



NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 36, No 7 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • APRIL 6-19, 2023

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DOUG CONDIT "ONE OF A KIND"



Photo courtesy of Betty Arce

NORWOOD RESIDENT, DOUG Condit, Jr., a former marine, and beloved, active member of his local community, pictured receiving the Bronx Community Board 7 Wing Award in April 2018, died on Sunday, April 2, 2023.

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

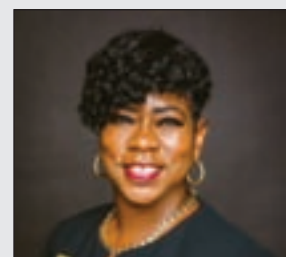
Norwood and other local Bronx residents were heartbroken to learn on Sunday, April 2, of the death of beloved, active community member, Doug Condit, Jr., a Vietnam veteran who, among other roles, was one of the main drivers behind the opening, in 2018, of Norwood's Williamsbridge Oval Skate Park.

Fellow veteran and member of Friends of Mosholu Parkland (FOMP), Lorita Watson, one of many friends who had been visiting Condit in recent months as he underwent hospice care for colon cancer at his Wayne Avenue home, said, "Doug was a great guy with a lot of grit. He lived an adventurous life... an avid skier and Navy veteran."

She continued, "He loved telling his stories and enjoyed a new audience," adding that Condit had recently been interviewed by The Bronx Historical Society's pastor. Referencing his advocacy around the Oval skate park, she said, "He was known to give the skaters water and provided them with their own logo t-shirts."

Condit received many honors over his lifetime, including those for his military service. Former State Sen. Ruth Hassell-Thompson (S.D. 36) entered his name into the NYS Hall of Fame as a Vietnam combat veteran who continued to volunteer his time

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NORWOOD NEWS

Vol. 36, No. 7

Norwood News is published
bi-weekly on Thursdays by
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Vietnam Vet Finds Solace in Sharing the Unsaid

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Ondray Cleveland completed two tours of duty in Vietnam between '68 and '71. The Soundview resident said his transition back to civilian life on his return to the U.S. was not smooth sailing. Later, he would join the navy for two years, before ultimately leaving the armed services for good.

"[I] wasn't doing too good once I came out of Vietnam because...stereotypes and all that stuff," he said. "Then I got myself together and came back out...ups and downs but it's been good." Though many years have passed since then, Cleveland was one of over 60 veterans who found solace in recently sharing his wartime experiences with other veterans at a Veterans Wellness Summit organized and held at Manhattan College in Fieldston in conjunction with the James J Peters VA Medical Center in Fordham Manor on Friday, March 31. He described the event as "fantastic."

"It was a really, really informative seminar," Cleveland said, adding that the setting also really helped. "The space that we was in... I met some beautiful people," he said. "I had a wonderful experience." In addition to the stands and the various presentations, what stood out for Cleveland was when attendees were broken up into smaller groups and invited to share their experiences as veterans in a safe setting.

"We wrote stuff down about what we feel," Cleveland said. "I shared my thoughts about how it was, like, very negative coming up, and how it came that this guy next to me later on in the class said, 'You know, I had the same experience as Ondray'."

Cleveland said the veteran went on to describe how over several years he couldn't deal with German people because of what he said they did. "I don't know what they did, but I'm just saying." Cleveland said. "But he says it kind of set him free now," he added of his colleague's experience sharing at the event.

Cleveland continued, "Oh, I was so impressed because I understand what that feeling is like, you know? That really was the icing on the cake for me, for somebody to really see how you're feeling...exactly. So, this whole environment about sharing and being vulnerable and letting go, just being vulnerable in a protective environment where you can share like that, and there's no judgment like the lady said, no criticism..."

Cleveland said veterans also received information on the Deckert program,



Photo by Sile Moloney

VETERAN, ONDRAY CLEVELAND, attends the Veterans Wellness Summit at Manhattan College in Fieldston on Friday, March 31, 2023.

run by the National Veterans Foundation where veteran service officers help write and submit benefits claims to the VA on behalf of other veterans, and also help gather the information needed to support those claims. "So, I'm going to sign up for that," he said.

Cleveland was also appreciative of the organizers for having invited him. "I'm in this process now [of] making this transition from the negative to the positive," he said, adding that he had "kind of" started a business but had encountered some difficulties in doing so. "This seminar has given me information about businesses, about health programs, plus the information for veteran benefits," he said. "I can get benefits, know how to get additional benefits, things like that," he said.

We asked Cleveland if he had ever heard about such supports for veterans via his local community board veterans' committee, for example. He didn't appear to. "I would love that," he said. "Yeah, that could be helpful."

Cleveland's impressions of the event were shared by fellow Bronx veteran and marine, Debbie Villalbasaavedra, who served four and a half years in Oklahoma and at Lejeune military base [in Jacksonville, North Carolina]. "Very beneficial," she said of the event. "It was actually nice to know that there are services available for us. Been out [ex-mili-

tary] now since 2017, so I had no idea that they had a lot of services for female veterans, which has just started to become a thing so it's nice to know."

Villalbasaavedra complimented Norwood native, Tiana [Sloan], one of the organizers of the event and director of the veterans success programs at Manhattan College, who, herself, later informed us the event marked her final day on the job. The summit had been a pet project of hers since February 2020, but had been delayed due to the pandemic.

Sloan later said, "It's been a long time coming, the partnership that I've been doing with the Bronx VA. We have a Bronx student veterans coalition that's designed to help get veterans better connected to care, to hopefully reduce incidence of suicide," she said.

Sloan continued, "It was just a wonderful day. I think what was also important is we had different generations of veterans. So, at Manhattan College, we primarily serve post-9/11 veterans. Those are the ones who were using their post-9/11 GI bill going to college, but because of the wealth of community partners that we had here, we were able to get the word out. So, we have veterans from all different eras, and it was really such a nice way to see this array of generations here together, accessing care."

Villalbasaavedra praised Sloan's ef-

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BRONX, FAMILY-RUN BUSINESS - ADVERTORIAL

LR Multiservices, Ready to Serve the Community's Needs

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Located on 2984 Webster Avenue, LR Multiservices is a family-run business that provides a variety of services to small businesses, ranging from tax preparation to tax accounting, and has been serving the Bedford Park community for over 20 years.

LR Multiservices is owned and run by Lissette and Leslie Ramirez, two sisters who fell in love with all things tax-related many years ago and who have been drawing on that passion to provide a service and connect with the community ever since.

"This is our second house, actually," joked Lissette, before adding, "It's our first house because we spend more time here than in our own house! Our business is like our family and the community is like our family as well."

The sisters' clients range from millennials to senior citizens which requires both Lissette and Leslie to adjust to their clients' needs as they are all different. They said that even means having to train the community at times as everybody brings new challenges, but Lissette and Leslie

have always been willing to work to find the best solution for every individual.

"Every year we keep adding more stuff because the clients need it and whatever the community needs, we try to improve our business by adding those services," said Leslie. "Our staff is trained to teach our clients, like how to send a text, or how to do the ID.me for the IRS. Everybody's situation is so different and they're in a different scenario."

The sisters' time in the community has helped them forge a relationship with people that spans generations and has also helped them cultivate a more personalized service. This relationship with the people of Bedford Park has also allowed them to give back and mingle among the community. In addition, they, in turn, have grown to appreciate how diverse the community has become.

"You get to know everybody," said Lissette. "You get to see them grow. Like, whoever the little kid was that my client was putting on their taxes now just graduated from college, and we're doing their first taxes! We make



Photos by Ariel Pacheco

(L TO R) LESLIE RAMIREZ, Lissette Ramirez, and their colleague, Ambar Guerrero, at LR Multiservices, located at 2984 Webster Avenue in Bedford Park on March 29, 2023.

them feel like when they come here, they're home. So, that's our favorite part."

The two have become ingrained with the local people, the surrounding businesses, and in the history of the area. LR Multiservices first opened in 2002 and has been at the same location ever since. The two sisters have seen a lot of change in both the neighborhood and in their industry but the one thing that has remained constant is their relationship with the people of Bedford Park.

"I think that makes us unique," said Leslie. "When a client comes here, we make sure that the client feels so happy that they want to tell their whole family to come. So, they know that we're here, we're not going to go anywhere, and they can keep coming here."

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LESLIE RAMIREZ AT LR Multiservices, located at 2984 Webster Avenue in Bedford Park on March 29, 2023.



LISSETTE RAMIREZ AT LR Multiservices, located at 2984 Webster Avenue in Bedford Park on March 29, 2023

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week, we asked readers their thoughts on the possibility of banning assault weapons, and what is driving the opposition by some to banning the use by civilians of weapons of war.



"Assault weapons or machine guns shouldn't be in the hands of regular citizens; they should only be used by the military, but all citizens should be able to own handguns and rifles. No one should be dying. Lawmakers should just take some action. They should just make the right choice. My thinking is if you know the history of how the police first began, they were formed to protect businesses. I don't believe that police protect citizens, because when crime happens the police come after. They're not there to protect the people the moment that it's happening. As citizens, I think we have the right to police ourselves and protect our families."

Paul Diaz,
Norwood
Photo courtesy of Paul Diaz



"Of course, assault weapons should be banned, because during the elections the politicians get money from those people, the companies that make the arms. That's why they don't want to ban them. This has been very harmful in the last couple of years after the [presidential] election and Biden's administration came in. Every day you see something happens in a school in the State, all over the place. They should be banned, and it should be limited to which people really need it, and an inquiry done into their backgrounds and then give the arms to the people, not just sell arms to the people. That's why this is a business for the arms factory and the manufacturers. It's just a business. No regular citizen should have a machine gun."

Muhammad M. Ali,
Norwood
Photo by David Greene



"We're living in the 21st century and there is absolutely no logical reason to allow the unregulated sale of assault weapons. They can't be used for hunting because of the damage [they] causes to the flesh of the hunted animal. Assault weapons have no place in a civil society. They pose a great danger to law enforcement and when lawmen are afraid to act, we get a Uvalde-type response... The fetish with weapons of mass destruction in this country is indicative of a disturbed society. Think of these politicians and their Christmas postcards featuring themselves and family members- under age children included - armed with assault weapons. A Christmas card!"

Angel Chevestt,
Illinois via Mott Haven
Photo courtesy of Angel Chevestt



"Assault weapons have proven that they are in the wrong places and in the wrong hands, and until people change their minds about gun control, these incidents will continue to happen. Until that happens, each school needs additional security. We are living in a world today that is all about money and those that know that are keeping that hold on others from doing what is correct for all of us."

Barbara Gibson,
Olinville
Photo courtesy of Barbara Gibson



"I'm in support of saving the lives of second graders more than supporting the second amendment. The opposition comes from people thinking that a school shooting can't happen at their child's school. We all know that schools aren't safe. I try to put it out of my head like most parents do, but we are all living in fear. We've just gotten used to it. The living with fear part is my hope that assault weapons become banned in this country."

Sammie Werkheiser,
Upstate NY
Photo courtesy of Sammie Werkheiser

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Elections 2023: Bronx DA Darcel Clark on Safety & Criminal Justice

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark made history in 2016 when she was elected as the first African American woman to ascend to the role of district attorney in the State of New York, as well as the first woman to hold the position of Bronx district attorney. As she runs for reelection for the third time in June 2023, we take a look back at her career to date, and her mission “to lead with empathy and compassion” while balancing safety and criminal justice.

Of her biggest accomplishments since taking office, Clark highlighted her support of recent legislative reforms. “I was not only supportive of the reforms, but I instituted reforms, even before the legislature had changed them,” she said. “So, my philosophy on bail... was that if we are not seeking a jail term for someone, we should not be seeking bail.”

Clark said this meant changing the culture of her office. “The way to keep the communities safe was to put everybody in jail and to charge them with the highest charge that you could ask for, maximum sentences,” she said. “I don’t believe in that, and I think that my years as an assistant district attorney, my years as a judge, and the last eight years as DA has changed my philosophy on what makes community safe.”

Clark said The Bronx can have public safety, reform, and fairness at the same time. She said her office looks at the root causes of why somebody is coming before the judiciary in the first place and “determining what justice looks like in that case for the victim, for the community, as well as for the person accused, and doing what [is] right in that particular case.”

She said it’s about transformative thinking. “So now, it’s not bail ‘em and jail ‘em. It’s who is this person, and what is the best outcome for justice for all those involved? So, that was a seismic change.”

Given the different datasets quoted by opposing parties on bail reform policy and recidivism rates, we asked Clark which dataset she used as the basis for her views on bail reform policy. She said her policies were based on the reality of what people are going through in Bronx communities.

“This is not my issue,” she said, explaining that her office’s

biggest challenge was around the existing discovery laws, the formal process of exchanging information between the trial parties about the witnesses and evidence they’ll present at trial. On recidivism, Clark said the biggest problem was not having “real pretrial services” available for arrestees to help prevent them from committing another crime before they go to the next court date. “We don’t have that investment in New York City,” she said.

Asked if such services should therefore be funded as part of the State or City budgets, she said she didn’t care who funded the services - State, City, philanthropists. “Anyone who wants to invest in it, *that’s* worth investing in, because that’s going to help communities be stabilized and safer,” she said, adding this would help address the public safety dangers seen in The Bronx.

Clark said she also created a Community Justice Bureau which seeks to address the issues forcing people into the criminal justice system like poverty, lack of jobs, unstable housing or school conditions, mental health, and substance use disorders. “We should be looking at the whole person, the whole community, the whole issue, and it’s about *justice*,” she said.

Additionally, Clark said that amid a backlog of cases, she also started the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau as an alternative to the DA’s prosecution unit at 161st Street, to address “in real time” the violent incidents seen at the jail and to make it a safer place for those who have to visit, work, or be detained there.

She said she also started the Conviction Integrity Bureau to look at past convictions and “make sure that we’ve righted any wrongs, but also to learn from those mistakes so that we don’t do [them] again.”

Examples included “review[ing] cases, to dismiss cases against cops that were bad actors, reviewing the marijuana cases, dismissals of those,



Front page side bar and page 5 photos courtesy of Richard Rosario
BRONX DISTRICT ATTORNEY Darcel D. Clark

and summonses, and all of those things: a holistic approach to conviction integrity.”

On the topic of Rikers, acknowledging it falls under the remit of NYC Department of Corrections (DOC), we asked Clark, nonetheless, for her thoughts on revelations around alleged drug smuggling by DOC officers into the jail.

Under her watch, she said she partnered with DOC and NYC Department of Investigation and body scanners were instituted at Rikers Island to ensure visitors weren’t smuggling drugs to detainees, but that the system was never extended to the officers and DOC staff.

She said the current DOC commissioner is making this latter point a priority to root out any [DOC] corruption she said may be helping to fuel such drug smuggling. “I fought for those scanners,” she said in part. “If it weren’t for me working and pushing the [former] De Blasio administration and working with the state legislators that do the regulation of those scanners, [they] wouldn’t have been there, so I’m happy that I was a part of making that happen.”

Asked for her thoughts on the closing of Rikers, and the opening of the new city-based, Bronx County jail, slated to open at the former Lincoln Hospital and NYPD compound at

745 E 141st Street, Clark said she was one of three DAs who testified as part of the commission into the decision.

“I supported it for smaller jails, and I think it will be a good thing,” she said, adding that she wasn’t necessarily happy, however, with the new Bronx jail location. She said the new jail should be at the Bronx courthouse like in every other borough, and that way, family can visit detainees both when they go to court, and while their family members are being detained.

“But the bottom line is, the place has to be made safe and humane for anyone who has to be detained,” she said. “We have to fix the Rikers that we have now.” She added that she worked very hard with DOC during the pandemic to ensure some detainees were released [to curb the threat of COVID-19 spreading].

My office continues to look [weekly] at the number of cases of people being detained at Rikers to make sure that if they have to be in jail, pretrial, that they’re there for a reason,” she said, adding that those open cases constitute some of the most violent people she has on her dockets.

“Nobody is there on any low level, nonviolent crime,” she said. “If they’re there, they’re charged with some serious charges, and they’re bail eligible, and if I’m asking for bail, I’m asking for it on those cases that warrant it.”

We asked Clark how she was addressing white-collar crime e.g. landlords who place their tenants in unsafe environments by not making necessary repairs or incurring other safety violations. She said the investigations her office conducts are primarily focused on the people causing the most harm to the community.

Referring to negligent landlords, she said, in addition to the resources, preparation, and willing complainants needed to prosecute such case, “It takes

time to build those kinds of investigations. We *do* prosecute those kinds of cases; it’s not just easy. Anybody who does this work would know that.”

In terms of case priorities, she said, in part, “We have a high incidence of gang gun violence that I have to put resources in, we have domestic violence, sexual assault, and drugs; these are the kitchen table issues that people deal with each and every day.”

Asked what she has learned in her eight years, Clark said she makes sure to stand up for victims every single day, believes in holding people who are harming communities accountable, while also supporting intervention, giving people second chances, and building support structures with community-based organizations to transform people into productive community members.

Norwood News has reported on some of Clark’s job fairs for the formerly incarcerated to help prevent recidivism, along with her other initiatives like her annual child safety fair, the annual 5K run to raise awareness of domestic violence, and anti-gun violence marches.

We later asked Clark for her thoughts on the case of Bronxite, Khalif Browder, who died by suicide post-release from Rikers in 2015, having been arrested at 16 and detained, at times in solitary, for a minor crime involving a stolen backpack for which he was never convicted.

“The Kalief Browder [case] was a tragedy that still haunts me and bothers me to this day,” she said in part. “I wasn’t the district attorney at the time, but I was one of nine judges on that case. There was a failure on so many levels, with so many stakeholders that were a part of that case. Bottom line, I have made sure in the eight years that I have been district attorney that there [will] never [be] another Kalief Browder again.”

Of Kalief’s charges at the time, she said, “That wasn’t my decision.” She referred to the change in bail policy and the new programs built to ensure young people under her administration are not charged in the way Kalief was.

“I have made that promise not only to myself, but I’ve made sure that my office has done it. Most importantly, I’ve made that promise to the people of the Bronx, and I’ve kept that.”

Charter School to Open at St. Brendan's School Site

By SÍLE MOLONEY

After nearly 200 young students and parents rallied outside St. Brendan School in Norwood on Feb. 24 to protest plans by the Archdiocese of New York to close the Catholic school, one of 12 Catholic schools across the City, including six in The Bronx, scheduled to close in September 2023, parents received a letter dated March 30 from the school's representatives, confirming that the site has been leased to a Charter school which will open in September.

The letter reads in part, "After our sad announcement in February that St. Brendan's Regional School would close, our parish was contacted by New York City Department of Education, interested in the possible use of the school building by Success Charter Academy."

The letter continued, in part, With the assistance of the Archdiocese's real estate office, we have agreed to a lease of the building, and Success Charter Academy will open in September. Fortunately, we will also be able to continue our parish religious education program without interruption as well as continue to use the building on weekends for other parish programs."

The letter went on to say, "This is good news for our parish as it will allow us to better maintain the building physically and will also enable the building to continue to fulfill the mission for which

it was built, the education of our young people, including their formation in the faith." The letter was signed by Father Miguez.

As reported, *Norwood News* had contacted NYC Department of Education (DOE) in February to ask if it had any comment on the announced closures of the Catholic schools, or how the City intended to serve the needs of the affected students in the impacted areas. A DOE representative told us at the time, "We will pass on this one."

We also asked the Archdiocese at the time if it had had any discussions with the DOE on how the affected children would be schooled after the proposed closures. TJ McCormack, director of communications/public relations for the Archdiocese, replied at the time, saying, "Let me see what I can find out for you."

In addition to the closures, attributed to declining income, the Archdiocese also announced the merger of four *additional* Catholic schools in The Bronx into two at the end of the 2022-23 academic year. The news followed the previous closure of six Catholic schools in The Bronx in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, also due to declining income.

Leah Martin-Adams is a parent of two children who attend St. Brendan School. She said parents had received the letter from St. Brendan on Monday, April 3. "So, kids out to bring more kids in," she



Photo by David Greene

ST. BRENDAN SCHOOL students hold signs as they protest the decision to close Catholic school along with 11 others, including 6 in The Bronx, during a demonstration outside the school on Friday, February 24, 2023. It comes after the mid-February decision by the Archdiocese of New York to close the 12 Catholic schools at the end of the current academic year due to falling enrollment...

said. "Why can't we share space?"

Norwood News contacted the Archdiocese again to ask what, if any, would be the impact to existing Catholic school students at St. Brendan regarding the new arrangement. Would both schools operate on the same site and if so, what would the split be in terms of students and space, if two schools were to co-exist?

We also asked if there were any plans to take up similar arrangements with Charter schools at other Catholic school sites in The Bronx. McCormack replied, saying simply, "We are committed to working with St. Brendan School families to find a Catholic school that best serves their needs. We are actively reaching out to them with support and assistance."

We asked Martin-Adams if given the past uncertainty around the future of St. Brendan, she would consider placing her children in the new charter school when it opens. She replied, "Absolutely not! Success Academy has absolutely horrible reviews on the way they treat the students."

She referenced an article by The City publication on reported issues at the academy. *Norwood News* contacted the academy for comment on the article. As of the date of publication, we had not received a response.

In addition to St. Brendan, the Immaculate Conception School, located in Williamsbridge, the Holy Family School, located in Unionport, St. Margaret Mary School, located in Mt. Hope, Santa Maria School, located in Parkchester, and St. Angela Merici School, located to the east of Joyce Kilmer Park in the South Bronx are all slated to also close.

The archdiocese previously clarified that there are two Immaculate Conception schools, one at 151st Street in Mel-

rose, operated by Partnership Schools, which will NOT close. Of the 12 Catholic schools set to close across the City, five are in Manhattan and one is on Staten Island.

The Archdiocese also announced in February that St. Francis Xavier School, located in Morris Park, would merge with St. Clare of Assisi, also located in Morris Park, while St. Gabriel School, located in Riverdale, would merge with St. Margaret of Cortona, located in North Riverdale.

Newly elected assemblyman for the 80th assembly district, John Zaccaro Jr., who represents the impacted part of Norwood where St. Brendan is located, released a statement on the announced closures in February. He said, "My office is working very closely with the Archdiocese of New York to determine the impact this decision will have on the students, teachers, faculty and their families who attend and work at St. Brendan School and St. Claire of Assisi here in our district and convey their concerns."

We reached out to the assemblyman for comment on the latest announced arrangements for the St. Brendan site. As of press date, we had not received a response.

"Sophia," a Norwood resident and kindergarten student at St. Brendan, was asked why she was protesting at the rally in February. She quickly responded, "I don't want my school to close down." Asked why, she replied, "Because I love my school." Sophia, who had previously attended the school's pre-K school, was asked if she had made a lot of friends at her school. She replied, "Yes," adding, "And I love my teachers."

**David Greene contributed to this story.*

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NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY

2023 Yankees Youth Leadership Award

The New York Yankees and Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) are looking for youth leaders who live within the boundaries of Bronx Community District 7 to apply for the annual Yankees Youth Leadership Award, which includes a stipend of \$750. To be considered as a candidate for the award, residents must meet certain requirements and submit certain documents and information to kcabreracarrera@cb.nyc.gov by April 17 at noon. Visit <https://bit.ly/40sZrS4> to view the requirements and application form.



Photo courtesy of the MTA

YANKEES FANS ABOARD the New York Transit Museum's 1917 IRT Lo-V Nostalgia train en route to the Yankees home opener at Yankee Stadium on Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Nostalgia Train Ride to Yankee Stadium marks Opening Day

Hundreds of Yankees fans joined New York City Transit (NYCT) president, Richard Davey, on the New York Transit Museum's 1917 IRT Lo-V Nostalgia train and the "Train of Many Colors" for an express train ride to the Yankees home opener on Thursday, March 30 at Yankee Stadium. MTA and NYCT officials used the occasion to highlight new and better service options for fans to Yankee Stadium for all of the season's home games, as the agency continues its efforts to regain its pre-pandemic ridership numbers.

Originally operated by the Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT) system, the IRT Lo-V began service in 1917, according to MTA and NYCT officials. The vintage train cars and hundreds of other similar cars served subway customers a few years before the first pitch was thrown at the original Yankee Stadium. According to the MTA and NYCT, with rattan seats, ceiling fans, and drop sash windows, the train hearkened back to an earlier age of subway travel and provided a photogenic counterpoint to the new home of the New York Yankees.

The Yankees emerged victorious on Opening Day, cruising to a 5-0 win over the San Francisco Giants, including an opening home run by reigning American League Most Valuable Player (AL MVP) Aaron Judge, who as reported by USA Today, signed a \$360 million contract in the offseason. Judge, 30, made history last year when he hit his 62nd home run of the 2022 season.

Bronx CB7 Calls for PEP Station

Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) is calling on the City Parks' department to install an additional Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP) station in Van Cortlandt Park in the Northwest Bronx to assist with park patrol as summer approaches. The motion was presented and approved at the

March 28 CB7 general board meeting.

The request comes as Parks unveiled a Bronx Mobile Command Vehicle for PEP in the South Bronx on March 28, procured with \$205,000 in funding from District 17 Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr. *Norwood News* asked Parks if the PEP mobile initiative would be expanded to other parts of the Bronx. We were informed that the vehicle will be stationed in The Bronx and will be available for use throughout the borough based on the needs of Parks operations.

Free Broadband for NYCHA Residents

New York City Mayor Eric Adams and other city officials gathered at NYCHA Bronx River Community Center at 1619 E 174th Street in Soundview on March 23 to announce the expansion of the "Big Apple Connect," free broadband program. Described as the nation's larg-

est municipal broadband program by nearly 50 percent, it aims to provide free internet and basic cable television service to a total of 202 New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments and reach approximately 300,000 New Yorkers for at least three years.

NYC Office of Technology & Innovation (OTI) expanded 'Big Apple Connect' to an additional 67 NYCHA developments since its launch last fall, reaching up to 40,000 new households, and is now ahead of schedule according to City officials. Adams promised to install 'Big Apple Connect' in more than 200 NYCHA developments by the end of 2023. For more information on the roll-out, visit <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/bigappleconnect/>. *Norwood News* requested a timeline from OTI on the roll-out of the program in The Bronx NYCHA developments and were advised that all NYCHA Bronx developments are now live with the program.

Greek Heritage Month Celebrated in Kingsbridge

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson hosted a Greek Heritage Month celebration in Kingsbridge on Friday, March 24, in conjunction with sponsors, Ponce Bank and the Bronx Terminal Market. There was food, cake, musical and dance performances, as well as the presentation of proclamations to a list of honorees.

Held at St. Peter the Apostle Greek Orthodox Church, located at 3245 Kingsbridge Avenue, the event was emceed by mistress of ceremonies, Aravella Simotas, a former New York State assemblywoman representing parts of Queens, alongside whom Gibson had previously served in the State legislature, while the invocation / benediction was given by Father John Paisis, a Greek Orthodox priest.

Greeks Got Talent contestant, Elaina Poulos, a Fordham University student, performed a rousing rendition of The Star-Spangled Banner, while the Greek national anthem and other songs and dances were performed by the Greek American Afternoon School of St. Peter The Apostle, with Evdoxia Levesanos.

Honorees included Mike and Konstantinos Tyras, owners of FoodFest and Victory Foods, Themistocles (Themis) Karasaridis, a former parish council member, Merkourios Angeliades, contractor and builder of St. Peter's Church, and the youth award went to Georgia Karounos of Preston High School.

During her remarks, Gibson said in part, "We need all of our elders to make sure that we continue to tell the story of Greek Americans, of the struggle, of the sacrifice, of the service of those who came the way, who set their footprints in history, who came before us during insurmountable challenges, during discrimination and hardship and poverty, but yet they survived and thrived and persevere and show true strength and resilience."



Photo by Síle Moloney

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Vanessa Gibson joins honorees and attendees at the Greek Heritage Month celebration held at St. Peter the Apostle Greek Orthodox Church, located at 3245 Kingsbridge Avenue in Kingsbridge on Friday, March 24, 2023.



Photo by Síle Moloney

STUDENTS FROM THE Greek American Afternoon School of St. Peter The Apostle, along with Evdoxia Levesanos, entertain guests at the Greek Heritage Month celebration held at St. Peter the Apostle Greek Orthodox Church, located at 3245 Kingsbridge Avenue in Kingsbridge on Friday, March 24, 2023.

Gibson, Adams Join Bronx Muslim Community at Iftar Gatherings

By DAVID GREENE & SÍLE MOLONEY

Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson and New York City Mayor Eric Adams joined members of the Bronx Bangladeshi Muslim community at different Iftar gatherings, daily, fast-breaking meals and gatherings held at nightfall, during the holy month of Ramadan until the festival of Eid al-Fitr falls and Ramadan ends.

Gibson and some members of her team delighted a group of about 75 to 80 Muslim leaders from the Northwest Bronx, which included members of the Norwood Bengali community and INCA Relief, on Wednesday, March 29, when they joined the community at Curry & Kebab, located at 3111 Bainbridge Avenue, for an Iftar gathering. The venue is just around the corner from the North Bronx Islamic Center. Also in attendance was Alina Dowe from the mayor's office.

Mohammed N. Mujumder, who presided over the event, said, "So, today at the invitation of the Bangladeshi community of North Bronx and with the invitation of Monjour Choudhury, board member of Bronx Community Board 7, Vanessa Gibson came for the first time to the North Bronx area to attend the Iftar dinner with the Muslim community. We, as a community, feel very proud that the borough president came in, greeted us and she especially greeted me, and appreciated what I have been doing as a foundation, what other people are doing, so that was very, very good," he said.

During her remarks, the borough president highlighted the importance of children and families. During this important, holy holiday of Ramadan, in which we fast, in which we reignite our commitment to our faith, to our community and to our family, I am here to join with all of you during this special celebration of Iftar," he said in part.

Mujumder said the borough president appeared to love the celebration. "The way she was



Photo courtesy of Mohammed N. Mujumder

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Vanessa Gibson speaks during an Iftar gathering with the north Bronx Muslim community at Curry & Kebab restaurant, located at 3111 Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood on Wednesday, March 29, 2023.

accepted by our community, it was all good," he said. For his part, Chowdary thanked all those who attended and said in part, "This is the yearly Iftar of the Bangladeshi community of the North Bronx. The borough president was here for the first time." He explained that they didn't invite too many people as they were restricted in terms of space, adding that next year, "Inshallah" they will have an even bigger gathering.

On Saturday, April 1, Mayor Eric Adams was the guest speaker and issued a call to action during the Annual Bronx Interfaith Iftar Dinner held at P.S. 106, located at 1514 Olmstead Avenue in Parkchester. A standing-room only crowd of an estimated 600 Bangladeshi American Muslims packed into the school for the occasion from all across the Bronx. Adams attended several such dinners as part of his "Five-Borough Ramadan Tour."

Moments before the major was introduced, one unidentified male speaker thanked him, "for his continued support for the well-being of the Muslim community in our city." The speaker added, "Mayor Adams has been a true leader, a friend and an advocate for the Muslim community." The speaker mentioned that the mayor had held a roundtable with top officials from the NYPD to ensure public safety before the start of Ramadan and had also provided a space at City Hall where Mus-

lims could pray each Friday. When you came to me, you stated you wanted falafel in the schools. We made it happen!"

"Now in the season of Ramadan, my call to you: don't only be a devout follower, but be a devoted leader, because the great prophet Elijah Muhammad was a doer," Adams said. "We cannot simply be in our houses of worship, our mosques, our synagogues, our churches, our temples while we're watching in our communities the despair that we're seeing right here in The Bronx. We're seeing so many young people losing their lives to gun violence.



Photo by David Greene

MAYOR ERIC ADAMS is surrounded by Bronx Bangladeshi Muslim leaders during an address at their annual Interfaith Iftar dinner held at P.S. 106 in Parkchester on Saturday, April 1, 2023.

lims could pray each Friday.

Once introduced, Adams told the jubilant crowd, "I've been side by side with you through some of the most difficult moments in this city. If you go back to 2001, when many of our young people were being rounded up and arrested in Brooklyn, I stood in front of the federal penitentiary with the Muslim leaders to call for them to be released."

Adams continued, "We were there with Donald Trump... who wanted the Muslim ban. We had one of the largest protests at Brooklyn Borough Hall." Then, offering some inspiration, Adams told the crowd of Bronxites, "You are traveling the same path as many other communities have traveled. You have found a foothold in this country, you've opened small businesses, you fought

Where are the Muslims?"

The mayor then asked the crowd, "Why aren't we in the streets fighting this gun violence? That is what your faith calls you to do. We are seeing a large number of people who are dealing with homelessness. You have your brothers and your sisters coming from the continent of Africa who are Muslims, and don't have a place to stay. Where are our Muslim brothers and sisters helping them?"

Later, the major, who has been both praised and critiqued by New Yorkers for expressing what he sees as the importance of religion in people's lives, later moved to the topic of democracy and civic duty. "And then, you have to vote!" he said. "We should have a million Muslims registered to vote! Because when you vote,

you empower yourself, you no longer have to wait on others to serve you. You have those who represent you serve you."

The 110th mayor later presented special mayoral citations to four Bronx mosques for the work their members carry out in the community, including one to the North Bronx Islamic Center in Norwood.

One of the organizers of the event, community activist Shamim Miah, said after the event, "The people of our community [were] very happy. They really appreciated the mayor's visit." He added that it was the first time that a New York City mayor had attended an Iftar gathering. While the mayor did have to leave to attend other events in Manhattan and Queens on the same evening, Miah said Adams vowed to sit down with local Bangladeshi Muslim leaders to discuss local issues at a later point.

In closing, Adams told the crowd, "As you break fast, let's also break the things that's destroying our community. I cannot thank you enough for your support, and I said I was going to be with you when I ran for office, and I'm here with you now that I'm in office, and that is the kind of leader you wanted."



Photo by David Greene

MAYOR ERIC ADAMS gets the rock star treatment as he presents citations to several Bronx mosques during the 2023 Interfaith Iftar Dinner, held at P.S. 106 in Parkchester on Saturday, April 1, 2023, organized by the Bronx Bangladeshi Muslim community.



Letters To The Editor

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

New York Local Journalism Sustainability Act

Passage of the New York Local Journalism Sustainability Act by the State legislature is important to assure survival of local journalism. Most communities are down to one local daily or weekly newspaper. Newspapers have to deal with increasing costs for newsprint, delivery and distribution along with reduced advertising revenues and competition from the internet and other news information sources.

Daily newspapers concentrate on international, Washington D.C., Albany, business, and sports stories. They have few reporters covering local neighborhood news. Weekly newspapers fill the void for coverage of local community news.

I'm grateful that you have afforded me the opportunity to express my views via letters to the editor, along with others who may have different opinions on the issues of the day.

Albany needs to join us in supporting weekly community newspapers. Readers patronize advertisers; they provide the revenues to help keep them in business. Let us hope there continues to be room for everyone including the *Norwood News*.

Larry Penner Great Neck

Editor's Note: We thank Larry and all our readers for your continued support. *Norwood News* recently signed a joint letter, together with other publications, requesting Gov. Kathy Hochul's support with the passage of this Act.

Permanent Jail for Some

There have been many foolish ar-

guments lately that no crime is so bad that the offender should be considered irredeemable. Some have argued that police can be replaced by social workers. Now I'm all for social policies that will prevent people from becoming criminals and help reform some who have, but I think it's irrational to say that even those who commit the most horrendous crimes are candidates for rehabilitation.

On March 24, a 27-year-old father named Tyquan Pleasant and his family were disturbed by loud music played by a neighbor, Shaun Pyles. Any neighbor should not be blasted by loud music, especially at 1:30 a.m. Pleasant complained and Ryles responded by allegedly stabbing Pleasant in the back. Pleasant died. Now what's there not to understand about not playing music so loud that it disturbs your neighbors, especially at 1:30 a.m.? Just how do you rehabilitate such a person?

From the March 30th Daily News is a story of a 34-year-old Queens man, Cleveland Sterling, who was arrested on a 21-count indictment that includes sex trafficking and robbery. He allegedly forced two women into prostitution, tattooed his name on them to claim them as his property and punched out the teeth of one woman who resisted having sex with a john. Even more outrageous, Judge Peter Vallone Jr., the former city councilman, ordered him released without bail.

Wasn't bail reform supposed to be only for non-violent offenses? Furthermore, tell me how this man, if guilty, is a candidate for rehabilitation. He should only be a candidate for a 50-year prison sentence, which is the maximum he can receive. Now let's deal with what should not be considered a crime. In the March 9-22, 2023 issue of the *Norwood News* is another anti-gay rant from Richard Marias. He longs for the days when "...it was a crime in NYC for a man to walk down the street in an effeminate manner or dress up like a woman." Nope,

there's nothing criminal about that.

Richard Warren Van Cortlandt Village

Editor's Note: Destination Tomorrow provides a range of services to the Bronx LGBTQ+ community. Visit www.destinationtomorrow.org for more information.

In Defense of former President Donald J. Trump

Reading the "Inquiring Photographer" answers in the latest issue of the *Norwood News* [March 23-April 5] defies logic. You have one person, Gregory Bryant, saying President Trump has paid off a lot of women. Does he have personal proof of this statement? Another person, Stephen Bobker, says President Trump has no respect for him as an American! Would Ms. Síle Moloney, editor of this paper, explain what that statement means? I doubt President Trump would waste his time getting to know Bobker!

Another person, Ms. Tamika Thompson, has the nerve to use the N word in her response against our beloved former president. If a white person made that comment, it might be considered a hate word! The only normal response to the question posed was by Mr. Nico Paradise who realizes the powers [that] be are all against President Trump, and he is innocent of all charges!

Our country is in a financial mess with Biden, with high interest rates and all the layoffs from tech companies. The country was booming financially under President Trump with unemployment and interest rates both under 3%. Sadly, we will never see that success again unless we vote in President Trump again!

Richard Marias, Norwood

Editor's Note: The article in question was prefaced and contextualized to explain to readers that the comments provided by those interviewed were

their opinions based on the [then] "possible" indictment of President Donald J. Trump regarding an "alleged" hush money payment to porn star Stormy Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, ahead of the 2016 presidential election.

The former president is a public figure, and reports of women being allegedly paid off for their silence/cooperation have already been widely published. The former president, himself, has acknowledged that Daniels was paid off, though he denies having had sexual relations with her.

Since we published this story, the former president was indicted by a grand jury on Thursday, March 30, in relation to criminal charges relating to the investigation by the Office of the Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg over the alleged hush money payment. The former president denies any wrongdoing.

When Stephen Bobker said Trump had no respect for him as an American, he was referring to, among other factors, his vote and Trump's subsequent [unfounded] allegation that the 2020 election was stolen.

We fully appreciate that the use of the "N" word is never optimal, and we did hesitate to include even the "N" abbreviation. Given the context, which we double-checked with the contributor, we took it that it was not intended as a racial slur. That said, we apologize for any offense caused.

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.

Vietnam Vet Finds Solace in Sharing the Unsaid

(continued from page 2)

forts, "[She] always makes these events available for us and helps us in anything we need," she said. "Honestly, I've been here for maybe three hours, and I've learned so much more than I have since I've been [inaudible]."

We also asked Villalbasaavedra if she had not heard about the resources available to veterans through her local community board. She said, "No, I was just aware of this [event] due to Tiana. She's amazing." She added, "If I go to the VA, it's not really advertised to us, so it's something that none of us know. The majority of the information I got was extremely helpful. I had no idea."

Asked for examples, Villalbasaavedra said, "Anything that has to do with health care, like homelessness or any free services for us...like we don't have to go to the actual hospital. They have clinical sites for us. I had no idea.... Other ways to work on our compensation or other events [where] we can all just link up together and maybe do a mini hike or just the camaraderie, you know?"

She added, "Once you get out, you really don't have that. You're pretty much venturing on your own and gathering whatever information you get. So, it's nice to know that they do these sorts of events to help guide us throughout the civilian world, which is not something

that's really an option for us."

We asked Daniel Germain, veterans benefit advisor with New York State Division of Veterans Services, how the media could better serve veterans so that they are aware of the supports available. "Just that," he said. "Keep spreading the word. Unfortunately, once they come back from service, they get into the weeds. The more we can reach out in the weeds and open their eyes to what they're missing..."

He added in part, "The worst thing is when you walk down the street and you see a homeless veteran because obviously, somebody failed that veteran by not educating him what his rights [are],



Photo by Síle Moloney

(L TO R) TIANA SLOAN OF Manhattan College's veterans program, and veteran, Debbie Villalbasaavedra, a former marine, attend the Veterans Wellness Summit at Manhattan College in Fieldston on Friday, March 31, 2023.

(continued on page 12)

CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE



Fordham Manor: Donation Box Stolen from Muslim Center

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo (above) who is sought in connection to a burglary that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said it was reported to them that on Sunday, March 26, at around 10.20 p.m., an unidentified man entered the Bronx Muslim Center at 2531 Davidson Avenue and stole the donation box from the mosque. The person then fled the location on foot, heading southbound on Davidson Avenue.

Arrest Made in Sexual Assault of Woman, 73

The NYPD said a man sought for sexually assaulting and robbing a 73-year-old woman in her home in the Indian Village section of the Bronx has been arrested. Police had asked for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accom-

panying photo (center top) who department officials said was sought in connection to a burglary that occurred in Indian Village, located southeast of Pelham Parkway.

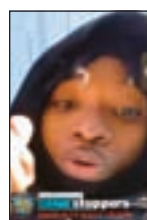
They said that on Thursday, March 23, at around 9.30 p.m. in the vicinity of Williamsbridge Road and Lydig Avenue, an unidentified person illegally entered the home of a 73-year-old female victim. Once inside, the victim awoke to find the suspect on top of her, demanding money.

Police said, "The individual touched the victim's breasts and proceeded to further sexually assault her," adding that he then fled the location southbound on Yates Avenue, taking the victim's bank card and pin number with him. They said victim did not sustain any [physical] injuries as a result of the incident.

The person sought was described as male, between 5 feet, 8 inches and 5 feet, 11 inches tall, weighed between 150 and 160 pounds, had wavy hair, and had last been seen wearing a blue jacket, a blue hat, black pants with a green stripe, and black sneakers.

On Tuesday, March 28, pursuant to what was described as an ongoing investigation, police said David Salas, 45, from the Indian Village section of

The Bronx was arrested in the 41st Precinct. He was charged with burglary, grand larceny, criminal trespassing, sexual misconduct, forcible touching, menacing, sexual abuse, and trespassing. A person arrested for a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.



Two Sought for Assault & Robbery of Boy, 13

The NYPD is asking for the public's help in identifying the people seen in the accompanying photo (above) who are sought in connection to a robbery that occurred on the bor-

der of Williamsbridge and Laconia. Police said on Thursday, March 16, at approximately 4 p.m., the victim, a 13-year-old boy, was aboard an MTA bus BX31, heading westbound on Eastchester Road and Boston Road.

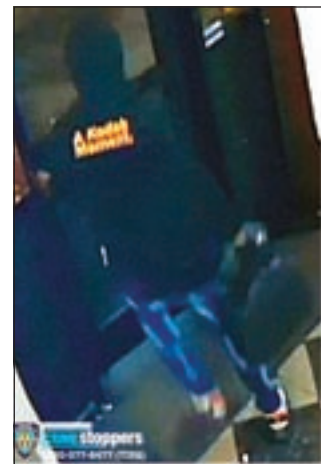
They said two male individuals boarded the bus, forced the victim off of it, and proceeded to kick him multiple times about the head and body. They then stole the victim's cell phone, before fleeing northbound on foot on Boston Road. "The victim refused medical attention on scene," a police spokesperson said.

The NYPD said the suspects sought are described as being between 14 and 19 years of age. "The first individual was last seen wearing a red, hooded sweatshirt, [a] black vest, and [a] black book bag," they said. "The second individual was last seen wearing a blue and black jacket, a black ski-mask, and a silver book bag."

Woman Stabbed, Robbed in Home Invasion

Police are looking for two people wanted in connection with a home invasion robbery that took place in an apartment building at 547 East 168th Street in Morrisania at 10 p.m. on Thursday, March 23. Police said the two held a female vic-

tim at gunpoint, and she was also stabbed. They reported she was not seriously injured following the incident. The two suspects stole her cellphone and robbed a safe containing \$160,000 in cash. Both suspects were caught on the building's surveillance cameras, one wearing a sweatshirt with the words, "A Kodak Moment" (pictured below) on it.



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

University Heights: Man Stabbed in Head

By DAVID GREENE

An unidentified man was stabbed in the head just outside the main entrance to Van Cortlandt Park close to Manhattan College and detectives are looking for two men and a woman who are wanted in connection with the crime.

According to the NYPD, the victim was assaulted at 4.18 p.m. on Thursday, March 23, opposite 5979 Broadway at West 242nd Street, just north of the Kingsbridge / Fieldston border. During NYPD radio transmissions obtained by *Norwood News*, a female police dispatcher is heard telling officers, "A male

stabbed to the head." The dispatcher later told officers she had received three calls to the 911 switchboard.

Moments later, as officers arrived at the park's entrance, one police officer confirmed the incident, telling the dispatcher, "Yeah Central, it's going to be a confirmed male stabbed in the head."

A video posted to the Citizens' App shows an officer speaking with witnesses as paramedics are seen treating the man and later placing him on a gurney. Emergency services said the victim was transported to New York-Presbyterian Hospital and his condition

is unknown currently.

At the time officers at the scene said they were looking for five female and three male suspects who had reportedly fled the scene southbound towards West 228th Street. One suspect was described as male, dressed in all black, Hispanic, and was wearing a Northface brand jacket. One of the female suspects was described as short, had red hair braids, and was dark-skinned.

According to police radio transmission, one male was stopped and questioned near the park, and two females and one male were stopped and questioned

outside Planet Fitness at Broadway and West 225th Street. None were identified by witnesses as being the people sought according to the police transmission and were subsequently released by police.

In response to an inquiry on the incident by *Norwood News*, on Monday, March 27, an unnamed NYPD official said, "We have not received any additional information on the condition of the victim at this time." The official added, "No one has been arrested regarding this incident. There were three perpetrators, two males and one female. The investigation is ongoing."



Photo courtesy of the Citizens' App
A POLICE OFFICER speaks to witnesses (bottom left) as paramedics tend to the victim on the sidewalk outside Van Cortlandt Park on Thursday, March 23, 2023.

Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY

EVENTS

An **Easter Egg Hunt** will be held in three sessions for different age groups on Saturday, April 8, at noon in St. James Park at West 196th Street and Jerome Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights, hosted by The Gardiner Foundation and District 14 City Council Member Pierina Sanchez.

Join Kingsbridge Library, 291 W 231st St The Bronx, NY 10463, on Tuesday and Wednesday April 4 and 5, at 10 a.m. for an in-person, **Bilingual Storytime Session**, art and fun! Explore colors and shapes, build literacy skills and engage in hands-on activities. All participants will receive a free art kit. The library will also be screening the movie, "Dead Poets Society," on Saturday, April 8 at 2 p.m.

MUSIC

Bronx Arts Ensemble presents **The Alfredo Colón Quartet** at Bronx Arts Space, 700 Manida St., Bronx, NY 10474, on Friday, April 7, for an evening of original jazz compositions by saxophonist, Alfredo Colón. His music explores his Dominican heritage and is culturally rooted

in his family's migration to the United States, with all of the complexities that the move entailed and continues to produce. It is inspired by the country's rich folklore and many of the characters surrounding it. He will be joined by Lex Korten on piano, Steve Williams on bass, and Connor Parks on drums. This is a free event. Call (718) 601-7399 for more information.

POETRY

The Bronx County Historical Society will be hosting **Spring 2023 Poetry Seminars** at Poe Cottage, located in Poe Park at 2640 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10458. Track 1 sessions will be taught by award-winning Bronx poet, Mariposa Fernández, partially in Spanish. Track 2 sessions will be taught by the Thursday Morning Poets, an award-winning New York City-wide group of writers. Seminars are free and open to all ages. Both seminars will culminate in a Poetry Slam on the porch of the Cottage, located at Poe Park, on Saturday, June 24, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Individuals are welcome to participate in as many seminar sessions as they wish across both tracks. Given the limited space at Poe Cottage, participants should register beforehand for the sessions they intend to attend. Individuals who have not registered are welcome to sessions, as long as space is available, on a first come basis.

DANCE

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, located at 250 Bedford Park Blvd W, Bronx,

NY 10468, in association with OZ Productions, International Concerts and Love Productions, presents the world-class, **State Ballet of Georgia**, on Sunday, April 16, at 6 p.m. Led by Nina Ananiashvili, a native of Georgia and a former Bolshoi prima ballerina, the State Ballet Of Georgia will present their triple bill "*Mostly B*": *Serenade*, with choreography by George Balanchine and music by P. I. Tchaikovsky; *Concerto Barocco*, with choreography by George Balanchine, and music by J. S. Bach; and *Sagalobeli*, with choreography by Yuri Possokhov, to Georgian folk music. Tickets can be purchased by calling (718) 960-8833 or online at <https://www.lehmancenter.org/events>.

MOVEMENT

NY Parks Foundation's FREE spring **Youth Track & Field** program begins on April 8 in parks in The Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan. Whether you want to hone skills or discover a new sport, the youth program for ages 6-17 is perfect for all levels looking to learn and have fun. Participants will practice proper technique, learn new skills, and develop healthy habits all while meeting new friends in their neighborhood park.

Meanwhile, for New Yorkers 60 years old and over, a **Seniors Fitness program** offers free twice weekly pickleball, tennis, yoga, and fitness walking classes across all five boroughs starting in April. Participants of all levels are welcome to come out, have fun, and socialize. Visit <https://cityparksfoundation.org/> or call (212) 360-1399 for more information.

Kingsbridge Heights: Police-Involved Shooting Leaves Man Critical

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Police said a police-involved shooting involving an armed, emotionally disturbed person occurred at 2685 Grand Concourse in Kingsbridge Heights on Sunday morning, March 26.

The incident comes on the back of an announcement in mid-December by Mayor Eric Adams of a new plan, regarded as controversial by some, to provide care for people with untreated severe mental illness.

During a press conference held at 1 p.m. on the day of the incident, NYPD Chief of Patrol John Chell told those gathered that at around 10 a.m. that day, members of the 52nd Precinct responded to a 911 call regarding an emotionally disturbed person, aged 43, armed with a knife.

Chell said, "The caller, a father, described his adult son as having a medical episode, describes he feels he's being followed. He goes on to say, 'If any cops show up here today, I will kill them'." Chell added that when two officers showed up at the location, they were met by the father and began to enter the walkway to the vestibule of the building,



Photo by Síle Moloney

NYPD OFFICIALS INVESTIGATE a police-involved shooting at 2685 Grand Concourse on Sunday, March 26, 2023.

later explaining that the incident began in an apartment.

Chell continued, "At this time, the subject comes out and clearly becomes agitated when he sees the officers, drops a bag, produces a large kitchen knife, starts advancing towards the officers. He's given numerous instructions to drop the knife at which time he does not comply and results in the officers strik-

ing the subject."

"The officers immediately rendered aid and called for an ambulance," Chell said. "The subject was brought to a local hospital in critical condition," he added. Police were asked by a reporter if there was another way the incident could have been handled e.g. by medical professionals given it was an emotionally disturbed person.

Police said the department were reviewing the tapes but that the officers got to the location quickly and the incident unfolded within the space of about 28 seconds. He said the incident was recorded on the officers' body cameras and would be reviewed accordingly.

Norwood News spoke to several residents of the area on the day but nobody had seen the incident. One woman said she was told from a friend who was a resident of the building that the shooting occurred on the street in front of 2685 Grand Concourse but was unable to confirm anything further.

One young woman who lives across the street from the incident site said she heard from her cousin that he (her cousin) knew the person who was shot. The victim's name was not shared by police.

Norwood News attempted to reach the family for comment but were unsuccessful. Gothamist later reported that the father of the victim, identified as Santo de la Cruz, reportedly confirmed to the publication that he did not dial 911 but 311 as his son, identified as Raul

(continued on page 13)

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



Kingsbridge Armory Survey

The working group behind the redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory, Together for Kingsbridge, is requesting the public to provide their input on what they would like to see in place in the armory by completing a survey which can be found here: <https://kingsbridge.together.com/community-engagement-survey>, and which is available in both English and Spanish.

Unity Democratic Club Meeting

The Unity Democratic Club meeting on Thursday, April 27, at 6.30 p.m. will feature special guest, NYC Comptroller Brad Lander, who will be addressing important issues facing New York City, including economic development, job creation, and financial management. He will also be taking questions from attendees. The meeting will take place at Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, 3450 Dekalb Ave, the Bronx, 10467.

Summer Youth Employment Program Deadline Extended

In late March, the City government announced that the application deadline for the Summer Youth Employment Program has been extended to an unspecified date. Apply now to gain valuable work experience and earn extra cash this summer. To apply, visit <https://application.nycsyep.com/>.

New York State Primary Elections June 27 Key Dates

Request your absentee ballot online or by mail by Monday, June 12. Register to vote via <https://nycvotes.turbovote.org/?r=votingnyc> by Saturday, June 17. Update your address if you have moved in order to vote on Primary Day by Saturday, June 17. Early voting takes place from Saturday, June 17, to Sunday, June 25. Visit <https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/> to find your early voting site and hours. Request an absentee ballot in person by Monday, June 26. To find your borough Board of Elections office, visit <https://vote.nyc/page/contact-us>.

Polls are open on Primary Election Day, Tuesday, June 27, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Visit <https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/> to find your Election Day poll site. Return your absentee ballot by mail (postmark required) or drop it off at a poll site by Tuesday, June 27.

Affordable Housing Lottery Wakefield

An affordable housing lottery has launched for units at 4435 White Plains Road, in Wakefield. Available are 27 units for residents on 130 percent of the area median income (AMI), ranging in eligible income from

\$68,572 to \$187,330.

Applications must be postmarked or submitted by mail or online via NYC Housing Connect at <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/details/3008> no later than **April 17, 2023**. To request an application by mail, send a self-addressed envelope to 4435 White Plains Road Apartments c/o Front Door Management P.O. BOX 9, Purchase, NY 10577. **No deposit or application fees apply.**

Affordable Housing Lottery Bedford Park

An affordable housing lottery has also launched for units at The Bronx Grove, two 11-story buildings located at 261 East 202nd Street and 207 East 203rd Street in Bedford Park. The structures comprise 127 residential units for residents earning 30 to 80 percent of the area median income (AMI), ranging in eligible income from \$0 to \$132,400.

Applications must be postmarked or submitted by mail or online via NYC Housing Connect at <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/details/3487> no later than **April 11, 2023**. To request an application by mail, send a self-addressed envelope to The Bronx Grove c/o K&G Upright, PO Box 1181, New York, NY 10039. **No deposit or application fees apply.**

Affordable Housing Lottery Twin Parks Terrace

An affordable housing lottery has launched for Twin Parks Terrace at 373 East 183rd Street in Fordham Heights. Though the name is similar, and though the building is located in Fordham Heights, Twin Parks Terrace is not the same site as where the Twin Parks fire tragedy occurred on Sunday, Jan. 9, 2022. The fire broke out at 333 East 181st Street, a 6-minute walk away from the new building.

Twin Parks Terrace comprises 181 residential units for residents at 40 to 80 percent of the area median income (AMI), ranging in eligible income from \$22,012 to \$132,400, and 11,000 square feet of retail space. Applications must be postmarked or submitted by mail or online via NYC Housing Connect at <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/details/3427> no later than **April 11, 2023**.

To request an application by mail, send a self-addressed envelope to Settlement Housing Fund, Attn: TPT Lottery, 247 West 37th Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10018. No deposits or application fees apply. More information can be found at <https://www.settlementhousingfund.org/twin-parks-terrace/>.

An affordable housing lottery helpline is available on (212) 863-7990 or via email at nychousingconnect@hpd.nyc.gov. For information on applying for affordable housing for people with disabilities, please call (212) 863-6486 or email accessibility@hpd.nyc.gov. Housing ambassadors

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

2022-23 Statewide Community Air Monitoring Initiative

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is undertaking a statewide community air quality monitoring effort in ten disadvantaged communities that are home to an estimated five million New Yorkers. Air quality monitoring will focus on locations in these communities with high air pollution burdens.

This effort will help DEC target strategies to reduce air pollution, including the greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change in these burdened areas to help achieve the goals of the State's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. The results of the monitoring will drive solutions to reduce greenhouse gases and other harmful air pollutants to protect public health.

The Bronx is one of the communities selected. A map of the Bronx community study boundary is here: https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/air_pdf/bronxcams.pdf and visit https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/air_pdf/camfsb.pdf to view a community fact sheet.

Tax Season

Tax Season is upon us. Single-filing New Yorkers who earned \$56,000 or less in 2022, or families who earned \$80,000 or less, are encouraged to file their taxes for free using NYC Free Tax Prep at https://www.nyc.gov/site/dca/consumers/file-your-taxes.page?utm_medium=email&utm_name=utm_source=govdelivery. NYC Free Tax Prep provides free, professional tax preparation that can help New Yorkers keep their full refund, including valuable tax credits, like the newly enhanced New York City Earned Income Tax Credit (NYC EITC). The new NYC Free Tax Prep for self-employed New Yorkers will also provide income tax services to freelance workers and small businesses.

D Subway Line Track Maintenance Ongoing

Structural repairs will begin on the middle track of the D line this spring between Bedford Park Boulevard and Kingsbridge Road, resulting in weekday suspension of the express D train service from 4.45 a.m. on Monday, March 27, through 5 a.m. Friday, April 28. Customers are advised to allow for additional commute time.

During morning rush hours, all southbound D trains will operate locally between Bedford Park Boulevard and 145th Street. Northbound D trains will operate as usual, via local service. During evening rush hours, all northbound D trains will operate locally between 145th Street and Bedford Park Boulevard. Southbound D trains will operate as usual, via local service.

Vietnam Vet Finds Solace in Sharing the Unsaid

(continued from page 9)

and if we can educate them on what's available, I think we'd see a lot more veterans doing better."

Jenny Pacanowski from "Womens Veterans Empowered & Thriving," which primarily operates online to be more accessible to veterans who are parents said women don't always attend outreach events and that was why they do their best to try to reach them virtually.

"We open our programming up to family members, so that the family have support and then all veterans, but specifically, our focus is on empowerment through breathing, writing, and

skills that they can apply to their daily life to thrive, because veterans are really good at surviving, but we like to see people be happy and thrive."

In the context of Women's History Month, we asked Villalbasaaavedra if she had any advice for young girls who might be thinking of a military career. "Don't let anybody stop you," she said. "It doesn't matter what gender you are. We can do exactly what the guys do, right? It's all mental, nothing is physical. We're [expletive] awesome!"

For more information on veterans services in New York City, visit <https://www.nyc.gov/site/veterans/index.page>.

Woman Hospitalized after Fordham Heights Fire

By SÍLE MOLONEY

One elderly female resident was hospitalized following a fire at 2364 Tiebout Avenue in Fordham Heights on Tuesday, March 28, according to the FDNY, who said they received a report of smoke and a fire on the 4th floor of a 6-story, multiple dwelling at 1:16 p.m. that day.

Twelve fire units, comprising 60 personnel arrived at the scene. "One civilian in serious condition [was] transported to Jacobi Hospital," a fire official later said, adding that the blaze was brought under control at 2.22 p.m. and the cause was under investigation.

Norwood News spoke to one family who lived underneath the apartment where the fire broke out who had come home to rescue their petrified little dog who was seen sooty and still frantically trembling in the arms of a small child. It was unclear if the

animal had been treated for smoke inhalation or had been given anything to drink.

After the fire was extinguished, residents were seen mopping up water in the building. We spoke to a French couple from Paris who were outside and were visiting The Bronx. Speaking in French, Clement Blondeau, said he was impressed by the number of firefighters and trucks at the scene, adding that they had caused a major traffic jam. He added, "It was surprising to see the firefighters throwing everything they found [in the apartment, including some furniture] out the window, without taking into account everything below, the cars etc."

We asked the FDNY for comment on this. An official said, "I do not know the specific reason for that at today's fire. It's often done for many reasons - to complete

(continued on page 13)



Let's Take Action for World Health Day 2023

By LIZ SPURRELL-HUSS

In honor of the 75th anniversary of the creation of the World Health Organization (WHO), April 7 marks World Health Day! This year's theme is "Health for All" which envisions that all people have good health for a fulfilling life in a peaceful,

prosperous, and sustainable world.

The WHO is dedicated to the well-being of all people, and champions global efforts to give everyone, everywhere an equal chance to live a healthy life. Unfortunately, we are not quite there yet. Some groups have been given fewer op-

portunities to be healthy and therefore have poorer overall health. This includes people of color, people living in poverty, people with disabilities, and women.

As a result, counties like The Bronx are overburdened by chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer and asthma, and our residents have a poorer quality of life. The good news is that more and more Bronxites are improving their diet and lifestyle choices and investing in their health and the health of their families and communities.

In fact, according to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings, Bronxites are living longer than just a few years ago, drinking less alcohol, and using community exercise opportunities and open spaces more often.

That said, there is more work to be done. Here are some ways we can work towards achieving Health for All:

- Participate in regular physical ac-

tivity for and with your community - a walking club, an outdoor exercise class, or an online class using free, publicly available videos.

- Find a community garden; they provide healthy food for the community and support social connections.
- Advocate for policies and practices that support health, in your place of work, school, or worship. For example, at work, challenge your co-workers to drink more water and avoid sugar-sweetened beverages for the next month, or within your faith community, encourage leaders to serve fruits and vegetables at all events for the next 6 months.
- Engage your local elected officials and ask them to support legislation that improves housing, education, food, transportation, and the environment.
- Encourage your local government to support the creation of parks, more sidewalks, and bike lanes.

On World Health Day, let's all think about practical ways we can take action to tackle the health challenges of today and tomorrow.

Liz Spurrell-Huss LCSW, MPH is director of health equity programs, community, and population health at Montefiore Health System.



Kingsbridge Heights: Police-Involved Shooting Leaves Man Critical

(continued from page 11)

de la Cruz, was experiencing "a schizophrenic episode."

The publication also reported that Santo asked 311 for medical authorities to commit his son before something went awry. The dad also reportedly said Raul did not understand English and that police were shouting at his son in English.

Gothamist further reported that they were informed by City officials that 311 calls are automatically routed to the NYPD if an incident relates to a mental health crisis and involves a person who

is armed, and that police decide which department will be dispatched to handle the situation.

As the press conference was wrapping up on the day of the incident, *Norwood News* asked police if the family had stated that they felt they were in danger when they called for help. Police did not respond to our question.

If you or someone you know needs support, call 888-NYC-Well, text "Well" to 65173 or visit nyc.gov/nycwell.

**David Greene contributed to this story*

Woman Hospitalized after Fordham Heights Fire

(continued from page 12)

searches, overhaul the fire room to make sure everything is out... could be in the way of another room...many different reasons."

The American Red Cross gives the following advice regarding pets and fire safety. Keep pets near entrances when away from home. Keep collars on pets and leashes at the ready in case firefighters

need to rescue them. When leaving pets home alone, keep them in areas or rooms near entrances where firefighters can easily find them.

Affix a pet alert window cling and write down the number of pets inside your house and attach the static cling to a front window. This critical information saves rescuers time locating your pets. Keep the

(continued on page 14)

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Public and Community Meetings

The 52nd **PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., sometimes via Zoom and sometimes in person. Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email list.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7** general board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 25, at 6.30 p.m. on Zoom. The Meeting ID is 859 4776 2187, or to join by phone, dial (646) 558-8656. Contact KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list. All meetings are being held virtually, via Zoom, until further notice.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8** full board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 18, at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Contact BX08@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list. Join the Zoom meeting by phone on +16465588656 or at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2114033690>. Passcode: 2114033690#

The **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meetings are usually held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m., sometimes in person and sometimes online. For details of future meetings, please contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

CORRECTIONS

In the *Norwood News* March 23-April 5, 2023 edition, in our front-page story entitled, "Women's History Month Marked in The Bronx," in the front-page photo caption and on page 19 of the same story, the president of the Bridgefield Civic League was referenced incorrectly as Cheryl Garland Johnson, instead of Debra Garland.

In the same edition, on page 10 in the story entitled, "Local Kids Face Off for Fun in Monthly Dance Battle Series," the winner of the March contest was incorrectly referenced as Jeremiah. In fact, the winner was Shamiah Bess. Jeremiah was another contestant on the night.

In the same edition, in the Letters to the Editor section, in one of the editor's notes, we referenced a Throggs Neck St. Patrick's Day story which was not finally included in the last edition due to space constraints but is included in this edition. We apologize for these errors.

Woman Hospitalized after Fordham Heights Fire

(continued from page 13)

number of pets listed updated. Visit <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/fire/pet-fire-safety.html> for more information.

Photo by Sile Moloney
FIREFIGHTERS RESPOND TO an "All Hands" fire at 2364 Tiebout Avenue in Fordham Heights on Tuesday, March 28, 2023.



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Sunshine Brings Smiles at St. Patrick's Day Parade

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Plenty of happy faces (as well as the occasional, green one!) were seen at the 25th Throggs Neck St. Patrick's Day Parade held this year on Sunday, March 12. Parade organizers said they were proud to have Mrs. Lois Harr and Mr. Roger



Photo by Sile Moloney

STATE SEN. NATHALIA Fernandez and Grand Marshal Roger Slattery at the 25th Throggs Neck St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 12, 2023.

Slattery leading the marchers down the parade route as this year's grand marshals.

To the sound of traditional pipe and marching band music, the parade kicked off around noon from the corner of East Tremont and Lafayette Avenues and the route, lined by revelers and well-wishers, bedecked in the obligatory green, was just about a mile and a half, ending at Harding Avenue. Some families were seen marching in the parade holding banners in memory of honorary grand marshals who have since passed.

Slattery, seen chatting to State Sen. Nathalie Fernandez (S.D. 34) at the start of the parade route, said, "It's a wonderful day for the Irish and the Irish at heart!" Former Democratic female district leader and candidate for the 13th city council seat, Irene Estrada, was also spotted on the day, no doubt eager to garner votes for June.

Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark was also seen marching on the day with her team. She later tweeted in part, "Happy St. Patrick's Day! It's a day to appreciate and celebrate Irish music, literature, culture, and the immense contributions to public service in our city and nation."



Photo by Sile Moloney

A GROUP OF pipers march in the 25th Throggs Neck St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 12, 2023.

Having read only on the morning of the parade, last year's *Norwood News* story about the inclusion for the first time of an Irish American LGBTQ+ group under their own banner in the parade since they were rejected over 20 years ago, Maya Jamie Milton, a Throggs Neck resident of 57 years, who said she came out last year as Maya, decided to participate in the parade for the first time.

She was seen happily marching with Brendan Fay and others behind the Lavender & Green Alliance banner and said she hopes to encourage more local youth to just be themselves. "I'm just so grateful to be here and I'm blessed!" Milton said. "Thank God for that. You gotta be where you want to be!"

Later, on March 22, Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson partnered with Bronx Terminal Market, Montefiore Medical Center, and Waste Management to celebrate Irish Heritage Month at the Rambling House, located at 4292 Katonah Avenue in Woodlawn.

"From our bridges and tunnels to the iconic buildings that grace our New York City's skyline, we remain grateful to our Irish brothers and sisters that continue to give back to their community and to this city each and every day," said Gibson.

The ceremony included musical and dance performances by Pamela Geraghty and Aoife Fleming from the Loughran School of Music and by the New York City Fire Department's Pipes & Drum, while Father David Power from St. Helen's Church delivered the benediction. Honorees this year included James (Jimmy) Casey, Brian Golden and Pat Golden from Terry Dalton Jr.'s Toys for Kids; and Kim Furletti, president of Women of Woodlawn.

Deirdre Sekulic, assistant director of social work at Montefiore Medical Center's Department of Social Services, and the Emerald Isle Immigration Center were also honored. Siobhán Dennehy, director, accepted the award on behalf of the center. This year, the youth award went to Aisling Coleman, a student at P.S. 19 Judith K. Weis School in Woodlawn.

Doug Condit "One of a Kind"

(continued from page 1)

in the community. He was also honored by Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) in April 2018 with the CB7 Wing Award.

Recalling their attendance at various veterans' events over the years, Watson said, "We, as a community, and friends will mourn his passing but celebrate his life!! Go Navy!!"

Condit's dog-walking and membership of the 52nd Precinct Community Council (the Council), CB7 Parks' committee, and Friends of the Williamsbridge Oval (FoWO) kept him busy over the years.

CB7 sanitation committee chair, Betty Arce, described him as "one of a kind," someone she knew through FoWO and the Council and said she was glad to have spent time with him in his last weeks. Describing Condit as a die-hard Yankee fan, Arce said, "He was such a raconteur, always had a story or two to tell, a joke, an observation, always with a smile."

She went on to describe him as a generous soul, giving and caring, a kid at heart with a mischievous sense of humor, some-

one who cared deeply for the Oval Park. "With his dog, Loca, he would amble into the park, wearing his signature NY Yankees baseball cap and jacket, and take note of any conditions that he felt needed attending to: trash, graffiti, damaged trees," she said.

Condit was instrumental in securing around \$400,000 in funding for the Oval skate park and previously wrote a *Norwood News* front-page editorial on why the skate park was needed. Arce said he also pushed to have the skateboarders included during the park's design and construction and made sure they were front and center at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"It breaks my heart that he is no longer with us, but grateful that I had the pleasure of his friendship," Arce said. "He walks with Loca in paradise."

According to the Physician Assistant History Society, Condit was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania after the end of WWII. Due to his asthma, the family moved to rural Colorado. At one time, he became a "teen editor" for one of the two weekly

town newspapers. Condit retired from his role as a physician assistant in cardiothoracic/vascular surgery at Montefiore Medical Center on Sept. 30, 2022, after 50 years of service.

Applauding his stellar career, Dr. Philip Ozuah, CEO of Montefiore Medicine, said at the time, "Doug was the person we called to come to the rescue of young kids with open heart surgery when I was training 33 years ago." Condit's trademark sense of humor was as sharp as ever on his retirement, offering the dry words of wisdom, "Don't get sick!"

CB Parks chair, Barbara Stronczer, also paid tribute to Condit, saying he was a friend and supporter of neighborhood parks and always attended Parks' meetings. "Living close to the Oval, he always made sure the Oval was being well maintained," she said. "We will miss him and his advocacy for better maintenance and upkeep of our local parks."

Meanwhile, Brenda Caldwell-Paris, president of the Council, expressed her "deepest sincere sorrow" as she shared how Condit was "called home to glory." She described him as "an amazing, awesome man, a

very loyal community activist, a devoted, active veteran," who touched so many in different ways.

She said the council had been blessed to have had Condit for over 10 years as its sergeant-at-arms and that he had participated in prayer vigils on gun violence, domestic violence rallies, marches and more. "Doug was always the first to arrive no matter where the location was," she said, adding he was always ready and checking people had a way home.

"There is not anyone who didn't know Doug," she said, adding that his funeral arrangements were not yet known but would be shared upon receipt. Arce said Condit had had a brother who died of COVID-10 last year and to her knowledge, had no other living relatives.

Sending condolences and prayers to his friends and family, Caldwell-Paris, said, "Rest in Peace, Doug. Your family community will truly miss you. We thank you for your service and all you have done to make a difference in our community. We Love You!!"

Elizabeth Quaranta, executive director of FOMP, described Condit as a wonderful person

whose soul was no longer with us. "There aren't many things I believe in, but I do, this time, want to think that he is over our community, protecting it like he has always done in real life," she said.

Having also visited Condit recently, Quaranta said she felt like he had been waiting for her to come over and say hello. She said she thanked him for being someone she could look up to as she continued to think about her own role in the community and what her purpose was in living here. "Funny," she said. "He thanked me."

She continued, "Doug Condit, if there were more people like you... His lessons, his determination, and his commitment to being an American, and a veteran, are admirable. Quaranta said as she walked past the Oval skatepark on April 3, she smiled as she thought of Condit. "Watching the skaters fall, to get up and try again and again, a lesson in itself and one that Doug made sure we had in this playground. That skatepark is Doug."

Physician Assistant History Society, Johns Creek, GA. Biography, Condit, Doug, (2020) Retrieved at <https://pahx.org/assistants/condit-doug/>.

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