Bronx Week 2022 kicked off informally on Monday, May 2, at the Northeast Bronx YMCA as its sponsors, supporters and organizers gathered to give the media a taste of what was to come, following a two-year hiatus from large-scale physical gatherings celebrating the annual festival.

Hosted by the Bronx Tourism Council, the Office of the Bronx Borough President, and the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, the 10-day festival was packed with several events relevant to every sector of the community, including senior activities, small business networking, family, health, finance, sport, and entertainment.

The festival also overlapped with National Small Business Week, and a five-borough, five-day tour was organized (continued on page 19).
Six Bronx Teens Busted for Alleged Times Square Auto Theft

By DAVID GREENE

Six Bronx teens are facing criminal charges, after an SUV which had been left running and unattended in Times Square showed up in The Bronx.

Police said the incident unfolded at 11:21 p.m. on Thursday, May 12, outside 6 Times Square at West 42nd Street and Broadway in Manhattan, when a 45-year-old male driver reported that his white 2022 Toyota Highlander SUV went missing after he left it running and unattended for just “a few minutes.”

The following day, Friday, May 13, at 4:50 p.m., officers from the 52nd Precinct in The Bronx observed six individuals driving in a similar, alleged stolen vehicle that police said had no license plates. Officers were able to block the vehicle in and apprehend the suspects, without incident, outside 2477 Valentine Avenue in the Fordham Heights section of The Bronx.

Police arrested Roldy Mendez, 18, of the Cross Bronx Expressway; Lindsay O’Neil, 18, of Wallace Avenue and Saquan Dominique, 19, of East 157th Street, along with three male minors, two 15-year-olds and one 16-year-old. All were charged with criminal possession of stolen property and unauthorized use of a motor vehicle.

According to police radio transmissions at the time of the incident, officers from the 52nd Precinct spotted the vehicle and began following it from Kingsbridge Heights into Fordham Manor and into the 46th precinct.

The vehicle proceeded westbound on West 185th Street and headed north on Valentine Avenue towards Fordham Road, where it was blocked in and stopped.

One of the pursuing officers was heard, saying, “Be advised...no lights, no sirens - let’s just try and block them in.” A moment later, an officer with the same voice is heard saying, “At Valentine and Fordham, you could just block traffic off right there. Whatever RMP [police vehicle] is right there on Valentine, block it off, block it off!”

In the background, another officer is heard yelling, “Get out! Get out!” as the dispatcher is then heard responding, “Is everything all right over there?”

The first officer is later heard returning to the vehicle and telling his dispatcher, “You can make it a ‘no further.” Everyone is in custody - just need more cars to transport please.”

Attempts to reach the three older, identified teens for comment via their addresses and through social media were unsuccessful.

A person arrested and charged with a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

POLICE RECOVER A 2022 Toyota Highlander which had been left unattended and running in Times Square in Manhattan on Thursday, May 12, 2022. Police later arrest six teens for the alleged car theft on Friday, May 13, 2022.
“It’s me, killer Chuck - the best MC, back in The Bronx - it’s the place to be! Tonight is the night – movin’ and groovin’! It’s also the night we say, ‘thank you Ruben!’”

U.S. Senator and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer’s rap intro was one of many remarkable sights and sounds that spectators were treated to at a recent show in Jerome Park’s Lehman Center for the Performing Arts.

On Saturday, April 30, almost all 2,276 seats at the Lehman Center were filled for “Hip-Hop Fever,” a hip-hop show dedicated to former Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. During the show, a video tribute put together by BronxNet and Sal Abbatiello, president of Fever Records, was played to recognize the former borough president’s contributions to the hip-hop community and his support of the arts at Lehman Center.

Ava Bornstein, executive director for the center, presented Diaz Jr. with a plaque, while Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, speaker of the New York State Assembly, Carl Heastie, serving as borough president, and as senator live venues, museums, theaters, and arts organizations bounce back from economic losses suffered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the April 30 event, the speakers also touted the former borough president’s support for the arts through his work in breaking ground on the Universal Hip-Hop Museum in the South Bronx.

By JULIAN NAZAR

"It’s me, killer Chuck - the best MC, back in The Bronx - it’s the place to be! Tonight is the night – movin’ and groovin’! It’s also the night we say, ‘thank you Ruben!’”

U.S. SENATOR AND Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer raps alongside former Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. on Saturday, April 30, 2022, at the Lehman Center for Performing Arts in Jerome Park.

Hip-Hop Fever Sweeps Through Lehman Center

As also reported by Norwood News, the transformation of the South Bronx continued Thursday, May 20, with the groundbreaking ceremony for the new museum which will memorialize the history of hip-hop in the borough, part of a $349 million development known as Bronx Point.

The 22-story building is projected to accommodate 1,045 apartment units, 542 of which will be dedicated to affordable housing, while the museum itself will occupy the ground floor. Rising along the Harlem River at 50 E. 150th St., the development will include 2.8 acres of public space with access to a playground, BBQ area, and an esplanade along the shoreline. Housing units will be reserved for low to middle-income households.

In a phone interview with Norwood News, Abbatiello spoke about Diaz Jr.’s role in the project. “What he did for Hip-Hop is he was a big advocator for getting that done on the westside highway,” the record executive said. “He helped all of us advance the [hip-hop] culture in so many ways. I love this brother so much.”

Later, Black Sheep electrified the crowd with their 1991 hit, “The Choice Is Yours” and Andres “Dres” Vargas-Titus, lead vocalist, then shared a beautiful moment with Abbatiello, saying, “He helped all of us advance the [hip-hop] culture in so many ways. I love this brother so much.”

For her part, with her storytelling and music selection, rapper, Roxanne Shante, transported the audience to Disco Fever, the dance club Abbatiello opened in 1976 on Jerome Avenue and 157th street in the South Bronx and closed a decade later. The audience almost swooned when Shante had hip-hop DJ, Grand Wizard Theodore, play “Fool’s Paradise” by Meli’sa Morgan, released in 1980.

When Sugar Hill Gang were invited onstage, many in the audience rose in anticipation. They were the first commercially successful rap group in the entire world, and their 1979 hit, “Rapper’s Delight” was the first hip-hop track to make it into the Billboard Hot 100.

Another landmark hip-hop track released in 1982 was “The Message” by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. Like Sugar Hill Gang’s hit, it introduced the Hip-Hop genre to a larger audience. In an interview in Classic Hip Hop Magazine, Melle Mel, lead vocalist and songwriter with the Furious Five, said it was the first hip-hop track that was socially conscious.

Melle Mel and Scorpio later performed the groundbreaking hit, while, in unison, everyone in the room belted out the line, “Don’t push me ‘cause I’m close to the edge. I’m trying not to lose my head.” The crowd erupted the crowd as the two were later joined onstage by the Sugar Hill Gang to perform “Rapper’s Delight.”

At one point during the show, Nice & Smooth’s Greg Nice jumped off the stage and danced briefly with a woman who was already dancing in the aisle. Later, rapper, Rob Base, asked the audience if they were ready to go back to 1988, before performing, “It Takes Two,” the Top 40 hit that Stephen Thomas Erlewine, an American music critic at AllMusic, called “the greatest hip-hop single ever cut.” The entire crowd roared their approval when Duke concluded the number.

Throughout the show, people, mostly over the age of 50, poured their hearts out while singing along. Those of us in attendance who didn’t grow up listening to these beats were swept up by the wave of nostalgia permeating the room. Indeed, it was hard not to envy the baby boomers who got to spend one night back at Disco Fever.

*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*
This week, we asked readers their thoughts on the possibility of Roe v. Wade being struck down and whether, in their view, such a Supreme Court decision could lead to the banning of contraception.

“I do believe everyone has a right to their own bodies, especially women. I also believe people have rights to do whatever they want with their bodies, but sometimes too many rights are given to people and it’s misused. Let’s just say, for example, if a woman is pregnant at a certain stage, that pregnancy should not be terminated, you understand? If the abortion is in the first four weeks or six weeks, if the woman wants to abort that pregnancy, it’s okay, but after three or four months, five months, no. To me, I don’t think that is genuine. That is like shooting somebody. From what I’d heard, I think they are trying to pass some measures that are also trying to prevent women from moving from one state to another, so they can’t get an abortion. I think a woman has rights to her body, but those rights need to be limited.”

Osman Kamara, Fordham

“I feel that if abortion rights were outlawed, we, as citizens, will begin to lose faith in the judiciary system. This has been the law since I can remember, so now, if a woman gets raped, or even if a woman uses protection because she’s not ready to have a child, and the condom breaks during sex, she will be forced into motherhood. This would be unfair to all women. I do think the Republicans will try and outlaw contraceptives like the day after bill [on abortion], in their eyes, this is a form of abortion. I do see them outlawing abortions across the board. I don’t think that is genuine. That is like shooting somebody. From what I’d heard, I think they are trying to pass some measures that are also trying to prevent women from moving from one state to another, so they can’t get an abortion. I think a woman has rights to her body, but those rights need to be limited.”

Romar Ware, Mott Haven

“I am outraged at the Supreme Court and Republicans that want to expunge Roe v. Wade. Women earned their liberty on January 22, 1973, after a social movement, which is happening once again, I, like all women, have a right to choose what we can do with our own bodies. Now what? Are the Republicans going to ban contraceptives and the Plan B? This is beyond ridiculous, and this attempt to ban abortions will be defeated. There needs to be impeachments of the justices and senators who supported overturning this law that has been in place for decades. Do they care that women will resort to going back to the underground and using a hanger and going to an unlicensed butcher that often ended tragically?”

Maggie Mary, Kingsbridge Heights

“If the Supreme Court strikes down Roe vs. Wade, I believe that it will signal to the right that they have allies in the pursuit to dismantle gains made in several areas. Issues like voting rights, reproductive rights, and other civil rights, like gay marriage, will be open for debate and attack. In many states, these attacks are already underway, and if Roe falls, it will energize these efforts. We are at a critical moment in our country where we are moving away from the Constitution’s principle of promoting the general welfare, to limiting rights of individuals and limiting access to services. We will be at the top of a very slippery slope.”

Patrick Jenkins, Jamaica, Queens

“Going backwards is inhumane. I have known women who had to resort to illegal abortions and had traumatic experiences. Others didn’t survive. They had children at home needing mommas to come home and feed them. This craziness is not pro-life.”

Mindy Matijasevic, The Bronx
I was surprised to hear that Black men are more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes. You can have serious health problems such as blindness or having a heart attack. So, I took the test at doihaveprediabetes.org. If you’re at risk, there’s something you can do about it.

Join an online Diabetes Prevention Program at health.ny.gov/prediabetes
Two Missing Teenagers

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating a 14-year-old girl who has been reported missing in Fordham Manor. It was reported to police that Alexa Olivera, of 2444 Devoe Terrace, Apt. 4, in the Fordham Manor section of The Bronx, was last seen at 100 Moshulu Parkway in Jerome Park on Thursday, May 12, at approximately 8:10 a.m.

Alexa, shown above, is described as female, White, is 4 feet, 9 inches tall, weighs 90 pounds, has a thin build, a light complexion and black hair. She was last seen wearing a gray sweater, black pants, and blue Michael Jordan sneakers.

The NYPD is also seeking the public's help locating a 15-year-old girl reported missing in Kingsbridge Heights, in the 50th Precinct. Sashely Arpi, 15, of 3055 Baily Avenue in The Bronx, was last seen on Tuesday, May 10, at around 7:25 a.m., leaving her home.

Sashely, shown above, is described as female, White, is 4 feet, 2 inches tall, weighs 90 pounds, has a thin build, a light complexion and black hair. She was last seen wearing black pants, black sneakers and a black sweater.

Anyone with information regarding either missing girl 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 CrimeStoppers website at https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/ or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.

One Person Transported to Montefiore Hospital After Collision

Police said one person was transported to a local area hospital following a two-vehicle motor vehicle accident in Van Cortlandt Park on Monday. An NYPD spokesperson told Norwood News, “On Monday, May 9, 2022, at approximately 2044 hours [8:44 p.m.], police responded to a 911 motor vehicle collision in the vicinity [of the] Major Degan Expressway and Van Cortlandt Park, within the confines of the 50th Precinct.”

The official continued, “Preliminary investigation reveals a 2022 Nissan (Vehicle #1) operated by a 34-year-old male was traveling southbound on Major Deegan Service Road merging onto the Major Degan when he collided with a 2015 Audi (Vehicle #2) operated by a 44-year-old male, who [was] traveling in the same direction as Vehicle #1.” Police said the second vehicle had been slowing to yield for a sign [before the collision occurred]. EMS transported the driver of the first vehicle to Montefiore Hospital in stable condition.
Bronx Fashion Week Returns with a Flourish!

By MIRIAM QUIÑONES & SILÉ MOLONEY

Bronx Fashion Week returned to Co-Op City on Saturday, May 7. The fashion show ran from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at The Mall at Bay Plaza, located at 200 Baychester Avenue, and featured designers and retailers ranging from Callejas Atelier and Larry Franco to Boulevard Menswear, Daysi Fernandez, Macy’s, Forever 21, and Ashley Stewart.

The aim of the annual event, according to its founders, is to provide real-time business opportunities to local, emerging, and established designers, and those from abroad, to showcase their skills and abilities in an industry that, they say, is often non-accessible. The show has become preferred for diverse and inclusive audiences.

About 300 people were in attendance this year for what was billed as a fashion celebration of unity, regardless of age, size, or ethnicity. Flora Montes, entrepreneur and founder of Bronx Fashion Week, explained the history of the now annual event saying, “I fell in love with fashion in 2013 after visiting Latin Fashion Week on a Saturday, and I started planning on a Sunday [for the first Bronx Fashion Week].”

She continued, “After losing everything, I took my last $200 unemployment check and started the legalities of bringing Bronx Fashion Week successfully to life.” She added, “COVID has put life in perspective for the world, and I am grateful. It was a moment filled with appreciation and love, and it feels incredible to be back!”

Meanwhile, as reported, State Sen. Alessandra Biaggi (D.S.D. 34) is a co-sponsor of The Fashion Sustainability and Social Accountability Act. The new bill, currently at the committee stage of the State legislative process, aims to hold fashion brands accountable for environmental and social impacts of their manufacturing.

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Van Nest Assembly of God is a body of Believers empowered by the Holy Spirit, called to worship God in Spirit and Truth, to walk in the light of the Word of God in all aspects of life, and to be witnesses of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, through word and deed, for the ends of the earth.

The Holy Spirit has clearly shown us that we are called to be a church led not by a program or a personality, but by the presence of the Lord. This is really why God’s hand of blessing and increase has been upon us all these years. As we look to the future, we know that His presence will lead us in a continuous increase of souls and expansion of facilities; for our true desire is to glorify Jesus Christ.
Kingsbridge: 21-Year-Old Woman Charged with DWI, Three Injured in Collision

By SÍLE MOLONEY

A woman was hit with a DWI charge following a motor vehicle collision in Kingsbridge. The FDNY said on Friday, May 6, at 10.52 p.m., emergency units responded to West 230th Street and The Major Deegan Expressway following reports of a motor vehicle accident.

Three patients were transported to Harlem Hospital and Jacobi Medical Center. Their genders/ages/conditions were unavailable. We asked for confirmation of how many vehicles were involved in the collision and police later confirmed there were two.

A traffic alert issued by New York State on Friday, May 6, at around 11.33 p.m. referred to an overturned vehicle on the southbound lane of the Major Deegan Expressway at Van Cortlandt Park, blocking the center and right lanes for a duration. We asked the traffic alert service if the alert related to this accident or a different one. We did not receive an immediate response.

Meanwhile, the NYPD confirmed that a 21-year-old woman, Lizmary Rodriguez, of 50 White Street, Tarrytown NY, was charged with driving while intoxicated in relation to the reported collision. A person arrested and charged with a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

On Saturday, May 7, at approximately 8.14 p.m., police confirmed they responded to a 911 call regarding a pedestrian who had been struck in the vicinity of East Tremont Avenue and Roosevelt Avenue in Throggs Neck.

Police said, “Upon arrival, officers observed a 76-year-old man with minor external injuries. EMS responded and transported the aided man to NYC Health and Hospitals/Jacobi, where he was pronounced deceased due to internal injuries.”

They added, “A preliminary investigation determined that he had been operating a battery-powered wheelchair and had been attempting to cross East Tremont Avenue from the east side to the west side when he was struck by a 2005 gray Toyota Sienna driven by a 25-year-old woman.”

They said the driver remained at the scene. “The investigation remains ongoing by the NYPD highway district collision investigation squad,” officials said. The deceased was later identified as John DeliaCava, 72, of Davis Avenue in Throggs Neck.

In a separate motor vehicle accident also on Saturday, May 7, on the Bronx River Parkway, a man was taken to hospital.

The incident took place at 6.49 a.m. Police said, “A Nissan traveling north on the exit ramp of the Bronx River Parkway at East Gun Hill Road [located in the 47th precinct] in the vicinity of Norwood / Olinville, rear-ended a 2003 Ford which had been stopped in traffic.” The driver of the 2003 Ford was removed to an area hospital with minor injuries.

Anyone with information regarding any of 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 CrimeStoppers website at WWW.NYPDCRIMESTOPPERS.COM or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.
Spring Festivities Event held at Devoe Park

By DAVID GREENE

With the lifting of COVID restrictions and the return of milder temperatures, Friends of Devoe Park hosted a “Spring Sprouting Festivities” Easter celebration at Devoe Park on Saturday, April 30.

Inside the park, located at University Avenue and Father Zeiser Place in the Fordham Manor section of The Bronx, youngsters enjoyed a host of events including face painting, an egg hunt of with eggs filled with bubble-gum, as well as several rounds of musical chairs. Winners of the many rounds of musical chairs were awarded a “magic wand,” that opened to become a bubble-maker.

Watching, as the dozens of children engaged in the many activities, Iris Rodriguez-Rosa, first deputy commissioner of the City parks department and former Bronx parks commissioner, told Norwood News, “This is one of my favorite parks in The Bronx because I was able to see Friends of Devoe Park evolve, and come together, and become friends as a group to take care of the park.”

Rodriguez-Rosa continued, “We have an amazing new dog run, because during the last two years of COVID a lot of people got animals and things like that, because they wanted company. So now, they have an actual place to take the dogs too that is beautiful.”

According to Rachel Miller-Bradshaw of Friends of Devoe Park, the group, incorporated in 2017, held their first Easter event in 2018. She explained how the group was founded after the City Parks Foundation / Catalyst deemed the green space as a “high needs” park. She said the group, which includes Fordham Hill Owners Corporation board president, Myrna Calderon, sprang into action, hosting park clean-up events and fundraisers. They also enlisted the help of local officials and police regarding public safety in and around the park.

Bradshaw said they continued with their efforts throughout the pandemic. “We were out in the park cleaning up and rallying other community activists and local legislators to help us maintain the park,” she said, adding that they had to take the cleanliness of the park into their own hands.

Regarding the Easter celebration at the park, Bradshaw said, “Our goal was we definitely wanted to commemorate Easter. We wanted to welcome community residents back into the park because of course now, community residents are starting to take advantage of the park again, and we wanted to do something special for the community.”

Regarding the dog run, Bradshaw explained, “We had opposed the dog-run because there was no clear outline as far as how it was going to be maintained.” She added, “To be quite honest... from what I see, it’s been a great addition to the park being that dog owners do use it.” However, Miller-Bradshaw said more Parks officers were needed since two recent incidents of dog fighting were reported inside the dog run.
The NYPD has announced a $10,000 reward to catch the gun man responsible for the fatal shooting of 11-year-old, Kyhara Tay, in the South Bronx. Police had sought the public's help identifying the individuals seen in the accompanying screenshot who are sought in connection with the shooting which took place on Monday, May 16, in the 41st precinct. Police said on Monday at 4.50 p.m., an unknown male was running along Fox Street towards 165th Street in the Foxhurst section of the South Bronx, while being chased by two people on a scooter.

When the person approached the front of 1015 Fox Street, he attempted to enter the location causing the scooter to drive past him on the sidewalk. The scooter passenger then began to shoot at the male. One round traveled down Fox Street and struck 11-year-old Kyhara in the abdomen. She had been standing in front of 995 Fox Street at the time of the incident. She was transported to Lincoln Hospital in critical condition and was later pronounced deceased.

Kingsbridge Heights: NYCHA Supervisor Gets 12 Years for Shooting Super

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark announced on May 12 that a former New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) employee was sentenced to 12 years for shooting a building superintendent multiple times after being written up for a job infraction.

According to the prosecution, on Jan. 6, 2020, inside Fort Independence Houses, a residential housing complex located at 3340 Bailey Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights, the defendant, Frankie Corchado, 48, who worked as a supervisor of caretakers, met with Charles Newton, the superintendent, along with a manager. Corchado was written up for an infraction. He left the building and later returned with a gun, kicked open the office door of the victim, Newton, and shot him once in the leg and once in the chest.

After the victim fell to the ground, Corchado shot him again in the abdomen and fired another shot, hitting the victim’s foot. He attempted to shoot Newton at least two additional times during the attack, but the gun didn’t fire after the trigger was pulled. Newton was shot a total of four times.

He was treated at Saint Barnabas Hospital, undergoing several surgeries to remove bullet fragments from his abdomen. He also suffered from a collapsed lung and had a rod inserted into his leg. A bullet remains lodged in one of his feet. Clark said Corchado pleaded guilty to first-degree assault on April 20.

Bedford Park: Two Teens Shot & Hospitalized

The NYPD is seeking the public’s help identifying the two suspects seen in the accompanying photo taken from the incident location regarding a non-fatal, multiple shooting that occurred in Bedford Park, where two teens were shot. On Thursday, May 12, at approximately 9.30 p.m., the two teens were walking in front of 382 East 197th Street, when they observed a group of individuals in front of 2720 Decatur Avenue.

The group fired at them multiple times, striking the first teen victim, a 14-year-old male, in the left arm and the second teen victim, a 15-year-old male, in the left leg, before fleeing eastbound on East 197th Street towards Webster Avenue. EMS responded to the location and transported the 14-year-old to Jacobi Medical Center and the 15-year-old to Saint Barnabas Hospital, both in stable condition. There are no arrests.

The first suspect is described as male, has a thin build and was last seen wearing a black, hooded sweatshirt, black pants, and black sneakers. The second suspect is also described as male, has a thin build, and was last seen wearing a light-colored, long shirt, light-colored pants, a black vest, and white sneakers.

University Heights: Three Sought in Shooting of 28-Year-Old Man

The NYPD is seeking the public’s assistance identifying the individuals seen in the accompanying photographs who are sought in connection to a shooting that occurred in the University Heights section of The Bronx. On Monday, May 9, at approximately 3.15 a.m., in front of 140 West Fordham Road, the three individuals displayed a gun and fired it multiple times, striking a 28-year-old man twice in the leg. The victim was transported by private means to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition.

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, 1-888-577-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/ or on Twitter @NYPDTipps. All calls are strictly confidential.
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**Mural Unveiled in Honor of Twin Parks Fire Victims**

By JULIAN NAZAR

In the wake of the tragic Twin Parks fire in Fordham Heights on Sunday, Jan. 9, a tragedy that claimed the lives of 17 people, including 8 children, Felicia Galitsky remembered that years earlier she had passed a permanent roadside memorial erected in memory of other victims of a prior Bronx tragedy. The memory and image stuck with her and inspired her to arrange a similar, permanent tribute to the victims of the Twin Parks residential fire.

The chief of staff for Laundry Capital Co. LLC, parent company of Clean Rite Centers, told *Norwood News*, “What if, instead of a temporary roadside memorial or some consumable item like a laundry card that gets used, we could give some permanent way for people to remember their loved ones?”

In the days and weeks which followed the tragic fire at the Twin Parks North West towers, located at 333 East 181st Street, flowers, cards, photos, hand-written messages, and flags from Gambia, Mali and the U.S. had been pinned to a railing outside the site of the towers in tribute to those who lost their lives on that fateful day. During the weeks and months that followed, and as the flowers began to fade and die, it seemed to add even more poignancy to the tragedy.

As reported, an outpouring of goodwill from both the local community and from across the City and country followed, with Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, District 15 City Council Member Oswald Feliz, District 14 City Council Member Pierina Sanchez, The Gambian Youth Organization, the Office of Assemblywoman, Yudelka Tapia, (A.D. 86) and many other organizations and individuals busy collecting donations to help the surviving victims of the fire.

Laundry Capital had already donated 150 laundry cards worth $50 each to Tapia’s office which survivors were able to use at any Clean Rite center location in New York City while they were to be rehoused. Many didn’t want to return to the towers, so raw were their memories of the tragedy.

Galitsky decided to run the idea of a mural tribute by Neville Baptiste, regional manager for The Bronx Clean Rite Center: He immediately suggested they reach out to Tats Cru, a group of Bronx-based, professional muralists to work on the idea. Galitsky duly contacted Tats Cru in early February to commission a permanent mural in memory of the Twin Parks victims on one of the walls of the Clean Rite Center, located at 1348 Southern Boulevard in the Charlotte Gardens section of the borough.

On Saturday, April 16, the muralists unveiled the memorial to the public. Galitsky said it had taken two-months to complete because, among other things, the muralists had to request permission from the families of the victims to have their names appear on the mural, and also pick a day when the Bronx borough president would be available for the occasion of the unveiling. Some residents of Twin Parks North West, the Bronx borough president, Clean Rite center management, and Tats Cru were duly in attendance on the day.

Although it took a couple of months to organize, muralist, Wilfredo “Bio” Feliciano, said it didn’t take Tats Cru very long to design the mural. He shared with *Norwood News* the thought process behind their latest work, as well as the challenges it presented.

“The initial idea was to do portraits of the victims,” Feliciano said. “We felt that was too heavy. I didn’t think people in the community would feel comfortable with so many people on the wall.” In the end, Tats Cru ended up listing the names on an image of the sky in one section of the mural. The following names appear on the mural: Sera Janneh, Seydou Toure, Haji Jawara, Issa Toureh, Fatoumata Drammeh, Fatoumata Dukureh, Mustapha Dukureh, Mariam Dukureh, Haji Dukureh, Fatoumata Dukureh, Mustapha Dukureh, Haji Jawara, Haja Dukureh, Fatoumata Drammeh, Nyumamahou Dukureh, and Ousmane Konteh.

The other reason the muralists decided to write the names of the victims as opposed to painting their portraits was because they said it would have been too difficult to fit all the victims into one mural. Another factor which the group grappled with was how to best go about honoring the victims. “How do you do something like this?” Feliciano asked. Ultimately, they thought the best way would be to write a simple message, “The Bronx Remembers.” Feliciano said they also included the flags of Gambia and Mali because most of the victims were from those two countries. He described the mural as being very bright and peaceful.

Jaylo Ynn, a professional artist in New York City, is very familiar with Tats Cru’s work. The artist considers Tats Cru’s latest mural to be further evidence of their excellence in the mural space. “I don’t expect nothing less,” Ynn said. “Tats Cru is number one in New York. Coming from me, that’s a huge compliment. They have been doing their thing for many years.”

Ynn also sees the impact the mural can have on the larger Bronx community. “It’s important because every day somebody is losing their life,” he said. “Instead of having all these vandal out here putting stuff on the wall, why not dedicate something to the masses that lived out here? The Bronx will never forget these people who paved the way, and had a purpose in the community.”

One member of the community who directly felt the impact of the latest mural was Adjaratou Demba, a resident at Twin Parks North West. She’s been living at the building for seven years and lost eight people on her floor on Jan. 9. “When I see it, I feel like I see the same day of the fire,” Demba said. “I can tell you that I see all of them in front of my face now. I know all of them. We spent all the time together.”

She recalled that she was neighbors with one of the families who died in the fire. “I used to see them every day, the kids running on the floor,” she said. “I keep thinking about all of that.” As someone who experienced the Twin Parks fire firsthand, she said Tats Cru’s mural brought up a lot of emotions. “The mural touched us,” Demba said. “We feel it deeply. I lost two boys from Mali, my friends’ sons.”

Now that Tats Cru’s mural is displayed for all to see, Galitsky is optimistic that this will be a turning point for news coverage on *The Bronx*. “The feel-good stories aren’t really as newsworthy,” Galitsky said. “Hopefully this is something that is and shows that in tough times the community really does come together and supports one another, and hopefully this can be something that can be the stepping-stone for more positive news about *The Bronx*. ”

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**Photo by Julian Nazar**

**TATS CRU AND** Clean Rite Center management pose in front of Tats Cru’s Twin Parks Fire mural tribute on Saturday, April 16, 2022.

**Photo by Julian Nazar**

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT** Vanessa Gibson poses alongside Tats Cru, Clean Rite Center management and Alfredo Estrada, executive chef for The Hip Hop Food Truck, on Saturday, April 16, 2022. Estrada provided food for everyone in attendance on the day.
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Issues of Concern for MTA Subway Riders

There are more important issues for subway riders than dealing with legal or illegal immigrant vendors selling churros and other products in the subways. This was the case during the recent arrest on April 29 of a vendor at the East New York Brooklyn Broadway Junction A, C, L & J station. The same is true for transit police. Fare beaters continue to rob the MTA of several hundred million in revenue yearly. Commuters have to deal with conductors who close the doors while crossing the platform attempting to transfer from a local to the express train.

Try looking for the proper way to dispose of your old newspaper as more trash cans are removed from more stations. Riders have to deal with the fear of being mugged, pushed down a flight of stairs or onto the tracks, aggressive panhandlers, eating as if one is at home or at a restaurant, those hogging two seats, yawning, coughing or sneezing without covering up, the release of flatulence and acrobatic performers swinging from subway car poles, or homeless people riding back and forth with their meager possessions, taking up several seats. Women are periodically accosted by gropers, while perverts engage in other unhealthy sexual activities.

Many have grown tired dealing with rats, mice, and litter. NYC Transit should consider installing separate cans for recycling newspapers, plastic, and glass along with regular garbage. Selling advertising on the side of cans could generate revenue to help cover the costs of more frequent off-peak and late-night collection and disposal.

Larry Penner
Great Neck

Treason Charges for Supreme Court Leaker

My dear friend, Chet Walker, saw my distress recently over the leakage of the upcoming U.S. Supreme Court decision concerning Roe vs. Wade. However, he asked me the following question. Is the glass half full or half empty? When I appeared confused, he stated that the leaker will soon be caught via the death penalty being used as an interrogation tool and/or device during the investigation of the leak, and that person will no longer be among us, as treason carries the weight of the death penalty.

Upon contemplating that scenario, I realized that would be an acceptable outcome in this case, as the U.S. Supreme Court must always act in a vacuum. Can you imagine a major stock or bond case before the court and someone leaked the outcome, and what that would do to our financial markets?

Richard Marias,
Norwood
COVID-19 Updates & Key Info

On May 17, the FDA expanded eligibility for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster dose to children 5 through 11 years. All New Yorkers 5 and older should get fully vaccinated. All eligible New Yorkers 12 and older should get their booster dose. If you are experiencing symptoms or were exposed, get tested. If you test positive, stay home.

Managing the Pandemic

Additional at-home testing kits are being distributed to all New Yorkers to allow people to stay at home if sick, and a telemedicine service has been implemented to ascertain whether New Yorkers who contract the variant need access to lifesaving COVID-19 medication. New Yorkers who test positive for COVID-19 can now receive these treatments that help prevent severe disease and hospitalization. DOHMH officials said if they do need such treatment, it will be delivered same day to their homes, curtailing the spread of the virus and keeping the City open.

COVID-19 Omicron BA.2 (Stealth) Variant

The Omicron BA.2 (stealth) variant continues to be the dominant coronavirus strain in the U.S. since March, according to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). The Omicron variant is comprised of several lineages and sub-lineages, the three most common being BA.1, BA.1.1 and BA.2. As of May 17, citywide COVID-19 cases were increasing while hospitalizations and deaths were stable, according to NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). The department is using an alert level system that tracks COVID-19 transmission and health care capacity in the city.

Current Risk Rating

The risk rating was high as of May 17. The citywide 7-day percentage positive rate was 8.09 percent as of May 17. As of the same date, the 7-day percentage positive rate in ZIP code 10468, covering Fordham / Kingsbridge / University Heights, was 5.54 percent (up from 3.51 percent in early May), according to DOHMH. In ZIP code 10467, covering Allerton / Norwood / Pelham Parkway / Williamsbridge, it was 8.07 percent (up from 8.04 percent as of early May). In ZIP code 10465, covering Belmont / Fordham University / Kingsbridge, it was 6.93 percent (up from 6.83 percent in early May). Meanwhile, in ZIP code 10471, covering Riverdale, North Riverdale and Fieldston, it was the highest in the borough at 15.06 percent (up from 10.83 percent as of early May).

Street Closing for Construction

NYC Department of Transportation informs residents of the following street closure for construction:

Work will be carried out at 270 East 232nd Street between Briggs Avenue and Valentine Avenue from May 17, 2022, to May 24, 2022.

NYC Water Board Public Notice

New York City Water Board (the board) will hold public hearings concerning certain amendments to the board’s rate schedule that first took effect on July 1, 2021, and that would first become effective on July 1, 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and as authorized by New York State law, the hearings will be held via teleconference. A hearing will be held on Wednesday, May 25, at 2 p.m. Call (347) 921 5612, access code 835 020 477#. Another hearing will be held on Thursday, May 26, at 6 p.m. Call (347) 921 5612, access code 941 587 106#.

Primary Elections 2022

As reported, the Supreme Court has ordered Congressional and State Senate elections to be held Tuesday, August 23rd, 2022. The Court is working to develop a new Political Calendar to reflect this primary date. As of May 18, the New York State Board of Elections does not foresee the June 28th primary changing for congressional and State legislative districts and see how any proposed district plan will impact them.

The map features a slider tool to transition seamlessly between the new maps and current ones. Move the slider left to show current lines, move it to the right to show proposed districts.

Waste Management Plan

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) now requires owners and developers of new residential buildings to submit a Waste Management Plan. This requirement is found in a new rule effective April 1, 2022. Visit nyc.gov/wastemanagementplan to learn more and submit your plan.

Who is covered?

New residential buildings over 150 residential units - new construction, substantial alterations, or conversions of existing commercial buildings. This requirement applies to any building that has not yet submitted plans with design drawings to Department of Buildings (DOB) or which has not yet had its design drawings approved by DOB.

What do you need to do?

Submit a Waste Management Plan to DSNY when submitting design drawings to the DOB that includes the following: name and contact information; number of dwelling units; estimated amount of trash, recyclables and compostable material that will be created when operating at full capacity; storage plan to ensure sanitary conditions for 150% of expected waste between scheduled collections; plan to keep recycling and composting separate from trash; strategies that will be employed to reduce the volume of waste for any trash or recyclables that will be set out for curbside collection; how and where the material will be set out for DSNY collection; education plan for tenants, including signage placement; compliance with applicable DOB and NYC building codes.

When do you need to act?

For projects with plans containing design drawings currently pending DOB approval, submit your plan within 60 days of nyc.gov/wastemanagementplan. Other projects should submit their Waste Management Plan at the same time they submit plans that include design drawings to DOB.

Why is this required?

Curbside placement of bags of refuse and recyclables from large buildings can not only obstruct pedestrian flow but also negatively impact quality of life of the surrounding area and create rodent infestations. The Waste Management Plans require buildings to employ best management practices and follow legal guidelines for waste recycling, storage, and disbursement.

How is DSNY helping the buildings comply?

DSNY is offering consultations with every building owner and has created a waste calculator to determine how much waste will be generated and how much space it will take up at the curb. DSNY also offers a free Zero Waste Training for building managers to promote the best waste management practices. Additionally, DSNY is reaching out to trade publications, Building Congress, REBNY and others to inform them of the new requirement.
Fordham Heights Fire: One Dead, 8 Injured including 2 FFs

By DAVID GREENE & SÍLE MOLONEY

One person died and 8 more were injured in a residential fire in Fordham Heights which broke out not far from the site of the Twin Parks residence where 17 people, including 8 children, died in a fateful fire in January.

The FDNY reported that they received a call at 9:05 a.m. on Tuesday, May 10, for reports of a 4-alarm fire and responded with 39 fire units comprising 168 fire and EMS personnel at 2194 Valentine Avenue at East 181st Street.

Officials said the fire broke out in a 2-story building (100×50 square feet) reportedly filled with intense smoke. The fire was reported throughout the building and later spread to neighboring buildings.

FDNY officials said one person died and 8 were reported injured, including two firefighters who incurred minor injuries and six civilians who also incurred minor injuries.

FDNY acting chief of operations, Richard Blatus, later provided an update on the fire, saying, “This morning, at approximately 9:05, FDNY Bronx Fire Dispatchers received a call for a fire at 2194 Valentine Avenue. Units arrived within four minutes and found a heavy volume of fire in the rear of the occupancy.”

Blatus continued, “A wind condition contributed to the spread of fire to adjoining structures. The fire quickly escalated to a fourth alarm bringing approximately 75 FDNY units to the scene. The fire is now under control.”

The fire chief concluded, “We have six civilian injuries which includes one person who was found deceased, and three minor injuries to Firefighters. The fire is currently under investigation by our FDNY Fire Marshals.”

The Twin Parks North West fire broke out at 333 East 181st Street in Fordham Heights on Jan. 9. As recently reported, obtaining the causes of certain historical fires from the FDNY has proven difficult.

Additionally, we will be taking all steps necessary to ensure fire safety challenges do not continue to plague our borough.”

City Comptroller Brad Lander also issued the following statement in relation to the fire, “Our hearts are with the Bronx and families impacted by the devastating fire this morning on Valentine Ave. Grateful for the brave FDNY firefighters extinguishing the blaze as investigations continue.”

Feliz later visited the burned out remains of the home on May 11, saying, “Spoke with families affected by yesterday’s tragic fire on Valentine Ave. Losing your home and loved ones can cause life-lasting trauma. We must do everything possible to prevent these horrific tragedies.”

As reported, on March 24, Feliz introduced new legislation which aims to enhance fire safety in the aftermath of the Twin Parks fire tragedy. Other legislation introduced by the mayor, Congress and the State have similar aims.
Two More Fires Reported in The Bronx on May 10 – One FF Injured

(continued from page 6)

a fire at 2705 Morris Avenue in Fordham Manor on “the 2nd story of a 6-story, non-fireproof, multiple dwelling.” Fire department officials said, “All hands used – dispatching 12 units with 60 FFs.”

Fire officials reported that one firefighter endured minor injuries at the scene and was transported to an area hospital. They said the fire was brought under control at 2:53 a.m. and its cause is under investigation, as is the cause of the Fordham Heights fire which occurred the same day.

Yet another fire was reported on the same day in Hunts Point. The FDNY confirmed units responded to 200 Manida Street at 1:59 p.m. regarding a storage structure on a construction storage lot. “It reached a 2nd alarm, bringing 25 units and 110 fire personnel to the scene,” a fire official said. “No injuries, under control at 13:43 hrs.”

Images posted to the Citizens’ App by users show thick, black smoke and flames emerging from what appeared to be a construction yard.

Norwood News will continue to follow-up on the cause of these fires.

FIRE UNITS RESPOND to a fire on 200 Manida Street in Hunts Point on Tuesday, May 10, 2022.

Out & About
COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY

EVENTS
To celebrate the 125th anniversary of DeWitt Clinton High School, two events will be held, and 100 percent of the profits from both events will go to the DeWitt Clinton Alumni Association Scholarship Fund which benefits the school’s students as they pursue their educational careers. An Alumni Association Dinner will take place at Marina Del Rey in the Throggs Neck section of The Bronx on May 26. To register, go to: https:// www.dewittclintonalumni.com/. A golf outing at Pelham Bay Golf Course will be held on August 2. To register, go to: https://bit. ly/3ex717tw.

The Bronx Chamber of Commerce will host its annual golf outing on June 21, 2022, at Trump Golf Links at Ferry Point. Michael Gilfeather, president and CEO of Orange Bank & Trust Company, will be honored. Join for a great day of golf, networking and friendship, following by a cocktail party & dinner. For more information, contact events@ bronxchamber.org.

Norwood Farmstand Compost sessions are held in conjunction with Grow NYC on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at East Gun Hill Rd and Dekalb Avenue.

MUSIC
The journey of Women’s Suffrage “pilgrims” is brought to life during a free concert at Woodlawn Cemetery, Conservancy and Crematory, on Sunday, May 22, at 3 p.m., in a new chamber piece entitled, Suffrage Signatures with the Canta Libre Chamber Ensemble. Composer, Joelle Wallach, will include live dialogue and images based on the personal letters and photographs of these fascinating women during the performance.

Join members of the Canta Libre Chamber Ensemble (flute, harp and strings) for the premier performance of this exciting multimedia work. Many of these groundbreaking suffragists are buried at Woodlawn Cemetery, located at 3800 Jerome Ave, Bronx, NY 10467. Their memory is alive and well, thanks to ongoing research and outreach to living relatives by the Woodlawn Conservancy.

DANCE
Join Dance Nights with Shagari at Williambridge Oval Recreation Center, located at 3205 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY, on Friday, June 17, at 8 p.m. for the Oldies.

FILM
The official Bronx premiere of the film, “1.5 Million,” a film by Gregory Hernandez, will take place on Saturday, May 21, 2022, at AMC Bay Plaza Cinema. According to the film’s producers, “1.5 Million” explores the political and economic forces that have brought about a literacy crisis in The Bronx, specifically, District 7 which is located in the south Bronx. With a lack of school libraries, classroom libraries, books within the community, bookstores, robust marketing by the NYPL in The Bronx and decades of divestment to education, a literacy crisis has come to fruition in The Bronx.

Born from the stereotypes that people in The Bronx do not read and are only known for having interests in sneaker and liquor stores; it is not by coincidence that access to literature has a profound effect on the culture of reading. As of 2016, only 56 percent of high school graduates in The Bronx are college ready. Poverty is a major factor, with 40 percent of children in the South Bronx living below the poverty line. A child raised in poverty is 13 times less likely to finish high school on time, if at all. Purchase tickets at www.onepointfivemillion.com.

MOVEMENT
Bronx Panthers Youth Football & Cheer saves lives through football and are recruiting all age groups. Call (718) 825 2260 or (917) 780 9237 for more information.

NYC Parks announced that registration for the 2022 Summer Camp lottery period ended on March 21. However, occasionally, the department may re-open the waitlist at select Summer Camp locations later in the season. Residents are invited to check back, or sign up for the NYC Parks’ https://www.nycgovparks. org/newsletters/subscribe for updates. The Summer Day Camp, which runs from July 6 to Aug. 19, is an exciting chance for children ages 6 to 13 to have a fun-filled summer!
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**LEGAL NOTICE**

This advertisement is to serve the High Court of The Supreme Court of Judicature of Guyana. In compliance with the Court, the family of deceased person Bhooplall Budhu (deceased as of January 29th 2006 at the Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York, United States of America), is looking to contact witnesses in the matter of the execution of the Last Will and Testament dated 23rd of December, 1996, of the aforementioned deceased persons.

The witnesses are: Melissa Mincey, whose given address at the time was 3169 Bainbridge Ave, Bronx, NY 10467, USA, and Josephine Pellicren, whose given address at the time was 3169 Bainbridge Ave, Bronx, NY 10467, USA. If you are Melissa Mincey, Josephine Pellicren, or are an acquaintance of Melissa Mincey and Josephine Pellicren, please call the chambers of Mr. Paul Stanislaus Braam, Attorney-at-Law at Lot 5 Avenue of the Republic and Robb Street, Georgetown, Guyana in relation to the witnessing of the above Last Will and Testament.

4/24/22 7196867

**Public and Community Meetings**

The next 52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL meeting will take place on Thursday, May 26, 2022, at 7 p.m., at St. Samuel Cathedral Church of God in Christ, located at 2930 Valentine Avenue (E.199th). Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email list. Proof of vaccination is required for in person meetings.

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, May 24 at 6.30 p.m. via Zoom. The meeting ID is 859 4776 2187 or by phone (646) 558-8656. Contact KCabreraCarrera@ch.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meetings have been held via ZOOM. The meetings are usually held on the first Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. The last meeting was held on May 4. For further details, contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.
by City officials, culminating in Little Yemen on Friday, May 6, with a visit to the neighborhood by Mayor Eric Adams and Small Business Commissioner Kevin D. Kim.

During her opening remarks at the YMCA, Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson paid tribute to all who had helped bring the event together, which she had said was quite an accomplishment given they only started planning for it in January. Thanking all who had made it possible, including her staff, elected officials, sponsors and colleagues, as well as Olga Tirado from the Bronx Tourism Council, Gibson said, “We wanted to make sure that Bronx Week could happen but this year; because after two years of a hiatus, we said we have to come back stronger than ever”.

Saying she was excited to announce the arrival of the first Bronx Week celebration as The Bronx’s new borough president, she added, “This is truly a time to celebrate and to highlight, promote, and amplify the voices of our Bronxites, of our cultural institutions, of our educational centers, community partners, our restaurants, businesses, everyone that truly counts to make the beautiful mosaic of The Bronx.”

She continued, “COVID-19 has had such an impact on this country, on the State, on the City, and certainly on The Bronx - one of the highest death rates to COVID, so many people that are dealing with health disparities, unfortunately, that was further exacerbated by COVID-19. So, we’ve been through so much, and I truly know that COVID was a setback for us in The Bronx, but if you know, like I know, every setback is preparation for a turnback, and Bronx Week 2022 is the borough’s official comeback like never before!”

Gibson used the occasion to acknowledge the acting president of the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, Rafael Roger, and thanked the festivals partners and sponsors, Humana, Waste Management, Altice, Bronxcare, Con Edison, Empire Blue Cross & Blue Shield, Montefiore Einstein, PepsiCo, Lincoln Hospital, Visiting Nurse Service, Hostos Community College, United Healthcare and VCC, for their support. “Thank you so much for not just lending your name, but certainly your commitment to making Bronx Week 2022 a great success,” she said.

She singled out Essen Healthcare saying the provider had been amazing. “It’s such a blessing to work with you during this pandemic. We’ve given out so much PPP, vaccine booster shots, we’ve had resource fairs, health fairs…” she said, “You have been great and we’re just looking forward to even more work together to provide primary care, access to our wraparound services and making sure that we take care of all of our children and families in The Bronx.”

Later, referring to the addition of the silent disco event at Woodlawn Cemetery to the Bronx Week line-up, an event which went ahead despite the rain, Gibson said, “I was a little nervous about having a silent disco at Woodlawn Cemetery, and then I got over it, and I say, it’ll be great, and all of that will bring some vibrancy to Woodlawn Cemetery!”

The borough president said it was important to celebrate the best of the borough, referencing in particular “our veterans, our seniors, our entrepreneurs, our educators, our first responders, essential workers, frontline staff, volunteers, all of our professionals, elected officials, so many that have helped to make the borough a great place to live, work and raise your family as we move The Bronx forward.”

Many of those mentioned were later applauded in person during the annual Bronx parade, held under glorious sunshine on Moshulu Parkway in Bedford Park, on Sunday, May 15, along with a lively representation of schools, bands, cultural institutions, musicians, dancers, youth and community groups. Pony rides, other kids’ activities and food stands lined the parkway from around noon to 6 p.m. The festival wrapped up later with a celebratory concert highlighting local talent.

Gina Farley, a teacher at Soundview Academy, who marched and danced in the parade with the Explosion Dance Team spoke to Norwood News on the day. Asked for her reaction to the atmosphere on the day, she said, “It was very exciting. This is our first parade of four. It’s a really great start – so nice to be out here again, after being so closed off during the pandemic.”

Asked about the benefits of dance to kids, Farley said, “It’s a lot of work! It gives them an amazing work ethic – healthy living, but as well, beautiful relationships with each other. They’re creating friendships that they would normally not get in a school year. As well, you see the difference in their grades. Because they work so hard on the dancing, they don’t want to mess it up… that they work hard everywhere.” She added that the school’s success and graduation rates were high, with many moving on to work on Broadway shows and enter top art schools.

Despite the joy of returning to in-person events, Gibson also spoke of some of the tragedies that had beset the borough during her first few months in office. “It has been a challenging two years. As I mentioned, COVID and the impact, the plague of gun violence, and so many things we’ve experienced here in The Bronx and in the City,” she said.

“Many times, people have tried to knock us down and we get back up again,” she said. “We show strength in the times of challenge, and I often say, we’ve been through a lot of pain, but somehow we have found purpose through pain. We’ve been through many storms but yet, somehow, we find strength in the storm.”

She continued, “As many of you know, my first week in office in January, we had one of the most horrific residential fires that the City of New York has seen in 30 years at Twin Parks Northwest, and 17 neighbors perished as a result of this fire, but the entire building was devastated, was traumatized, and many will never be the same again.”

Gibson said her office, countless volunteers and organizations, and community partners joined together to help the impacted families during what she said was their greatest time of need. As previously reported, some residents had complained that relief for the victims and survivors of Twin Parks was not delivered quickly enough, and despite an immediate outpouring of large-scale donations. Gibson addressed the point at the time, explaining that it had taken some time to work through the bureaucratic aspects of processing certain types of housing vouchers for the impacted families with the federal housing authority. As previously reported, a class action lawsuit by a number of Twin Parks residents is underway.

Gibson went on to say that people might have thought that the Twin Parks fire was the only fire during this time and that although it had indeed been the most tragic, and one that had claimed the lives of many neighbors, she added that since then, there have been many other fires, both residential and commercial.

The theme of Bronx Week 2022 was “History in the Making” and was particularly relevant given the historic significance of Gibson’s own election as the first woman and African American to serve in the role of borough president, but that was not all. The borough also saw the historic election of deputy Bronx borough president, Janet Peguero, as the first Dominican immigrant to be appointed to the office. Together, the women made further history by becoming the first ever female team to lead the borough.

A tradition for more than 40 years, Bronx Week is an annual celebration of the borough’s history, beauty, and institutions of the borough, and as usual, culminated with a black-tie gala honoring three more Bronx Walk of Fame inductees on Saturday, May 14.

Since 1997, the Bronx Walk of Fame has served as the premier honor in the borough for those who contribute to the vibrancy of the borough. This year’s honorees were actor, Luis Antonio Ramos, entertainer, Remy Ma, and producer, Elif Rivera.

Of this year’s inductees, Gibson said the three incredible individuals had used their talents and their skills to showcase the Bronx in a positive light, and truly changed the narrative that others had created for the borough. “As people that live and work and raise your families and are invested in this world, we know that we are a world of hard work of resilience, of strength,” she said. Concluding her remarks, which she echoed on many occasions throughout the festival’s duration, Gibson said, “I’m just so grateful because Bronx Week, to me, is not just our commitment to this borough but in five months, when many felt it was impossible to do, we made it possible so, I am proud to lead this great borough!”
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