



# NORWOOD NEWS

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## FOOTBALL MEETS FIRE SAFETY IN THE OVAL



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

**AN FDNY SAFETY** Education Unit explains to a family of three that if they call the FDNY, the department will send someone to their home and install a free smoke detector. (L to R, front row) Cristine Alleyne, Oliver Alleyne, and Tanisha Hundes, and (back row) firefighter, Damian Waite, Captain Gerald Rocco, firefighter, Tom McKeon, at the Williamsbridge Oval park located in the Norwood section of The Bronx during an FDNY Football Skills & Drills event on July 30, 2022.

By MIRIAM QUIÑONES

It was a fun-filled, sunny day all around as a Football Skills & Drills Camp was held in the Williamsbridge Oval in Norwood on Saturday, July 30, hosted

by FDNY Community Affairs, the FDNY Office of Recruitment and Retention, and the FDNY Bravest Football Team in conjunction with local Norwood football group, the Bronx Bucca-

neers.

Participants received training on not only some useful football skills, but fire safety training, and emergency preparedness and CPR training too. In

addition, participants registered for smoke alarms to be installed in their homes, and there were plenty of giveaways and fun games too.

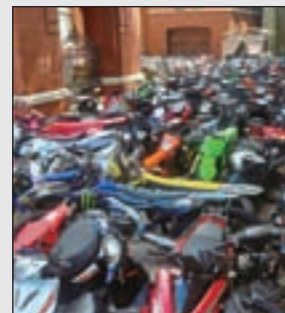
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Photo courtesy of John Perez

### JOHN PEREZ

## Elections 2022: John Perez on Family, Training & the Environment

### By EMILY SAWAKED

A U.S. army veteran, single father, and Democratic candidate for Senate District 34, which covers parts of The Bronx and Westchester counties, John Perez has run unsuccessfully for elected office in the past. He is one of three candidates in the race to succeed State Sen. Alessandra Biaggi who is running for Congress in NY-17. Having lived a long and experienced life, Perez said he is eager to serve his district and the rest of the State.

His motivation to begin another campaign stems from how he was raised and in particular, his father's influence. "My family, that's what we did," he said. "We were always public servants in a big capacity. I mean, they renamed a street after my dad...He did not want me to go to the army. He said, 'No, I got to get you ready. You're going to be in public service.'"

But in 1989, Perez's father was shot and killed in front of him, following an argument between the two about Perez wanting to join the army. "I was upset with my dad," the candidate said. "I wasn't talking with him for like three days. He was upset with me, I was upset with him, I didn't want to talk to

him; I wanted to join the army."

He said one of his father's drivers [from the family business] was sent to go get Perez from across the street and bring him home. "That's when the guy came in and shot him in his face," Perez said. "My dad actually died on my lap. His last words were.....with a smile on his face, he said, 'You can go.'"

Perez said his father was allegedly responsible for institutionalizing the liberty cab private car service in New York City. He alleges that his father's idea to unionize the Hispanic taxi drivers was the reason he was killed. Now, unionizing the liberty cab drivers, or the non-medallion taxi drivers, has become one of Perez's missions.

As well as that change, he also is writing his own piece of legislation. "I'm writing a piece of legislation that I would like to introduce which would require the senate and assembly to conduct and publish a risk assessment associated with any law enacted in New York State," Perez said.

He said this was especially in response to the bail reform law [which went into effect in 2020]. "Because the most reckless law ever passed that is going to go down in history is this bail

reform law," he said. "There was no type of accountability taken into consideration, no risk assessment taken into consideration, they just went off and started appeasing the masses."

Perez continued, "Of course, the criminals are going to march and rally, and their family members or whatever, because in their mind they think that their people are innocent. Yet, I got a dead father in 1989, you got a three-year-old child that was hit by a shot coming outside of her daycare, you got another kid that was shot in a car seat, you got police officers that were shot. So, what is the risk assessment?"

The other most important changes he wants to bring to The Bronx are trade schools and a military academy. "I just don't want a building. I want a campus," he said. "I want this campus to be free, and we have a location, but I want this campus to be open until 9 o'clock at night. I'm even exploring the possibility of possibly having dorms for students that have issues at home."

Perez said he wants the location to be a place where there is discipline, attention to detail, teamwork, and physical fitness.

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# A SUBJECT THAT IS OFTEN TOO DIFFICULT TO TALK ABOUT MAKES FOR GOOD READING.

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# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**

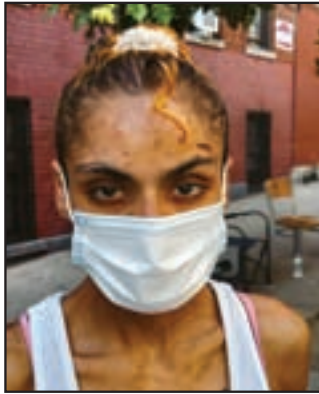


This week, we asked readers who they believe when it comes to the bail reform debate, since progressives and some public defenders allege the rise in crime is not linked to bail reform, while the mayor and law enforcement allege it is.



"The people that are actually saying that it does... I mean they become brazen if you're not going to punish people. As anybody, they're going to become opportunists and to me, bail reform is contributing to the increase in crime. The DAs, the judges, they should be held accountable too and they should be removed. You can say [crime] it's worse than [in] the 80s. I used to walk around... I'm 43 and I've never seen these kinds of robberies. You never heard of it like this with these types of numbers. Every time you turn on the news there's someone getting robbed, and I used to walk around The Bronx back in the 80s and the 90s and I'm more concerned today."

**Rasheed White,**  
Westchester



"Bail reform should be eliminated; for those that do the crime, they should pay the time. They should stay in jail. People with gun charges and charged with more serious crimes should not be released and they should stay inside. The crime is getting higher because there's no discipline. They're getting released on bail and come out to do the same thing all over again, because they're taking the system as a joke. The politicians and the judges should be held accountable."

**Michelle Sanchez,**  
Bedford Park



"The bail reform is to blame for the rise in crime. The reason is because there's no consequence for anyone's actions, for those who have repeated offences. There's so much more forgiveness in the court system for the criminal that there's no justice for the victim. When the legislators went into bringing in bail reform because an individual had died in jail and we understand that, that the system is broken, but to understand that the system is broken, and then they went ahead with bail reform, and to release everyone and everybody without taking a look at their records... Some have the longest records ever and they get to come out of jail and continue their activities. It's not the judges. The judges are appointed by the elected officials, so they're not going to go against the Democratic Party."

**Irene Estrada,**  
Pelham Gardens

*Editor's Note: Irene Estrada is the Democratic female district leader for Assembly District 80.*



"I mostly blame the system and the judges because they keep letting the criminals out of jail. I think the politicians need to tweak the bail reform law. The politicians and the judges are wrong, but mostly it's the judges because they keep letting the criminals out of jail and the law system is already messed up. I'm upset that a person used to be held on Rikers for long periods of time for petty crimes, but now they should be more in the middle and hold people accountable for the more serious crimes."

**Raven Chesnut,**  
Norwood



"I do see an increase in crime but honestly, crime is going to happen regardless. So, whether you impose bail or whether you have no bail, crime is always going to be around. I do think [the rise in crime] is due to the pandemic and the economy. I think it involves a lot. I don't think it's just whether there's no bail or not. People are all about success. A lot of people are just going to point their finger at whoever they want to take the blame. That's the one thing about people, not everybody wants to take responsibility for their own actions. They don't want to take accountability, so it's easy to point the finger at someone else and let them worry about it."

**Venice Turraine,**  
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# NEWS BRIEFS

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

## Bedford Park Fire, No Injuries

A fire which broke out in Bedford Park on July 27 resulted in no injuries, according to the FDNY. Officials said units responded to 3010 Valentine Avenue at 12:56 p.m. for reports of a fire on the 5th floor of a 6-story, multiple dwelling [Apt. 5G] on Wednesday, July 27. An FDNY spokesperson said the fire was brought under control at 1:33 p.m. and there were no injuries.

A tweet by the FDNY had indicated that “all hands” had been alerted to respond to the incident. Norwood News asked the FDNY if the cause of the fire was yet known or if it was still under investigation. We did not receive an immediate response. We will update this story with any new information we receive.

The FDNY is reminding residents that spray caps are available for free from any firehouse. However, opening fire hydrants at full throttle is illegal, wastes water, and may cause a fire hazard.

## Funding Announced for Bronx Arts Institutions

Mayor Eric Adams and NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) commissioner, Laurie Cumbo, announced on Aug. 3, a total of \$5.5 million in new capital funding for the Universal Hip Hop Museum to fit out its future 52,000-square-foot home at the Bronx Point development at Mill Pond Park in the South Bronx.

The new museum, part of the \$349 million Bronx Point development, will memorialize the history of hip hop in the borough and will include several gallery spaces, a black box theater, interactive exhibits, and administrative offices.

The Bronx Point development will feature public open spaces, 350 units of permanent affordable housing, a state-of-the-art multiplex theater, education space, and a neighborhood food and beverage hall and incubator.

They also announced new capital funding for other Bronx-based cultural organizations, including the Bronx Museum of the Arts, the New York Botanical Garden, The Point Community Development Corporation, Pregones Puerto Rican Traveling Theater, Wave Hill, and the Bronx Zoo.

# Elections 2022: John Perez on Family, Training & the Environment

(continued from page 2)

Regarding climate change and climate resilience within the borough, Perez said the issues affecting the district were obvious. “It’s a waste of money,” he said. “If they’re going to do a survey on City Island, you know what they’re going to find? Brown fields, contaminated water and I’ll tell you why. That mountain that is right before City Island used to be a dump site for many years.”

He said in the boating and coastal areas, the boats leak antifreeze, gas, and oil. “You’re going to get a high contamination rate, but that survey was already done and it’s still active,” he said. “So why are you going to spend money and do it again? Yeah. You got the police firing range right across the bay there, and you got depleted uranium into the water.”

Perez ran in Assembly District 87 in 2018, winning 21.3 percent of the vote in the Democratic primary but losing to incumbent, Assembly Member Karines Reyes.

In 2020, he ran in Senate District 32, winning 11.5 percent of the vote in the Democratic Party and losing to incumbent, State Sen. Luis Sepúlveda. In 2021, he ran for City Council in District 13, winning just 5.4 percent of the vote and losing to incumbent, Council Member Marjorie Velázquez, whose district

encompasses City Island.

As for his campaign, his team is small, but Perez admitted to preferring it that way. In fact, his petition team consists of only three people, but he also contributes to that effort as well. “I have other people that do other things, but my petition collectors, it’s just us three,” he said.

“It’s usually four, but one of them was not feeling so well this year so we left them out, but we hit our target all the time! We hit our target! Challenge me, go right ahead,” he said.

In terms of other priorities, the U.S. army veteran said the biggest issue he would like to confront in the senate, if elected, is crime, as well as issues with the family court system which he said have personally affected him in terms of custody of his daughter. He is also for more funding of public schools, free bus transportation and using wisely the funding of transportation in general. “Where is that money going?” is the question he asked regarding these issues.

Perez was criticized by fellow candidate, Christian Amato, during a BronxNet debate between the candidates in S.D. 34 race, which aired on Monday, Aug. 8, for using photos of himself apparently in military attire in his campaign materials. Amato alleged this was a breach of U.S. De-

partment of Defense rules. Perez refuted the claims, insisting he was in compliance and referenced the use of military attire in films.

Amato, whose brother and father served the country, later shared a copy of the regulation on Twitter with an accompanying photo of Perez, seemingly in military attire. Fernandez also has at least one family member who serves in the military.

During the same debate, Perez said he was in favor of abortion in some limited cases but essentially said he felt it was currently being used as a form of birth control and highlighted that he was the only parent running in the race and could not imagine life without his children.

He received pushback from both his opponents, with Fernandez saying whether someone was a parent or not was irrelevant and pushed back on the idea put forth by Perez that women who make a choice to have an abortion do so lightly.

As to whether he is ready to take on the challenge of the upcoming election, Perez did not share any concerns. All who are eligible to vote can do so on Aug. 23, with early voting commencing on Aug. 13.

*\*Síle Moloney contributed to this story.*

## Million-Dollar Lottery Ticket Sold in The Bronx

The New York Lottery announced on Saturday, July 30, that one second-prize ticket for the July 29 Mega Millions drawing was sold in The Bronx, and the ticket is worth a guaranteed \$1,000,002.

The ticket was purchased at New Way Deli & Lottery Corp, located at 77 East Kingsbridge Road. The winning numbers for the Mega Millions game are drawn from a field of one to 70. The Mega Ball is drawn from a separate field of one to 25. The Mega Millions drawing is televised every Tuesday and Friday at 11 p.m. The winning numbers were: 13-36-45-57-67 and the mega ball was 14.

## Fordham Manor: Firefighters Battle Fire from Land and Sea

Firefighters battled 90-degree heat as well as a stubborn junkyard fire in Fordham Manor by land and sea on July 22, employ-

ing an FDNY marine unit on the Harlem River to help extinguish the blaze.

Fire officials said the blaze broke out in a pile of trash inside a junkyard located at 2371 Exterior Street, just north of Fordham Road. The FDNY was alerted to the incident at 2:16 p.m. on Friday, July 22.

The fire drew 60 firefighters from 12 units and the marine unit. At least two tower ladders and numerous handlines were used from the ground. The blaze was declared under control at 4:53 p.m. and no injuries were reported, according to the FDNY.

When contacted by telephone on Monday, July 25, an unidentified employee of Storage Post Self Storage, which is located next door to the junkyard at 301 West Fordham Road and not far from the site of the planned billion-dollar Fordham Landing development, confirmed that he was present on the day the fire broke out.

Asked if firefighters had entered the storage facilities property to tackle the blaze, he said they had. We asked if the storage facility itself was affected at all. “No, I don’t think we had any property damage,” the employee said. With billowing smoke seen as far away as Jerome Park and Riverdale, the employee was asked if he was concerned for his safety. He replied, “Was I concerned? Yeah, a little.”

## MTA Announces Universal Subway WiFi

The MTA recently announced a public-private partnership to provide cell coverage throughout all 418 track miles of its subway tunnels, along with an expanded Wi-Fi service in all 191 above-ground subway and 21 Staten Island Railroad stations.

Transit customers can currently use cellular and Wi-Fi service at all 281 underground subway stations through Transit Wireless, a BAI communications com-

pany. The proposed expansion would transform the subway system into a fully digitally connected transit network enabling riders to use their mobile devices throughout the entire subway system.

MTA officials said the WiFi upgrade would also be coordinated with other work taking place throughout the system, involving fitting out hundreds of miles of tunnels to enable cell service between stations, and supporting MTA operational needs.

Overall, the project is expected to result in over \$1 billion, benefiting the MTA and its customers over the life of the agreement in terms of service provided, additional revenue, and cost savings, MTA officials said. Work on the project will begin immediately and will be completed across the network in 10 years, though riders will be able to start using the new services as each section is completed.



# Defining US, the Story of Umoja

By EMILY SAWAKED

There is nothing more powerful than hearing the voices of people who have been on the front lines of a battle against oppressive systems. The docuseries, “Defining US,” focuses on the U.S. public school system and its impact on low-income children of color across the nation. It premiered at the Toronto Black Film Festival in February, and as part of the series, two individuals with experience of the Bronx public school system shared their stories.

One, Angel Diaz, is a former student at the school and now a paraprofessional [teaching assistant] at the school, and the other, Ingrid Chung, is a former teacher and now principal at the school. Chung, and her former student, Diaz, participated in the docuseries seven years ago when Chung was still a teacher at AMS, the Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science, a small public school, located at 1595 Bathgate Avenue, south of the Tremont section of The Bronx.

There, Chung presided over Umoja, a program unique to the school, dedicated to uplifting a handful of student participants, in which they are paired with young men of color who act as family to them, sharing certain life skills along the way, from planning for the future to teaching them how to shave.

According to Chung and Diaz, Umoja volunteers each take five young men from each of the four high-school years (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) and stay with them throughout their time at school and for many, well into adulthood also. The school runs a similarly unique sister program called Nia for girls.

Chung and Diaz were introduced to the documentary through Paul Forbes, founder of the “Leading with Hearts and Minds” program at Defining US. Forbes is one of the executive producers and recommended AMS be part of the docuseries, which is supported by the Connect with Kids Network (CWK).

Of her students, Chung said, “My boys were showing up to all these different events and, naturally, being involved in the community and public school system at large. Paul also has really, really close relationships with the boys in my program and so, he thought of Angel, and thought of some other key players in the program that he wanted to highlight as a best prac-

tice program across the nation.”

The terms Umoja and Nia have a Swahili origin. Umoja means “unity”, and the program has really defined what that means. While the kids are still in school, they help one another out with assignments and accountability, while also providing a safe space and a helping hand in times of need.

“They need a meal? We’re going to take care of each other,” said Diaz. “We’re going to put clothes on their backs, we’re going to try to put a roof over their heads, and just make sure that we all stick together as one, because the majority of the day, we’re spending it here together.”

Aside from preparing the children for their futures, the group leaders and fellow students of Umoja also help the students in their daily lives, keeping them out of dangerous situations and making up for what they lack, whether that be food or housing.

“We also have a community where kids don’t even want to go home,” said Diaz. “We have Chung staying here until 6.30, 7 o’clock, you got me staying here until 6.30, 7 o’clock. You got cliques of our kids always surrounding us. We have our spaces that are always occupied. We can’t get enough of them, and they can’t get enough of us! That’s just genuine love,” he added.

The school is open “24/7” according to Chung and Diaz, who said the kids are always welcome to see them on weekends as well as over the summer. The actual experience of the documentary was something foreign to them, they said.

“We did a couple things [shoots] also in my home which was something that was, again, foreign,” said Diaz. “I didn’t even allow AMS to come to my house. For me, to allow a couple strangers with cameras, and know they recorded what it would look like as my everyday life, me interacting with my little sister and stuff like that, it was a little bit eye-opening.”

Diaz added that the documentary was like a time capsule in a way and Chung agreed, commenting on their growth over the years and how heartwarming it was, looking back and seeing the kids talk about Umoja even when none of the school representatives were around.

“I was a teacher then, Angel was a student, and now, both of us are in different positions at the same school,” said Chung. “Seven years later, and his little sister



Screenshot courtesy of Defining US.

**ANGEL DIAZ IS** interviewed seven years ago as part of the documentary, Defining US.

who’s in the documentary is now a student at my school,” she said.

“It was just really, really cool to have that moment be memorialized, to hear the kids’ perspectives, because when the kids are being interviewed, typically, we’re not in the room with them.” She said hearing their authentic perspectives on what the program is, what it means to them, and what it means to be an AMS student and a member of Umoja was special.

According to the duo, what the documentary tackles is the systemic racism they say exists within the school system in the United States as a whole. According to statistics shared in the docuseries, about 50 million children attend public school-

ing in the country. More than half are students of color and Black students are 200 percent more likely to be suspended from school, and to fail a class.

The Umoja program attempts to reverse some of these statistics, giving students the possibility to see that their destinies can be different from what the system and statistics would have them believe.

According to its website, the City School District of the City of New York (or the New York City Public Schools) is the largest school system in the United States (and the world), with over 1.1 million students taught in more than 1,800 separate schools. Advocates for better

*(continued on page 8)*

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# Defining US, the Story of Umoja

(continued from page 7)

funding of the system enjoyed a recent win in the courts which will see the Adams administration revisiting its latest education budget for the upcoming year.

Meanwhile, Chung and Diaz say the goal at AMS is to create a safe space for students so they, in turn, can learn and grow into role models for others in their communities. They say by helping the next generation, they are also helping the community. “I’ll always remind people that this program saved my life,” said Diaz.

Over the past eight years, kids from the program have attended national conferences to present their work and share their impact, and Diaz and Chung said people are always super interested in their experiences of the program. “People are interested because we know it’s not a secret that our young men of color are in crisis,” Chung said.

She cautioned, however, that even though people want to hear about the program, listening was very different from action. “It is hard work to be so deeply committed to a family in ways that are very difficult to explain, like we all have it [their commitment to each



Photo courtesy of Defining US.

**INGRID CHUNG IS** interviewed seven years ago as part of the documentary, Defining US.

other] tattooed on our hands, somewhere or our arms, or our backs,” she said.

Chung said she might not hear from some of her students for three years and then, they text her from a new number. “Like Angel said, “You need something? We got you,” she said, adding that sometimes that meant showing up for each other at funerals.

“We can’t teach people how to do

that, but we can teach you how to create a structure that really changes not only your life as an adult, but changes the lives of all the young people that have the opportunity to engage in it,” she said. “All we’re talking about is just creating genuine, authentic relationships with young people.”

As for her own personal ambitions, Chung’s dream is to open a pre-k through 12 school, where she can foster a commu-

nity of learning and growing together, much like she has done with Umoja, and if the group of young men she has helped thus far is any evidence to go by, that dream will surely come to fruition.

Those interested in watching the docuseries or in getting more involved can visit <https://definingus.org/about/defining-us-history/>.

*\*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*

## NYBG

### AROUND THE TABLE: STORIES OF THE FOODS WE LOVE

**On View Now–Sept 11**

An Exhibition Celebrating the Art  
and Science of Edible Plants

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN





# Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY

## EVENTS

**The Bronx Book Fair** aka The Peoples Book Fair takes place on Aug. 13, from noon to 7 p.m. via Zoom., in two sessions. Register in advance via the fair's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BronxBookFair/>.

NYC Children and partners are hosting a **Latinx Fatherhood & Father Figure Family Fund Day** on Aug. 10, 1-5 p.m. at Edenwald Houses, Community Room, Courtyard, 1150 E 229<sup>th</sup> St.

## FILM

Bronx River Arts Center (BRAC), 1087 E Tremont Ave, The Bronx, NY 10460, begins a monthly film series featuring works from around the world. In August, coinciding with the current exhibition, "Women of the Ivory Coast and Mali," BRAC presents **CINEMA AFRICA**, a collection of films that dwell on the lives, experiences, and stories of people from various countries in Africa.

These representative gems of African filmmaking will be screened either outdoors on BRAC's rooftop garden or indoors in BRAC's Event Space. This event is free. Donations are welcome. For more information, email [info@bronxriverart.org](mailto:info@bronxriverart.org).

## KIDS

**Starlight Cinema Nature's Revenge** series, comprising animal-themed movies on Thursday nights continues in Van Cortlandt Park Parade Ground. The final installment will take place on Aug. 11 with a screening of "The Meg."

## MUSIC

Bronx Arts Ensemble presents **Caribbean Music and More** at Van Cortlandt House Museum on Sat, Aug. 27 at 2 p.m. From Jamaican and Haitian folk songs to Florence Price's monumental *Five Folksongs in Counterpoint*, the Bronx Arts Ensemble String Quartet celebrates the works of Black composers and musicians in the Americas and more. Bring a blanket or chair to enjoy this free concert on the lawn of the Van Cortlandt House Museum.

**The Bronx Summer Concert Series**, sponsored by Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson and partners, continues each Sunday, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Orchard Beach. All are welcome. The event is free.

**Downtown Jazz** takes place uptown in the Church of the Mediator 888, 260 W 231<sup>st</sup> St., in The Bronx on Aug. 20, at 7 p.m., featuring the music of the Befo' Qoutet. Tickets are \$30.

**The Morrison Avenue Annual Festival 2022**, between Westchester and Walton Avenues, takes place on Saturday, Aug. 13, 2022, at noon. This is a free event. Founded by local Bronx entrepreneurs, **Da' Block Music & Arts Festival** will kick off its inaugural showcase at The Bronx Brewery, 856 E 136<sup>th</sup> St, The Bronx, NY 10454, on Saturday, Aug. 27 (no time provided). The festival will help to empower local music, create a space for culture, and provide an artistic platform for the local Bronx community.

## MOVEMENT

**Twin Parks West Older Adult Center**, 355 East 183<sup>rd</sup> Street, Bronx, NY 10458, invites residents to join for Bingo, Zumba, Yoga classes and more, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call (917) 841 6541 for more information.

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](https://nyc.gov/parks).

**NYC Parks** outdoor, public pools reopened on June 28. Free summer breakfast and lunch is also available at public pools from June 28 to Sept. 2. Visit: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/food/summer-meals> for more information.

## For Home Healthcare Workers, the Work Continues



Photo courtesy of VNS Health

JOAN GASSER

By EMILY SAWAKED

Healthcare workers have been on the front line of this pandemic since it first hit in early 2020, and over two years later, that has not changed. Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNS-SNY) is a nonprofit that has been serving some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers in their homes for over 125 years, and has been diligently working to help patients stay healthy in their homes.

May marked National Nurses Month, as well as National Nurses Week (May 6-12), and once again, was an occasion to honor all nurses who go above and beyond to care for their patients, including those who care for those most vulnerable to COVID-19, often providing at-home care to people facing the ends of their lives.

Nurses like Joan Gasser have been working hard to give meaningful care to their patients in their homes, despite the ongoing complications which the various waves of the pandemic have brought.

Gasser told Norwood News she started her healthcare work only after

getting involved in social work which, itself, stemmed from her prior work with the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC).

"It really got me interested in working with people and creating change, or helping to create change and seeing people in the neighborhood taking control of their living situations," she said.

In 2009, Gasser began her work with VNS Health after her mother became terminally ill and had to receive round the clock care. "They were able to keep her comfortable and allow us to spend time with her and have conversations, and just to be with her," she said.

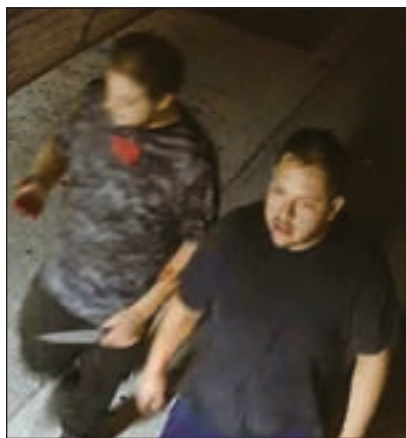
After listening to a hospice nurse from California speak about her work, Gasser brought in her resume to VNS Health, out of curiosity. She was deeply moved and eventually began her career as a hospice nurse.

The goal of hospice care is to, as Gasser put it, help people die well. The job, thus, has been rewarding for Gasser, despite being frustrating at times. The frustrations, though, have more to

(continued on page 17)

## CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY

**Fordham Manor Stabbing**

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the two people seen in the photo above who are sought for questioning in connection to an assault that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said a felony assault took place in front of 61 East Kingsbridge Road on Monday, Aug. 8, at 4:30 a.m. They said the pictured individuals allegedly stabbed a victim multiple times, causing serious physical injuries. A reward of up to \$3,500 is being offered for information.

**Fordham Heights: Jewelry Store Robbed of \$2.15M**

Police are looking for four men who robbed a jewelry store, using a hammer to smash at least one display case, before fleeing on foot down with over \$2 million in gems. Police were called to Rocco's Jewelry, located at 2521 Webster Avenue in Fordham Heights at 2:38 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 5. Police said an unknown individual approached the front door and was buzzed inside the store by an employee. He held the door open for an additional three people, and once inside, the three smashed the display case and placed the jewelry in bags and then fled southbound on Webster Avenue. No injuries were reported.

The first suspect is described as male, is in his 20s, has a dark complexion, a slim build and was wearing a black baseball cap, a white T-shirt, black jeans, black sneakers,

and black sunglasses. The other three suspects are described as male, also in their 20s, have dark complexions, each has a slim build, and all were wearing dark clothing, dark-colored face masks and gloves.

**Man Arrested following Stabbing**

Police said a man was arrested following a stabbing at 3300 Bailey Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights on Saturday, July 23, at around 10.30 p.m. Gilbert Abraham Lopez, 29, of 3044 Bailey Avenue (an address about two blocks away from the location of the assault) was arrested and charged with alleged assault, menacing, criminal possession of a weapon, and harassment.

Residents of the building told Norwood News three victims, two women and one young girl, were treated for injuries by EMS following the incident and that the alleged perpetrator was apprehended following a pursuit on foot. The residents said one of the three victims had shouted to them outside from her window to tell them to call the police, saying she had been stabbed inside her apartment.

From July 1, 2020, to Dec. 31, 2021, The Bronx recorded the highest percentage (7 percent) of chronic domestic violence complaints (797) relative to its population, of all City boroughs.

The Bronx District Attorney's office urges anyone suffering at the hands of an abuser to immediately contact the Bronx D.A.'s crime victim assistance unit at (718) 590-2115. The Bronx Family Justice Center can be reached on (718) 508 1220. For more help & resources, visit <https://on.nyc.gov/2BqhBe8>. or call 1-800-621-4673 (HOPE). If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

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

**Bedford Park Heroin/Fentanyl Seizure**

Two men were arrested in the Bedford Park section of The Bronx in connection with a large-scale heroin/fentanyl packaging and distribution operation, City prosecutors said on Thursday, Aug. 4. Six kilograms of narcotics (over 13 pounds), with a street value of at least \$1.8 million, was intercepted.

Diego Tejada-Rosario, 23, and Victor Camacho, 23, were charged with criminal possession of a controlled substance in the first and third degrees, and with criminally using drug paraphernalia in the second degree. Both men were arrested on Aug. 2, officials said. Tejada was arraigned in Manhattan Criminal Court on Aug. 4, and Camacho was scheduled to be arraigned that night.

According to the investigation, on Aug. 2, at around 12:23 p.m., law enforcement officials were conducting surveillance outside an apartment at 2815 Grand Concourse, which they believed was being used as a narcotics mill, when they allegedly observed both men exit the apartment.

They were apprehended and the apartment was searched using keys allegedly recovered from Tejada and Camacho. Recovered from the apartment was over one kilogram of heroin/fentanyl split into four packages, tens of thousands of pre-packaged glassine envelopes containing heroin/fentanyl, more than 20,000 empty glassine envelopes, stamped and ready for packaging, 12 digital scales, 14 coffee grinders (commonly used for mixing narcotics), 21 ink pads and four stamps, including one with the brand name "Tik Tok."

The drugs and paraphernalia were packed inside three suitcases and additional bags. Officials also seized a Dominican Republic-issued passport which included Tejada's photo but had a different name.

Officials said Tejada had previously been charged on Jan. 27, 2020, in relation to a separate case involving fentanyl. He and five others had allegedly been found in The Bronx with more than 40,000 glassine envelopes of fentanyl worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

According to the prosecution, because criminal possession of a controlled substance in the first degree and other charges Tejada faced at that time were not bail eligible at the time, due to bail reform that had taken effect in early 2020, Tejada was released on supervision.

He was arraigned on Aug. 3, 2021, on a charge stemming from that arrest. However, officials said he allegedly failed to appear for his court date and a judge ordered his arrest on Nov. 18, 2021.

On Aug. 3, Mayor Eric Adams

and Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell essentially called for a further scaling back of bail reform laws which were already refined in April 2022. They said this was needed to target repeat dangerous offenders who they said were exploiting the bail system.

In response, The Legal Aid Society of public defenders said, "The numbers don't lie, and last week, multiple outlets reported on data released by the NYS Office of Court Administration, showing that bail reform has had little impact on recidivism and as an overall driver of crime, despite the repeated attempts by this administration to cherry-pick a handful of cases to misguide New Yorkers and convince them that bail reform is responsible for all of society's ills."

On Friday, Aug. 5, Adams and the City's health commissioner, Dr. Ashwin Vasan, announced new measures to reduce the number of overdoses in New York City by expanding access to technology that tests pre-obtained drugs for fentanyl and other possibly lethal substances. They plan to do this at sites running syringe service programs (SSP) co-located at overdose prevention centers (OPC).

On Aug. 8, \$5 million of street-ready heroin and fentanyl was seized from a Bronx packaging mill in the Crotona section of the borough. In June 2022, a major drug takedown took place in the Mt. Hope section of The Bronx, involving the seizure of around 110 kilograms of heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine, plus 50 pounds of a substance believed to be crystal meth, and up to 75,000 counterfeit pills believed to contain fentanyl.

Law enforcement officials said the drugs were intended for citywide distribution and carried an estimated street value of around \$24 million.

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

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



# Elections 2022: Christian Amato on Education, the Environment and Quality-of-Life



Photo courtesy of Christian Amato

CHRISTIAN AMATO

By EMILY SAWAKED

The son of Italian immigrants and former theatre professional, Christian Amato is a candidate for State Senate District 34, covering parts of both the East Bronx and Westchester county, in this year's Democratic primary. He began his campaign in February and said he is eager to continue to serve the people of The Bronx.

Amato's political career first started with organizing in response to Trump's election. "I got my start organizing, connecting immigrant Bronxites to DACA initiatives," he said. "As the son of immigrants, that was really important for me. You know, that was the time we saw the Muslim ban and all these different sort[s] of violations towards our immigration system from the Trump administration."

He continued, "My family had this opportunity to come to this country and build a life for themselves, and that's an experience that I think every immigrant should be entitled to." After being asked

to help a campaign in North Carolina, he came back to The Bronx to apply what he did in Raleigh, there.

"That's when Alessandra Biaggi ran [for Senate District 34, in 2018]," Amato said. "I got involved in her race. I was one of her field leads, and I also was her lead digital strategist, developing much of the messaging and digital strategy that helped us win that campaign."

He said after that, he helped lead her effort in the general election, and added that the senator, who is currently running for Congress in NY-17, chose Amato to be her chief of staff and district director, which he did for quite some time. There were some rumors of discord amid Amato's departure from Biaggi's office and the senator recently endorsed Amato's opponent in the S.D. 34 race, Assembly Member Nathalia Fernandez (A.D. 80). *Norwood News* reached out to both Biaggi's office and Amato's campaign for comment.

Amato continued, "I went on to continue doing the work of elevating Demo-

crats across The Bronx and Westchester, overlapping with this region." During the pandemic, Amato said he organized to help those without the proper PPE needed for everyday use. "We live in the wealthiest state in the world, and here we are, we can't even get people a box of PPE," he said. "When I learned that the city was sleeping on resources, and there were millions of masks sitting in basically airplane hangers across the city with an inch thick sheet of dust over them, I said, 'What are we doing here?'"

He said he later drove around street corners with a flatbed truck giving out full boxes of masks and sanitizer and COVID kits. This, he said, he paid for out of pocket at the height of the pandemic.

Later, he said he began to deliver food. "I formed a \$3 million food partnership with Driscoll foods that we would deliver," he said. "We would distribute hundreds of thousands of pounds of fresh produce weekly, and the same thing. I'd rent trucks out of pocket. I'd often do four food drives a day, driving to different communities with a full truck of produce."

The young candidate said he wasn't the only one doing this. "I'd have 15 to 20 community leaders from across The Bronx meet me at the drop-off point," he said. "Each would load up a truck, filled

with fresh fruits and vegetables from Driscoll foods." Amato said he has also done plenty of community work, including helping out at shelters and working to elevate transgender wellness and equity.

In terms of the policies he wishes to implement, if elected, he said, "Education, fully funding our public schools, making SUNY and CUNY free for all New Yorkers and expanding universal pre-K up to Westchester county." He added, "Environment, expanding our coastal resiliency, offering tax incentives, weatherization, and investing in our hard and soft green infrastructure."

His third priority is quality of life. He cited accessible public transportation, affordable healthcare, and quality housing for seniors. "I'm going into this expecting to win and then ready to work with my colleagues and build bridges with my colleagues across the State to be able to do good things for our communities," Amato said.

"These policies don't just have an impact here. Remember, as a senator, you're impacting all New Yorkers. So, if I can help expand universal pre-K to Westchester, that also means we're expanding that to several counties in the State outside of New York City, and that's very important.

(continued on page 15)

## Think Big & Bold in the Real World!



Begins  
Sept '22

MMCC is offering a **FREE Advance & Earn** program for **16-24** year olds living within the 5 boroughs to help you think about your long-term career and educational goals, and create a plan to achieve them! This **20-week program** will provide you with life-changing opportunities and could be your first step towards a **degree** and your **dream job**.

Also offering **Commercial Driver's License (CDL)** training for ages 21-24.

**For more information or to make an appointment, Call (917) 792-3899 or VISIT [mmcc.org](http://mmcc.org)**



Mosholu Montefiore Community Center Workforce Education Center  
174 East 205 Street - 4th Fl, Bronx, NY 10458 • 917-792-3899 | [www.mmcc.org](http://www.mmcc.org)

# NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



## Back-to-School Events

Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson is hosting a **Back-to-School health and Literacy Fair** on Thursday, Aug. 18, at 1 p.m. at Kwame Ture Recreation Center at 1527 Jessup Avenue, Bronx, NY 10452.

State Sen. Gustavo Rivera is hosting a back-to-school event at Ben Abrams playground at Boston Road and Bronx Park East, Bronx, NY 10462 on Friday, Aug. 12, at 3.30 p.m. and on Thursday, Aug. 18, at 3.30 p.m. at St. James Park, Jerome Avenue and West 192<sup>nd</sup> Street, Bronx NY 10468.

## 2022 Community Needs Assessment

Do you have ideas about what your local community needs? Take a few minutes and fill out a survey to help inform how future funding is spent across the city. Visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2022CNANYC>.

## Monkey Pox Updates

As of Aug. 5, 1,558 city residents had tested positive for monkeypox. Officials emphasize that anyone can get and spread monkeypox and added that current cases are primarily spreading among social networks of gay, bisexual, and other men who have multiple sexual partners. Therefore, this community subset is currently at greater risk of exposure. If you have a new or unexpected rash or other symptoms of monkeypox, contact a health care provider.

A two-dose vaccination is available for those eligible, but supplies are scarce, and appointments are necessary. Health officials recommend signing up for at least one-dose for now. Mass vaccination sites are open at Bronx High School of Science, 75, W 205<sup>th</sup> Street, and at Lincoln Hospital, 234 E 149<sup>th</sup> Street. Book an appointment by calling 877-VAX-4NYC or 877-829-4692. For more information, visit: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/monkeypox.page>.

## Norwood News Hiatus

*Norwood News* is usually on hiatus for a few weeks in August. However, due to the second Primary Election Day falling on Aug. 23, we will continue to publish throughout August, and our last print edition will be on Aug. 25. The next print edition after that will be on Sept. 22.

## Norwood News partnership with WNYC

Ahead of the November mid-terms elections, *Norwood News* is partnering with *WNYC Public Radio* as part of a larger effort to amplify the voices of voters in communities throughout the city. For more information on how to get involved, call (929) 318 6595 or email [smoloney@norwoodnews.org](mailto:smoloney@norwoodnews.org).

## Polio Vaccine

The City's health department says 13.8 percent of children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years in New York City have not been vaccinated against polio and the agency is urging parents to ensure their children get vaccinated against what they say is a highly contagious viral infection. Department officials said hundreds of people may be infected with the polio virus, once regarded as being an illness that was contained.

## Job Fair Preparation Class

VIP Community Services and local elected officials are hosting a job fair preparation class on Sept. 9 at 10 a.m. at 764 East 176<sup>th</sup> Street, Bronx, NY 10460. Help will be offered on resume preparation and mock interviews. Dress for success! Call (718) 583 5150 for more information.

## COVID-19 Updates

The City-run COVID-19 hotline provides residents with COVID-19 updates, including testing sites, advice from medical staff, quarantine information and mental

health support. Call 212-COVID19 or (212) 268-4319.

Another new, free 24/7 hotline was launched by the State health department for those who test positive for COVID-19 but don't have a health care provider. The hotline, 888-TREAT-NY, was launched after reaching an agreement to utilize the Virtual ExpressCare platform, operated by NYC Health + Hospitals, and allows residents to receive virtual care from an NYC Health + Hospitals provider.

The telemedicine visit will include a clinical assessment by medical providers who will identify the appropriate COVID-19 treatment plan, which may include a prescription of oral antiviral medications proven to decrease hospitalization for those at risk of severe disease. When given soon after a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, the antivirals also help fight infection and shorten recovery time.

As all treatments require a prescription, those who test positive for COVID-19 should talk to their provider or call 888-TREAT-NY to determine what treatment is best for them. New York State is assigned a weekly allotment of the antiviral drugs from the federal health department. Insured patients will pay a co-pay amount based on their plan and the State health department will cover the costs for those without health care coverage.

The City also runs mobile-based Test to Treat Corps clinics, where free COVID-19 testing and anti-viral pills are available. They provide no-cost instant access to antiviral medication for eligible New Yorkers who test positive at the sites. Each site is equipped with a clinician who can screen and prescribe the medication for anyone who tests positive on a rapid test at the site. To check for Bronx mobile Test & Treat locations, visit: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page>.

Additionally, residents can pick-up free at-home test kits at any of the participating sites. To find a testing or at-home kit pick-up site near you, visit [nyc.gov/covidtest](https://nyc.gov/covidtest) or call 311.

The NYC Test & Treat Corps has expanded its COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation Guidance Tool, <https://on.nyc.gov/3cHqPbs>, which provides New Yorkers direct access to order care packages to help isolate safely, as well as guidance to those 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.

## Long COVID Resources

If you believe you may have Long COVID, resources are available at these sites: <https://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/covid-19-resources-for-all-new-yorkers/test-and-treat/after-care/> and <https://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/centers-of-excellence/>.

## August 23 Primary Election

Early voting for the primary runs from Aug. 13 to Aug. 21, and the last day to apply *in person* for an absentee ballot for the primary is Aug. 22.

Election Day is Aug. 23 and polls are open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., the last day *to postmark* a primary election ballot is Aug. 23, the last day *to deliver* a primary ballot *in person* to your county board or any poll site in your county by close of polls is Aug. 23, the last day a primary election ballot can *be received* by the county board is Aug. 30.

**Your poll site may have changed!** Check your designated polling site well in advance of voting in the August primary. For more information, visit: <https://www.nycvotes.org/meet-the-candidates/2022-primary-election/august-2022-races/>. **Also, voters are no longer permitted to cast a ballot on a voting machine**

**if they have requested to vote by absentee ballot!** Voters who have requested to vote by absentee ballot can still vote in-person using an affidavit ballot.

## Transportation Updates

Effective Aug. 1, tickets will be issued to those who breach the 25mph citywide speed limit if they exceed the speed limit by more than 10 mph. Speed cameras are now in operation 24/7/365.

SKF General Contractors LLC will be fully closing the road at 3254 Parkside Place between East 207<sup>th</sup> Street and East 209<sup>th</sup> Street from July 21 to Aug. 21, 2022, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday to Friday to use a front loader for soil delivery and backfilling at the new building's construction project.

Meanwhile, NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) has advised residents that the replacement of the trunk and distribution water mains and a rehabilitation of the sewers continues to take place in Norwood and Woodlawn Heights during the third quarter of 2022.

DDC also advises residents of a temporary, bee line, bus stop relocation on Jerome Avenue which will be in effect 24/7 from June 13 until Aug. 31, 2022. DDC also advised there will be no parking on a temporary basis on the west side of Jerome Avenue between Bainbridge Avenue to East 233<sup>rd</sup> Street 24/7 from Aug. 8 through Aug. 11.

DDC has also announced that there will be a temporary reroute of the southbound Bx16, Bx34 and BxM4 buses from Gun Hill Road to 210<sup>th</sup>, 24/7 until Nov. 2, 2022. DDC has also announced that there will be a temporary closure of the westbound Bx10 bus stop on East Gun Hill Road at Bainbridge Avenue, 24/7 until Nov. 2, 2022.

DDC has also announced that there will be a temporary rerouting of the northbound Bx16, Bx34 and BxM4 buses from Gun Hill Road to Jerome Avenue, 24/7 until Nov. 2, 2022.

The MTA has advised that ongoing repairs on the D subway line from July 2022 through 2023 means local service during rush hour or and partial suspensions on weeknights and weekends, when riders are asked to use the 4 subway line instead.

Throughout August, NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) will begin safety improvements on White Plains Road from East 226<sup>th</sup> Street to East 241<sup>st</sup> Street in Wakefield. This work will add protected bike lanes, shorten pedestrian crossings, improve accessibility, and upgrade corridor markings.

The Bronx bus redesign plan went live on June 26. More details can be found at <https://new.mta.info/project/bronx-local-bus-network-redesign>.

## Citizen Training to Reduce Overdose Deaths

Opioid overdose is now the leading cause of accidental death in New York City and in the United States, surpassing even motor vehicle accidents. Overdose deaths are preventable and with naloxone, you can save a life. The City has announced new measures to train citizens on how to reduce overdose deaths. Find out where you can get a naloxone kit at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/naloxone.page>. For questions about naloxone, email [naloxone@health.nyc.gov](mailto:naloxone@health.nyc.gov).

## City Redistricting

On Friday, July 15, the NYC Districting Commission released the draft, redrawn maps of the City's 51 city council districts, based on community feedback collected at the hearings held to date. There is still time to comment. To view the draft maps, visit: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/districting/maps/maps.page>. A further Bronx hearing will be held on Wed., Aug. 17, 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Lehman College (CUNY), Gillet Auditorium, 250 Bedford Park Blvd West, The Bronx 10468. The commission will vote on the final maps on Sept. 22.



# Marshall Brings Flower Power to Bronx Park

By **EMILY SAWAKED**

On the precipice of Bronx Park in Norwood, a series of tapestries made with colorful parachute cords now decorate the railing, bringing a splash of color to the park entrance. Ruth Marshall, a contemporary textile artist from Australia, now living in The Bronx, recently partnered with Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC), a nonprofit subsidiary of Montefiore Medical Center, to create a beautiful display at the park's entrance, which was unveiled on Wednesday, July 20.

The artist uses environmentally friendly materials in her work, especially to bring attention to endangered species. Marshall said it was her first time to really work with parachute cords, lightweight nylon kernmantle ropes originally used in the suspension lines of parachutes.

She said she chose the material so that the installation would last through the year amid changes in the weather. The move prompted her interest in now working with recycled materials.

"I get so much satisfaction out of the power cord, but I put a question mark in my notebook that said, 'What other materials can I use for outdoor settings?'" she told *Norwood News* of her artistic journey on the installation. "I have also crocheted with plastic bags. So, I'm very interested in how I can apply my art to more environmentally [conscious projects], recycle, reuse, repurpose," she said.

The Aussie became involved in the project following previous work and ties with Montefiore, the parent company of MPC, and specifically with Montefiore's director of fine arts programming, Jodi Moise.

"I put all the art up in the hospitals, and she [Moise] found my work through [the] Bronx Center of the Arts website; and she liked what I was doing," said Marshall. "She asked me to think about doing an outdoor installation and I was like... 'I've never made an outdoor in-



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

**ARIANA CIPRIANI, FORMER** manager of neighborhood development at the Jerome Gun Hill BID, attends the unveiling of the "Power Flowers" installation by Ruth Marshall at Bronx Park in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Wednesday, July 20, 2022.

stallation!"

She said she mused over the project for several years. "Her request forced me to research what else I could crochet with, that was durable and weather permitting, and colorfast and all those things," the artist explained. "I put up a big installation for one of the outdoor [hospital] courtyards several years ago now," she said of her work at Montefiore.

Her latest project was cultivated by Ariana Cipriani, former manager of neighborhood development at the Jerome Gun Hill BID. She said she found Marshall through Moise.

"[I thought] it'd be perfect for here because we wanted it to be something that didn't block the view of the park," Cipriani explained. "It was colorful! It would last a long time; the key for public art, as a nonprofit, is you invest in it. You want it to look really great for the whole year without having to fix it again."

In partnership with MPC, the Jerome Gun Hill BID provides supplemental sanitation, security, marketing, events, retail attraction and beautification in the local community. The BID recently facilitated the repainting of the colorful street mural by Laura Alvarez on the Jerome Avenue parklet at Gun Hill Road on June 8.



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

**ARTIST, RUTH MARSHALL,** sits in front of her "Power Flowers," installation at Bronx Park and 204th street in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Wednesday, July 20, 2022, a collaboration with MPC, Jerome Gun Hill BID, and New York City Parks.

Of the latest project, Cipriani said, "So, this is super sturdy, colorful, transparent and it survives rain, sun, and snow. We really just wanted to reflect all the colors and culture of The Bronx. I think Ruth was very successful in taking [in] all that excitement and color and how dynamic the neighborhood is, and turning it into something very beautiful," she said.

Meanwhile, MPC also works with Guerinos against Graffiti\*, a local business dedicated to cleaning up parks and streets. Started by Sirio Guerino and his wife, Heather, the

duo often work with the 52nd Precinct, local nonprofits and Bronx Community Board 7 to help beautify and keep Bronx streets clean.

For this latest event, the group cleaned up the park entrance, repainted the surrounding stones, and fixed planter at the location. "It was an honor to help out MPC after all these years to do a new project like this," Guerino, who has been honored for his community service in the past by Bedford Mosholu Community Association, among others, told *Norwood News*.

"As you can see, a lot more

needs to be done, but see certain things take a special way of cleaning them, being that they're bricks and rocks and stuff," Guerino said. "But as you can see, the benches and the tree pit were done, and we also went out of our way, and we did the entrance too."

He continued, "We painted the concrete on the side so when you walk in, you feel like you are walking into a really nice place, like the red carpet was laid out to you! It's an honor because I live in Norwood, and I can come here on a daily basis and see what was done, and then see what can be done in the future."

Indeed, Guerino has made it his mission to clean up other "jewels of The Bronx" so that everybody can enjoy a piece of their home. "This is just the beginning," he said.

District 11 City Councilman Eric Dinowitz and Kenny Agosto, a representative from the Office of State Sen. Jamaal Bailey (S.D. 36), were also present on the day. The art is beautiful!" said Dinowitz. "I love it! It's really going to make this place more welcoming for our community. Our parks are beautiful because local community members and local organizations take pride and have a stake in their local park. This, today, is a perfect example of that commitment to our local parks."

Agosto also addressed the group, both in his capacity as a representative of Bailey, and as the founder of the Bronx Park East Community Association. "This is a culmination of dreams from our community," he said. "A lot of times, this side of the park and that side of the park don't really get to meet, to see the beauty that can be grown and sewn and harvested," he said.

The installation is set to be on display for a year until June 2023, so all those who have not yet had the chance to admire the artwork may do so at any time.



## Letters To The Editor

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

### Eliminate Bail!

After reading the *Norwood News* story in the July 28-August 11 edition entitled, "Rivera and Camilo Face Off in S.D. 33, I get the impression that incumbent State Sen. Gustavo Rivera and Miguelina Camilo are running against each other not because of any real differences on issues. A combination of redistricting that put them in the same district, and prior political commitments made to Camilo seem to have set up this race.

But when it comes to bail reform, neither they, nor any other politician I know of, has advocated the obvious solution. Rivera is right that with bail, dangerous people with money go free while poor people who are not dangerous but can't afford bail are jailed. I dealt with this in my letter in the *Norwood News* January 13-26 edition letter, "Justice?" as well as in letters to two other publications.

I'll write it again; bail must be eliminated. Judges should only hold suspects if they have good reason to believe that releasing them would endanger the public, or if they have good reason to believe the defendant will not show up in court or if that person has been repeatedly arrested after being released.

No other defendants should be held prior to trial. This way, a defendant's wealth, or lack of it, is not a factor. Why is it that not a single member of the legislature has thought of this? Are bail bondsmen donating to their campaigns?

**Richard Warren,  
Van Cortlandt Village**

### Secure the Subway System from Flooding

The MTA Inspector General Report dealing with how the MTA spent \$5.8 billion in Federal Transit Administration Super Storm Sandy Recovery and Resiliency funding over the past ten years was disappointing. The storm in 2012 resulted in extensive flooding damage to the NYC Transit subway system. The report revealed that the MTA is still not fully prepared to deal with flooding in the event of a future Hurricane.

These funds supplemented billions more in annual FTA formula funding over the same timeframe. NYC

Transit should have learned from Super Storm Sandy which of the 472 subway stations and 36 subway lines were most vulnerable to flooding or located in flood zones. Remedial actions should have been completed years ago.

Fast forward to 2022 - after spending emergency funds on upgrading and adding additional sump pumps, securing subway entrances, elevator shafts, and street level air vents, why are there still some subway stations and lines still subject to flooding after major rainstorms?

Look what just happened on Monday, July 18, after a heavy rainstorm. Eight of the 472 subway stations had to be temporarily closed. Service was suspended on the A line in Washington Heights and on the #5 line in northern Bronx. NYC Transit still needs to do more.

Consider adding new pump rooms, improve coordination with NYC Department of Environmental Protection to ensure there are adequate storm water and sewage system capacity adjacent to stations and tracks and purchase additional mobile pumps and pump trains.

Do we need more funding to be allocated to increase the number of existing NYC Transit subway system pump rooms back to a state of good repair? Do we need additional new pump rooms?

How many NYC Transit Bus, Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority Bus, MTA Bus (the former seven NYC private franchised bus operators), NYC Transit and Staten Island Railway subway yard and shops are located in flood zone areas?

Have they all been upgraded to deal with the next superstorm? Five million pre-pandemic subway and commuter rail riders should not have to deal with continued inconveniences every time there is a major rainstorm.

**Larry Penner,  
Great Neck**

### Societal Challenges Vs. TV Dinners?

We are facing some of the greatest challenges in our city, State, and country's history. Page 2, 6, and 11 of the *Norwood News* July 28-August 11 edition mention people who very victims of brutal, horrific crimes. *Norwood News* is free to print what it chooses, but is it truly necessary to print a letter that is 494 words from a Nassau County resident about TV dinners? I care about a social security system that might not have money by the time I get there, crime spiraling out of control, oner-

ous tax burdens, ballooning federal deficits, out-of-control illegal immigration, a stubborn pandemic, another stubborn disease. I do not care about the history of TV dinners.

**Nat Weiner  
Parkchester**

*Editor's Note: I take Mr. Weiner's point. In fact, letters to the editor are supposed to be in response to stories published in the Norwood News. However, as this guideline is not always followed, as I only received two letters ahead of our last edition, and as I don't want to discourage letter-writing, particularly among those who may not use social media, I included both letters in our last edition. In the cut and thrust of deadlines, I may also have made a split-second decision that the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the TV dinner merited awarding some space to what some may consider a beloved tradition.*

### Crime & Punishment

With the exploding violent crime rate here in NYC, especially in our beloved Bronx, I am stunned at the amount of people who will still vote for anyone on the Democratic Party line. I was shocked to read about the daylight jewelry store robbery on Fordham Road of over \$2 million. Yet it was in and out of the news and not a word from our local political leaders who all happen to be Democrats!!

One of my favorite quotes by Napoleon is, "The act of policing is, in order to punish less often, to punish more severely." When people act like savages, you remove them from society and keep them apart from society. Punishment needs to be extremely harsh to keep people in line. In Saudi Arabia, why is crime so low? In Singapore, why is crime so low? Enforcement is harsh and punishment, even harsher.

Public caning should make its way here to the U.S. Instead of jail time, you get lashed in the ass. Crime would drop precipitously and there would probably be less inmates.

**Richard Marias  
Norwood**

*Editor's Note: To ensure sufficient time for review of all letters to the editor, please send them to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org) or by mail to Norwood News, 3400 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467, by the Friday before each publication day. If sent by email, please mark them as "Letter to the Editor" in the subject line. Letter writers should aim to write no more than 300 words and in response to published articles. Thank you.*

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## Celebrating National Breastfeeding Month

By **CLAIRE GARON**

Imagine that you're about to start training for a challenging sport. Perhaps you're learning how to lift weights or training for your first race. Now, imagine doing this with a crying newborn and four hours of sleep. This is a lot like learning to breastfeed. August is World Breastfeeding Month and a perfect time to talk about the joys and (totally normal) challenges of breastfeeding.

There are many similarities between breastfeeding and starting a new fitness routine; both are physical activities with great health benefits. You will need knowledge and determination to reach either goal. At the start of both, you may experience discomfort, soreness, or even pain, all of which will improve with practice. If not, there are experts who can help. Finally, you will learn to trust yourself.

The benefits of breastfeeding for the health of mother and baby are clear. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), babies who breastfeed are less likely to get infections, as children. Breastfed babies are also less likely to get chronic conditions, including heart disease and diabetes, as adults. Mom too has a lower chance of ovarian and breast cancer, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Not surprisingly, many women and families want to breastfeed. While most women *can* breastfeed, only 25 percent of women exclusively breastfeed their baby for the first six months of life, as recommended by the American Association of Pediatrics. Exclusive breastfeeding means that the baby's only food is breastmilk,

not formula or a mix of the two.

If you or someone you know is breastfeeding or thinking about breastfeeding, here are three important facts to help increase their chance of meeting their breastfeeding goals:

### 1. You Need to *Remove Milk to Make Milk*

When you remove milk from the breast, the body releases hormones that cause the breasts to refill. Most women will make enough milk to exclusively breastfeed a baby if they feed 10-12 times a day (or about every 2 hours). Unfortunately, long gaps without breastfeeding causes the body to produce less, and your milk will likely decrease and eventually stop. Imagine a woman who does not breastfeed after her baby's birth. Her breasts will be full for a few days, but then will "dry up."

Again, you have to remove milk to make milk! New parents will often delay breastfeeding for the first few days if the baby is not nursing well, mom is in pain, or she's simply exhausted. The result is little or no milk. Breastfeeding from your baby's first day will create the milk you'll need in the weeks to come.

### 2. Breastfeeding can be hard, but practice leads to progress!

When a baby attaches to the breast, we call this the "latch." Babies are born with the instinct to breastfeed, and usually latch within an hour of birth when placed on mom's bare chest, a practice called "skin to skin." It's normal for newborns to cry and turn away from the nipple for the first breastfeeding sessions, or they might latch for several seconds, and then "pop off" the nipple.

This may leave loved ones confused and disappointed. If this occurs, don't worry! After all, this is a new skill and you're both beginners. Seek advice from the lactation consultant in the hospital and keep trying! This is not a reason to stop breastfeeding. Remember, learning to breastfeed is like learning a new fitness move, like a squat or a lunge. Practice leads to progress.

### 3. Social Support Matters

Loved ones, including partners, relatives, or older children, can help you breastfeed by:

Spending time with baby "skin to skin." A baby ben-

efits from being skin to skin with caretakers of any gender or age. Holding a baby to your chest (while wearing a robe, low shirt, or no shirt) improves their breastfeeding skills!

Doing housework. Loved ones can help with laundry, dishes, cooking, and cleaning so that that mom can use her time to rest and to practice breastfeeding.

Learning about normal breastfeeding from trusted sources and when to seek help from a pediatrician, OB-GYN, lactation consultant or breastfeeding hotline.

Providing mom with praise and encouragement during this challenging time. Remember, practice leads to progress.

To get breastfeeding help at Montefiore, consult your OBGYN or your child's pediatrician. To learn more before or after you give birth, join these free online classes and support groups:

#### Just Birth Space

Visit <https://www.justbirthspace.org>, and click "Support Groups and Classes" at the top. Also, check out the monthly Newborn Care and Infant Feeding Class, and the weekly Infant Feeding Support Group and Postpartum Support Group.

#### Bronx Baby Café Breastfeeding Support Group

This is an English-speaking group which meets online on Thursdays at 11 a.m.

On the date and time, to begin the video session, visit <https://hbc.webex.com/meet/lewiskd>.

#### Schedule a one-on-one breastfeeding consult in person, by video or by phone:

Call the NYC Breastfeeding Warmline on (646) 965-7212, Monday to Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Contact one of Montefiore's WIC offices or another local WIC office near you by referring to this list provided by NYS Department of Health: [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/wic/local\\_agencies.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/wic/local_agencies.htm) or call the Growing Up Healthy hotline on (800) 522-5006 and ask for the nearest location to you.

Search for a private lactation consultant at [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org).

*Claire Garon MPH, CHES is a health educator with the Office of Community and Population Health at Montefiore Health System.*

## Elections 2022: Christian Amato on Education, the Environment and Quality-of-Life

(continued from page 11)

In a time where parents are suffering with finding a job, trying to find a good job, figuring out what to do with childcare, something like that can be transformative for the quality of life and the economic mobility of many in our communities across the state."

To implement these policies, Amato said he would use funding allocated in the State budget by Gov. Kathy Hochul, and federal funds allotted by President Joe Biden. He also believes in taxing corporations that contribute the most to pollution.

"Our budget rivals most economies, our taxes are the highest in the country and yet, we can't afford to be a leader," he said. "It doesn't add up, this politics of austerity, in the time where we have to uplift as many New Yorkers as possible, not just coming out of this pandemic, but we're in a perceived downturn that might become a recession again."

Amato said investment was needed to stimulate growth. "All of these things that I'm proposing come with job growth and job creation, and so, these investments aren't just in our quality of life and improving

our communities and providing housing or safety and security. These are economic generators as well. You look at the Climate, Community and Investment Act, which would create a tax on our largest polluters, corporations who are our largest polluters, that would generate \$15 billion a year."

Amato's concerns for the upcoming election are voter turnout, which he said was "abysmal" in the past during the elections for State governor and Mayor of New York City. However, he said he had confidence in his team, and his campaign.

During a BronxNet debate

which aired on Monday, Aug. 8, with the other candidates in the race, Amato was criticized by his opponent, John Perez, for his alleged prior stance on publicly defaming the police by carrying a sign that read, "All Cops Are B\*stards." Amato addressed the point, saying crime budgets may vary year-to-year depending on priorities, that he had "marched for police accountability" and that investment in other areas like cure violence programs was another way to reduce street crime.

His final message to voters was the following: "I'm the only candidate who has been, who

is a lifelong Bronxite, who has been born and raised here, and worked in these communities, and served these communities. I'm the only candidate running with a roadmap for our communities, and my friends live here, my family lives here, and I'm really interested in fighting to make sure that this community gets the attention it deserves."

Election Day is Aug. 23 and early voting starts on Aug. 13. Voters are reminded to check their polling site **prior** to heading to the polls as it may have changed.

*\*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



# Cops Crack Down on Unregistered Bikes, Scooters and ATVs

By DAVID GREENE

Teams of NYPD officers are entering their 4th weekend of a citywide crackdown on illegal and or unregistered motorized dirt bikes, scooters, and All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs). Meanwhile, stores across the City continue to sell motorized scooters given there are seemingly no restrictions on such purchases.

Officials from the NYPD held a press conference at Norwood's 52nd Precinct on Webster Avenue on Tuesday, August 2, during which NYPD chief of patrol, Chief Jeffrey Maddrey, was joined by Bronx borough commander, Assistant Chief Philip Rivera, commanding officer of NYPD Highway One, Captain Lee Manuel, and the 52nd Precinct's commanding officer, Deputy Inspector Jeremy Scheublin.

They and other members of the NYPD were surrounded by 186 confiscated bikes, scooters, and ATVs, with half taken from riders on streets located within the 52nd Precinct, which covers Bedford Park, Fordham, Kingsbridge, Norwood, Bronx Park, and University Heights. The rest were from other precincts across The Bronx.

"We made a promise to the community," Maddrey said as he recalled a "bike crush" event in June. "And a lot of questions came up about how are we going to respond to New Yorkers. Are we going out there and [taking] these vehicles off the street? And when I spoke, I said, 'Absolutely!'"

Maddrey said officers took part in "special training" conducted with by Manuel and the NYPD's Highway Patrol to make inroads on the mission. He continued, "We wanted to improve their tactics to make sure when they go out here, that they're grabbing these vehicles in a safe manner. The safety of all concerned is paramount."

Revealing more on the recent crackdown, Maddrey explained, "We put together some special training, we developed some new tactics, some new strategies, and for the last three weekends, we went out there, every weekend we got better and better, and this weekend, I think it really culminated."

Police officers across the five boroughs confiscated 240 bikes on Sunday, July 31. Of the 240 taken off the roads, Maddrey said between 150 and 160 bikes were taken off Bronx streets.

"We've crushed bikes before," the chief continued, concluding his presentation by adding that they plan to continue to remove more bikes off the streets. "We're going to continue to improve the quality of life for New Yorkers," he said.

"We're going to improve safety for New Yorkers, people driving, people walking on the sidewalks; we've had plenty of incidents where these bikes are being operated on sidewalks and



Photo by David Greene

(L-R) COMMANDING OFFICER OF NYPD Highway 1, Captain Lee Manuel; 52nd Precinct commanding officer, Deputy Inspector Jeremy Scheublin; NYPD chief of patrol, Chief Jeffrey Maddrey and Bronx borough commander, Assistant Chief Philip Rivera, hold a press conference at the 52nd Precinct on Webster Avenue in the Norwood section of The Bronx, to announce a crackdown on illegal or unregistered dirt bikes, scooters and ATVs on Tuesday, August 2, 2022.



Photo by David Greene

**POLICE DISPLAY 186** dirt bikes, scooters, and ATVs, confiscated across The Bronx over two weekends, outside the 52nd Precinct in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Tuesday, August 2, 2022. Half were taken off streets located in the 52 command, with one displayed for the media.

causing danger to families, children, mothers, so, we're going to press forward with this initiative."

Recalling his warning to riders at the bike crush in June, Maddrey added, "I told people who ride these bikes, 'If you don't ride 'em, we won't take 'em,' but they didn't hear that truce and they continue to ride so we'll continue to take them."

Rivera spoke on the criminal aspect of dealing with illegal bikes and scooters, saying, "There are residual benefits of doing an operation such as this that extend beyond the traffic issue... Unfortunately, quite often these bikes are used in robberies and shootings."

He recalled how one individual on a bike decided to fire into the air during the recent Bronx Dominican Day Parade, while another rider stopped

at Creston Avenue and East Tremont Avenue while also carrying an illegal firearm.

During a question-and-answer session, one reporter asked, "You don't actually chase them, do you?" NYPD officers have been discouraged from chasing illegal dirt bikes and ATVs since an August 11, 2012 police chase with a dirt bike ended with the death of a driver, Eddie Fernandez, 28, and injuries to passenger, Adalberto Gonzalez, 26, at the intersection of Randall Avenue and Coster Street in Hunts Point.

Maddrey replied, "No, we don't chase them; that's not part of our policy. We just have to use good tactics, good tactics and a lot of times we just try and catch them off guard, catch them when they're not paying attention." He added, "Because we're still actively involved in removing these bikes, I can't let you know everything."

The chief went on to say, "As you see, most of these bikes, ATVs and illegal dirt bikes, bikes that are not registered, bikes that are not properly insured, some of them have no vehicle identification number, a lot of times when we grab the people who are operating them, they're not wearing a helmet. They're not obeying the traffic rules, they're riding on the sidewalks."

He then explained that the NYPD Property Clerk would send a notice to the owners along with the current process to retrieve a confiscated bike. The owner would have to go to the precinct where the bike was taken within 15 days of when the bike was impounded, along with the appropriate paperwork. Police will not just let the owner ride away with a confiscated bike, so the owner would have to arrive with a tow-truck or a vehicle used to haul the bike away.

The weekend before the announcement of the crackdown, officers across the city confiscated 400 bikes. Since

Jan. 1, the NYPD has confiscated 3,000 illegal bikes.

Meanwhile, several scooter riders Norwood News spoke to, and one scooter salesman all incorrectly believe scooters under 50 CCs (cubic capacity) do not have to be registered with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. However, a flyer provided by the NYPD shows a driver's license is required to drive all motorized scooters and mopeds, even though bike shops are currently not required to ask for a driver's license before purchase.

Officers, civilian employees, and private tow truck operators spent hours loading up the different motor bikes and scooters onto flatbed trucks, police trucks and other vehicles outside the precinct on the day of the press conference. Those bikes not claimed were due to be eventually destroyed.

One police source said, "The NYPD is aggressively pursuing every method to rid our streets of illegal dirt bikes and ATVs. If residents make such an observation, we strongly encourage residents to call 911 so that the groups can be tracked, and the NYPD can alert adjoining precincts." The source added, "If an NYPD officer can safely stop any of the motorcyclists, and they are driving illegally, the motorcycle will be confiscated."

On two occasions, the same police source declined to respond to a request for information regarding a post on the Citizens App of a motorcycle that apparently crashed into a police car on the Grand Concourse on Thursday, July 14.

Meanwhile, on Monday, Aug. 8, an employee at Frank's Electric Bikes Shop on White Plains Road in the Van Nest section of the borough was asked if a 40CC scooter wouldn't need to be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles. The worker replied, "No." When asked if he had heard about the NYPD crackdown, the unidentified salesman replied, "Ahh, I'm not sure," before directing such questions to the manager who was away from the shop at the time.

Recent incidents involving scooters and mopeds include a pattern robbery within the 43rd Precinct, where five individuals are wanted in connection with three robberies in June and July, where a scooter was used. On Monday, March 16, a gunman fired wildly from the back of a scooter, hitting and killing Kyhara Tay, 11, who was walking home from school with friends. On May 23, police charged Omar Bojang, 18, with murder, manslaughter, and criminal possession of a weapon. On May 20, an unnamed 15-year-old boy had already been arrested in connection with the incident. A person arrested and charged with a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.



# For Home Healthcare Workers, the Work Continues

(continued from page 9)

do with the system she works in rather than the work itself.

"There's rarely enough resources [nurses] for people so you're fighting to get [them]. It's not enough; some people need more," she said. Also, according to Gasser, home healthcare for those who are nearing the end of their life falls under the standard Medicaid and Medicare plan. This is not readily available information despite a majority of Bronx residents being on said plan.

Gasser explained that, usually, hospice nurses would go into homes as a third party to care for dying patients but because of the pandemic, their work had to change. "We were doing telehealth visits," she said. "We switched to not doing home visits. We went back to the field in July. It wasn't as rewarding as being with them face to face."

She explained how the pandemic resulted in another crisis for terminally ill patients, which came on top of their actual illnesses. With the high numbers of deaths, funeral homes were booked to capacity and were unable to take in more reservations. Meanwhile, hospitals were also full, leaving terminally ill clients unable to receive needed hospital care during the worst points of their illness, making hospice

care that much more important.

"We lost health aides," said Gasser. "Some of them died because they got sick. We didn't lose any of our hospice nurses, but some of them became very ill, which resulted in them being out for a while." Gasser did lose a social work colleague, however, which she described as "devastating."

Another reason for losing home health aides was that some left the field entirely during the pandemic, meaning they had less people to cover the patients. Gasser explained how between insurance and the pandemic, their work became even more intense and frustrating.

Once in-person home visits resumed, she said getting back out there was a little daunting [as not everyone was fully vaccinated] but by that point they at least had the necessary PPE to do their job, as well as sufficient COVID-19 testing kits and other protocols to keep them safe while they worked.

"Our work [during the earlier stages of the pandemic] was similar to what we usually had to do," Gasser said, but added that some families later needed more concrete services, like applying for new COVID-19 related benefits. She said the virtual work also continued in some cases, even when home visits started up again. "It was difficult, be-

cause talking over the phone was not as comfortable for the clients and patients as being in person," she said.

VNS Health also had to provide more bereavement support to their patients' families. "Because families were losing family members to COVID, we had to help them get through COVID and the isolation," she said. "They were experiencing losses at different levels."

As a result of the pandemic, some hospice nurses were also charged with caring for patients who were discharged from the hospital after having COVID-19, though this was less frequent. "We had one gentleman... he was struggling, so we had one nurse come in, as did I," Gasser said, adding that luckily, the man in question recovered and got taken off hospice care eventually.

Additionally, some nursing homes in which VNS Health operates had some COVID cases. "We had some who died unexpectedly because of COVID, not their [original] diagnosis," she said. "It was hard on the families. There was a lot of blame going around about what the facilities weren't doing. It was hard because they were doing what they could do but it [COVID-19] was very quick, and ran through the different facilities. They did lose a fair amount of people."

Beatrice Santa-Wood, media and cre-

ative strategist at VNS Health, further explained the situation. "Even though there were shortages, our nurses were in people's homes throughout the pandemic, and we were a lifeline for a lot of patients. A lot of people have a hard time finding these services elsewhere, so the people we're treating are some of the most vulnerable and wouldn't be able to find help."

Now, more than two years into the pandemic, Gasser said the work of hospice nurses has definitely gotten easier. She only wishes there were more resources.

"People need access to services, and I just wish it was easier and more available," she said. She also hopes that more people will utilize the hospice services that are available to them. "For those with Medicare, it's covered; everything we do is covered," she said.

Santa-Wood said the work remains vital, as at-home care helps prevent overcrowding in hospitals when there are surges of COVID-19, and it also keeps their patients safe at home and away from the virus.

Gasser had one piece of advice for readers based on her experiences: get out and vote. "People have to realize the power that they do have," she said. "Do something to make a difference, whatever that is. It all counts."

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## Public and Community Meetings

The **52<sup>nd</sup> PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., sometimes physically and sometimes virtually. 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 (date TBC) after the summer hiatus and is targeted to be held physically but this is to be confirmed. Contact [KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov](mailto: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 next meeting will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 7, at 8 p.m. For further details, contact [bedfordmosholu@verizon.net](mailto:bedfordmosholu@verizon.net).

### CORRECTONS

In the story on page 7 of the *Norwood News* [July 28-August 11, 2022] entitled, "1961 Freshman Graduates from BCC," Mercedes Yordan's surname was incorrectly spelled, and in the story on page 13 in the same edition, entitled, "Disability Rights NY Highlights Healthcare Inequity," Peppar Cyr's surname was spelled incorrectly. We apologize for these errors.

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# Football Meets Fire Safety in the Oval

(continued from page 1)

munity members to participate alongside players from the FDNY Football Team who ran skills and drills to help lead, motivate and coach young participants,” an FDNY spokesperson later said of the event. “Also on hand was the Fire Safety Education Unit, the Mobile CPR Unit, and a FDNY Mobile Academy. FDNY members had a great time interacting with the community the Department serves.”

FDNY Captain Gerald Rocco used the occasion to remind residents and participants that if a fire alarm goes off in their building, and if it stops a few minutes later, they should still call 911 to find out why the alarm went off in the first place.

Due to the ongoing hot weather, participants were also reminded that spray caps are available from local fire houses and can be fitted to fire hydrants to create a gentle cool spray. However, opening fire hydrants full throttle is illegal as it wastes water and may cause a fire hazard in the event of a fire.

Tasha Harris-Andrews of Bronx Buccaneers was happy with the success of the event. Posting some photos of the event on her social media, she added the message, “Thank you Yvonne, the FDNY Bravest Football Team, & all the FDNY departments for hosting event at the Oval with the Bronx Buccs Football Team. It was amazing!”

*\*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



1



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4



2

Photo by Miriam Quiñones  
**1 CHILDREN ARE GIVEN CPR** training during an FDNY Football Skills & Drills event hosted by the FDNY, in conjunction with Bronx Buccaneers, in the Williamsbridge Oval, located in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Saturday, July 30, 2022.

Photo courtesy of Tasha Harris-Andrews  
**2 TASHA HARRIS-ANDREWS** of Bronx Buccaneers makes friends with a dummy during CPR training at a Football Skills & Drills event hosted by the FDNY in the Williamsbridge Oval in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Saturday, July 30, 2022.

Photo by Miriam Quiñones  
**3 KORI PEGUES, 6, SHOWS** off her cartwheel skills during a Foot-

ball Skills & Drills event hosted by the FDNY in the Williamsbridge Oval in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Saturday, July 30, 2022.

Photo by Miriam Quiñones  
**4 PARTICIPANTS RUN** A few laps of the track during a Football Skills & Drills event hosted by the FDNY in the Williamsbridge Oval in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Saturday, July 30, 2022.

Photo courtesy of Tasha Harris-Andrews  
**5 PARTICIPANTS IN A** Football Skills & Drills event hosted by the FDNY in the Williamsbridge Oval in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Saturday, July 30, 2022 pose for a group photo.



5



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