



NORWOOD NEWS

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MMCC YOUTH RALLY AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE



Photo by Emily Sawaked

A CHILD PARTICIPATING in a Mosholu Montefiore Community Center program holds a sign which reads, "This is a school zone, not a war zone!" as she marches with other youth along East Gun Hill Road in Norwood for a rally on Friday, June 3, 2022, to mark Gun Violence Awareness Month.

By EMILY SAWAKED

Dressed in orange, and carrying signs often bigger than themselves, children and teens who participate in various programs offered by Mosholu Montefiore Community Center (MMCC),

took to the streets on Friday, June 3, to mark the beginning of Gun Violence Awareness Month.

Departing from the MMCC venue located at 3450 DeKalb Avenue in Norwood, the group seemed adamant to raise their

voices in protest against the ongoing gun violence that plagues their lives each day in The Bronx, as well as the horrific mass shootings that have recently occurred across the nation.

As of June 5, 185 shootings

have occurred in the borough so far this year, and 216 shooting victims. In the 52nd precinct, which covers Norwood, Bedford Park, Kingsbridge, Fordham and Bronx Park, there have been 16

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Mosholu Preservation Corporation is a non-profit support corporation of Montefiore Medical Center.



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.

Will New Waste Management Plans Help Resolve Trash Overload?

By EMILY SAWAKED

The lack of trash cans for pedestrians on Bronx streets has been noticed by residents for quite a while. As reported, the situation worsened amid the pandemic with many people eating outdoors in parks, especially in summertime, often causing existing cans to be overloaded. Though that specific problem is not yet resolved, Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) and City officials are working, in the meantime, on other ways to keep the borough's sidewalks and parks clean.

CB7 held its latest sanitation committee meeting on Tuesday, June 7, and members discussed how litter and other trash is consistently dumped onto streets, roads, and parks across the district. Present at the meeting were Stephen Caruso from NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY), Greer Mayhew from the City Comptroller Brad Lander's office, Effie Ardizzone from NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), along with community and board members.

The main discussion revolved around how to keep The Bronx clean, both for the residents, and to combat climate change. During his presentation, Mayhew said both littering and waste from construction and buildings have negatively impacted upon the environment. "As of 2020, 75 percent of energy consumption in the City is fossil fuel-based gas and oil," he said, but the City has set a solar target which has eight years left to reach the end goal of 1,000 megawatts."

As for emissions, Mayhew explained that New York City has only reduced these by 25 percent since 2005, even though the goal is to reduce emissions by 80 percent by 2050.

"Seventy percent of our emissions comes from our buildings," he said, with transportation coming second, and waste coming third. "Over 40 percent of New York City buildings have failing energy rates."

A lot of that, according to Mayhew, is also due to the expansion and construction of buildings, which, according to CB7 and Caruso, have been contributing greatly to the production and dumping of waste. This was one of the points addressed during Caruso's presentation.

"The main focus is on commercial waste, so we're looking to set up some kind of [industrial] container on the street in which we'll collect all the commercial garbage in that particular area," he said. This includes containers for construction workers at buildings, and the different vendors in The Bronx. Caruso added that DSNY is also looking for more employees, and that those interested can take an exam online to be placed on the civil service list.

Also discussed was an upcoming clean-up event that is being organized by DSNY in conjunction with the Yankees and the Office of the Bronx Borough President, whereby clean-up volunteers get free tickets to Yankees games and a chance to win seats in the VIP box. Similar such clean-up events have taken place in different parts of The Bronx in the past, but due to the current partnership with Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, it is now happening all over the borough.

"It will be between July and September," said Caruso. "There will be six clean-up events, I believe, so if anyone has any specific locations they would like to see be addressed,

you can certainly let me know," he said as he shared his email address, scaruso@dsny.nyc.gov. "Ultimately, the goal is to reduce the amount of trash that we see out on the curb for prolonged periods of time," he added.

Rat infestation was another issue that came up and it was confirmed that DSNY offer free, online "rat academy" training sessions. Residents can sign up for these rat academy training sessions online.

Since DSNY now requires owners and developers of new, large residential buildings to submit a Waste Management Plan, a new rule effective since April 1, 2022, this topic was also discussed.

Caruso gave a brief explanation of the requirements of the plan, which included, calculating "an estimated amount of trash, recyclables and compostable material that will be created when operating at full capacity." The waste storage plan should also "ensure sanitary conditions for 150% of expected waste between scheduled collection."

Additionally, the plan should "keep recycling and composting separate from regular trash," and define "how and where the material will be set out for DSNY collection." It should ensure tenants are educated about waste management, which includes the placement of signage and education on complying with applicable DOB and NYC building codes."

Caruso said waste management plans for new buildings or for buildings where there are any significant renovations or expansions should be submitted to DOB at the same time as the new building designs or renovation designs. He said DSNY makes its

(continued on page 6)

Bedford Park Residents Want Cameras for P.S. 8 after Shooting outside School

By SÍLE MOLONEY

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating the person seen in the attached surveillance photo who is sought for questioning following a non-fatal shooting in Bedford Park on June 8. The photo was obtained following the incident.

Police said the incident occurred at around 2.20 p.m. as a 22-year-old male victim was in a vehicle (as a passenger), located opposite 214 East Mosholu Parkway South and Briggs Avenue, when he encountered the unidentified shooter. The gunman shot the victim in the back, and then fled, on foot, westbound along East 203rd Street toward Valentine Avenue.

"The victim was removed to Montefiore [Medical Center in Norwood] by private means," police said. He was treated there, and an EMT later told *Norwood News* that he was later transferred to an area trauma hospital. "There were no other injuries reported as a result of the incident," police added.

The gunman is described as male, is between 20 and 30 years of age, has a medium build, black hair, facial hair, a dark complexion and was last seen wearing a black undershirt, black shorts and black sneakers.

Norwood News spoke with an elderly, female Bedford Park resident of 25 years called Alba, who was sitting in the park with her husband, Francisco, in the vicinity of the crime scene at 4.05 p.m. on the day of the shooting. Speaking in Spanish, she said she had not witnessed the incident.

"It's very worrying, what's happening for seniors, adults and for children. Though here, in comparison to other places, [it's] not so much," she said, in reference to ongoing gun violence in the borough. She added that years earlier it had been much more peaceful. "But Valentine [Avenue] and upwards is well dangerous and every day, getting worse," she said. Asked if it was the first shooting so close to the couple's home, she said it was.

She added that when someone later asked her why she was sitting in the park so close to the crime scene, she joked, "Well I'm safe now because the po-



Photo by Sile Moloney

POLICE CORDON OFF the crime scene of a non-fatal, afternoon shooting opposite 214 East Mosholu Parkway South at the junction of Briggs Avenue, just outside P.S. 8, in the Bedford Park section of the Bronx on Wednesday, June 8, 2022.

lice are here." Nonetheless, she said, in general, she does feel more nervous since the shooting. Her husband added, "I'm afraid to go out on the street," adding that you never knew who might come up behind you and that residents could simply get caught up in crossfire.

We also spoke with Christian Ortiz, 20, who was visiting his girlfriend in a nearby building in the vicinity about his feelings on gun violence. "Nowadays, it's a lot of young kids who are not really in gangs, or maybe they're in gangs and they listen to this music," Ortiz said. "I'm not saying music does that; I listen to that music sometimes, too, but it's the young people in that music will be doing those crimes, and then the younger people who are listening to them... I was young too. You want to impress people, you know?"

Asked if, in his opinion, shootings are not necessarily retaliatory therefore, the 20-year-old, who lost his brother-in-law to gun violence, said, "It's just, 'I'm gonna just do it, like, I can do it,' you know? That's the mindset people have, um, just, 'You want to test me?'" He also felt people, in general, were ignorant, scared, suspicious and in need of greater social integration. Though he said he was not that hopeful that things would ever change much, he still believes government programs that provide funding to keep people engaged

are worthwhile.

P.S. 8 Isaac Varian is located at 3010 Briggs Avenue, diagonally across the street from where the shooting occurred. During the Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) Public Safety committee meeting held the next day on Thursday, June 9, local residents and one parent coordinator based at the school expressed their concerns about public safety in the area in the wake of the shooting.

Asked by public safety committee chair, Victor Saldaña, if any members of the community wanted to raise any specific public safety issues, a female resident responded saying, in part, "Yes, I would. In light of yesterday's shooting that happened literally in front of my house, as a parent of P.S. 8, I just found it very disconcerting." She said two of her family members, a child, and a senior, had been walking into her house just five minutes before the shooting took place.

Referring to the recent mass shootings that have taken place across the country in recent weeks, and the uptick in gun violence nationally, locally and statewide, the resident added, "When it hits home, it hits home. I believe P.S. 8 should have a camera system installed in their school, which is obviously there for the protection of the school staff, and especially the children, and I just want to discuss that."

Another resident and board

member, Louelle Green, added, in part, "I have no objections to having cameras on site, and I think the parents and the school, PTA, should reach out to their local officials, call them up and say, 'Listen, we're concerned. We want a camera system.'" Green then asked if the New York school system had a program or protocol on how they place cameras in schools, or if they had the funds to provide them."

Saldaña committed to following up with the district manager for CB7, Ischia Bravo, the Board of Education and the 52nd precinct, whose representatives, exceptionally, were unable to attend the Thursday evening meeting. He said he would also ask if the Board of Education provided any additional support for when such crimes occurred in the vicinity of public schools.

In the context of the discussion, the parent coordinator for P.S. 8, who was also in attendance, said, "I was present yesterday when the incident did occur. Consequently, we did have a lockdown." She added, "It was a major concern, and unfortunately, it is a major concern that we've had, and yes, we have looked into cameras. We also seek help in order to address this issue and see how we can expedite obtaining cameras for the entire school, since this can impose a threat to our children."

The school coordinator

added that she did see that at around 6 o'clock on the day of the shooting, some police officers were stationed on Valentine Avenue and 203rd Street "In the past, they have had a police presence, 24 hours, within that little section, due to the fact that this has been an ongoing issue in the past," she said, and asked if such police presence could be reinstated.

Saldaña then asked if there had been any conversations held with the Board of Education about the camera/security issue. The parent coordinator replied, saying, "Unfortunately, I cannot speak upon what has transpired, and how many times it has been addressed, but I am aware that in regards to the cameras, they have, in the past, made attempts to obtain cameras for the school."

Norwood News later shared that in the context of recent traffic accidents in the local area, apparently due to speeding, we had contacted NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) and the NYPD to see what measures were being taken to address this, and that when DOT responded, they referenced recent legislation which had been passed and which had expanded the use of cameras in the City.

Recent remarks by both DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez and Mayor Eric Adams appeared to refer to a "24/7 Speed Camera Agreement." *Norwood News* had asked for confirmation as to whether the expansion of the use of cameras referenced by DOT was in general, or if it was just an expansion of cameras in school vicinities.

We were informed by DOT that the new law related specifically to the *expansion of the hours of operation* of camera usage and that DOT was still operating the [same] cameras within a radius of 750 schools zones across the City, employing roughly 2,000 cameras. DOT officials said they had reached an agreement to extend the speed camera program and expand the hours of camera operation from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., to 24 hours, seven days a week.

The resident who raised the topic later said, "I'm respectfully requesting a motion for support from you guys, from the committee, and for CB7 to

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**



As elected officials worked to enact new legislation after several recent mass shootings, we asked readers if they believed such legislation would have any impact, and what type of legislation, in their opinion, was necessary.



"Of course, I'm familiar with the legislation, but nothing is going to help because the government is into all this stuff. They are allowing certain things to happen to their benefit. Drugs and guns, it's the same thing. I would like this to stop immediately, because so many innocent people are dying. They must ban all guns and why do you think that's not going to happen? The Republicans don't want it to stop. It starts with them. You're not safe at the hospital, in the stores, at the emergency room or the supermarket. It's crazy what's happening; at home, you saw the girl that got shot inside her home? You're not safe anywhere."

Lisa Blair,
Norwood



"Yeah, they want to raise it from 18 to 21 and now they've got to have the micro-stamping on the bullets, yeah. I think it will help for the State, but obviously not for the country. The politicians can't seem to work together to come up with some kind of comprehensive compromise. The 'iron-pipeline' is a problem, absolutely. I honestly don't know why they can't close these loopholes; you would think they would have some commonsense laws about some of these things. You don't need an AR-15. I served in the military, and I know you don't need that kind of weapon. I don't think it will pass the Senate. The way the Republican Party is now and we're coming to the midterms, they don't want to see [President Joe] Biden get a win."

Joe Bello,
Parkchester



"Oh, my goodness! That's a hard one! I think the legislation might help; it depends on what kind of guns you're talking about, and what kind of bills you're talking about. I think if they pass something it will help people stop killing each other; that's what's important. I do think the National Rifle Association is controlling Congress a little bit, I guess. I haven't seen gun violence around here but yeah, I am concerned a little bit for my safety. As long as people stop killing each other, that's what's important."

Karla Gonzalez,
Westchester Square



"I'm somewhat following it. I work for the City so I know a little about stuff like that. I think what the governor did could be helpful. More elected officials need to get behind it because it's needed. There are too many guns on the streets; it's like a Catch-22. I feel like ever since COVID, the rise of guns on the streets has been worse than drugs, kidnapping, sex trafficking with the kids, sexual abuse, any kind of abuse. I feel like things have gotten worse. My hope is that Washington [D.C.] will pass it, but I don't know. It's just one of those things; I don't think they will ever stop the guns coming from the South. It's sad, because I know of people that know people who are doing this, and I can't associate myself with that, because you have innocent kids dying. People are afraid to come out their homes; they're afraid to take their kids to the park. It's not like when I was raised in the 90s, when you could let your kids go outside with no worries. Now, you have to be worried for yourself, along with your kids. There's no real safety, especially here in The Bronx."

Patricia Miller,
Tremont



"I don't think it will help. You either get rid of them all or get rid of none; it's all or none. It's a 'no brainer' to me. If you don't have the guns, you can't kill. Look at all these other countries: London, and other places. You don't hear about mass shootings there. It's because they don't have guns. It's too easy to get a gun here in the United States; that's the main problem. This is the only way; if you stop the guns, you'll stop the shootings. It's that simple. I'm hardly ever out at night. Once it starts getting dark, I go inside. That's how you live to be 60, okay? I try to keep a low profile and look over my shoulder because you never know. It's like that old saying: even when you're crossing a one-way street, look both ways."

Howard L. Douglas,
Fordham Manor



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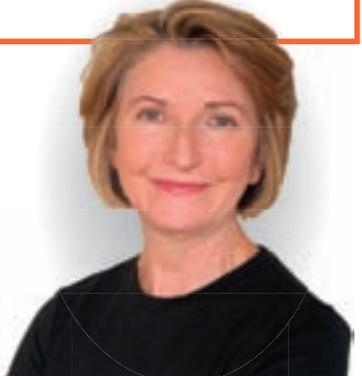
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NEWS BRIEFS

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

FBI Warns Americans of Revived Scam

The FBI is warning Americans that new reports show that scammers are reviving an old tactic to gain trust. Scammers are emailing and texting pictures of both real and doctored law enforcement credentials and badges in efforts to prove they are legitimate and scam people out of money. Scammers may change the picture or use a different name, agency, or badge number, but the basic scam is the same. FBI officials are warning the public to be skeptical of email and text messages claiming to be someone from a government or law enforcement agency. No one in federal law enforcement will send photographs of credentials or badges to demand any kind of payment, and neither will government employees.

Handshake Agreement on \$101 Billion City Budget

Mayor Eric Adams and Council Speaker Adrienne Adams announced an early handshake agreement for “a balanced and responsible” Fiscal Year 2023 Budget of \$101 billion on June 10, which will go into effect on July 1, 2022. City officials said the latest adopted budget prioritizes public safety, uplifts the City’s youth, helps working families, improves public spaces, boosts affordable housing, and combats food insecurity.

The budget is around \$3 billion more than the budget for the current Fiscal Year (FY22), the result of “personal income taxes related to a record level of Wall Street activity,” and it sets aside \$8.3 billion in budget reserves, the highest level in the City’s history. Officials say it also builds on investments administration secured in Albany this session, including major expansion of earned income tax credit and historic funding for childcare. Some City schools have already protested cuts to the education budget, while the Parks allocation fell short of the mayor’s election promise to devote one percent of the budget to Parks funding.

Will New Waste Management Plans Help Resolve Trash Overload?

(continued from page 2)

own waste management calculation, and this can help with the drafting of individual waste management plans for buildings.

“We’re also offering zero waste

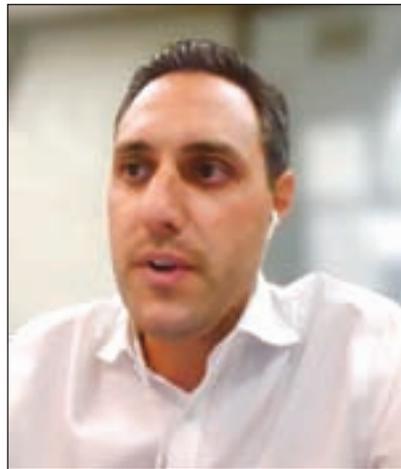


Photo by Emily Sawaked

STEPHEN CARUSO FROM New York City Department of Sanitation gives a presentation to Bronx Community Board 7’s sanitation committee on plans to clean up The Bronx on Tuesday, June 7, 2022, over Zoom.

Sorin Appointed as MTA Board Member

Gov. Kathy Hochul has confirmed the appointment of Lisa Sorin, president of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce, as an MTA board member. Sorin is the first female president of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce, having previously served as an active board member. Before joining the Bronx Chamber of Commerce, its representatives said Sorin was the executive director of the Westchester Square Business Improvement District for over 6 years. In this role, she worked to bring a new mix of retail, housing, and improved mass transit connections to that section of the Bronx.

Bronx VA Hospital Appoints New Executive Director

Dr. Balavankatesh Kanna has been appointed as the new executive director of the James J. Peters Depart-

ment of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, located in Fordham Manor. The news was announced by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs on June 13. According to the department, Dr. Kanna received his medical degree from Coimbatore Medical College in India and has served the Bronx community since then, completing his residency in internal medicine 25 years ago in 1997. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and earned the certified professional in-patient safety credential from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. He is a fellow of the American College of Physicians and the New York Academy of Medicine.

New Rape Kit Bill Passed

State Sen. Alessandra Biaggi (S.D. 34) announced that on June 2 the State senate majority passed the bill she sponsored to es-

tablish a rape kit tracking system in New York State. The bill was also passed in the assembly, where it was sponsored by Assembly Member Amy Paulin, and now awaits sign-off by Gov. Kathy Hochul.

The new law will direct the Division of Criminal Justice Services, in consultation with the State Department of Health, Office of Victim Services, Division of State Police, and the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Abuse to develop and implement a statewide electronic tracking system for evidence collection kits. The rape kits are used to collect and preserve evidence of sexual assault or other sex offenses.

New Climate Change Superfund Act

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) announced the introduction of the Climate Change Super-



Photo by Emily Sawaked

GREER MAYHEW FROM City Comptroller Brad Lander’s office discusses the environmental impacts of waste and emissions with Bronx Community Board 7’s sanitation committee members on Tuesday, June 7, 2022, over Zoom.

training to building managers as well,” said Caruso. On the other hand, it was confirmed that the expansion of curbside composting is currently on hold until further notice.

CB7’s sanitation committee budget proposals were also discussed at the end of the meeting, with a motion to reword and clarify some to make them more precise. They related to funding for education around waste management laws and enforcement, including pet waste and electronic waste. All were approved, subject to

any final amendments by the full CB7 Board.

More information on DSNY jobs can be found on the department’s website: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/site/employment-opportunities>.

For more information on DSNY’s rat academy training, go to: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/rats-control-training.page>.

Visit nyc.gov/wastemanagement-plan to learn more about waste management and to submit a waste management plan.

fund Act on May 26, a bill he sponsored. Described as first-in-the-nation legislation, the new law will use the “polluter-pays” model exemplified by existing federal and State superfund laws to collect \$30 billion over ten years for climate change adaptation from the parties most responsible for causing the climate crisis - fossil fuel companies

Dinowitz said consumers are facing pain at the pump currently as well as in their gas and electric bills, while at the same time, the oil and gas industry is raking in enormous profits. He said the new law will claw back some of the oil and gas industry’s recent windfall profits and use them for adaptation costs that would otherwise be charged to State taxpayers. The program is designed to prevent such costs from being passed on to consumers.

Fernandez Encourages Financial Literacy Among Youth

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Money doesn't grow on trees we've been told since infancy. At the core of the discussions on the draft, agreed and now \$101 billion adopted City budget for Financial Year 2023 is a familiar, annual conundrum - the need to balance the books of government, while attempting to satisfy the needs and desires of various interest groups seeking to build upon a budget allocation received in previous years.

While both the budget size, and the disparity between incomings and outgoings may differ, it's a similar process for every country, corporation, nonprofit, institution, small business, single-parent household or individual. For some time now, Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez (A.D. 80) has come to ERE believe that young Bronxites stand to benefit from acquiring an early understanding of basic financial literacy.

"People don't know, you know?" she said. "I've noticed myself, getting older, seeing young people get into their adult lives and managing and financing themselves, and the conversation student debt and debt, in general, is bringing to life." April marked Financial Literacy Month and she said it was the opportunity to really look at what kids were *not* being taught.

The assemblywoman organized a workshop in her district with a few or-



Photo by Sile Moloney

ASSEMBLY MEMBER NATHALIA Fernandez (A.D. 80), pictured in Norwood on June 8, 2022, would like to see more free financial literacy in schools for younger people, to help create communities and generations that are more financially stable.

ganizations, including World of Money, a nonprofit based in midtown Manhattan which, for 17 years, has been providing immersive financial literacy classes to children and youth aged 7 to 18, based all over the City, including in The Bronx, through afterschool and summer programs.

Sandra Lamb is the nonprofit's founder and executive director, and said their approach is not just a workshop on budgeting. "It's expansive, from the financial history of the world to wealth mindsets, to stock valuation

presentations, and, and so it's a total immersion," she said, adding that their courses comprise 120 hours of training.

"The way we look at it is we need to play generational catch-up, because the world that we live in requires that we know how to respond to money, manage money; it just requires that," said Lamb. "That's why we provide all the information that children need to know, so that they can begin creating a financially secure life."

Fernandez said as everyone gets

older, they realize they haven't been saving properly. "We haven't been utilizing the knowledge and the services that are out there the proper way, falling prey to the predatory financial services that don't really help communities come out of the debt holes," she said. "There have been proposals over the years in the legislature to incorporate financial literacy into the curriculum, but it hasn't made its way in yet."

She said legislators are looking at ways to make it available to high school students, specifically, adding that the goal was for high school and middle school students to understand that they can start saving now. "You can really start setting yourself up for a little bit of an easier future when it comes to your finances, and it's important to have that base of education because it's going to further remove the equity gap that remains in our communities and society," she said.

Asked if financial literacy was being taught in *any* schools or just in some schools, the assemblywoman said it's barely being taught at all though some schools make it a priority. She said she remembers being in 3rd Grade and being taught how to balance a checkbook. "That was really the only flash of any financial education that I recall in my elementary / high school years," she said.

(continued on page 14)

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 12:00pm Prayer Meeting

WEDNESDAY NIGHT:
 7:30pm Prayer Meeting

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Elections 2022: Jeffrey Dinowitz Looks Forward, Not Back

By SÍLE MOLONEY

As the incumbent assemblyman representing Assembly District 81 since 1994, Jeffrey Dinowitz is both a seasoned politician and candidate when it comes to election campaigns. He has seen off a number of political challengers over the course of his political career to retain his Northwest Bronx seat and he appears adamant to keep it that way.

Given his many years in office, and the countless pieces of legislation on which he has worked throughout his career, *Norwood News* asked Dinowitz if he could speak to what he felt were the top three priorities during the upcoming campaign.

"It's really hard to narrow things down to three - it's housing, health care and environment or sometimes housing, health care and crime, because the truth is there are more than three issues," he said, in part. On housing, he said he has been a statewide leader, citing the various eviction moratorium bills, the Tenant Safe Harbor Act, more recent legislation that prevents landlords from charging legal fees without a court order and laws relating to the charging of air conditioners.

"Those are all my bills," he said. "And I've had others beyond that the legislation which we passed not too long ago that mandates that when the court orders a repair of a building, it has to be done within a certain time period." The assemblyman was referencing Jashawn's Law, State legislation which passed in 2020, almost 18 years after a tragic Norwood fire took the life of 9-year-old Jashawn Parker.

The bill was put forward by Dinowitz in 2003 in response to the Aug. 6, 2002 blaze at 3569 DeKalb Avenue. At the time, the building had over 350 building code violations, and its owner had been ordered to make repairs by a housing court judge, but those repairs were never made.

"That took many years for me to get passed," said Dinowitz, before adding that he's probably lead more tenants' legislation in the assembly than any other member. "I focus on housing issues, because we want people to be able to stay in their homes," he said. "We don't want to see people thrown out on the street, particularly during the pandemic."

Dinowitz, whose son, Eric,

is the councilmember for District 11, which covers much of the same political jurisdiction as A.D. 81, said having grown up and lived in The Bronx all his life, and having lived in all types of housing, he has a deep understanding of housing issues, and how they are basic to people's needs. "I lived in a rent-controlled walk-up when I was young. I lived in NYCHA public housing, I've lived in rent-stabilized housing, Mitchell, Lama; I've lived in it all," he said.

On healthcare, he said he has been a longtime advocate and co-sponsor of the New York Health Act, which aims to expand the scope of healthcare coverage in New York State. "It's been years in the making. I think we're getting closer to it, but we haven't gotten there yet," he said. "But to me, that's very important. I've done a lot of focus in the area of vaccinations. I have been the foremost advocate for vaccines in the State legislature. A few years ago, just two or three years ago, I passed legislation which mandated that there will no longer be non-medical exemptions to vaccine requirements in schools."

He said prior to that, many people were getting exemptions for their kids based upon what he believed were false claims. "The vaccination rates had gone down, and this was at a time when measles was on the upswing. So, we passed this legislation, and it was very controversial, but I got it through."

"I'm absolutely convinced that this legislation, this law, has saved lives, and more recently, I've been a leading spokesperson, in terms of encouraging more people to get vaccinated against COVID-19," he said. Indeed, the assembly received some heat from some parents and others within the community who were very much against the COVID-19 school vaccine mandate.

Nonetheless, Dinowitz refused to back down, receiving widespread support from across the State for his stance on the issue, particularly when protestors shown up displaying swastikas and yellow stars outside the Jewish assemblyman's home and constituency office. He also backed legislation to prevent the use of fake vaccination cards.

"You've seen some of the opposition to my position at some of these disgusting displays of Nazi symbolism by vaccine op-

ponents," he said. "I've also got a bill passed just this session which mandates insurance coverage for colorectal screening for people aged 45 that was not mandated previously, and it's very important that people be screened for that."

He mentioned how the issue had received a lot of publicity after the actor, Chadwick Boseman, died of colon cancer at a younger age of 45. "It was terrible. So now that's being mandated as part of insurance coverage. So, those are just a few examples of some of my accomplishments with respect to health issues," he said, while acknowledging that the pandemic had highlighted the grave disparities among people who had and did not have healthcare and how race played a further role in this.

More recently, in terms of one of his other priorities - the environment - the assemblyman was behind the passage of the Climate Change Superfund Act. Described as first-in-the-nation legislation, it will use the "polluter-pays model" exemplified by existing federal and State superfund laws to collect \$30 billion over ten years for climate change adaptation from the parties most responsible for causing the climate crisis - fossil fuel companies.

On crime, Dinowitz said, "I think that people are very concerned about the fact that the crime rate has risen significantly in the past couple of years since the pandemic, and while it's true that it's nothing approaching what it was at the height of the crime waves of the late 80s and early 90s, it's still a huge concern."

He added, "Many people do not feel safe, whether it's on the streets or on the subway, and we need to do more to address that situation. We, in the legislature, we passed a package of 10 anti-gun bills which I think is very, very important," adding that he was very proud of the bills. "But that's only one part of it. I think that we need to address many of the other issues."

He commended the anti-gun violence, anti-gang and drug counseling work carried out by Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, based in Norwood. "I just got them a quarter of a million-dollar grant to work with teenagers," he said. "It's the things that we want to keep young people away from. I don't think police are the answer to everything, but I think

those who call for the defunding of police are way off base. I'm pretty sure I'm the only candidate running in this race that doesn't want to defund the police."

Asked for his view on whether police should be present when dealing with people who have mental health issues, he said, "Well, I think everything has its time and place. There will be some instances where having a mental health counselor may be the right answer, but if you have somebody who can be an immediate danger to either themselves or other people, and the police are there, it may not be advisable for the police to wait for a mental health counselor. Sometimes the police have to try to address the situation. So, it really depends on the individual situation. We have to do things in a smart way."

We put forward the view to the assemblyman that there are those who would say some legislative wins could have been achieved earlier had the assemblyman pushed for them harder and earlier in his career and that this is why some people feel perhaps it's time for a change.

"Well, if you want change, you should vote for me, because I've been putting forth change as long as I've been in office: good change," he said. "There are many people in various jobs that have been there for a long time, not just in elected office. You know, what if a teacher has been doing a great job? Even to say that after an excellent review, they should no longer be a teacher, that just doesn't make sense. If somebody does a good job, they should have the opportunity to continue at that job."

He added, "So, as far as change, yes. Many of the things we just talked about are that change, making good things happen. That's positive change, and I've been doing that as long as I've been in office."

In terms of campaign contributions, we put it to the assemblyman that there are voters who may feel it's preferable to vote for the candidate [Jessica Altagracia-Woolford] in the assembly district race who does not appear to be beholden to any special interests, and who has committed to only accepting small-dollar donations from individuals.

"Well, she could say that, but we really don't know where all of her contributions came

from, because if you look at her disclosure statement, some of her contributions aren't itemized. "Every last one of my contributions are itemized. I have 100 percent transparency. She does not."

He added, "But I'll say two things. First, I believe I have a very small number of contributions from some corporates, including Pfizer, the manufacturer of the vaccine that saved millions and millions of lives, probably, and the contribution was a mere \$500. So, to say, 'Oh, he takes corporate contributions,' is really disingenuous because I have a lot of contributions. I have a significant number of contributions from individual people in my district."

He continued, "She has just a tiny number of contributions from people in our district, and in fact, I believe the majority or close to the majority of contributors are from out of state. What is it that that is motivating people from places around the country to give her money for her campaign, but not people from the constituency that she's going to serve?"

Norwood News reached out to Altagracia-Woolford for a comment on the point about her contributions not being itemized. We did not receive an immediate response.

We also asked the assemblyman about his past endorsement of Sen. Jeff Klein, who headed up the Independent Democratic Caucus, which blocked progressive legislation from being passed in the State legislature for many years. "

"Well, we don't really know what could have happened. To the people who want to harp on about a single endorsement out of hundreds of endorsements I've made over the years, that took place four years ago, I would suggest that we would be better off if people would look in front of them rather than behind them," he said.

You know what I've told my grandkids when they're running and they like to look behind to see if their brother is getting close? Look in front of you. When you look behind you, that's when you trip and fall. And for the people who could only look to the past, that's really regrettable on their part. My record stands for itself. That was a single endorsement."

He added that perhaps with one exception, he generally endorses all his colleagues in office. "Elections are not about the past," he said.

Elections 2022: All Tracey Towers Residents Will Vote Onsite After Poll Site Change Reversed

By SÍLE MOLONEY

New York City Board of Elections officials said *all* Tracey Towers residents can vote at the Tracey Towers polling site finally in the upcoming primary elections on June 28, bringing relief to some senior residents who were not relishing the prospect of having to travel further afield to cast their ballots. However, the precise reason for the announced poll site change, which came within weeks of Election Day, and before a subsequent reversal of the decision, remains unclear.

Sallie Caldwell, a senior Tracey Towers resident, told *Norwood News* on Tuesday, June 7, that she and other residents at the Mitchel Lama housing complex in Jerome Park had received their voting cards for the upcoming June 28 election on Monday, June 6.

They were accompanied by instructions to vote at either the Scott Tower voting center, located at 3400 Paul Avenue also in Jerome Park, or at the Montefiore Mosholu Community Center, located at 3450 DeKalb Avenue in Norwood. This was despite the fact that there is a voting center onsite at Tracey Towers itself, located at 40 West Mosholu Parkway South.

“We always voted in Tracey Towers,” Caldwell said on June 7. “Starting this week, we’ve been getting cards. You know how they send the cards out to vote, and telling people, some people got to go to Scott Towers, some have to go to the Montefiore center over there, and the rest of them come in Tracey Towers. Now before, I *have* voted in Tracey Towers, but yet you’re asking the rest of us to go to Scott Towers and Montefiore center?”

Caldwell added, “Now, we were notified of redistricting but ain’t nobody notified us that half us, seniors, here would have to travel to vote.” Asked if she knew who had made the decision, she replied, “I don’t know. That’s what I’ve been trying to find out. I spoke to a supervisor at the Board of Elections (BOE), his first name is Steve. He’s supposed to be getting back to me. I guess he’ll get back to me today because when he went on there [the BOE database], he saw that some of us [were] going to Scott Tower to vote.”

Caldwell said Steve appeared surprised by the issue and reportedly said he would investigate and get back to her. He reportedly added, without disclosing any voter names, that indeed he could see that other people in Caldwell’s building were also listed to vote at Scott Tower voting center.

Caldwell added, “Now, the young lady who is in charge of the building at Tracey, she called, and she found out that there *will* still be voting inside of Tracey on the first floor.” Caldwell was referring to Beverly Miller who she said coordinates the voting center at Tracey Towers, and who reportedly told Caldwell she had not been notified that the building’s voting residents were to be split up. Caldwell said, she reportedly said to her, “Are you serious?” when it was brought to her attention.

Caldwell said on June 7, she got calls from several mostly senior Tracey Towers residents telling her they too were instructed to go to Scott Tower or Montefiore

(continued on page 22)



Photo courtesy of Google Maps.

ALL TRACEY TOWERS residents at the Jerome Park Mitchel Lama housing complex will vote onsite finally in the upcoming primaries on June 28, 2022, after the New York City Board of Elections reversed an earlier decision communicated a few weeks before the election to split the voters across different voting centers.



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Bedford Park Residents Want Cameras for P.S. 8 after Shooting outside School

send a letter to our council members in support of getting cameras in the school, and for the community board to help to expedite that. Thank you.”

Greene suggested that it might be better to state that the community board was in favor of installing cameras in *all schools* in the local district, but especially at P.S. 8 due to the shooting that had occurred outside the school, and due to an increase in crime in the local area, generally.

Saldaña agreed, adding, “We’ll also reach out to our council members to say that the community has requested cameras for all schools in the community.” One of the residents mentioned that some schools in the district do have cameras, while others don’t.

Norwood News has also followed up on the point about cameras for P.S. 8 with the Department of Education. We did not receive an immediate response.

As reported, a 17-year-old student was arrested in Harlem on Tuesday, June 7, after he was found to be in possession of a gun inside Democratic Prep Endurance High School, located at 240 East 123rd Street in Harlem. The gun was discovered amid a scuffle among students inside the school.

As reported, P.S. 8 Isaac Varian school is benefiting from \$3.35 million in federal funding for the expansion of

Montefiore’s School Health Program (MSHP), announced on April 13, which covers health service provision by doctors, dentists and therapists. The school’s medical team handles 210 student physical health related visits per week, and an additional 60 visits for mental health counseling and support for students per week at its two school medical clinics.

Two days prior to the shooting incident, new gun laws were passed on June 6 by the State legislature, while on June 8, the U.S. House of Representatives voted in favor of similar gun reform legislation at a federal level, though the latter still has to pass in the U.S. senate.

For Ortiz, he said he said he knows everyone doesn’t come from a great home, so he understands [some people are damaged]. “But if you grew up with a mom and things like that, you know how you should treat other people and stuff and I don’t ever believe in inflicting any type of pain or anything like that on to others.”

Anyone with information in regard to this incident 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.nypd-online.org/> or on Twitter @NYPD-Tips. All calls are strictly confidential.



Photo courtesy of the NYPD

THE NYPD RELEASED a photo of this individual who is sought for questioning in connection with a non-fatal shooting which opposite 214 East Mosholu Parkway South at the junction of Briggs Avenue outside P.S. 8 in the Bedford Park section of the Bronx on Wednesday, June 8, 2022.

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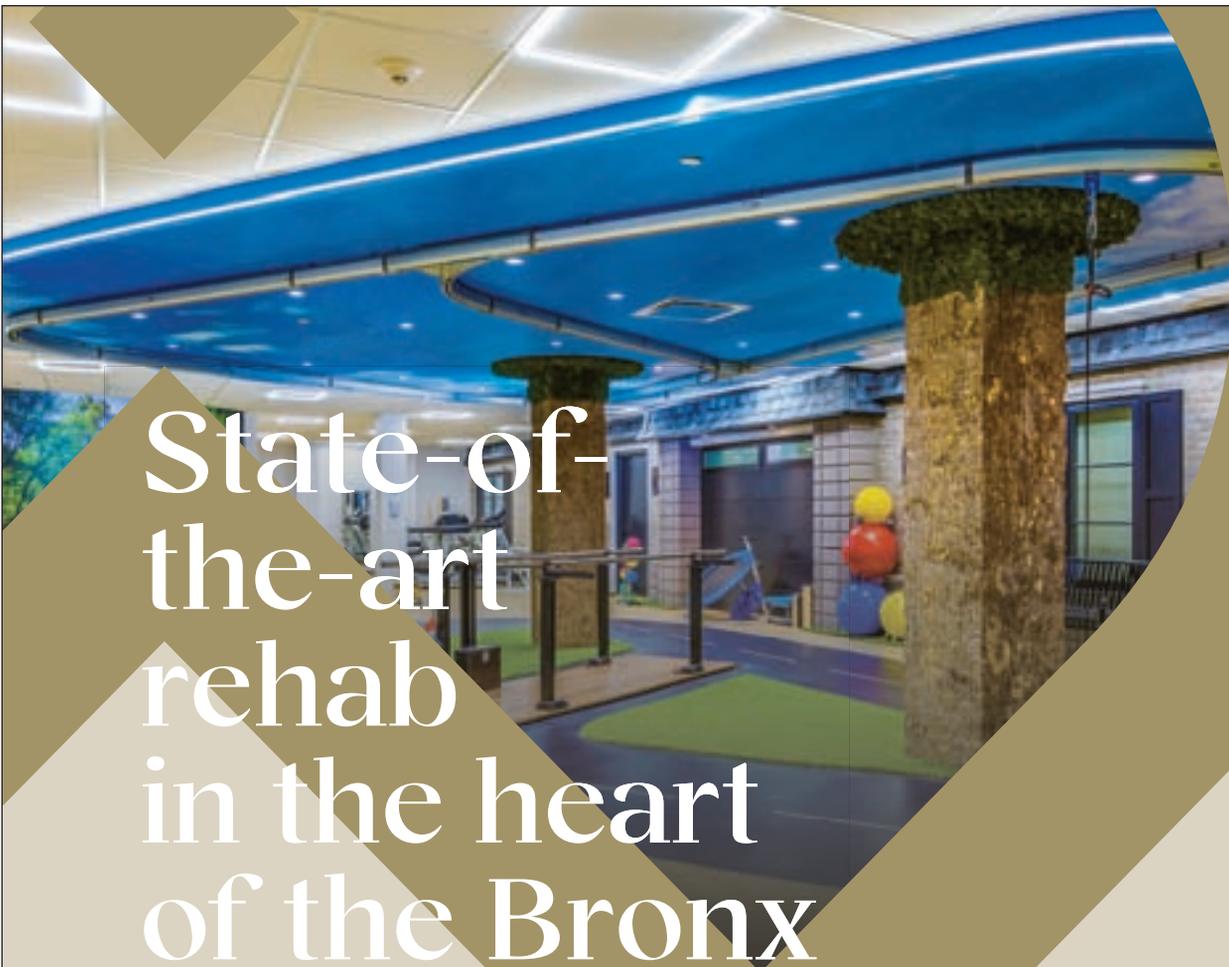
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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY EMILY SAWAKED & SÍLE MOLONEY



COVID-19 UPDATES

Omicron BA.4 and BA.5

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 comprises several lineages and sub-lineages, including BA.1, BA.1.1, BA.2, BA.4 and BA.5.

Current Risk Rating

As of June 13, citywide COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths were decreasing, according to NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). Nonetheless, the current alert level is high as of the same date, meaning there is high community spread, and substantial pressure on the health care system.

The citywide 7-day percentage positive rate was 7.91 percent, down from the 9.26 percent as of May 24. As of the same date, the 7-day percentage positive rate in ZIP code 10468, covering Fordham / Kingsbridge / University Heights, was 5.08 percent (down from 7.81 percent in late May), according to DOHMH. In ZIP code 10467, covering Allerton / Norwood / Pelham Parkway / Williamsbridge, it was 6.81 percent (down from 7.97 percent as of late May). In ZIP code 10458, covering Belmont / Fordham University / Kingsbridge, it was 5.61 percent (down from 5.71 percent in late May). Meanwhile, in ZIP code 10464, covering City Island, Eastchester and Pelham Bay Park, it was the highest in the borough at 12.99 percent.

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 the same day to their homes, curtailing the spread of the virus and keeping the City open.

On May 25, the NYC Test & Trace Corps announced it had expanded its COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation Guidance Tool, which provides New Yorkers direct access to order care packages to help isolate safely and receive COVID-19 therapeutics, including oral antiviral prescriptions and monoclonal antibody treatments. In addition to the resource portal, the quarantine and isolation guidance tool offers personalized guidance to New Yorkers who are exposed to, tested positive for, or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19. For more information, go to <https://covid19.nychealthandhospitals.org/COVID19help> or call the NYC Test & Trace Corps COVID Hotline at 212-COVID19.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced on June 9 that the mask mandate in schools and daycare centers for 2 to 4-year-old children was to be made optional, effective Monday, June 13.

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, and talk to your healthcare provider about treatment.

Masks are still required in healthcare facilities, nursing homes, correction facilities, domestic violence shelters, and on public transit. All travelers,

domestic and international, should continue to follow all CDC travel requirements. Get the latest COVID-19 information at:

- <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>
- <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Primary Elections 2022

As reported, the Supreme Court ordered Congressional and State Senate elections to be held Tuesday, August 23rd, 2022, amid the latest court decisions around redistricting which followed the 2020 Census. A court-appointed special master approved new redistricting maps for the congressional and State senate districts in New York State on May 20.

The CUNY Graduate Center has made available an online comparison map at the following link: <https://newyork.redistrictingandyou.org/>. The map enables the public to quickly determine their current congressional and State legislative districts and to see how the latest redistricting maps impact them.

Meanwhile, a further court decision on June 10 determined that the Assembly Districts approved by the New York State legislature in February 2022, are

finally invalid “based on procedural infirmity,” according to court documents, and therefore, new assembly district maps will finally be redrawn by a court-appointed special master **but not until 2024**.

New Yorkers will vote based on the latest assembly district maps, approved in February 2022, in the upcoming June 28 primary elections for statewide offices, the State assembly, judicial delegates and alternates and any local offices that are scheduled to be on the primary ballot.

The NYC Campaign Finance Board (CFB) announced on Thursday, June 2, that it had released the official New York City voting guide for the State primaries scheduled for Thursday, June 28. Early voting for some primary elections starts on Saturday, June 18. The voting guide can be accessed here:

<https://www.nycvotes.org/meet-the-candidates/2022-primary-election/>

DOB Virtual Sessions

The New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) is hosting live, bi-weekly, online Q&A sessions for property owners, registered design professionals, filing representatives and other licensees/registrants, providing a space for attendees to ask job specific questions for filings in DOB NOW, the Buildings Information System (BIS), or general questions about permits, construction codes, zoning regulations, sign-offs, certificates of occupancy, places of assembly, equipment installations, violations and civil penalties, etc. For more information on the June 16th event, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dob-bronx-borough-qa-session-tickets-311826069167?aff=erelexpmlt>.

Waste Management Plan

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) now requires owners and developers of new large 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 with 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 at 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 collection.

How is DSNY helping the buildings comply? DSNY is offering consultations with every building 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.

Free Haircuts

SUNY Bronx Educational Opportunity Center is offering free haircuts by appointment. Taking place Mondays through Fridays, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., Bronxites can call the following number if interested: 718-530-7043. The haircuts will take place at the following location: SUNY Bronx EOC, 1666 Bathgate Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457. Vaccination or a negative test within three days is required to receive a haircut.

City Council Redrawing of Districts

The NYC Districting Commission is starting the redistricting process for the City Council districts. Input is necessary on the subject, in accordance with the City Charter. An initial meeting was held on Thursday, May 26 at 3 p.m. at 1 Pace Plaza, New York, NY at Pace University. It can be rewatched on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yc4u612bjw8>.

Free Parenting and Prenatal Classes

The Parenting Resource Center at Catholic Guardian Services, located at 3356 Fort Independence St., Bronx, NY 10463, is providing free, parenting and prenatal classes for new and expecting parents. Classes will be held in person and will be taught in English and Spanish. Parents that complete the classes will be given a free crib. The four classes will be on breastfeeding, stress or trauma, safe sleep, and women's health. To sign up, contact Marie at (718) 828-0300 Ext. 209.

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Letters To The Editor

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

No Real Logic or Morality

I hope there is a God. But if the Almighty exists (and I don't mean Bobby Lashley) then I suspect the Lord might interrogate Richard Marias as to why he attributes irrational opinions to Him. I ask Marias, how does allowing gay marriage destroy straight marriage?

Marias insists on repeating assertions that make no sense. The "Adam and Steve" comment was always childish. The fact that Marias repeats it a second time after it's been said countless times by others doesn't suddenly make it wise. Christian teachings identify pride as one the seven deadly sins. Repeating nonsense over and over rather than conceding that your argument is baseless sounds prideful to me.

My problem with Marias does not have to do with his religion. It has to do with using religion to justify opinions that cannot be backed up with fact, logic, or true morality. I've known plenty of wonderful people who are religious. One of my best friends is a firm believer in the man I know as Rabbi Jesus and he knows as the Savior, Jesus Christ. Neither of us can reconcile the philosophy of Jesus with Donald Trump. Can Marias explain how Jesus, who condemned greed, reminds him of Trump?

On the subject of crime, which homosexuality is not, there's the *Norwood News* article posted June 4th, "Bronx Man Sentenced to 15 Years for Fatal Olinville

Stabbing." 33-year-old Terrance Caudle pleaded guilty to manslaughter and will serve only 15 years for repeatedly stabbing 30-year-old O'Brien Maxwell in the neck. New York State law allows murder to be reduced to manslaughter if it's deemed that the attacker was under "extreme emotional disturbance."

So does that mean you get a lighter sentence if you're angry at the person you kill? Wouldn't that cover all murders not committed by a professional assassin? Considering how many elderly people have been arrested recently for killings, I don't think Caudle will have "aged out of crime" at age 48.

**Richard Warren,
Van Cortlandt Village**

Adams had Better Qualified Candidates to Fill MTA Board Seats

The announcement by NYC Mayor Eric Adams, recommending Frankie Miranda, Sherif Soliman, and Isabel Midori Valdivia Espino (Midori Valdivia) to serve on the MTA Board, filling three of four NYC seats, was disappointing. There were other better-qualified candidates. They included NYC DOT Transportation Commissioner Ydanis Rodrigues, NYC Councilwoman and Transportation Committee Chairperson, Selvena Brooks Power, and NYC Comptroller Brad Lander. Each would have been better able, using their respective positions, powers and responsibilities, to help foster better coordination, more cost-effective transportation and improved bus, subway, ferry, and commuter rail services within the five boroughs.

**Larry Penner
Great Neck**

Escape from the Trans Rabbit Hole

The great author Walt Heyer has written several books on transgender regret, but his sixth and newest book, "Trans Life Survivors," is not his personal story. It's a compilation of the stories of many others caught up in today's "transmania." They specifically sought out Walt to get some much-needed support. They've shared their lonely, surreal experiences falling down the trans rabbit hole, hoping to escape as he did.

Walt's correspondents describe a wide range of frustrating and confusing experiences. Some are nudged into transgenderism by social pressures and emotional manipulation. Many are hastily sent into surgery without adequate counseling (or any counseling at all) or are misdiagnosed. Some of those regret their decision very shortly after having irreversible surgery.

Many concerns about childhood traumas are ignored by therapists who are politically motivated to push as many patients as possible into a sex change. They also fear intense ostracism and vicious backlash from the trans community if they "come out" as a potential "de-transitioner."

Walt wrote "Trans Life Survivors," he says, because he wants others "to catch a glimpse of the raw emotions and experiences of people who are harmed by the grand – and dangerous – experiment of cross-sex hormones and surgical affirming procedures."

I, for one, will not be attending any so-called Pride events this month but you will see me sitting in the most beautiful park in the world, Mosholu Parkway, on a bench reading Walt's book. I will also be ordering a copy for our local public library for others to read as well.

**Richard Marias
Norwood**

Fernandez Encourages Financial Literacy Among Youth

(continued from page 7)

"It really has been reliant on the school, and I guess principals, themselves, to say, 'This is something we need to offer to our school community.'" She said in the public school system, it's not mandated but as students enter college, there are electives they can take. "We want that elective to be available and [the students] made aware at an earlier age in high school so students can better understand their finances."

Fernandez, who is currently running for the State senate seat in Senate District 34, said conversations around the fact that college students who play Varsity sports are now being compensated for their skills is also sparking more conversations in the legislature about the need for more financial literacy among youth. "I think we just need to get ahead of the afterthought of it and make this part of the general conversation at an earlier age," she said.

The assemblywoman explained that entities like World of Money are paid by the schools to teach financial literacy, though students may need to sign up and pay a fee also. "Should there be funding assistance, students can get little scholarships to attend these courses," Fernandez said. "Unfortunately, [there's] nothing free right now to teach you how to be financially literate, but that should be the goal, that this is basic education that we're teaching

our young people."

Fernandez added that the lack of local banks also impacts upon young people's ability to understanding personal finances. "Cash checking is not a bank. Having local banks that can help you with loans, creating saving accounts, is a huge step in just being in the mindset and the action of being cautious with your financials."

She added, "Ultimately, if we can create communities, generations that have become more financially stable, achieving equity, then we're uprooting those that are impoverished, and we want to uplift our communities."

Lamb said World of Money's annual, youth, financial education training institute operates in June and July each year and the kids are with them from 9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. every day. The curriculum is taught by Wall Street professionals who dedicate some of their time to teaching children. The course is also available virtually to facilitate broader access.

World of Money is funded by corporations, sponsors, and through parent donations. "We say no-one pays [for a class] but everyone contributes to their own financial education," she said. "As a nonprofit, we always are applying for grants."

In terms of how the nonprofit measures its success, Lamb said, "I'm really proud to say, first of all, World of Money

exposes children to a world they didn't even know existed, and we attract students from economically diverse households."

"Children are very intuitive, and very few children will say to their parents, 'I want to go learn how to manage my money.' They like this gravy train! They love it, so they don't want to stop that," said Lamb. However, she said once they get past why their parents want them there, and the ramifications surrounding money [in life] are explained to them and why they need to be knowledgeable about this, they tend to get hooked.

She said they are told that money doesn't just exist to provide them with their wants but also their needs. "What about saving? What about investing? What about entrepreneurship? What about becoming a philanthropist?" she said. "And so, when you expose all of those tenets under the world of money, you have the child's attention," she added, adding that 99 percent of their students graduate.

There are three separate classrooms: the young moguls, aged 7 to 9, the rising moguls aged 10 to 12, and the teenage moguls, aged 13 to 18, to cater to different abilities. "It's very rigorous," said Lamb. "They have daily homework, they have a final quick quiz that they have to pass, they are monitored in terms of their attendance, their dress

code, all of that."

Rebekah Givan, 12, is from The Bronx and is a current "World of Money Rising Mogul." She said she started as a "Young Mogul" and has attended the World of Money Institute for the last six years. "Over the years, World of Money has changed how I think about money, and how I manage my money," she said. "Before, I thought money just grew on trees (you know what I mean) ...but now, I am asking questions like, 'How do you *make* money?' As a result, we talk about how I can *earn* money, and I have learned how to save and invest my money," she added.

Rebekah said, most of all, she's enjoyed the experience and has made new friends. In addition, she's learned about FICO scores when it comes to loan applications, how to obtain better interest rates, about prepaid, credit and debit cards, and even some Mandarin Chinese!

In terms of her plans of how to use her newfound knowledge, Rebekah concluded, "I am determined to be a philanthropist so I can give back to my community. For someone my age, financial education is important so we can grow up to be independent and take care of ourselves and others."

For more information on World of Money, go to <https://worldofmoney.org/>.

Heroes and Victims of COVID-19 Remembered

By DAVID GREENE

Over two years after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, various Bronx organizations were recognized for answering the call of service during the pandemic's early days at an event hosted by Councilman Rafael Salamanca (CD 17) at the New York Botanical Garden, while at a separate event, some Redwood trees planted last year were blessed and dedicated to the lives and memories of more than 40 victims of COVID-19.

Salamanca honored seven healthcare entities and food distribution companies during a luncheon at The New York Botanical Garden, on Southern Boulevard on Thursday, April 21. The seven honorees were Lincoln Hospital, Urban Health Plan, Baldo Specialty Foods, D'Arrigo New York, Hunts Point Produce Market, NYBG Bronx Community Farm Hub Initiative and the New York Common Pantry.

Recalling those early days, Salamanca told a crowd of invited guests, including several local community boards and officials from several Bronx police precincts, "Our office immediately started receiving calls about food. As I mentioned, the shelves were completely empty." Salamanca and his staff started reaching out to the 700 businesses in Hunts Point, seeking assistance and he recalled giving away 700 bags of fresh

produce to families in need on that very first day.

In a heartfelt tribute to the 3,000 staff members at Lincoln Hospital, the councilman said, "You have done wonders. My father was diagnosed with COVID on April 1st and on April 3rd, my dad passed away... It was Lincoln Hospital nurses who held my dad's hands in his final hours, and I just want to say thank you for being there for us, for thousands of New Yorkers."

Salamanca thanked police officers from the 41st, 42nd and 43rd precincts as well as members of Public Service Area 7, who assisted Salamanca and his team in transporting and distributing tons of food in the days immediately after the mandatory lockdowns.

Before introducing keynote speaker, Mayor Eric Adams, Salamanca recalled how he called Adams, who was then Brooklyn borough president, and Adams came to The Bronx with needed face masks. Salamanca said to Adams, "Mr. Mayor, you came through for the borough of The Bronx at a time of need and The Bronx never forgot that."

Adams briefly recalled his youth and how his mother became "more broken" from "the interactions" with city officials, then the unsettling feeling of having to seek help just to feed one's family.

Still speaking of his mother, Adams told the audience, "Because in April, when she transitioned, and I was in the hospital room with her, I said, 'Mommy I will never forget what you went through.'" He continued, "And the mom-

mies and daddies of today are not going to go through that while I'm the Mayor of the City of New York."

The mayor then thanked the honorees for assisting Bronxites during the worst of times, saying, "I am saying on behalf of them, 'thank you,' and one day, because of what you did during COVID, they're going to stand at a microphone somewhere in their position and reflect on your presence. You planted something inside them, like they planted inside of me."

On April 9, a planting of another sort was the focus of a public gathering at 'Fort Washington Walk' park at University Avenue and Reservoir Avenue in the vicinity of Jerome Park/Kingsbridge Heights. On that day Marianne Kraft and residents of the community were joined by members of Jerome Park Friends and Neighbors and the James Baldwin Outdoor Learning Center (JBOLC) who gathered for a tree and flower memorial ceremony, in the memory of 40 local residents or friends of local residents who died from COVID-19.

The three Redwood trees were planted last October and since then, Yannelys Tejeda and her children planted flowers near the trees in honor of her children's grandfather, Marcelino Abreu, who succumbed to COVID-19 at the age of 65.

Kraft told the crowd, "We are grateful that you have come to bless these young trees that will be here for many, many years to come to remind us of all the people who have died from COVID, our friends, and our neighbors." Kraft

said that when the trees bloom, they will produce flowers and "heart-shaped" leaves.

Deb Travis of Jerome Park Friends and Neighbors told the crowd, "When Marianne approached me, I thought this was just such a wonderful idea, because all of us really have been so strongly touched by COVID, and COVID made us feel like we had to hide inside, right? And it made us feel like our neighbors were far away." Travis now believes the trees help "make a space where we can come together and to see our friends and to see our neighbors, and to reconnect after this long silence."

During a prayer service, Rev. Joseph Franco said, "We also turn to you with sadness as we remember so many friends who have passed away during the last two years. We are called to remember them, to do something for them and to honor their memory. We do so by dedicating these recently planted trees. Bless them, dear Lord and with them, help us rededicate ourselves to protecting and serving our earth."

The names of 40 Bronxites or friends of Bronxites were then read aloud and members of the crowd were asked to call out the names of people they had known who had died from the virus. Raymond Pultinas, the founder of JBOLC, called out the name of Michael Green, who worked on the student newspaper "The Clinton News."

"He was really the forced behind the student empowerment," he said.

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Pride in The Bronx

By **EMILY SAWAKED**

A rainbow flag, doused by rain but still flying proud, was hoisted up a flagpole in front of Bronx County Courthouse on the Grand Concourse by officials, including Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, amid cheers and applause, as Pride Month was officially launched in The Bronx. The sidewalk was filled with joyous smiles on Thursday, June 2, after a ceremony marking the beginning of the month-long celebration was held inside the courthouse during which numerous, prominent LGBTQIA+ activists from the borough were honored for their work.

During the ceremony, a tradition started by Gibson's predecessor, former Bronx borough president, Ruben Diaz Jr., the new head of the borough's LGBTQIA+ task force, Alexis Ruiz, was announced. This year's honorees comprised several local LGBTQIA+ activists and figures.

Gibson said she will host a further Pride event on June 15, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. in Mott Haven with Destination Tomorrow, the borough's dedicated LGBTQIA+ center, headquartered on the third floor at 452 East 149th Street in Mott Haven. "It's going to be more of a celebratory party event at Rosa's at the Park," said Gibson. (The venue is located at 2568 Park Avenue.)

"We're going to have very little speaking because we did that at the Pride flag raising event, and we're going to acknowledge the LGBT leaders and the staff," she said. "We're going to talk about the awardees, then we're just going to party! I think it's important in the post-COVID-19 world, where we were isolated for two years, to have some fun!"

Several honorees were named at the opening Pride ceremony, from business owners like Carlos Cortes, of the Chocobar Cortes brand, to youth leaders like Jaisen Garcia-Castillo, who works in prevention services and outreach at Destination Tomorrow. Others included Lailani Muniz, chief operations officer at New York Transgender Bodybuilding Federation, Mx. B Hawk Snipes, entrepreneur, social activist, entertainer, and model.

Throughout the ceremony, it was clear the courthouse room was filled with eager leaders of various organizations and passionate supporters of Gibson. "It's crazy for us because we've been longtime supporters of Vanessa's," said Grace Dretrevarah, LGBT liaison & senior reentry peer & health facilitator at the Osborne Association, which serves individuals, families, and communities affected by the criminal justice system. She showed us an old picture of herself with Gibson.

Dretrevarah's aunt, Patricia Martin, agreed, saying she was also a longtime



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Vanessa Gibson (in red) and Deputy Bronx Borough President Janet Peguero (in pink) join members of the LGBTQIA+ community and an NYPD community affairs team member as they raise the rainbow flag amid some rainfall at Bronx Borough Hall, located at 851 Grand Concourse, on Thursday, June 2, 2022, to mark the beginning of Pride Month.



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Vanessa Gibson (in red) and Deputy Bronx Borough President Janet Peguero (in pink) join members of the LGBTQIA+ community who were honored at an event at Bronx County Courthouse, located at 851 Grand Concourse, on Thursday, June 2, 2022, to mark the beginning of Pride Month.

Gibson supporter. Asked her opinion about interactions between Bronxites in general and the LGBTQIA+ community, Martin said, "The Bronx is just as accepting as any other borough."

In light of recent anti-LGBT sentiment in different parts of the country and the recent "Don't Say Gay" law in Florida, *Norwood News* asked Gibson about some preconceptions that The Bronx is not an accepting place for the LGBTQIA+ community. "I feel like it's gotten a lot better," she said.

She added, "I think The Bronx was historically known as a borough that is not that progressive when it comes to LGBTQIA+ rights, and I think over the years, as you see more LGBT candidates run for office [and get elected], we have been able to celebrate the community in a real tangible way."

There were, in any event, no complications with the opening Pride ceremony other than the weather. Pride flags of various shapes and forms were waved around by cheerful onlookers

who clapped and cheered loudly, while others cried amid the retelling of some touching stories and award presentations.

Aside from the scheduled awards, there were a few people who were honored on the day as a surprise, like Sean Ebony Coleman for his ongoing work in the borough as executive director of Destination Tomorrow. Dirk McCall, director of Sunnyside Shines Business Improvement District (BID) was also surprised with an award. The John Wade Memorial Award, named after the late LGBTQIA political activist, who McCall greatly admired and had been friends with, was particularly emotional for the honoree.

"I knew John Wade for many years," McCall said. "John Wade was somebody, when I was a young leader, who was very helpful in telling me what I was doing right, and what I should do differently. He was a real inspiration. John was somebody who really set the parameters for how to be a LGBT political organizer," he added.

McCall has worked in The Bronx at three different times, but it was his work on launching the LGBTQIA+ task force, together with Diaz Jr., for which he was honored at the ceremony.

"We had a seat at the table," McCall said. "One of our goals was to keep the new LGBT center, Destination Tomorrow, the successor center to the Bronx Community Pride Center, involved with everything we did. We had the Third Avenue BID working with us. We did everything together. We did work on immigration issues, mental health, and how to combat all sorts of issues. Vanessa's going to do a lot more of that. The work is going to continue."

As for that ongoing work, itself, Gibson, in her prepared remarks, also spoke of the desire to decriminalize sex work, a situation which she said impacted a large number of both LGBTQIA+ community members and Bronxites in general. She also expressed her wish to protect healthcare and primary care, and to continue providing shelters for homeless LGBTQIA+ members, especially youth.

Throughout Pride month, there will also be a specific Pride Week celebration in The Bronx, starting Tuesday, June 14, and ending with a Pride Festival from noon to 6 p.m. at Westchester Avenue between Brook Avenue and Bergen Avenue.

Gibson concluded the event, saying, "Gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights." Meanwhile, as Rev. Vanessa Brown, who was also present at the event, said in her benediction, "Closets are for brooms, not people."

**Sile Moloney and Miriam Quiñones contributed to this story*

Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY & EMILY SAWAKED

EVENTS

A **Summer Film Series** will be screened at the Bronx Library Center, 310 East Kingsbridge Road at Briggs Avenue. On Saturday, June 18, at 2.30 p.m., there will be a free screening of the 2016 Marvel Film “Captain America: Civil War.” No registration is required and the event is open to adults over the age of 18 only. For more information, contact New York Public Library on (718) 579-4244 or visit: nypl.org/events.

Come test your knowledge during a fun-filled hour on **Black History Trivia**, Juneteenth Edition at the Bronx Library Center, 310 East Kingsbridge Road at Briggs

Avenue on Friday, June 24, from 1 to 3 p.m. Space for this event is limited. Prizes will be given to some participants. This event is for adults 18 and older. For more information, contact New York Public Library at (718) 579-4244 or visit: nypl.org/events.

The Bronx Chamber of Commerce will be partnering with several Bronx LGBTQIA organizations and will also launch a Bronx LGBTQIA+ business membership drive with the goal of providing culturally competent certification and business services to LGBT entrepreneurs and small businesses in the borough throughout **Pride Month** (June). Be on the lookout for a special, invitation-only, launch event with Bronx Chamber members, Ponce

Bank, and the Third Avenue Business Improvement District during the third week of June.

Take advantage of the many other events taking place across The Bronx, culminating with the official **Big Gay Bronx Brunch** on Saturday, June 18, which will benefit The Bronx Chamber Foundation’s Workforce Development Programs. There’s also the **1 Bronx Pride Festival** on Sunday, June 19, at 149th Street and Third Avenue in the HUB. Contact events@bronxchamber.org for more information.

This event is free and open to the public. For more information, visit: nyc.gov/parks.

MUSIC

Manny Manuel, Puerto Rican singer of merengue, bolero, and tropical music, became famous as a member of the group Los Sabrosos del Merengue, before launching a successful solo career in 1994. He will be performing at Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, located at 250 Bedford Park Blvd West, The Bronx, on Saturday, June 18, at 8 p.m. Visit www.LehmanCenter.org for more details.

MOVEMENT

Come and enjoy some **Outdoor Fun and Fitness** at St. James Park, 2530 Jerome Avenue at East 192 Street, Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., from June 1 to Sept. 30. This program includes spin classes, stretching, sports activities and games. The program is free and open to the public. For more information, visit: nyc.gov/parks.

KIDS

Kids aged 6 to 13 are invited to create **Arts and Craft Works** out of ordinary household items during this organized arts program hosted by the Parks Department at Poe Park Visitors Center, 2640 Grand Concourse at East Kingsbridge Road, every Tuesday and Thursday, from 3 to 4 p.m. from April 5 to June 23.

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Public and Community Meetings

The next **52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meeting will take place on **Thursday, June 23, at 7 p.m.** at North Central Bronx Hospital, located at 3424 Kossuth Avenue. 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 in September after the summer hiatus and is targeted to be held physically but this is to be confirmed. Contact KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meetings have been held via ZOOM. The meetings are usually held on the **first Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m.** The last meeting was held on June 1. For further details, contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

Norwood: Search for 22-Year-old Missing Woman

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating a 22-year-old woman reported missing in Norwood. Police said Shania Joseph of 3343 Decatur Avenue "was last seen Thursday, May 26, 2022, at approximately 12.00 hours [noon], leaving her residence." They added, "She is described as being approximately 5'3" tall, weighing 115 lbs., with brown eyes and brown hair. Unknown clothing description." A photo of Joseph is attached.

Anyone with information regarding this missing person 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 sub-

mit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.



Photo courtesy of the NYPD
SHANIA JOSEPH, 22, HAS been reported missing. She was last seen on May 26, 2022.



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CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY



Fordham Heights: 29-Year-Old Man Shot Dead

The NYPD said a 29-year-old man has died from a gunshot wound to the head in Fordham Heights. On Wednesday, June 7, at approximately 11.29 a.m., police said officers responded to a 911 call regarding a man who had been shot opposite 2323 Walton Avenue, located in the 46th precinct. Upon arrival, police discovered the man, laying on the ground with a gunshot wound to his head. EMS responded and transported the victim to St. Barnabas Hospital where he was pronounced deceased. There are no arrests, and the investigation remains ongoing. The identity of the deceased is pending family notification.



University Heights: Man Stabbed in Unprovoked Attack

The NYPD is asking for the public's assistance identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo above who is sought in connection to an assault that occurred in University Heights. It was reported to police that on Sunday, May 22, at around 10.25 p.m., in front of 1995 Sedgwick Avenue, an unidentified person allegedly stabbed a 59-year-old man in the head and torso with an unknown object, in an unprovoked attack. EMS transported the victim to St. Barnabas Hospital where he remains in serious condition.



Claremont Village: Man Allegedly Attempts to Lure Child

The NYPD is asking for the public's assistance identifying the individual seen in the accompanying photo below who is sought for questioning in connection to an incident involving the alleged luring of a child in Claremont Village. Police said on Wednesday, June 2, at around 7 a.m., behind 420 East



Wakefield: 34-Year-Old Man Shot in Head

The NYPD said a 34-year-old man died by gunshot wound to the head in Wakefield. Police officials said on Sunday, June 5, at around 8.39 a.m., officers responded to a 911 call about an aided man at Wilder Avenue and Cranford Avenue, within the confines of the 47th Precinct. Upon arrival, officers observed the man inside a vehicle with a gunshot wound to the left side of his head. EMS responded and pronounced the man deceased at the scene. There were no arrests and the investigation remained ongoing.

The identification of the deceased had been pending family notification. In the meantime, on June 6, police confirmed the

deceased has since been identified as Kimar Street, 34, of South Bond Street, Mount Vernon. The investigation remains ongoing.

University Heights: Man Assaulted with Metal Object

The NYPD is asking for the public's assistance locating the person seen in the accompanying photo below with the red hat who is sought for questioning in connection to an assault that occurred in University Heights. Police said on Wednesday, June 1, at around 5.59 p.m., inside 2460 Davidson Avenue in Fordham Manor, a 53-year-old man got into a verbal dispute with the suspect.

Police said the victim left the location and was followed by the assailant to 14 West Fordham Road in University Heights. As the victim was walking in front of the location, police said the suspect approached him from behind and began hitting him around the head and hand with an unknown metal object. According to the NYPD, the assailant fled the location to parts unknown. EMS responded and transported the aided victim to Saint Barnabas Hospital, in stable condition.

169th Street, the person allegedly followed a 12-year-old girl and exposed his penis to her, while allegedly offering her money in an attempt to lure her. The victim fled the location and the man allegedly continued to follow her. No physical injuries were reported as a result of the incident.

17-Year-Old Arrested for Possession of Gun in School

A Bronx mother was left "enraged" and "shaken," following news that at the Harlem school attended by two of her children, a 17-year-old male student was found to have been in possession of a gun on the school campus on Tuesday, June 7. He has since been arrested. Police said at approximately 12.30 in the afternoon on June 7, officers were informed that "a student was in possession of a firearm" inside Democratic Prep Endurance High School, located at 240 East 123rd Street in Manhattan, also the location of Harlem Prep Elementary School.

The student was taken into custody and a loaded 9 mm firearm was recovered, they said. There were no injuries arising from the incident. Police said the teen was charged with criminal possession of a weapon.

A school spokesperson later explained that an alert security guard noticed a student reaching into their backpack during an altercation in a stairwell and immediately intervened. The security guard secured the student and their backpack, the school was put on an immediate lockdown, and the police were called.

The spokesperson added, "They responded swiftly, conducted a search that found the firearm, secured the scene, established that there was no further threat, and the lockdown ended 19 minutes later. We are thankful to our guard and to the NYPD for their swift responses."

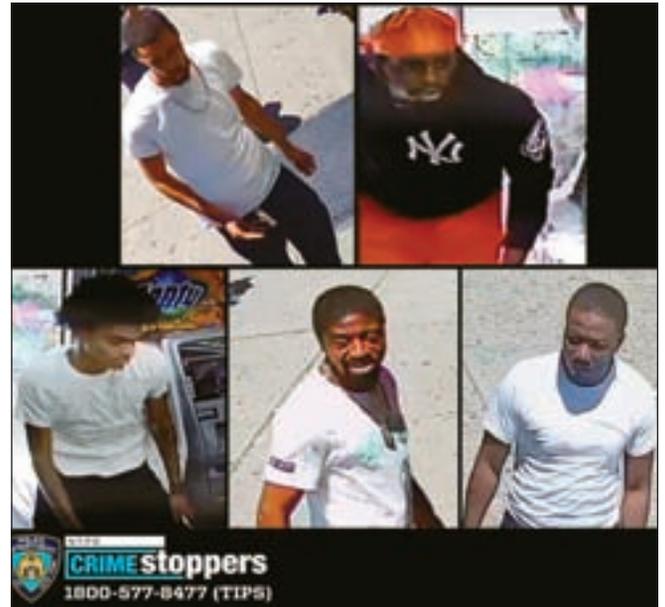
Monique Riley, the Bronx mother whose kids attend the school, said the school informed her that security scanners are in place in the high school but not in the elementary school, and she worried that older students could ask younger kids to bring a gun onto the campus. *Norwood News* asked the school for comment.

The spokesperson responded, saying, "DPPS has not implemented metal detectors indefinitely at its schools. They are using metal detectors / wand scanners this week at both high schools on 123rd street out

of an abundance of caution and in accordance with NYPD and DOE school safety guidance. Only high school students are scanned." We also reached out to the DOE for comment but officials said as the impacted school was a charter school, they could not comment.

Tremont: NYPD Seeking 5 Persons of Interest following Murder

The NYPD is appealing to the public for help identifying a group of individuals seen in the accompanying below photo who are sought for questioning as part of an ongoing investigation into the murder of a 27-year-old man in Tremont. On Thursday, June 9, police responded to a 911 call regarding a man who had been shot at 595 East Tremont Avenue.



Upon arrival, officers observed the man, unconscious and unresponsive, with multiple gunshot wounds to the body and torso. EMS responded and transported the victim to St. Barnabas Hospital where he was pronounced deceased. The deceased was later identified as Avanti Frowner of 5750 West Centinela Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

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 anonymously by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.

KEEP THE LOST ART OF LETTER WRITING ALIVE!

WRITE TO US

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Letters should be 400 words max, and include the author's name. Anonymous letters will not be published, but names will be withheld upon reasonable request.

Volunteers Continue “Flagging” Tradition at Woodlawn Cemetery

By DAVID GREENE

Volunteers, once again, carried out the painstaking task of locating more than 8,000 graves of American servicemen and women to place American flags on them in honor of Memorial Day at Woodlawn Cemetery.

Volunteers fanned out across the sprawling cemetery, located at 4199 Webster Avenue at East 233rd Street, and placed small flags at the headstones or in front of community mausoleums as a gesture of respect and tradition for the country’s fallen military members.

This year’s “flagging” season began on Saturday, May 21, and continued through Sunday, May 29. On Sunday, May 22, volunteers, including a local cub scout troop, were greeted by James Hendon, commissioner of NYC Department of Veterans’ Services, and Zach Iscol, commissioner of NYC Department of Emergency Management, before they got to work flagging the gravesites.

On Saturday, May 28, Susan Olsen of Woodlawn Conservancy told *Norwood News*, “When people are buried, we record if they’re a veteran or not. With COVID, our volunteers have not had the access to the materials they used to have, but we’ve added the people that were buried this last year, so every year it keeps growing.”

Olsen estimates that another 100 veterans were bur-



Photo courtesy of Woodlawn Conservancy

LOCAL CUB AND boy scout troops volunteer as “flaggers” marking the graves of veterans with American flags in honor of Memorial Day, May 30, 2022.

ied at Woodlawn over the past 12 months, bringing the total number of veterans buried at Woodlawn to about 8,600.

According to Olsen, this year, Woodlawn had about 150 volunteers throughout the flagging season, including mem-

bers of Community Board 7 (CB7), Cub Scout Pack 520 from Morningside Heights, and Pack 777, both from the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Volunteers spread out across the 400-acre cemetery and flagged as many graves as possible.



Photo by David Greene

“FLAGGING” VOLUNTEERS (L-R), BRANT Alper, Trina Alper and Bruce Campbell, finish putting the names of veterans on American flags before placing the flags at community mausoleums in time for Memorial Day on Saturday, May 28, 2022.



Photo courtesy of Woodlawn Conservancy

AN AMERICAN FLAG marks the gravesite of a U.S. service member in honor of Memorial Day at Woodlawn Cemetery.

Famous soldiers buried at Woodlawn include Civil War veteran and newspaper publisher, Joseph Pulitzer, as well as Sergeant Natale Greco, a Bronx native whose B-24 was shot down over Germany during World War II.

In general, the cemetery currently has around 310,000 individual grave sites and nearly 1,300 private mausoleums. Woodlawn was designated a national historic landmark in 2011.

Norwood resident, Bruce Campbell, was joined by two of his neighbors, Brant Alper and his daughter Trina, when he volunteered for flagging season. They were working inside an office, putting stickers with the names of veterans on hundreds of American flags that were then placed in boxes and picked up by more volunteers who later placed them on the graves and mausoleums.

“We are preparing flags for those veterans who are in the community mausoleums,” Campbell said. “These are folks who don’t have individual graves or individual markers, but we have 13 or 14 community mausoleums that are spread out all over the cemetery. Think of

them as apartment houses for the dead, for people who don’t want to be buried in the ground, but don’t want to spend millions of dollars for a private family mausoleum.”

Campbell continued, “For example, Robert Moses is in one of our community mausoleums, and because we don’t have a plot, with a stone for us to put the flag in the ground in front of, we put their names on the individual flags, and then put them in front of the community mausoleum.”

The Norwood native said he grew up as a “Navy brat” with both parents serving in the military, but that was not the reason behind his volunteering. “I think it’s an important thing to do, and I’ve been involved with the cemetery for quite a while,” he said, adding that he even gives guided tours.

Asked about his assistants, Campbell replied, “Brant started flagging about five or so years ago and was so taken by it that he comes back every year, and this year, he brought his lovely daughter.”

For additional information on events and tours at Woodlawn Cemetery, visit www.woodlawn.org

Jerome Gun Hill BID & Laura Alvarez Unveil New Street Mural

By SÍLE MOLONEY

The Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District (BID), in partnership with Bronx-based artist, Laura Alvarez, joined local elected officials representing Norwood on June 8 for a short, afternoon ceremony under the sunshine for the unveiling of the artist's new asphalt street mural, located at the BID's "Street Seat" area along Jerome Avenue's shopping hub.

The BID, in partnership with New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), created the Street Seat in 2021, as reported, to bring more open space, seating, and placemaking opportunities to Norwood.

The Street Seat area is an engaging, accessible public space with free seating for use by community members. There, they can sit, relax, gather for free programming, or simply enjoy a take-out lunch from a local restaurant while soaking up the atmosphere.

Each year, the BID commissions a Bronx-based artist to design and install an asphalt mural on the parklet, and this year, BID officials said they were delighted to work with Alvarez, and were excited to unveil the artist's new work.

Jennifer Tausig, executive director of the Jerome Gun Hill BID welcomed those gathered for the occasion. "We created this public space about a year ago for people to use, who may be waiting for the bus or may be waiting to go to City MD or may just want to sit and have a bite to eat," she said. "We couldn't have done it without the help of our elected officials and of course, our amazing artist, Laura Alvarez, so thank you to everyone."

Alvarez is an illustrator, author, designer, visual artist, muralist, community activist and educator. Born in Valencia, Spain, she studied Fine Arts in Spain and England. In New York City, she juggles her City job, her career as an artist with her commitments to her Bronx community.

Alvarez is interested in the connections people make with her art and said there is no better place to make those connections than in the streets. She thanked the BID for inviting her to be a part of the project. "It was really amazing," she said. "Sunday, we had the whole community come and paint and help the basics of the base of the mural, and then I spent another two days with another local artist, just painting and everybody, for the most part, had a very good, positive reaction about it. They loved the colors and [...inaudible...] and I hope the community uses it and enjoys it like I enjoyed painting it all, so thank you."

Tausig later introduced Ariana Cipriani, manager of neighborhood



Photo by Síle Moloney

(L TO R) ARIANA CIPRIANI, manager of neighborhood development at the Jerome Gun Hill BID, Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez, artist, Laura Alvaro, Sen. Jamaal Bailey, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, Jennifer Tausig, executive director of the Jerome Gun Hill BID and a representative from one of the elected official's offices pose for a photo during the ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the unveiling of Alvarez's new street mural on Jerome Avenue, by East Gun Hill Road in Norwood, The Bronx on June 8, 2022.

development at the BID, adding that the mural project had really been her brainchild and she had helped facilitate it.

"So, this parklet space, over the last year, has become a really great fixture for the community," said Cipriani. "If you come out here during lunch hours, people are enjoying their lunch, they're using this space to wait for the bus. We're really proud of this project, because last year and this year, the art, the planting, the pavement has all been done by Bronx-based artists and vendors."

She continued, "It's really a community-driven project. Community members actually selected the design on Instagram out of the other murals that Laura had done. We're just really proud of this special place. There aren't a lot of spaces like this in Norwood where you can just have a lot of free programming, community events, giveaways in a space that is accessible and welcoming for all."

Cipriani went on to say that the space had really become a tool for the Jerome Gun Hill BID and its neighbors and that the small businesses on Jerome Avenue loved the space and their customers use it. "We've had a really great, positive reaction to it," she said. "So, from June to October, we'll be finding ways to have Bronx Bound Book here, giveaways, music, we partner with health insurers on community-driven events programming, and we'd love for you all to come and be a part of [it]."

For his part, Bailey thanked the BID and Alvarez for the new mural.

"Creatives and artists are critical, not just to teach our kids in school, but for all of us to be able to see that it inspires us by, literally, the color palette wakes us up as we walk by," he said.

"It inspires us to think about something and think freely to beyond what our day was, and in my mind, Ms. Alvarez, I see a lot that I can interpret about this piece, and not to sound like a pseudo-art aficionado, but I see a lot of brightness, and I see a lot of colors. I see a lot of passion and the passion is indicative of those folks in this community who work hard for what they have, and they love their community."

Bailey said he thought the mural was emblematic of our community: full of vibrancy, full of color, full of life and full of passion. "So, I thank you for encapsulating what this borough, and what this neighborhood is about in this piece of art. It is something that will inspire people as they drive by, and they'll wonder 'What is that?' They may take a seat to drink a cup of coffee, or a glass of water, or their beverage of choice, and it's very important to make sure that we continue to cultivate the arts and to the BID, thank you so much for all that you do for cultivating art not just here, but everywhere throughout the years in your jurisdiction. Ms Alvarez, thank you so much."

Tausig then said the Jerome Gun Hill BID was lucky enough to be represented by not one but two assembly members due to being on the border between two districts.

Fernandez thanked the BID and Alvarez for bringing beauty to the

borough. "We're a fast-paced city," she said. "We're moving, we're running, and sometimes we wait, and art helps us calm down. It lets us engage with emotions, with visions and to have it right here in this little corridor is a beautiful thing."

She added, "I'm so happy that we do have places like this that are helping our City and our [community] members relax and enjoy the little things, enjoy the colors and think about what the images and shapes do for you. It's really a bit of therapy and I think we need to see a little more of it around our City, so I'm really so happy to be here. I'd love to see the whole block in these rainbow colors, but this is great. I'd love to see it again, so thank you so much."

For his part, Dinowitz said, "Art energizes the community." This was followed by some good-natured laughter as he was then drowned out by a couple of locals who happened to pass by carrying a speaker which was blasting out Hip-Hop beats. The group dutifully took their cue and "shook it down" briefly, before the assemblyman continued.

"I've been coming here for a really long time," Dinowitz continued. "I've seen this area through the best of times and the worst of times, but we're going through pretty good times right now, and I think in large part that's due to the hard work of the people." We have stores, and years ago, we had so many [inaudible/companies?]."

He said the community had been reinvigorated, and it had taken a lot of hard work. "I'm very grateful for that because I like color," he said. "Years ago, I'll tell you a secret. All the offices in Albany were painted white, and then *somebody* decided to paint his office in color, and sure enough, other people followed suit and now, most of the offices have different colors. Yes, I'm a trailblazer, but I don't have the talent to do something like this," he said of the mural.

"This is a type of place where yes, maybe I would sit down for a few minutes to eat a slice of pizza, but it's really an asset to the community and this community deserves the best, so happiness is happening to everybody. This is great! Thank you so much."

Before the official ribbon-cutting ceremony got underway, Tausig concluded the event by also thanking District 11 City Councilman Eric Dinowitz who she said was busy downtown negotiating what later turned out to be an adopted \$101 billion city budget for FY2023.

For her part, Alvarez has a mantra: "Everyone is an artist." To learn more, visit www.lauralvarez.com.

Elections 2022: All Tracey Towers Residents Will Vote Onsite After Poll Site Change Reversed

(continued from page 9)

center.

She said to get to Scott Tower as a senior was feasible but not convenient. “I either get a cab or wait a half an hour for a bus or try to walk,” Caldwell said, adding that if voters wanted to vote early, they would still have to walk over to Scott Tower or Montefiore community center to do so, as early voting was not provided at Tracey Towers.

She continued, in part, “They had it one time, I remember,” adding that now, the building really has mostly retirees and seniors. “They [other residents] don’t want to do the voting because we went down in the voting rights also, because we have a whole lot of people in this building who [are] not...they cannot vote, because they’re not citizens, so that takes the whole voting thing from us,” she said.

“I don’t know if this is the reason why they’re taking.. I don’t know why....but to me, it seems like, they are taking the people who *can* vote out of the building, and leaving the building with a percentage [inaudible] that’s not much.... because they know there are a lot of immigrants here who can’t vote,” she added.

“Not that we [seniors] can’t get around, but if this is going to be something permanent, then let us know!” Caldwell said. “This way, even if we have to do it, we can make arrangements. We start voting and I know we don’t vote that often, what if we wake up on the [28th] and it’s pouring down raining? How are we going down to Scott Tower? We’re not going to walk, and we’re not going to stand there if it’s raining!”

Caldwell went on to say that some Tracey Towers residents had not received their voting card by June 7, but she assumed that this was because the cards were sent out in alphabetical order. She said many *had* received them and that about 10 people called her to query the change, reportedly saying, “You’re not the only one. I don’t understand this!”

Norwood News received a similar confirmation from another Tracey Towers resident who preferred not to disclose their name. Caldwell said she also contacted Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) about the issue who, she said, was also reportedly surprised to learn of it. She said he promised he would look into it and get back to her.

Meanwhile, *Norwood News* contacted the Bronx office of NYC BOE the same day [June 7] to ask what the reason was for the change of polling site. We did not receive an immediate response. On Friday, June 10, District 11 City Councilman Eric Dinowitz, in whose district Tracey Towers falls, shared the attached notice, and explained that due to redistricting, the BOE initially changed the voting process whereby some Tracey Towers voters were no longer scheduled to vote on site and were, instead, listed to go to an alternate voting center.

“However, after closely addressing this situation with the NYCBOE, the residents of Building 20 will not have to go to a different polling location for these upcoming primary elections and will be able to keep vot-

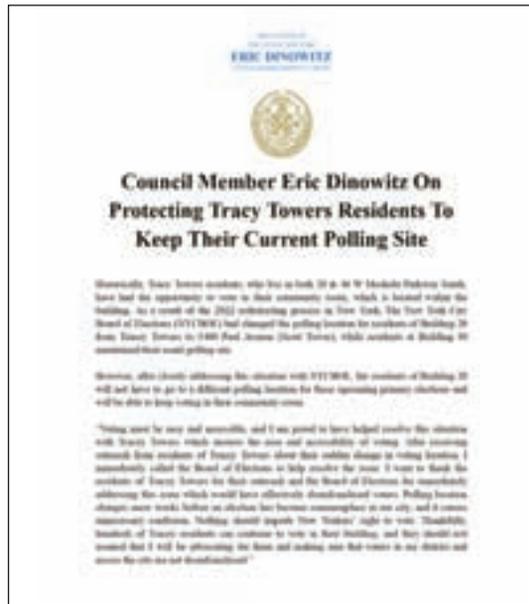


Image via Twitter

PRESS RELEASE FROM District 11 City Council Member Eric Dinowitz dated June 10, 2022, regarding the reversal of an earlier Board of Elections decision to split up Tracey Towers voters across different voting centers in the upcoming June primaries on June 28, 2022.

ing in their community room,” the councilman wrote in the notice, adding that “voting must be easy and accessible.”

He continued, in part, saying, “Polling location changes mere weeks before an election has become commonplace in our City, and it causes unnecessary confusion. Nothing should impede New Yorkers’ right to vote.”

Upon receipt of the notice on Friday from the councilman’s office, *Norwood News* followed up once more with the BOE. We asked why the change had been made, since the redistricting of the assembly districts did not impact Tracey Towers. The housing complex still falls, in its entirety, into Assembly District 80, represented by Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez. We did not receive an immediate response.

Another Tracey Towers resident we spoke to said she recently received a notice from Jean Hill, president of the Tracey Towers Tenants Organization, which read, To All Residents of Building 20, voting for the 6/28 primary: you will vote here at Tracey Towers. Do not go to Scott Towers.”

Hill later told *Norwood News*, “The minute I received my card in the mail telling me to vote at Scott Towers, I contacted several of our elected officials to get it corrected. Tracey Towers has been a polling site for over 40 years, and they split the building in half. Residents in Building 20 (only) were required to vote at Scott Towers. Tenants in Building 40 would vote at their regular polling place in Building 40. Fortunately, we were able to get this corrected.”

Unlike the congressional and State senate districts, the assembly districts approved by the State legislature in early February 2022 were *not* later made subject to

revision by a court-appointed special master in May, the result of a legal challenge, and the assembly district maps approved in February will remain in place for the upcoming primaries in June and for the general elections in November.

However, it was announced on Friday, June 10, that a *new* court ruling, brought about due to a separate legal challenge, had since decided that the assembly district maps approved in February 2022 *were* finally deemed invalid also “based on procedural infirmity,” according to court documents, and therefore, new assembly district maps *will* finally be redrawn by a court-appointed special master. However, this will be done in time for the *following* elections *in 2024*. The petitioner of the additional legal challenge was Paul Nichols et al.

On Monday, June 13, Vincent Ignizio, deputy executive director at the BOE, responded to our inquiries regarding the sudden change of polling site at Tracey Towers, saying, in part, “With the redistricting, the board had to create new election districts and poll site assignments.”

We responded, confirming, once again, that the *Tracey Towers location*, itself, had not been affected by redistricting this year since it was, and remains, in Assembly District 80. We asked, once again, therefore what the reason was for the change of polling site. Ignizio responded saying, “All Assembly Districts and Election Districts were altered this year due to redistricting. They will be altered again in 2024 due to the Courts finding Assembly District lines unconstitutional as well. Tracy Towers will be an active polling site this year for all 3 elections (2 primaries and the General).”

We responded, explaining that following the decision by the courts on or about April 29, it was known that the assembly districts, which were approved by the State legislature in February 2022, *were not* due to be [further] amended this year ahead of the 2022 primaries, and that the April court ruling had been in respect of the State senate and congressional districts *only*.

Also, as above, the assembly district maps approved by the legislature in February 2022 had not impacted upon Tracey Towers, which was, and remains, in A.D. 80. The Tracey Towers residents received the notice about the change of polling site for the upcoming June primaries on or about June 6, at which time it was already known there was no redistricting impact [this year] on Tracey Towers.

It wasn’t until June 10 that a *further court ruling* announced that finally the assembly districts would indeed be amended as well, *but only in 2024*, so again, no impact for the upcoming 2022 June primaries. We therefore asked the BOE again the reason for the change of polling site at Tracey Towers a few weeks before the June primaries, even though the change has since been reversed. We did not receive an immediate response.

For more information on the latest voting guide for the upcoming primaries, go to: <https://www.norwoodnews.org/nyc-cfb-voter-guide-now-available-for-some-primary-elections-scheduled-for-june-28-2/>.

MMCC Youth Rally Against Gun Violence

(continued from page 1)

shootings this year and 19 shooting victims.

Chants of “Enough is enough!” and “This is a school zone, not a war zone!” could be heard through the streets as the determined group, followed by program directors at and guided by a police escort, marched down East Gun Hill Road, over the Bronx River Parkway, past Gun Hill Houses along the 1.1-mile route, with Evander Field in Williamsbridge as their destination.

Some young people shared their reasons for marching with us. “We walk because we care about what is happening in my community,” said Jamar Benard, while Javon Humphrey said, “These shootings are scary; we can’t go to the park or walk to the store.” Another youth named Wasir said, “Gun violence impacts us all, not just adults or kids, but the entire community. We need stricter gun control.”

Fueled by what MMCC directors called the kids’ own anger at the ongoing violence all around them, the young protesters were encouraged to stand up for their beliefs. The directors said the kids hoped to use their voices to spark change within their communities, particularly around East Gun Hill Road, which has seen three shootings in the vicinity of the center in the last seven months.

“Gun Hill, itself, has been highly affected,” said Tara Palmer, youth director at MMCC’s Dekalb Avenue location, which intersects with East Gun Hill Road. “Since I’ve been working here the last seven months, there’s already been three shootings, one of which...a teen ran into our building, thinking he got shot and it really scared us.”

MMCC is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year and the MMCC team pride themselves on the work and the services they have provided at their various locations across the Bronx and Harlem to community members of all ages. They offer several different programs, catering especially to youth. Among these is the Advance & Earn program, funded by the center’s partner, **New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)**.

The goal is to support youth **aged 16 to 24** to obtain their **high school equivalency**, formerly known as the GED, while the **Advance Training Track** is designed for youth **aged 21 to 24** who are interested in obtaining their **commercial driver’s license**.

In addition, there are various after-school programs, the Boys & Girls Club Teen Center, the Child Development Center, Saturday Academy, senior centers, programs catering for special needs, sports, youth employment, and workforce development & continuing education. In addition, the Train & Earn culinary program prepares students for entry-level positions in the food service industry. The Dekalb Ave center has also opened a food pantry for those in need, which was particularly busy during the early days of the



Photo by Emily Sawaked

A CHILD PARTICIPATING in a Mosholu Montefiore Community Center program addresses her peers at Evander Field in Williamsbridge at the end of a rally marking Gun Violence Awareness Month on Friday, June 3, 2022.

pandemic.

Rita Santelia is CEO of MMCC and said, “What we noticed in the last few years is that many of our families would, when they were in crisis, leave us and be forced to go to Manhattan, for example, to get services. In the last five years, we’ve implemented the department of support services, and they no longer have to leave us.”

She added, “We help them with housing. We help them with free tax services, and in a couple of years, we are hoping to collaborate, and actually do supportive housing for kids who are aging out of foster care.”

MMCC partners with schools as well, providing “Cornerstone” and “Beacon” programs focused on local youth, along with other services. The Beacon programs serve children aged 6 and older, as well as adults, and operate in the afternoons and evenings, on weekends, and during school holidays and vacation periods, including summer, to provide academic support.

“We put up a community school in [P.S.] 86 [in Kingsbridge Heights],” Santelia continued. “We just got a grant. That was from a longtime partnership with the principal that we were able to get that grant.”

She said the center also infuses some of the high schools with its OASIS program which focuses on drug prevention. Some staff and attendees of MMCC programs offered outside of the Dekalb Avenue center participated in the rally as well. “We also go to some of our high schools and do some restorative justice work,” Santelia added.

According to Santelia, this work takes kids outside of their local communities and presents them with different opportunities. Many have been impacted by violence in their lives, either directly or indirectly and the program teaches them what they can do to plan a future path for themselves, whether that involves college or not.

The kids are taken to camps and res-

taurants and their educational path is discussed to see what is impacting upon it. “I mean, that’s probably why we’re doing this rally,” said Santelia. “From this level of interaction with them, they felt empowered.”

Tashan Dawkins, director of youth services at the center, was at the forefront of the rally, giving the kids the tools they needed to support a cause which has triggered strong feelings within them.

Both Palmer and another director said the kids were really traumatized by the recent wave of national gun violence, adding that they wanted to come up with a rally or walk, and had used the word “walk,” in particular. “Then, the young people developed the entire thing, what they wanted to see, how we wanted it to be executed,” said Dawkins. “We were just the adults to say, ‘Hey, we believe in you! We believe in your passion; we’re going to support you.’”

According to Dawkins, there wasn’t a lot of time to prepare for the rally because the idea sparked the day after the May 24th Uvalde school shooting in Texas in which *21 people, including 19 children, were killed and 17 injured*. Dawkins also stressed the importance of safety during the event.

“We just want to make sure that the young people are safe, and that they’re sending their message that, ‘We are here. We are trying to take back control. We want stricter gun control,’” she said.

The directors assisted the group in creating a petition, both on paper and on their social media platforms, the goal of which was to garner as much support and help as they could to raise awareness of the issue.

MMCC relies heavily on funding from federal and State programs, which provides an income to those working at the center and also provides funds for individual programs. According to Santelia, this can be an issue, when they don’t have enough funding.

On May 4, at MMCC’s virtual gala cel-

ebrating its 80th anniversary, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) confirmed funding of \$250,000 for programs combating drug use, gun violence, gang activity and others, saying, “The work that you have done has literally helped tens of thousands of people in my district and around The Bronx and you’ve made a huge difference in the lives of so many people.” Despite this, more funding is always needed.

“It would be amazing if the fairy godmother comes down and gives us an endowment or gives us money to be able to open up additional facilities like this one, just so that we can actually keep up with the demands of the community that we’re serving,” Santelia said, adding that the demands are great.

Nonetheless, the rally was a success, especially in the eyes of the directors, who were impressed with the “kinetic energy” that pulled all of it together in a little over a week. They said it was a “hands-on” initiative, with the entire team working with the kids to make it happen.

“It is giving the community a little more awareness of what we do at MMCC,” said Domonic Smith, OASIS program director, who is also involved in the restorative justice program. “I’m super impressed with them [the kids], and it was little guys, like a kindergartner who was with us; they get it,” he said.

Since the march took place, new gun legislation has been passed at both State and federal level. At the end of the rally, after some final words, and on instruction from the directors, the group, in unison, released a flurry of individual balloons high into the sky, a small tribute by each youngster to individual gun violence victims, either known or unknown to them.

“I really hope that community members really take that in,” said Palmer. “It’s really affecting the kids. They should not have to endure the pain of getting shot, of being killed early. They should not have to die young, and their parents shouldn’t have to be burying them.”

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



Photo by Emily Sawaked

KIDS AND YOUTH attending Mosholu Montefiore Community Center programs release white balloons as a small gesture in honor of individual victims of gun violence, whether known or unknown to them, at the end of a rally at Evander Field in Williamsbridge on Friday, June 3, 2022 to mark Gun Violence Awareness Month

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