By SÍLE MOLONEY

It was an extra special Thanksgiving this year for one mother and her family. Seven months after history was made in The Bronx, an emotional meeting took place on Tuesday, Nov. 22, between the world’s first HIV-positive to HIV-positive, heart transplant recipient and her donor’s family. Westchester resident, Mrs. Miriam Nieves, 62, who is HIV-positive, met the mom and sisters of deceased donor, 30-year-old aspiring nurse, Brittany Newton, a nurse from Louisiana, Nieves’ family members, and the Montefiore Health System transplant team who carried out the operation, the world’s first HIV-positive to HIV-positive heart transplant.

HIV-POSITIVE, WESTCHESTER resident and heart organ recipient, Mrs. Miriam Nieves, 62, (in red) is pictured on Tuesday, Nov. 22, 2022, at Montefiore Medical Center, located at 111 E 210th Street in Norwood, The Bronx, along with the mom and sisters of deceased, HIV-positive, heart donor, Brittany Newton, 30, a nurse from Louisiana, Nieves’ family members, and the Montefiore Health System transplant team who carried out the operation, the world’s first HIV-positive to HIV-positive heart transplant.

(continued on page 15)
Bronx Children’s Museum Formally Opens!

By ARIEL PACHECO

After operating as a “museum without walls” for more than 12 years, The Bronx Children’s Museum has finally found a permanent home in the South Bronx. Located near Yankee Stadium, along the Harlem River, The Bronx Children’s Museum is set to officially open to the public on Saturday, Dec. 3.

A long-awaited, ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on Wednesday, Nov. 16, in celebration of the opening of the museum. The Bronx Children’s Museum is the first ever children’s museum in The Bronx, and event organizers estimate they will engage with 24,000 children at the facility during its first year.

The opening ceremony featured several speakers, including Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, former Bronx borough presidents, Rubén Díaz Jr. and Adolfo Carrion Jr., along with various officials who played key roles in the founding of the museum.

“The Bronx Children’s Museum will truly serve as a beacon of hope and opportunity, a space of artistic expression of culture, of education, all coming together,” said Gibson, a longtime supporter of the museum since her days as a city council member in District 16. “I am so proud that this date is finally here because of all the work,” she added.

The museum is geared toward children who range in age from infancy through fourth grade and is located just steps away from the Bronx Terminal Market and the future site of the Universal Hip-Hop Museum, part of the multi-million-dollar Bronx Point development. Several lucky children in attendance for the opening ceremony were able to see, ahead of the public, what the museum has to offer.

Hope Harley, founding president of the Bronx Children’s Museum, who now serves on its board of directors, said of the occasion, “I didn’t even envision this. I had no vision of what this would look like.” She added, “I just knew that we needed to create a museum for the children of The Bronx. “Every time I come in here, I cry, but tears of joy.”

The Bronx Children’s Museum features site-specific art installations and interactive exhibits allowing families to play, learn and connect to The Bronx. The 13,000 square-foot facility has numerous exhibits including The Waterways, The Woods, The Block, The Nest, The Turret Gallery, and Sonia’s Corner.

The Waterways mimics the look, feel and function of Bronx waterways like the Bronx River, the Harlem River, and Orchard Beach. The Block is a miniature replica of a local neighborhood, complete with a community garden and various store fronts. The Nest targets children aged 0 to 3 years of age and their caregivers, where infants and toddlers can develop their motor skills through crawling and sorting objects.

The Woods allows children to discover and observe a variety of animals and plants through a microscope, while the Turret Gallery allows children to climb and crawl in an interactive space that features artwork from the children attending the museum’s after school program.

Sonia’s Corner is named in honor of both U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and Bronx native, the Hon. Sonia Sotomayor, another longtime supporter of the museum, and Bronx native actor and writer, Sonia Manzano. Manzano played Maria on Sesame Street. Sonia’s Corner features a collection of children’s books and family-friendly resources.

“It’s all about the children seeing, touching, experiencing, and really exploring,” said Arlene Bascom, current president of the museum, who also serves on its board of directors. The facility also includes twelve fine art installations created by Bronx connected artists, theme-based areas, and interactive activities.

Diana Ayala, District 8 city council member and deputy speaker, said of the museum, “The fact that our children don’t have to leave their place of residence to visit something so beautiful is really something that I’m proud to be a part of.”

The cultural institution was founded in 2005 and since 2010, has engaged more than 124,000 children and families according to the event organizers. “Imagine what our children will ascend to when they have institutions like this,” said Laurie Cumbo, commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. “That’s why this institution is so important and perfect at this moment.”

The museum was previously mobile and the iconic purple school bus became a roving learning environment and the museum’s most popular program. It was forced to shut down the “Museum On The Go” due to the pandemic. However, in the meantime, the museum secured funding from the City for a new bus that is expected to be ready for road in 2025.

Gibson went on to say, “This project will give The Bronx a cultural resource center dedicated to providing our children an opportunity to dream big, express themselves, and aspire to be whatever they want to be.”

The opening of the facility had been delayed multiple times due to various funding issues. It was supposed to be open in July 2022 but failed to acquire a temporary certificate of occupancy in time. The space is shared with the City’s Parks department.

Parks commissioner, Sue Donoghue, who also spoke during the ribbon-cutting ceremony, said, “We’re advancing equity and education, giving kids in The Bronx the Museum space they deserve. This museum is a partner of ours both literally and in spirit.”

For now, the museum will only be open three days a week. That may change as the institution secures additional funding in the future. Admission will be completely free for the first four to six months and thereafter, tickets will be priced at $8 for both adults and children. Children under 12 months have free admission.

The museum is located at 725 exterior street on the second floor of the 1925 powerhouse in Mill Pond Park. Tickets are available now and more information can be found at https://www.bronxchildrensmuseum.org/old-home.
The NYPD arrested a man in connection to the fatal shooting of a 29-year-old male driver, shot on the Major Deegan Expressway on Monday evening, Nov. 21. The victim later crashed into “multiple” parked vehicles on Sedgwick Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights.

Police said that at 4:50 p.m., officers from the 50th Precinct responded to a 911 call regarding a man who had been shot in front of 2891 Sedgwick Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights. A police spokesperson said, “Preliminary investigation determined that a 29-year-old male was at 70 Major Deegan North inside of a black Toyota Camry when he was shot once in the back by an unknown individual.”

The spokesperson added, “The victim then drove to the vicinity of 2891 Sedgwick Avenue [where] he struck multiple, parked cars and then overturned his vehicle.”

Police said the driver (gunshot victim) was transported to area hospitals, the New York Presbyterian Allen Hospital in Manhattan where he was pronounced deceased.

Earlier than evening, Norwood News overheard some police radio transmission exchanges between two police units, one seemingly based on the Major Deegan Expressway, and one on Sedgwick Avenue. At around 4:45 p.m., an NYPD dispatcher reported that a male had been shot at Sedgwick Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights.

A short time later, a traffic unit reported shots fired on the Major Deegan Expressway and W. 234th Street and asked if it was related to the earlier reported shooting incident at Sedgwick Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights. A police official was later heard giving the address of 2891 Sedgwick Avenue and Reservoir Avenue as the location for a required ambulance to treat a shooting victim.

A short time later, at Sedgwick Avenue, a police official was heard saying, “Can I get one more bus (ambulance) to this location for an aided?” Meanwhile, a police official was heard saying, “At this time, regarding the (10) 34 on the highway, there’s no description at this time. It just states that someone was shot and left the location.”

The police unit, seemingly based on the highway, later confirmed that shots had been fired on the highway and that a police unit was “canvassing” the area for evidence. An official from one police unit was later heard saying they had no description of the vehicle driven by the gunman, that officers had driven as far as the Yonkers border and could not locate any suspect.

The police unit based at Sedgwick Avenue was later heard saying, “Patrol supervisor, meet me over by the car wreck, over here.” Police were later heard saying units were canvassing Bronx hospitals for a possible second victim.

In another police transmission, a police unit was heard saying, “As far as the hospital canvas, there was a passenger in the backseat, a Black male with a black, baseball cap, khaki pants... possibly wearing a sweater. Unknown if he was struck, fled scene... on foot. Unknown direction of flight.” A police official was also heard on the radio saying the suspect fled from the backseat of a vehicle.

Separately, the FDNY reported that emergency services received a call at 4:49 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 21, from 2891 Sedgwick Avenue regarding an arrest / shooting. A department official told Norwood News two people were transported to area hospitals, the New York Presbyterian Allen Pavilion and St. Barnabas Hospital respectively.

The deceased victim was later identified as Raymond Genao, 29, from the Fordham Manor section of The Bronx.

An NYPD flier offering a reward of up to $1,000 for information leading to the arrest of anyone who was found to be in possession of illegal guns was later seen on the store window of the Mobil Gas Station on the Major Deegan Expressway.

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(continued on page 7)
With the World Cup being played this year during off-season in Qatar, the first time the tournament is being held in the Middle East, and amid reports of the country’s poor human rights records for women, manual workers, and the LGBTQ+ community, we asked readers if big money is influencing sports institutions like FIFA or the NBA to the detriment of professional sports.

“Ayoub ElBouhyaoui, the fans. Everything is going well. I’m a Morocco fan. They’re good and their next match is against Belgium.”

“Ayoub ElBouhyaoui, Morris Park

“Yes, I do think money is having an impact on sports; it’s negative. The World Cup wasn’t supposed to be in Qatar because it’s not a site that’s open to everybody. So, I think FIFA should organize the World Cup somewhere else, where everybody can be accepted and everybody can be welcomed, and that doesn’t happen in Qatar. They have a lot of human rights issues. So, I think a lot of money was involved for the event to take place over there. It does have a negative impact on the sport because people are going to start to think that money can buy everything, and that can put some doubt in the results at the end. So, we’re going to wonder if it was a legitimate win or was money involved again. We’d never know. I’m still watching, I don’t watch every game because I work long hours. I must watch Brazil because that’s where I’m from, so I watch my country. I think they’re doing good. I think they’re going to win.”

“Mario Souza, Parkchester

“Well, it’s definitely all about money, you know what I’m saying? Everything revolves around money. The more money you make, the better you play. The better you play, the better the results. So, people will want to come. So yes, I think the game could be stolen, just because they want the money that’s circulating. I’m rooting for France. Sometimes you’ve got to go on faith and that’s basically what I’m doing.”

“Chandler Monros, Yonkers (visiting Kingsbridge Heights)

“I think big money is detrimental to a variety of things in the way that global capitalism has adverse effects on most of our lives. In the case of sports, we see it in concentrated wealth, generated mostly, thanks to the players, in the hands of a minority of rich owners, a small number of rich teams or a handful of developed nations. In the case of the World Cup, a small group of individuals at FIFA, many of whom are banned from soccer, in prison, or dead, likely took bribes or lucrative agreements in exchange for their support on Qatar’s controversial bid. FIFA took the money and none of the players belong to, or are employed by, FIFA. They would be associated with their respective national federations. I’m not rooting for one team. I think a team from South America is due for a win.”

“Juan Escalante, Hartdale, Westchester

“If it was up to me, I would have protested where the games were held. I do think teams stack the deck by paying players so much, for example the Yankees. I’ve noticed on “True Housewives of Qatar” on Bravo, they try to make you think the women live such an extravagant, care-free life and that they have freedom like women here do. The show only portrays the rich, and you never see a maid or any common people, and where they shoot, the restaurant is usually empty. I think USA will beat Iran three to one.”

“Lisa Meyer, West Islip, NY

Editor’s Note: The Netflix documentary “FIFA Uncovered” describes the origins and trajectory of the organization, and the apparent bribery that took place over the years in respect of the bids by various countries to host the World Cup.

Search for Local Missing People

By SÍLE MOLONEY

The NYPD is seeking the public’s help locating a 12-year-old boy reported missing from University Heights. Police said Saul Delorbe of 2257 University Avenue was last seen leaving his home on Tuesday, Nov. 29, at around 00.50 a.m. He is around 4 feet, 8 inches tall, weighs around 100 pounds, has a thin build, a light complexion, black hair, and brown eyes. He was last seen wearing a gray sweat suit and a black jacket.

Police are also asking for the public’s assistance locating a 15-year-old girl reported missing from Kingsbridge Heights. Police said Maria Batista of 5 East 196 Street, Apt #406 in The Bronx, was last seen Monday, Nov. 21, at 7.30 a.m., leaving her home. She is described as being around 5 feet, 4 inches tall, weighs 130 pounds, is Hispanic, has a medium complexion, brown eyes, and black hair. She was last seen wearing a black coat, black pants, and black and blue “Yeezy” sneakers.

Police are also seeking the public’s assistance locating a 50-year-old woman who lives in Fordham Manor. It was reported to the NYPD that Yasminne Lefranc of 2516 Grand Avenue was last seen on Friday, Nov. 4, at around 4.30 p.m., leaving her home. She is described as female, is around 5 feet, 8 inches tall, weighs around 250 pounds, is Black with a medium complexion, and has short black hair and brown eyes. No clothing description was provided.

The NYPD is also searching for the 55-year-old man seen in the accompanying photo who is reported missing from Bedford Park. Police said that Courtney Stevens of 100 East Mosholu Parkway South was last seen on Monday, Nov. 14, at around 12.30 p.m. in his local neighborhood. He is described as being around 6 feet, 1 inch tall, weighs 200 pounds, is Black, has a medium skin complexion, brown eyes, and is bald. He was last seen wearing a black hat, a black jacket, and black jeans.

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

(continued on page 6)
Have a Happy Healthy Holiday
Montefiore Einstein
New City Laws Protect DV Survivors

Mayor Eric Adams announced the launch, on Sept. 14, of The People’s Money initiative, a citywide participatory budgeting process, whereby New Yorkers decide how to spend mayoral expense funding of $5 million to improve local communities. Residents discussed some funding ideas at various public sessions in recent weeks.

Some local ideas include revitalizing the portion of Jerome Avenue between Kingsbridge Road and Bedford Park Boulevard, by Lehman College, as it “lacks lighting, sanitation, and a pedestrian-friendly environment.” Students and visitors usually avoid walking on Jerome, especially at night as they are concerned about their safety and local businesses are also affected.

Another idea is to make public parks full of families and kids again, and to “stop persons from riding motorcycles in parks and smoking and other illegal activities.” For a full list of the local proposed ideas, filter by borough and visit https://www.participate.nyc.gov/processes/Citywidepb/f/303/proposals.

The People’s Money Proposals

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Patients’ Bill of Rights to Include Informed Consent

State Sen. Gustavo Rivera’s bill S1172C was signed into law on Nov. 22. It will ensure the State’s Patient Bill of Rights includes and clearly states important rights around informed consent, which the senator said will empower patients to make the best healthcare decisions together with their healthcare providers.

D Line Weekend Subway Suspension

The D line, weekend subway service is suspended from Fridays at 11.30 p.m. until Mondays at 5 a.m. between Norwood-205th Street station and 161st Street station due to track maintenance. Subway passengers are asked to use the 4 train at Moshulu Parkway instead and to change at 161st Street to the D line.

Free, regular bus shuttle service is in operation at weekends to transfer passengers from Norwood-205th Street station to Mosholu Parkway station.

Laal Appoints New Outreach Coordinators

Norwood-based women’s empowerment group, Laal, has appointed two new outreach coordinators to serve its Indian and Pakistani members. Sumera Kotab attended SM Law University in Karachi, Pakistan, obtaining her law degree in 2007 after finishing second-year law school, and started out as an assistant at a daycare center for 2 and a half years, while simultaneously finishing off high school in The Bronx. She works at the U.S Census Bureau, including on annual, door-to-door, outreach campaigns. She also works as a poll worker during election season, and volunteers at Learning Leaders, assisting public school teachers in elementary schools.

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Search for Local Missing People

(continued from page 4)

All photos courtesy of the NYPD.

SAUL DELORBE, 12,

MARIA BATISTA, 15,

YASMIN LEFRANC, 50

COURTNEY STEVENS, 55

 Bronx Chamber of Commerce Mourns Chair

The Bronx Chamber of Commerce is mourning the death of longtime chairperson, Joseph P. Kelleher, who was also a businessman and former BronxNet host. The Chamber’s board of directors wrote, “Chairman Kelleher was a loving husband and father, friend and mentor to many, businessman and fierce advocate for The Bronx and New York State. He has left a lasting impact on our borough and State and is an example of true leadership for us all.” They added, “Please join the Bronx Chamber of Commerce and communities throughout New York State in prayer for Joe and his family. For further information, contact mb@bronxchamber.org.”
Kingsbridge Heights: Fatal Shooting & Car Pile-Up

(continued from page 3)

nor Deegan Expressway in Van Cortlandt Park, where the fatal shooting took place.

On Sunday, Nov. 28, the NYPD announced that pursuant to an ongoing investigation, Manuel Palma, 26, of Riverside Drive in Manhattan was arrested on Wednesday, Nov. 23, at 6:30 p.m. in the 50th Precinct in connection to the incident. He was charged with murder, manslaughter, and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon (a loaded firearm).

Because of the earlier police reference, caught on radio, to a suspect allegedly fleeing from the back seat of a car, Norwood News later asked the NYPD if they could say if the victim was a taxi driver, or if he had been shot by an assailant who had been in the backseat of his car. The NYPD responded, saying, “Unable to confirm at this time; incident remains under investigation.”

We pushed to try and save his life, but it was too late. "We asked if she could describe her brother. She said, "I don’t know anything about him. We didn’t live together, and he just came home.”

"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 by logging onto the CrimeStoppers website at https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/or on Twitter @NYPD Tips. All calls are strictly confidential.

We offer Early Head Start, Head Start, DOE UPK and Family Child Care programs within the Bronx. Low-income families are eligible. Our Services include programs for pregnant women, free full-day childcare for children ages birth to 3 years old and Center Based programs for children 3-5 years old.

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- Children Birth to 5 Years Old
- Pregnant Women
- Free Early Head Start Services with Qualified Providers for Infants & Toddlers: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
- DOE UPK and Family Child Care Programs
- Bilingual Programs

CONTACT US: Gilda Morales-Aleman & Alexander Martinez
Phone: 718-993-7700 ext. 915 & 924
Email: gmoralesaleman@cmcs.org & AlexanderMartinez@cmcs.org
Letters To The Editor

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

Come to the Table of Plenty
As we approach the reason for the season, the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, please know you are all welcome to attend religious services at your neighborhood Church, the Parish of St. Brendan and St. Ann.

You do not have to be Catholic, and all are welcome. You will be greeted by the Pastor Raul and Deacon Paul. You can find Mass times here: https://saintbrendanchurch.org.

What is important is that we show fellowship with each other and think of those less fortunate than us, and how we can help those individuals and families. That is what the birth of Christ signified - hope for the world!

Christmas is a time for renewal and a chance to better understand ourselves, all at the same time. I hope to see all of my neighbors as well as the rest of the Bronx there. We can make room for all in the pews! Merry Christmas!

Richard Marias
Norwood

Anti-Gay Bigotry, Domestic Violence, Murder

Richard Marias’ letter to the editor “Qatar Hosting the Soccer World Cup,” Norwood News, Nov. 17-30, is typical of his anti-gay bigotry and his hypocritical defense of evil laws in the name of morality. Qatar is supposed to be given credit for not carrying out the Sharia death penalty against gay people! They “only” get seven years in prison...

This is the penalty for all extramarital sex. So, if an unmarried man has sex with an unmarried woman, they get seven years in prison. Also, “leading, instigating, or seducing a male to commit sodomy or dissipation” gets you one to three years. “Dissipation” means wasteful. I guess that depraved government considers sex that cannot produce a child wasteful.

So, if a wife seduces her husband into giving her anal sex, or using a condom, she goes to prison. Who monitors this? Peeping Toms? Marias describes these laws as “common sense.” Does he describe Donald Trump as skinny? As for Marias’ use of the words “woke” and “sissy,” I guess when you have no sane argument, you resort to name calling.

On another subject, I’m all for the laws passed to protect domestic violence survivors mentioned in the News Briefs in the same issue. I would add this. Any person who persists in threatening and battering a former domestic partner should be imprisoned. The woman should not have to be like a criminal and hide from him. He should not be allowed near her. When he gets out, he should be on lifetime parole. If he goes near her again, he should go back to prison.

Also, here’s something that should apply not only to domestic abusers. Attempted murder should be treated the same as murder. Nobody should get out so they can have a second shot at murdering their target. The penalty should be life without parole.

Of course, we need judges who properly enforce the law. In Brooklyn, Zidon Clarke was found guilty of manslaughter but acquitted of murder. His victim was shot in the back of the head. So, clearly, he intended to kill his victim. This verdict, in a non-jury trial, was delivered by Brooklyn Supreme Court Judge Danny Chun (see November 22nd NY Daily News article, “Gang member dodges murder charges in stray-bullet death.”)

Also, how a shot to the head, which Clarke bragged was his good aim, gets described as a “stray bullet” is beyond my comprehension. Obviously, Chun needs to be removed from the bench.

Richard Warren
Van Cortlandt Village

Election Day Clean Up

Election Day has come and gone. This reminds me of “The Outer Limits,” a 1960s television show. With the end of round-the-clock commercials by politicians, political parties, political action groups, and pay-for-play special interest groups, control of your television is now back with you until the next election cycle. No more candidates’ campaign mailings clogging mailboxes and weighing down our hardworking postal employees. Finally, some peace and quiet!

Candidates who claimed they cared about the environment can now do their part. Winners and losers should have their paid campaign staff and volunteers pick up all the thousands of campaign signs that litter our roads and highways to help clean up this waste. They could also use leftover campaign funds to hire homeless or unemployed people to collect this litter. Let some people with community service be assigned this task. If candidates refuse to clean up after themselves, the NYC Department of Transportation should do the job and send candidates the bill.

Larry Penner
Great Neck

To ensure sufficient time for review of all letters to the editor, please send them to 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, ideally, in response to published articles. Thank you.
Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) held the first veterans' flagging event on Nov. 19, 2022 at the Bronx Victory Memorial in Bedford Park. In attendance, among others, were Karla Cabrera Carrera, Bronx CB7 assistant district manager, Bronx CB7 Veterans Committee chair, Chad Royer, Northwest Bronx Democrats founder and veteran, Anthony Riveccio, Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BCMA) president and Bronx CB7 parks committee chair, Barbara Stronczer, Guerinos Against Graffiti* president, Sirio Guerino, veteran, David Rosas, Jean Hill, former chair and current member of Bronx CB7, and Deputy Inspector Jeremy Scheublin, commanding officer of the 52nd Precinct.

Addressing those present, Royer said, “Let us use opportunities like this to remember what is happening now. We must not forget that we still have pressing matters pertaining to our veterans. While some of our veterans are doing well, others are without a place to live, without family members, dealing with mental health challenges, dealing with physical limitations and disability, dealing with food insecurity, searching for jobs that pay a living wage, and dealing with the trauma from bad experiences during their time of service.”

He added, “The list is long. We need, each of us, to play an active role in helping our friends, family members, and neighbors who have served, while we honor and remember those who have passed on while having chosen to protect our country.”

Riveccio, a U.S. Navy veteran, said, “It was my honor to advocate for an event three organizations, including mine, have been doing since 1987 when the WWI monument was in decline, and full of garbage and graffiti. Thirty-five years later, it is now clean, illuminated, and going to be used for events again, as it was decades ago, before 1987.” He added, “I thank CB7 Veterans Committee, Norwood Against Graffiti, Bedford Mosholu Community Association and Northwest Bronx Democrats.”

For her part, Hill said, “For all of our vets, I would like to say everyone waves the flag, but we have to take care of our vets. They have post-traumatic stress syndrome. They have homelessness problems, they have a host of issues that seem to get lost in the storm when they come home.”

She added, “Everybody waves while they are serving, but they tend to forget them when they come home, and I have experienced this full circle.”

Rosas also addressed those gathered, saying, “I’m a veteran, myself, and it’s a real honor to come out here for a World War I event. Last time I really went and honored World War I with veterans, or anything that had to do with World War I was when I was in Europe going to some of the monuments and sites like that, so it’s great to have something like this in The Bronx.” Rosas added, “So, I am really thrilled that we’re going to take action as a community to try to make things better. I am really glad I came out today.”

Guerino said he was glad to attend, saying, “Unfortunately I am not a vet, but my grandfather fought in World War I, on the Italian side, in Italy. My uncle, Eddie, and my uncle, Tony, my mother’s brother, served in Korea. My own son was in Kuwait, and as a family member whose relatives are very patriotic, I serve the community by coming out every day to make up for not serving in the armed forces.” He added, “I want to thank everybody for being here and I want to thank God I live in America. God bless everyone.”

Editor’s Note: Chad Royer is referenced incorrectly as a veteran in our latest print edition. We apologize for this, our error.
University Heights: Man Shot in Head Area
Officials from the 52nd Precinct are calling on the public to help with an investigation into a non-fatal shooting in University Heights. They said the incident occurred on Nov. 26 at around 2:24 a.m. opposite 138 West Fordham Road. Police said a suspect shot and struck a victim in the head area before fleeing in the pictured vehicle. A reward of up to $3,500 is being offered for information in relation to the incident. Residents are asked to call 1-800-577-TIPS with any information they may have. Calls are confidential.

Norwood: Woman, 77, Robbed in Home
The NYPD is asking for the public’s help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo who is sought regarding a robbery in Norwood. Police said on Friday, Nov. 18, at around 8:30 a.m., a woman, 77, was entering her apartment building, located in the vicinity of Kossuth Avenue and East Mosholu Parkway North, and while walking to her apartment door, a person approached her from behind and grabbed her purse.

As a result, the victim was thrown backward and hit her head on the ground. The assailant fled the location in an unknown direction. EMS responded and treated the victim at the scene. The victim’s purse contained ID documents and $125.

Bedford Park: Woman, 77, Robbed on Street
The NYPD is asking for the public’s help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo who is sought in connection to the robbery of a 77-year-old woman in Bedford Park.

Police said that on Tuesday, Nov. 8, at around 8:20 a.m., the woman was walking in the vicinity of Decatur Avenue and East 201st Street when a person unknown to her approached her. They said the person snatched her purse before fleeing northbound on East Mosholu Parkway South on foot.

The victim’s purse contained a cellphone, wallet, keys and identification documents, police said. No injuries were reported, police said.

Fordham Heights / University Heights Gunpoint Robbery
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University Heights: Man Shot in Head Area
Officials from the 52nd Precinct are calling on the public to help with an investigation into a non-fatal shooting in University Heights. They said the incident occurred on Nov. 26 at around 2:24 a.m. opposite 138 West Fordham Road. Police said a suspect shot and struck a victim in the head area before fleeing in the pictured vehicle. A reward of up to $3,500 is being offered for information in relation to the incident. Residents are asked to call 1-800-577-TIPS with any information they may have. Calls are confidential.

Norwood: Woman, 77, Robbed in Home
The NYPD is asking for the public’s help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo who is sought regarding a robbery in Norwood. Police said on Friday, Nov. 18, at around 8:30 a.m., a woman, 77, was entering her apartment building, located in the vicinity of Kossuth Avenue and East Mosholu Parkway North, and while walking to her apartment door, a person approached her from behind and grabbed her purse.

As a result, the victim was thrown backward and hit her head on the ground. The assailant fled the location in an unknown direction. EMS responded and treated the victim at the scene. The victim’s purse contained ID documents and $125.

Bedford Park: Woman, 77, Robbed on Street
The NYPD is asking for the public’s help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo who is sought in connection to the robbery of a 77-year-old woman in Bedford Park.

Police said that on Tuesday, Nov. 8, at around 8:20 a.m., the woman was walking in the vicinity of Decatur Avenue and East 201st Street when a person unknown to her approached her. They said the person snatched her purse before fleeing northbound on East Mosholu Parkway South on foot.

The victim’s purse contained a cellphone, wallet, keys and identification documents, police said. No injuries were reported, police said.

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EVENTS
Friends of Mosholu Parkland (FOMP) will be hosting a Winterfest on Mosholu (Parkway) and Bainbridge Avenue in Bedford Park in the lead-up to the Annual Holiday Tree Lighting event on Dec. 8, hosted by Bronx Community Board 7 and FOMP, at which there will be seasonal refreshments, snacks, and more. Call (347) 371 3085 for more information on the Winterfest.

Families are invited to join the fun at the Winter Wonderland, with icicles, snowflakes, arts and crafts, winter games, and a special visit from Santa, himself, at 2155 University Avenue, and the car entrance is at 200 College, Hall of Fame Playhouse. The pedestrian entrance is 2155 University Avenue, and the car entrance is at 200 Hall of Fame Terrace. Take the 4 subway train to Burnside Avenue. Tickets for the event are $30 in advance or $40 at the door. Reserve at https://www.bcc.cuny.edu/about-bcc/bcc-foundation/foundation-events/handels-messiah/. Proof of vaccination is required or a negative test result from the past five days. Masks are optional but recommended.

Experience the magic of New York City’s largest, outdoor, holiday light experience as New York Botanical Garden’s NYBG Glow exhibit returns for a third year on Nov. 18–19, 23, 25-26, Dec. 2-3, 9-11, 15-17, 22-23, 26-30, 2022 and on Jan. 1, 7, 14, 2023, from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Discover the beauty of the garden’s landscape and historic buildings after dark, breathtakingly illuminated. Round out your experience with an after-dark visit to the Holiday Train Show® under the glow of the Haupt Conservatory by purchasing a special combination ticket. Enjoy a drink, hot cocoa, and a bite to eat at one of the outdoor bars or the Bronx Night Market Holiday Pop-Up. For more details, visit www.nybg.org.

MUSIC
Join Bronx Arts Ensemble for its Annual Holiday Concert, featuring Jennifer Jade Ledesna in the Woodlawn Chapel at Woodlawn Conservancy on Sunday, Dec. 11, at 3 p.m. For more information, visit www.woodlawn.org.

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts presents El Parradón de la Gran Manzana on Saturday, Dec. 3, at 8 p.m. The show features Víctor Roque, Henry Hierro, Pablo Martínez, Willie Gomez, Victor Brito, Tony Valdez, with special guests, Grupo d’Ahora, and the great salsa showman and Lehman Center favorite, José Alberto aka “El Canario.” This historic reunion of the original members of La Gran Manzana will be a one-of-a-kind concert at Lehman Center, a celebration welcoming in the Christmas season. Visit https://www.lehmancenter.org/events/parrandon-gran-manzana for more information.

Bronx Community College presents a beloved holiday event and true celebration of community! The Orchestra of The Bronx, joined by The Bronx Opera Chorus and 23 Readers in Handel’s Messiah on Sunday, Dec. 11, at 3 p.m. at Bronx Community College, Hall of Fame Playhouse. The pedestrian entrance is 2155 University Avenue, and the car entrance is at 200 Hall of Fame Terrace. Take the 4 subway train to Burnside Avenue. Tickets for the event are $30 in advance or $40 at the door. Reserve at https://www.bcc.cuny.edu/about-bcc/bcc-foundation/foundation-events/handels-messiah/. Proof of vaccination is required or a negative test result from the past five days. Masks are optional but recommended.

Four-time, Grammy award-winning, and internationally acclaimed, world music sensation, the Soweto Gospel Choir, will perform at the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts on Sunday, Dec. 11, at 4 p.m. Direct from South Africa, the Soweto Gospel Choir returns to Lehman Center with an all-new concert, entitled “Hope: It’s Been A Long Time Coming,” commemorating the freedom movement in South Africa and the civil rights movement in the United States. Visit https://www.lehmancenter.org/events/parrandon-gran-manzana for more information.

Celebrate the sounds of the season with The Beautiful Music of Christmas and help raise funds for Church of the Mediator, 260 W 231st Street in Kingsbridge, on Sunday, Dec. 11, at 3 p.m. A reception will follow. Tickets are $25, or $10 for students and seniors. For more information, call (929) 476-2140 or email info@churchofthemediator.org.

MOVEMENT
 Bronx Nomads running group generally meets at the Williamsbridge Oval track on Mondays and Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. All levels are welcome.

BronxWorks and Twin Parks West Older Adult Center, 355 East 183rd Street, Bronx, NY 10458, invites residents to come join some fun classes Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
The Truth About HIV: U=U

By DR. ERIC A. MEYEROWITZ

World AIDS Day has been observed on Dec. 1 since 1988. This date is an opportunity to remember all those we lost during the HIV pandemic, and to reflect on the progress made to date in treating this virus and in diminishing stigma surrounding AIDS. Each year, our resolve to ending the epidemic once and for all strengthens.

What It Means To Have HIV In 2022

The progress scientists and physicians have made in treating HIV and preventing the spread of the virus is remarkable. In the last 30 years, treatment options have rapidly evolved. Most people living with HIV can now be treated with just one oral medicine, taken daily. Modern HIV treatments are very well tolerated, and most people experience few or no side effects.

Treatment options are highly effective, with nearly all people who regularly take their medications rapidly arriving at a point where they live with a level of the virus that is so low, it is considered “undetectable.”

What is “U=U”? You may have heard or seen the slogan “U=U,” or undetectable equals untransmissible. U=U has been proven by a large amount of scientific evidence; people who have an undetectable level of HIV, and continue their medications, cannot transmit HIV through sex to their partners who don’t have HIV. Put in another way, while on treatment, a person with “undetectable” HIV has zero risk of sexual transmission to others.

In terms of prevention, we have made tremendous progress over the last decade. There are now three incredibly safe and effective options for HIV prevention, including oral and injectable medications. When taken before potential HIV exposure, as pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP, these medications dramatically reduce the risk of contracting HIV.

Transplant & New Treatments

People with and without HIV should receive the same treatment options and care for conditions that are unrelated to HIV. The HIV Organ Policy Equity Act (HOPE Act) of 2013 allowed people with HIV to choose to become organ donors for others with the same status. This has saved many lives.

This year, clinicians at Montefiore Medical Center performed a first-of-its-kind heart and kidney transplant from a donor with HIV to a recipient with HIV. Our researchers are also working on new approaches to prevent and treat cancers related to HIV.

A Hopeful Future

While we continue to work towards the goal of ending the HIV epidemic, there are already many tangible reasons to be hopeful. I’m reminded of this each time I help a patient start treatment or use PrEP; I can see the confidence they feel being in control of their health.

You too can make a difference by getting updated HIV testing and sharing the advances in HIV medicine. On World AIDS Day 2022, join me in a pause, to remember all the vibrant people we lost, and to also look ahead with hope and resolve. No one should die from HIV infection. Spread the word!

Eric A. Meyerowitz MD is an infectious disease specialist at Montefiore Medical Center and an assistant professor of medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

COMPiled by SÌLE MOLONEY

AIDS Day Commemoration

On Thursday, Dec. 1, at 10 a.m., Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson will join Amida Care, Destination Tomorrow, and other partners in recognition of World AIDS Day at Fordham Plaza for a press conference and day of action. AIDS is a life-threatening condition caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that attacks the immune system of the patient. With the very first cases diagnosed in 1981, AIDS is responsible for 36.6 million deaths worldwide. Reaching a one-year peak of 1.9 million deaths in 2004 alone, that figure dropped to 680,000 in 2020 due to Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) that reduces the amount of HIV that attacks the immune system of the patient, and continue their medications, can significantly lower the risk of sexual transmission to others. This has saved many lives.

For more information, call (718) 250-5824.

What is RSV?

NYC Department of Health & Hygiene is also educating New Yorkers on the spread of the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), which is a common respiratory virus that causes mild, cold-like symptoms but may result in serious illness in some people. Anyone can be infected, but RSV can be serious, especially in infants and older adults. Symptoms often include runny nose, sneezing, cough, shortness of breath, wheezing, fever, and decrease in appetite. Learn more at http://nyc.gov/rsv.

College Prep and Leadership Classes

Learn how to navigate the process of choosing a school that is right for you, what to expect after graduation, and how to become a leader at Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, 3225 Riverdale Oval East in Norwood, each Wednesday from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Email shaqari.aliyev@parks.nyc.gov for more information.

Epilepsy Awareness Month

November was Epilepsy Awareness Month. About one out of 10 people may have a seizure during his or her lifetime. With seizures being a medical condition lasting from 3 to 10 seconds, a person having a seizure cannot swallow or speak, cannot see or hear, and can lose consciousness. To help someone having a seizure, ease them to the floor gently, turn them onto one side, place something soft and smooth under their head, and keep them still. If the seizure lasts more than 10 minutes, call 9-1-1.

Stay with the person until the seizure is over and after a seizure. Montefiore Health System has laid down the general “dos and don’ts” of first aid during a seizure. Montefiore Health System is gLj9KS. For more information, call (718) 590-6033 or email bmcrray@bronxbp.nyc.gov.

What is “U=U”?

You too can make a difference by getting updated HIV testing and sharing the advances in HIV medicine. On World AIDS Day 2022, join me in a pause, to remember all the vibrant people we lost, and to also look ahead with hope and resolve. No one should die from HIV infection. Spread the word!

Eric A. Meyerowitz MD is an infectious disease specialist at Montefiore Medical Center and an assistant professor of medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

otda.ny.gov/programs/hep/emergency-benefit

New Affordable Internet Access Program

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has launched the Affordable Connectivity Program to help connect families and households struggling to afford internet service. Find out how you can immediately save $400 per year. Under this new federal program, you may be eligible for a discount on internet access. Visit https://www.fcc.gov/acp for more information.

Affordable Housing Lotteries

Affordable housing lotteries for seniors and others are open for units at the following locations:

- 322 Grand Concourse in Mott Haven, with a deadline of Dec. 8.
- 740 Brook Avenue in Woodstock, with a deadline of Dec. 7.

For more information, run a search using these addresses on www.norwoodnews.org, or contact the Affordable Housing Lottery Helpline on (212) 863-7990, or via email at pnychousingconnect@hpd.nyc.gov. For information on applying for affordable housing, call 311 or visit nychousingconnect@hpd.nyc.gov. For information on applying for affordable rentals, call 311 or visit affordable@hpd.nyc.gov.

Housing ambassadors can be reached at ambassadors@hpd.nyc.gov.

COVID-19 Updates

An NYC COVID-19 hotline provides testing sites, advice from medical staff, quarantine information and mental health support. Call 212-COVID19 or (212) 288-4319. Find a vaccine or booster location today at ny.gov/vaxtoso.
ACS Investigates Case of Bronx Mom who allegedly Killed Infants

By DAVID GREENE & SILE MOLONEY

The City’s Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) told Norwood News the agency is investigating the case of 22-year-old Bronx mom, Dimone Fleming, who was arrested on Saturday, Nov. 27, for allegedly killing her two infant sons at a homeless shelter in the Mt. Hope section of The Bronx.

The news comes amid a media spotlight that has possibly a previous case of alleged abuse involving Fleming and her child, and as the mayor rolled out the City’s latest efforts to address the mental health needs of undomiciled New Yorkers.

The two infants died, having been stabbed multiple times on Saturday, Nov. 27, following an apparent domestic incident at a family shelter located at 246 Echo Place in Mt. Hope. The two children were found in the bathtub underneath some clothing. They have since been identified as Octavius Fleming-Canada, an 11-month-old baby boy of 246 Echo Place, and his 3-year-old brother, Dashawn Fleming, of the same address.

Following the tragedy, on Sunday, Nov. 28, Norwood News interviewed and reported on the experiences of two former residents of the Mt. Hope shelter. Both said there was room for improvement in terms of support at the shelter for residents.

The organization running the shelter is called Services for the Underserved (S:US). One former, female resident of the building who declined to be identified, said, “Yeah, I lived there for a year, and some change. To my knowledge, I think the building was open for a few years already. I know it’s a nicer apartment, but I’m not sure how long it’s been open.”

The woman added, “My experience at this location was bad. I was in the SUS Program for about two years in total. That’s the shelter program, they have another location that’s related to the shelter (This Echo Place location) is just a family shelter.” The woman continued, “Very, very bad transition to permanent housing... it’s a really, really unprofessional place.”

She continued, “That place almost got set on fire last year as well. Somebody upstairs almost set their apartment on fire. I don’t know if it was intentional. They were leaving and their kitchen almost went up in flames.” Asked if the shelter provided any services to families on site, she said, “You know I got some referrals when I was at the domestic violence location. The family shelter...very poor communications, very unprofessional. The staff there’s in and out. The turnover with the staff there is insane.”

Asked if she had seen on TV about the incident involving the children, she said, “Yeah, I know the family. I don’t know them very well, but I feel really bad for them in that situation. That shelter. We’re really a lot of cut off. I don’t believe that she was given the help she needed. I feel real, real bad for that woman and her family. It’s a two-parent household. I believe that was the kid’s dad (who found the children) the little kids’ dad.”

She added, “I don’t know what was going on behind closed doors, her and that man. I never saw any signs of domestic violence or anything like that. The dude was always with his kids. The woman was with the kids for the most part. Whatever was going on behind closed doors, she didn’t get the help she needed in that facility, and I’m pretty sure she was there for a while.”

We also spoke to a second, former, female resident of the building who also declined to be identified, and who said she did not know the impacted family involved in the tragedy. Asked about her experience at the shelter, she said, “It’s half residential, half New York City shelter... a lot of inconsistencies, a lot of not helping like they should, as far as the shelter system. It’s a pretty clean place to live. That’s about it.”

Asked if she was shocked by the news, she said, “Very much so; it’s normally a quiet building.” According to its website, S:US is a nonprofit located at 463 Seventh Avenue in Manhattan and “envisions a city where everyone has a roof over their head, is healthy, productive and can enjoy the social connections that create a life of purpose.”

Founded in 1978, S:US has a staff of 1,800 that provides $245 million in services funds and supports more than 200 programs that provide direct services for victims and survivors of crime and their families, including therapy, support groups, case management, civil legal assistance, accommodation to court, and transportation, among other assistance.

Local services for those affected by domestic or gender-based violence are also available in The Bronx. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or gender-based violence, call 311 and ask to be connected to a NYC Family Justice Center or walk-in Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call the NYC 247 Domestic Violence Hotline on 1-800-821-4673, or visit the NYC Mayor’s Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence for more information.

If you are in immediate danger, if you can, dial 911. Anyone with information regarding the case and the allegations regarding an alleged prior abuse incident involving Fleming. An ACS spokesperson responded, making reference to the mayor’s prior remarks at the press conference, and added, “The safety and well-being of New York City’s children is our top priority. We are investigating this case with the NYPD.”

Dimone Fleming was taken into custody after the incident on Saturday evening. Pursuant to an ongoing investigation, police said on Monday, Nov. 28, that she had been arrested on Saturday, Nov. 27, at 7 p.m. in the 48th Precinct. She was charged with two counts of murder of multiple victims, two counts of intention to commit murder, and two counts of murder: depraved indifference to a person less than 11-years-old, according to police. Fleming had been booked on Saturday evening after the incident occurred for a psychological evaluation.

On Nov. 22, the City Council passed two new bills to support survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, ushering in the City’s annual, “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign,” which kicked off on Nov. 25 (International Day to End Violence Against Women) and ends on Dec. 10 (Human Rights Day).

New York State’s Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline provides free, confidential support 24/7 and is available in most major cities (800) 942-6906, text (844) 997-2121 or chat at @opdv.ny.gov. Individuals also can visit www.ovs.ny.gov/connect to find a victim assistance program in their community.

The Office of Victim Services funds and supports more than 200 programs that provide direct services for victims and survivors of crime and their families, including therapy, support groups, case management, legal assistance, and transportation, among other assistance.
Classification

Professional Directory

Computer Services

Computer Repair
Computer Repair Upgrade, troubleshooting, laptop overheats, cracked screen, broken power jack, virus removal, data recovery. Call James (646) 281-4475, (718) 324-4332.

Madame P's Beauty World, 617 East Fordham Rd., Bronx, NY 10458, specializes in basic hair care, press 'n curl, relaxer and silk press. We do hair-cutting, wave nouveau, carefree curl, hair coloring, afros, finger coil, afro shampoo and trim special offers. (347) 284 3834

FOR RENT

For Rent: Office apartment (P/H) - 4 rooms, plus foyer and waiting areas; private front entrance; 2 blocks from Monte & NCB; ideal for group practice: psychotherapy, energy healing, consultation, tutoring, etc.; (partially furnished, optional) rwengermail@aol.com.

Public and Community Meetings

The next 52nd Precinct Community Council meeting will take place on Thursday, Dec. 15 at 6 p.m. at Monroe College (King Hall Bldg), located at 2501 Jerome Avenue. Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email list. Proof of vaccination is required for in-person meetings.

The Bronx Community Board 7 December general board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom via the following link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85947762187. Contact KCabreraCarrera@ch.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list. All meetings are being held virtually, via Zoom, until further notice.

The Bedford Moshulu Community Association meetings are usually held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. The November meeting was held in person at 400 E Moshulu Pkwy S, #B1 (lobby floor), The Bronx, NY 10458. For details of future meetings, please contact bedfordmosh-olu@verizon.net.

CORRECTIONS

In the Norwood News edition November 17-30, 2022, paragraph 10 on page 15 of our front-page story entitled, “Local Man Shot by Police Laid to Rest,” the paragraph should have referred to Ajamu Demmerle throughout rather than to Kyle Lockett. The paragraph should have read: “Quoting an unnamed worker at the barber shop where Demmerle reportedly fled inside from police, The NY Daily News reported that the worker said Demmerle told him, ‘I don’t have a knife, no gun. I’m good. I just want to hide here. Don’t call the police. Don’t call the cops, please.’ The worker added that Demmerle pleaded, ‘I have a baby, please’.”

In paragraph 20 of the same story, on page 15, we reported that Rose Bishop had written on a Go Fund Me page, created to cover the costs of Kyle Lockett’s funeral, that his mother, in her grief, had asked the community to pull together and donate so that her son could be laid to rest properly. In fact, this was written by Sarah Lang, the creator of the GoFundMe page, which Bishop later shared on social media. We apologize sincerely for these errors.

TO REPORT A STORY TO THE NORWOOD NEWS, CALL US AT 929-318-6595

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Bronx Makes History with Gift of Life

(continued from page 1)

Brittany Newton, who was also HIV-positive.

Newton’s family had flown in from Louisiana for the special occasion. Seven months after her surgery at Montefiore Health System, Nieves shared her gratitude for her medical team, for her donor, and for her second chance at life.

She also shared her message of hope and advocated for other people to consider organ donation.

“I am so grateful to the Newton family, and to Montefiore for taking a chance and extending my life,” Nieves said. “I hope other people see my story and start the conversation about organ donation as they gather with their families this Thanksgiving.”

Nieves’ story is one of struggle and triumph. After overcoming drug addiction when she was younger, which resulted in her contracting HIV, she went on to have a successful career, three children, and six grandchildren. After years of recovery and effectively controlling her HIV, she experienced another health issue in 2006, when she was diagnosed with kidney cancer and needed to have one kidney removed.

Nine years later, her remaining kidney started to fail, eventually requiring nightly dialysis. Her kidney function was so poor it was determined that she would need a kidney transplant. When a match became available, Nieves and her husband of 27 years, Julio, were relieved and overjoyed.

However, devastatingly, when she was being assessed for the kidney transplant surgery, it became apparent that her heart function had deteriorated significantly, making it unlikely that she would survive the operation. Nieves would need a heart transplant also. She thought her chances were impossible.

Thankfully, her team of specialists at Montefiore had the experience and determination to find a solution. In 2013, the HIV Organ Policy Equity (HOPE) Act enabled HIV-positive people to donate their organs to a HIV-positive recipient.

According to Montefiore Health System, in the United States, there are between 60,000 and 100,000 people who could benefit from a new heart. However, only around 3,800 transplants were performed in 2021. “Sadly, many people with HIV, waiting for a heart, never receive one,” said Nieves’ cardiologist at Montefiore, Omar Saeed, M.D., M.S., also an associate professor of medicine at Einstein.

“By successfully managing Ms. Nieves’ care, we have shown that HIV-positive donors are a lifesaver, and we encourage more people to consider sharing this lifesaving gift,” he added.

Meanwhile, Jamil Borgi, M.D., heart surgeon and associate surgical director for advanced pulmonary failure and lung transplantation at Montefiore, said “Our multidisciplinary team of clinical and surgical specialists are uniquely positioned to find new, sophisticated ways to serve our patients.”

Once Ms. Nieves was listed for an HIV-positive heart, she was the only person on the transplant list eligible for such an organ, which meant she didn’t have to wait very long. Just a few days later, she was told there was a match. One thousand miles away in Louisiana, Newton, who according to her family, had a heart of gold, tragically passed away.

In choosing to become an organ donor, and with the assistance of the Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency, Newton became a hero, giving the gift of life to Nieves. Surrounded by her medical team at Montefiore, Nieves met Newton’s mom, Bridget, and younger sisters, Breanne, and Brianca Newton, for the first time on Nov. 22. Tears were shed when, using a stethoscope, the family took turns to listen to her heart beating inside Nieves’ chest.

Addressing those gathered after the emotional meeting, Breanna Newton, the elder of Brittany’s two sisters, said she wanted to share a little of who Brittany was, adding that she had spent years working with the elderly. “She had a very, sweet, forgiving, helpful, and protective spirit. She was truly loved by her family and to know her was to love her as well.”

Breanne continued, “She was kind, humble and lived her life to the fullest. She left this world being a blessing to others, through her selfless act of organ donation. Brittany’s years on earth were short, but through organ donation, her spirit lives on. She will be missed, forever loved, and remembered by her family and all those that knew her. The family later presented Nieves with another gift, a memorial plaque, which they said they hoped she loved.

Breanne then read the inscription on the plaque, saying, “A lady’s heart of gold, a second chance that is one of a kind, and a blessing from God that is so divine, for he is the reason we are here to celebrate the second chance at life so dear. We are [in]audible on unforeseen circumstances but we are thankful for life’s second chance. We will always keep you near even though we are miles apart. We love you always because you have our sister’s heart. Prayers for you always, The Newton Family”

Later, smiling and laughing, Breanna explained that purple was Brittany’s favorite color and therefore, the reason why the plaque was purple.

Montefiore Health System provides care to approximately three million people in communities across The Bronx, Westchester, and the Hudson Valley. It comprises 10 hospitals, including the Children’s Hospital at Montefiore, Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, and more than 200 outpatient ambulatory care sites. Montefiore officials say the advanced clinical and translational research at its medical school, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, directly informs patient care and improves outcomes.

Addressing reporters later, Nieves said if it hadn’t been for the Newton family, she would not be alive. “Words can’t express how grateful and thankful I am,” she said. She later told Norwood News, “The only gift I wanted I got this year, I got...the call [regarding a donor] and I’m ok, and I’m really thankful and blessed.” She again encouraged people to become donors, saying HIV positive people probably didn’t even know they could become donors. “I hope to inspire more people to become organ donors and see that they have the power to save lives,” she said.

Fighting back tears, Nieves’ husband of 30 years, Julio, told Norwood News that words could not express how grateful he was. “There’s still a lot of stigma around HIV and, as we know, there are not even donors. Hopefully, with this, it can open the minds of many people out there, and it can make a difference in the world. To save somebody’s life, it’s the ultimate gift.”

Those seeking more information about Montefiore Health System can visit www.montefiore.org.

*Rachael McCullan contributed to this story.
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