Rescued from Window Ledge Believed to be Back with Owner

by DAVID GREENE

According to a pair of witnesses, a dog slipped through a partially opened window in a Norwood building and was stuck on a second-floor window ledge for at least 20 minutes. Several passersby called 911 but said no emergency personnel ever made it to the scene. The dog was eventually rescued and is now believed to be back with its owner.

As reported previously by *Norwood News*, and according to Citizen App user, “paoladlc,” who posted a brief video clip of the scene on the app, on Thursday, July 22, at 7.26 p.m., residents and visitors passing by 3202 Kossuth Avenue, at the corner of East Mosholu Parkway North in Norwood, spotted the dog on the window ledge.

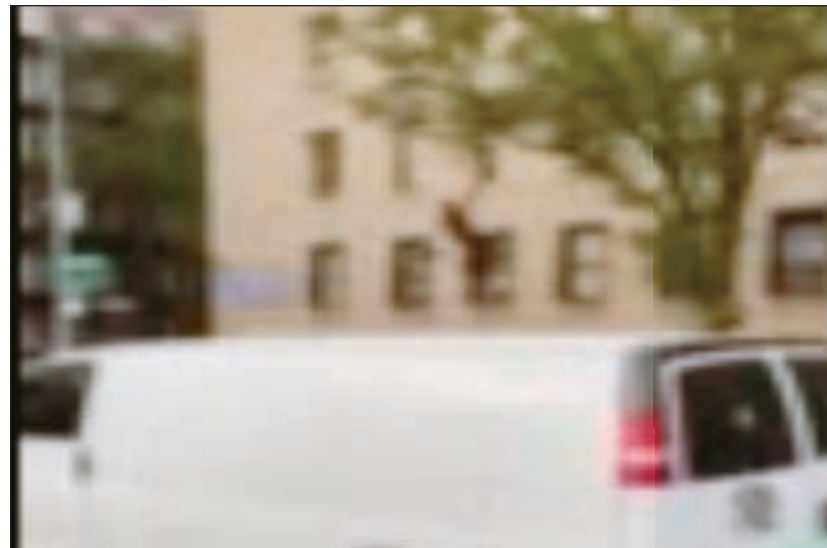
The 40-second video showed the dog at an estimated 25-feet above the sidewalk, remaining perfectly still as a man and woman on the street below held out a blanket and tried to encourage the dog to jump onto it. Thanks to the popular Citizen app, 1,500 area residents were notified of the incident, and the video was viewed more than 8,200 times. However, despite receiving over 650 emojis of support, well wishes and 46 comments, the dog’s fate remained unknown to the app users.

In a separate video obtained by *Norwood News* from a witness and resident of the area, an unknown “Spiderman,” is seen using the window bars of the basement and first-floor apartments to reach the dog on the second floor. According to witnesses, he placed a leash around the dog’s neck and pulled it down to where it was apparently caught by the two people holding the bed sheet. A third video, also obtained by *Norwood News*, shows bystanders apparently petting the same dog after

the rescue.

On July 31, a witness who shot the video, who asked not to be identified, recalled. “Yeah, the dog was up there. When we came out, it was on the second floor over there, and I also saw some guy who went up there and he put a leash on the dog, and he pulled it down and they caught him.” The witness added, “The dog was okay. She is fine.”

The witness continued, “The police didn’t want to help with her either. They didn’t come...like five people



called them and nobody came.” The witness, a female child under the age of 18 who spoke to *Norwood News* with her mother’s permission, added, “I was waiting for people to come and rescue it. It took a while... like 20 minutes.” The identity of the wall-crawler who rescued the dog is still unknown.

A second witness, an adult female, who also declined to be identified, recalled the moments before the initial video was taken, and said, “The window was fully open and somebody tried to pull her in, but she wouldn’t go.”

The witness confirmed the dog was not hurt, adding, “He’s back with the owner now, yeah, I don’t know why. I wouldn’t have done that.” The witnesses said that once the dog was on the ground, residents called a woman whose number was on the dog’s collar, and the owner apparently sent a friend or cousin to pick the dog up.

The younger witness said, “All I know is the dog was terrified, but once they got him on the ground, he was happy, and everybody was playing with him. The dog could have fallen and hurt himself. He could have died.”

Recalling the moment when the passerby climbed up to the dog, the

adult witness recalled, “I was like, oh my God, this guy is going to die from the fall.” She added, “I was on the phone with 311 and they were like, ‘Let me see if I can get the police,’ and we called the police, and we called the fire department. They said it was our problem. We have to deal with it.”

The adult witness said that no police or fire units ever showed up, adding, “The people that were standing here, I don’t even know them... just passing through. I live here so when I saw that, I called 911 and they put me through to 311. The guy at 311 was actually more helpful than the other operator, but they didn’t send anybody.”

An unidentified man who was exiting the building on the same day, July 31, and who said he was a friend of the dog owner, said, “You see the window? It wasn’t open that much. He just crawled out. She’s good. I’ve seen her walking around.”

A source at the Animal Care Centers of New York City (ACC), located on East Fordham Road, later told the *Norwood News*, “If someone was to call stating that this was an issue, because our field department is extremely short staffed, and is not able to run to a situation like

that, we would have that person that called, to call 911 in order for them to help out.”

The staffer added, “Now if 911 isn’t able to help, then we would try our best to assist the situation, but it’s something that typically we would have the person call 911.” The ACC staffer said they were looking further into the incident.

Requests for comment were made with the NYPD and FDNY. We did not receive an immediate response. A photo from the Citizen’s App video was forwarded to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, who replied, saying it was their understanding that the NYPD had responded to the incident. Both resident witnesses said they never saw anyone walking the dog in the area before.

According to the website, rover.com, most dogs should be walked between

**(TOP) A SCREENSHOT** from a Citizen App video shows a dog standing on the second-floor window sill of a building at 3202 Kossuth Avenue in Norwood, as two Good Samaritans hold out a bed sheet in hopes of catching the dog on Thursday, July 22, 2021. Photo courtesy of Citizen’s App

**(ABOVE LEFT)** A screenshot from a video by a witness who asked not to be identified shows a man climbing the outside wall of 3202 Kossuth Avenue in Norwood on Thursday, July 22, 2021, as he attempts to rescue a dog trapped on a second-floor window ledge. Image courtesy of the witness.

**(BELOW LEFT)** A screenshot from a video by a witness who asked not to be identified shows residents petting a dog after it was apparently rescued from the second-floor window ledge of 3202 Kossuth Avenue in Norwood on Thursday, July 22, 2021. Image courtesy of the witness.





# Bus Crash Injures 14

(continued from page 1)

by investigators from the Department of Transportation and officials from Liberty Lines which runs the Bee-Line bus service.

On Friday, Aug. 1, Detective Denise Moroney, an NYPD spokeswoman, told the *Norwood News*, "Police responded to a 911 call of a motor vehicle collision."

Moroney said after a preliminary investigation was carried out, it was determined that a black Chevrolet Equinox, driven by an unidentified, 20-year-old man, was traveling southbound on Jerome Avenue, when the driver attempted to change lanes and collided with a silver Toyota Rav 4.

The Toyota was driven by a 50-year-old man. After the initial impact, the Toyota Rav 4 veered into the northbound lane of

female commuter who said she used the Bee-Line bus service, recounted missing the bus in question just minutes earlier at the Bedford Park Boulevard and Jerome Avenue stop, saying, "I just missed this bus... As my cab is pulling up, this bus was leaving, so I waited for the next bus." Later, as she took in the images of the heavily damaged bus from the safety of a sidewalk, the startled woman added, "I don't understand how this happened."

A second Citizen App video posted by "red725us" showed the bus driver speaking to a local news reporter about the events leading up to the collision. Referring to his passengers, he said, "They know...they saw what happened." He then asked some of the passengers, "Were you guys in the back when the guys hit the bus? Did you see when those two id-



traffic and collided with the Westchester-bound, Bee-Line bus that was driven by a 57-year-old man. The front of the bus then struck the steel pillar that supports the elevated number 4 train line.

Moroney said 12 bus passengers were transported to area hospitals with "non-life-threatening injuries." However, she added that one bus passenger, a 69-year-old man, "sustained severe trauma to the head." The victim was transported to Jacobi Hospital, where the individual was initially listed in critical condition.

*Norwood News* reached out to Jacobi for an update on the man's condition. We did not receive an immediate response. Moroney said that both drivers of the two SUVs had remained at the scene.

Minutes after the crash occurred, Citizen App users began broadcasting live footage of the aftermath, including accompanying police band audio transmissions. One officer was heard reporting to his dispatch, "Affirmative. The bus hit the column... We've got multiple aided on the bus."

In a Citizen App video, an unidentified

iot hit the bus...when the cars hit the bus?"

The bus driver who, at this point, was sitting on the curb and wearing a neck brace added, "Because, when they hit it, I was already against the pillar. I don't even know what the [expletive] happened."

*Norwood News* arrived at the scene of the crash as an NYPD Highway Patrol officer was interviewing the 20-year-old driver of the black Equinox. He had the young man walk a straight line as part of a sobriety test.

Meanwhile, recalling the accident, Michael, a resident of Norwood, said, "I was on the 4 train, and I came down and saw a crowd and the front of the bus was really torn up."

Several, local television news outlets later aired surveillance video footage that captured the crash. The video showed the Equinox driver attempting to move from the outside lane into the inside lane, when it collided with the Rav 4, which then struck the bus.

Sadly, last March 12 marked the 10th

anniversary of another bus crash, which involved a tour bus that had been chartered to take passengers to and from Chinatown in Manhattan to a Connecticut casino. The bus crashed while traveling back to Manhattan on the New England Thruway, near Connor Street in Co-Op City, killing 15 and injuring more than a dozen.

Meanwhile, last January, local news outlets showed dramatic video footage from the scene of another bus crash which occurred on January 14 in Highbridge, when an articulated MTA bus smashed through a concrete highway barrier and remained dangling over the Cross Bronx Expressway access road, with seven passengers and the driver trapped inside.

The front section of the bus later dropped about 50 feet onto the expressway access road. All eight were reportedly injured, one seriously, following that crash.



Photos by David Greene

**(TOP) ACCORDING TO** police, a black, Chevrolet Equinox struck this grey Toyota Rav 4 which then struck a Bee-Line commuter bus that then struck the pillar of the elevated structure for the number 4 train line, on Jerome Avenue in the Norwood section of the Bronx on Thursday, July 29, 2021.

**(LEFT) A HIGHWAY** patrolman has the unidentified, 20-year-old driver of a black, Chevrolet Equinox walk a straight line as part of a sobriety test, after police say he attempted to change lanes before striking another vehicle, causing a chain-reaction collision on Jerome Avenue in the Norwood section of the Bronx, on Thursday, July 29, 2021.

**(BOTTOM) AN NYPD** Highway Patrol officer examines the front of a Bee-Line bus that crashed into a steel support column of the elevated structure for the number 4 train on Jerome Avenue in Norwood on Thursday, July 29, 2021.



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*Construction Accident*

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