



NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 36, No 19 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • OCTOBER 12-25, 2023

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Photo by David Greene

SEVERAL SMALL BUSINESSES on Bainbridge Avenue between East 204th and East 205th Street are seen decimated after a fire ripped through the block in the early hours of Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023.

By **SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE**

After a third major commercial fire in a 14-year span ripped through a busy business strip of Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood in the early hours of Tuesday, Oct. 10, several small

business owners watched in shock as their livelihoods went up in smoke before their eyes and they are, once again, grappling to figure out a way forward.

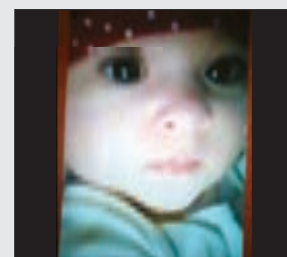
Twenty-five fire trucks, emergency vehicles, EMS per-

sonnel with waiting stretchers, police, news crews, and residents initially filled the section of the avenue stretching from Van Cortlandt Avenue as far as Mosholu Parkway North, and more took up East 204th Street as 106 firefighters

first tried to tackle the blaze which FDNY officials said they were alerted to 3.49 a.m.

They said the initial report was for a fire at 3117 Bainbridge Avenue, a one-story structure, which is the location of the

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NORWOOD NEWS

Vol. 36, No. 19

Norwood News is published
bi-weekly on Thursdays by
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Bronx, New York 10467
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Bronx Family Suffers 2nd Tragedy in 9 Months

By DAVID GREENE

For the second time in nine months, a Bronx family were once again planning a funeral after a one-year-old baby girl died after she was removed by emergency services, along with her parents, from the family's car in Syracuse, New York, having been found unresponsive, possibly from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Last month, on Sept. 25, according to Joshua Rolon, 36, brother to the late Angel "Pookie" Cuasant, 26, a longtime Norwood resident, Rolon's girlfriend, Delilah Rodriguez, 39, and the couple's one-year-old daughter, Delilah Annabelle, were evicted from their Syracuse home in upstate New York.

According to Cuasant and Rolon's mom, Rolon left The Bronx three years ago to work with Rolon's half-brother, Hector Santos, in Syracuse, making ceramic tiles and countertops. On Wednesday, Sept. 27, Rolon's young family was discovered unconscious inside their family car in the Eastwood section of the city.

According to the Syracuse Police Department (SPD), police and fire units were called to 117 Edtim Road in Syracuse at 9.04 a.m. for a report of "unconscious persons inside of a vehicle."

SPD said all three were transported to local hospitals. According to a Sept. 27 report by localsyr.com, officials were examining the young family's nearly 20-year-old vehicle and an autopsy will determine the infant's exact cause of death.

Bill Fitzpatrick, Onondaga County District Attorney, was quoted as saying, "Our preliminary forensic examination of the vehicle shows there was a problem with the catalytic converter, and that someone, we don't know who, possibly the father but we don't know for certain, made some attempts to seal that to prevent gasses from escaping."

A spokesperson for the SPD said of the incident, "Despite resuscitation efforts, the female toddler was pronounced dead at University Hospital." Both the SPD and Rolon's mom said he and his partner were initially reported to be in serious condition but said both have since recovered and have been released from the hospital.

As previously reported, on Dec. 18, 2022, Cuasant, Rolon's brother, died in a hail of gunfire inside a Fordham Manor bodega located at East 194th Street and Briggs Avenue. On April 5, police arrested Andres Latorre, 37, who was charged in connection with Cuasant's murder.

Norwood News asked the Bronx District Attorney's Office for details of how Latorre has pleaded in connection with his court case, which is ongoing. We did not receive an immediate response.

Cuasant, Santos, and Rolon's mother spoke to Norwood News on Saturday,



Photo courtesy of the family of Delilah Annabelle Rolon

AN UNDATED PHOTO posted to a GoFundMe page shows Delilah Annabelle Rolon, 1, who died on Wednesday, Sept. 27, 2023, after she and both her parents were found unresponsive in their family car, where they had been sleeping, after they were evicted from their home in Syracuse, N.Y. on Sept. 25, 2023. Both parents survived.

Sept. 30, from Syracuse on condition of anonymity due to the violent nature of Cuasant's death. Of the ongoing court case involving the latter's murder, she said she missed a recent court date in The Bronx as she had been in Syracuse at the time.

She said she understands the Bronx DA's office is attempting to strike a plea deal with Latorre. According to justice.gov, when the prosecution has a strong case, they may offer the defendant a plea deal to avoid trial [which can be both lengthy and traumatic for the victim's family to go through] and perhaps reduce the defendant's exposure to a more lengthy sentence.

A defendant may only plead guilty if they *have* committed the crime and admit to doing so in open court before the presiding judge. When they do, they also agree that they may be "sentenced" by the presiding judge, the only person authorized to impose a sentence.

As we reported at the time, during a prior court date on Cuasant's case, ten-

sions reportedly escalated between Cuasant's family and Latorre's family. Cuasant's mom alleged this resulted in some attendees being ejected from the courtroom. Norwood News followed up with court administration officials for comment on the alleged incident but did not receive an immediate response.

Of the latest tragedy to hit her family and of Rolon, his mom said, "He and Pookie were like twins... Ever since Pookie was killed, Joshua lost it completely." The mom continued, "He had a house. He had a car. He had a job. He had a baby. He had everything that he could think of, everything, and he started going backwards, regressing... until he lost everything."

The mom added, "They were evicted on Monday, but he never called me. He said he tried going to a shelter and because he didn't have the right paperwork, they said he had to wait for a three-day notice; they rejected him with the baby."

That allegation was immediately disputed by Justin Sayles from the Office of the Onondaga County Executive, which provides external support to residents, communities, and businesses of Onondaga County and, among other functions, educates, informs, and advises those who administer county services and those who receive them.

"That is not true," Sayles told Norwood News on Thursday, Oct. 5. "We heard that as well, and we actually went back and the shelter reviewed the footage for the entire timeframe. They never showed up," he said, referring to the young, displaced family.

Sayles continued, "We heard that from, I believe, the brother as well, and we were obviously very upset to have heard that. They reviewed the camera footage for the entire time, and they didn't show up."

He added, "They reached out, I believe, at around 1 a.m. that morning to call to say they were evicted and had no place to go, which is why they were immediately set up with a hotel room. We're still unsure as to why they didn't show up, but they did not show up to the shelter

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NORWOOD NEWS

Norwood News is Recruiting a Sales Executive

Norwood News, founded in 1988 and located at 3400 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467, is an award-winning, biweekly, print community newspaper and website which primarily serves the Bronx neighborhoods of Norwood, Bedford Park, Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights, Fordham Manor, University Heights, and Fordham Heights, and to a lesser extent, the wider Bronx. We are currently recruiting for a sales executive to join our growing team. The sales executive will work closely with the editor-in-chief, the designer of our print newspaper, the web designer, and the office manager by proactively selling ads for both our print publication and our website.

The right candidate should have two years previous sales experience, be highly organized, have excellent interpersonal skills, be motivated to respond promptly and attentively to our advertisers' inquiries, maintain a strong network of advertising relationships, have *some* technical skills, a knowledge of the Northwest Bronx and of wider citywide sales opportunities, good grammar and writing skills, and be able to work independently in a fast-paced environment for a busy nonprofit news outlet.

Responsibilities include proactively selling [ideally recurring] ads for both our print publication and website, carrying out all necessary due diligence on advertisers, contract preparation and coordination of signatures by advertisers on all ad contracts and insertion orders, completing and maintaining both electronic and hard copy logs of all ad sales contracts and insertion orders, preparing a biweekly ad schedule ahead of each print edition, which includes details of the ads running on each publication date, the ad specifications, details of each contract run date, etc., liaising with advertisers to fully understand their technical ad requirements and communicating these to the designer, obtaining sign-off from advertisers on any ad amendments and communicating this to the designer, proactively liaising with our office manager to ensure the timely issuance of invoices and assisting the office manager, when necessary, with chasing payment of outstanding invoices, coordinating and furnishing any necessary affidavits requested by advertisers in respect of ads, maintaining and growing a network of advertisers and maintaining an updated, competitive media kit, adding any new advertisers to the distribution list for receipt of hard copies of the newspaper, keeping all expense receipts and submitting expenses electronically via the requisite channels, ensuring advertorials received from partner organizations are proofed and accurate, completing all necessary online compliance and other training.

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- a basic knowledge of advertising law, particularly around legal notices and affidavits would be useful

The salary for this position is \$55,000 per annum plus 15% on sales commissions, paid quarterly, with full benefits. For details on how to apply, please send an email to Síle Moloney, *Norwood News* editor-in-chief, at smoloney@norwoodnews.org.

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week, we asked readers their thoughts on a proposal to include funding in the City budget to pay family members who don't wish to leave their kids at a daycare to care for young children directly. The proposal was made by Otoniel Feliz-Sambo, the father of one-year-old Nicholas Dominici, who tragically died after he was apparently fatally poisoned with fentanyl at Divino Niño Daycare Center in Kingsbridge Heights on Friday, Sept. 15, as reported.



"I think that's a brilliant idea! I think it's safer for the children and the family members [to] take care of the children anyway [but] they don't have the resources. I think it's safer because that fentanyl is likely in more daycares and we just don't know about it yet. So, I'm so glad that they were busted. It's bad enough trying to get rid of the crack era. Now, we have the fentanyl era."

Vanessa Goodwin,
Parkchester
(Photo by David Greene)



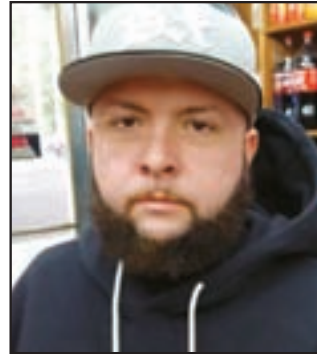
"I do believe that children need to be exposed to other children, so that they can [interact] with them, but I can see where it would be a lot safer, and your children aren't exposed. I'm in favor of education, more inspections and parents need to be involved, not just send them there. There was one that I took her [child] to. I'm in the process of pulling her out of daycare because they make them be quiet during lunch. They lost her; it's been horrible."

Breanne Dolan,
Parkchester
(Photo by David Greene)



"Well to be honest, right now, I'm scared of this situation happening here with the daycare. I'd like to stay home and take care of my daughter. Yeah, that's a good idea. I know the place, and I've seen them before around here. I never saw anything suspicious."

Marileny Munoz Salazar,
Kingsbridge
(Photo by David Greene)



"I'm totally in favor of that! I don't think they've been monitoring the daycares in a correct way, no, not at all. It's a tragic situation."

David Moran,
Kingsbridge Heights
(Photo by David Greene)



"It's a wonderful thing! I think it can help us a lot because now we don't know who to trust with our kids so it's a wonderful thing! I feel like if it could help; it would be better for your own family to take care of your kids because you can't trust people nowadays, like what happened there [where] they found fentanyl in a daycare; that's horrible. My wife and I are struggling with this now and we don't know what to do."

George Reyes,
Norwood
(Photo by David Greene)

Mosholu Fall Festival a Success Despite Rain

By MIRIAM QUIÑONES

The Annual Mosholu Fall Festival organized by Future of Mosholu Parkland (FOMP) was held on Saturday, Oct. 7, at P.S. 8's Mosholu Playground in Bedford Park, and despite the rain, the vibe was positive and there were lots of happy faces seen underneath many hooded rain macs.

Assemblyman George Alvarez (A.D. 78), who represents some or all of Bedford Park, Belmont, Fordham Manor, University Heights and Kingsbridge Heights, and City Council Member Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11), who represents much of the northwest Bronx, were among those in attendance on the day, along with the councilman's two boys, 52nd Precinct Community Affairs Officer Stephen Echevarria, and Jerry Landron of the 52nd Precinct Community Council.

Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) district manager Karla Cabrera Carrera, Andrew Laoisa, CB7 member, Albanian American Open Hand Association Inc. (AAOHA) founder Aleksander Nilaj and Paulin Prelidakaj, Brandon Montes and Mia Cvetovich of Norwood Community Library were also present, AAOHA donating boxes of fresh food on the day, including plums, lettuce, plantain, apples, oranges, pineapple, and



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

(L TO R) BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7 member Andrew Laoisa, Albanian American Open Hand Association Inc. (AAOHA) member, Paulin Prelidakaj, AAOHA founder, founder Aleksander Nilaj, Councilman Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11), his two sons, and Assemblyman George Alvarez (A.D. 78), attend the Mosholu Fall Festival held on Saturday, Oct. 7, 2023, in P.S. 8 playground in Bedford Park.

bags of onions. Everyone who came out went away with bags filled with free food.

Though the playground was flooded with puddles, Cabrera Carrera's daughter was seen having fun jumping over and into them. There was music and songs, including, "You Are My Sunshine" by guitarist,

Jackie Keveson, fun and games with mime artist, Catherine Gasta, community resources and information distributed, face-painting, storytelling, crafts, photo opportunities, and even a mummy contest.

In addition to Dinowitz and Alvarez, the event was sponsored or supported by State Sen. Gustavo Rivera

(S.D. 33), who represents much of the northwest Bronx, Urban Vegan Kitchen, Bent on Wellness, NYC Compost Project hosted by NYBG, also were in attendance, Bronx Community Board 7, NYC Parks, New York Public Library, Norwood Community Library, and P.S. 8.

FOMP executive director, Elizabeth Quaranta, described the event as sweet and impressive, "This is how you build community resiliency," she said. "Yes, we could have had a rain date but keeping optimistic, we persevered ahead," she added, before drawing attention to the need for funding for the refurbishment of Mosholu Playground.

"This is a tough community, and we are out there fighting for a new playground that is well way overdue," she said. "Awesome day yesterday and we had the best time dancing in the rain."

Quaranta thanked everyone who attended, the associations that donated, and all who had smiles on their faces, giving particular thanks to Nilaj. "In times when things are difficult, like it was that day, you see the value of people shine! Thank you, Aleksander Nilaj! It was such a humble experience to meet you. You make a difference in this world."

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



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Answering Community Questions About Depression

By CARLOS TEJEDA

Carlos Tejeda, community health specialist at Montefiore's Office of Community and Population Health interviews psychologist Dr. Brenda Boatswain, wellbeing manager at Montefiore Einstein and assistant professor at the Department of Family and Social Medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. They discuss questions from the community about depression.

What is depression?

According to the American Psychological Association, depression is the most common mental illness, and is caused by biological, psychological, and social reasons. Some social factors that can affect depression include racism, discrimination, and poverty, all of which disproportionately affect people

of color.

Depression can cause negative changes in brain function, physical and mental health. Depression affects how we think, feel, and act. The American Psychological Association notes that everyone feels sad at times, but depression is something more.

Some signs of depression include extreme sadness or despair that lasts more than a few days, not enjoying activities like before, sadness that interferes with daily life activities, and difficulty thinking, focusing, or making decisions.

They can also include physical symptoms such as pain, weight loss or gain that is unrelated to changes in eating habits, trouble falling asleep or sleeping too much, increased fatigue or lack of energy, feeling worthless or guilty, or recurring thoughts of death or suicide.

How does depression affect people?

Without treatment, a person with depression may engage in unhealthy behaviors like drug and alcohol misuse, gambling, risky sexual activity, self-harm, or harm to other people. Untreated depression can lead to many emotional and medical problems and difficulties at home, school, work, and

with the law.

Different groups may have different signs of depression. For example, depression might look different by gender identity or age.

How is depression treated?

Depression is diagnosed and treated by a licensed mental health provider or other medical professional. It is a treatable illness; don't "tough it out" or suffer in silence! Thankfully, there are many options for treating depression. If someone is experiencing signs of depression, they should speak with their doctor to discuss options, which include counseling or "talk therapy" with a licensed mental health provider.

During talk therapy, a person learns coping skills for negative thoughts and feelings so they can feel better. Medication is also an option in some cases. There are many types of medication used to treat the biological causes of depression. According to the National Institute for Mental Health, medications work by changing how the brain produces or uses certain chemicals involved in mood or stress.

A person may need to try several different antidepressants before finding the one that improves their symp-

toms. Antidepressants can take up to eight weeks to work, so it's important to give medication time to work before deciding if it's helping.

Another option is a combination of talk therapy and medication. If you think you're suffering from depression, please speak to your medical or mental health provider. The National Suicide and Crisis hotline 988 is free, available for everyone in over 200 languages.

If you, or someone you know, is a clear and present danger to themselves or others, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. If you, or someone you know, is in an emotional crisis, reach out and call or text message 988 anytime 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, anytime of year.

Start with a text, if a phone call is too scary. It could be a short text message that reads, "I need to talk" or "I feel alone." Remember, it is important to have open conversations about depression, to raise awareness, and to end stigma. There is hope, and help.

To request a community workshop on mental health, contact community-health@montefiore.org, and to learn more about mental health services at Montefiore, call (718) 430-2290 or visit <https://www.montefiore.org/psychiatry-services>.

Bronx Family Suffers 2nd Tragedy in 9 Months

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that was arranged for them."

Addressing the recent homeless explosion in Syracuse, Sayles said, "For some reason, recently there's chatter in our community that the shelters are full. Well, it doesn't mean we don't have other housing options for folks."

On Oct. 7, *Norwood News* informed Rolon's mom of Sayles' response. However, having also spoken with Rolon and Rodriguez, she alleges what they told her is what happened. "I've seen the papers," she said. "The cops gave me the papers. They went to the shelter over there, and the shelter told them, 'We don't have space. If you come back tomorrow, we will take you.'"

She alleged this happened before the trio were later found unresponsive in their vehicle. *Norwood News* asked to see copies of the papers. As of press date, we had not received them.

We also attempted to reach Rolon's landlady for comment. In a Sept. 30 media report by Syracuse.com, Serafina Pascarella who, we understand, represents Pascarella Development & Management, is quoted as saying in response to the

tragedy, "It's breaking my heart. I don't know what to say."

The outlet reported that Pascarella said Rolon had been living at 317 Elm Street in Syracuse since 2020, but hadn't been paying rent since January 2023. It was reported that Pascarella knew Rolon had a baby girl and wanted to help the family stay in the apartment, so she kept trying to work with him to pay what he could, but he didn't make any payments and told her he didn't have a job.

It was reported that Pascarella eventually told Rolon she was going to evict him and explained to him how to go to the county's department of social services to get emergency housing help, and that at eviction court, she stayed with him afterwards to show him which parts of the paperwork to take to DSS.

Pascarella reportedly said that if, at any point, Rolon had asked her for more time, if he had told her he was planning to live in his car with his family, she would have helped, but that during their last conversation before the incident, Rolon told her not



Photo courtesy of the family of Joshua Rolon

(L) JOSHUA ROLON IS seen in hospital after he was found unconscious in his car in Syracuse, NY on Sept. 27, 2023, along with his girlfriend and one-year-old daughter who later died, and in another photo prior to the incident.

to worry and that they were going to a shelter. She reportedly said she told Rolon she was sorry as he moved the last of his belongings into the family's car.

Of the baby girl's parents, Rolon and Rodriguez, FitzPatrick told NewsChannel 9, "I have directed that no criminal charges are going to be issued because they don't serve any function in this particular case. This father, if he survives, is going to have lost his spouse and his child. There is no reason for deterrence. I can assure you this man will never live in his car again in his lifetime."

Meanwhile, reflecting on her late granddaughter, who would have celebrated her second birthday on Sunday, Oct. 1, Rolon's mom told *Norwood News*,

"I had a dream about Pookie where he had a baby in his hands, and in the dream I'm telling him, 'Pookie, let me get the baby because you can't take care of the baby,' and he said, 'No, mommy, no. I was sent on a mission to take care of this baby.'" The mother added, "I had no idea that two weeks later it was going to be Joshua's baby."

A GoFundMe page has been set up to cover funeral expenses for Baby Delilah and has, so far, raised \$3,561. Those wishing to donate can visit the site at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/funeral-expenses-for-my-niece-delilah-rolon>.

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

*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.

NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY



DR. CLAUDIA GOLDIN

Bronx Science Alum Wins Nobel Prize

Bronx High School of Science Hall of Famer Dr. Claudia Goldin, Class of 1963, has been recognized with the Nobel prize in economics, as confirmed by Bronx Science Alumni Foundation on Oct. 9. “A trailblazer throughout her career, Goldin is currently the Henry Lee professor of economics at Harvard University, and the first woman to be offered tenure in Harvard’s Economics department (1989),” the alumni said.

The Nobel Memorial Prize in Eco-

nomics Sciences awarded Goldin’s research into the world’s understanding of gender gaps in labor force participation and earnings. Alumni said Goldin is only the third woman to win the Nobel prize in economics and the first to be recognized as an individual, not as part of a group. They said she is the ninth Bronx Science alum to win the Nobel prize and the first to do so in economics. For more on Goldin’s accomplishments, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/CGoldinNobelPrizeNYTimes>.

Torres Calls for Santos to Resign (Again)

Democratic Congressman Ritchie Torres (NY-15), who represents a large section of The Bronx, issued a statement on Oct. 10 following news of a 23-count superseding indictment filed in federal court in New York against Rep. George Santos (NY-03), who represents parts of Long Island, calling, once again, on the latter to resign.

Torres said the charges only further expose Santos for who, in his view, the public already know he is, “a pathological liar, serial fraudster, and a habitual cheat who should have resigned from office months ago.” Torres said Santos had no place serving in Washington D.C.

“Congress must expel him immediately and pass the SANTOS Act to send a powerful message to anyone who seeks to disgrace our institution, as he

has, that these are serious crimes for which there should be severe consequences, for him and for anyone who willingly abuses the trust of those we are privileged to serve,” Torres said.

The “Stopping Another Non-Truthful Office Seeker Act” or “SANTOS Act,” if passed, would amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 and require any candidate for Congress to file additional information about their educational background, military service, and employment history. It was introduced by Torres and Rep. Dan Goldman (NY-10) in January of this year. A candidate who knowingly provides false information would be punished with a \$100,000 fine, one year in prison, or both. Santos denies any wrongdoing.

Spotted Lantern Flies Everywhere

At least one Bronx resident, who declined to be identified, has complained about the impact of spotted lantern flies on the trees lining Moshulu Parkway in Bedford Park and elsewhere. Norwood News contacted NYC Parks’ department to ask if anything was being done to address the situation, given the bugs have been seen all over the City. A spokesperson informed us that New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets was currently “taking the lead” on lanternflies across the State and asked us to reach out to them for additional information, which we did.

We did not receive an immediate response and are following up. The Parks’ department advised that New Yorkers can find more information on spotted lantern flies on their website: nyc.gov/parks/slf.

Labor Leader Honored in Garden-Naming Ceremony

Dr. Philip O. Ozuah, president and CEO of Montefiore Medicine, has honored 1199 SEIU president George Gresham by naming an employee garden after the labor leader, praising him for being “relentless in his advocacy on behalf of hardworking healthcare workers.” The garden-naming was held on Thursday, Oct. 5, at Montefiore’s Moses campus located at 111 East 210th Street in Norwood.



(L TO R) JERRY FELICIEA, JR., endoscopy technician and 1199 member, Dr. Philip O. Ozuah, president and CEO of Montefiore Medicine, and 1199 SEIU president George Gresham on Oct. 5, 2023, in Norwood, The Bronx

Bainbridge Burns (Again)

(continued from page 1)

popular Hillside Meat Market, located between East 205th and East 206th Street.

Adjacent businesses, Bainbridge Bakery, Curry & Kebab, La Familia Market (a Mexican deli), Shahjalal Grocery & Variety, Mz Mexicana Grocery, and 7S Fish Market, along with Hillside Meat Market were all decimated in the fire. Firefighters were seen cutting through a metal gate to access the CVS pharmacy overnight while tackling the blaze to reveal a smoke-filled interior. It has been closed since.

CVS advises customers that they can find an alternative CVS pharmacy on their store locator via Google, and that if they’re experiencing a medical emergency, they should dial 911. Jenny, a resident since 1972 of 3150 Rochambeau Avenue, located behind the fire scene, where firefighters were also tackling the flames from the rear, told *Norwood News* later on Tuesday morning, “All my medication goes there [CVS] so

I was worried.”

She added, “What woke me up was the helicopters. Then I heard all the firetrucks and then the cops came around the corner and they started knocking on everybody’s door because the entire hallway [3150 Rochambeau Avenue] was engulfed with smoke.”

When we spoke to other residents of the same building as the fire was still burning, none recalled hearing a fire alarm go off. Asked if there were many elderly people in the building, one young resident, who declined to be identified, said, “Yeah, a lot,” adding that everyone was helping their neighbors evacuate.

An 18-year female resident of the same building, waiting in the dark with some small children, said neighbors alerted her. “I just woke my parents up, my husband, and my children and I came out,” she said. “All my neighbors are saying it’s like three times it’s happening in this area – the CVS Pharmacy, the restaurant.” The resident said they didn’t have

to evacuate. They just did so voluntarily.

Fran Hoffman, another longtime resident of the building, tearfully recalled, later that morning, attempting to help her cancer-stricken mother, down the stairs, since they weren’t allowed use the elevator.

Other residents, many wearing face masks, who live on the opposite side of Bainbridge Avenue to where the fire was burning filmed and watched in shock, as pet dogs were seen barking in panic as smoke filled the air.

Randy Williams of Bainbridge Avenue said in part, “The fire didn’t wake me. It was the noise that jolted me because it was a sound that you normally don’t hear and I thought it was a car hitting another car, because usually sometimes that happens.”

He added, in part, “All of a sudden, the smoke came, and a piece of the roof popped up in the air, smoke came out, and right after that, flames started coming, so I immediately called 911. Thank God nobody got hurt and it didn’t spread worse than it did.”

Williams continued, “CVS lost half of their merchandise because their service door, where they keep their garbage and cardboard, went up in flames and it damaged half of their pharmacy in the back.

One firefighter was brought to North Central Bronx hospital, FDNY Battalion Chief John Sarrocco later confirmed. According to FDNY, the fire escalated to a 3-alarm emergency at 4.14 a.m., necessitating a total of 33 units, comprising 138 fire fighters and EMS personnel, but as it blazed, a total of 39 units responded in the end to make it a 4-alarm fire, comprising 168 firefighters and EMS personnel. FDNY said the fire was finally brought under control five hours later at 8.50 a.m.

Sarrocco said, “On arrival, units found heavy fire throughout the structure. We started an interior attack. Unfortunately, due to structural stability concerns, we had to pull our units out and did a tower ladder operation.”

He continued, “What happens in a fire like this is the space between the top of the ceiling and the roof system

called the cockloft area... when the fire gets into that area it spreads exponentially throughout the building.” Sarrocco said the cause of the fire is still under investigation.

Choudhury Sfaul said one of his friends, Mahmoud Gujja, is the owner of the Halal restaurant. “My friend is ok,” he said. “He’s crying but he’s with his wife and his two daughters.”

As the fire burned, we spoke to the manager of Hillside Meat Market, Jimmy Cronin, who said he and his boss’s son ran the business together. He said he didn’t live in the building and appeared to be obviously stunned at the scene.

“No, no, everybody’s out,” he said, when asked if any of his colleagues or employees had been affected. “The only place someone might be is the CVS. I know they work overnight there, so maybe someone might have been there. I don’t know,” he added. The CVS manager confirmed the next day sometimes employees work overnight on Wednesdays.

Cronin continued, “This is the second fire we’ve had on this block. The last one was

(continued on page 15)



Letters To The Editor

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

Response to Hamas Attack

In response to the statement by Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) to the Hamas attacks on Israel on Saturday, Oct. 7, I, too, oppose all acts of terrorism and violence but I am confused... He states that Israel should respond without regard to proportionality. What does that mean? Israel has a right to nuke Gaza, continue to murder innocents, take away what little rights and freedoms the Palestinians have, steal more land and water?

Bibi [Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel] is always looking for ways to steal more land and water from the Palestinians for the settlers.

I wouldn't be surprised if he started this as a justification to intensify the already savage and barbaric actions of the apartheid / Jim Crow State of Israel.

Palestinians in occupied territory CANNOT move freely. They die waiting to get to the hospital. They spend years, if not their whole lives, separated from relatives who live a few

minutes away. They get locked up as children with no chance of getting out. They are denied basic services of electricity, water, and heat. These are only a smattering of the horrors. The list goes on and on...

Does the assemblyman not know what life is like for them? Has he ever set foot in Gaza or the increasingly shrinking areas of the West Bank that settlers haven't already stolen? Has he ever spoken to a person living there? Does he think they're lying?

If he defends the State of Israel in what it currently does and what it's about to unleash, he is either ignorant or has absolutely no soul and no heart. Which is it? Actually, I know it's neither; he doesn't care because they are his major donors.

For all his constituents who *aren't* Zionists, does he represent us, too? I don't want my tax dollars to be used to support the crimes of Israel. I want all levels of government to put pressure on Israel to stop its crimes by participating in the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel.

Jane Rubio
Jewish constituent of Norwood
and former resident of Lebanon

Editor's Note: Norwood News reached out to the assemblyman for comment, and he replied as follows: "Ms. Rubio states that she opposes all acts of terrorism and then goes on a long rant blaming Israel for all the problems in the region. That sounds to me as if she is justifying the vicious attack by Hamas, which has resulted in the slaughter of 1,000 or more Israelis, mostly unarmed civilians. Over 260 young people were slaughtered by the savages at a music concert. Another large number were slaughtered on a kibbutz. Civilians were murdered, kidnapped, and raped, including young children and a Holocaust survivor. Any attempt to justify this is absolutely disgusting, and supporting BDS means you support the end of the State of Israel."

As far as what I meant by saying without regard to proportionality, here's what I mean: Every time Israel is attacked and they attack back, critics of Israel say the response has to be proportionate. No, it doesn't. The number of Israelis killed in this terrorist invasion translated into the population of the U.S. would mean over 30,000 Americans would've been killed. If a terrorist attack resulted in 30,000 or more Americans being killed, what do you think our response should be? And by the way, it's irrelevant to me whether you're Jewish or not. Being Jewish doesn't give you special standing to say the things you said."

New York Local Journalism Sustainability Act

Recently, I came across a letter in your Letters to the Editor section by Larry Penner, who mentioned the law entitled, "The New York Local Journalism Sustainability Act," which was passed by the New York State legislature. As a recently hired reporter for *The West View News*, downtown in Greenwich Village, the message in the letter really hit home.

We, in the newspaper business, have to work really hard not only to preserve local, legitimate news for the community, but we must also be very wary of threats to the business, such as the onset of artificial intelligence (AI). How will people know who are the real authors of news articles, which are basically facsimiles, all conjured up by a computer?

This is an issue which the public should take very seriously. Without journalistic integrity, how then can this industry go on? I say to the public if you have the chops to be a great journalist, step up to the plate and contribute to many of these local newspapers, big and small. Let's not let print journalism turn into a dying breed!

Bryan Gerard Briggs
Wakefield

The "Justice" System

Years ago, I remember a poll was released that showed that most people surveyed preferred the punishment for murder to be life without parole instead of the death penalty. The problem is that many murderers don't get life. The September 28-October 11, 2023, issue of *Norwood News* shows two examples. Both are products of plea bargains which our "justice" system overly relies on.

One headline tells it all. "Jeremiah Ryan Gets 15 Years to Life in Prison for Fatal Shooting of Angellyh Yambo." As is often the case, a shooter with poor aim decides to shoot two men who committed the offense of arguing with him. He winds up killing 16-year-old Yambo and wounding two 17-year-olds, a boy and a girl. He could be free 15 years from now.

In the "Crime File" column from the same issue, it is reported that Luis Cruz plea bargained to manslaughter for shooting into a crowd and killing a 17-year-old boy. How is that not murder? When someone shoots into a crowd, how are they not trying to kill someone?

Let me add that plea bargaining can sometimes create injustice the opposite way. Innocent people have been pressured into plea bargaining, but our "justice" system has the amazing ability to jail the innocent and release the guilty. Even for lesser crimes, penalties are lenient. The Aug. 5 *NY Daily News* reported that Kenneth Gore was arrested for allegedly kicking an MTA worker in the lower back at the east side 59th Street subway station. Gore has a record dating back to 1983 of over 100 arrests.

How many crimes is a person permitted before being put away for good? Gore is 64 years old. Once again, I say, so much for aging out of crime. One thing Mayor Eric Adams got right was when he said shutting down Rikers Island might have to be delayed. Adams noted that the four new jails would only hold 4,200 people, about 2,000 fewer than currently detained. Unless it can be guaranteed that 2,000 people are going to give up crime, and nobody is going to take up crime, I think Adams has a point.

Richard Warren
Van Cortlandt Village

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.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ROADWAY REPAIR & MAINTENANCE DIVISION

The New York City Department of Transportation, Roadway Repair & Maintenance Division cordially invites your company to submit bids for the following contract: PIN: 841201B0025- Milling Existing Asphalt Concrete Wearing Course in Preparation of Resurfacing Citywide (Specifications) available for download free of charge starting October 12, 2023. To access the IFB, vendors should visit the PASSPort public Portal at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/mocs/systems/about-go-to-passport.page>. Click on the "Search Funding Opportunities in PASSPort" blue box. Doing so will take one to the public portal of all procurements in the PASSPort system. To quickly locate the IFB, insert the EPIN, 841201B0025, into the Keyword search field. In order to respond to the IFB, vendors must create an account within the PASSPort system if they have not already done so.

DOT will be holding a in person Industry Day for our Milling Contract's on Tuesday October 24, 2023, at 55 Water Street in DOT's bid room. The event will be start at 11 A.M. and end at 1 P.M. The entrance is on the first floor at the rear of the building on the park side. Please reserve at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/733463297467?aff=oddtcreatOR>

A pre-bid conference via Zoom is scheduled for 10/31/23 at 11 A.M. Those who wish to attend the pre-bid meeting must email the authorized agency contact for a link no later than October 27, 2023, by 4 P.M. The deadline for the submission of questions via email is 11/3/2023 by 4 P.M. to the authorized agency contact person. This procurement is subject to participation goals for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise of 30%. Any inquiries concerning this IFB should be directed by email, under the subject line "841201B0025- Milling Existing Asphalt Concrete Wearing Course in Preparation of Resurfacing Citywide" to the email address of the Authorized Agency Contact, Shaneza Shinath, at sshinath@dot.nyc.gov or through the PASSPort communication function. Responses to this IFB must be submitted via PASSPort. All Bids must be received via Passport before the Bid Due Date, November 15, 2023, no later than 11 A.M. No in-person viewing of bid opening will be permitted. You will find the Zoom information in Passport with full details. Virtual Bid Opening will be conducted via Zoom Webinar on November 15, 2023, at 11:30 A.M.

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CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY



More Fentanyl Seized 6 Blocks from Divino Niño Daycare Center

Federal, State and City law enforcement officials said over 40 pounds of suspected fentanyl, carrying an estimated street value of \$1.5 million, was seized in Kingsbridge Heights on Sept. 26, six blocks from Divino Niño Daycare Center, where one-year-old Nicholas Dominici was exposed to fentanyl on Sept. 15, and later died.

Officials said the latest suspected fentanyl seizure was from Apt. 1J at 2800 Heath Avenue and is unrelated to the investigation into the daycare center located at 2707 Morris Avenue, where fentanyl was previously seized, and where three other infants were hospitalized following exposure to the drug.

Authorities said Juan Gabriel Herrera Vargas was arrested on Sept. 26 in connection to the latest seizure after he was surveilled and was seen carrying a small, black bag in which suspected fentanyl was later recovered, to Kingsbridge Road subway station. He has been charged with various drug trafficking offenses and was arraigned in Manhattan Criminal Court on Sept. 28.

They said once approached by law enforcement on Sept. 26 at the subway station, Herrera Vargas handed agents his wallet and identification and then ran away, leaving the suitcase behind. They said agents and officers then surveilled 2800 Heath Avenue and later that evening, Herrera Vargas was observed exiting Apt. 1J, pulling another suitcase, which was also later found to contain suspected fentanyl, behind him. Officers arrested Herrera Vargas at the location.

Officials said suspected fentanyl and packaging materials were found in the back bedroom of the apartment, and the apartment windows were taped up with large black plastic trash bags to ensure nothing was visible from the outside. They said the results of laboratory analysis on the narcotics seized were pending.

Officials said fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is around 50

times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine. They said it is inexpensive, widely available, highly addictive, and comes in a variety of colors, shapes, and forms, including powder and pills.

According to the CDC, an estimated 110,684 people in the U.S. died of drug overdoses and poisonings in 2022, with almost 70 percent of those deaths involving synthetic opioids like fentanyl. Meanwhile, 3,026 people fatally overdosed in New York City alone in 2022, according to the City's health department. Health officials said only two milligrams of fentanyl is considered a potentially lethal dose.

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



Bedford Park: Woman, 82, Robbed

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they say is sought for questioning in connection to a robbery that occurred in Bedford Park. Police said that on Wednesday, Oct. 4, at around 8.50 a.m., an 82-year-old female victim was at 2960 Grand Concourse, when a man approached her and stole her necklace, valued at around \$800, from around her neck.

They said the man then fled the location on a black and orange scooter, traveling eastbound on East 201st Street to parts unknown. They said the victim did

not sustain any injuries during the incident. Police said the person sought is described as male, has a medium complexion and medium build, and is around 5 feet, 7 inches tall.



Fordham Heights Gunpoint Robbery

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo above who police say is sought in connection with a gunpoint robbery that occurred in Fordham Heights.

Police said that on Tuesday, Oct. 3, at around 11 a.m., three males got into a struggle with a 21-year-old male victim in front of 2262 Jerome Avenue. They said one of the three had agreed to meet up with the victim to purchase a piece of clothing, and all three forcefully stole the item from him.

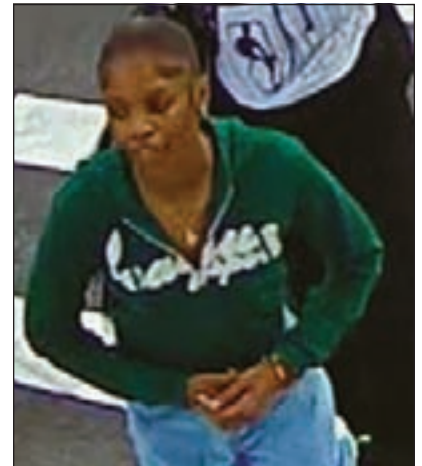
They said one of the three pointed a weapon from inside his fanny pack at the victim, and that all three then fled on foot towards 182nd Street and Crescent Avenue. Police said the first suspect was described as male, has a dark complexion and was wearing all black, the second was also described as male, has a dark complexion and was wearing a black, hooded sweatshirt and gray sweats. They said the third suspect was also described as male, has a dark complexion, and was wearing a fanny pack and gray sweat pants.

Fordham Heights: Three Sought for Slashing of Girl, 13

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating the three youths seen in the accompanying photos to the right who police say are sought for questioning in connection to an assault on a 13-year-old girl in Fordham Heights. Police said that on Monday, Oct. 2, at around 5.46 p.m., in front of 365 Ford Street, the victim got into a verbal dispute with the three others, and it became physical.

During the physical altercation, police said the three other youths pepper sprayed the victim and began to punch and kick her throughout the body. Cops said one of the three used an unknown

object to slash the victim in the back of the head. They said the victim refused medical attention at the scene, and the assailants fled on foot northbound on Webster Avenue.



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.

Survivor Highlights Complexity of DV at 6th Annual 5K

By MIRIAM QUIÑONES &
SÍLE MOLONEY

The Office of Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark, together with the Office of Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson and the New York Yankees hosted the 6th Annual Run/Walk/Roll to End Domestic Violence on Saturday, Oct. 7. The event kicked off at the steps of Bronx Borough Hall at 161st Street and the Grand Concourse in the Concourse section of the borough at 9.30 a.m. under heavy rain.

The rain did not deter those determined to ensure the annual event went ahead, however. From babies to the elderly, even a biker joined the route. Addressing attendees before the event, Clark said, "In the six years that we've held this, somebody gets triggered. Somebody realizes that they do need help." She said she wanted victims to know that her office was available to do just that. "We have a wellness table," Clark said, adding that counselors and advocates were available to speak with survivors, if needed.

As usual, the event began with survivors speaking about their experiences in overcoming their respective situations, in efforts to give courage to others who might be in a similar plight, and to generally raise awareness of what has been described as a domestic violence epidemic in The Bronx.

NYPD statistics show a nearly 59% increase in domestic violence offenders from 2021 to 2022. Furthermore, NYPD officials say domestic, intimate partner, and other family homicides are more likely to occur in The Bronx, compared to any other borough. NYPD data shows that in 2022, there were 2,333 complaints reported in the 52nd Precinct, which covers some or all of Norwood, Bedford Park,



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

A POLICE OFFICER and two other women run in the 6th Annual Run/Walk/Roll to End Domestic Violence on Saturday, Oct. 7, 2023, in the Concourse section of The Bronx.

Fordham, Kingsbridge, Bronx Park, and University Heights.

Meanwhile, in the 46th Precinct, which covers some or all of Fordham, University Heights, Morris Heights and Mount Hope, there were 2,857 for the same period, while in the 50th Precinct, which covers some or all of Riverdale, Fieldston, Kingsbridge, Marble Hill, and Spuyten Duyvil, for the same period, there were 1,211 complaints.

The 47th Precinct, which covers some or all of Woodlawn, Wakefield, Williamsbridge, Baychester, Edenwald, Olinville, Fishbay, and Woodlawn Cemetery, had the highest number of DV complaints in The Bronx, and the second highest in the City for the same period, at 4095. The 75th

Precinct which covers parts of Brooklyn, including Cypress Hill, registered the highest number of complaints across the City, at 4,349 for 2022.

Other journey through domestic violence, one survivor, Clara Ross Spiegel, explained how she embarked on a relationship in 2010 that she said dramatically changed her life in every way. "Years later, he [her abuser] would tattoo that date on his hand as a symbol of his love and devotion to our family," she said.

"It would be easy to vilify him in this moment, but that's not what I'm going to do," Ross Spiegel said. "He is very loving,

protective, funny, intelligent, charismatic, and talented. He made breakfast in bed for me every Saturday morning. He would tell me he loved me every time I rolled over in my sleep. He gave massages and made bubble baths when I had a bad day. He made up rhymes and songs for our kids. He is a lot of fun. He is also a victim of an abusive childhood, and he fought every day to break the cycle of abuse until he lost that fight."

She continued, "He is a complex person who is entitled to compassion and understanding. Two things can be true at the same time. While one side can be more dominant, it is often difficult at any one moment to see both sides. It is that challenge that involves dialectical thinking." The latter refers to the ability to view issues from multiple perspectives and to arrive at the most economical and reasonable reconciliation of seemingly contradictory information and postures.

Ross Spiegel went on to say that she

and her partner created a beautiful family and [at one point] a life together. "To say that I'm heartbroken that our relationship ended in the way that it did would be a gross understatement," she said. "We have all been devastated, and we are all trying to find some meaning in this suffering. I did not come out unscathed, while he suffers the ramifications. I hope that he finds peace and healing."

She said when their relationship ended, she began the tumultuous journey of disclosing and filing reports. "The process felt cold and many times dehumanizing," Ross Spiegel said. "I then met Detective Kelly who had become the arresting officer. He listened, he was kind, and he made it feel safe to take the next steps. I would also like to highlight [inaudible] Alison Klein. Without her, none of this would have been possible. She was thoughtful. She immediately understood the immensity of what I had just gone through."

Ross Spiegel explained how she later had to learn that her experience was not all that she was. "This sharing, today, is with purpose, to stand aside and amplify the voices of all survivors and contribute to the cosmic dialogue and social change," she said.

In efforts to highlight that domestic violence knows no gender boundaries, another speaker, Nadine Walker, talked about her brother, also a victim of domestic violence, had been killed because of it.

Later, Ross Spiegel talked about her family and how her kids were doing well. "The person I am today is largely credited to my mom, who is also here with us today," she said. She went on to talk about how her mom had supported her with love, laughter, empathy, compassion, and a deep commitment to justice." Amid applause, she added, "Above all, she taught me strength and resilience. Thank you, Mom. You are my example for everything."



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

PEOPLE OF ALL ages, and even some dogs, took part in the 6th Annual Run/Walk/Roll to End Domestic Violence on Saturday, Oct. 7, 2023, hosted by Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and her office, Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson and her office, and the New York Yankees, in the Concourse section of The Bronx.

Geriatric Social Worker Wanted

An exciting clinical program for LMSW/LCSWs is available at local senior centers - full time positions available for high energy professionals to provide mental health service with seniors 60+, in Manhattan and The Bronx. Work scope includes using evidence based, solution focused, behavioral oriented & skill building in which you will be trained and certified to counsel seniors who are challenged by depression, social isolation, and anxiety. Treatment modalities will include both individual and group therapies in a supportive and collaborative environment. Strong computer skills a must. Mandatory team meetings, supervision and CEU in-service training is provided. Spanish speaking preferred. Apply online at <https://tinyurl.com/projectWHEEL> For more information, call 855-OHEL-JOB or (718) 686-3102. Salary: \$55,000- \$70,000.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



Input Needed for District Needs

Every year, Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) prepares a "Community District Needs" statement identifying its specific community needs. The board is calling for input for the fiscal year 2025 statement. For questions, please contact Karla Cabrera Carrera, district manager, at kcabreracarrera@cb.nyc.gov or on (929)-496-0748. CB7 residents can fill out the survey online in English, Spanish, Albanian or French at the following link: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7333194/CD-Needs-Online-Survey>. The statements are key to informing the City's neighborhood and infrastructure planning and the equitable and efficient delivery of services to communities citywide. City agencies must respond to community board budget requests in the City's annual budget.

Con Ed Works

Con Edison is performing electric upgrade work on East 203rd Street between Grand Concourse and Valentine Avenue in Bedford Park from Oct. 4 to Nov. 29, Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and thanks residents for their patience during this work. Residents should expect street closures, limited street parking and noise during the duration of the work. If anyone has any concerns, please email worknotice@coned.com.

Flea Market

Bedford Park Congregational Church, located at 201st Street and Bain-

bridge Avenue in Bedford Park, will host a big flea market on Saturday, Oct. 28, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., with bargains, raffles, sandwiches, and cakes. All are invited.

General Election Key Dates

The next general election takes place on Tuesday, Nov. 7. The deadline for voter registration, updating your address, and requesting an absentee ballot (online or by mail) is Monday, Oct. 23. Early voting runs from Saturday, Oct. 28, through Sunday, Nov. 5. Register to vote at <https://nycvotes.turbobvote.org/>. To find your early voting or Election Day voting site, visit <https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/>.

Breast Cancer Bake Sale

For Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a breast cancer bake sale will be held on Friday, Oct. 13, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at 3016 Webster Avenue, in front of the 52nd Precinct, with all proceeds going to breast cancer research. For more information, please contact NYPD Community Affairs Officer Capo on (718) 220-5824.

Funding Needed to Preserve Edgehill Church

Kingsbridge Historical Society (KHS) is appealing to the community to support the upkeep of its headquarters, Edgehill Church, located in Spuyten Duyvil. Members wish to preserve and protect the landmarked, 135-year-old church for

its historical significance but also for meetings, lectures, and other cultural events. They said there is no heating system, it takes in water during rainstorms, badly needs a coat of paint, and its Tiffany Studio windows need to be preserved and protected. Donations can be made at <https://kingsbridgehistoricalociety.org/donate/> or on KHS's Go Fund Me page directly.

Affordable Housing Lottery

NYC Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) launched various affordable housing lotteries for units at 1325 Southern Boulevard in Charlotte Gardens with a closing date of Oct. 2, at 40 Bruckner Boulevard in Mott Haven with a closing date of Oct. 30, at 3073 Barker Avenue Apartments with a closing date of Oct. 16, and at eight other Bronx locations, including at 2042 Grand Avenue and at 1982 University Avenue with a closing date of Oct. 2. Visit www.norwoodnews.org, and search for "affordable housing" for more information.

"HPD in Your District" Session in District 11

Council Member Eric Dinowitz (CD. 11) is hosting a "HPD in Your District" session with representatives from NYC Department of Housing, Preservation & Development (HPD). Learn more about housing related issues, including help with applying for affordable housing, understanding your rights and responsibilities, help with financing improvements

and repairs, and more. The next session will be on Tuesday, Oct. 17, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 98 Van Cortlandt Park South, Bronx, NY 10463.

Community Engagement Grants

Bronx Council of the Arts is advising residents that the 2024 Community Engagement Grants (CEG) application cycle is open. Bronx-based artists, collectives, and arts organizations have the opportunity to apply for New Work, Arts Fund, and Community Arts for a total of up to \$10,000 in grants. Applications are due Tuesday, Oct. 31 at 11:59 p.m. Visit www.eventbrite.com and search for 2024 Community Engagement Grants (CEG) for more information.

Pillar of the Community Award Nominations

New York City Mayor, Eric L. Adams says the wisdom, history, commitment, and passion that so many of our residents exhibit and extend to their neighbors makes them pillars of their communities and city. It is in this spirit that Adams wishes to honor residents who have lived on the block, resided in buildings, served in a civic organization the longest. He is requesting residents to join him as he travels throughout the City to pay tribute to these pillars of the communities. Nominate a block association, civic association, homeowners association, tenant association or other here: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/cau/Initiatives/mayor-adams-neighborhood-awards.page>.

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Bronx Vigil Held after Hamas Attacks

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Hundreds of Bronx residents joined various elected officials on Sunday, Oct. 8, for a vigil for Israel at Bell Tower Monument on West 239th Street in Fieldston, organized by Bronx Jewish clergy members, to mourn and pray for the thousands killed [including babies who were beheaded], raped, or captured on Saturday, Oct. 7, in a surprise terrorist attack in southern Israel near the Gaza strip by the Palestinian Hamas military group.

Vigil attendees prayed, sang, and addressed those gathered, condemning the attack, which prompted a swift military response from Israel. Elected officials included Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81), who represents much of the northwest Bronx where many Jewish communities live, District 11 City Council Member Eric Dinowitz, who represents much of the same area, Rep. Ritchie Torres (NY-15), whose Bronx district stretches from the north to the south, and Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson.

Also present were Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark, Assembly Member George Alvarez (A.D. 78), who represents some or all of Belmont, Bedford Park, Fordham Manor, University Heights and Kingsbridge Heights, Assembly Member

Yudelka Tapia (A.D. 86) who represents some or all of University Heights, Fordham Heights, Morris Heights, and Mt. Hope, and officials from the Office of Attorney General Letitia James.

Most, if not all, had previously condemned the attacks. Assemblyman Dinowitz later added, "Let's be very clear. The Nazi-like attack on innocent Israelis is 100% the fault of Hamas. The people of Israel share no blame whatsoever for the vicious murders, mutilations, rapes, and kidnappings that Hamas has perpetuated. Any effort to blame Israel for these crimes is simply disgusting."

Dinowitz had previously denounced the Democratic Socialists of America who organized a pro-Palestinian rally "in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their right to resist 75 years of occupation and apartheid" in Times Square on Oct. 8, the Jewish holiday of Simchas Torah.

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates back to the end of the 19th century. In 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. On May 14, 1948, the State of Is-

(continued on page 14)

Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY

FOOD & DRINK

Bronx Night Market's season finale will conclude its 7-year run on Fordham Plaza in Belmont/Fordham Manor on Oct. 28. Organizers said the difficult decision comes from various factors, including concerns for the safety of its dedicated team and valued vendors, challenges in garnering substantial support from the community, and the inability to secure necessary sponsorships for Bronx-based experiences. The market organizers wish to express their deepest gratitude to the community, vendors, attendees, and partners who they say have been integral to its journey. For inquiries, details about the final events, and the Bronx Night Market's legacy, please visit www.bronxnighmarket.com.

The New York Botanical Garden, located at 2900 Southern Boulevard, The Bronx, celebrates **Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month** through Sunday, Oct. 15, with a lively variety of on-site and digital

programs to spotlight the important contributions and histories of the plants and people making up this diverse community, with educators, gardeners, community partners, and plant tours. Enjoy cooking demos and tastings, as well as a spotlight on the historic importance of maize and the opportunity for kids and families to pot up their own corn seed to take home. For more information, visit <https://www.nybg.org/event/hispanic-latinx-heritage-month/>.

FILM

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Bronx Council on the Arts, in partnership with Real Talkies, will present a free screening of **"Foreign Puzzle,"** at the Longwood Art Gallery at Hostos, located at 500 Grand Concourse, The Bronx on Friday, Oct. 27, at 2 p.m. The award-winning documentary is about an inspiring Mexican American dancer who communicates the impermanence of life through dance, while juggling the roles of a recently divorced parent, a choreographer, and a primary school teacher amid intensive treatments for breast cancer. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the film's

protagonist, Sharon Marroquín, and director Chithra Jeyaram. *Foreign Puzzle* is not rated by the MPA and is not suitable for young children. The Bronx Documentary Center will host the **9th Annual Women's Film Series** from Oct. 13 to Oct. 15, at the BDC Annex, located at 364 East 151st Street, The Bronx. This year, the festival was curated by Beth Dembitzer and Tânia Cypriano around women documentary filmmakers telling stories that explore the power of community. Post-screening panel discussions with the women filmmakers and producers will offer insight into their filmmaking careers. Admission is free. For more information, visit <https://www.bronxdoc.org/events/9th-annual-womens-film-series/detail>, email INFO@BRONXDOC.ORG or call (718) 993-3512.

MUSIC

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, located at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, The Bronx, presents **Tito Nieves & Friends, featuring Kevin Ceballo, Rumberos del Callejon, and special guest star Daniela Darcourt**, with musical direction by Carlos Padrón, hosted by J.I. Starr

"El Boricua de New York," on Saturday, Oct. 21, at 8 p.m. Tickets can be purchased by calling (718) 960-8833 or at <https://www.lehmancenter.org/events/tito-and-friends>.

NYC Cultural Affairs, Kingsbridge Riverdale Van Cortlandt Development Corporation & partners are hosting an **Arts in the Park Celebration**, an afternoon of live music, with John Pinamonti and Seeing Voices, and fine art in Henry Hudson Park, 2570 Independence Ave #6204, The Bronx, on Sunday, Oct. 15, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Meet at the monument at the 227th Street entrance.

The Orchestra of the Bronx, founded and conducted by Michael Spierman, returns for a free concert at Lehman College's Loving Theatre, located at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, The Bronx, on Sunday Oct. 22, at 3 p.m., and performing Mozart's Clarinet Concerto and Beethoven's Symphony No. 3 (the Eroica). Spierman leads a 40-member orchestra of musicians drawn from other major orchestras and Broadway shows. Concerts continue to be free of charge.

Earn your press pass and become a local journalist!

This **free** online training program is designed to add depth to your local newspaper's newsroom staff. Supplementing existing local news and sports coverage with trained community correspondents will help newspapers fill gaps in existing coverage, especially in small towns. The training will give participants basic guidance to build upon on the job under the supervision of editors.

The four-part online program will focus on journalism basics such as ethics, accuracy in reporting, interviewing techniques and writing clearly.

To earn certification, participants must complete all four sessions and pass a written test.

The online training will be offered two 90-minute sessions; October 17th and 18th from 6:00pm - 7:30pm. To register, contact judy@nynewspapers.com.





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Ogunda Ryu is a Wellness Combat and Self Defense Program. Our classes are in Masjidus Sabur, located at 2975 Bainbridge Ave, Bronx, NY 10458, Tuesdays and Sundays, 8:30-11:30 a.m. Please come join us. Ousssss. Have a Blessed Day.

Public and Community Meetings

The next monthly **52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meeting will take place in October (date TBC). 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 (CB7)** general board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 24, at 6.30 at Monroe College's Kings Hall, located at 2501 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, NY 10468. Contact KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list. All meetings are in person unless otherwise notified by CB7. [Norwood News apologizes for a previous miscommunication regarding the format of such meetings.]

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8** full board meeting will be held in November (date TBC). Contact BX08@cb.nyc.gov for more details, and to be added to the distribution list.

The **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. The next meeting will be held in November. For details, please contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

Bronx Vigil Held after Hamas Attacks

(continued from page 12)

rael was created, sparking the first Arab Israeli War. The war ended in 1949 with Israel's victory, but 750,000 Palestinians were displaced, and the territory was di-

vided into 3 parts: the State of Israel, the West Bank (of the Jordan River), and the Gaza Strip.

According to one EU agency, some 4.5 million Palestinians live in the Occupied Palestinian Territories of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza. Amnesty International has said of the Israeli government, "Laws, policies, and institutional practices all work to expel, fragment, and dispossess Palestinians of their land and property, and deprive Palestinians of their human rights."

Al Jazeera reported on Oct. 11 that 2,300 people had been killed on both sides of the conflict since Saturday.



Photo courtesy of the Office of Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz
BRONX RESIDENTS JOIN elected officials on Oct. 8, 2023, for a vigil organized by Jewish clergy members at Bell Tower Monument on West 239th Street in Fieldston, in response to the latest Hamas attacks on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023.

Bainbridge Burns (Again)

(continued from page 7)

at Halloween 2011, where all of those stores down there...this is like this. How many times the bakery?"

Norwood News reported on the bakery fire on the same Bainbridge block at the time it broke out on Halloween 2009, its aftermath, a legal battle which ensued between the landlord and the affected merchants over back rent, and the subsequent redevelopment of the affected site. Around ten other businesses were also affected.

The merchants were represented by The Legal Aid Society. Contacted on the outcome of that legal dispute, a representative for the Society said their attorney doesn't know what happened after a settlement agreement was reached.

Two months after the Halloween fire, in December 2009, a block south on Bainbridge between East 205th and Perry Avenue, another commercial blaze erupted, once again affecting a number of local businesses, including Foodtown, which has since reopened, American Diner and Bainbridge Dental.

According to ABC7-NY, prosecutors said 52-year-old Mohammed Abdul Quadir was arrested and charged with arson for his alleged involvement with that fire. It was reported that Quadir allegedly hired 53-year-old Christopher Gooding to start the blaze, because the former had allegedly been in debt and had allegedly bought a half-million-dollar insurance policy on the diner before the fire occurred.

It was reported that Gooding was also arrested. Norwood News reached out to the Bronx District Attorney's office for details of the final outcome of both legal cases and will update this story upon receipt of any feedback. We also asked the FDNY for the cause of both 2009 fires, and will share any updates we receive.

Jenny recalled watching the Foodtown fire from her roof years earlier, saying, "That was arson, yeah." In reference to clean-up efforts following the latest fire, she added, "All these guys cleaning, they're from Foodtown so I don't know if Mr. [Noah] Katz [whose family have owned Foodtown since 1956] owns one of these [latest damaged] stores. I don't know, but I just thought it was odd that everybody from Foodtown was out here cleaning. Helping out the community is nice..."

A vacate notice posted at the fire scene by NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) later on Tuesday morning advises residents that "conditions within the premises are imminently perilous to life."

Meanwhile, an NYC Small Business Services (SBS) rep. told Norwood News, in part, that SBS has been working with the seven affected businesses since Tuesday, in coordination with



Photo by Síle Moloney

FIREFIGHTERS RESPOND TO a 4-alarm fire on Bainbridge Avenue in the Norwood section of The Bronx in the early hours of Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023.

the Office of Emergency Management, assessing damage, connecting them with relevant City agencies, and helping them to navigate their insurance coverage. They said any business in need of support recovering from an emergency should call 1-888-SBS-4-NYC.

Later on Tuesday morning outside his business, we spoke to Mohammed Alam, manager of Curry & Kebab restaurant, who was with Bronx Community Board 7 member, Monjur Chowdhury. "I got the call around 5.30 [a.m.] and I'm here at a quarter to six and I see... it's totally lost," Alam said. Estimating the overall impact based on employees at all his sites, he said, "I have six employees, and I think there's more than 50 employees who have lost their jobs now."

Asked about rebuilding, he said, "I don't know. I'm totally lost. I don't know if I will rebuild. The [building] owner, if he rebuilds our building... then maybe then we can see." Asked about insurance, he said, "Ah, actually after COVID I didn't pay the insurance." After visiting the business ruins, Chowdhury said he and the restaurant's employees were going to their mosque located on East 206th Street and Rochambeau Avenue to pray.

District 11 City Councilman Eric Dinowitz, who represents Norwood, said, in part, of the blaze, "We will be monitoring the fire and my office stands by to assist those impacted by the fire." Meanwhile, Daniela Beasley, executive director of Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC), which works to support local businesses in the Norwood community, said, "All of MPC [were] heartbroken when we heard about the fire."

She added, "These businesses are pillars in our community; we are here for any and everything the affected small business owners need and will be starting a fundraising effort to assist in the rebuild of their stores." When advised by Norwood News that one resident had asked about fundraising efforts for the affected businesses, Beasley confirmed, once available, a link to a fundraising page will be posted on www.mpcbronx.org and on MPC's Instagram account @mpc-bronx.

We spoke with Cronin again later on Tuesday. He said, "We've been in this neighborhood, on this block, for 40 years. It's just a lot of hard work and it's just gone away just like that, and not just us, but all the stores here. It's all small family businesses. It's tough,

especially with the holidays coming and everything now too. A lot of people depend on us."

Cronin said they had another site in Mount Vernon, and he's been giving everybody his number. "We'll deliver down to you whatever we have. We're trying to help everybody we can but yeah, we're a little shorthanded too," he said, adding he was blown away by the support of the community. "I don't know how many hugs I've gotten already. We try to support them as much as they support us," he said.

He said he hopes to be back running the business again but knows there's a lot of red tape, adding that he was informed by officials that asbestos tests have to be carried out, and that whatever remains of the seven affected businesses will have to be demolished.

Staring at the ruins, he concluded, "Everybody was asking me, 'Do you want to go on camera and stuff?' and I'm, like, I really don't because I think I would burst out in tears. You see it like this... Like I want to cry right now, but I got to hold it together."

Editor's Note: Please visit our website www.norwoodnews.org to view more stories on the fire, including more photos and videos.

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