



NORWOOD NEWS

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PERMANENT OUTDOOR DINING FUELS NOISE DEBATE



Photo by José A. Giralt

RESTAURANTS AND DINERS along East Bedford Park Boulevard, located in the Bedford Park section of The Bronx, see just a few outdoor customers on Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021, but are much more crowded at the weekend.

By **DAWN CLANCY**

Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7)'s Housing, Land Use, and Economic Development Committee have said "yes,"

to plans to support the City's proposal to make outdoor dining permanent, but some residents are wary the move may exacerbate already, unwanted

noise levels late at night. The board also gave its support to a new housing development at 3118 Webster Avenue in Norwood, despite some residents'

misgivings over the trajectory of quality of life in the area.

At the board's housing committee meeting, held on *(continued on page 27)*



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CB7 Approves Plan for Frisch Field Revitalization

By DAWN CLANCY

Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) Parks' committee ushered in their first post-summer hiatus meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 8, with a vote approving the proposed renovations and upgrades to Bedford Park's Frisch Field.

The \$5 million project, designed by the City's Parks' department, will include the addition of a tee-ball diamond, an enclosed bullpen, an adult exercise station, new water stations with bottle fillers, benches, storage units, as well as upgrades to the field's existing Little League diamond and the adjacent dugouts.

However, the bulk of the funds will be spent underground, on timely repairs in the wake of Hurricane Ida, to sinkholes, to address drainage and irrigation issues that have made portions of the field's two acres vulnerable to flooding.

Located on Mosholu Parkway and Webster Avenue, Frisch Field's drainage issues were brought to the forefront back in 2018 when then-District 11 Council Member Andrew Cohen approached the City's Parks' department with a \$5 million plan to revamp the field.

As previously reported by *Norwood News*, before Cohen's initiative, the field, designated as a city landmark, sat underutilized and poorly maintained for decades, leaving the surrounding community frustrated.

"Whenever it rains, the bridge going over Mosholu... it's got one drain and it comes right down into Frisch Field," said Doug Condit, a community member during the Sept. 8 meeting. "An hour after it stops raining, you've got three feet of water inside the field. You can't use it at all. It's too wet."



Photo courtesy of NYC Parks' department

FRANK FRISCH FIELD in Bronx Park

The field was first opened to the public in 1935 and was called Mosholu Baseball Field. However, in 1948, the name changed to Frisch Field in honor of Norwood native and baseball Hall of Famer, Frankie Frisch, also known as the "Fordham Flash."

At the height of his career, fans wanted to call Frisch the 'Norwood Flash' but the moniker didn't have the same ring to it. After graduating from Fordham University, Frisch went on to play baseball for the New York Giants and later the St. Louis Cardinals, before retiring.

Paul Rube is the project's landscape architect at the City's Parks' department. Given the field's historical ties to baseball, Rube said the proposed renovations are meant to enhance the baseball value of the field and stay true to its traditional usage.

The addition of the tee-ball diamond was central to that thinking, as was the adult fitness equipment, which will include parallel bars, chin-up bars, and plyometric boxes, also called jump boxes. As a result, once the project is completed, Frisch Field will be strictly designated for baseball, tee-ball, and Little League

games. Additional sports will not be permitted.

However, given the field will be open to the public, it's a mandate that Barbara Stronczer, chair of CB7's Parks' committee, doubts the City will be able to enforce.

"I live right near the field, and I notice that every Sunday, all summer long, a soccer league uses the outfield from Webster Avenue back to the tracks of the Metro North," Stronczer said at the Sept. 8 meeting. "Different teams come in, and they play from eight in the morning until about four in the afternoon. How are you going to prevent this in the future?"

Norwood News reached out to the City Parks' department for details on how the rule would be enforced and received the following response from Park's press officer, Dan Kastanis.

"The field portion of the park will be designated for baseball play only, and enforced by Parks' staff through education," Kastanis wrote, adding that Parks' officials are still deciding whether the field will, finally, remain open for general public use or just for permit holders.

He continued, "Responsive to community feedback, in addition to the field renovation, we have updated the design for the project to include brand new adult fitness equipment and a new tee-ball area, which will be open to the public during regular park hours."

Residents had been asked in recent months, following a previous Parks' presentation, to provide input into the City's draft plans for the field. Kastanis added that the baseball designation was necessary to preserve the field terrain. Pick-up soccer games and other activities, he said, could cause damage and create

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N R W TO CORTLANDT STREET



This week, we asked readers their thoughts on Gov. Kathy Hochul's announcement about curbing misinformation on abortion?



"You know if women want to have that, they have the right to do that. I don't agree with certain things, but I can't comment on that really, you know what I'm saying? They should have the right to do it, but babies need to be born. Republicans always cry they're pro-life when it comes to abortion, but it never comes up when you're talking about gun control. Everybody has an opinion, but when babies are being killed, I don't like it."

Byron Beasley,
Fordham Manor



"I feel like every woman has the right and I feel she, (Hochul) as a woman, understands how we feel, and I think that's great. I also think it's the woman's right to have what she believes in, and if Gov. Hochul wants to do it, I'm all for it. Yes, abortion and women's rights have always been under attack. There's always double standards when it comes to us, women."

Yessenia Sanchez,
Olinville



"I feel like we choose who gets into elected office and choose those who lead us and run our cities. Our elected officials need to do their part, and give us the right information for women so they can make the right decision on how they feel in regards to abortion. Social media took control, since social media came about, it has evolved throughout the years, and with the misinformation, that's the new media. A lot of media outlets and reporters get some information from social media as well. People use social media in order to be "social activists," but just because you post something, doesn't make you aware of what's going on."

Ralphy Marciano,
Woodstock



"People have to choose what's right for them; women should have the right. The misinformation is coming from the politicians. The regular people, they don't care about abortion. Politicians have always lied. They are all partisan. Some are left, some are right and some in the center. I think getting the truth today is a little better than it was."

Adam Diop,
Fordham Manor



"Everybody has to make their own decisions. Today, I'm kind of against it because I was pregnant a couple of times and I had two miscarriages. I now feel that after three months, it shouldn't be done. I feel if God blesses you to have a child, you should have it. I don't think anybody should have an abortion."

Shamikia Caldwell,
Norwood

Two Arrested after Fordham Manor Crash

by **DAVID GREENE**

A driver who ignored a police-stop, who was not being pursued by police, caused a three-vehicle crash that injured at least two vehicle occupants and three pedestrians at a busy intersection in Fordham Manor.

The incident was reported at 4:16 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 8, at the intersection of East Kingsbridge Road and East Fordham Road in Fordham

Manor. The out-of-control vehicle struck three pedestrians on the sidewalk, before flipping over outside of Bryan Park, a triangular park on East Fordham Road.

Police spokeswoman, Det. Denise Moroney, said, "Police observed a 2006 Subaru fail to stop at a red light, pulled the motorist over and upon approach, the vehicle fled the location."

Moroney continued, "The 21-year-



Photo courtesy of Juan Rodriguez

A CAR SPEEDING down East Kingsbridge Road in Fordham Manor apparently lost control and flipped over, injuring several pedestrians at East Fordham Road on Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2021.

Subaru slammed into his car [Vehicle #3]. Seconds later, the Subaru also ploughed into several pedestrians, knocking them to the ground, as the Subaru flipped over on its roof.

As Rodriguez waited for his vehicle to be towed, he recalled the incident, saying, "I saw the light was red, but I didn't understand that the police were following this car [Vehicle #1]."

Rodriguez, who said he believes his car has been totaled, following the crash, also recalled seeing several pedestrians lying on the ground and police quickly arresting the young driver and passenger of the 2006 Subaru.

Rodriguez confirmed his female passenger was removed from the scene by EMS. A Citizen's App video showed at least one child was also transported to an area hospital by EMS. The child was seen bleeding from the head. There were no official reports of any deaths following the incident, and FDNY did not immediately respond to our requests for an official update on

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NEWS BRIEFS

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Flooding Relief

Rep. Adriano Espaillat (NY-13) is calling on the U.S. House and Senate leadership to include his bill, the Housing Survivors of Major Disasters Act of 2021, in upcoming emergency disaster supplemental funding. Espaillat said as the country sees more natural disasters like Hurricane Ida, brought on by the climate crisis, the inclusion of his bill in the funding package would clarify and modernize FEMA's federal housing disaster assistance programs, and would protect safe, stable, and affordable housing for thousands of U.S. citizens across the country.

Tougher Laws to Target Fake Vaccine Cards

In response to the rise of fake vaccination cards, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) is calling on Gov. Kathy Hochul to sign his bill, introduced in May 2021, to make it easier for prosecutors to charge those forging or possessing a forged immunization record, with a felony. The bill adds explicit language to the definitions of forgery, in the second and third degrees, which addresses forged immunization records. The assemblyman is hosting a townhall to combat COVID-19 vaccine misinformation on Thursday, Sept. 23, at 6.30 p.m. Call (718) 796 5345 for more details.

191 Rikers Inmates Released

On Friday, Sept. 17, Gov. Kathy Hochul announced that "in cooperation with the City of New York," 191 Rikers Island inmates would be released from the City jail. She also signed the Less is More Act, which restricts incarcerating New Yorkers for technical and non-criminal parole violations, and requires hearings to happen more quickly.

"It's about protecting human life. It's about protecting human rights. It's about protecting human dignity," Hochul said, adding that New York State incarcerates more people for parole violations than any other state in the country. Hochul is also directing the State Department of Corrections to start transferring 200 Rikers inmates into State prison facilities. It follows widespread reports of "inhumane" conditions

Homecoming Concert Celebrates Life, Arts & Culture in "The Boogie-Down"

By **JASON GONZALEZ**

New York City Homecoming Week kicked off in the birthplace of Hip Hop, on Monday, Aug. 16, when the first of five outdoor concerts was held in Orchard Beach in The Bronx. Homecoming Week was launched as a celebration of the City's recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, despite health officials saying that more people still need to be vaccinated in order to reach herd immunity. City-wide, just 62 percent of New Yorkers are fully vaccinated, and in the Bronx, that number is 54 percent.

Nearly 18 months after "The Big Apple" was labelled the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City has emerged from that dark time, taking back its mantle as the epicenter of life and culture, once again. All of the acts on the bill for the Bronx show had their roots in the borough, and the event also drew some high-profile, political figures such as New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, and U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer.

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark, and State Sen. Jamaal Bailey were among some of the other elected officials in attendance.

"The Hip Hop culture is just what New York is," said Schumer. "It mixes, it matches, it's diverse. We all get together, we all come in and mix and mix and mix, and we're better than when we started."

The line-up included many Bronx notables such as KRS-One, Slick Rick, Busy Bee, Furious 5 featuring Grandmaster Melle Mel and Scorpio, Kid Capri, and Nice & Smooth. The



Photo by Jason Gonzalez

GREG NICE (WITH fedora) and Smooth B (wearing the army fatigue shorts) of Nice & Smooth, the rap duo from the '80s are pictured with a friend at the Bronx Homecoming Concert at Orchard Beach on Monday, Aug. 16, 2021.

rest of the talent was comprised of CL Smooth, DJ Hollywood, DJ Jazzy Joyce, DJ Kevie Kev, Fantastic Five, Grand Wizard Theodore, Joeski Love, PopMaster Fabel, Soul Sonic Force, T La Rock and the Ultra Magnetic MCs.

"Always, coming back to The Bronx is good," said Hip Hop pioneer, KRS-ONE, whose hits include "Love's Gonna Get'cha." It's like a litmus, not a litmus test, more like a measurement; this is where I started back in 1973," he added.

The rapper said when he comes back to the Bronx, he goes through

all his old neighborhoods. "I reminisce, I think, and say, 'Well you know, you're 50 now. Did you really make it in life? Did you really go somewhere?' You know, this kind of thing so The Bronx brings you right back over," he said.

New York City Homecoming Week combined forces with the Universal Hip Hop Museum, due to open in 2023. Rocky Bucano, its executive director, gave City officials props for arranging the week-long shows and for harnessing the power and energy of Hip Hop, in particular, to lift peo-

(continued on next page)

at Rikers, as well as staff shortages caused by NYC Department of Correction employees calling in sick, repeatedly, or not coming to work.

Security Camera Roll-Out Across Subways

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) announced, Sept. 13, that security cameras have been installed at all 472 subway stations across New York City. Thousands of cameras have been deployed

systemwide in recognition by MTA management that "safety and security are top concerns" for customers as they increase their usage of the subway system. MTA chief safety officer, Patrick Warren, said "If you are a criminal who preys on those who use our system, you will have your image captured, and be put on the express track to justice."

New PAC Aims to Increase Youth Vote

Troy Blackwell, an Af-

ro-Latino voting rights activist and former District 15 City Council candidate, has founded "Ready for Change," a political action committee dedicated to promoting youth voter education and supporting "forward-thinking Democrats" at the local and state level. According to Blackwell, Ready for Change aims to make democracy more representative, by increasing voter participation among youth, especially youth of color.

Improved Metro-North Hudson Service

MTA Metro-North Railroad announced Sept. 16 that service frequencies have increased on the Hudson Line, effective Sept. 20, with weekday service returning to 82 percent of pre-pandemic levels, and weekend service to 100 percent of pre-pandemic levels. The Hudson Line sustained significant damage after record rainfall when the remnants of Hurricane Ida hit the area on Sept. 1.

from previous page)

ple's spirits after a difficult couple of years.

"Many of the artists performing in these shows are native New Yorkers hailing from the five boroughs," he said. "It's their talent, creativity and passion for the culture that spread it from the stoops, parks and playgrounds to stages, worldwide."

Nice & Smooth members, Greg Nice and Smooth B, agreed and expressed humility and gratitude after performing before the home crowd. "It's beautiful, man! It's excellent. There's nothing like it," Smooth B said of being back home and performing. Nice echoed the same sentiments, saying, "It's awesome, Baby! Like, the Awesome Two....like Special K and Teddy Ted. It was awesome!"

Another concert scheduled during Homecoming Week was one on Aug. 17, at Midland Beach on Staten Island, where Wu-Tang Clan members, Raekwon and Ghostface Killah, took to the stage. Meanwhile, Big Daddy Kane headlined at the Brooklyn Army Terminal on Aug. 19. The outdoor entertainment moved on to Queens on Aug. 20 when George Clinton performed at Forest Hills Stadium.

All five Homecoming Week shows

were free, but attendees had to show proof of a COVID-19 vaccination to attend. At the Bronx concert, some people who were not vaccinated were seen sitting outside in the parking lot, behind the venue barriers and gates.

They sat out on beach chairs, beers in hand, and didn't seem too bothered that they were unable to go inside, since they could see the stage, the large screens, and could hear the music from where they were. It also made for an easy exit at the end of the night.

Homecoming Week concluded on Saturday, Aug. 21, with a huge "We Love" concert on the Great Lawn at Central Park. Scheduled performers included Bruce Springsteen, Jennifer Hudson, Paul Simon, Carlos Santana, and LL Cool J, among others. However, two hours into the show, heavy rain, thunder, and lightning interrupted a performance by Simon & Garfunkel and the show, which was being aired live on CNN, had to be shut down.

Back in the Bronx, Michelle Rodriguez of Queens who attended the Aug. 16 concert, summed up the experience, saying, "It's so refreshing. I really miss going to concerts." Meanwhile, Lamont Johnson of the Bronx, added, "This is bringing people together. It's important for the culture."

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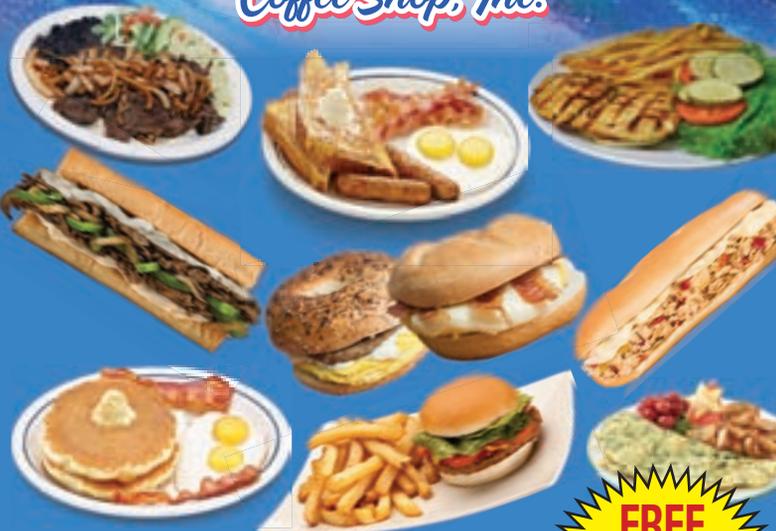
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Bronx “COVID Ditty” Show Wins International Film Festival Awards

By SARAH HUFFMAN

During the height of the statewide shutdown in 2020, brought on by the need to curtail the spread of the deadly coronavirus, actor, director and writer, Steve Greenstein, like many others, was subjected to long periods of boredom.

Lack of work in New York City’s normally thriving entertainment industry prompted him to begin taking walks around the Bronx’s Kingsbridge neighborhood, where he took the time to observe how the pandemic was affecting his community.

His thoughts on this prompted Greenstein to begin writing the web show series, “COVID Ditty,” fulfilling a dual need in the actor to stay creative during a time of uncertainty, while also channelling the historic nature of the moment through his storytelling.

“I look for the nooks and crannies in life, and that’s what I like to write about what is outside my door,” he said. “If you can find art in that, if you can create meaning in that, then you’ve got something. I knew when I was making this, and seeing what was happening outside my door, that was the impetus to write the episodes.”

The story focuses on Phil, played by Greenstein, and his son Charlie, played by Andrew Terranova, as they navigate life during the pandemic. While the series is fictional, the characters deal with pertinent, real-life topics such as the role of essential workers, the impact of the closure of local businesses, and the racism directed at the Asian community.

Greenstein describes the series as historical fiction because of the way it captures real life situations in a fictional setting. It was shot at local businesses in the Bronx and in the New York City area. Greenstein said he always looks for interesting stories first, then finds a local setting



Photo Courtesy of Steve Greenstein.

(L TO R) “COVID DITTY” CREATOR, Steve Greenstein, poses with the cast and crew of the web series in the Kingsbridge section of the Bronx.

in which to tell them.

For example, episode three presented a storyline about discrimination against the owner of a Chinese restaurant, prompting Greenstein to find such a restaurant in which to film. All business owners whose locations were used during production were compensated by Greenstein and thanked in the closing credits of the relevant episode.

“That was a really important thing of our little productions, giving back to the neighborhood,” said Greenstein. “Just, as if a big, Hollywood production comes into a neighborhood, they pay,” he added.

Greenstein is a Bronxite who spent a large part of his early years in Kingsbridge with his grandparents, even after he moved further upstate at a later stage of his childhood.

Before the pandemic hit, Greenstein had been a working actor, landing roles in various productions, including TV shows and plays. Prior to “COVID Ditty,” he most recently appeared in *Pose* (2019), *Iron Fist* (2017), and *The Detour* (2017). He said he has experience as a character editor, and together with the character work he gained over his acting career, it helped him develop the characters for “COVID Ditty.”

His professional experience also helped him navigate

the jobs of director and producer. “I really do love directing,” he said. “I do love the whole process, because I realize I’m not just an actor. I’m an actor, director, producer. I think if you want something to be done, you got to just do it.”

It was also important to Greenstein that the “COVID Ditty” production had Screen Actors’ Guild (SAG) approval, and that the production was protected by the union. After getting approved by SAG, the series started production in the summer of 2020, and he said every person involved was paid a union wage.

When it came to keeping everyone safe, Jennifer Plotzke, line producer on the show, said the Screen Actors Guild made everyone get COVID tests 48 hours before showing up on set, and reports were shared with headquarters in Los Angeles.

“It was difficult at first, especially because we were working during the summer of 2020, before vaccinations, when we were still in the height of the pandemic,” Plotzke said. “But eventually, we got the hang of it. Luckily, we were working with a small cast and crew and shooting mostly outside or in businesses that weren’t open at the time, so that made it easier to distance ourselves on set and gave us space to work safely. It was great to get back to work



Photo courtesy of Steve Greenstein.

(L TO R) STEVE GREENSTEIN AND Andrew Terranova work on a scene for the web series, “COVID Ditty,” filmed in the Kingsbridge section of the Bronx.

at that time,” she added.

Greenstein found his cast and crew by calling around to people he knew from the industry and by searching online. Monica Delgado said Greenstein found her through the Hispanic Organization of Latin Actors (HOLA) and asked her to audition for her role.

Delgado, who plays a nurse, Maria, says the show was a great way to showcase the reality of New Yorkers during the pandemic. “I also think that, you know, 20 years from now, it will be like a little historical series for people to watch, because it has stayed very true to our reality,” she said.

Delgado’s character, Maria, being an essential worker, is seen working on the front lines of the pandemic. In episode five of the series, Maria tells Phil how exhausting it is to work through the pandemic, and how she has taken on much more responsibility in her job since the crisis began.

“To me, it’s my favorite episode, just because of what she goes through, and how she speaks about it,” said Delgado. “I always think, if only certain people that are still so against science would watch this episode and listen to her, but who knows if even her words would change their minds?” she said.

“Covid Ditty” has been

recognized by both local and international film festivals over the last year. Greenstein said he decided to sign up for a film class at New York University (NYU), and his professor urged the students in the class to submit their projects to various film festivals. Greenstein took the professor’s advice, and his series has since been nominated, and has even won some film festival awards.

Among others, the series was recognized in the Best Shorts Competition, won a Talent of the Year award at the Amsterdam International Film Festival, won a Bronze Award at the Independent Shorts Awards in Los Angeles, received an Honorable Mention at the New York Movie Awards, and won Best Web/TV Series at the Florence Film Awards.

Delgado describes “Covid Ditty” as “the little engine that could,” explaining how remarkable it is that the series has received the kind of recognition that it has.

“It’s amazing, and it feels like it’s so worthwhile and so, I keep telling people, you know, it’s only eight minutes an episode! Give it a chance; I think you’ll enjoy it! So, hopefully we’ll keep going for a little bit, especially since the pandemic is not going anywhere yet, and see if we can keep reaching out to other people out there,” she said.

(continued on page 9)

Closing Rikers No Cure for Flawed System

On a regular basis, I read about horrific attacks by inmates against correction officers and other inmates. So, total elimination of solitary confinement is dangerous. On the other hand, it should only be used, when warranted.

Should correction officers have the option of using it against those who assault them? Should they be backed up by management, instead of scapegoated and disciplined for defending themselves? Of course! But should officers who wrongly use it be disciplined? Also, of course!

A problem overlooked in Dawn Clancy's story ("Bronx Legislators, Activists Call Out City Plan to End 'Solitary Confinement,'" *Norwood News*, Sept. 9-22), is deinstitutionalization.

There was a time when those who could not care for themselves, due to mental illness, were hospitalized. Those hospitals were closed and now, police and correction officers have to deal with the mentally ill. If Layleen Xtravaganza Cubillette-Polanco had



Letters To The Editor

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

been hospitalized instead of imprisoned, she'd probably be alive.

As for Rikers Island, that has been allowed to deteriorate under Mayor Bill de Blasio, who alternates between doing wrong and doing nothing. If Amnesty International treated the United States the way it treats other countries, they would have declared that jail a human rights violation by now.

Closing Rikers will accomplish nothing if new jails are run the same way. Rikers, as well as the city's jail system, needs to be fixed. But just as this country did not have a real president for four years, it has now not had a real mayor for almost eight years. That should change in January.

**Richard Warren,
Van Cortlandt Village**

Texas Law Needed in The Bronx

I wholeheartedly support the Texas law that bans abortion at six weeks and am very pleased to see that Florida may also adopt such a law. However, where this law is truly needed is here in New York State, especially in the Bronx, where we lead the nation in the number of abortions performed every year! I would also encourage anyone here in Norwood who learns of a friend or neighbor who becomes pregnant to stop me on the street and tell me. I know of many support services available to help pregnant women and will make sure they know of these services.

**Richard Marias
Norwood**

Time for LMDC to Close

A cat has nine lives, and so does the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC). November 2021 will mark the 20th anniversary of this quasi-independent government agency. It was formed in 2001, following the September 11th terrorist attacks, and its original mission was to plan the reconstruction of Lower Manhattan, and distribute nearly \$10 billion in federal funds to support rebuilding downtown Manhattan.

Anyone can clearly see that this mission has been completed. What are the political motivations of Gov. Kathy Hochul, her predecessor, Andrew Cuomo, State Sen. Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins, State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio for continuing to allow this agency to remain open? Has State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli or City Comptroller Scott Stringer conducted any recent audits of this agency. After twenty years, it should have completed its mission. It's time for the LMDC to close its doors and move on.

**Larry Penner
Great Neck**

Bronx "COVID Ditty" Show Wins International Film Festival Awards

(continued from page 8)

Plotzke agreed that it was great that the series was being recognized. "Steve and the entire cast and crew have poured a lot of love into this, and they deserve the accolades," Plotzke said. "The series really highlights local life during the pandemic and is a great love letter to The Bronx. I'm glad so many people are seeing it," she added.

Plotzke said she thinks the series could keep going as long as the pandemic lasts, and even beyond. "There will always be stories to tell in The Bronx, and these characters will still face interesting challenges and have

good times, whether there's a pandemic or not," she said.

While Greenstein's current goal is to get picked up by a streaming service, he said, ultimately, he hopes the series brings people together by showcasing their shared experiences.

The series can be found on YouTube by searching for "COVID Ditty," and Greenstein is still making new episodes. There will be a screening party of their latest episode on Oct. 7, at 7:30 p.m. at An Béal Bocht Café at 445 West 238th Street, in Fieldston.

As for the future of "Covid Ditty," Greenstein said he could see

himself doing more episodes, especially if he receives financial support for the series. At this time, he's pulling from his savings to produce the show, but he hopes someone will

give his team the financial backing needed to keep it going.

"I just hope that they're (the viewers) touched by the human experience of regular people that have been

living through this, not the politicians, not the mouthpiece we see on the nightly news, the talking heads, the CNN commentators," he said. "As an artist, as a writer, I think I've

given an insight into just regular people who go to work every day, trying to make it better for themselves and their kids, to get by another day in The Bronx."



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CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY

**Norwood Assault**

The NYPD is seeking the public's assistance identifying the person seen in the attached surveillance photo above, who is wanted for questioning in connection with an assault that occurred in Norwood. On Saturday, Sept. 4, at around 4.41 p.m., a 34-year-old male victim who was at the rear of 3405 Putnam Place got into a verbal dispute with the male suspect. After a brief struggle, the suspect kicked the victim to the floor, and continued to kick him in the body and head. The suspect later fled on foot to parts unknown, and the victim was transported to NYC Health & Hospitals/St. Barnabas, where he is listed in critical condition.

The suspect is described as an adult male, 30 to 40 years of age, of a medium build, is dark-skinned and was last seen wearing a gray hooded sweater, tan pants, black sneakers, a white hat, a black face mask and was carrying a black bag. The screenshot of the video footage obtained from the incident location is attached.

Fatal Stabbing in University Heights

On Friday, Sept. 10, at around 5.30 p.m., police responded to a 911 call regarding a man who had been stabbed near the corner of West 183rd Street and Sedgwick Avenue, in University Heights. Upon arrival, officers observed a 28-year-old man with stab wounds to the neck and torso. EMS responded to the location and transported the victim to Saint Barnabas Hospital, where he was admitted in critical condition. On Friday, Sept. 17, the victim was pronounced deceased. There are

no arrests, and the investigation remains ongoing. The deceased has been identified as Christopher Martinez, 28, of



Sugar Hill in Manhattan.

Norwood Pistol-Whipping Assault

The NYPD is seeking the public's assistance in locating the man seen in the attached photo above, who is sought for questioning in connection with an alleged assault in Norwood. It was reported to police that on Thursday, Sept. 16, at 11.59 a.m., in the vicinity of Reservoir Place and Reservoir Oval Walk, the man pistol-whipped a 33-year-old female victim, discharging a single round in the process which struck a four-door, unoccupied Lexus sedan that

was parked nearby. The victim, who suffered bruising, swelling and a laceration to the head, was transported by EMS to an area hospital in stable condition. The suspect fled in a grey Acura ILX. A photo of the man is attached.

Man Arrested for NYPD Endangerment

Police arrested a man for allegedly pouring a liquid, believed to be gasoline, on an occupied NYPD van during an anti-police protest on Friday, Sept. 3, near the 46th precinct station house in Fordham Heights. Christopher Springs, 22, of the Bronx, was arrested on Sept. 15, in connection with the Sept. 3 incident which occurred at Valentine Avenue and East 180th Street.

It was the second such protest in response to a police-involved shooting on Sunday, Aug. 29, which resulted in the death of 24-year-old Mike Rosado, as previously reported. The protest turned violent when protesters knocked over

metal barricades, and the police vehicle was later, allegedly, doused with gasoline. Eggs and trash were also allegedly thrown at the police van. The driver quickly drove away before the situation worsened, and no injuries were reported.

Police confirm that Springs was charged with attempted arson, reckless endangerment, and rioting. He was granted supervised release. The New York Post reported that Springs allegedly later said he had been "radicalized by lies," propagated by anti-police agitators. Springs had no prior arrests. A person arrested and accused of a crime is innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

Anyone with information regarding these incidents is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org>, or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.

"Teddy Cars" Restores Drama Program at St. Barnabas

by DAVID GREENE

A local car dealership stepped up and made a \$2,000 donation to support the film, drama, and music programs at St. Barnabas High School, as 200 students from Grade 9 through 12, returned to class after 18 months of virtual learning.

On Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2021, general manager and partner at Teddy Cars, located on Boston Road, presented the check to the school. It's hoped the funds will help jump start the return of the school's drama club and restart a music program that ended in 2012.

The stage at St. Barnabas High School, located on East 240th Street in Woodlawn Heights, has been dark since their Springfest show and classes were cancelled in March 2020 due to the coronavirus outbreak and related shutdown.

Before the check presentation, Batista said, "I love doing this for the community. This is the community that supports our business and it's really important to give back."

He added, "Most businesses that have their business in the area should be participating, donating, and helping local organizations, not just the schools, but any program that really improves people's lives."

Through its "Music Matters" program, Teddy Cars has donated \$20,000 to the music programs of 10 different Bronx high schools. "You're in the neigh-



Photo courtesy of Gary Axelbank

AT A CHECK presentation at St. Barnabas High School on Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2021, are (left to right) teacher, Richard Vitacco, principal, Henry Triana, Julio Batista of Teddy Cars, and student, Rafaela Rica.

borhood, so you should invest in the neighborhood," said Batista. "And let's not forget the other side of the coin. If everyone in the area is also buying from local businesses, you're improving the community by tax revenue, so it's important to really buy, shop and participate in the community that you're in."

Henry Triana, the new principal at St. Barnabas explained, "Any funds that we get from the community are important, and specifically from Mr. Batista over at Teddy Cars." He added, "Supporting the Bronx community in Bronx schools, that's really

honorable and important."

Triana continued, "The drama program, I think, is something that continues to build up, especially now with COVID. I'm sure the production last year, like [in] all other schools, was halted." The school principal said that restarting the drama program would ensure students had an outlet, adding that academics was one part of school life but it wasn't everything.

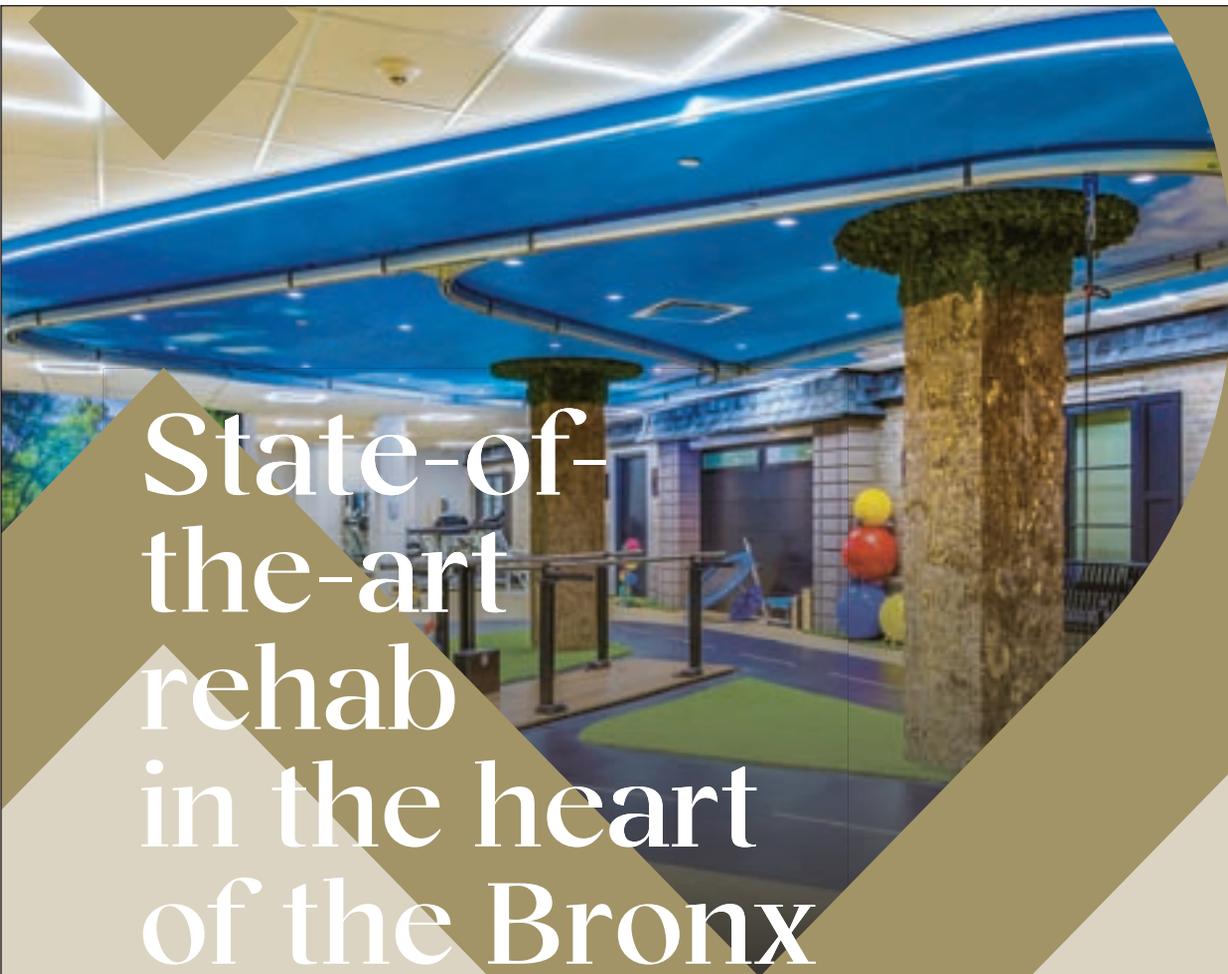
"It's a gateway into whatever they do want to go into... the dedication and commitment that it requires definitely translates into whatever else they want to do," he said.

A grateful Triana added, "We very much appreciate the donation, and everything that they've done for our school."

Richard Vitacco is a teacher, and film and drama moderator. He also wholeheartedly appreciated Batista's donation to the school. "It shows his interest in the community. Our film and drama program is a great creative outlet," he said. "It helps students think outside the box, to find solutions to problems, and it builds a sense of comradery and a sense of kinship among fellow students." He added, "It also helps to develop lifelong relationships even after high school is done."

The donated funds will help the school put on next year's spring musical, which involves 30 to 35 stu-

(continued on page 12)



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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



COVID-19 Updates

On June 24, 2021, New York State ended the State disaster emergency (PAUSE order) declared on March 7, 2020, to fight COVID-19.

On Sept. 15, Gov. Kathy Hochul announced a series of universal mask requirements designed to protect New Yorkers against the highly contagious Delta variant and the recent surge in COVID-19 infections statewide.

Face masks are now required at State-regulated childcare facilities for children aged two and up, and for all staff and visitors.

Residential congregate programs operated, licensed, certified, or approved by the Office of Children and Family Services, are required to ensure masks are worn by all staff and residents.

Programs and facilities licensed or registered by the Office of Mental Health, the Office of Addiction Services and Supports, the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, require masks to be worn, regardless of vaccination status.

On Sept. 15, Gov. Hochul announced a #VaxtoSchool campaign to increase COVID-19 vaccination rates among school-aged New Yorkers. Additionally, 125 free tickets are available to

the Governors' Ball Music Festival on Randall's Island from Sept. 24 to 26. Tickets are available to individuals who receive a first dose of their COVID-19 vaccine at State-operated, #VaxtoSchool, pop-up locations. The Bronx location is Mosholu Montefiore Community Center 3450 Dekalb Avenue, Bronx, NY 10467.

Effective Sept. 2, all teachers, administrators, and other school employees must submit weekly COVID-19 testing unless they show proof of vaccination.

The NYS Department of Health has released official guidance for classroom instruction for the 2021-2022 school year, as follows: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/09/school-guidance.pdf>.

Gov. Kathy Hochul recently signed into law a new moratorium on COVID-19 related residential and commercial evictions, which is in effect until Jan. 15, 2022. To apply, go to: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/>.

To support the distribution of booster shots, \$65 million will be made available to local health departments across the State.

The open enrollment period for uninsured New Yorkers has been extended through Dec. 31. New Yorkers can apply for coverage through NY State

of Health, at <https://nystateofhealth.ny.gov/> or directly through insurers.

Health care workers can text NY-FRONTLINE 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.

The FDA has expanded the emergency use authorizations for the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna mRNA vaccines so that immunocompromised individuals will be eligible to receive a third booster vaccine shot to boost their antibodies.

CDC mask guidance can be checked here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>.

NYC offers free, at-home PCR COVID-19 testing for all New Yorkers who are 65+ or immunocompromised. The service is available 7 days a week from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and appointments can be scheduled by calling 929-298-9400.

As of Aug. 17, people 12 and older are required to show proof they have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to obtain access to indoor dining, indoor fitness, and indoor entertainment. Learn more at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines-keytonyc.page>.

On Sept. 9, Mayor Bill de Blasio mandated that all NYC pre-kindergarten, childcare, and after-school program workers who have contracts

with the City must show proof of at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by Sept. 27.

A virtual townhall to combat COVID-19 vaccine misinformation will be held by Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz on Thursday, Sept. 23, at 6 p.m. Call (718) 796 5345 for more details.

Proof of Vaccination

According to NYC DOH, when proof of vaccination is required, New Yorkers can choose from the following options:

- a CDC vaccination card, or photo or photocopy of this card;
- an NYC vaccination record or other official immunization record from within or outside the U.S., including from a health care provider or a photo or photocopy of this card;
- the NYC COVID Safe App, on Android or iOS, where residents can upload a photo of their CDC vaccination card or other official record, along with a photo ID;
- the Excelsior Pass or Excelsior Plus Pass, where New Yorkers will need the phone number or email address associated with their NYC vaccination record. More information is available at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines-keytonyc.page>.



Photo by David Greene

A **STARBUCKS SIGN** denoting the imminent opening of a new branch of the popular café chain was first observed on Jerome Avenue at East 208th Street in Norwood on Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021.

Starbucks To Open at "Twin Donut" Site

by DAVID GREENE

Coffee lovers, get ready! Workers are putting the finishing touches to the remodeling of the once popular, "Twin Donut Shop," in preparation for the grand opening of a new Starbucks in Norwood.

The former outlet, located at 3396 Jerome Avenue and East 208th Street in Norwood, closed in July 2018, as previously reported by *Norwood News*, and the site has remained vacant ever since. Prior to its closure, the donut shop had been in operation for more than 50 years, according to Liz Camcran, an employee of

the business who spoke to *Norwood News* at the time of the closure in 2018.

The business did reopen for one evening, on the night of Oct. 1, 2018, but not to the public. On that occasion, it was used as a movie set for a brief scene from the film "Joker," starring Joaquin Phoenix.

Calls to the local Starbucks manager, as well as to the corporate office in Chicago, IL., were unsuccessful. However, one local Starbucks official told the *Norwood News* on Monday, Sept. 20, the new location would be open in a matter of days.

"Teddy Cars" Restores Drama Program at St. Barnabas

(continued from page 10)

dent performers. Meanwhile, St. Barnabas's Winterfest production, slated for January 2022, will be performed by most of the students at the all-girls school, with the male parts performed by students of St. Barnabas's affiliate, Mount St. Michael Academy.

Eighth grade student, Rafaela Rica, said of the program, "I was a very shy person. I had a lot of anxiety, especially about starting high school, but as I got more comfortable in the school and more comfortable in the drama club, it's helped me project my voice, like when I'm doing a presentation."

Rafaela explained that she used to speak very fast. "I still may need to work on that, but I've learned to speak

a little slower and dictate my words." She added, "The money will be put to great use."

St. Barnabas High School is an independent, college-preparatory high school that has educated young women since 1924. Educational programs include a three-tier academic curriculum with advanced placement, Honors and Regents classes, as well as support services and portfolio assessments.

Meanwhile, donating funds to support music programs at local Bronx schools is not the only good news that has garnered Teddy Cars some attention. The car dealership, which specializes in Nissans and Volkswagens, was named America's #1 Nissan dealer in 2019.

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Bronxites Honor Victims of Sept. 11th Attacks, 20 Years Later

by DAVID GREENE

On the 20th anniversary of 9/11, Bronxites gathered at various memorial events across the borough to honor the memories of those lost during the September 11th attacks, in 2001. They joined family members, friends, and strangers across the City to pause and remember the 2,977 people killed when two hijacked jetliners crashed into the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan, twenty years ago, as well as those who subsequently died as a result of the events of that day.

On Saturday, Sept. 11, Bronxites gathered at the 9/11 memorial monument, erected on the grounds of Jacobi Hospital on Pelham Parkway, where they honored the 144 Bronxites killed that fateful day.

At the same time, a second gathering was held outside the 49th precinct on Eastchester Road in Morris Park, where police officers paid homage to the 23 NYPD police officers who died when the Twin Towers collapsed, as well as the 247 officers who have since died from 9/11-related illnesses over the intervening 20 years. During the nearly year-long, recovery efforts at Ground Zero, in the wake of the attacks, members were exposed to toxic dust, which caused various illnesses.

According to published reports, on Tuesday, Sept. 7, this year, the Office of the City's Medical Examiner identified two additional victims, thanks to new DNA technology, bringing the total number of victims identified through DNA analysis to 1,647. The remains of the two victims were the first to be identified since October 2019. A further 1,106 victims have still to be identified.

On Saturday afternoon, Sept. 11, nearly 100 residents in Parkchester gathered along Unionport Road as Bronx Community Board 9 held a memorial event for those who perished. Many from the Bengali community turned out for the occasion, joining a troop of local Cub Scouts, other community residents, and members of EMS and the NYPD.

Speaking at the Parkchester event, Fr. David Powers said, "The shock and horror of that tragic day has subsided, but it has been replaced with an emptiness, a longing for innocence lost."

On Sunday morning, Sept. 12, on Pelham Parkway, a 9/11 charity run / walk was held in honor of Lt. Thomas Clesse of the 49th precinct who died from cancer in 2000.



Photo by David Greene

ON THE 20TH anniversary of the September 11th attacks, residents gather in Parkchester on Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021 to honor and remember those who were killed.



Photo by David Greene

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Ruben Díaz, Jr. presides over his last 9/11 memorial event, as Bronx borough president, during a service at Lou Gehrig Plaza, located at East 161st Street and the Grand Concourse, on Saturday, September 11, 2021.

At noon on Monday, Sept. 13, Bronxites gathered again for a memorial service, organized by the Office of Bronx Borough President, Ruben Díaz, Jr., at Lou Gehrig Plaza, located at East 161st Street and the Grand Concourse.

Recalling the events of the tragic day, the borough president said, "If you look at the elected officials that are here today, my father and I, we were the only ones who were elected 20 years ago." (Ruben Díaz Sr. is the elected Bronx City Council member for District 18.)

Díaz Jr. went on to describe when he first became aware of the attacks, saying Paul, his chief of staff at Borough Hall, told him at the time, "Look, we have an issue." He told the borough president to come out and look at the images [on TV], and it was then, Díaz Jr. said, that he saw that the first of the Twin Towers had been hit.

"I couldn't believe my eyes and I thought, like so many of you, that it was an accident," Díaz Jr. said. "I wanted to believe it was an accident. I wanted to believe it was just some-

thing gone terribly wrong, that it was not malicious, intentional, but what we later found out was an evil act on humanity," he added.

Díaz Jr. urged Bronxites not to forget what happened that day. "There was an assault on our democracy. That day was an election day," he said. "We cannot forget the Noel family, and over 3,000 people who perished that day. Nobody asked them their political affiliation, nobody asked them who they loved, nobody asked them how old they were."

The borough president referenced the 144 Bronxites who died in the attacks, whose names are inscribed on the 9/11 memorial monument at Jacobi Hospital. It has since been updated to include an additional 13 names, to account for those who have since died of 9/11-related illnesses and brings the total number of Bronx victims of the September 11th attacks to 157.

Reflecting on the present day, Díaz Jr. then said, "You fast forward 20 years later, and I can't help but say, 'Maybe those lessons have been lost?' You see,

we are more politically divided than ever. Democracy was attacked that day, but it seems to me like more and more, throughout our country, democracy is still being assaulted."

The borough president, who steps down at the end of his current term, then said the borough was at a point of ushering in new elected leadership, leadership, he said, he was proud of, and which, he said, represented an abundance of talent.

"After me, there's going to be another borough president, because this goes on and she's with us today," Díaz Jr. continued. "She's our City Council member, and the next borough president and the first female, the first African-American borough president in the Bronx's history; Vanessa Gibson is with us here today."

On Tuesday, Sept. 14, the FDNY added the names of 25 additional members to a memorial wall at the FDNY's Brooklyn headquarters, who have also died from 9/11-related illnesses.

According to a New York Post article, the actual number of victims who died on Sept. 11, 2001 was 2,996, including 343 FDNY firefighters and one volunteer firefighter. The article referenced federal victim statistics from the Center for Disease Control's World Trade Center Health Program, and an additional 3,311 people who enrolled in it who have since died, surpassing the number of those killed on the actual day of the attacks.

Another gathering had been held in the Bronx on Saturday, Sept. 11, outside the headquarters of FDNY's Engine 72, on East Tremont Avenue in Throgs Neck, where the community paid their respects to the 343 FDNY firefighters and one volunteer fireman who perished that day.

On Thursday, Sept. 16, the FDNY announced the September 5th passing of retired firefighter, Steven F. Devaney, of Engine Company 46, located at 460 Cross Bronx Expressway. Devaney was a 20-year veteran of the department when he retired due to 9/11-related illness. He leaves behind a wife and three children.

On Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021, NBC and other media outlets reported that the FBI has released a newly declassified document about the 9/11 attacks. It describes the logistical support given to two of the Saudi hijackers in the lead-up to the terrorist operation, as the world marked the 20th anniversary of one of America's darkest days.



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Bronx Community Board No. 7 is a New York City agency established to identify the needs of our community and advocate through city government to meet those requirements. The 59 community boards are independent City agencies that advise on land use, the City budget, municipal service delivery, and other matters on a geographically exclusive basis. Bronx Community Board 7 serves the neighborhoods Bedford Park, Fordham, Jerome Park, Kingsbridge Heights, Mosholu, Norwood, & University Heights of the Bronx.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Track developments in the assigned issue areas
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- Attend 1-2 community board general board and/or committee meetings events per month (note these take place on evenings)
- Help prepare Community Board Meeting documents
- Perform special projects assigned by the District Manager
- Provide information on and generate ideas for an enhanced social media presence
- Legislative research
- Assist with constituent concerns
- Perform other duties as assigned.

REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to utilize google drive and Microsoft applications ex: word, excel etc.
- Verbal and written communication skills
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- Self-starter attitude
- Ability to work together in a team
- Passion for service
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MPC Celebrates 40 Years in Norwood



(TOP) ON FRIDAY, Sept. 17, 2021, Jennifer Tausig (with mic), executive director of Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC), addressed the crowd at the nonprofit's 40th anniversary celebration, held at the Keeper's House, located at 3440 Reservoir Oval East in the Norwood section of the Bronx.

(LEFT) (L TO R) District 11 City Councilman Eric Dinowitz, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) and Jennifer Tausig, executive director of Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC) share a light moment during a presentation ceremony to celebrate MPC's 40th birthday on Friday, Sept. 17, 2021 at the Keeper's House, at 3440 Reservoir Oval East, in the Norwood section of the Bronx.

(RIGHT) (L TO R) State Sen. Jamaal Bailey (S.D. 36), Marcos Crespo, former assemblyman and senior VP for community affairs at Montefiore Medical Center, David Cruz, former editor-in-chief of *Norwood News* and current news editor at Gothamist, and Rick Chandler, senior VP for strategic development at Montefiore Medical Center, share a light moment during MPC's 40th birthday on Friday, Sept. 17, 2021, at the Keeper's House, 3440 Reservoir Oval East, in the Norwood section of the Bronx.



By SÍLE MOLONEY

Representatives of Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC) gathered to celebrate its 40th birthday on Friday, Sept. 17. The event was held outdoors at the historic Keeper's House, located at 3440 Reservoir Oval East, in Norwood, which is also home to the nonprofit.

About 60 community members and former and current elected officials joined past and present MPC staff members for the happy occasion. Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) presented a proclamation to MPC executive director, Jennifer Tausig, in recognition of the organization's efforts and achievements over its 40 years.

Addressing the MPC team, Dinowitz said the history of the work carried out by the nonprofit in terms of prevent-

ing the decline of the neighborhood was very meaningful. "The Norwood community is such an important community in the Bronx," he said. "I thank you for all the work that you do, and continue to do."

Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark said her job was to do everything she possibly could to make sure the community was safe, and that she was doing that. "Congratulations on 40 years of excellence," she said.

MPC was established in 1981 as a nonprofit support corporation of Montefiore Health System and has helped to combat community deterioration by preserving neighborhoods and building community.

It does this through supporting small businesses to ensure they grow and thrive, acquiring and supporting quality sustainable afford-



able housing, beautifying the neighborhood, and producing educational, local news, through the biweekly publication of the *Norwood News*.

MPC was a driving force behind offering the location adjacent to the Keeper's House for the recent launch of the Keeper's House Edible Garden, a community garden run by Friends of Mosholu Park-

land.

For her part, Tausig, who is also executive director of the Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District (BID), thanked all who attended, and all in the community who support MPC's work. "We really appreciate you being here, and all kinds of support that you provide us."

(Photos by Adi Talwar)

(BOTTOM RIGHT) (L to R) Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark, District 11 City Councilman Eric Dinowitz, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) and Jennifer Tausig, executive director of Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC) share a light moment during a presentation ceremony to celebrate MPC's 40th birthday on Friday, Sept. 17, 2021 at the Keeper's House, at 3440 Reservoir Oval East, in the Norwood section of the Bronx.



(ABOVE) A SINGER performs at Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC)'s 40th anniversary celebration held at the Keeper's House at 3440 Reservoir Oval East in the Norwood section of the Bronx on Friday, Sept. 17, 2021.

Bronx Serviceman, Killed During the Korean War, Accounted for 70 Years Later

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

The U.S. Defense Prisoner of War (POW) / Missing in Action (MIA) Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced on Monday, Sept. 20, that U.S. Army 1st Lt. Anthony R. Mazzulla, 26, of The Bronx, New York, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on May 28, 2020.

Though Mazzulla was accounted for in May of last year, DPAA said his family only recently received a full briefing on his identification, which is why the details of his status are only being released to the public now.

In late 1950, Mazzulla was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. According to DPAA officials, he was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, after a fighting withdrawal near the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be re-

covered.

On July 27, 2018, following a summit between then-U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un in June 2018, North Korea turned over 55 boxes purported to contain the remains of American service members killed during the Korean War. Mazzulla's remains arrived at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii on Aug. 1, 2018, and were subsequently accessioned into the DPAA laboratory for identification.

To identify Mazzulla's remains, scientists from DPAA used anthropological analysis, as well as circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) and Y chromosome DNA (Y-STR) analysis.

Mazzulla's name is recorded on the Courts of the

Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, in Honolulu, along with the others who are still missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Mazzulla will be buried in Cranston, Rhode Island. The date has yet to be determined. For family and funeral information, contact the Army Casualty Office at (800) 892-2490.

To see the most up-to-date statistics on DPAA recovery efforts for those unaccounted for from the Korean War, go to the Korean War fact sheet on the DPAA website: <https://www.dpaa.mil/Resources/Fact-Sheets/Article-View/Article/569610/progress-on-korean-war-personnel-accounting/>.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans who went



Photo courtesy of DPAA

THE U.S. DEFENSE Prisoner of War (POW) / Missing in Action (MIA) Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced on Monday, Sept. 20, that U.S. Army 1st Lt. Anthony R. Mazzulla, 26, of The Bronx, New York, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on May 28, 2020.

missing while serving the country, visit the DPAA website at www.dpaa.mil. Mazzulla's personnel profile can

be viewed at: <https://dpaa.mil/sites/crmforce.mil/dpaa/Profile?id=a0Jt0000001X7K4EAK>.

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Public and Community Meetings

The next **52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meeting will be held on **Thursday, Sept. 23, at 6 p.m.** at Christ Disciples International Ministries, 3021 Webster Avenue (across from the precinct). 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 on **Tuesday, Sept. 28 at 6.30 p.m.** Contact ibravo@cb.nyc.gov and mirosario@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list. Join the meeting online at <https://zoom.us/j/83066035540> or by phone on (646) 558-8656. Meeting ID: 830 6603 5540.

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 was held on Sept. 1. For further details, contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

CB7 Approves Plan for Frisch Field Revitalization

(continued from page 2)

hazardous holes in the outfield and in the clay infield.

Still, Stronczer's observation brought into question a larger issue that the committee only briefly discussed at the September meeting. Although baseball packed Frisch Field's bleachers with enthusiastic fans in the 1930s, some residents like community member, Daisy Perry, wonder if baseball is what the Bedford Park community still wants in their backyard, 86 years later. "This is my neighborhood," said Perry. "Baseball, that's not something that I do."

Ultimately, the committee did vote in favor to approve the renovations and upgrade design for Frisch Field by a three-vote majority. Two committee members were absent. The motion will move to a final vote scheduled to take place at CB7's general board meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 28, at 6:30 p.m.

According to Tara Valenta, deputy

director of Landscape Architecture for Bronx Capital Projects, the field's renovation, including design finalization, obtaining the necessary approvals, and construction work will take two years to complete. Work is scheduled to begin in fall 2022 and the field will open to the public sometime in fall 2023.

In other Parks' news, at CB7's executive meeting held Thursday, Sept 16, Sanitation committee chair, Betty Arce, mentioned that some trees had to be removed from Williamsbridge Oval Park following Storm Ida. During the post-Ida clean-up, the trees were found to be rotten (and therefore unstable), posing a potential safety risk to residents. The Parks' committee intend to contact the City's Parks' department to ensure any uprooted trees will be replaced.

The next Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 13, at 6:30 p.m.



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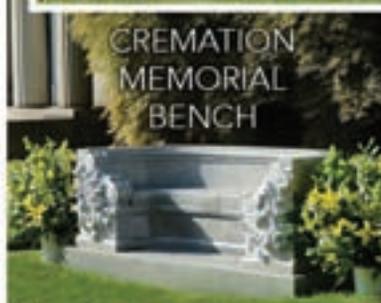
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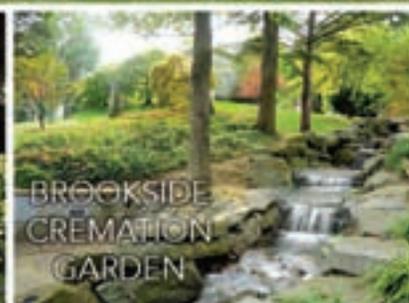
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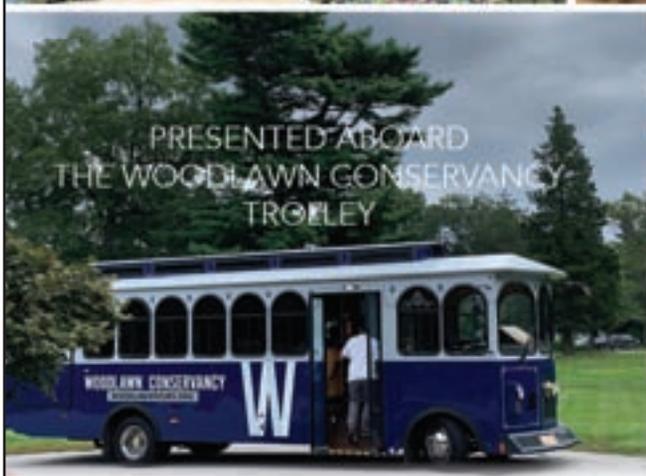
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Get Your Flu Shot to Protect Yourself and Others

By SHARON ADENIYI

Influenza, or the flu, is an upper respiratory illness caused by a virus that affects the nose, throat, and lungs. The flu is contagious and spreads through droplets from an infected person when they sneeze, cough, or talk.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), these droplets can travel up to 6 feet, and can land in your nose or mouth. You can also pick up the virus from touching infected surfaces or objects and then touching your eyes or nose.

Symptoms of the flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, muscle or

body aches, and headaches. In extreme cases, influenza can lead to pneumonia and other respiratory illnesses and may require hospitalization.

The symptoms of flu are very similar to those of COVID-19, so if you are feeling unwell, you should get tested and start on the appropriate medication, as determined by your doctor.

The flu causes seasonal epidemics every year. As summer ends, and we enter flu season, getting a flu shot is the best way to protect yourself against the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months

and older be vaccinated. The vaccine helps to:

- significantly reduce your likelihood of getting the flu;
- reduce the number of flu-related deaths;
- protect women and babies during and after pregnancy;
- reduce hospitalizations.

Getting a flu shot protects you, as well as your family and community. This is especially important for those at higher risk for complications caused by the flu. People at higher risk include those of 65 years and older, people who are pregnant, and people with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease.

There are many free or low-cost options for receiving the flu vaccine. Once again, Montefiore has teamed up with Walgreens to offer free or low-cost vaccinations on these dates:

- Monday, Sept. 20, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Breaking Ground, 1191 Boston Road
- Saturday, Sept. 25, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at RCCG Tabernacle of Restoration, 4640 Furman Avenue
- Sunday, Oct. 3, 10 a.m. to 1

p.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 1253 Shakespeare Avenue

- Sunday, Oct. 10, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua Church, 832 E. 166th Street
- Sunday, Oct. 17, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. Simon Stock Church, 2191 Valentine Avenue
- Sunday, Oct. 24, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 627 East 187th Street

While most people should get a flu vaccine every year, some people should stay away from certain types of flu vaccines, and should not be vaccinated, based on their age, health status, and whether they have certain allergies. If you have questions about which flu vaccine is right for you, talk to your doctor or other health care professional.

This flu season, protect yourself, your family, friends, and community by getting a flu vaccination. Also, according to the CDC, it is safe to get the flu shot and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time, so make sure you are protected against both viruses this year.

Sharon Adeniyi is a student at Hunter College and an intern in the Office of Community and Population Health at Montefiore Health System.

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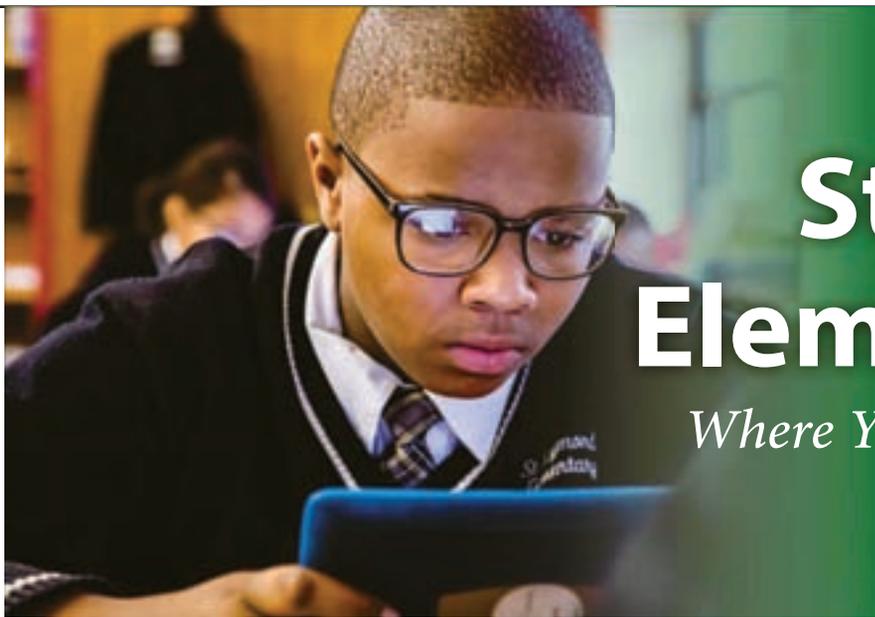
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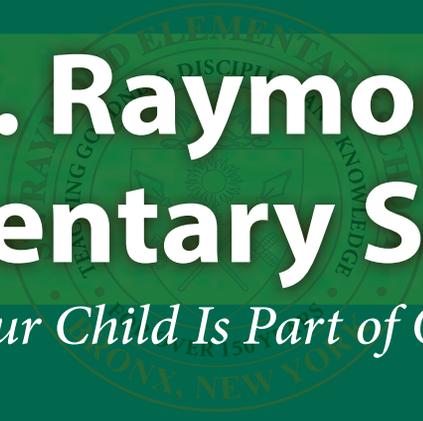
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Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY

Editor's Pick

The **Off-Broadway in the Boros Fest** is coming to the Bronx. Enjoy free, outdoor, theater performances at 1 Fordham Plaza, on Saturday, Oct. 2, from 4 to 6 p.m. For more information, go to nyc.gov/OffBwayBoros.

Events

Lehman College is marking **Hispanic Heritage Month** (Sept. 15 to Oct. 15) with an array of cultural activities, thought-provoking panel discussions, and exciting performances that highlight the many contributions Hispanic and Latinx communities have made to U.S. history. Register now for a wide selection of events. For more information, go to <https://www.lehman.edu/cuny-institute-health-equity/upcoming-events.php>.

[lehman.edu/cuny-institute-health-equity/upcoming-events.php](https://www.lehman.edu/cuny-institute-health-equity/upcoming-events.php).

A celebration of the unique, native cultures of America, the **Bronx Native American Festival** is being held at Pelham Bay Park, located at Bruckner Boulevard and Wilkinson Avenue, on Sunday, Sept. 26, at noon. There will be performances by Bobby Gonzalez, Thunderbird American Indian Dancers, The Silvercloud Singers and demonstrations by Jorge Estevez and Joy Tonepahhote. Admission is free. For more information, call the Pelham Bay Park Administrator's office on (718) 430 1891.

Music

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month. On

Saturday, Oct. 2, at 8 p.m. a don't-miss show will feature one of the most popular big bands in Latin music, the incredible Mambo Legends Orchestra, accompanying Colombian singer, Patty Padilla, in a tribute to Celia Cruz. The second part of the show will feature the iconic Puerto Rican singer and songwriter, Andy Montañez, accompanied by the Mambo Legends. For more information, go to: <https://www.lehmancenter.org/andy-mambo-patty>.

The African Heritage Multi-Cultural Music & Dance

Festival in the Bronx returns for its third year in a row, celebrating African culture through music, dance, storytelling, and poetry. The festival is organized by the African Advisory Council of the Bronx Borough President's Office in partnership with Hostos Center for Arts & Culture. This is a free, virtual event that takes place on Sept. 30 at 7.30 p.m. For more information, call Hostos Center for Arts & Culture on (718) 518-4455.

Literature

Rebel Girls is hosting a book launch to celebrate their new book, **"Good Night Stories for**

Rebel Girls: 100 Real Life Tales of Black Girl Magic," which includes stories of 100 barrier-breaking, Black women. This outdoor event will take place at **The Lit. Bar**, 131 Alexander Ave (between 134th Street and Bruckner Boulevard) Bronx, NY 10454 on Saturday, Oct. 2, at 11.30 a.m., and will include various surprises and giveaways.

Movement

Join NYC Parks, Montefiore Health System, Empire Bluecross Blueshield, Enstein College of Medicine and BronxNet for **Bronx Fit Fest** in St. James Park at 2530 Jerome Avenue in Fordham Manor from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 2, 2021. There will be Zumba, yoga, outdoor spin classes, chairbics, pickleball, and family-friendly games. The event is free, and will go ahead, rain or shine. For more information, call (212) 360 3338.

Williamsbridge Oval Park Recreation Center is now open for the fall season, and registration is free. Go to <https://www.nycgovparks.org/facilities/recreationcenters/X104> for more information on the various classes that are on offer.

Two Arrested after Fordham Manor Crash

(continued from page 4)

the conditions of the injured. Citing "police sources," News 12 reported that seven people were injured in total, including a mother and two children who they identified as pedestrians injured on the street.

During a Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) virtual meeting on public safety, held Thursday, Sept. 9, *Norwood News* asked Police Officer José Cepeda about the incident. He replied, "As far as the accident yesterday...ahh, it wasn't a pursuit."

Cepeda continued, "The individuals [in the Subaru] actually saw the police and took off. Once they, I believe, got to Fordham (Road) around Tiebout (Avenue), they hit three vehicles, and I believe three pedestrians were struck and the car flipped."

He added, "So, it was actually the public safety officers...

they didn't pursue. They saw the vehicle, and I guess the car noticed that the police saw them and they just tried to get ahead of it and took off, but they [police] weren't following the vehicle, honestly."

Police arrested Yaser Garcia, 21, and Laura Jimenez, 18, both residents of Newark, New Jersey. Garcia was charged with multiple counts of possession of a weapon, leaving the scene of an accident with injury, reckless endangerment, obstructing governmental administration, criminal possession of a controlled substance, reckless driving and going through a red light.

Jimenez was also charged with multiple counts of criminal possession of a weapon, as well as possession of a large capacity ammunition feed device, obstructing governmental administration, and criminal possession of a controlled substance.

The crash comes on the heels of a hit-and-run crash that killed one woman and seriously injured another at East Fordham Road and Morris Avenue, in Fordham Manor, at 8:42 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 28. Police said Murielle Gousse, 44, died a short time later at St. Barnabas Hospital, following the incident.

Detectives at the 46th precinct continue to work to identify the driver involved in that incident who, they said, failed to stop after the crash and reportedly fled eastbound on East Fordham Road.

The crash that killed Gousse, and another fatal crash in Brooklyn that occurred the following morning, prompted NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner, Hank Gutman, to issue a statement, as reported, that read in part, "This weekend saw two high-speed fatal crashes on our streets, both

of which occurred in school zones, near speed cameras."

As reported, Gutman called on officials to pass S.5602/A.6681, a bill introduced by Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81), and supported by Assembly Member Nathalia Fernández (A.D. 80), that would allow cameras in school zones to be active 24-hours a day. The cameras in question are currently only turned on between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., Monday through Friday.

In a recent DOT press release, the agency noted that one-third of all fatal crashes in New York City last year took place in school speed-zones during overnight and weekend hours, when cameras were not in use.

Police in the 46th precinct also continue to search for another driver who failed to comply with a traffic stop request on Aug. 4 at East Fordham Road and Marion Avenue,

also in Fordham Manor. That driver injured 11 people after he slammed into several vehicles stuck in gridlock traffic.

Despite the gridlock, the driver managed to clear a getaway path and escaped a half dozen officers, many with guns drawn. The vehicle was later abandoned and recovered by police. Francisco Padilla, 29, of Mt. Eden, was arrested and charged with various offenses. (He remains innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.)

During that same CB7 public safety meeting in early September, Cepeda addressed the issue of vehicles fleeing routine traffic stops, telling residents, "The issue is going on all over the City, honestly. A lot of the time, you try and stop these vehicles... they end up becoming pursuits." Cepeda continued, "Just to make it safe for everyone, those guys end up getting away."

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Arrest Follows Slashing at Bronx Collaborative High School

By SÍLE MOLONEY &
DAVID GREENE

A student from Bronx Collaborative High School was hospitalized following a slashing incident which took place at the school on Wednesday, Sept. 15, after a dispute broke out between two students. Police have since confirmed that a 15-year-old male was arrested on Sept. 20 in relation to the incident and has been charged with assault.

In response to an inquiry sent to the NYPD on Sunday, Sept. 19, police confirmed that at around 1 p.m. on Sept. 15, police responded to a 911 call regarding an assault inside 100 West Mosholu Parkway South in Jerome Park, which is the address for DeWitt School campus, located in the 52nd precinct. The campus is home to four schools, one of which is Bronx Collaborative High School. The others are Worldview High School, DeWitt Clinton High School, and District 75 High School.

Upon arrival, officers were informed by a 15-year-old male youth that he had been involved in a verbal dispute with another male individual, and that the dispute had escalated into a physical altercation. The victim had been slashed in the face with an unknown sharp object and the suspect had fled the location to parts unknown. EMS transported the victim to Montefiore Hospital in stable condition.

Following the incident, representatives from the school sent a letter to parents, informing them that an altercation had occurred between two students and that a soft lockdown, followed by a hard lockdown, had been put into effect on the day in question, to ensure students' safety. They confirmed that the lockdown was lifted at 2.41 p.m., that the matter was being investigated by police, and that counseling was available to any students who needed it. A copy of the letter is attached.

Norwood News reached out to the NYC Department of Education (DOE) for a comment on the incident. Nathaniel Styer responded, saying, "The safety of students and staff is our top priority, and NYPD and EMS immediately responded." He added, "We're taking additional safety measures at the school and working closely with NYPD as they conduct an investigation."

One parent who spoke with the Nor-



Image via Facebook and courtesy of a parent of a student on the campus.

COPY OF LETTER sent to parents of students of Bronx Collaborative High School on Sept. 15, 2021.

wood News on condition of anonymity said he and his wife had not been properly informed by Bronx Collaborative High School about what had actually occurred. He cited the letter from founding principal, Brett Schneider, but said it was vague on the details of what had actually occurred and they were still waiting on an explanation.

On Sept. 15, several Citizen App users who appeared to be students, posted about the incident as it was unfolding. A related video appears to have since been removed from the platform. Some apparent students reacted in disbelief to the lockdown measures they were experiencing, with one writing, "We really in a lockdown," while another wrote, "collab (Bronx Collaborative High School) in a lockdown. idk (I don't know) abt (about) the other schools."

Another user wrote, "Another ghetto day at Clinton," and another followed up with, "Hope ya ok." Yet another user wrote, "He got a gun," while others questioned how someone had managed to get a knife into the school, even though police did not confirm what type of weapon caused the assault in their official report. Neither was there any mention of a gun in the official incident report received from police.

City & State reported on Aug. 30 that the City intends to transfer 5,000 school safety agents out of the NYPD's purview over the next ten months, in efforts to calm fears about policing in schools, adding that the transition is expected to be completed by June 2022,

and if it goes ahead, it would result in such school safety agents falling under the oversight of the DOE, rather than the NYPD, going forward. *Norwood News* asked the DOE for a comment about the alleged transfer, and they did not dispute it.

Youth groups like Sistas & Brothas United, the youth arm of the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC), have long called for less school safety agents (SSAs) on school campuses, as previously reported. They say the presence of police on campus increases tensions and exacerbates the school-to-prison pipeline.

Instead, the group has called for more funding to be channeled into various educational, emotional and psychological support services for students to prevent such conflicts from arising in the first place. They advocate for restorative justice solutions over punitive measures to resolve conflicts.

Speaking at a December 2020 protest organized by Sistas & Brothas United, Wesley Guzman of Sistas & Brothas United said the event had been organized to bring attention to how youth of color are criminalized in schools instead of being given what they need to feel supported in holistic learning spaces.

"2020 has been a difficult year for all of us, and we hoped that the Department of Education would have stepped up and provided a safe and supportive learning environment for our students, our families, our teachers and our community," he said at the time. "Yet, our youth were left with the same old racist and criminalizing practices and budget priorities."

The Student Safety Act requires that the NYPD publicly issue quarterly reports on arrests, summonses, and other police-involved incidents in the City's public schools.

According to a 2019 ACLU Student Safety Act Report on racial disparities, in the 2018-2019 school year, Black and LatinX students represent 66 percent of the student body, but were involved in 88.9 percent of police interventions in schools. Since the implementation of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in summer 2019, the proportion of incidents involving Black and Latinx students slightly increased to 89.4 percent.

ACLU found that "this was generally consistent with other changes over the years, as the City does more

to reduce the overall impact of police in schools, but does little to explicitly eliminate racial disparities, which worsen. NYC students started the 2019-2020 school year with the new MOU in place, which strictly limits the activities of police in non-emergency situations.

In addition, a new State law prohibits police from stepping in to manage everyday school discipline. Advocates expect (and hope) the new policies will begin to have a major impact on the number of in-school arrests and police actions.

Norwood News reached out to NWBCCC on behalf of Sistas & Brothas United for a comment on the slashing incident at Bronx Collaborative High School. They replied, saying it was unlikely they would be commenting further on the matter.

We previously reported on measures taken at DeWitt school campus to keep students safe, following a previous stabbing incident outside the campus in November 2019.

On August 24, NYC School Safety Coalition, a coalition of parents, families, religious leaders, and community leaders who support the continuation of SSAs in schools, held a virtual SSA career opportunity workshop, together with two, active SSAs, and hosted by Little Africa Bronx News moderator, Mona Davids, who is a parent.

Davids spoke to *Norwood News* on Sunday, Sept. 19, about DOE's apparent intention to transfer 5,000 SSAs out of the purview of the NYPD and under DOE control by June 2022. Davids highlighted that, in 2002, DOE fell under the central control of the mayor. It is a control that is not guaranteed indefinitely and must be renewed by the State Legislature every few years.

She added that Democratic nominee for mayor, Eric Adams, a former police detective, had committed to retaining SSAs under the control of the NYPD, and therefore, she didn't see how the department would succeed in transferring the referenced 5,000 SSAs to DOE control.

Davids also said that school safety agents do not carry guns and are not police officers, but civil servants who take a civil servant's exam. She was critical of groups such as the ACLU who, she said, sought to erroneously portray SSAs as police.

She added that, decades ago, when SSAs were actually under the purview

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Bedford Park Affordable Housing Lottery Launches

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

An affordable housing lottery has launched for The Bedford, a 13-story residential building located at 211 East 203rd Street in the Bedford Park section of The Bronx, as reported by YIMBY.

Designed by Magnusson Architecture and Planning, and developed by partners, Housing and Services Inc. and Robert Sanborn Development, the structure yields 108 residential units.

NYC Housing Connect is the housing portal for NYC Department of Housing, Preservation & Development (HPD), which New Yorkers can use to find and apply for affordable housing opportunities across the five boroughs. Available on the portal are 41 units for residents at 40 to 80 percent of the area median income (AMI), ranging in eligible income from \$0 to \$103,120.

Residents will have access to a community room, multiple lounge areas, bike storage lockers, shared laundry room, a library, a learning center, and a landscaped rear yard and rooftop terrace. The apartments include energy-efficient appliances and air conditioning.

At 40 percent of the AMI, two studios are available with monthly rent of \$592 for those with incomes ranging from \$22,800 to \$38,200, and eleven, one-bedroom units with monthly rent of \$740 for residents with income ranging from \$28,218 to \$42,960. At 50 percent of the AMI, there are eight, one-bedroom units with monthly rent of \$0 for those with incomes ranging from



Image courtesy of NYC Housing Connect

211 EAST 203RD Street in Bedford Park, The Bronx.

\$0 to \$53,700.

At 80 percent of the AMI, there are two, one-bedroom units with monthly rent of \$1,400 for residents with incomes ranging from \$50,846 to \$85,920, and eighteen, two-bedroom units with monthly rent of \$1,681 for those with incomes ranging from \$61,372 to \$103,120.

Prospective renters must meet income and household size requirements to apply for the apartments, and applications must be postmarked or submitted online no later than Nov. 15, 2021.

Go to <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/details/2202> to apply online, or to request an application by

mail, send a self-addressed envelope to Bedford 203 HDFC, c/o Sycamore Birch Management, 869 Morris Park Ave., Bronx, NY 10462.

According to NYC Housing Connect, preference for the units will be given to residents of Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7). Eligible Bronx CB7 residents who are selected will not be eligible for Project Based Voucher Section 8 Units.

Units for which the income limit is set at 40 percent AMI and 50 percent AMI will be designated for individuals 62 years of age or older, or for households having at least one household member who is 62 years of age or

older.

Applicants for units for which the income limit is set at 50 percent AMI must qualify for a Section 8 Project Based Voucher, and the rent for eligible applicants will be equal to 30 percent of their income.

Tenants are responsible for electricity, which includes electric stoves. Heat and hot water are included in the monthly rent, and the laundry and air conditioning amenities are subject to fees.

The building is being constructed through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC) and Supportive Housing Loan Program of HPD. Supportive housing is permanent, affordable housing with on-site support services to serve the needs of the most vulnerable New Yorkers, including the formerly homeless and disabled.

Sixty percent of units in supportive housing will be set aside for low income or formerly homeless individuals or families with special needs, who are referred by City agencies.

The remaining forty percent of units in the building are being made available to the public through the lottery. The units listed on NYC Housing Connect are those which are being made available to the public, only. There are no deposits or application fees. More information is available on NYC Housing Connect.

Editor's Note: Norwood News does not process any applications. All inquiries should be sent to NYC Housing Connect.

Arrest Follows Slashing at Bronx Collaborative High School

(continued from page 24)

of the DOE, the department, in her view, did not adequately handle school safety, and this was why SSAs were later trained by the NYPD, and transferred under the control of the police agency. However, she reiterated that SSAs are not police officers. "School safety shouldn't be used to play political football," said Davids. "We're talking about our children, life and death, and I'm a mother."

Davids said that it was her view that the proposed transfer of the 5,000 SSAs was a

way for current City administration officials to succumb to the political pressure they have been under since May 2020 to defund the police, following the murder of George Floyd.

She said those calling to defund the police are not bearing the brunt of the high crime experienced by many families across the City, and in the Bronx in particular, including gang-related crime, which she said had infiltrated the City's public school system.

"So, it's just all of these people..... who drive around

with an NYPD security detail screaming 'Defund [the] NYPD' or these others who are hypocrites who live in safe neighborhoods," she said. "It's not their children, you know, that are dying on the streets. It's not their family members that can get shot, going to the supermarket, or sitting in a park celebrating whatever Mexican day or Puerto Rican day, or just community events."

Davids, who is from South Africa and grew up under the apartheid regime, also flatly rejects the notion that

maintaining SSAs in schools is racist. She said the majority of SSAs are female, Black and brown employees, some of whom are mothers, themselves.

Davids is holding a rally on the issue of school safety at City Hall on Oct. 10.

Norwood News reached out to both the City, and to Eric Adams' campaign for comment on Davids' remarks. On Monday, the DOE responded to our inquiry, confirming that the transfer of the 5,000 SSAs to DOE was on track, and outlined a

number of restorative justice programs and mental health initiatives which are already being rolled out in the City's public school system.

Editor's Note: If you are a student or a parent of a student at any of the schools on DeWitt school campus or at any other school and would like to provide a comment, please reach out to us at smoloney@norwoodnews.org, via the Norwood News Twitter Direct Message function, or via Norwood News Messenger app, and we can give you a call. Thank you.

Permanent Outdoor Dining Fuels Noise Debate

(continued from page 1)

Sept. 14, the first such committee meeting to take place since breaking for the summer, a quality-of-life discussion unfolded in response to the City's department of transportation (DOT) introducing a proposal to make outdoor dining a permanent fixture of NYC sidewalks and roadways. The proposal includes a zoning text amendment that requires a letter of support from CB7's housing committee.

In March 2020, amid the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants across the five boroughs were forced to halt indoor dining to help slow the rapid spread of COVID-19. As a result, according to DOT officials, 64 percent of restaurant employees lost their jobs, while hundreds of the City's 27,000 eateries were forced to close permanently.

To boost the City's flailing restaurant industry, on June 18, 2020, NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio signed Emergency Executive Order No. 126, lifting long-standing zoning requirements that prevented many restaurants from adding an outdoor dining option, during pre-COVID times.

Today, approximately 11,000 eateries are participating in the emergency open restaurants program across the five boroughs providing a much-needed boost to the industry.

Darisa Cruz from the Bronx borough commissioner's office was supportive of the initiative, saying, "This program has been a lifesaver, not just to the restaurant industry but also to the City that has seen the incredible vitality outdoor dining can bring to our sidewalks and streets." She added, "It's a beacon of hope and innovation in a dark time. It's a sign that our city can imagine a better future."

In general, CB7 members said they wanted to see local restaurants flourish. However, some feared that if made permanent, outdoor dining

could herald an unwanted nightlife culture into residential areas, at the expense of the existing community. Noise, safety, and sanitation were among the community's top concerns. Noise complaints recorded on the City's 311 system amount to some 51,000 across all five boroughs since Jan. 1, 2021.

"We've definitely dealt with so many quality-of-life issues during the pandemic," said resident, Candida Nichols. "One of the restaurants on my street has already, a few times this summer, pulled out chairs and tables on the sidewalk and people just hang out all day. It becomes very noisy."

"We have to have a balance," added housing committee member, Myrna Calderon. "Otherwise, you're going to have the working-class people just leaving the City because the noise is already unbearable. You can't just blanket... open up the neighborhood and say anybody can have a sidewalk café."

Ben Huff, a senior transportation project manager with New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), said that although the permanent outdoor dining program would open up areas once geographically restricted by zoning mandates, restaurants would still need community board support and would need to meet minimum footpath requirements and other seating criteria. Additionally, permanent sidewalk cafés would be subject to annual inspections.

"So, it won't be easy for restaurants to have a sidewalk café in the permanent program," Huff said. "Restaurant owners will have to provide proof that they're meeting all the requirements."

Still, while many community members resisted DOT's open restaurant proposal, CB7 housing committee member and vice-president of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce, Sandra Erickson, voiced her support for the plan and en-

couraged the community to do the same.

"I see our restaurants have really thrived by this addition and it makes the neighborhood more vibrant to have people outside," said Erickson. "The restaurants will still have to come to the community board [to present their case] so, I think it really is important that the committee is supportive of this. It's the right thing to do."

Meanwhile, Erick Ascensio, the housing committee's newly appointed chair said, "I know we all want to see better restaurants in our neighborhood." He added, "I personally don't want to go into Manhattan every time I want to sit outside, so I welcome this change to the committee."

With a three-vote majority, including one "no" vote, and one abstention, the housing committee passed the motion to provide DOT with a letter of support approving the proposed open restaurant zoning text amendment.

The vote is the first of three legislative phases that needed to be completed to bring the permanent open restaurant plan to life in the City's five boroughs. DOT officials estimate that the project will be finalized sometime in late 2022 or early 2023. Until then, the current emergency plan will continue to allow restaurants to keep their outdoor dining spaces open until, at least, winter 2022. The City is also pursuing a strategy for roadway dining which will be presented to the housing committee at a later date.

Meanwhile, Matthew Gross, co-owner of Urban Builders Collaborative (UBC), an affiliate of Lettice Construction, which is behind the new housing project at 3118 Webster Avenue, presented updated plans for the proposed, mixed-income housing development.

UBC's initial proposal had set aside 15 percent of the building's apartments for "special needs populations". How-

ever, to qualify for a 9 percent, low-income housing tax credit under the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) of the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), UBC must increase its available stock of affordable housing units to 35 percent.

When completed, 3118 Webster Avenue will offer a total of 99 residential units, consisting of 21 studio apartments, 26 one-bedroom units, 41 two-bedroom units, 10 three-bedroom units, and one two-bedroom unit set aside for a superintendent, as mandated by HPD guidelines.

Pending QAP approval, 35 percent of the units will then be allocated to special needs populations, and the remainder will be reserved, roughly 45 units will be reserved for workforce and middle-income household applicants.

Generally, special needs populations can refer to a broad range of individuals and families, including the working poor, formerly homeless or incarcerated, and domestic violence survivors who need access to affordable housing, and on-site financial and mental health services that support ed rehabilitation.

Similar to the permanent outdoor dining discussion, while members of CB7's housing committee generally support the initiative, they questioned how the special needs population at 3118 Webster Avenue will be defined, and whether the existing community's concerns over quality of life will be given priority consideration.

"To be clear, everybody needs housing, and we want to accommodate," said Ischia Bravo, CB7's district manager. "We just want to make sure that it's not at the cost of everyone else's quality of life. This is not our first rodeo."

As *Norwood News* reported in 2010, there's been a decades-long effort by the DCP to upzone Webster Avenue in Norwood and Bedford Park from an industrial corridor to an

area more conducive to residential and commercial development, including retail stores and restaurants.

But over the years, these changes have generated an influx of affordable housing developments that Calderon said overwhelms the neighborhood with people who struggle with severe, psychiatric and drug issues that put the larger community's safety at risk.

"Instead of the formerly incarcerated [people], I think people with disabilities also need to be looked at [as potential residents]," said Calderon. "They need housing too, and a lot of times they're ignored, but they're actually an asset to your building population. So, I think this might be a way to add something positive to the community that's not negative."

Gross said his organization bought the Webster Avenue property, envisioning a mix and match workforce, with a very small amount of housing set aside for special needs populations. "And, you know, the City is sort of forcing their agenda," he said.

Gross assured the housing committee that, going forward, UBC would partner with nonprofits to help identify populations that could contribute positively to the neighborhood's growth. He said, as the project evolves, UBC will provide the community board with updates in this regard.

"We're looking to figure out who the best partner is," Gross continued. "But formerly homeless is definitely going to have to be one of the criteria. It may be formerly homeless with other populations we work with, such as domestic violence victims who have disabilities, but it will be a type of population that we feel would be easily 'integratable.'"

The next Bronx CB7 Housing, Land Use, and Economic Development Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 19, at 6:30 p.m.

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*

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