



NORWOOD NEWS

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ARMORED CAR HEIST ATTEMPTED IN NORWOOD



Photo by Toby Norwood

POLICE OFFICERS STAND next to an armored car after an attempted daylight car heist occurred at East 204th Street and Perry Avenue in Norwood on Thursday, October 14, 2021.

by **DAVID GREENE & SILE MOLONEY**

Police are searching for at least one “male, wearing a ski mask” who attempted to ambush an armored vehicle in Norwood in broad daylight. According to one resident, an unidentified armed guard was picking up a bag of cash containing \$6,000 at a McDonald’s restaurant when he was accosted by a stranger but refused to give up the cash.

NYPD spokeswoman, Detective Annette Shelton, later told *Norwood News* the attempted robbery took place at 2.10 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 14, at Perry Avenue and East 204th Street. “It was reported to police that a 53-year-old male victim (employee) for an armored security company was transporting money when he was approached from behind and was pepper sprayed,” she said.

Shelton continued, “An unidentified individual attempted to forcibly remove a bag of money containing \$6,000

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Bedford Park Residents Fed Up with Parkway Trash

By DAWN CLANCY

On a cloudy Saturday morning, Cindy Barrera and her dog Venom stopped near the corner of East Mosholu Parkway North and 206th Street in Bedford Park and glared at the Heineken beer bottle caps, greasy granola bar wrappers, and spent coffee cups tangled up in a nearby patch of grass.

Barrera, a 30-year-old registered nurse, is fed up with the amount of trash dumped along the parkway. It's a problem that has plagued the area, also known as Mosholu Parkland, for years. "It really [expletive] me off because we have such a beautiful park," said Barrera. "To see trash laying around is disgusting."

At the Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BMCA) meeting, held on Wednesday, Oct. 6, some residents echoed a frustration not unlike Barrera's, but theirs was aimed at the New York City (NYC) Department of Parks and Recreation, the city agency responsible for maintaining the parkland.

Bedford Park residents say trash is often left on the parkland for days while nearby trash receptacles overflow, and that when garbage is collected, it's gathered up in black bags that get piled up on the sidewalks, becoming an all-you-can-eat buffet for flies, rats, and raccoons.

In theory, the bags are meant to be collected by park employees and then dropped off at a nearby litter corral for removal from the parkland. However, some Bedford Park residents said it's not unusual for the bags to be left to rot on the sidewalk for weeks.

Parks and the NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY) share responsibility for maintaining the parkland and surrounding roadways. Vincent Gragnani, press secretary for DSNY, told



Photo by Dawn Clancy
GARBAGE PILES UP at the litter corral near East Mosholu Parkway North and E. 206th Street on Tuesday, October 12, 2021.

Norwood News in an email, "[DSNY's] responsibilities in this area are limited to sweeping and snow removal on the service roads [East Mosholu and West Mosholu Parkway]."

Meanwhile, a Parks' department official told *Norwood News*, via email, that Parks employees work collaboratively with DSNY to keep the parks, greenspaces, and sidewalks clean.

Norwood News also reached out to the Department of Transportation (DOT) to ask if this agency is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the parkway roadway. We did not receive an immediate response.

Elizabeth Quaranta, acting executive director of Friends of Mosholu Parkland (FOMP) and long-time environmentalist, said at BMCA's October meeting that the problem isn't that the trash doesn't get picked up by Parks' staff but that it's done so inconsistently.

Quaranta said residents should know the Parks' department schedule for cleaning the parkway. "The problem [we're] talking about is that there is no logistics to the actual pick-up," said Quaranta. "Do they work in the area in the morning? Do they work in the afternoon?"

Norwood News raised Quaranta's questions with the Parks' department. In response, Dan Kastanis, Park's press officer, said the department takes "great pride" in the City's parks, and that the Parks' team collects trash on the parkland daily, seven days a week. He added that when there is a lapse in service, it's typically because a piece of essential equipment used to collect trash from the sidewalks is out of order.

The Parks' team was supported by Bedford Park resident, Sirio Guerino, who said at the BMCA Oct. 6 meeting, that it was remarkable to him to hear people saying that Parks' staff were not doing their job. "I see them every... out there every freakin' morning, gathering up bags and bags of garbage. Maybe it takes them a long time, but they are working very hard to organize some kind of continuity," he said.

Norwood News has long reported on the community's frustration with garbage on Mosholu Parkland and elsewhere in the neighborhood, especially around the Fourth of July holiday when the area becomes a hot spot for illegal barbecues, after which people do not always clean up after themselves.

The community has also taken aim in the past at the Parks' department, and for a week or two, the situation improves only for the garbage to return later and the cycle to start all over again.

It's a pattern, Adam Ganser, the executive director for New Yorkers for Parks, an advocacy organization, says the community shouldn't be expected to fix. Instead, he says, it's a problem that needs dedicated attention and funding from the government.

"The Parks' department has been woefully underfunded for decades and is often operating on a skeleton staff," Ganser told *Norwood News* in a phone interview. "They do a valiant job with the funding that they're given, but it's not enough."

For the last 50 years, the budget allocated to the Parks' department has been around 0.5 percent of the City's overall budget. In July 2021, the city adopted a \$98.7 billion budget for the 2022 fiscal year. According to the Mayor's Office, just \$620 million or 0.6 percent has been earmarked for the Parks' department, which manages over 2,000 parks, equaling roughly 30,000 acres

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week, we asked readers their thoughts on what the Democrats should cut from the \$3.5 trillion infrastructure bill to get it over the line to satisfy Republicans?



"Oh! Is that what they're doing? No, I don't think they should try and appease the Republicans. Well, they shouldn't cut healthcare and they shouldn't cut education. That's a very hard decision. I know they have to vote on something. Kids need education because it's bad out here. They need all the education they can get. Oh gosh, maybe the added healthcare for seniors is, maybe, the least important now."

Pamela Thomas,
Norwood



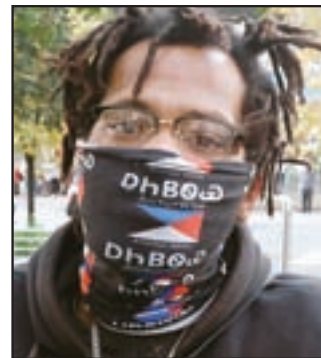
"I don't think they should make a deal with any Republicans. I'm cut and dry now with those (expletive), and the Democrats that sided with the Republicans are going to get voted out of office. There's a lot of schools now with pre-K and maybe that could be cut from the bill. Seniors are tired of their programs getting cut and are tired of footing the bill for everybody else. I've got to pay \$269 for Medicaid and they knocked me down to SSI levels. Seniors need more. Seniors need hearing and dental."

Stephen Avallone,
Wakefield



"Everything in the bill is important and we need it now. I think maybe they should cut the free pre-K. People need college, but maybe they can pass that next year. It's better to get something than nothing. God is good all the time."

Jonathan Ortiz,
Belmont



"They should repackaging the bill and let the Republicans do it, because there's no tomorrow with the Democrats, they don't save anything. We need to save our children. We're spending our grandchildren's money. The stimulus checks are not free, and now we have inflation so everything that was \$3 is \$6 now. I don't know. I'm about to leave this country and go to Poland or Norway. I support extra healthcare for seniors, but they need to fix the student loan debt crisis before giving people free college education. We weren't offered free college when we were in school. If they don't fix it, they're never going to get the money and it's going to cause the economy to go down. Some kind of forgiveness has to happen first for people who owe money and then no more free anything."

Shaheem Solomon,
Kingsbridge



"I think that Joe Biden and the Democrats need to stop kowtowing to [Rep. Krysten] Sinema and [Rep. Joe] Manchin, negotiate the bill and move on. Manchin does not understand and Sinema has her own agenda- which we will never know. We have to lower the spending to \$2 trillion and decide what we will spend it on. Time is running out and we will end up with nothing. That's tough. I would not cut anything but would reduce the spending. If we had to cut something, I would say free college, that can wait."

Michelle Massie,
Brooklyn
(photo provided)

Residents Unhappy with Tent "Encampment" on Mosholu Parkway

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Bedford Park residents have been getting more and more vocal about the unsightly, overflowing trash situation on Mosholu Parkway during their regular Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BMCA) meetings, as reported, but another issue which has also raised concern is the growing number of make-shift tents erected by homeless people along the parkway in recent weeks.

As one resident, who went by the Twitter username, @mamainature30, tweeted on Monday, Oct. 18, "@EricDinowitzNYC, @norwoodnews, @NYCDHS, @NYPD52Pct How long before the encampment at Mosholu Parkway becomes a tent city? It already doubled in size since last week. Somebody needs to intervene."

Bedford Park resident, Elizabeth Quaranta, who is also the executive director for Friends of Mosholu Park-

land (FOMP), has been urging residents to log complaints about the tents with the City's 311 service, in order to put pressure on City officials to address the issue and ensure the homeless are housed safely elsewhere.

"We need your help," she wrote in a post on FOMP's Facebook page on Oct. 14. "Please log on the 311 Breaking Parks Rules before this person hurts himself from heavy drinking and possibly running into the parkway." Quaranta accompanied her post with some photos of the tents belonging to the homeless people who were camped out on the parkway.

"He has to be helped and removed," she continued. "We need at least 10 [311 complaints] on this. This tent was just put up this morning and the person is destructive to himself and the environment. Thank you!!"

Quaranta recommended giving the address as 333 Mosholu North [behind the monument] when logging a complaint since it is the closest available address to where the tents are based and suggested adding notes to describe the actual location.

Recently, in response to complaints from New Yorkers about the need to assist homeless people on public transport who were reportedly causing delays with the train schedules, the MTA urged commuters who come across homeless or mentally unstable people on the subway to call "BRC," a homeless shelter operator with whom NYC Transit has a contract. "People experiencing homelessness often move locations faster than we can coordinate, so we suggest calling BRC at (212) 533 5151," an MTA official said. "Their helpline is staffed 24/7 and can dispatch a team ASAP."

In light of this update from MTA, Norwood News reached out to both the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation and NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) to ask if there was an equivalent service or number to call when residents encountered homeless or mentally unstable people in the City's parks.

On Tuesday, Oct. 19, Dan Kastanis, press officer with the Parks' department responded, saying, "We con-

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NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Bronx BP Honored by NYBG

The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) presented the Hispanic Heritage Month Distinguished Leadership Award to Bronx Borough President Ruben Díaz Jr. on Wednesday, Oct. 13. The presentation took place at the garden during the annual Fiesta de Flores event, part of NYBG's Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month celebration of the plants and people of Latin America and the Caribbean. The award was an original modillion (an ornate architectural bracket) from the 1937 restoration of the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, designed by Lord & Burnham ca. 1899, opened in 1902. It was presented to Díaz Jr. on behalf of NYBG's staff and Board of Trustees in recognition of what was described as his outstanding leadership, commitment, and contributions to the people and to the Borough of the Bronx by CEO & The William C. Steere Sr. President, Jennifer Bernstein, and Trustees, Joseph A. Thompson and Anthony Perez.

14-Year-Old Student Slashed in Oval

Police from the 52nd precinct have made an arrest following the slashing of a 14-year-old boy in the Williamsbridge Oval in Norwood on Saturday, Oct. 9, at 4.40 p.m. Police said the boy was playing basketball in the park, located at 3224 Reservoir Oval E, when a male assailant approached him and slashed him on the cheek. The victim was removed to Jacobi Medical Center in stable condition.

According to the victim's mother, the assailant is known to the victim as they were former classmates at a school in the Northwest Bronx. She said the incident was "completely unprovoked," and was present when it unfolded. She told the Norwood News she fears it may be gang-related and is reticent to send her son back to school once he recovers as she doesn't feel it is safe. We've reached out to the DOE and to the school for comment.

BMCA to Hold Park Clean-Up

The Bedford Mosholu Community Association are holding a park clean-up and beautification event on Saturday, Oct 23, from 10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. The meeting point will be the Webster Avenue

Residents Unhappy with Tent "Encampment" on Mosholu Parkway

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ducted two clean-ups at Mosholu Parkway today as part of the Mayor's Homeless Interagency Taskforce, to address tents and refuse at the sites, and we continue to coordinate with DHS on providing outreach to these individuals."

Kastanis added, "Being homeless in and around a New York City park is not a crime. As part of the City's effort to provide shelter, support, and services to homeless individuals, if you see someone suffering from homelessness in a City park, or setting up an encampment, please report it to 311."

According to City officials, as part of the mayor's "Homeless Interagency Taskforce," approximately three to six organized clean-up events take place each week. Spearheaded by DHS, they say the taskforce comprises members of the NYPD, NYC Department of Transportation (DOT), NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY), Parks, and NYC Department of Buildings (DOB). To date, this year, City officials say the taskforce has participated in over 100 joint taskforce operations.

In terms of the Mosholu Parkway clean-up event, City officials said DHS had previously reached out to the affected homeless individuals located on the parkway, but they refused services at that time. A letter was subsequently



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Quaranta

A TENT IS erected on Mosholu Parkway North in the Bedford Park section of the Bronx on Oct. 14, 2021.

issued informing them of the impending removal of their tents, and this action was subsequently carried out on Tuesday.

Parks officials said they work closely with NYPD, the DHS, NYC De-

partment of Social Services (DSS), and other community-based organizations to engage chronically homeless individuals when found in the City's parks and offer services and support to help get them to shelter.

Comfort Station.

CCRB Recommends Discipline for 65 POs

The NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) released new data on Monday, Oct. 18, on the 313 complaints from the Black Lives Matter protests. So far, CCRB officials said they have completed 127 full investigations resulting in 42 substantiated complaints of misconduct containing 91 allegations against 65 officers. The agency recommends charges and specifications, the highest level of discipline for the most serious allegations of misconduct, against 37 officers.

Each of these officers will face an administrative trial run by the CCRB's Administrative Prosecution Unit (APU), and if found guilty, could face loss of vacation days, suspension, or termination. Agency officials said trial proceedings will begin

once the NYPD serves these charges to the respective officers. The CCRB also recommended discipline for another 28 offending officers for their misconduct that will be addressed through training or the loss of vacation days. CCRB officials said 34 percent of complaints could not be effectively investigated due to an inability to identify officers. According to the agency, the work of the investigators was described as "meticulous."

New Building Planned at 2769 Creston Avenue

A building application has been filed with the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) for a new eight-story, residential building at 2769 Creston Avenue in the Jerome Park section of The Bronx, as reported by YIMBY. Located between East 196th and East 198th Streets, the interior lot is two blocks from the Kings-

bridge Avenue subway station, serviced by the B train.

Rajive Maret of D&F Development Group is listed as the owner behind the applications. The proposed 74-foot-tall development will yield 26,800 square feet designated for residential space. The building will have 44 residences, most likely rentals, based on the average unit scope of 609 square feet. The masonry-based structure will also have a cellar, penthouse, and a 30-foot-long side yard, but no accessory parking. Badaly Architects is listed as the architect of record.

Demolition permits were filed in 2019 for the two-story building on the property. An estimated completion date for the new structure has not been announced.

New iMentor Program at Lehman College

Lehman College is partnering with the national mentoring or-

ganization, iMentor, to launch a new program that will provide 260 freshmen and transfer students, who are already enrolled in one of the organization's high school programs, with one-on-one mentoring and support to help them excel academically and graduate college in four years.

The Alice Griffin Scholars Program is named in honor of Alice V. Griffin, Ph.D., who taught at Lehman for 42 years until her retirement in 1991. Griffin was instrumental in founding Lehman's graduate English program and served as its director. She was also the mother of iMentor founder, John Griffin, who is supporting the program with \$1 million from his organization. Lehman, located at 250 Bedford Park Blvd W, in the Jerome Park section of the Bronx, will provide up to \$20,000 in support the first year of the program, \$30,000 the second year, and up to \$40,000 the third and fourth years.



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Newest “Rebel Girls” Book Brings #BlackGirlMagic to Mott Haven

By SARAH HUFFMAN

Fans of the “Rebel Girls” book series celebrated the publication of the newest addition to the series during an outdoor book launch, held on Saturday, Oct. 2, at The Lit Bar bookstore in Mott Haven. Rebel Girls is a series of books that tells the stories of powerful Black women of different racial and cultural backgrounds, who live or lived in different time periods, going back to the 17th century, in different parts of the world.

Examples include activist and poet, Amanda Gorman, Shirley Chisholm who was the first Black woman elected to the United States Congress, and Olympian, Florence Griffith Joyner. The book also includes original artwork for each woman.

During the event, Lilly Workneh and CaShawn Thompson, the co-editors of, “Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Real Life Tales of Black Girl Magic,” signed copies of the new book and participated in a Q&A session with fans of the series.

Workneh, journalist and current head of digital content for the website, rebelgirls.com, told *Norwood News* that since her career has centered around Black media and Black storytelling, she jumped at the opportunity to be involved with the book, especially when she found out Thompson was involved in the project.

“It was a great opportunity to help pass on the stories and legacies of Black women to the next generation,” Workneh said. Thompson, meanwhile, is the originator of the #blackgirlmagic movement, social media hashtag, and clothing campaign which began in 2013. The brand highlights the perseverance of Black women, despite facing adversity.

Thompson agreed to the project because she thought a book like Rebel Girls was necessary. She said she wasn’t aware of the series prior to her involvement with the latest book, but she now loves all of them.

“I’m just like, in love with the fact that they are essentially targeting girls, and bring about knowledge and representation for girls all over the world,” she said.

Dozens of parents, along with their young children, filled the street in front of The Lit Bar for the Rebel Girls-themed event. Julee Wilson, beauty director for Cosmopolitan magazine, moderated the Q&A, asking the editors about the creation of the book,



Photo by Sarah Huffman.

LILLY WORKNEH AND CaShawn Thompson engage in a Q&A session with Cosmopolitan beauty director, Julee Wilson, at the launch of their new book at The Lit Bar in the Mott Haven section of The Bronx on Saturday, October 2, 2021.

and interacting with the audience. At one point, Wilson asked audience members to name a powerful Black woman they admired, and a few young girls said their own moms.

During the event, Workneh and Thompson each read a short section of the book aloud, and after the Q&A, all event attendees were invited to meet with them and have their books signed.

One eight-grader named Naomi said she’s read two other books from the “Rebel Girls” series and attended the event to get to know the authors of the latest series addition. Her friend, Kennedy, added that she wanted to learn about the women in the book.

“I just also want to know more about my culture and people that look like me, and how they impacted history and paved ways for so many women,” she said.

A mom named Christina said her six-year-old daughter reads the “Rebel Girls” books all the time, and so they came along to get the new book. “I was excited to come support and have her experience...and also start building allyship from this very young age...so not just hear stories about her own culture, but other stories as well,” Christina said.

The event was part of a series of book launches hosted by various, independent, Black bookstore owners in cities across the country. According to Workneh, the “Rebel Girls” team recognizes the influence “The Lit Bar” has had on the community, and in the

Bronx in general, and wants to help it prosper.

“Really, these book events [are] to help support the bookstore, more than anything else, to help partner with them, to bring business and amplification and partnership in meaningful ways,” said Workneh. “I’m very well aware of the role they play in the community and partnering with them for this event and hopefully others in the future.”

Workneh said the creation of the book required her and Thompson to choose 100 women from a list of hundreds of potential names. She said they tried to make sure there was enough representation of women from different cultural backgrounds, professional backgrounds, classes, locations around the world, sexualities, and physical appearances.

“That was pretty challenging because every Black woman, in particular every Black woman who has ever existed, is magical,” she said. “I think it’s important, especially for young Black girls, to see themselves represented in the stories and the media they consume, and the younger we can start that, the better [and] the more we are able to help them feel confident, and see the possibilities of what they can be and do in life.”

Once Workneh and Thompson had the list narrowed down, the two editors grouped the women into four categories: creators, leaders, champions and innovators. Workneh added that they tried to stress that not every re-

markable woman does something that affects millions of people. She said it was not always about being a world changer, and that they tried to highlight some everyday women who created impactful change around them.

“The stories that we included are really women who followed and pursued their passions, unapologetically, and were able to overcome certain obstacles and challenges Black women, in particular, face in order to live authentic and full lives,” Workneh said.

During the Q&A, Thompson reiterated this point, stressing that no matter if you’re the Vice President of the United States or working at Walgreens, all Black girls and women exemplify “Black Girl Magic.”

Prior to the event, Thompson said she was most excited about the interactions people would have with the book, and to receive feedback from girls and parents about what they like, what they learned, and if they identified with anything in the book.

Meanwhile, Workneh said she was excited to see the kids’ faces light up as they read the book and see them learn about people they might not have otherwise known.

Thompson added that she hopes people know that the book is not just for Black women and girls. “The book is for everyone, and I say that because these are stories that deserve to be told, and I think everyone deserves to hear them and appreciate and learn about the contributions that Black women and girls have made throughout history up until present day,” she said.

For Workneh, she said she hopes the book resonates with parents and kids everywhere and that they learn about Black women they may never have heard of before. She said she also hopes people take away a better understanding of what “Black Girl Magic” is and how that shows up in the world.

“Rebel girls is all about inspiring and instilling confidence in the next global generation of girls, and really trying to do that through storytelling,” said Workneh.

“Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Real Life Tales of Black Girl Magic,” along with the other Rebel Girls books, can be purchased at rebelgirls.com and elsewhere. Workneh is co-editor and contributor, Thompson is co-editor and wrote the foreword, and Jestine Ware, Diana Otero and Sonja Thomas are contributors.

Montefiore Urges Organ Donation as 8,486 New Yorkers Await Organs

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Nearly 10,000 New Yorkers are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. Oct. 7 marked Organ Donor Enrollment Day and Montefiore Health System recognized the day by setting up outdoor tabling outside its hospital buildings to share information about the importance of organ donation and to encourage Bronxites to become organ and tissue donors.

Leo Trevino, MPA, MDiv is manager of organ/tissue donation at Montefiore Medical Center. "In the Bronx, there is a great need for organ and tissue donation," Trevino said in the context of last year's enrollment day. "People suffering from organ failure, and those who have an organ that has been damaged by disease or injury, come from near and far to Montefiore to receive lifesaving care."

As of September 2020, Trevino said there were over 100,000 people in the United States on the organ registry list, waiting to receive the gift of life, and on average, nearly 20 people across the United States die every day from causes that are treatable with an organ transplant.

"By taking simple steps to register, each Bronx resident can join the more than 5.6 million people who have enrolled in the New York State Donate Life Registry," he added. "Doing so can help potentially save up to eight lives through organ donation and enhancing many more through tissue donation."

Organ Donor Enrollment Day was started in 2015 by "LiveOnNY," a team of over 200 clinicians, educators, social workers, and others who, according to the group's website, are united around highlighting the life-changing power of organ and tissue donation. Group members say they work tirelessly, day and night, 365 days a year to help save the lives of those in need of a transplant, and to provide support and comfort to donors and their loved ones both throughout the donation process, and afterwards.

The organization works to educate and inspire the community about organ and tissue donation through educational events, media outreach, and through local schools and communities.

This year, Trevino's message was echoed by many in the public sphere, including Bronx State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33) who tweeted on Oct. 7, "There are thousands of New Yorkers waiting for a transplant who are hoping that you'll sign up to be an organ donor." He added, "Sign up today for [#DonorDay2021](http://Registerme.org/EnrollmentDay!) at <http://Registerme.org/EnrollmentDay!>"

According to data from the Organ Procurement and Transplant Network (OPTN) and U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, there are 8,486 people currently *on the organ transplant waiting list* in New York State.

We spoke with one double organ transplant recipient, who is not based in New York State. She explained that some people who are born with an underlying medical condition may go on a transplant list straight away after birth. Others, whose health may deteriorate more slowly as they age, and depending on the progression of their illness, may



Photo courtesy of Montefiore Health System

JOHN TORRES, PHYSICIAN liaison, Advanced Lung Disease Program, Montefiore Health System, shares information on organ donation and encourages New Yorkers to register as organ donors.

not necessarily go on a waiting list immediately after birth. Instead, they may, initially, manage their condition with medication for several years.

However, for this latter category of patients, the need for a transplant may [or may not] eventually become more urgent. Every case is different. This may help to explain the nearly 10,000 number referenced earlier, versus the 8,486 number of people *currently* on the organ donor waiting list, since some people may be further along the process than others.

The donor we spoke to added that depending on each person's unique circumstances, some may, in consultation with their doctors, take the decision at a later point to start planning for a transplant operation, at which point they would then formally apply to go on the list.

According to OPTN data, of the 8,486 people on New York State's waiting list on Oct. 13, 1,189 are

(continued on page 14)



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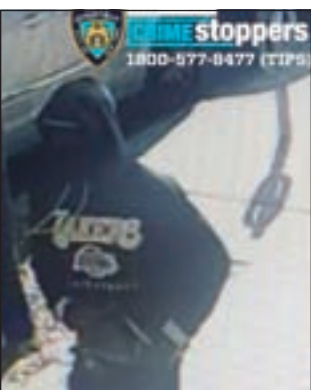
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CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE



the scene. The assailant is described as male, dark-skinned and was last seen wearing a black hoodie sweater with the word "Lakers," printed on the front, black pants, brown boots, and a black facemask. The surveillance photo was obtained from 374 East 204th Street.

Bedford Park Stabbing

Police are looking for at least one suspect after a 26-year-old woman was stabbed once in the chest in Bedford Park. The incident was reported outside El Nuevo Tenampa Restaurant, located at 2765 Webster Avenue, at 3:35 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 16. Police said the woman was stabbed after an argument with an unknown suspect, who fled the location. The victim was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital in critical but stable condition, there are no arrests, and the investigation is ongoing.

A male source who declined to be identified said he heard a lot of loud screaming around the time the incident occurred and witnessed two people in the vicinity, one with a knife and another with two bottles. An

unidentified female employee at the Mexican restaurant said a fight had taken place inside the establishment before the incident apparently spilled out onto the sidewalk. The employee added that those at the restaurant did not know the victim.

Harassment on Gun Hill Road

A 58-year-old Norwood resident told the Norwood News he was the victim of verbal harassment and threatening behavior during an altercation on East Gun Hill Road in Norwood in the early hours of Thursday, Oct. 14. The victim, who had an injured knee, was on his way to Montefiore hospital and added that as a result, he couldn't run properly. He said he had been walking along East Gun Hill Road by Putnam Place, talking with his mother on the phone at around 2 a.m., when a man suddenly appeared and began shouting at him in an aggressive way, asking "What did you do to my daughter?"

The victim said the man also called him expletives and displayed a knife. He said the assailant made one attempt to lunge at the victim's bag to snap

it. The victim pushed the assailant away and ran out onto the road and up the hill, at which point, the victim said he met a police patrol. He said he recognized Officer Hynes from the 52nd precinct who intervened and secured the situation. The victim said he believes the aggressor was mentally unstable or possibly on drugs and chose not to press charges. He said he wanted to thank Officer Hynes for intervening. Norwood News reached out to the NYPD to corroborate the incident. We did not receive any formal confirmation.

Fordham Manor Assault

The NYPD is seeking the public's help in identifying eight individuals sought for questioning in connection with a robbery that occurred in Fordham Manor.

On Tuesday, Oct. 12, at around 9.22 p.m., the individuals approached a 21-year-old man in front of 4 West Kingsbridge Road. They proceeded to kick him, punch him, and slash him in the face with a cutting instrument. They also stole the victim's Android cellphone, before fleeing the location. EMS responded and transported the victim to an area hospital in stable condition. Four of the eight are captured in the attached

video still of the incident.



video still of the incident.

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). Tips can also be logged on the CrimeStoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/> or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.



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If you've experienced or witnessed a traumatic event and now have unwanted memories of the event, struggle with fear and anxiety, feel isolated from family and friends; or avoid situations that remind you of the trauma, you may have **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**. Learn more about the CYPRESS research study of an investigational drug for people with PTSD.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



COVID-19 Updates

Staff & visitors must wear masks at State-regulated childcare facilities for children aged two and up. Staff & residents at residential congregate programs operated/approved by the Office of Children and Family Services must wear masks. People at 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, must wear masks, even if vaccinated.

All public-school teachers, administrators, and other school employees were required to submit proof of vaccination by Oct. 1.

Uninsured New Yorkers can apply for State health coverage through Dec. 31, at <https://nystateofhealth.ny.gov/> or directly through insurers.

A new moratorium on COVID-19 related residential and commercial evictions is in effect until Jan. 15, 2022. To apply, go to: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/>.

NYC offers free, at-home PCR COVID-19 daily testing, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. for New Yorkers, 65+ or immunocompromised. Call 929-298-9400 to book.

The FDA has expanded emergency use authorizations for the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna mRNA vaccines.

President Joe Biden has mandated that all private employers with 100 or more workers require their workers to be vaccinated or tested weekly. He also mandated that all healthcare workers in hospitals, clinics and other facilities that accept Medicare and Medicaid payments, and all federal contractors must get vaccinated, with no opt out option.

As of Sept. 24, free COVID-19 booster doses are available to **eligible** New Yorkers. New Yorkers 65 years and older, or residents in long-term care settings, **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series. New Yorkers aged 50-64 years with underlying medical conditions **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series.

New Yorkers aged 18-49 years with underlying medical conditions **may** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series. Consult your regular health care provider. New Yorkers aged 18-64 years, who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of an occupational or institutional setting, **may** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series.

To schedule a booster shot, text your zip code to 438829 or call 1-800-232-0233 to find locations near you. Free booster doses are widely available at pharmacies, local health departments, clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and other locations across New York State.

Effective **Oct. 7**, applications are being accepted for the Landlord Rental Assistance Program (LRAP) which provides rental assistance for landlords whose tenants are unwilling to apply for Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), including where a tenant has left the rental property. Assistance may be provided for households with rent up to 150 percent of the Fair Market rent (FMR) for the county where the property is located.

Call 844-NY1RENT (844-691-7368) Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. for more information. For the hearing impaired, TTY phone number: 1-833-843-8829.

Apply here: <https://nysrenthelp.otda.ny.gov/en/Identity/Account/Login>.

New Yorkers, 12 and older, must show proof of at least one vaccine dose to access indoor dining, fitness, or entertainment. Learn more at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines-keytonyc.page>. Information on proof of vaccine options is available at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines-keytonyc.page>.

Call the COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline at 1-844-863-9314 for mental health counseling.

New York City has expanded its in-home vaccination program to all New Yorkers aged 12+. You can select which of the vaccines you prefer at no cost. To request your in-home vaccination, visit <https://forms.cityofnewyork.us/f/home>.

Dispel misinformation and get the facts about COVID-19 vaccinations at:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccine-facts.page>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>.

Track Maintenance on D Subway Line

Track maintenance will be carried out on the D subway line between Norwood and Bedford Park Boulevard stations between Oct. 29 and Nov. 1, on Fridays between 9.45 p.m. and Mondays at 5 a.m. During these times, no D trains will run between Bedford Park and 205th Street, and a shuttle bus service will replace the D subway line service between these stops during these times.

General Election Deadlines

Oct. 23-31 is the early voting period. **Nov. 1** is the deadline to request an absentee ballot *in person*. **Nov. 2** is the absentee ballot return deadline. **Nov. 2** is Election Day.

Bronx Bus Redesign -Restarting

The final Bronx bus redesign plan, initiated in 2019 by NYC Transit, can now be reviewed here: <https://new.mta.info/bronx-busredesign>, and comments can be submitted here: <https://mta-nyc.custhelp.com/app/comments/bronxbus>.

Redistricting

A schedule of upcoming public hearing dates to discuss the drafts of the proposed redistricting maps put forward recently by New York's redistricting commission can be found here: <https://www.nyirc.gov/meetings>.

Draft plans can be found here: <https://www.nyirc.gov/draft-plans>.

State Constitutional Amendments on November Ballot

Five State constitution amendments will appear on the Nov. 2 general election ballot, in addition to the elections for public officials. NYS Board of Elections provides the exact text of each proposal here: <https://www.elections.ny.gov/2021BallotProposals.html>.

Resources & Help following Storm Ida

Service centers to support those affected by the flash flood emergency following Storm Ida are open to all, irrespective of immigration status. The Bronx center is located at Hostos Community College, 450 Grand Concourse, E. Building C, Bronx, NY 10451.

Bronxites can also call 311, or access city services online by visiting [NYC.gov/ida](https://www1.nyc.gov/ida).

Beware of fraudsters posing as government officials, charities, unlicensed contractors, or rental listing scam artists. Always ask for I.D. and call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 (711/VRS) if in doubt.

Disaster Assistance for Undocumented New Yorkers

Undocumented survivors of the storms and flooding caused by the remnants of Hurricane Ida who were ineligible for relief through FEMA or other means, can apply for alternative relief. Funding is being distributed through grants via community-based organizations. Call the ONA Hotline at 1-800-566-7636, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. for guidance. Help is available in over 200 languages.

Help for Homeless or Mentally Unstable New Yorkers

Residents who see homeless people in a City park or setting up a tent should report it to 311 and DHS & Parks will coordinate to send help. Commuters who come across homeless or mentally unstable people on the subway can call BRC, a homeless shelter operator with whom NYC Transit has a contract, on (212) 533 5151. The helpline is staffed 24/7, and can dispatch a team ASAP.

Free & Loan-free Training Programs

Mosholu Montefiore Community Center offers free, high-school diploma equivalency programs; free, commercial driver license programs; and loan-free culinary training

programs with opportunities for paid internships. Go to www.mmcc.org or call (718) 652 0282 for more information.

New YMCA Center

A new Northeast YMCA Center is open at 1250 229th Street in the Bronx.

Public Hearings

Oct. 28 at 2 p.m. on Moped Shares Permitting Process. More info at: <https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/rule/moped-shares-permitting-process/>

Nov. 3 at 10 a.m. on DSNY proposed new rules on petitions for rule making. Go to: <https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/> for more information.

Nov. 5 at 11 a.m. on DEP noise code penalty schedule. More info at:

<https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/rule/noise-code-penalty-schedule-2/>

Nov. 5 at 11 a.m. on proposed rule regarding conduct of pre-trial mediation in Oath Trials division. More info at:

<https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/rule/proposed-rule-regarding-conduct-of-pre-trial-mediation-in-oath-trials-division/>

Nov. 5 at 11 a.m. on proposed rule banning the use of residential addresses for tobacco retail dealer and electronic cigarette retail dealer licenses. More info at: <https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/rule/proposed-rule-banning-the-use-of-residential-addresses-for-tobacco-retail-dealer-and-electronic-cigarette-retail-dealer-licenses/>

Nov. 8 at 2 p.m. on permanent car share rules. More info at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/carshare.shtml>.

Bedford Park Residents Fed Up with Parkway Trash

(continued from page 2)

of City parkland.

In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City cut \$84 million from the Park's 2021 fiscal year budget, in addition to mandating a hiring freeze across all city agencies. These austerity measures were introduced at the same time as social distancing and mask requirements went into effect, making City parks in every borough both essential public spaces for recreation, as well as the safest places for family and friends to gather.

"Given what we've experienced over the last 18 months, now coming up on two years, it's critical that these spaces are well maintained," said Ganser. "We're not out of the pandemic and these spaces are really the only spaces where life feels normal."

Recently, in a win for the Parks' department, New Yorkers for Parks was able to get \$80 million restored to the Parks' department's 2022 fiscal budget. However, Ganser said the bump in resources is a temporary fix, given that it was made possible by a surplus of federal dollars given to New York State due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ultimately, Ganser said he believes instituting long-term change that has the power to "flip the script" will only come when communities start looking for a different outcome and become too loud for politicians to ignore.

"I don't mean to imply that communities shouldn't be in the ear of the Parks' department because the more they are, the more likely they will see direct action," said Ganser. "As they say, the squeaky wheel gets the grease."

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Metro-North Penn Station Access

Regarding the following story, “Environmental Review Completed for Metro-North Penn Station Access & Four New Bronx Stations” (*Norwood News* online article, Sept. 27), the project was originally studied in 2000. The promised initiation of service in 2025 still faces unresolved obstacles.

MTA and Amtrak still need to reach a final agreement concerning the scope of work, track outages and support by “Amtrak Force Account” to advance the project. Amtrak wants the MTA to pay for related work on the same corridor. The MTA believes that Amtrak should be paying for these improvements out of its own capital plan.

The MTA promised to initiate the service within one year of the completion of the \$11.2 billion LIRR Eastside Access connection to Grand Central Terminal, forecast for December 2022. Metro North previously promised service into Penn Station would commence in December 2023. This has now been delayed until December 2025.

Claims that the project will save Bronx commuters up to 50 minutes travel time lack detailed justification. The same holds true for the 33,000



Letters To The Editor

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

anticipated riders on the service. In our new post COVID-19 world, Metro North needs to reevaluate anticipated future ridership growth projections. More people are going to telecommute from home on a part-time or full-time basis.

The anticipated final cost will never be known until completion. Costs will be further refined by award of construction contracts, followed by change orders due to unforeseen site conditions or last-minute changes in scope to contracts during construction. Coordination will be needed between various contractors, Amtrak, Long Island Railroad, MTA Office of Capital Construction (LIRR Eastside Access project) and NJ Transit.

Another contract for hiring a construction management firm will be

required to support coordination efforts. The existing Metro North fleet will have to be expanded to support this new service to Penn Station.

Will Amtrak and Metro North be able to provide sufficient track outage support to meet this aggressive schedule? Will there be any need for Metro North to combine or cancel trains on the New Haven line to support this project? Can construction be completed in less than three years? Time will tell.

Larry Penner
Great Neck

Some Thoughts on the Dave Chappelle Case

I admire the CEO of Netflix for standing behind Dave Chappelle after terrible attacks on his humor by the

transgender community. Objective truth is no longer a thing, and everyone has his or her own truth now.

The rules of etiquette are evolving in real time and kind-hearted people instinctively understand that in the presence of someone who identifies by a specific gender, the polite thing to do is to make an effort to accommodate that person's request, to avoid hurting the person's feelings.

However, never should you be forced to deny your truth or the objective truth and believe someone else's truth, if it doesn't jibe. The courtesy you extend to a person living an alternative reality is the same courtesy that should be extended to you.

Politeness should never be conflated with affirmation, if to thine own self you cannot be true. That is thought control, which leads to brainwashing, which leads to tyranny. No one should ever feel they have to give up their religious convictions or moral ethics to satisfy some off-the-wall policies of some irrational groups.

Richard Marias,
Norwood

Montefiore Urges Organ Donation as 8,486 New Yorkers Await Organs

(continued from page 9)

registered with Montefiore's transplant center. Across the State, as of the same date, kidneys were the most needed organ, with 7,299 kidneys needed. Next was liver at 719, followed by the heart at 324, pancreas at 146, kidney / pancreas combined at 136, lungs at 107, intestine at 11, and a heart / lung combination at 3.

In terms of wait times, Laura Ruocco-Duran of Montefiore Health System, told the *Norwood News*, “It varies by organ. There are a lot of factors that impact wait time, including organ availability and compatibility matching between donor and recipient.” According to the OPTN data, as an indication, 1,380 New Yorkers have been waiting 5 years or more for their needed organ.

Asked what were the most common medical conditions which give rise to the need for a potential organ transplant, Ruocco Duran said it was mainly Hypertensive Nephrosclerosis (HN). According to Science Direct, HN is defined as chronic kidney disease caused by nonmalignant hypertension (HTN) and is the presumed underlying disease in 10 to 30 percent of patients with end-stage renal disease worldwide.

Meanwhile, in terms of the racial



Photo courtesy of Montefiore Health System

(L TO R) Leo Trevino, Jr., MPA, MDiv., manager of organ/tissue donation at Montefiore Health System, is joined by LiveOnNY associates, Illiana Almanzar and Amy, on Organ Donor Enrollment Day to encourage Bronxites to register as organ donors.

breakdown, according to the latest available OPTN data, as of Oct. 13, the number of Black patients awaiting a transplant in New York State was 2,813, almost as high as the number of White patients awaiting an organ, at 2,903. This is despite the fact

that the State population is made up of roughly 65.7 percent White, and 15.9 percent Black.

Ruocco Duran added that Montefiore's transplant center also cares for patients beyond The Bronx and New York State, from Long Island to

New Jersey and from Connecticut to further afield.

Registration to become an organ donor is ongoing, and can be done by going to the following link: <https://registerme.org/campaign/enrollmentday>.

St. Patrick's Home Fully Vaxxed!

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Given the increased focus of late on the importance for all New Yorkers to get vaccinated, staff at St. Patrick's Home, Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center, in Van Cortlandt Village took some time out on Friday, Oct. 15, to celebrate the fact that all staff members are now vaccinated. Sr. Kevin Patricia Lynch explained that while many were already vaccinated earlier this year, following the recent vaccine mandates which came into effect more recently, it prompted remaining staff members to follow suit. To mark the occasion, an Ice Cream Social was held, complete with a "COVID-19 virus piñata" which staff didn't hesitate to try out.

Photos Courtesy of St. Patrick's Home
STAFF AT ST. Patrick's Home, Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center, in Van Cortlandt Village held an Ice Cream Social, complete with "COVID-19 virus piñata" on Friday, Oct. 15, to celebrate the fact that all staff are now vaccinated.



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Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY

Events

The **Jerome Gun Hill BID 20th Annual Fall Festival** will take place on Saturday, Oct. 23, from noon to 5 p.m., on Jerome Avenue between E Moshulu Parkway and E Gun Hill Road in Jerome Park. Stop by and enjoy the pumpkin patch, performances by local bands and giveaways.

An event **Celebrating NYC Housing Co-Ops** will be held on Oct. 27 at 7 p.m. at The Amalgamated Co-Op, 98 Van Cortlandt Park South. For more information, contact Dr. Glyn Robbins at glynrobbins@aol.com or call +44 7411 557 097.

Experience the beauty of Woodlawn in the evening on the popular **Illuminated Mausoleums Tour** on Friday, Oct. 22 and Saturday, Oct. 23 at various times starting at 6.45 p.m. Guests will be taken by trolley through the cemetery and will walk back enjoying the art and architecture

of the beautifully lit mausoleums. This tour is outdoors, so guests are asked to wear comfortable walking shoes and warm clothes, and to bring along a flashlight! This is a trolley and walking tour. All guests, regardless of vaccination status, will be asked to wear a mask while on the trolley. For more information, email contact@woodlawnconservancy.org or call 718-408-5624.

Kids

Plentiful pumpkins and hordes of gourds will be on display at New York Botanical Garden's ongoing **Scarecrows & Pumpkins** event, through Sunday, Oct. 31, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the LuEsther T. Mertz Library Building, and on the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory Plaza. To add to the seasonal fun, more than 100 whimsical scarecrows will line the twisting trails of the Everett Children's Adventure Garden. For more information, go to: <https://www.nybg.org/event/scarecrows-pumpkins/>.

Music

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, located on the campus of Lehman College/CUNY at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx, NY 10468, welcomes Latin Grammy Award winner, **INDIA**, for a special concert on Saturday, Oct. 23, at 8 p.m. Famous for her chart-topping albums such as "Dicen Que Soy," "Ese Hombre," "Sobre el Fuego," and the 2016 Latin Grammy Award-winning Best Salsa Album, "Intensamente La India Con Canciones De Juan Gabriel," this performance will be unforgettable. Tickets at \$85, \$75, \$50 and \$45 can be purchased by calling the box office at 718-960-8833, Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and from 4 p.m. on show days, or online at www.LehmanCenter.org.

The Bronx People's Festival, organized by the Bronx-wide Coalition in conjunction with Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition, takes place in Crotona Park on Saturday, Oct. 23, at 11 a.m. At the event, you'll be able to:

- Share your ideas for how we can transform our Bronx economy and society to prioritize self-determination, wellbeing, and dignity for all,
- Learn about exciting projects happening locally and beyond that are aligned with our vision and values,

- Get all the information you need to vote in NYC's general election this November,
- Reflect on the loved ones we've recently lost, and access resources for healing, like Reiki,
- Connect with the organizations, staff, and delegates in our leadership team and learn how you can stay engaged, and
- Eat delicious food, play games, win prizes, build community, and a lot more!

For more information, contact Michael Partis at michael@bcdi.nyc or call (917) 943 6225.

Movement

Join NYC Parks for a **Halloween Discovery Hike & Craft** event in Van Cortlandt Park on Sunday, Oct 31, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Join the Urban Park Rangers for a walk into the woods searching for spiders and other critters. Enjoy fall foliage and try your hand at your choice of nature arts & crafts. Best for kids. Meet at the Van Cortlandt Nature Center, West 246th Street and Broadway.

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.



School is Back, and So is the Flu

By **MICHAEL D. CABANA**

Now that school is back in session in The Bronx and the colder weather and flu season are here, it is a good time to review how to best keep your children healthy and protected. While numbers are, thankfully, decreasing, COVID-19 remains a threat and it remains important to stay alert. Now, when the typical cold weather sniffles come around, more families may be concerned if it's allergies, a cold, the flu or COVID-19.

As symptoms of these conditions are similar, it is important to recognize when you or your child should get tested for COVID-19 to prevent further transmission. Different people with COVID-19 may experience different symptoms, but the most common symptoms include fever and chills, a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty

breathing, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.

Almost all these symptoms are also common with influenza, except a new loss of taste or smell. If you or your child has any of these symptoms, or if you are aware of a close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends getting a COVID-19 test. Close contact is considered being within 6 feet of someone for a total of at least fifteen minutes over a 24-hour period, two days before they show COVID-19 symptoms, or getting a positive COVID-19 test result.

Those with symptoms should get a test as soon as possible, while those with an exposure should seek testing

three to five days after it. With the increase of the Delta variant, testing after exposure is now recommended even if you are vaccinated. Getting a test for COVID-19 is easy and free, and testing locations can be found by texting "COVID TEST" to 855-48 or using the nyc.gov webpage.

To reduce any chances of becoming ill with COVID-19, there are many actions you can take. The COVID-19 vaccine is a safe, free, and effective method that reduces your risk of becoming seriously ill, hospitalized, or dying after contracting the virus that causes COVID-19. Additionally, it protects the most vulnerable members of your family and those who are not eligible to receive the vaccine yet.

The AAP and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) both recommend that adolescents aged 12 and older and adults receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The two-dose Pfizer vaccine is available for children aged 12 and older, with authorization for children aged 5 to 11 expected in the coming weeks. Both the two-dose Moderna and one-dose Johnson and Johnson vaccines are available for individuals aged 18 and older.

Another important vaccine to receive is the influenza vaccine. This vaccine is available to individuals 6 months and older. Ensuring that everybody in

your family receives the flu vaccine is an easy way to protect against the flu. Both COVID-19 vaccines and influenza vaccines can be located using the NYC vaccine finder website, vaccinefinder.nyc.gov, or by calling the vaccination hotline: 1-877-VAX-4NYC.

As a reminder, individuals aged 12 to 17 already have access to the Pfizer vaccine. Additionally, the website allows you to filter to sites providing the flu vaccine to individuals younger than 18 years of age, and by insurance coverage. You can also ask about either of these vaccines at your doctor's office.

While we are all hopeful about the declining COVID-19 cases, it still remains a threat in our communities, so it is important to get vaccinated for COVID-19 and the flu and continue to practice the tried and true mitigation efforts we have been practicing for months: wear a mask, physically distance, and stay vigilant for when to get tested for COVID-19 after exposure. By working together as a community to support each other, we have the best chance of overcoming COVID-19 and other common respiratory illnesses.

Michael D. Cabana, MD, MPH, Physician-in-Chief and Evin F. Rothschild, Study Coordinator, Department of Pediatrics, Children's Hospital at Montefiore.



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Public and Community Meetings

The next **52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meeting will be held on **Thursday, Oct. 28, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** at Christ Disciples International Ministries, 3021 Webster Avenue (across from the precinct). Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at 718-220-5824 to be added to the email list.

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, Oct. 26, at 6.30 p.m.** Contact ibravo@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 Oct. 6. For further details, contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

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AG James Secures \$256M to Combat Opioid Crisis in NYC

By JOSÉ A. GIRALT

New York State Attorney General Letitia James is delivering more than \$256 million to New York City to stem the tide of opioid addiction and overdose. The announcement was made as part of a statewide campaign called, “Heal NY: Turning the Tide on the Opioid Crises.”

James made the announcement inside the auditorium of Lincoln Hospital, located at 234 E 149th St, in Mott Haven, on Oct. 4. The funds are part of a \$1.5 billion legal settlement reached with various manufacturers and distributors of opioids, according to the attorney general’s office, and are earmarked for addiction abatement, prevention, education, and treatment resources.

At the event, James was joined by 20 elected officials representing the City, State, and federal governments, including Bronx Borough President Ruben Díaz Jr., Congressmen Adriano Espaillat (NY-13) and Jamaal Bowman (NY-16), State Sen. Alessandra Biaggi (S.D. 34), State Sen. Luis Sepúlveda (S.D. 32), and Assembly Member Nathalia Fernández (A.D. 80). “It’s time to heal New York,” James said. “We’re here in the South Bronx because the South Bronx has been particularly hit hard by the opioid epidemic.”

In March 2019, James brought a lawsuit, on behalf of the State, against six opioid manufacturers including Purdue Pharma and its affiliates, and members of the Sackler Family [owners of Purdue] and the trusts they control; Janssen Pharmaceuticals and its affiliates, including its parent company Johnson & Johnson; Mallinckrodt LLC and its affiliates; Endo Health Solutions and its affiliates; Teva Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc. and its affiliates; and Allergan Finance, LLC and its affiliates.

After some opening remarks by James, some elected officials shared personal stories to underscore the deep-rooted reach of the opioid crisis, and how it has affected families from all walks of life, all across the City.

Bronx Borough President Ruben Díaz Jr. asked the audience, “Have you ever buried two uncles because of substance abuse? Have you ever been to 149th Street and saw your cousin and said, ‘Hey, what’s up?’ and she doesn’t recognize you, or doesn’t want to acknowledge you because she’s in this fog, this haze?”

Díaz Jr. continued, “Well, you know



Photo by José A. Giralt

NEW YORK STATE Attorney General Letitia James (at podium) shares the stage with City, State, and federal elected officials as she announces the launch of “Heal NY,” a statewide campaign to address the opioid epidemic, during a press event at Lincoln Hospital in the South Bronx on Monday, Oct. 4, 2021.

what? I have. This shows that no one, no family has been immune or safe from this.”

Reports by the New York Division of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration show that “the COVID-19 pandemic has made the opioid crisis worse in New York, accounting for a spike in methamphetamine and fentanyl seizures.” Meanwhile, The Office of the Special Prosecutor for the City of New York (SNP) found that “a flood of heroin and fentanyl is entering New York City in 2021.”

Last year, in anticipation of State budget cuts of up to 20 percent in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, local nonprofits working on the front lines in response to opioid abuse feared that such reductions to funding would increase the number of overdose deaths.

Nonprofit representatives looked forward, therefore, to seeing the settlement funds headed their way. Hia-watha Collins is a community and capacity building manager at the National Harm Reduction Coalition, based in Manhattan. The national advocacy group helps people address the adverse effects of drug use, addiction, and incarceration.

“I am so glad, so proud to hear where this money is going to... to education, to training, to prevention, harm reduction, and things like that,” Collins said. “Everyone has an opportunity to change and save a life. Overdose is something that is preventable.”

Other nonprofits are hoping that the funds from the settlement will be

allocated appropriately. *Norwood News* reached out to Rev. Addie Banks, executive director of, “We Engage in Prevention Awareness,” (WEPA), which runs a program in the Northwest Bronx, on this point. While she’s grateful to James for the funding, she said she hopes WEPA will be consulted before funds are distributed.

Luis Laboy is chairperson of the Bronx Council on Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders and has lived most of his life in the South Bronx. Holding two Master’s degrees, one from Fordham University and another from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the 61-year-old sees an opportunity for the settlement funds to make an impact in the hardest hit communities.

“I do appreciate Letitia James, the attorney general, for her relentless advocacy and support to provide resources to combat [...] the issues we are experiencing in the Bronx with drug use,” he told *Norwood News* in a phone interview on Tuesday, Oct. 19.

On the other hand, Laboy said he notices there has been pushback in certain communities, especially by some business owners, when more addiction treatment services are proposed. “They are confused with these programs that are housing people, that have a history of homelessness, with treatment programs,” he said. “So, they say, ‘Oh, we have too many treatment programs.’”

Laboy said the South Bronx really needs *more* treatment programs, however, and hopes that the influx of funds will not only support more programs,

but will also educate the public on the different needs of those who live on the margins of the community.

Provisional data from NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOH) indicates that from January to September 2020, at least 1,446 individuals died of a drug overdose in New York City. More than 75 percent of these overdose deaths involved fentanyl—a potent opioid that carries a high overdose risk.

Meanwhile, a 2019 DOH health indicator report found at the borough level, in 2019, there were 423 unintentional overdoses in the Bronx, followed by 383 in Manhattan, 331 in Brooklyn, 234 in Queens and 92 on Staten Island.

Across the City, Fordham-Bronx Park had the fourth highest rate per 100,000 residents of unintentional overdose deaths the same year, after Hunts Point-Mott Haven, Highbridge-Morrisania, and Crotona-Tremont.

During the first half of 2021, 4,765 life-saving Naloxone kits were assigned to police precincts in the Bronx, 5,948 police officers were trained on how to use the kits, and Naloxone was administered 36 times by Bronx police officers during this period, including once at Kingsbridge Road subway station on Saturday, June 26, as previously reported.

So far, the attorney general’s office confirmed it has received settlement funds from Endo and the Sackler family, including the foundations they control. The case against Mallinckrodt is in U.S. Bankruptcy Court, and the trials for the two remaining defendants, Teva Pharmaceuticals USA and Allergan Finance, are currently underway in state court.

The pending verdicts or settlements are expected to increase the amount of funds New York City and State will receive, though exact figures are not yet known. “More funds are coming from more settlements,” James said.

The attorney general is now on a tour of the State’s ten regions, encompassing 62 counties, to announce each region’s share of the settlement money in combating the opioid crisis.

“We sued ‘Big Pharma’ and now they’re paying for the tragedy, for the death, for the destruction, and the carnage that they have caused all across the State of New York,” James said. “[Today] is a good day but it comes at the end of a long night of suffering and loss and tragedy.”

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



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P.S. 94 Holds “Welcome Back” School Bash

By DAWN CLANCY

Six years ago, Tina Padilla, 53, had to learn how to walk again after emergency back surgery left her with a metal rod implanted along her spine, but all traces of her painful past were seemingly gone as the fifth-grade teacher danced with a swarm of students to celebrate the return to in-person learning at P.S. 94’s “Welcome Back” bash held on Saturday, Oct. 16, in Norwood.

The outdoor event, held on the school’s grounds, located at 3530 Kings College Place, attracted over 150 parents, students, and teachers, all eager to celebrate the school’s reopening after COVID-19 forced New York City public schools to close and pivot to remote, and later hybrid learning from March 2020 until September 2021.

Padilla described Saturday’s celebration - complete with face painting, cotton candy, balloons, live music, and a brightly colored bouncy castle - as invigorating. “It’s the closeness of seeing the kids,” she told *Norwood News*. “Even though you can’t see their smiling faces through their masks, you can feel the love.”

Meanwhile, like many P.S. 94 students, 10-year-old Brandon Young, a 5th grader, was just happy to be back in the classroom with his friends. “It feels good to be back,” said Young. “It really does.”

After 14 months of a somewhat erratic school schedule, including at least one prior attempt to reopen schools in person in September 2020, only to close them again a few months later and pivot to a hybrid learning model, on May 24 of this year, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that NYC public schools would *fully* reopen on Sept. 13, with no remote learning option.

It was a decision that triggered a mixed-bag of reactions from parents and teachers alike, some of whom still wanted to retain a remote learning option amid the ongoing risk of the COVID-19 Delta variant. Others, such as P.S. 94’s interim acting principal, Diana Baez, were and are excited to reopen in person, though anxious to ensure the safety of the school’s 929 students, from K through 5th-grade.

“We worry a little because we want to make sure we’re following protocol,” Baez told *Norwood News* at Saturday’s celebration. “Social distancing is hard because they [the students] were excited to see their friends that they haven’t seen in a year and a half. So, we definitely need to make sure they’re staying 3 feet apart.”



Photo by Dawn Clancy

JESHUAL JIMENEZ, 6, sits to get his face painted at P.S. 94’s “Welcome Back” celebration at 3530 Kings College Place in Norwood on Saturday, October 16, 2021.



Photo by Dawn Clancy

HEIDDY DELOSANTOS, 10, happily finishes up the last bits of her cotton candy at the “Welcome Back” bash at P.S. 94 at 3530 Kings College Place in Norwood, on Saturday, October 16, 2021.



Photo by Dawn Clancy

MASKED STUDENTS ENJOY the bouncy castle at P.S. 94’s Welcome Back bash at 3530 Kings College Place in Norwood, on Saturday, October 16, 2021.

To curb the spread of the coronavirus, students are required to follow social distancing, mask-wearing, and handwashing guidelines, and unvaccinated students, who have consented, are subject to random COVID-19 testing every week.

Additionally, the Department of Education (DOE) and the mayor mandated that all public-school teachers and staff be vaccinated, imposing a Sept. 27 deadline for receipt of at least one dose.

Vaccines are currently not available to children under 12 years of age. However, on Sunday, Oct. 17, on ABC’s “This Week,” Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and chief medical advisor to U.S. President Joe Biden, said, upon approval, vaccines for five to 11-year-olds could become available as early as November 2021.

However, despite vaccine mandates,

various safety protocols, and regular testing, some Bronx parents still don’t support the return to in-person learning and are furious with the mayor’s decision to scratch the remote option.

Norwood News recently reported on efforts by the Bronx Parent Leaders Advocacy Group (BPLAG) to reverse the mayor’s mandate. At a rally on July 26, outside the offices of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) union in Manhattan, a group of about 20 parents rallied to call for the reinstatement of a remote learning option for immunocompromised students and for students who thrive academically in a remote learning environment.

“I am very much, more than ever, still in favor of a remote option,” BPLAG president, Farah Despeignes, told *Norwood News* recently via text message. “My sons will not be returning to any DOE

building under these circumstances.” Despeignes is currently homeschooling her two sons, one of whom is in the 7th grade and the other in the 8th grade.

Asked if the DOE had pushed back on her decision to homeschool, Despeignes said the DOE “wants to push parents against a wall by discouraging home instruction, and making parents feel that their only choice is the classroom.” She added, “The DOE and the mayor are now in the business of bullying parents and students. This is unacceptable in a democracy, which is supposed to be all about negotiation and compromise.” We reached out to DOE for comment.

According to the DOE’s daily COVID-19 case records from Sept. 13, 2021, to Oct. 17, 2021, there were 5,136 confirmed, cumulative, positive COVID-19 cases, of which 74 percent related to students and 26 percent related to staff.

The DOE’s monitoring system tracks active COVID-19 infections across NYC’s public school system. When positive cases are detected, the DOE can implement a series of actions, including classroom closures, quarantining and school shutdowns to stop the spread.

Cumulatively, since Sept. 13, 2021, the DOE has reported 1,681 classroom closures, 2,255 partial classroom quarantines, and one complete school shutdown relating to a situation which has since been resolved.

So far, P.S. 94 has reported no COVID-19 cases. However, teachers and staff are fully aware that a coronavirus outbreak could arrive at any time. This reality has parents like Essence Bailey, mother of a 4th and a 6th grader, worried about what will happen once winter arrives, and students are forced to stay inside, potentially triggering an increase in positive cases.

“I believe if we just take the precautions of the Centers for Disease Control [& Prevention], and also just following the simple rules, like washing your hands, we’ll be okay,” said Bailey. “And if your child is sick, don’t bring them to school.”

However, before those long, winter months set in, P.S. 94 plans to take advantage of the warm, fall weather and continue holding events outside, like the “Welcome Back” bash.

It’s a plan that makes 10-year-old Heiddy Delosantos, who is in the 5th grade, excited for what’s ahead. When asked how it felt to be back at school, she told *Norwood News*, “I just love being here!”

Armored Car Heist Attempted in Norwood

(continued from page 1)

from the guard but was unable to, and fled on foot, northbound, on Perry Avenue.” Shelton did not say which business owned the cash. By Friday, Oct. 15, police had reported no arrests in the case.

Breaking News Network (BNN) reported on Oct. 14 that police were looking for a 6-foot-tall, Hispanic man, dressed in black in connection with the robbery. This description was not provided by the NYPD to *Norwood News* in the context of our inquiries. Meanwhile, in reference to the attempted robbery, users of the Citizens’ App also said the robbery suspect had worn a ski mask.

Shortly after the incident occurred on Oct. 14, a male source who frequents the area and who declined to be identified, contacted the *Norwood News*, saying, “They attempted to rob an armored car 10 minutes ago.” The source said the victim had been removed from the scene by ambulance, and police officers had surrounded the armored vehicle which was parked outside Jerry’s Hardware Store at the intersection of East 204th Street and Perry Avenue, opposite a McDonald’s restaurant.

On the same day, a second witness, a female resident of the area who also declined to be identified, described what she had seen to the *Norwood News*, “One of the guys was holding his eyes,” she said, referring to the armored vehicle team. “The cops are still out here,

and they have the street taped off.” The same witness confirmed the victim had been placed in an ambulance. Referring again to the armored vehicle guards, she said, “Those guys got guns, you know? It’s crazy.”



Photo by Brian Norwood

CRIME SCENE TAPE blocks off the intersection of East 204th Street and Perry Avenue in Norwood on Oct. 14, 2021, after an attempted robbery of an armored vehicle guard who, one source said, was accosted after coming out of McDonald’s.

Citizens App photo courtesy of MiSzAdrii

(INSERT) PEOPLE WALK by as police investigate an attempted robbery of an armored car guard making a pick-up at East 204th Street and Perry Avenue on Thursday, October 14, 2021.

A third source, a man who works in the area who, similarly, declined to be identified, said, on Oct. 14, “I heard they didn’t take any money. I heard they pepper-sprayed the guard, but the guard managed to not give up the money.” According to the source, the guard held on to the bag.

On the same day, in reference to the incident, another male resident of the neighborhood who also declined to be identified, initially told the *Norwood News* that police had been in pursuit of a black BMW, and that a friend of his had witnessed a car crash at East Mosholu Parkway South and Marion Avenue in

Bedford Park a short time after the robbery. The source alleged that two bags of money had been recovered at the site of the crash, and two suspects had been taken into custody.

The following day, the same male source followed up with the *Norwood News* and said the vehicle involved in the crash had been a silver BMW, not a black one. He said police had allegedly been in pursuit of the vehicle on Oct. 14 prior to the crash and that it had later been impounded by the 52nd precinct and was being held underneath Mosholu Parkway in an impoundment lot.

Norwood News went to the location in question and duly photographed a damaged silver BMW in the lot. We contacted the NYPD on Sunday, Oct. 17, provided the license plate number of the vehicle, and inquired about the crash in the context of the attempted armored car heist.

Sergeant Edward Riley responded and corroborated Shelton’s earlier report regarding the Norwood attempted heist, confirming there had been no arrests and that the investigation was ongoing.

In the context of the exchange, Riley confirmed that a crash did take

place in Bedford Park at 340 E Mosholu Parkway South at 3.18 p.m. on Oct. 14. He also confirmed that the vehicle involved in the crash matched the license plate number we provided to him.

Riley further confirmed that on the same day, Oct. 14, shortly before the Bedford Park crash occurred, a robbery had taken place in Fordham Heights, involving the same vehicle. “A BMW Sedan committed a gunpoint robbery, removing jewelry from a victim in front of 364 E 188th Street, where the vehicle proceeded to flee the location, and enter the 52nd precinct,” Riley said.

He continued, “The driver side-swiped a parked vehicle, unattended, where the suspects were apprehended.” Riley said 32-year-old Akeem Palmer and 36-year-old Kevin Hall were charged with robbery in the first, second and third degree, and with criminal possession of a weapon (a loaded firearm). No address for either man was provided.

When contacted a second time to ask if the Norwood attempted robbery and subsequent crash in Bedford Park were related, the NYPD did not immediately respond to the request. *Norwood News* will continue to follow any developments with the case.



Photo by David Greene

A BMW USED in a robbery that took place in Fordham Heights on Oct. 14, crashed after an alleged police pursuit ended on East Mosholu Parkway South and Marion Avenue in Bedford Park. It is now impounded as evidence and is parked in the 52nd precinct’s impoundment lot, as photographed on Saturday, October 16, 2021.

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INJURY ATTORNEYS



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Verdicts/Settlements

\$28,500,000.00 **\$16,687,615.91** **\$16,000,000.00** **\$15,000,000.00** **\$4,000,000.00** **\$3,700,000.00**

Placental Abruption

Brain-Damage Baby

Pedestrian Hit By Bus

Construction Accident

Construction Accident

Construction Accident

PAST RESULTS ARE NOT A GUARANTEE OF FUTURE RESULTS

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