



NORWOOD NEWS

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NORWOOD WALKS FOR AUTISM



Photo by Síle Moloney

RESIDENTS, STUDENTS AND teachers from P168 in Norwood joined Puzzle Life and members of the 52nd Precinct for a walk around Botanical Square in Norwood to promote autism acceptance on Friday, June 16, 2023.

By SÍLE MOLONEY

A group of around 200 people, including many kids, joined together for a walk in Norwood to promote autism acceptance, unity, and inclusion on Friday,

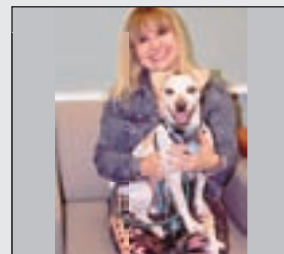
June 16. The event was organized by the group Puzzle Life in conjunction with Norwood's P168 and the 52nd Precinct.

Kyle McClean and his wife, Liza, who live in Soundview,

launched Puzzle Life, a group which aims to promote acceptance of people living with autism. Kyle told *Norwood News*, "Well, my wife and I, we have a beautiful princess on the spec-

trum and it's the third year in a row we wanted to do things in our community for autism acceptance, not awareness, acceptance," he said.

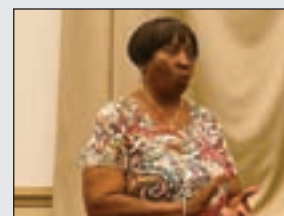
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Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC)
3400 Reservoir Oval East
Bronx, New York 10467
Phone: 718 324 4998
Fax: 718 324 2917
E-mail: norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org
Web.: www.norwoodnews.org

Publisher
Mosholu Preservation Corporation

Editor-In-Chief, Norwood News
Sile Moloney
smoloney@norwoodnews.org

Intern
Sara Martinez

Regular Contributors
David Greene, José A. Giralt,
Ariel Pacheco, Miriam Quiñones

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KHCC Hosts 10th Annual Neighborhood Festival

By MIRIAM QUIÑONES

Kingsbridge Heights Community Center (KHCC) hosted its 10th Annual Neighborhood Festival on Friday, June 16, celebrating both Pride and Juneteenth. The event was held at the center located at 3101 Kingsbridge Terrace. A planned barbecue was brought inside on the day due to a thunderstorm, but the rain did not dampen the atmosphere. There was a bouncy castle, food, treats and games. Frasherly Genao and Maria Raminrez said they loved the event.

All photos by Miriam Quiñones



FRASHERLY GENAO AND Maria Raminrez attend the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center (KHCC) 10th Annual Neighborhood Festival, celebrating Pride and Juneteenth, on Friday, June 16, 2023.



MOM, VICKI MORSY, and daughter, Maya, enjoy eating popcorn and ices at the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center's 10th Annual Neighborhood Festival, celebrating Pride and Juneteenth, on June 16, 2023.



CHILDREN WAIT ON line for the bouncy house at the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center's 10th Annual Neighborhood Festival, celebrating Pride and Juneteenth, on Friday, June 16, 2023.



KEITH YEARWOOD, RECREATION specialist, and Robert Rodriguez, youth operations director at Kingsbridge Heights Community Center (KHCC) hand out free books by Darryl "DMC" McDaniels at the Center's 10th Annual Neighborhood Festival, celebrating Pride and Juneteenth, on Friday, June 16, 2023.



HECTOR CRUZ, THE custodian of Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, takes a break to eat a hamburger cooked by the kitchen staff during the Centers' 10th Annual Neighborhood Festival on Friday, June 16, 2023, with board member Gail Perek.



KIDS PLAY IN the bouncy house during the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center's 10th Annual Neighborhood Festival, celebrating Pride and Juneteenth, on Friday, June 16, 2023.

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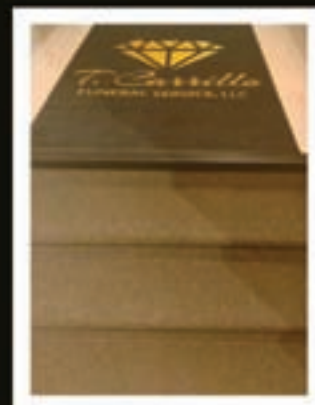


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By **DAVID GREENE**

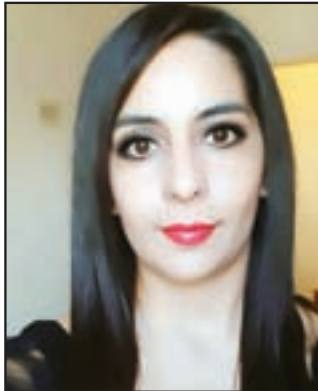


This week, we asked readers their thoughts on the age-old problem of double parking, the problems it can cause, as well as possible solutions.



"I see a lot of cops stop people from double parking because every time there's double parking, it always causes a lot of traffic and people can't get through. If people keep on double parking, they're just going to get tickets. If they don't want to get a ticket, you must move the car because the cops always come around and tell you no double parking. There should be even more enforcement."

Allan Peisel,
Norwood
Photo by David Greene



"It annoys me that people are so selfish and arbitrary sometimes. The public space is that, public, and regulations are created so nobody interferes with others' rights, to keep traffic flowing and allow safe passage. It gets worse when not only individuals, but businesses or private figures begin to take over the streets for their restaurants, hotels, and other venues. For example, if there's a big event, a demonstration, something collective, then it would be logical that people need to take over the space, if it's momentarily or is a collective action, not an arbitrary individual's action, just because they can."

Gabriela Oliveros,
Riverdale
Photo courtesy of Gabriela Oliveros



"It seems that since COVID, there are a lot more cars on the road. I generally hate double parking because it makes everything more dangerous, both for drivers and pedestrians, but it seems to have become a necessary evil. Legal parking is scarce these days and most times, drivers are forced to double park."

Annie Boller,
Pelham Bay
Photo courtesy of Annie Boller



"New York has become overcrowded, with few solutions to remedy the situation. The solution, I believe, would be that the DOT (NYC Department of Transportation) delegate a collective group of inspectors in various areas of constant accidents, where they can identify defective traffic lights, as well as reckless drivers, and document and remedy the situation by fixing the traffic lights and holding reckless drivers accountable."

Raqibah Basir,
Belmont
Photo courtesy of Raqibah Basir



"It's gotten out of hand, and the outside dining and the bike lanes have exacerbated it and there doesn't seem to be any solution. It's one of the most difficult problems in New York City and it's a matter of life and death, because it creates situations where people could die."

Mike Horowitz,
Riverdale
Photo courtesy of Michael Horowitz



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Jerome Avenue Men's Shelter Client Charged in Brooklyn Sex Attack

By **DAVID GREENE**

NYPD detectives from Brooklyn have arrested a man charged with beating and sexually assaulting a woman in Brooklyn on June 7, who they say had been a resident at the Jerome Avenue Men's Shelter (JAMS) located on Jerome Avenue in Norwood.

Police say the 51-year-old victim was inside a building in the vicinity of Bradford Street and Pitkin Avenue in Brooklyn, when she "was pushed down a flight of stairs," causing her to sustain a fractured eye socket, a fractured jaw, and broken ribs.

The assailant later allegedly forced his victim to perform a sex act, before fleeing along Pitkin Avenue towards Miller Avenue. They said the victim was transported to a local hospital in stable condition. On Wednesday, June 14, the NYPD released a video and photo of the alleged suspect, apparently inside a bodega.

On Wednesday, June 21, the

NYPD announced the arrest of Ja-reill Finley, 30, who police say had been a client at the JAMS shelter located at 3600 Jerome Avenue. Finley was charged with assault with intent to disfigure / sexually motivated strangulation, and two counts of a criminal sex act, and sexual abuse.

In October 2021, a local resident told *Norwood News*, "That shelter is a disgrace! As a resident of this neighborhood for over 23 years, I have never seen my neighborhood this bad."

A woman who answered the phone at the 200-bed shelter on Saturday, June 24, did not recall Finley's name as someone who had stayed at the shelter and directed calls for comment to Tamara Gayle, the residence director of JAMS which is run by BronxWorks. We were unable to reach Gayle for comment.

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

Bronx Town Hall Touts Public Banking Benefits to Locals

By JOSÉ A. GIRALT

At a public meeting billed as a “Boroughwide Town Hall on Public Banking,” representatives from ten Bronx-based groups joined various elected officials to push for State and City legislators to build upon efforts to promote worker-owned businesses, increase community land trusts, and facilitate access to more local credit unions as an alternative to big commercial banks.

On May 11, inside the auditorium of the Bronx Library Center, located in Fordham Manor, attendees viewed video and slide presentations describing how these actions could improve economic conditions in the borough.

Listed as expected attendees on the press release announcing the event were elected officials, State Sen. Robert Jackson (S.D. 31), Assembly Member George Alvarez (A.D. 78), Assembly Member Karines Reyes (A.D. 87), Assembly Member Amanda Septimo (A.D. 84) Assembly Member Yudelka Tapia (A.D. 86).

Also expected were representatives from Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, Bronx Financial Access Coalition, Green Worker Cooperatives, New Economy Project, New York Public Interest Research Group,

Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, NYC Network of Worker Cooperatives, Public Bank NYC, Solar Uptown Now Service (SUNS) Cooperative, and University Neighborhood Housing Program (UNHP).

Danielle LeBlanc works with Green Worker Cooperatives, consulting with small businesses, start-ups, and non-profits on marketing and proposal development. “The fight for a public bank is a fight to transform our financial system, not just to change where and to which communities investments go, but to ensure that we, the people, have a voice in those decisions,” she said. “It’s a fight for economic democracy.”

LeBlanc described a financial situation where every year, New York City “collects \$100 billion in revenue from taxes, fees, and other sources.” She said, “Before it spends any of that money, by law, it has to place it on deposits in the big



Photo by José A. Giralt

A PANEL THAT included community leaders and elected officials answer questions from the audience at a Bronx Town Hall on public banking, held at the Bronx Library Center, 310 East Kingsbridge Road in Fordham Manor, on Thursday, May 11, 2023.

banks.” She then described a dire situation at play between the big banks and some local communities. “These are the banks that have systematically underserved Bronx communities in terms of branch locations, and loans to local people and small businesses,” she said.

According to activists like LeBlanc and Gregory Jost of Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, the main complaint against the big banks and even the check-cashing stores is that their fees for late payments and check-cashing services disproportionately affect lower-income people.

Add to that payday loan services that sometimes charge an annual percentage rate (APR) of 400 percent, as referenced in prior press release on the topic by former Gov. Andrew Cuomo, and it becomes clear why some people have trouble climbing out of crippling debt.

According to the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, while there is no set definition of a payday loan, it is usually a short-term, high-cost loan, generally for \$500 or less, that is typically due on your next payday.

Collections on payday loans were made illegal in New York State in 2013. While this measure prohibited the offering of such services at the street/retail banking level, borrowers sometimes find such loans online, though illegal statewide.

At the federal level, the Department of Justice (DOJ) oversees the growth of the big banks to make sure no one institution monopolizes a market. On June

20, Assistant Attorney General Jonathan Kanter spoke before the Brookings Institution, a Washington D.C.-based entity which, according to its Facebook page, conducts “independent research and analysis on the most important policy issues in the world.”

Kanter said the DOJ plans to look more closely at efforts from big banks to grow even bigger through mergers and acquisitions. “We’re not going to artificially limit ourselves to just one or two dimensions of competition,” he said according to reporting by *Politico*.

The “one or two dimensions” Kanter was referring to were traditional factors like deposit concentration and the physical location of bank branches, when trying to determine if a bank will gain an unfair advantage through expansion. Other factors might include fees charged, interest rates, customer service, and even the impact an approved expansion may have on non-banks. “All we’re saying is that we’re going to look at all the competitive factors,” Kanter said.

While these efforts at the federal level principally impact the biggest banks, local activists like LeBlanc and Jost are more focused, however, on what New York City and State can do on a smaller scale. They have called out the big financial institutions on what they deem to be an abandonment of working and lower-class communities. Data published on NYC.gov reveals that Bronx Community District (CD) 3, 5, 6 and 12 hold the highest per-

centage of unbanked households in The Bronx.

CD3 covers some or all of the Crotona Park East, Claremont, Concourse Village, Melrose, and Morrisania neighborhoods, CD5 covers some or all of Fordham, Morris Heights, Mount Hope, and University Heights, CD6 covers some or all of Bathgate, Belmont, East Tremont, and West Farms and CD12 covers some or all of Edenwald, Wakefield, Williamsbridge, Woodlawn Heights, Fish Bay, Eastchester, Olinville and Baychester.

The same data shows that ten individual City neighborhoods account for nearly 37 percent of unbanked households. These include Bedford Park (CD7), Fordham North, Norwood (CD7), Belmont, and Fordham South.

A recent example of how depositing City funds into a small local bank can benefit an underserved neighborhood is what happened in Bronx CD1, which covers the South Bronx. In April, NYS Superintendent of Financial Services Adrienne A Harris announced that a Popular Bank branch would be included in the Banking Development District (BDD).

According to NYS Department of Financial Services, to encourage participation in the BDD program, \$10 million in subsidized public deposits and other benefits are made available to banks and credit unions that open or maintain a branch in underserved communities and offer access to affordable products and services.

Bronx Borough President

Vanessa L. Gibson praised the collaboration. “I wish to congratulate Popular Bank in being a part of the solution and partnering with our neighborhoods on this important mission of improving affordable banking services and financial security,” she said.

Public banking advocates want to see more support for their cause of having local communities involved in banking decisions. Jost is also an adjunct professor of sociology at Fordham University. He sees more opportunities for community engagement when residents support smaller financial institutions like the Lower East Side People’s Federal Credit Union.

First organized in 1986 as a non-profit financial cooperative, *Norwood News* reported on the institution’s expansion into The Bronx last summer and the launch of the Bronx People’s Federal Credit Union. With its distinctive white and green van, it has since brought mobile banking services to many neighborhoods in the borough.

“Instead of extraction and exploitation, we have products and services like affordable savings and free checking accounts, credit builder loans, credit repair, surcharge-free ATMs, auto loans, [and] personal loans,” Jost said.

Jost sees The Bronx’s can-do spirit as a great asset in building wealth at a grassroots level.

“Most of our financial systems [are] in support of the big banks, not the little ones,” he said. “How do we turn the tables? How do we shift the balance of power in a way that helps ‘the little engines that could’? We all know what it is to tough it out and make it; that’s how The Bronx [works]. This is our story; so why don’t we have some backing from our existing taxpayer dollars to help us grow and thrive and do better?”

According to a March 2023 annual estimate report by NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, Wall Street’s 2022 *average bonus* paid to securities employees dropped to \$176,700, a 26 percent decline from the previous year’s \$240,400 average bonus.

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*

ELECTIONS 2023: Incumbents Lead at Poll Closure on Election Night

By **SÍLE MOLONEY,**
MIRIAM QUIÑONES &
DAVID GREENE

After polls closed on Tuesday, June 27, NYC Board of Elections released the initial, unofficial results of the primary elections which took place that day, based on a percentage of returned poll site scanners. The initial results cover both early votes and election day votes. Absentee and overseas ballots still had to be counted, as did the remaining scanners. Below is a summary of the unofficial results for The Bronx.

Democratic incumbent, Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark led with 72.72 percent of votes in the Democratic primary for the position of Bronx district attorney, while her rival, defense attorney Tess Cohen garnered 26.78 percent of vote.

Clark later said, "In 2015, becoming the first woman in The Bronx and the first woman of color elected district attorney in the State of New York was the proudest moment of my life. It has been the greatest honor to serve The Bronx as your district attorney and tonight, I am so thrilled that I will be able to continue this important work."

Clark said she was proud of the work her office had achieved over the last eight years. "We expanded our Community Justice Bureau so we can do more to provide resources, connect individuals with community partners, and utilize alternatives to incarceration," she said. "We are confronting gun violence head on, getting illegal guns out of our

community and prosecuting gun traffickers."

The district attorney continued, "We are working with our community partners to engage our youth so that they make the right choices. From hate crimes to dangerous work conditions, to domestic violence, my office is working to hold those responsible accountable. We are utilizing innovating programs and bureaus to implement meaningful reforms, investigate wrongful convictions, address root causes of crime, and address mass incarceration."

She said she firmly believed safety and justice go hand in hand and added that she was more energized than ever to continue her work. "This victory would not be possible without so many people," she said. "I want to thank my family, my husband, Ray, and our incredible team for your support and help always but especially during the hectic last few months. I also want to thank the leaders, Democratic clubs, and unions from across the Bronx and beyond who supported my campaign. Most of all, I want to thank the voters who made their voices heard today."

In the City Council District 14 Democratic primary race, incumbent City Councilwoman Pierina Sanchez, who won her seat in 2021, led with 74.88 percent of the vote, while her rival Rachel Bradshaw garnered 24.8 percent of votes. David Mirtz, chair of the Bronx Chapter of the New York Working Families Party, later issued the following statement on Election Night. "We couldn't be more thrilled by Pierina



Photo courtesy of Councilman Kevin Riley

CITY COUNCILMAN KEVIN Riley (C.D. 12) campaigns in District 12 on June 13, 2023 ahead of the June 27th Democratic primary election.

Sanchez's victory tonight," he said.

"As housing chair, Pierina has been a powerful voice for protecting tenants against unjust rent hikes and ending the devastating eviction crisis in The Bronx. Our members were proud to hit the streets in support of Pierina, and look forward to working with her to build a stronger and healthier Bronx."

District 14 broadly encompasses some or all of the neighborhoods of Kingsbridge Heights, Fordham Manor, Fordham Heights, Bedford Park, University Heights, Mt. Hope and Morris Heights. It is bordered to the south by the Cross Bronx Expressway.

In the City Council District 13 Democratic primary race, incumbent Councilwoman Marjorie Velázquez, who won her seat in 2021, led with 63.78 percent of the vote. Velázquez declared victory that night, saying, "Since joining the city council last year we've worked to make The Bronx safer and more secure."

She continued, "We've added over two dozen new officers to the 45th and 49th precincts, added security cameras across the district, and passed legislation to crack down on catalytic converter thefts. We fought to deliver over 100 units of affordable housing for our seniors and veterans, and secured over \$10 million for Jacobi Hospital, but our work is not done."

She concluded, "Tomorrow morning, I will get back to work delivering for the East Bronx and fighting for all our families. In this primary election, I took on two anti-choice, anti-LGBTQ Trump acolytes and beat them handily. Tonight, I want to thank my family, our volunteers, my dedicated campaign staff, my brothers and sisters in labor, the public servants who entrusted me with their support, our allies at the issue organizations doing the hard work every day to make our city a better place, and most of all the voters of the East Bronx for their support and trust."

The councilwoman's rivals, Bernadette Ferrara, a resident of Van Nest, founder of the Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance and a Bronx Community Board 11 board member, garnered 21.8 percent of the vote, Irene Estrada, former Democratic female district leader

for the 80th assembly district, won 7.21 percent and John Perez, a U.S. army veteran and single father who last year ran and lost to now State Sen. Nathalia Fernandez in the State Senate District 34 Democratic Party, won 4.92 percent of the vote.

District 13 broadly encompasses some or all of the neighborhoods of Allderton, City Island, Country Club, Edgewater Park, Ferry Point, Locust Point, Morris Park, Pelham Bay, Pelham Gardens, Pelham Parkway, Schuylerville, Silver Beach, Spencer Estates, Throggs Neck, Van Nest, Waterbury LaSalle, Westchester Square, and Zerega.

In the City Council District 13 Republican Party primary race, George Havranek led with 50.48 percent of the vote, while Kristy Marmorato won 41.01 percent and Samantha Zherka garnered 7.74 percent.

In the City Council District 13 Conservative Party primary race, Kristy Marmorato came out on top with 50 percent of the vote to George Havranek's 35.71 percent, while Samantha Zherka garnered 14.29 percent.

Phyllis Nastasio, who previously ran and lost to now Assemblyman John Zaccaro Jr. in last year's general election in assembly district 80, also ran for election to represent City Council District 13. However, she was disqualified from both the Republican primary and the Conservative Party primary.

In the City Council District 12 Democratic primary race, incumbent Councilman Kevin Riley led with 83 percent of the vote, while his rivals, Pamela Hamilton-Johnson won 10.82 and Aisha Hernandez Ahmed won 5.81 percent. The district broadly encompasses the neighborhoods of Wakefield, Olinville, Edenwald, Eastchester, Williamsbridge, Baychester, and Co-op City.

In the Republican County Committee primary, Samantha Zherka led with 40 percent of the vote, while her rivals, David Malavolta garnered 25 percent and Stefanie Sarlo won 15 percent.

Our reporters spoke to some voters around the borough both during early voting and on Election Day. Outside 18 Metropolitan Oval, Parkchester polling site on Election Day, there weren't many voters present when we were on site. When we attempted to talk to them, only one man said he was familiar with the races but declined to stop and talk.

On Sunday, June 25, outside Mosholu Montefiore Community Center polling site at 450 Dekalb Avenue in Norwood, one female voter who declined to be identified said, "They need to really vote for the right people. New York City needs to get fixed ASAP. It's not about a title, and the money they get, but what are they going to do to keep everyone safe in the street?"

Another male voter, who also declined to be identified, said that immigrants were getting all the help with homes, clothes, food, cellphones and more. "What about our people that are in the street begging for money and food?" he said. The man added that the people needed "to get rid of everyone and get new people in to run The Bronx and New York City." He added, "The people we have now are not doing enough."

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NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Eid Al-Adha Celebrated in the Oval

The Islamic holiday of Eid Al-Adha [Idul-Adha] was celebrated by hundreds of muslims in the Williamsbridge Oval park on Wednesday, June 28. The religious holiday, which translates to "The Feast of the Sacrifice" continues through June 30, and is the second and the largest of the two main holidays celebrated in Islam (the other being Eid al-Fitr). The former honors the willingness of Abraham (Ibrahim) to sacrifice one of his sons, either Ishmael (Ismail) or Isaac (Ishaq), as an act of obedience to God's command. We spoke to one male member of the congregation who said they had come together to celebrate in the park because they couldn't all fit in the local mosque. Alternate side parking is suspended for the duration of the holiday.



Photo by Sile Moloney

MUSLIMS GATHER IN the Williamsbridge Oval park on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, to celebrate Eid Al-Adha.

Passover now a School Holiday
NYC Department of Education an-

nounced on Monday June 26, that it would start to include the days which comprise Passover as days off in the school calendar. Up to that point, the original 2023-2024 calendar excluded the last days of Passover as days off from school. The Office of District 11 City Council Member Eric Dinowitz said the councilman worked with colleagues in the City and State legislatures on making the change, first by organizing a letter signed by a broad coalition of NYC elected leaders, and subsequently through a direct discussion with Mayor Eric Adams. Dinowitz said the original calendar would have presented significant challenges to Jewish students, families, and faculty during Passover.

New Manhattan College President

The Manhattan College Board of Trustees announced on June 28 the appointment of Milo Rivero '81, Ph.D., P.E., as its 21st president. According to college representatives, Rivero, an alumnus of the College, is a highly accomplished leader in the engineering and construction industries, has a deep understanding of the higher education landscape and a long history of service to Manhattan College, an independent, Lasallian Catholic, coeducational institution of higher learning located on West 242nd Street in Fieldston. He succeeds Brother Daniel Gardner, FSC and begins his tenure on July 1.

For nine years, Rivero, a resident of Scarsdale, NY, was president and CEO of STV Group Inc., described as one of the nation's most prominent engineering, construction management, planning and architectural firms, before retiring from the organization in 2020. College officials said during his 15-year tenure at STV, Rivero guided the firm through an unprecedented period of growth and profitability, overseeing many notable projects including the

Freedom Tower, the 9/11 Memorial and Museum complex, and the redevelopment of LaGuardia Airport.

Before his tenure at STV, College officials said Rivero served as senior vice president at AMEC, a construction management company. From 1997 to 2001, they said he oversaw a staff of 900 employees as president and CEO of the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA). At the SCA, they said he was responsible for the capital improvements and new construction of New York City's public schools. They added that the NYC SCA was widely regarded as one of the premier construction agencies in the nation under his leadership.

Construction company, Stag Group, recently purchased Overlook Manor, part of Manhattan College's dormitory residence for a reported \$18 million.



Photo courtesy of the NYPD

KHAIDLEY RODRIGUEZ, 15, is reported missing.

Fordham Manor: 15-Year-Old Girl Missing

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating a 15-year-old girl reporting missing from Fordham Manor. Police said that Khaidley

Rodriguez of 2687 Heath Avenue was last seen on June 17, at around 11 p.m., leaving her home. They said she is described as female, is around 5 feet, 5 inches in height, is Black Hispanic, weighs around 120 pounds, and has brown eyes and long brown hair. They said she was last seen wearing a black sweater, black shorts and black/white sneakers.

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

Summer Recruitment Drive for Youth

The U.S. Department of Labor's Job Corps program has launched a summer recruitment drive in the State of New York, offering immediate openings and free career training in the nation's leading industries for 16 to 24-year-olds from low-income households. The South Bronx Job Corps Center is located at 369 E 149th St., Bronx, NY 10453. It offers pre-apprenticeship training programs, all within the construction industry. Other career skills training areas include programs in automotive and machine repair, finance and business, health care, homeland security, hospitality, information technology, and renewable resources and energy. For more information about Job Corps, or to begin the enrollment process, visit [jobcorps.gov](https://www.jobcorps.gov) or call 800 733-5627.

Kingsbridge: Tandem Tractor-Trailer Stuck under Elevated Subway for Hours

By DAVID GREENE

A tandem tractor-trailer recently got trapped under the elevated subway in Kingsbridge for several hours as police and fire units blocked off traffic in the area and two dozen MTA employees attempted to free the truck with minimal damage to the subway line.

According to an unnamed MTA official, the incident took place at 10:42 a.m. on Thursday, June 22, at the intersection of Broadway and West 231st Street. The truck, registered to S Auto Transport of Bunridge, Florida was still stuck under by 1:30 p.m. that afternoon.

MTA officials said the overhead subway service was not impacted, and no damage was reported, but road traffic in the area was delayed. The NYPD has not yet responded to a request for information on the incident.

Norwood News previously reported how on April 13, a man, who had been seen by

members of the public acting erratically at the 238th Street subway station holding an imitation gun, began walking along the elevated subway track to the same 231st Street subway station at the intersection with Broadway.

The man was later shot by police when he did not put the gun down, after being instructed to do so numerous times. It was later discovered the gun was an imitation. The gunshot victim survived and was taken into custody.

Later that month, on Monday, April 17, a female police officer from the 50th Precinct was struck in the head apparently with a bottle by a member of the public at the same location on Broadway and 231st Street in Kingsbridge. The following day, April 18, a fire broke out on the elevated train track at Kingsbridge Road subway station by Jerome Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights.



Photo by David Greene

A TANDEM TRACTOR-TRAILER became wedged under the elevated subway at Broadway and West 231st Street for several hours on Thursday, June 22, 2023.



Letters To The Editor

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

Trash Around the Oval

The sanitation department's rote response to Carol Lang's recent letter deploring the filth surrounding Williamsbridge Oval Park in no way addresses the issue raised. The area surrounding the retaining wall all the way around the Oval Park is often filthy with discarded debris and food wrappers and bottles, even whole meals dumped out, and the weeds have been permitted to grow into bushes that obscure parking and make cleaning up difficult.

While the street sweeper is able to clean the area adjacent to the sidewalk and curbs fairly well, it can't get near the debris mentioned above. This can only be picked up/shoveled up by sanitation worker crews. Even two or three workers addressing the issue in sections could make a big difference. How do I know? I've taken to filling a shopping bag from the area adjacent to my car when I park. Yes, entirely filling a shopping bag with debris. If I can improve the small area next to my car, surely a well-paid worker could make a difference when regularly assigned.

It is clear the mess is primarily due to individuals dumping rather than holding onto their food wrappers and bottles and such. Many of these people do not live here but come to enjoy the Oval Park. The fact of the dumping needs to be acknowledged and dealt with instead of residents being given excuses about other sites being cleaned. Clean up the area next to the retaining wall all the way around Oval Park and do it weekly.

**Annette Porter
Norwood**

Trash Around the Oval

I am writing in response to the response to my previous letter to the editor by the Department of Sanitation's spokesperson who claimed that garbage collection happens three times a week on Wayne

Avenue. That spokesperson, in my opinion, is either a bureaucrat reading a prepared script, or a bot that delivers a line when called upon to do so, because anyone who has eyes to see, cannot miss the garbage that continues to pile up daily.

The spokesperson should come around the neighborhood and look for himself and talk to some of the people who live in the area. I have been down this road before, and after calling 311, the spokesperson from the Department of Sanitation said he came and there was no garbage. **Incredible!** People are being paid city money to lie to its residents, instead of using that money to protect the community they have sworn to serve. Rats have been found posing a danger, especially to children who inhabit that park.

Where is our money going if not to cleaning the neighborhood and educating our children? I have been told by Councilman Dinowitz' office that money is going to NGOs to "hire" ex-cons to clean up the area. Why not hire them at union wages with benefits, as opposed to giving all that money to the NGOs and only a percentage to the people who do the work? This policy of stiffing workers, namely laying them off and expecting those who remain to do more work, or hiring part timers with no security, is the crux of the problem.

Unfortunately, this is being carried out in all city agencies including education and healthcare. Seniors are being forced off Medicare into an inferior Medicare (dis) Advantage program by the mayor, so that the City can save money on our healthcare, and so that the insurance company bosses can increase their profits. Let's have a Town Hall to discuss all these issues.

**Carol Lang
Norwood**

Editor's Note: Norwood News reached out to NYC Department of Sanitation for comment. We did not receive an immediate response. We did photograph evidence of the sanitation trucks collecting trash in the vicinity of the Oval in the early hours of the morning.

We also reached out to NYC Department of Education (DOE) and NYC Department of Health for comment. DOE had no comment.

MTA Proposed Fare Increases Both Fair & Reasonable

MTA fare increases have been periodically required every few years. Fare hikes are needed if the MTA and operating agencies such as the NYC Transit bus, subway, Staten Island Railway, MTA Bus, LIRR, and Metro North are to provide the services millions of New Yorkers count on daily. Such increases are inevitable due to increasing costs of labor, power, fuel, supplies, materials, routine safety, state of good repair, replacement of worn out rolling stock, and upgrades to stations, yards and shops.

Too many have forgotten that it was 27 years ago, in 1996, when MetroCards were first introduced. These provided free transfers between the subway and bus. This eliminated the old two-fare zones, making public transportation an even better bargain. It has been 8 years since the \$2.75 base fare was adopted. Purchasing a weekly or monthly MetroCard, OMNY Card, LIRR or Metro North commutation ticket reduces the cost per ride and provides virtually unlimited trips. Employers offer transit checks which help subsidize a portion of the costs.

In the end, quality and frequency of service is dependent upon a secure revenue stream. MTA Management, MTA unions, riders, taxpayers, along with City, State and federal transit administration officials who provide both capital and operating assistance, all must do their fair share. This is necessary to ensure continued success of safe and reliable public transportation in the MTA service area that millions of daily riders count on. We all will have to contribute, be it at the fare box, or via taxes imposed at different levels of government and redistributed back to the MTA. TANSTAFFL or "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch," or in this case, a free ride.

**Larry Penner
Great Neck**

Editor's Note on Richard Warren's Letter "Our 'Justice' System"

In the editor's note included in the Norwood News edition dated June 15-28, 2023,

on Richard Warren's letter to the editor "Our 'Justice' System," included in the Norwood News edition dated June 1-14, 2023, it was incorrectly stated that Mr. Warren's letter was received less than 48 hours before our print deadline. In fact, Mr. Warren's letter was sent prior to the required deadline.

However, due to the receipt of large numbers of emails and press releases containing large video, audio and photo file attachments around the same time, the Norwood News email accounts had reached capacity. Therefore, it wasn't until some of the larger emails were archived that Mr. Warren's email was received, which, at that point, was in the midst of our production cycle. [As a nonprofit media outlet, we have a limited amount of storage space and have to continually archive emails in order to receive new ones.]

In the same editor's note, it was incorrectly stated that a witness said Jordan Neely, who was killed in a Manhattan subway after being held in a chokehold by Daniel Penny, while assisted by others on May 1, was not threatening anyone. In fact, as reported in the original editor's note to Mr. Warren's letter in the June 1-14 edition, the witness said Neely did not harm anyone. We apologize for these errors.

**Sile Moloney
Editor, Norwood News**

To ensure sufficient time for review of all letters to the editor, please send them, along with supporting sources, 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 on local issues or in response to published articles. We do not publish op-eds from political candidates or from elected officials [with some exceptions for health-related matters]. Thank you for reading and for your continued support.

Opinion

By VINCENT MARCHELLO

Building healthier communities requires deliberate action every day to improve individuals' lives. Every time a person goes to a doctor for a check-up or gets important immunizations, health outcomes improve, and communities grow stronger. Ensuring people have access to quality, affordable health coverage is one of the most important ways to help accomplish this goal.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, enrollment in Medicaid and Child Health Plus increased 23.4% to about 9 million

Millions of New Yorkers Will Need to Take Action to Keep Health Coverage

people in New York State, according to the State Department of Health.

Those 9 million people will need to act soon to keep their health coverage. In December 2022, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, which ends the "continuous enrollment condition" for the Medicaid, Child Health Plus, Essential Plan, and Managed Long Term Care programs. This means most New York State residents who have coverage through these plans will need to update their eligibility information as part of the renewal process over the

next 12 months, depending on their coverage end dates.

At Fidelis Care, we serve more than 2 million members across the State who will be affected by this change. We believe every individual deserves access to quality, affordable health coverage. It's important that affected individuals are aware of these changes and complete all necessary requirements. We encourage them to: update their contact information with the agency that they enrolled with (such as NY State of Health or NYC's Human Resources Administration) to get the latest up-

dates; look for agency notices and follow next steps promptly; and contact their health insurance plan providers. Fidelis Care members can call 1-866-435-9521 or visit fideliscare.org/renew for help.

As a physician, my job is to protect my patients and support their health and wellbeing. I encourage affected individuals to take steps to keep health coverage. Their physical and mental health depend on it.

Dr. Vincent Marchello is chief medical officer at Fidelis Care, a New York State health plan.

Giant Laundry Bronx, Where Laundry is Done Right

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Located at 2861 Webster Avenue, Giant Laundry Bronx is a family-owned and operated business that has consistently served the community since it opened in 2017.

Giant Laundry Bronx is a full-service laundromat that specializes in drop-off wash and fold, pick-up and delivery, and self-service laundry cleaning. It is owned by Jim and Elaine who owned a laundromat in Connecticut but wanted to expand to The Bronx to help provide service in an underserved area.

"We have an extraordinary staff to support our customers and provide an exceptional laundromat experience with first-class service," said Elaine. "We also pride ourselves on being the safest and cleanest laundromat in The Bronx."

Giant Laundry Bronx doesn't use any quarters or coins. Customers can use cash, credit, or debit cards, and even EBT to place credit on a laundry card that can then be used

to start the state-of-the-art washers and dryers. The owners have even offered free ice cream, coffee, and donuts to their customers in the past!

The couple has also made a point of giving back to the community. They are partnered with schools to offer discount laundry plans to students and staff. Giant Laundry Bronx has also donated gift cards to support the homeless and gives discounts to first responders.

"We're a community-based laundromat," said Elaine. "We service the residents in the area: schools, local businesses, and essential businesses and workers alike."

Giant Laundry Bronx can arrange pick-up and delivery of laundry within a 15-mile radius of their business, which can be booked on their website. They also provide WiFi, air conditioning, and TV to onsite customers, and have soap available for purchase onsite as well. In addition, Giant Laundry



Bronx has \$1 off washes Tuesday-Thursday.

"We enjoy being at the store, meeting the customers, and even offering free laundry by surprise," said Elaine.

Giant Laundry Bronx is open 7 days a week and the team is ready and waiting for you to come and get some of the best customer service the community has to offer!



All photos provided by Giant Laundry Bronx

(TOP) CUSTOMERS PLACE laundry inside washers at Giant Laundry Bronx

(FAR LEFT) CUSTOMERS drop off laundry at the front desk at Giant Laundry Bronx

(LEFT) GIANT LAUNDRY Bronx storefront, 2861 Webster Avenue, The Bronx.

CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE


**Fordham Heights:
Man, 62, Shot**

A 62-year-old man was hospitalized following a daylight shooting in Fordham Heights on Friday, June 16. Police said that the incident took place at 4.50 p.m. at 2386 Ryer Avenue, where the victim was shot once in the knee. They said the victim was transported by EMS to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition, and the perpetrators fled on foot southbound on Ryer Avenue.



The NYPD said the second incident occurred on Friday, May 26, at around 5 p.m. when two people broke into 150 East 210th Street (a doctor's office) through a second-floor window. Once inside, they said the two stole around \$300 in cash and there was also damage done to the first-floor window and second-floor doorframe. Police said no injuries were reported.

The NYPD said the third incident occurred on Friday, May 26, at around 6 p.m., when a person broke the rear, glass window at a doctor's office located at 3330 Bainbridge Avenue. They said nothing was taken and no injuries were reported. They said the property destroyed/damaged was estimated to be around \$250.

The two people sought are described as male, both with medium complexions, and are estimated to be between 20 and 30 years of age. The surveillance photos of the men were obtained from the location of the first incident.


**Norwood: Two Thieves
Sought in Burglary Pattern**

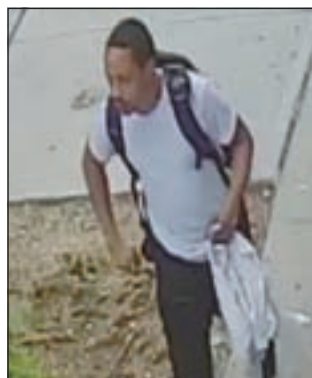
The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating the people seen in the accompanying photos above who police say are sought in connection with a local burglary pattern identified across Norwood in May. Police said the first incident took place on Friday, May 26, at around 4 p.m. when a person broke into 3322 Bainbridge Avenue (a doctor's office) through the first-floor, rear window. They said once inside, the person removed a laptop valued at around \$1,000 before fleeing on foot to parts unknown. They said no injuries were reported.


**Kingsbridge Heights:
Man Robs Teen**

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they say is sought in connection to a robbery that occurred in Kingsbridge Heights. Police said that on Monday, June 5, at approximately 3.18 p.m., the victim, an 18-year-old woman, was walking in the vicinity of East Kingsbridge Road and Grand Concourse when she was approached by a person unknown to her.

The man stole the victim's

necklace and was last seen heading westbound on East 192nd Street on foot, police said. They added that the victim was not injured. The thief was described as male, has a medium complexion, a medium build, a black beard, and is around 5 feet, 9 inches tall. Police said he was last seen wearing a white t-shirt, gray jeans, and black and white sneakers, and was carrying a black, hooded sweatshirt and a black mask. They said he also has full length sleeve tattoos on both arms.


Norwood Slashing

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating the man seen in the accompanying photo above who police say is sought in connection with an assault that occurred in Norwood. Police said that on that on Thursday, June 22, at around 1.35 p.m., a 30-year-old male victim was engaged in a verbal dispute with a second man in front of 9 East Mosholu Parkway North.

They said as the dispute escalated, the second man displayed a sharp object and slashed the victim about the left side of the face with it. They said the assailant fled the lo-

cation eastbound on foot, EMS responded and transported the aided victim to NYC Health and Hospitals/North Central Bronx in stable condition.


**Kingsbridge: Man Sought
following Robbery of
14-Year-Old Girl**

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying and locating the individual seen in the accompanying photo above who department officials say is sought in connection to a robbery that occurred in Kingsbridge.

Police said that on Sunday, June 25, at around 3.40 p.m., a 14-year-old female victim was approached from behind by a person unknown to her in front of 3900 Waldo Avenue. The person grabbed her neck and mouth and stole a gold chain from around her neck. The victim sustained a minor injury to the neck but refused medical attention.

**Fordham Heights Man 49
Arrested for Assault**

Police have launched a murder investigation following the killing of a 62-year-old man in

Fordham Heights in May. One 49-year-old man has been arrested on assault and other charges in connection with the incident. According to the NYPD, on Sunday, May 21, at 8.50 p.m., officers responded to a 911 call regarding a man who had been assaulted at 2200 Grand Concourse.

Upon arrival, they said an officer observed a 62-year-old man with trauma to the head. They said EMS responded and transported the victim to BronxCare Health System, where he was pronounced deceased on Monday, June 5. The deceased has been identified as Jose Morillo of Valentine Avenue in Mt. Hope.

Pursuant to an ongoing investigation, police said Arkym Davis, 49, of Grand Concourse in Fordham Heights, was arrested in connection with the incident. They said he was charged on May 27 at 12.55 p.m. in the 46th Precinct with assault, aggravated harassment, and harassment.

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

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

CORRECTIONS

In the *Norwood News* edition dated June 15-June 28, 2023, in the News Briefs section on page 7, under the subheading "Coverage 4 All," it was incorrectly reported that the bill (S2237A) which aimed to make quality and affordable health-care accessible to all New Yorkers regardless of their immigration status, had passed both houses of the legislature. In fact, it only passed the State senate. We apologize for this error.

NYBG



**NOW EXTENDED
THRU OCT 22!**

***...things come to thrive...
in the shedding...in the molting...***

by Ebony G. Patterson

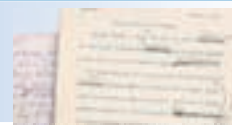
LuEsther T. Mertz
Charitable Trust



Agnes Gund

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



Bronx CB7 Community Coordinator

Bronx Community Board 7 is hiring a community coordinator. For details, visit www.nyc.gov/jobs and search for job ID number 587540.

Laborers Recruit Apprentices

The Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee for Laborers Local Union 731 will conduct a recruitment drive from July 10 through July 21, 2023, for 50 skilled construction craft laborer apprentices. Applications will be available online at <https://recruitment.local731.com> from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., Monday through Friday, during the recruitment period. **This is a limited-application recruitment. Only 500 applications will be distributed, on a first come, first-served basis. The recruitment will be offered online for 10 business days or until 500 applications have been issued, whichever comes first.** Applicants who do not have access to a computer should visit their local library or their nearest Department of Labor Career Center. Visit dol.ny.gov/career-centers. For questions, contact Local 731 on (718) 752-9860.

Environmental Monday Park Clean-Ups

Friends of Mosholu Parkland (FOMP) remind residents that each Monday is an opportunity to get some fresh air and help with local park clean-ups. The group has gloves, bags, and grabbers and meets at 10 a.m. at the "Welcome Garden" at Bainbridge Avenue and East Mosholu Parkway North corner. They start promptly and end at

11:45 a.m. and say they love to see new faces.

Help Save Fordham Evangelical Lutheran Church

Representatives for Fordham Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at 2430 Walton Avenue in Fordham Heights, are appealing to the public to help save the church, described as a cornerstone of the community for more than 105 years, and which is set to close for financial reasons. Representatives said the church provides services like *Head Start*, *Our Sister's Place*, various after school programs, *!Vamos Unidos!*, *Picture The Homeless*, *Common Wise*, *FIERCE*, AA, NA, *Everyday is A Miracle*, a food pantry, free ESL classes, and more.

They said that on Sunday March 26, representatives from The Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America came to the church to witness a vote on a resolution to close the church, and that the congregation voted overwhelmingly to keep it open. They allege that on Sunday, June 11, without warning, the congregation was locked out of the church, and that they have been asking to meet with church leadership ever since to implement plans to become financially stable. [Norwood News has contacted the City's church leadership for comment.]

The group is asking for the public's support, as they allege Lutheran churches that service congregations of color are not receiving help or support. They question why such churches are closing in low-income areas. Church Council Member Patricia Jewett can be reached on (917) 930-2493.

Affordable Housing Lotteries

NYC Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) launched an affordable housing lottery for units at 739 East Gun Hill Road in the Williamsbridge section of The Bronx, with a deadline of Aug. 16, 2023. HPD also launched a lottery for units at 2279 Barker Avenue, in the Allerton section of The Bronx, with a deadline of Aug. 9, 2023. Visit www.norwood-news.org, and search for "affordable housing" for more information.

An affordable housing lottery help-line 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.

Survey re Parked Overnight Trucks

To help City officials address the issue of overnight parked trucks in Bronx Community District 7 and in other districts, which residents have been complaining about for several months, residents are invited to complete a survey on the issue, and ask others to do the same. The link is as follows: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/1267646deb5419284ab98c766ad6d9a>

Disability Pride Month

A disability pride month event will be held Thursday, July 6, at 11 a.m. hosted by The Office of the Bronx Borough President and partners at Bronx Borough Hall, 851 Grand Concourse. RSVP to qrco.de/bronxdisabilitypride. The event location is accessible.

Alternate Side Parking Suspended

Alternate Side Parking is suspended Wednesday, June 28, to Friday, June 30, for Idul-Adha (Eid Al-Adha).

Proposed Changes to MTA Fares & Tolls

Residents can provide feedback online on proposed changes to MTA fares and tolls. Visit <https://contact.mta.info/s/forms/public-hearing-form?Id=a0g8z0000001yUA> to submit comments. A series of in-person hearings concluded on June 26.

Bronx Summer Clean-up 2023 Series

The Office of the Bronx Borough President and partners are organizing a Bronx Summer Clean-up 2023 series to coincide with Hip Hop's 50th Anniversary. Volunteers receive free Yankee tickets subject to certain conditions. The first scheduled clean-up date is Friday, July 21, in Kingsbridge Heights [location to be confirmed] from 10 a.m. to noon.

Metro North Williamsbridge Station Closed for Repairs

Metro North Williamsbridge station is closed for repairs until July 12.

Farmers Market

NYC Health + Hospitals/NCB provides the community with fresh fruits and vegetables, along with cooking demonstrations and more from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each Wednesday at Jerome Avenue and Mosholu Parkway North. More healthy eating tips can be found at <https://bit.ly/3A9vt7J>.

Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY

EVENTS

State Sen. Jamaal Bailey (S.D. 36) and partners will host his **Annual Summer Barbecue** on Saturday, July 22, at 959 East 233rd Street from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. RSVP by calling (718) 547 8854 or email senatorjbailey@nysenate.gov by Friday, July 14. For tabling opportunities, email by Friday, July 7, jparson@nysenate.gov.

MUSIC

On Friday, June 30, at 6 p.m., the **Odane Whilby Band** will perform pop hits from the '50s to the '80s at Pelham Bay Park (Middleton Road and Stadium Avenue) in conjunction with NYC Parks, NYS Council on the Arts, NYC Cultural Affairs and Councilwoman Marjorie Velázquez.

Join Woodlawn, legendary saxophonist and clarinetist Victor Goines, and his ensemble of

creative musicians at the premiere of **The Woodlawn Suite** at the Dizzy's Club at Jazz at Lincoln Center in Manhattan's Time Warner Center on Thursday, July 13, at 6 p.m. Experience the sounds of Madam C. J. Walker strutting down the street, Dorothy Parker raising a glass, and Cicely Tyson whispering to Miles Davis on *The Woodlawn Suite*, Victor's 13 piece-movement tribute celebrating the lives of New Yorkers now at rest at the historic Woodlawn Cemetery.

Aside from the main event, passed hors d'oeuvres and a sit-down entrée with dessert will be served. An open bar will be available at this private fundraiser for the conservancy. For additional information, email mventrudo@woodlawn.org or call (718) 408-5624.

The **Hip Hop 50 Live** concert will take place in Yankee Stadium on Friday, Aug. 11, 2023, with Snoop Dog, Lil Wayne, Ice Cube and more. Tickets can be purchased at Livenation.com, Ticketmaster.com, and Axs.com.

ART

A free, 10-day **2023 Summer Art Week** takes place from July 10-21 at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, 3225 Reservoir Oval East in Norwood. NYC Parks is looking for youth interested in art for this 2-week art camp. Participants will need to fill out an application to apply. For questions, email ana.torres@

parks.nyc.gov or call (718) 543 8672.

The exhibit, **"Have a Heart: Friendship & Activism of Jesús Lebrón,"** curated by Dr. Steven Payne, director of the Bronx Historical Society, is currently on display at Fordham University's Quinn Library at the Lincoln Center and at NYPL Belmont branch. The exhibit celebrates Bronx-born Puerto Rican activist Jesús Lebrón and his central role in the struggles to attain LGBTQ+ rights, including marriage equality, as well as his friendship with fellow activist Brendan Fay.

MOVEMENT

New York City's public beaches opened on Saturday, May 27, and remain open through Sunday, September 10. NYC Parks reminds all beachgoers to be safe in and around the water this summer, and only swim when lifeguards are on duty, daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; swimming is unsafe and strictly prohibited at all other times. NYC Parks outdoor pools will open on Wednesday, June 29.

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 since April 2023. 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.



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others achieve
stability

Fight

poverty and
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Register to
volunteer today:



Juneteenth Celebration Held in Williamsbridge Oval Park

By MIRIAM QUIÑONES

A Juneteenth celebration hosted by the social justice committee of Bronx Community Charter School in Norwood was held at the Williamsbridge Oval park on Monday, June 19. The school, located at 3170 Webster Avenue in Norwood, first launched what they intend to be an annual celebration last year. Held from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., the event included musical performances and reflections on the meaning of the holiday.

All photos by Miriam Quiñones



A LITTLE GIRL seats at the reading area on top of a beanbag to read a book during the second annual Juneteenth celebration at the Williamsbridge Oval park in Norwood hosted by the social justice committee of Bronx Community Charter School on Monday, June 19, 2023.



CHILDREN MAKE PAPER butterfly tributes for people who have passed away during the second annual Juneteenth celebration hosted by the social justice committee of Bronx Community Charter School, located in Norwood, at the Williamsbridge Oval park on Monday, June 19, 2023.



A 7TH GRADER, CAMRIN, plays the drums during the second annual Juneteenth celebration hosted by the social justice committee of Bronx Community Charter School, located in Norwood, at the Williamsbridge Oval park on Monday, June 19, 2023.



THE SECOND ANNUAL Juneteenth celebration hosted by the social justice committee of Bronx Community Charter School, located in Norwood, took place at the Williamsbridge Oval park on Monday, June 19, 2023.



DAWN CAMPBELL, A special education teacher sang a few songs during the second annual Juneteenth celebration hosted by the social justice committee of Bronx Community Charter School, located in Norwood, at the Williamsbridge Oval park on Monday, June 19, 2023.

Norwood: Motorcycle Rider Injured

By DAVID GREENE

A 23-year-old motorcycle driver remains in serious condition and his 23-year-old female passenger was in stable condition after an early morning collision at Jerome Avenue and Bainbridge Avenue. Police

say the crash took place at 7:17 a.m. on Monday, June 26, after a 31-year-old man driving a 2003 Toyota attempted to make a U-turn and collided with the motorcycle that was traveling southbound at the time of the collision. Both victims were transported to St. Barnabas Hospital. Police officials reported no arrests as of Monday.

torcycle that was traveling southbound at the time of the collision. Both victims were transported to St. Barnabas Hospital. Police officials reported no arrests as of Monday.

Nick's Garden Coffee Shop

Serving the Community for over 50 Years

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Nick's Garden Coffee Shop has been a pillar in the community for over 50 years, serving the neighborhood its favorite foods from generation to generation. Through the decades, its excellent food and customer service have always remained consistently great.

Nick's Garden Coffee Shop has been a family business since it originally opened a half century ago. It is currently run by Eva Sophilas and her husband but has been passed down from Eva's mom after it was originally opened by Eva's grandfather. This makes Nick's Garden Coffee Shop much more than just a business to Eva.

"Everything I had growing up was because of this place," said Eva. "It's really special to me and I hope to continue that going forward."

The family's long history in the neighborhood has allowed them to forge relationships with customers that go beyond just food. Many of their customers stop by after visiting the Botanical Gardens and always make sure to pick up their favorite items from Nick's Garden Coffee Shop.

"I like the community; everyone here is like family," said Eva. "I love the people that come in and I love to interact with them."

The most popular item on the menu is their eggs benedict according to Eva. Breakfast is served all day long but there are also dinner specials available like roast beef and salmon. Nick's Garden Coffee Shop also sells burgers, wraps, and club sandwiches which are all high-quality. While the food is top tier, the service is what makes them unique.

"We care a little extra about the people that come in here," said Eva. "We interact with them and make them feel at home."

Nick's Garden Coffee Shop is open 7 days a week and is located at 2955 Webster Avenue. Come in today for breakfast or lunch to find some of the best food in the neighborhood. Whether it's your first time stopping by or you've been coming to Nick's Garden Coffee Shop for years, you'll feel right at home!



Photos by Ariel Pacheco

(ABOVE) EVA SOPHILAS, owner of Nick's Garden Coffee Shop, stands alongside her husband inside the business on June 19, 2023.

(INSERT) NICK'S GARDEN Coffee Shop storefront on June 19, 2023

Awards Presented at Last BMCA Meeting before Summer Break

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Joy Syeeda Lafontaine and Police Officer Stephen Echevarria were each presented with awards for their community service during the final meeting before the summer break of Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BMCA) on June 7, the same day that air quality in New York City was affected by Canadian wildfires.

Lafontaine, a committee member of BMCA, was awarded the Mary Vallati Memorial Award in recognition of her exceptional volunteer service over the year, while Echevarria, community affairs officer at the 52nd Precinct, was awarded the Jack Kelly Memorial Award in recognition of his outstanding service to the community.

Delivery package theft was discussed with BMCA president Barbara Stronczner saying she had been advised that a resident with a disability living at 326 East 201st Street had had packages stolen from in front of her door, and that across the street at a Co-op on 325 East 201st street, a man was photographed stealing mats from the hallway. "I mean, it's crazy, just crazy," Stronczner said. There were some jokes made later about people literally taking the word "welcome" too far.

Stronczner added that the issue had been reported to police. "He came with a shopping cart and just loaded the shopping cart," she said. Police Officers Boland and Arias from the 52nd Precinct, who were present at the meeting and who deal with 311 complaints, confirmed they received an email about the issue and were following up. It was mentioned that a mirror had previously been stolen also.

The two Sector C officers, Boland, who said he's been with the Precinct for nine years, and Arias, who said she's been there for seven and a half years, then gave an overview of the seven major crimes in the precinct for the prior 28-day period compared to 2022. They said there were seven robberies, up from five from the previous year, 11 felony assaults, up from seven the previous year, three burglaries, down from four last year, 13 grand larceny incidents up from nine last year, and three grand larceny auto incidents, down from four last year.

Boland said that e-bike theft fell under grand larceny and scooter theft fell under grand



Photo by Síle Moloney

(L-R) JOY SYEEDA Lafontaine, Barbara Stronczner, and Police Officer Stephen Echevarria are pictured at the final meeting of Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BMCA) in Bedford Park on June 7, 2023.

larceny auto. "You guys see them every day, I'm sure. They get stolen at a high [rate], so that's why those numbers are up a little bit," he said. Boland said it was important to log calls with 311 as any unanswered calls over an hour are now being flagged to a specific Police Chief Chell who was now only monitoring 311 calls. Boland said that anything that was flagged as "outside" in a complaint like barbecues or noise got flagged and "body cameras go on right away" so that residents can see what the officers are doing to address the situation. He said the cameras get turned off after enforcement.

The officers explained that they also now have an app on their phones where they can read off all 311 jobs. "Usually, we can call if you guys leave a number to ask what the problem is," Boland said. "Right now, we get a notification on our phone. There's a police vehicle that is only assigned to 311s. They don't do 911s and within an hour, it's supposed to be answered." He also clarified, "My rule of thumb is if you need 911, you always call 911."

Boland explained that both he and Arias worked every day except Sunday and Monday and handle mostly 311 problems. They encouraged residents to both call 311 and text them and said they will be there within 15 minutes. Boland's number is (929) 287 7212 and Arias's is (917)

374 0459.

Local resident Sirio Guerino asked that police monitor for barbecues outside the Orthodox Indian Church in Bedford Park on Decatur Avenue, as he said they were disturbing the church members. Boland went on to explain that on Fridays and Saturdays, the NCO unit do what they call a caravan. "We have about five police cars, and we go around the whole precinct and all we do is answer 311 calls and write summonses," he said, adding that the summonses were for things like loudspeakers, drinking, public noise, and taking scooters off the streets.

Stronczner mentioned about a noisy car wash machine around Botanical Square North and Boland and Arias agreed to follow-up. They mentioned that Harris Field was a hot topic and that they had held a meeting with Councilman Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11) and were working with the Parks' department to figure out ways to address the noise and garbage there, especially on weekends.

A resident asked if police could still address issues happening inside residential buildings now that cannabis was legal. Boland said residents still can't smoke in the public areas of buildings and this includes cannabis. He added loitering was also not permitted. He encouraged residents to call 311 in case of any concerns. Residents were also reminded that fire-

works are still also illegal and shared fliers that can be posted inside buildings to inform people of this.

A member of the Botanical Square Tenant Association mentioned that the group had had a good history with the 52nd Precinct. He was encouraged to hear about the Build the Block meetings and that they rotated around the precinct sectors each quarter. Boland explained that such meetings with residents were used for when they don't get direct calls from residents in order to know what community complaints to address.

Stronczner encouraged everyone to vote in the primary elections on June 27. "I will never tell you who to vote for but please go out [and vote], because if we need our elected officials or need something for the community, the first thing they're going to look at are all those poll rolls to see how many in Bedford Park actually turned out to vote," she said. "So please, if you need something, you've got to vote." She added, "I often say this because we share our council people with other neighborhoods like Riverdale, Wakefield, Woodlawn, and if we want attention here, we've got a vote."

Lafontaine said the annual 52nd Precinct Community Council fellowship breakfast would be held on Oct. 6. at Monroe College on Fordham and Jerome, and tickets were selling at \$20. Representatives from the

offices of various elected officials later gave updates regarding local events and legislative matters. The contact email for George Cooke from District 15 City Councilman Oswald Feliz's office was confirmed as GCooke@council.nyc.gov.

Evan from Assemblyman John Zaccaro Jr's office confirmed the email for the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM), if residents suspected smoke shop violations or had complaints to lodge, as complaints@ocm.ny.gov. He said the assemblyman was working on legislation around illegal cannabis shops.

"There's been a lot of confusion, and so he's really trying to make that easier for everybody to understand, specifically how it relates to the distance that a smoke shop could be from a school or a place of worship," he said, adding that it wasn't always clear how the required minimum 500 feet was being measured.

Brent from Dinowitz's office mentioned that the councilman had sponsored a number of bills providing support to students with disabilities, supporting the city's cultural institutions in the aftermath COVID-19, promoting digital literacy for older adults, and expanding employment opportunities for young people.

He also addressed the issue of catch basins needing cleaning that had been discussed at the previous BMCA meeting and requested residents to let their office know the priority locations. He also said the issue of "columns" along Mosholu Parkway was being addressed with Parks.

Marisa Canapi's young son, Xavier, in his first time to speak in public, later talked about how he and his school friends had collected various signs that had been hammered to trees in the local area, advertising cash for diabetic test strips. The police explained that it was thought that the strips are given by Medicaid to elderly people who get them for free, and that if they don't need them, people put signs up to sell them.

Xavier said, in part, "What happened was we saw all these signs and we wanted to save the trees, because it's not nice for these people who keep putting these on the trees."

The next BMCA meeting will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 6.

Sunshine Photo Studio

Capturing Your Best Moments

Photo courtesy of Sunshine Photo Studio
NELSON PEREZ, OWNER of Sunshine Photo Studio



By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Sunshine Photo Studio has been capturing the community's best moments on camera since 2007 when it first opened in the neighborhood. Since then, Sunshine Photo Studio has photographed countless events, weddings, sweet sixteens, graduations, and numerous other special occasions.

Sunshine Photo Studio is owned by Nelson Perez, who learned the art of photography through his uncle when he was younger. After working with his uncle for a decade and gaining valuable experience, Nelson took the lessons he learned and decided to open up Sunshine Photo Studio.

"I love it, I love photography," said Nelson "I like taking pictures of people and giving the people of the area a service that they need and want."

Sunshine Photo Studio is available to take photos both inside and outside of the studio. Their attention to detail brings pictures to life and their customer service sets them apart. They have multiple backgrounds that are fitting for just about any occasion and have full studio capabilities.

"Our service is what keeps people coming back, and helping people is one of my favorite parts," said Nelson. "I love when I see people return because it means we did a good job."

Nelson has lived in The Bronx his entire life and that has helped him forge a relationship with the community. He has a deep understanding of the people in the area, and he uses photography as a means of giving back. The familiarity with the neighborhood makes every photograph that much more meaningful.

"It feels like I'm giving back to the community with my photography," said Nelson. "We keep our prices low, and we try to make things as easy as possible for people."

Sunshine Photo Studio is open Monday-Saturday and is located at 355 East 204th Street. Come in today to capture your best look or have your special occasion photographed by a professional. The photos will last a lifetime!



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Public and Community Meetings

The next **52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meeting will take place on Thursday, June 29, at 7 p.m. at Glad Tidings Assembly of God Church, 2 Van Cortlandt Ave E, Bronx, NY 10468. Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email distribution list.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7** general board meeting will be held in September. 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 Thursday, June 29, at 7 p.m. Contact BX08@cb.nyc.gov for more details and to be added to the distribution list.

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. The next meeting will be held in September. For details, please contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

Bronx CB7 Remains Largely Unchanged

By SÍLE MOLONEY

The composition of Bronx Community Board 7 remained largely unchanged after annual elections for the executive body positions were held during the board's general meeting on Wednesday, June 28, at Lehman College in Bedford Park.

There were 25 members in attendance on the night, and after the votes were tallied, Yajaira Arias remained as chair, Barbara Stronczer remained as first vice chair, Chad Royer remained as 2nd vice chair, Jean Hill was elected as third vice chair, Ruth Caraballo remained as secretary and Edgar Ramos remained as member at large. Other candidates included Andrew Laoisa, Daisy Perry and Helene Jake Wilson.

Arias said it had been a privilege to be the board's chair for the previous eight months and added that she had enjoyed it very much. She said she spoke every day with Karla Cabrera Carrera, the district manager who she said was "great."

For her part, Hill said that as a

former board chair, a former housing chair and former treasurer, she believed financial information was the backbone of any organization. "What I want to do, and what I want to see is constant information being given out to all of the board members," she said.

"We should all know what our expenses are, what money we have, what money we get from the City, how our money is being spent, who we pay, you know, the salaries to; all of this is important," she said. Hill highlighted her various financial qualifications and added, "I'm firmly a community person. I fight for the community, and I fight for my board."

Arias thanked the board for supporting her and encouraged residents to attend meetings and hold elected officials accountable. "Thank you for listening to me and wanting to share this ongoing vision with me," she said. The board will meet exceptionally in July for board business and next *regular* meeting will be in September.



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Norwood Walks for Autism

(continued from page 1)

He added, "That's what we fight for. So, this would be the first year that we did it with the 52nd Precinct. We [previously] did it with the 43rd but with the 52nd Precinct, we were just overwhelmed with love and joy here, and we want to continue to do it in this neighborhood. Big shout out to my daughter, Courtney, and big shout out to anybody that represents @puzzlelife.voicepg2, helping us knock the stigma out of autism."

Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech, and nonverbal communication, according to the website Autism Speaks. Meanwhile, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), autism affects an estimated 1 in 36 children in the United States.

Deputy Inspector Jeremy Scheublin, commanding officer of the 52nd Precinct, addressed the crowd outside the stationhouse ahead of the walk, thanking those who helped organize it. "Martha, Ana, Tiwana and Pritima, thanks for your support and partnership here today," he said. "The 52nd Precinct Explorers are here today, our auxiliaries are here today, Inspector Dave Wong, can't say enough."

He continued, "Our youth coordination officers, our Community Affairs Officers Echevarria and Capo, Sgt. Jaramillo and Sgt. Adams, Lt. Lawyerr, my executive officer, Captain Asif Iqbal, the Police Benevolent Association for the food, NYPD Hispanic Society for your partnership, our DJ Officer Martin, Bronx Parks Commissioner Aponte, the 52nd Clergy Coalition, Sandra and Jeremy from Hunts Point, love you guys, always love to see you, and last but not least, Kyle and Liza and their beautiful family from Puzzle Life."

Scheublin added, "We're here today with them and our message is to the children and families of this community. If you have a family member or a child with autism or any family member with special needs, know that you are blessed."

The message from the men and women in blue in the 52nd Precinct is that we love you, we support you, and we'll walk with you today and let his community know that. Thank you all for coming and God bless you."

Kyle also addressed those gathered before the walk, saying, "Let's give a round of applause to all the warriors that's here today. It's you we're out here walking for today so give yourselves a round of applause. My wife and I started this movement for our beautiful princess, Kourtney, and all those [who] live this journey every day."

Kyle said the couple purposefully organized the walks in June because after April, Autism Awareness Month, people tended to forget that people continue to live with autism every day. "That's why we turn the lights right back on and all y'all play a big part in this," he said.

He continued, "I reached out to the inspector, to the 52nd Precinct and when I say, they welcomed us with open arms... What we're doing today is we're walking for inclusion, we're walking for acceptance, and what I want everybody to understand is don't get stuck on the word 'disability.'"

Kyle added, "Let's be encouraged by the word 'capability'. Clap for capability please! Our children have so much capability! Before we start walking, I want everybody to just follow me. We got this thing called, 'Walk in a place for Autism.' I want everybody to just do this [walks on the spot]. Take steps, just walk with me."

He encouraged everyone to complete the exercise once a day. "Use your hands, and let all those know that they're not alone," he said. "You guys are awesome! You guys are superstars every day! Let's walk for inclusion, let's walk for acceptance, let's do this!"

The route took the group from the precinct down Webster Avenue, around Botanical Square, and back again to the precinct for some festivities. Many wore blue or carried blue balloons while others carried signs denoting autism acceptance.

During the walk which Kyle livestreamed on Instagram, he gave a shout out to all those who live with Asperger's syndrome, a form of Autism Spectrum Disorder and developmental disorder. Young people with Asperger's Syndrome have a difficult time relating to others socially and their behavior and thinking patterns can be rigid and repetitive according to the Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Meanwhile, according to the CDC, Down syndrome is a condition in which a person has an extra chromosome. This changes how a baby's body and brain develop, which can cause both mental and physical challenges for the baby.

Along the route, we spoke to teacher Alyssa Harris from P168, located at 3050 Webster Avenue in Norwood. Asked if the event was an annual one, Harris said, "This is our first time participating as a school." Asked if there were other schools also participating, she said she



Photo by Síle Moloney

A WOMAN HOLDS an "Autism Strong" flag along the route of a walk around Botanical Square in Norwood to promote autism acceptance on Friday, June 16, 2023.

believed P168 was the only one. Asked how the collaboration came about, she said, "I believe the precinct reached out to us and asked if we would participate, and then we decided to come."

We asked what, if any, were the challenges in teaching students on the autism spectrum. "I would say one of the most rewarding things is understanding each student as an individual and working with their strengths," she said. "One of the things the speaker [Kyle] said was instead of focusing on the word 'disability,' focus on the word 'capability,' and that's something we focus on, is the abilities."

In summary, Harris added of the event, "It's great that we're doing this and I'm glad that we're able to participate and work with the 52nd precinct."

Back at the stationhouse, there was food, games, and some of children got to interact with the precinct's "K9." We spoke to one woman who was attending with her niece, Sydney, and asked for her thoughts on the day. "It's long overdue for something like this to take place," she said. "We live this every day. We just need to get everybody else to understand that people with disabilities exist and they're out there, and we need to be sure that we acknowledge them."

Also present on the day was Karla Cabrera Carrera, district manager of Bronx Community Board 7, and Chad Royer, chair of the veterans committee. Cabrera Carrera said the board were very happy to attend and participate. "We were very impressed by seeing all the kids and the big turnout and all the collaboration that happened to make this event a successful event," she said. "We look forward to participating next year and making it even a bigger and better event."

Royer agreed it was a great day. "As a father of a child with a disability, finding out that there was going to be an autism walk, I just had to be there," he said. "Things like this bring families together, brings constituents together so that the message can be heard. I, for one, can tell you that it hits different... where autism awareness is there in April, but what

about May 1st? I still have to deal with the issues of being a dad, of a father with a child with a disability."

He added, "Not everyone understands, not everyone is aware. Even when I have services in place, it's not always the easiest path to take. Sometimes, appointments get missed, services get cut. I can go on and on, but I just hope this opens the door for these conversations on a bigger platform where we can even advocate for our folks with a disability to have a voice."

Of Kyle, Royer said, "He and I walk similar paths: father, child with a disability, live in the Bronx, 62 of 62 [The Bronx ranks 62 out of 62 New York counties on a health index.], the list goes on. We hope, and I've been asking if we can do it again next year. I hope that's a yes across the board." Asked if he wanted to share his child's name, Royer said he would say "Angel" for social media purposes as he didn't want to share his real name.

We later asked the McCleans if there was one policy change or effort that could be made to help those with autism, what would it be. Kyle replied, "Inclusion, inclusion, like to invite our kids, you know?" Liza added, "Make them feel welcome, you know? Like they're part of us."



Photo by Síle Moloney

A YOUNG GIRL pats a K9 outside the 52nd Precinct in Norwood after a walk around Botanical Square in Norwood to promote autism acceptance was held on Friday, June 16, 2023.

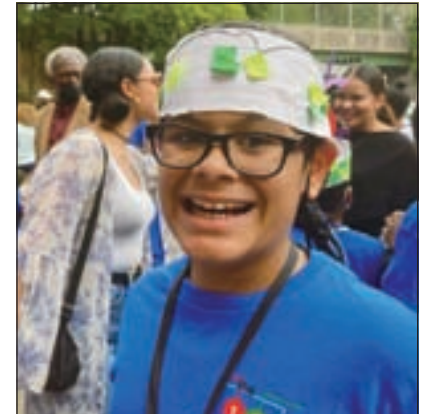


Photo by Síle Moloney

A YOUNG BOY enjoys the festivities at the 52nd Precinct after a walk around Botanical Square in Norwood to promote autism acceptance was held on Friday, June 16, 2023.

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