



# NORWOOD NEWS

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## DOT ACTS ON MOPED CHAOS

Photo by David Greene

**AN ATV RIDER** is seen traveling northbound as part of a roving band along Jerome Avenue in Norwood on Sunday, March 17, 2024.

By **SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE**

NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) officials and New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced the launch of a new e-bike safety campaign on March 19, and on March 20, they called for the renewal and

expansion of the City's red-light camera program. The announcements come following a week of moped/dirt bike chaos across The Bronx.

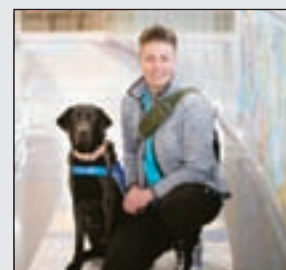
On Thursday, March 14, after police observed "a roving band" of ATV [all-terrain vehicle] / dirt bike riders traveling

in a pack in the Norwood/Bedford Park area, which they said later dispersed in different directions, an ATV rider was hospitalized following a collision with a sedan the same evening.

Meanwhile, police were searching for another dirt bike / motorcycle rider who, the

same evening, attempted to assault two cops in Norwood. Later that evening, in Morris Park, a motorcycle rider was killed in a collision with an ambulance and on Sunday, March 17, another "roving band" was witnessed in Norwood.

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**Meet Polly, the latest recruit at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore**  
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**Mayor Visits Kingsbridge Underpass & Poe Park** | pg 11

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## NORWOOD NEWS

## Vol. 37, No. 6

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# Bedford Park: One Hospitalized, in Custody after ATV Accident

By SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE

One person described as male has been hospitalized and is also in custody following a collision involving an ATV [all-terrain vehicle/dirt bike] and a car on Thursday evening, March 14, in Bedford Park.

Separately, in nearby Norwood, a motorcycle rider was being sought for an assault on police the same evening, and later that night, a motorcycle rider died after being hospitalized following a collision with an ambulance in Morris Park.

Police said officers had observed “a roving band,” meaning a large group of motorcycles and ATVs traveling in a pack, in the vicinity of Jerome Avenue and East Mosholu Parkway in Bedford Park at 6.13 p.m. on March 14, and had put word out over the police radio. They said the group subsequently dispersed in different directions.

A police spokesperson later said, “One of the ATVs ends up at the intersection of Grand Concourse and Van Cortlandt when he sees a separate police vehicle behind him with lights and siren not activated, like no lights or siren turned on.”

We asked if the police car had been in pursuit of the ATV nonetheless and the spokesperson said, “At that time, at the intersection, that police vehicle did not have lights, or a siren activated.” We asked if the police vehicle had been stationary or in motion and the spokesperson said, “It came up behind the ATV at the red light and for whatever reason, I guess, he [the ATV driver] was spooked or for whatever reason, the ATV [driver] decides to run the red light.”

The spokesperson continued, “At the same time, a blue 2017 Nissan sedan was approaching on Van Cortlandt, going towards Mosholu Parkway [across the Grand Concourse] which ends up colliding with that ATV and the Nissan was occupied times two.” He said there was a 63-year-old male driver in the sedan along with a 20-year-old male passenger, and that both refused medical attention at the scene.

He said the driver of the ATV was transferred to St. Barnabas Hospital initially in critical condition and was reportedly later in stable condition. “He remains in police custody,” the spokesperson said. “At this point, it’s not an ar-



Photo by Sile Moloney

**POLICE INVESTIGATE THE** scene of a collision involving an ATV and a Nissan sedan at Van Cortlandt Avenue and the Grand Concourse at around 6.13 p.m. on Thursday, March 14, 2024.

rest. It’s a pending investigation so we’ll be updating it.”

Asked if there was more than one occupant on the ATV at the time of the collision, the spokesperson said he just had a report of one occupant. After some earlier, conflicting reports about whether there had or had not been a collision, police reported that the NYPD’s collision investigation squad had been called to the Bedford Park accident location.

Asked for a description of the hospitalized victim, the NYPD said he was male. “I don’t have an age or anything like that, but it appears it was a male,” a spokesperson said.

Earlier on Thursday evening, there had also been some separate, unconfirmed reports of a possible collision at nearby East Gun Hill Road and Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood. We asked police about this, and a spokesperson said he didn’t have any record of a separate collision at that location. In the end, it transpires it was actually an assault, rather than a collision.

Meanwhile, EMS and several police vehicles were seen at Van Cortlandt Avenue and the Grand Concourse, and helicopters were seen and heard flying over the area from around 6 p.m.

One female resident who declined to be identified told *Norwood News* she saw around 20 riders on motorcycles / ATVs traveling on Paul Avenue towards

Lehman College in Bedford Park around the time the incident occurred.

Another female resident, who was with her mom and who also declined to be identified, said she did not see what had happened but added, “So, from what I heard it was like that someone on that group of people were on that red motorcycle [gesturing to a 4-wheel, red ATV seen at the accident location], and they were getting chased by the cops, and apparently the person on it, I guess, fell off.”

She continued, “But the other people that were on it with him kept driving, and I guess some kind of incident occurred. I’m not sure if the person....there were like two different ambulances here. Apparently, somebody did get transported away but it was like a hit & run kind of situation so, they were looking around. There were police like going in and out of this building right here [gestures to a building on the corner of Grand Concourse and Van Cortlandt Avenue].”

Asked how she felt about the incident happening in her neighborhood, the woman said, “I mean it’s, I guess, it’s scary because there hasn’t been a lot happening in this neighborhood, I think, until recently that’s making a lot of people want to move from here.”

A group of motorcycles and ATV riders had been seen by *Norwood News* on Tuesday, March 12, at around 5 p.m. traveling at high speed, and breaking lights, up and down the Grand Concourse in the same general vicinity as where the collision occurred. We asked the woman if she had also seen the group. “I’ve seen a lot of those, yeah,” she said. “They’re very reckless. I mean they’re very scary. All those motorcycles in general are terrifying.”

We asked if she had witnessed the riders breaking the red lights. The woman said, “Um, I don’t think I’ve paid attention to that but they’re very reckless, and there’s always usually like a group, right? Yeah, I have seen them on like Jerome [Avenue] over there.”

One *Norwood News* reporter had



Screenshot by Sile Moloney

**A ROVING BAND** of ATVs and motorcycles travel through a red light on the Grand Concourse in Bedford Park on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at around 5 p.m.

(continued on next page)



# Certified Child Life Specialist “Polly” Joins CHAM

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Polly, a 23-month-old, black labrador has joined the Child Life team at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore (CHAM) in Norwood to support young patients during hospitalizations and medical appointments.

CHAM officials say Certified Child

a variety of tools to educate and support children through some of the most trying times of their young lives,” said Meghan D. Kelly, MSEd, CCLS., director of the Phoebe H. Stein Child Life Program at CHAM.

Kelly added, “Polly is the newest tool our child life specialists will employ to



Photo courtesy of the Children's Hospital at Montefiore

**POLLY, A CERTIFIED** child life specialist with the Children's Hospital at Montefiore in Norwood, is seen accompanying a young patient, along with Polly's own child life specialist, Katy Dessick and another CHAM employee.

Life Specialists (CCLS) assist children through medical play, helping them understand their illness, cope with procedures, and achieve their health goals. They said Polly is kicking off her new job at CHAM during Child Life Month, which is dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the vital role CCLS play in supporting young patients.

“Child Life is a specialty that has evolved over the past 100 years and uses

help young patients who are anxious, who are facing extended hospital stays, and who need assistance getting through tough procedures. We are delighted to welcome Polly as the newest member of the CHAM Child Life team.”

CHAM officials said Polly spent the last six months in professional training with expert instructors at Canine Companions, who have provided facility dog, animals highly trained to assist health-



Photo courtesy of the Children's Hospital at Montefiore

**POLLY, A CERTIFIED** child life specialist with the Children's Hospital at Montefiore in Norwood, is seen with a patient and her own child life specialist, Katy Dessick.

care professionals with specific tasks, free of charge, since 1975.

Polly comes to CHAM thanks to funds raised by former New York Ranger and current Boston Bruins defenseman, Kevin Shattenkirk, through his partnership with the Jam Kancer in the Kan Foundation.

“I've seen first-hand just how important the Child Life Specialists are to a patient's treatment during my visits to CHAM,” said Shattenkirk, who previously funded staffing which enabled a playroom at CHAM to be opened and available for extended times during the day.

“My wife Deanna and I jumped at the opportunity to add a four-legged member to the team,” he added. “We believe Polly will have such a positive impact on every child she interacts with.”

CHAM officials said Polly will be

available to “treat” patients in need of physical and emotional support, such as children recovering from surgery who need encouragement getting out of bed and walking. They said she'll also assist children who need motivation to have open conversations about difficult and stressful topics, such as eating disorders.

They said Polly will see around seven patients per day and will live with her own dedicated certified child life specialist, Katy Dessick. “Polly is a unique member of our Child Life team,” said Dessick. “Few children's hospitals have facility dogs in-house to assist with patient needs. We are very grateful to Kevin Shattenkirk for making this possible, and to Canine Companions, who dedicate countless hours to training dogs like Polly to be crucial aids for people in need of extra support.”

(continued from previous page)

seen a group of motorcycles and ATV riders traveling at speed on the Grand Concourse in the Tremont area earlier on Thursday evening, March 14. It's unknown if it was the same group as was seen by police at Mosholu Parkway and Jerome Avenue in Bedford Park at 6.13 p.m.

Norwood News also contacted the NYPD to ask about a separate, unconfirmed report of a brick being thrown at a police officer possibly by a motorcycle rider in the Tremont area prior to the collision in Bedford Park on March 14, but were informed they had no record of this. In the end, it seems this incident actually occurred in Norwood, not Tremont.

Traffic was still being allowed pass through the Grand Concourse scene of the incident on Thursday evening, despite one section being cordoned off,



Screenshot by David Greene

**A ROVING BAND** of ATVs and motorcycles travel along the Grand Concourse in Tremont on Thursday afternoon, March 14, 2024.

but some delays were expected.

We also spoke to some other passersby after the accident and asked

them what they knew. One woman who described herself as Mariela de la Fiesta (Party Mariela) said, “I live

nearby so I heard the helicopters and it brings to my attention what was happening, and when I came, I just find the police.” She said she didn't see what happened but understood it was an accident. She didn't see any injured people, she said.

Norwood News previously reported on a major crackdown by police on illegal scooters, motorcycles, and ATVs when the 52nd Precinct unveiled a stash of unregistered bikes they had seized in August 2022.

Anyone with information regarding this incident 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.

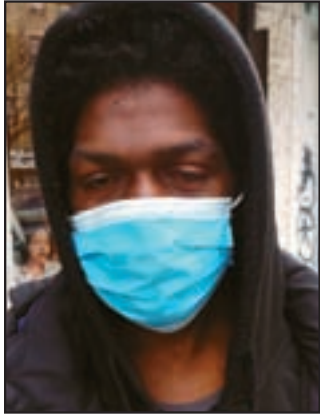


# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week, following our recent report on the defacing of a Norwood mural allegedly by gang members, we asked readers if they or any children in their extended family have been approached about joining a gang, and how the family responded.



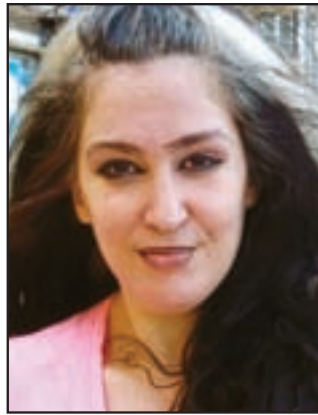
"I had a younger brother who joined years ago in the 2000s. Yes, he got away from it, and he turned his life around and became a teacher. I think it's a big problem for kids. I dealt with gangs too, but in the situation today, the kids are misled, and people join because of family issues or whatever the case may be, but it's not the right way to go. Even if you're down with a gang, you can always turn your life around."

**Zoa Briggs,**  
Bedford Park  
Photo by David Greene



"My son said they did ask him if he wanted to join [a] gang and he said, 'No.' He told me, 'Mommy, they asked me to join the gang, but I said no because you taught me well.'"

**Nancy Melendez,**  
Allerton  
Photo courtesy of Nancy Melendez



"I have no children in my immediate family but if someone was asked, rather than join a gang, maybe join an Outbound Program, the Goodwill Rebound program. A lot of gang members don't like the police; maybe become a police officer. They could join the Explorer's Program or the Police Athletic League. I think gangs are a widespread problem."

**Rachel Tantaró,**  
Bedford Park  
Photo by David Greene



"Basically, when my sons were in high school, they were approached but were able to politely decline because of their mother's influence and family values. But they have classmates that they went to school with who are gang-affiliated and the parents don't even know."

**Jim Nasium,**  
Riverdale  
Photo by David Greene



"A child in the family was asked to join but didn't accept. We didn't find out immediately, but we saw changes in behavior and after many discussions, we finally found out. Because of the circumstances, it was decided that the best thing for the child was to go somewhere else to finish high school and to stay away from New York for a couple of years."

**Sheila Sanchez,**  
Williamsbridge  
Photo courtesy of Shelia Sanchez

*Editor's Note: NYS (NY Connects) provides the following information on the Goodwill PROS Rebound Program. Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) is a comprehensive recovery-oriented program for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness.*

*The goal of the program is to integrate treatment, support and rehabilitation in a manner that facilitates the individual's recovery.*

*Goals for individuals in the program are to improve functioning, reduce inpatient utilization, reduce emergency services, reduce contact with the criminal justice system, increase employment, attain higher levels of education and secure preferred housing.*

*There are four "service components" in the program: Community Rehabilitation and Support (CRS), Intensive Rehabilitation (IR), Ongoing Rehabilitation and Support (ORS) and Clinical Treatment.*



## DIVISION OF BRIDGES INVITATION FOR BIDS

**PROTECTIVE COATING OF  
RIVERSIDE DRIVE OVER WEST 125TH STREET- WEST 134TH STREET  
Borough of Manhattan  
Contract No. HB1070RD  
NYCPIN: 84123MNBRS596  
EPIN: 84123B0037**

**EPIN: 84123B0037-PIN:84123MNBRS596**-Protective Coating of Riverside Drive over West 125<sup>th</sup> Street- West 134<sup>th</sup> St, in the Borough of Manhattan. This Competitive Sealed Bid (CSB) is being released through PASSPort, New York City's online procurement portal. Responses to this CSB must be submitted via PASSPort. To access the solicitation, vendors should visit the PASSPort Public Portal at <https://www.nyc.gov/site/mocs/passport/about-passport.page> and click on the "Procurement Navigator". This will take you to the Public Portal of all procurements in the PASSPort system.

To quickly locate the CSB, insert the EPIN: **84123B0037**, into the Keywords search field. In order to respond to the Competitive Sealed Bid, vendors must create an account within the PASSPort system if they have not already done so.

Any inquiries concerning this Competitive Sealed Bid should be directed by email to agency contact [nkumar@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:nkumar@dot.nyc.gov), under the subject line EPIN: 84123B0037.

A pre-bid conference via ZOOM is scheduled for 04/03/2024 at 10:00 am. Those wishing to attend must email the authorized agency contact for a link. Optional field visit is scheduled on 04/03/2024 at 2:00PM in the intersection of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and West 134<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan.

The deadline for the submission of questions is 04/10/2024 by 4:00 pm.

The bid due date (submission via PASSPort) as instructed is due 05/15/2024 by 11:00 am.

Bid opening date via ZOOM is 05/15/2024 at 12:00 pm.

This procurement is subject to M/WBE participation goals, the M/WBE goals for this project are 30%.

As-Built Drawings will be available upon request from the Contractors. Contractors need to sign Confidentiality agreement to view As-built drawings.

**Eric Adams, Mayor**  
**Ydanis Rodriguez, Commissioner**

## Garifuna Culture Celebrated at Borough Hall

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson joined Author Jose Francisco Aviles and The Garifuna Coalition, USA, Inc. for an evening celebrating Garifuna culture, tradition, and music in the Rotunda of Bronx Borough Hall on Thursday, March 7.

According to officials from the Bronx Borough Presidents' office, the Garifuna people are the descendants of

an Afro-indigenous population from the Caribbean Island of St. Vincent. "Forced to flee in the 18th century, they settled along the Atlantic coast of Central America in the countries of Guatemala, Nicaragua, Belize, and Honduras where many continue to live today," they wrote. "In the 20th century, many began to migrate to the United States and settle in The Bronx, home to the largest Garifuna in the United States."



Photo courtesy of the Office of the Bronx Borough President  
**GARIFUNA WABAFU DANCE** Theater members, including Luz Soliz-Ramos, celebrate Garifuna culture at an event hosted by the Office of the Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson at Bronx Borough Hall on Thursday, March 7, 2024.



# NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY

## National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Friday, March 1, marked the beginning of National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. To mark the occasion, a community education event was held at Montefiore Einstein's Moses campus, located at 111 East 210<sup>th</sup> Street in Norwood. Montefiore's clinical team shared resources and literature to help educate the community about the importance of early colorectal cancer detection and treatment.

Montefiore officials said colorectal cancer screening is the only form of cancer screening where, during screening, early stages of cancer can be both detected and removed before cancer spreads. They added that Black people and Hispanic people are diagnosed with more aggressive colorectal cancer, often at younger ages, compared to their white counterparts.

They said that the NCI designated Montefiore Einstein Comprehensive Cancer Center offers the most advanced colon cancer care, support and access to clinical trials, right here in the community.



Photo courtesy of Montefiore Einstein  
**MONTEFIORE EINSTEIN OFFICIALS** gather on Friday, March 1, 2024 to mark the beginning of National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month for a community education event at Montefiore Einstein's Moses campus, located at 111 East 210<sup>th</sup> Street in Norwood.

## Manchester City F.C. V A.C. Milan at Yankee Stadium

Yankee Stadium has announced a summer weekend celebration of soccer, with two matches over the course of two days from July 27-28. The first match will feature the reigning UEFA Champions League, UEFA Super Cup, FIFA World Club Cup, Premier League and FA Cup champions Manchester City facing seven-time European Cup champions A.C. Milan in a pre-season friendly match on Saturday, July 27 (time TBD). The second match will see 2021 MLS Cup champions New York City F.C. take on Liga MX side Querétaro F.C. in their 2024 Leagues Cup opener on Sunday, July 28, at 8 p.m., marking the first-ever Leagues Cup match held at Yankee Stadium. Community events

and outreach, the specifics of which will be announced at a later date, will be scheduled in the neighborhood around Yankee Stadium as part of the weekend.

## BCC's Gould Memorial Library Wins Preservation Award

The Gould Memorial Library, located on Bronx Community College campus, has won a 2024 Lucy G. Moses Preservation Award and its representatives will formally receive the award, bestowed by The New York Landmarks Conservancy, during a ceremony on April 10 at The Plaza Hotel in Manhattan. The ceremony attracts an audience of more than 500 every year, according to the conservancy, a private non-profit organization that has led the effort to preserve and protect New York City's architectural legacy for more than 50 years.

## Woman Alleges Sexual Assault by Mayor

Lorna Beach-Mathura, a resident of Florida and former resident of Brooklyn, filed a lawsuit in the State of New York on March 18, under the Adult Survivors Act against New York City Mayor Eric Adams, citing an alleged sexual assault in 1993, when both she and Adams were employees with the Transit Bureau of the NYPD.

According to court-filed documents, having been passed over for promotion, Beach-Mathura, a Black, female NYPD employee, alleges she sought help with her ca-

reer from Adams, both in his capacity as a police officer and as a leader in the NYPD Guardians Association, an organization which advocates for the rights of Black employees. Beach-Mathura, who holds a doctoral degree in educational leadership and who works in education according to her LinkedIn profile, alleges that instead of helping her, Adams allegedly asked her to perform oral sex on him after he allegedly drove her to a vacant lot.

Court papers show the lawsuit has also been filed against the NYPD Transit Bureau, the NYPD Guardians Association, and three other "unknown" entities, which are also defendants. The Adult Survivors Act is New York State legislation enacted in May 2022 which amended state law to allow alleged victims of sexual offenses for which the statute of limitations had lapsed to file civil suits for a one-year period, from November 24, 2022, to November 24, 2023. The mayor denies the allegation.

Norwood News asked City Hall, the NYPD, and the City's law department, which is representing the mayor, if the NYPD Guardians Association and Transit Bureau also deny the allegations. We did not receive an immediate response.

## Valentine Ave Alleged Drug Traffickers Named

Federal prosecutors have named the 16 alleged, Valentine Avenue drug traffickers referenced in the front-page story

of our March 7-20, 2024, edition.

Prosecutors said they are Edwin Carrasquillo, aka "Malo," Hector Hernandez, aka "Hec," Jose Hernandez, aka "Nene," aka "Little," Nathaniel Manning, aka "Tio," Damel Marcus, aka "Shank," Edward Moreno, aka "AR," Jason Rivera, aka "Colombo," Josue Vargas, aka "Leo," Juan Kuang, aka "Jo Jo," aka "Jay," aka "Blanco," Steven Santiago, aka "Swizz," Victor Mendeng, aka "Cali," Delilah Carriel, Rosemarie Sanchez, aka "Rosie," Juan Calderon, aka "Jazzo," aka "Juanito," Christopher Meadows, and Angel Villafane. They said charges were filed against the 16, who were described as members and leaders of "an armed and violent drug trafficking crew."

They said they were arrested following the execution of a search warrant on the night of March 5 and the morning of March 6 at a Valentine Avenue address located, we believe, between East 194th Street and East 196th Street, in Fordham Manor. Some or all were charged with engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise, distributing narcotics, and carrying and using firearms in connection with an armed drug trafficking operation based at Valentine Avenue in the Kingsbridge section of The Bronx for over a decade from 2012 to the present. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

## CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE



### Fordham Heights: Man, 47, Shot Several Times & Dies

A 47-year-old man died following a shooting in Fordham Heights. Police said that on Saturday, March 16, at around 9.40 p.m., officers responded to 911 calls regarding a person who had been shot in front of 2311 Morris Avenue, a multistory, residential building located between Field Place and East 183rd Street.

They said upon arrival, officers observed the man with multiple gunshot wounds throughout the body, and he was removed by EMS to St. Barnabas Hospital where he was pronounced deceased. No arrests have been made and the investigation remains ongoing, police said. The deceased was identified as Alexis Ramirez of Creston Avenue in Fordham Heights.



Photo by Sile Moloney

**POLICE CORDON OFF** the crime scene and place markers on the sidewalk as they carry out an investigation into the fatal shooting of a 47-year-old man at 2311 Morris Avenue in Fordham Heights on Saturday night, March 16, 2024.



Photos courtesy of the NYPD

**RAHUL CUYA, OF** Manhattan has been arrested on kidnapping and murder charges, along with two others, while Steven Santiago is still sought in connection with the same incident.

### Pelham Bay: 3rd Man Charged in Murder of Two Left Inside Burning Car

The NYPD said a third Manhattan man, aged 26, has been arrested and charged with kidnapping and murder, among other charges, after two young people were shot, execution-style, and left in a burning car on the side of a road near Pelham Bay Park in 2022. Police said Terrence White of 212 West 109th Street was arrested on March 18, at 10.30 a.m. in The Bronx.

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark said in early March that a second Manhattan man, Rahul Cuya, 24, of Baruch Drive had been charged with kidnapping and murder, among other offenses, in connection with the case. The NYPD said Cuya was arrested on March

12 in The Bronx and was arraigned the following day at Bronx Criminal Court. Cuya was remanded in custody and is due back in court in June.

The DA's office said Jahmel Sanders, 30, also of Baruch Drive, Manhattan, had previously been arraigned also in connection to the incident on March 9, 2023, and been charged with murder and kidnapping, among other offenses, and that a fourth defendant, Steven Santiago, is still being sought. Sanders was due back in court in June 2023. We followed up on the status of his case with the Bronx District Attorney's Office but did not receive an immediate update.

According to the investigation, on May 16, 2022, Cuya, in conjunction with Sanders and others, allegedly kidnapped Nikki Huang, 22, and Jesse Parrilla, 22, both of Manhattan, transported them to Shore Road near Pelham Bay Park in The Bronx, where they were shot. A Honda Accord was set on fire with the victims inside it. Huang suffered bullet wounds to her head and neck and Parrilla suffered bullet wounds to his head and chest. Their bodies were burned almost to ash.

According to the investigation, prior to the shootings, on May 15, 2022, at 9.30 p.m., Huang told friends who are alleged gang members that she was robbed of a purse in Manhattan and two hours later, a man was fatally shot in Manhattan. At around 1.20 a.m. on May 16, 2022, Parrilla, driving his mother's Honda Ac-

(continued on page 8)

## The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

### Notice of Needs Assessment Public Comment Period To Provide for Input on the Development of The New York State Plan for the 2024-2025 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

In accordance with the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981, as amended, the State of New York provides for input on the development of the 2024-2025 New York State Plan for the Home Energy Assistance Program. The Office of Community Services (OCS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has proposed significant revisions to the FY 2025 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Model Plan Application to be effective September 1, 2024. This will include edits or removal of some current Model Plan questions, and the addition of new questions. More information on the proposed LIHEAP Model Plan Application changes can be found in the [Federal Register](#).

Comments to OTDA may be submitted regarding New York State's completion of the proposed new and revised questions and current Model Plan questions that will remain unchanged.

The current 2023-2024 HEAP State Plan may be found online:

<https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/stateplan.asp>

#### Comments:

Written, e-mailed, or faxed comments on the development of the 2024-2025 New York State Home Energy Assistance Program State Plan will be accepted through close of business on April 30, 2024. Comments must be received by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 30, 2024 in order to be included in the Needs Assessment process.

**Written** comments should be addressed to:

NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance  
HEAP Bureau  
40 North Pearl Street, 11B  
Albany, New York 12243

**E-mailed** comments should be sent to:

[NYSHEAP@otda.ny.gov](mailto:NYSHEAP@otda.ny.gov)

**Faxed** comments should be sent to:

NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance  
HEAP Bureau  
(518) 473-0497

The needs assessment period will conclude with public hearings to submit verbal comment. Four public hearings will be held online via WebEx:

- **Tuesday, April 23, 2024**

- **10:00am to 11:00am via WebEx**

To attend the April 23, 2024 10:00am to 11:00am WebEx please use the following link:

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=m68b3aad5a04ecce77f5defbb338ada37>

To join the April 23, 2024 10:00am to 11:00am WebEx using audio only, please dial (518) 549-0500 and enter the Event number 1616 54 2470

- **1:00pm to 3:00pm via WebEx**

To attend the April 23, 2024 5:00pm to 6:00pm WebEx please use the following link

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=m58af59650e7d12ce4184a9719bafba8c>

To join the April 23, 2024 5:00pm to 6:00pm WebEx using audio only, please dial (518) 549-0500 and enter the Event number 1615 56 8348

- **Thursday, April 25, 2024**

- **10:00am to 11:00am via WebEx**

To attend the April 25, 2024 10:00am to 11:00am WebEx please use the following link:

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=me315cc68cb83400d798da71e478c47a3>

To join the April 25, 2024 10:00am to 11:00am WebEx using audio only, please dial (518) 549-0500 and enter the Event number 1618 16 0833

- **5:00pm to 6:00pm via WebEx**

To attend the April 25, 2024 5:00pm to 6:00pm WebEx please use the following link:

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=m58356054f6ef54866dd1981c98170104>

To join the April 25, 2024 5:00pm to 6:00pm WebEx using audio only, please dial (518) 549-0500 and enter the Event number 1617 46 1346

Individuals and organizations wishing to present their views must limit their testimony to five minutes and may submit a written copy of their statement. Additional time may be allotted after all participants have had a chance to provide oral comments. Any comments exceeding five minutes may also be submitted by mail, email, or fax.



## CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY &amp; DAVID GREENE



(continued from page 5)

cord, was dropping off Huang near her home on the Lower East Side when the defendants allegedly grabbed him and put him in another vehicle, and one of the defendant's took the Accord.

Around 20 minutes later, Huang was lured out of her building and taken into the same Honda Accord. The victims were driven to Queens and then to The Bronx. At around 4.16 a.m., Parilla's mother's Accord was discovered in flames on Shore Road near a golf course. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

### Bronx-based NYPD Lieutenant

#### Arrested in 49th Precinct

An off-duty member of the NYPD was arrested and charged in the confines of the 49th Precinct on Sunday, March 17. The 49th Precinct covers the northeastern portion of The Bronx, including Allerton, Morris Park, Van Nest, Pelham Parkway, Eastchester Gardens, and Pelham Gardens.

NYPD Lieutenant Edward Lawyerr, 35, was arrested and charged for driving while intoxicated and for refusal to take a breath test. Lawyerr is assigned to the 46th Precinct, which covers the neighborhoods of Fordham, University Heights, Morris Heights and Mt. Hope. He became a police officer in 2010, was promoted to sergeant in 2016 and lieutenant in 2022. He is presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.



and interpreter. Photo by Síle Moloney

**ROSVIN A. MEJIA CASTILLO** appears in Bronx Criminal Court on March 13, 2024, with his defense attorney

Street in Bedford Park began at Bronx Criminal Court on Wednesday, March 13. As reported, Rosvin A. Mejia Castillo, 37, also of 226 East 203rd Street, was arrested and charged in connection with the incident on Saturday, Feb. 10, at 12.15 p.m. at the 52nd Precinct and later appeared in court accompanied by his defense attorney.

Mejia Castillo has been charged with murder, two counts of attempted murder, three counts of assault, attempted assault, six counts of criminal possession of a weapon, and two counts of endangering the welfare of a child. Dressed in what appeared to be a beige jumpsuit and white t-shirt and receiving Spanish language translation of the proceedings through an interpreter, he pled not guilty to the charges.

Police said Bonilla Mejia was shot inside her home in the early hours of Feb. 10, following reports of an assault, and died later at Jacobi Medical Center. Two of her children, a teenager and a young child, were also shot but were reported to be in stable condition following the incident, police said. They also said the incident appeared to have been "domestic related."

The defense attorney for Mejia Castillo requested a restriction on media coverage of the trial, arguing it had the potential to influence the jury (who were not present in court on March 13). *Norwood News* argued that coverage of the trial was in the public interest and that the incident had been traumatizing for all concerned. The judge ruled in our favor.

In October 2023, Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson launched "31 Days of Action Against DV" (domestic violence) to raise awareness of the issue and the fact that the north Bronx has seen the highest rates of domestic violence in the City in recent years.

The prosecuting attorney said discovery items had been shared with the defense team. Discovery is the term used in law to describe the compulsory disclosure of relevant documents between two parties to a legal action. The prosecution requested that an existing order of protection for the two children who were victims of the shooting be extended. Her request was granted by the presiding judge.

Mejia Castillo was remanded in custody. He seemingly had

both his hands restrained behind his back while in court, with one arm freed at one point to allow him to sign a document. He is due back in court in June and is presumed innocent unless and until convicted.

The Bronx District Attorney's domestic violence unit can be reached on (718) 838 6688 and provides confidential support and services to those affected by domestic violence.

### Fordham Manor: 26-Year-Old Male Stabbed on East Kingsbridge Road

A 26-year-old man was stabbed twice in the leg during a physical altercation in Fordham Manor, police said. Police said they received a complaint on Tuesday, March 12, at around 8 p.m. regarding an assault in front of 1 East Kingsbridge Road. They said a 26-year-old male was involved in a physical altercation with an unknown male who stabbed the victim in the leg twice with a knife.

Police said the suspect fled the location on foot westbound on East Kingsbridge Road, and the complainant ran to his home and called 911. They said the victim was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital and is listed in stable condition, and added that no suspect description is yet available, and the investigation is ongoing.

### Fordham Manor: One Woman Hospitalized, One Woman Arrested after Stabbing

One woman was hospitalized after a stabbing in Fordham Manor on Thursday, March 7, according to the City's emergency services. An EMS spokesperson said emergency services personnel received a call a 1.44 p.m. on March 7 for a reported stabbing at 2652 Bainbridge Avenue, located between East 194th Street and East 196th Street.

The spokesperson said one person was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital and their condition and description were unknown at the time. Citizens reported via the Citizens App that a woman had been stabbed in her left arm, and that a suspect has been arrested.

Norwood News contacted the NYPD for more information on the incident and a spokesperson later said they received a report of an assault at the location. "A 42-year-old female reported to police that on Thursday, March 7, 2024, at approximately 13.41

hours, she was slashed in the arm by an unknown individual in the vicinity of Marion Avenue and East 194 Street," an NYPD spokesperson said. "The victim was transported by EMS to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition."

Pursuant to an ongoing investigation, they said Amelia Benjamin, 46, of 2659 Bainbridge Avenue was arrested and charged with assault on March 12. She is presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

### Bedford Park: Man Attempts Robbery to Rob Store, Shoots Employee

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying



Photo courtesy of the NYPD  
**THIS MAN IS** sought for a Bedford Park armed attempted robbery and assault on March 9, 2024.

photo who they say is wanted in connection to an attempted robbery and assault that occurred inside a Bedford Park store. Police said that on Saturday, March 9, at around 2 p.m., a customer entered the store, located at 101 East 198th Street (a deli & grocery) at Creston Avenue, and while an employee was handing the customer some store merchandise, the customer attempted to grab it while simultaneously displaying a gun and threatening the 44-year-old male employee.

They said the victim attempted to struggle with the suspect, resulting in the suspect firing one shot in the victim's direction, before the suspect fled the scene. They said the victim was not injured and no merchandise was taken. Police said the suspect has a dark complexion and was wearing a dark-colored, hooded sweat-shirt.

### Fordham Manor: Food Vendor Beaten and Robbed at Gunpoint

Police are looking for five in-

dividuals who beat and robbed a food vendor on East Fordham Road on the border of Belmont and Fordham Manor on Feb. 26. Police said they were called to East Fordham Road and Third Avenue on Feb. 26 at around 11.05 p.m. when the 34-year-old victim reported he was working at the food cart, when five individuals approached him and demanded money.

Police said one member of the group displayed a black gun and hit the victim across the face causing swelling and injury. They said the others began to punch and kick him about the body. Police said the suspects stole an undetermined amount of cash as well as the victim's iPhone, before fleeing on foot, southbound, along Third Avenue. They said no arrests have yet been made in the case and no description of the suspects was available. They are continuing to investigate.



Photo by Síle Moloney  
**POLICE INVESTIGATE A** shooting of a boy, 15, in Fordham Manor on March 8, 2024.

### Fordham Manor: Boy, 15, Shot on Grand Concourse

Police said a 15-year-old boy is stable having previously been categorized as critical following a shooting on the corner of the Grand Concourse and East Kingsbridge Road in Fordham Manor by the D train subway entrance. Police said they were alerted via 911 to a shooting of a male at around 7.57 p.m. on Friday, March 8, outside 2675 Grand Concourse. Upon arrival, they said they observed the teen with a gunshot wound to the left thigh, and said he was taken by EMS to Jacobi hospital. There are no arrests, and the investigation is ongoing, police said.

*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/>, or on Twitter @NYPDTips.*

*All calls are strictly confidential.*



## VIOLENCE INTERVENTION & PREVENTION (VIP) PROGRAM

975 Kelly Street Suite 401 Bronx, NY 10459

### WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

Elder Abuse, the mistreatment or harming of an older person, is an injustice that we all need to prevent and address.

- Physical
- Emotional/ Psychological
- Financial
- Sexual
- Neglect



### FACTS ABOUT ELDER ABUSE

- About 1 in 10 Americans age 60+ have experienced abuse.
- Without decent health care and public resources, our population becomes more at risk for abuse as we age.
- The impact of elder abuse is felt by people of all ages.
- Elder abuse also reduces older people's participation in the life of our communities.
- Elder abuse creates health care and legal costs that are often carried by public programs like Medicare and Medicaid.



### ABOUT US

We provide FREE services and supports designed to promote elder justice by helping them to navigate systems and ensure their safety within the home and their community.



### OUR SERVICES

- Advocacy
- Safety planning
- Information & Referral
- Supportive Counseling
- Assistance with Order of Protection & Evictions
- Crisis Intervention
- Security Lock Installation
- Educational Workshops, and more



**FOR INFORMATION AND REFERRALS  
PLEASE CALL (718)542-0006 OR EMAIL  
US AT INFO@NSHOPP.ORG**



SHOPP Elder Justice Program is Funded by the NYC Department for the Aging (DFTA)

## PROGRAMA DE INTERVENCIÓN Y PREVENCIÓN DE LA VIOLENCIA (VIP)

975 Kelly Street Suite 401 Bronx, NY 10459

### ¿QUÉ ES EL ABUSO DE ANCIANOS?

Abuso de ancianos, el maltrato o daño a una persona mayor, es una injusticia que todos debemos prevenir y ayudar.

- Físico
- Emocional/Psicológico
- Financiero
- Sexual
- Negligencia



### DATOS SOBRE EL ABUSO DE ANCIANOS

- Aproximadamente 1 de cada 10 adultos mayores de 60 años ha experimentado abuso.
- Sin atención médica decente y recursos públicos, nuestra población corre más riesgo de abuso a medida que envejece.
- El impacto del abuso de ancianos lo sienten personas de todas las edades.
- El abuso de ancianos también reduce la participación de las personas mayores en la vida de nuestras comunidades.
- El abuso de ancianos genera costos legales y de atención de la salud que a menudo corren a cargo de programas públicos como Medicare y Medicaid.



### SOBRE NOSOTROS

Ofrecemos servicios y apoyo GRATUITO diseñado en promoción de la justicia para personas mayores, ayudándolos a navegar los sistemas y seguridad en su hogar y su comunidad



### NUESTROS SERVICIOS

- Apoyo y defensa
- Planificación de la seguridad
- Información y Referidos
- Consejería a corto plazo
- Asistencia con orden de protección y desalojos
- Intervención en Crisis
- Instalación de Cerraduras
- Presentaciones educativas, y mucho más...



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O ENVÍENOS UN CORREO ELECTRÓNICO A  
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El Programa de Justicia para Adultos Mayores de SHOPP está financiado por el Departamento para Personas Mayores (DFTA) de la ciudad de Nueva York.



## Letters To The Editor

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

### The New York Local Journalism Sustainability Act

The New York Local Journalism Sustainability Act would provide tax credits to local community-based newspapers for hiring local news reporters. It is important to lobby Gov. Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, along with your local state senator and state assembly member to support this critical legislation. Most communities are down to one local daily or weekly newspaper.

Newspapers have to deal with increasing costs for newsprint, delivery and distribution as well as reduced advertising revenues and competition from the internet and other news information sources. Daily newspapers concentrate on international, Washington, Albany, business, and sports stories. They have few reporters covering local

neighborhood news.

Weekly newspapers fill the void for coverage of local community news. I'm grateful that you have afforded me the opportunity to express my views via letters to the editor, along with others who may have different opinions on the issues of the day. Albany needs to join us in supporting weekly community newspapers. Readers patronize advertisers; they provide the revenues to help keep them in business. Let us hope there continues to be room for everyone, including the *Norwood News*.

**Larry Penner**  
Great Neck

*Editor's Note: We thank Mr. Penner for his advocacy of community newspapers. Unfortunately, as a nonprofit media publication, the Norwood News would not benefit from the referenced legislation even if it were to pass, but we support it nonetheless.*

### Student Loan Forgiveness

I actually agree with the vast majority of Larry Penner's letter to the edi-

tor [*Norwood News*, March 7-20, 2024] on "Student Loan Forgiveness." I have several points I would like to add to it. First, as opposed to concentrating on the symptom of the problem - student loan forgiveness - concentrate on the problem itself: why is college so expensive? What kinds of outrageous perks and privileges are given to administrators and professors? When I went to college in the early 1980s, tuition was \$130 a credit. The son of one of the professors attended the school and was given free tuition. How many more colleges have situations such as these?

Second, Mr. Penner should not characterize individuals who don't pay their student loans as "deadbeats," but rather every case should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. As far as Mr. Penner's suggestion that Congress enact legislation to guarantee refunds from those who owe money in the form of loans, it's been in place for decades. The federal government already snatches tax returns from those who owe student loan debt when a spouse files an "Injured Spouse" form. The state also snatches the return. The spouse files a "non-obligated spouse"

form.

### Fines Paid by Former Bronx Elected Officials

*Editor's Note: In response to previous letters from Richard Marias on whether certain former Bronx elected officials convicted of corruption have paid their fines, served their time, and received their pensions, we followed up on the matter with various sources, including, as directed by other sources, federal prosecutors for the Southern District of New York. The latter referred us to the Federal Bureau of Prisons. As of press date, we're following up with this bureau and will share the outcome of our findings.*

*Please send all letters to the editor, along with supporting hyperlinked sources, to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org) or by mail to Norwood News, 3400 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467, by the Friday before each publication day. Letter writers should aim to write no more than 300 words on local issues or in response to published articles.*

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# Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE

## EVENTS

Celebrate **Women's History Month** by honoring past heroines like Harriet Tubman, as well as local mothers, sisters etc. with Bronx Community Board 7, its district manager, Karla Cabrera-Carrera, and LINC NYC on Thursday, March 28, at 11.30 a.m. at Bronx Library Center, 310 E Kingsbridge Road, Bronx. This event is geared towards families with kids aged zero to 5 years of age, but all ages are welcome. Sign up at [bit.ly/fordhamlinc](https://bit.ly/fordhamlinc) or contact Arisbel Villa at [avila@lincnyc.org](mailto:avila@lincnyc.org).

The **Happy Land Memorial Garifuna Heritage Walking Tour** will take place on Saturday, March 23, at 11 a.m. to coincide with the 33rd anniversary of the Happy Land Social Club Fire on March 25, 1990. The departure point will be the southeast corner of East 174<sup>th</sup> Street and Boston Road. Join José Francisco Avila and The

Bronx County Historical Society for a 90-minute walk of the historic West Farms area, afflicted by the fire. Visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/happy-land-memorial-garifuna-heritage-walking-tour-tickets-856349172427> to reserve tickets.

The Office of the Bronx Borough President is hosting an **Irish Heritage Month Celebration** at the Rambling House, 4292 Katonah Avenue in Woodlawn on Wednesday, March 27, at 5.30 p.m.

The Office will also be hosting a **Greek Heritage Month Celebration** at St. Peter the Apostle Greek Orthodox Church, 3245 Kingsbridge Avenue in Kingsbridge on Friday, April 5, at 5.30 p.m. Email [events@bronxbp.nyc.gov](mailto:events@bronxbp.nyc.gov) to RSVP for either event and for more information.

## KIDS

The 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct with Lt. Nelson Bonila and Assemblyman John Zaccaro Jr. (A.D. 80) are hosting an **Easter Egg Hunt** on Saturday, March 23, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. across the street from the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct station house at 3016 Webster

Avenue. All are welcome. Call Officers Capo or Echevarria on (718) 220 5824 for more details.

## MUSIC

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Park Blvd West Bronx, New York 10468, presents **La Sonora Ponceña**, a Puerto Rican salsa band, founded in 1954 by Enrique "Quique" Lucca Caraballo, Saturday, March 30, at 8 p.m. Today Quique's son, Papo Lucca, directs the band. The band has stayed active for a remarkable amount of time, recording dozens of albums, including a 55th anniversary album. Visit <https://www.lehmancenter.org/events> for more information and to buy tickets.

## ART

Join En Foco and The BxArts Factory as they present **The Story Unveiled: Illuminating Womxn's Narratives**, an exhibition hosted at The BxArts Factory, 240 East 153rd Street, Bronx, NY 10451 from March 7 to March 31. For more information, visit [eventbrite.com](https://eventbrite.com), and search using the event title.

## DANCE

**A Silent Disco** will be held at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, 3225 Reservoir Oval East in Norwood on Friday, March 29, at 6 p.m. All are welcome. For more information, email [Malc.Pinckney@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:Malc.Pinckney@parks.nyc.gov) or call (718) 543-8672.

## FILM

Join Uptown4Palestine for a screening of "Between 2 Crossings" on Saturday, March 23, from 3 to 5 p.m. at Valentine Varian House, located at 3266 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10467, near East 207th Street in Norwood. (Organizers note that the event is not sponsored by the venue.) Seating is limited. Please RSVP at <https://bit.ly/3EiICJ>.

# Mayor Visits Kingsbridge Underpass

By SÍLE MOLONEY

New York City Mayor Eric Adams joined local Bronx elected officials on Thursday evening, March 14, for a visit to the Kingsbridge underpass, a well-known gathering point for unhoused individuals and for drug use.

Located underneath the Grand Concourse and East Kingsbridge Road in Fordham Manor, the mayor was accompanied by District 15 City Councilmember Oswald Feliz and Assemblyman George Alvarez (A.D. 78). Feliz later said of the tour, "Really appreciate @NYCMayor & Assemblyman @GALVA-REZNYC for touring the Kingsbridge Underpass tonight. Quality of life issues here are escalating, affecting the entire community, & utterly unacceptable. Look forward to working together to ensure our community can live [with] dignity."

Norwood News recently reported on the arrest of 16 people at nearby Valentine Avenue in the vicinity of East 192<sup>nd</sup> Street, located the other side of the Grand Concourse, who were charged with, among other offenses, drug trafficking. Meanwhile, on Friday, March 8, a 15-year-old male was shot at the entrance to the Kingsbridge Road subway station on the Grand Concourse and East Kingsbridge Road.

With the permission of her mom, Norwood News spoke to a 10-year-old student from the area after the shooting. She said she felt sorry for the innocent people in her neighborhood who "have to pay for what other people do." Asked if she got training at school on mass shootings, she said, "Not really. We just got fire drills and lockdown practice and sheltering...like to stay inside the building when there's stuff happening

around. Today, we had a lockdown practice."

Asked how it made her feel when she has to do the training, she said, "It makes me feel, like, scared. Even if it's a joke, sometimes I get scared. I just don't want it [anything bad] to happen [for real]. Asked if she felt others took the drills seriously, she said, "Some people do joke about it." She added that people should be careful going out and to pay attention to their surroundings. "Keep your awareness just like on," she said.

The mayor later referenced his visit to the area during a press conference in the context of quality-of-life, mental health, and sanitation concerns across the City, adding that a clean-up of the area followed his visit. Local residents and educators have long complained about the prevalence of open [outdoor] drug use in the area. Many agree services *are* needed to assist those with addiction issues but have called for such services to be provided at a venue located away from young children who are habitually witnessing, at very close proximity, the effects of such open, outdoor drug use in plain sight.

They argue, for example, that the distribution of clean syringes by outreach workers should be handled at a venue or center situated away from schools. The matter was raised once again at a public safety forum held at P.S. 246 in Fordham Manor on Nov. 30 last year. P.S. 246 is located opposite Poe Park, a well-known site for open drug use.

Feliz had participated in a virtual



Photo courtesy of the Office of Councilman Oswald Feliz. **NEW YORK CITY** Mayor Eric Adams joins District 15 City Councilman Oswald Feliz and Assemblyman George Alvarez (A.D. 78) on a tour of the Kingsbridge Underpass on Thursday, March 14, 2024.

community input discussion on the renovation of Poe Park playground on Feb. 28, together with local residents including members of Friends of Moshulu Parkland, NYC Parks, and Partnership for Parks.

Some of the items discussed included flood hazard zones, managing storm water, heat mitigation, tree preservation, an accessible and inclusive redesign of the park, welcoming entrances, other design ideas like seating areas, green spaces, spaces for gathering/events, and water and other play features.

Of the mayor's latest visit to the area, Feliz added, "@NYCMayor also joined us at Poe Park, and also the building I grew up in. We did lots of baseball/wiffle ball here. He promised to join us for baseball, after we're done resolving these challenges!"

## Typical Project Timeline

The timeline for a capital project is between 32-47 months.



Slide courtesy of NYC Parks

A TYPICAL PROJECT timeline for an NYC Parks project.



# NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



## Applications Open for 2024 NY Yankees Youth Leadership Award

Applications for the 2024 NY Yankees Youth Leadership Award are open, as confirmed by Bronx Community Board 7. Apply by April 7, 2024, at noon. Visit <https://bit.ly/3I8MqRs> for more details.

## NYC Free Tax Prep Webinar

Bronx Community Board 7 and NYC Department of Consumer & Worker Protection are hosting an NYC Free Tax Prep Webinar on Monday, March 25, at 6 p.m. Register to receive the Zoom link at <https://bit.ly/3IwUtwJ>.

## Summer Folk Culture Internship

Applications are open for a summer folk culture internship with Mind-builders Creative Arts Center. Apply at [https://www.mind-builders.org/programs/folk\\_culture.html](https://www.mind-builders.org/programs/folk_culture.html) by April 15.

## Applications Open for Tile, Marble & Terrazzo Worker Apprenticeships

Applications are open for tile, marble, and terrazzo worker apprenticeships. Applications will be available at

the International Masonry Institute, located at 12-07 44th Avenue, Long Island City, NY 11101 from 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. on April 15, April 16, April 17, April 18, April 19, Oct. 21, Oct. 22, Oct. 23, Oct. 24 and Oct. 25. Applications must be completed, and exams taken, on the day of application. Doors open at 8 a.m. There will be no admittance after 8:30 a.m. Processing will be until 10 a.m. Applications will not be accepted by mail.

For further information, applicants should contact Tile, Marble and Terrazzo BAC, Local Union #7 of NY & NJ at (718) 706-9294. Additional job search assistance can be obtained at your local New York State Department of Labor Career Center (see: [dol.ny.gov/career-centers](http://dol.ny.gov/career-centers)).

## Public Hearing

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) announced that a public hearing on proposed amendments to existing City rules relating to roadway and sidewalk cafés will be held on April 16 at 9:30 a.m. The hearing was due to be held on March 19 but has since been postponed to the April

date. Please check the hearing page on LPC's website (<https://www.nyc.gov/site/lpc/hearings/hearings.page>) for updated hearing information, signup sheet links, the agenda and Zoom instructions.

The hearing relates to proposed amendments to Chapter 2 of Title 63 of the Rules of the City of New York. The hearing will take place both at the Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1 Centre Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10029 and via the LPC's YouTube channel.

## Soccer Referees Wanted

Soccer referees are wanted by the Eastern New York Youth Soccer Association (ENYSA) to referee youth soccer games. Training is provided. For more information, log on to <https://enysreferee.org/how-to-become-a-referee/>. If you have any questions, e-mail [questions@enysreferee.org](mailto:questions@enysreferee.org).

## NY Senate Passes NY HEAT Act

The New York Senate voted to pass the NY HEAT Act, and now the Better Buildings New York Coalition is urging Albany leaders to protect ratepayers from escalating future costs and to include the full NY HEAT Act in their final budget agreement. They say 25% of all households that are energy-burdened could see their bills cut nearly in half, saving an average of \$136 each month, with the new law.

They said in January, Gov. Kathy Hochul included key provisions of the NY HEAT [Home Energy Affordable Transition] Act, in her executive budget proposal. They said the bill previously passed the NYS Senate during last year's session and for the first time now has majority support in the Assembly.

## Bronx Week Vendor Deadline

Applications are open for vendors during Bronx Week on the Grand Concourse by Yankee Stadium. Join the vibrant intersection of vendors at 161st Street and Grand Concourse for Bronx Week 2024. Apply using the following link: [https://www.cognitofrms.com/MASCHospitalityGroup/TheBronxWeek?mc\\_cid=e42374ae2b&mc\\_eid=4160a56007](https://www.cognitofrms.com/MASCHospitalityGroup/TheBronxWeek?mc_cid=e42374ae2b&mc_eid=4160a56007)

## Applications Open for Vendors at Bronx Night Market Vendor

The Bronx Night Market will return to Fordham Plaza on April 6, at 4 p.m. The Bronx Night Market is not merely a culinary gathering; it is a powerful re-

flection of the community's resilience, creativity, and collective pride, contributing to the borough's cultural richness and economic vibrancy. This special event will occur on the first Saturday of the month from April to October. Visit <https://www.maschospitalitygroup.com/bronxnightmarket> for more information and to apply as a vendor.

## Affordable Housing Lotteries

NYC Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) has open affordable housing lotteries for housing units at the following locations, among others:

- 3001 Grand Concourse, with a deadline of April 3
- 1140 Grant Avenue, with a deadline of April 1
- 3103 Sedgwick Avenue, with a deadline of March 22
- 2754 Creston Avenue, with a deadline of April 3
- 3831 Carpenter Avenue, with a deadline of April 1

HPD frequently extends the announced deadlines. Visit <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/search-lotteries> for more information.

## Upcoming Voter Registration & Election Deadlines

The U.S. presidential primaries take place on April 2. Early voting starts March 23. The primary elections for Congress, State, and party positions take place on June 25. Early voting starts June 15. The last day to change party registration is February 14. If you are registered in one party, and want to vote in a different party's primary, you must change your party registration. The last day to register to vote is March 23 for the presidential primary, and June 15 for the local primaries. Visit <https://vote.nyc/page/register-vote> to register to change party affiliation.

## Grant Cycle Open

RTW Charitable Foundation aims to build partnerships with local organizations to advance health equity in New York City. Organizations that seek to address the gaps in care for communities of color, low-income families, recent immigrants, and other underserved populations are invited to submit a Letter of Intent for funding in the 2024 grant cycle by April 15. Visit <https://www.tfaforms.com/5108302> for more information.

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—Guy Monseair, City Island Rowing Coach

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—Robert Michler, MD

Surgeon-in-Chief and Chair, Surgery and  
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See Guy's story at [montefiore.org/guy](https://montefiore.org/guy)



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### BEDFORD PARK DRAWING CLUB

Is anyone interested in a weekly figure-drawing meet-up in the Bedford Park, Bronx area? A room might be available for this sketch group to meet in if there is enough interest. Artists would be responsible for their own drawing materials and would sketch a clothed model in a variety of timed poses. All levels would be welcome! Contact [BedfordParkDrawingClub@gmail.com](mailto:BedfordParkDrawingClub@gmail.com) for details.

## Public and Community Meetings

The 52<sup>nd</sup> **PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of the month at different locations, either in person or online. 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, March 26, at 6.30 p.m. at Monroe College, Kings Hall, Mintz Auditorium, 2501 Jerome Ave., Bronx, NY 10468. Contact [KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov) to be added to the distribution list. All meetings are in person unless otherwise notified by Bronx CB7.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8** full board [executive] meeting will be held in April [date TBC]. Contact [BX08@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:BX08@cb.nyc.gov) to be added to the distribution list.

The next **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 3, 2024, at 7 p.m. Usually, the meetings are held at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy. South in Apt. B1 (lobby floor). For more details, please contact [bedfordmosholu@verizon.net](mailto:bedfordmosholu@verizon.net).



#### Maintenance Quality Control Assurance Testing and Inspection Services in Connection with Roadway Repair, Citywide: E-PIN 84123B0025

This Competitive Sealed Bid (CSB) is being released on 3/18/24 through PASSPort, New York City's online procurement portal. Responses to this CSB must be submitted via PASSPort and Bid Date will be 4/24/24 at 12pm. To access the solicitation, vendors should visit the PASSPort Public Portal at <https://www.nyc.gov/site/mocs/passport/about-PASSPort> and click on the "Procurement Navigator." This will take you to the Public Portal of all procurements in the PASSPort system. To quickly locate the CSB, insert the EPIN 84123B0025 into the Keywords search field. In order to respond to the Competitive Sealed Bid, vendors must create an account within the PASSPort system if they have not already done so. This procurement is subject to M/WBE participation goals, the M/WBE goals for this project are 30%. DOT will hold a Prebid Conference on 3/27/24.

Any inquiries concerning this Competitive Sealed Bid should be directed by email to agency contact [nkumar@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:nkumar@dot.nyc.gov), under the subject line E-PIN: 84123B0025.

Eric Adams, Mayor  
Ydanis Rodriguez, Commissioner



# DOT Acts On Moped Chaos

(continued from page 1)

"Our streets must be safe for everyone — pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike," said New York City Mayor Eric Adams in the context of the road safety campaign launch on March 19. "E-bikes are a great way for New Yorkers to get around, but we must ensure that people riding them can do so safely. That's why we're launching this campaign as a part of our broader efforts to make our streets safer and adapt to the new ways our streets are being used."

In the context of the Norwood attempted assault on police, the NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying a male motorbike rider, aged 18 to 25, with a dark complexion who was wearing all black clothing when on March 14, at around 6.17 p.m., he damaged a moving, marked police vehicle with two uniformed, on-duty, police officer occupants.

They said, in part, the officers were traveling past 3555 Bainbridge Avenue when "an unknown, unidentified male motorist, recklessly operating a blue, two-wheeled vehicle did approach [...] and threw a brick towards the rear of the vehicle." They said the rider fled southbound on Bainbridge Avenue towards East Gun Hill Road and no injuries were reported.

On March 12, *Norwood News* witnessed a group of motorcycle / ATV riders at around 5 p.m. traveling through red lights up and down the Grand Concourse in Bedford Park. When we asked a resident if she had also seen the group on Tuesday, she said, "I've seen a lot of those, yeah. They're very reckless. I mean they're very scary. All those motorcycles in general are terrifying."

We also witnessed a roving band on the Grand Concourse in Tremont earlier that evening of March 14. It's unknown if it was the same group as was later in Bedford Park.

The NYPD and EMS later said they responded to a separate motor vehicle accident the same evening at around 6.50 p.m. Police said, in part, "A 2019 Suzuki motorcycle, operated by a 23-year-old male, was traveling westbound on Pelham Parkway approaching the intersection of Eastchester Road when an FDNY ambulance, operated by a 25-year-old, male, on-duty EMT, was traveling northbound on Eastchester Road. As the ambulance entered the intersection it was struck on the passenger side by the motorcycle."

They said the Suzuki driver was later pronounced deceased at Jacobi hospital, both ambulance occupants were transported to a local area hospital in stable condition, and the investigation remains ongoing.

Meanwhile, DOT officials said they launched the new multi-platform, e-bike public education campaign, "Get Smart Before You Start" to promote the safe use of e-bikes. DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez said the new campaign aims to reduce injuries and fatalities.

DOT officials said with nearly six percent of NYC adults reporting that they ride an e-bike or e-scooter once a week or more, the new campaign will use "compelling images" and "instructional audio" to inform users how to properly accelerate, brake, and operate an e-bike at an appropriate speed.

They said DOT will also help newer riders know what to expect when riding an e-bike. They said last year, DOT installed a record 31.9 miles of protected bike lanes and installed the first "double-wide" bike lanes to better accommodate the increasing number of cyclists in New York City.

They said bike ridership reached an all-time high in 2023 and added that the agency is committed to both improving infrastructure to better accommodate e-bike users and expanding enforcement against the most dangerous behaviors on the road. They said the million-dollar safety campaign is part of DOT's \$280 million Vision Zero expense budget for the next fiscal year and the agency's \$7.7 billion, 10-year capital plan for Vision Zero-related projects.

Rodriguez said, in part, "Our data-driven process shows that this new campaign is a timely and necessary response to the rise in fatalities that involve e-bike riders. E-bikes are an efficient and environmentally friendly way to get around and we hope that this campaign will encourage their safe operation."

We asked DOT if the campaign relates only to e-bikes or both e-bikes and gas-powered motorcycles/dirt bikes/ATVs. We did not receive an immediate response as of press date. A breakdown of different types of vehicles accompanies this story. When asked, the NYPD press office was unable to confirm if all of the bikes involved in the referenced incidents were e-powered or gas-powered. According to online research, ATVs can be e-powered as well as gas-powered.

On March 20, DOT officials said the relaunch of the red-light camera program coincided with the release of its Red-Light Camera Report showing what they said was "the tremendous safety benefits of red-light cameras." They said the report shows red light cameras located at fewer than 1% of the city's intersections dramatically reduce red-light running and danger-

ous crashes.

They said the latest push comes amid a record surge in traffic fatalities attributable to red-light running. Last year, they said 29 people died from red-light running, an all-time high, adding that all occurred at intersections without a red-light camera.

Attendees at the event called for the passage of bills to renew and expand the red-light camera program and to crack down on the city's most reckless red-light runners. They said the bills would expand the camera program from fewer than 1% of the city's intersections to 10% of intersections with a traffic signal. A companion bill would require the State Department of Motor Vehicles to revoke the vehicle registration of vehicles in receipt of five or more red-light camera violations over one year. A further DOT safe cycling campaign launch is set for March 22.

Prior to the launch of these campaigns, on Sunday, March 17, at 2.40 p.m., around 20 vehicles were seen in Norwood by *Norwood News* traveling northbound towards Woodlawn along Jerome Avenue at Mosholu Parkway North. They were followed by at least three unmarked police vehicles with a siren, and several NYPD patrol cars and vans. At 3:02 p.m. three ATV riders were later seen returning southbound on Jerome Avenue, where one was observed briefly mounting the sidewalk. This time, the bikers were pursued by several police vehicles and an NYPD helicopter overhead.

According to police radio transmission, the pursuit began on the Grand

Concourse and continued north into Norwood and Woodlawn. When we queried the chase with the NYPD, a press official said, "There is no report on file based on the information provided."

Speaking at the 52nd Precinct Community Council meeting on Feb. 22, 52nd Precinct Captain José Gomera said, "I know the last time we had a lot of complaints about the scooters." Gomera added that in the prevailing 28-day period, officers from the 52nd Precinct had seized 171 scooters, bikes, and mopeds, had issued 31 summonses, and had made 29 arrests.

He added that year-to-date, 354 illegal vehicles had been seized, 48 summonses issued, and 45 arrests had been made. "Confiscating scooters is a dangerous job to do because sometimes these guys flee from us and they could fall, and then it's going to be on the officers, right, if something happens to the motorist as well, and we also want to prevent anyone from getting hurt," he said.

As reported, Eric Duprey, 30, died after he was hit by an ice cooler and knocked off his moped by NYPD Sgt. Erik Duran of the NYPD Narcotics Borough Bronx (NBBX) during a fourth "buy-and-bust" operation or undercover drug purchase of the day, on Aug. 23, 2023, at 2505 Aqueduct Avenue in Fordham Manor. Attorney General Letitia James announced on Jan. 23, that manslaughter charges had been brought against Duran, 37, of Putnam County. Duran is presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

Know the difference	E-Bike Class 1	E-Bike Class 2	E-Bike Class 3	Moped Class C	Moped Class B	Moped Class A	E-Scooters	Not Legal
	Electric Bike with Pedal Assist	Electric Bike, throttle up to 20 MPH, Operable Pedals	Electric Bike, throttle up to 25 MPH, Operable Pedals	Limited Use Motorcycle, Low speed, 2-3 wheels	Limited Use Motorcycle, Low speed, 2-3 wheels	Limited Use Motorcycle, Low speed, 2-3 wheels	Device with handbars, a non-fixed seat, weighing less than 125 lbs. Can be powered by electric motor	The following are examples of illegal e-mobility devices: Moped without license plate or VIN Electric Skateboard Segway Hoverboard Electric unicycle Kick scooter
How fast can I go?	20 MPH	20 MPH	25 MPH	20 MPH	30 MPH	40 MPH	15 MPH	
Do I need a license?	No	No	No	Yes, Driver's License	Yes, Driver's License	Yes, Driver's License	No	
Do I need to register my bike?	No	No	No	Yes, Must be registered with NYS DMV, must have license plates & VIN	Yes, Must be registered with NYS DMV, must have license plates & VIN	Yes, Must be registered with NYS DMV, must have license plates & VIN	No	
Where can I ride?	Bike Lanes and streets with speed limits no greater than 30 MPH	Bike Lanes and streets with speed limits no greater than 30 MPH	Bike Lanes and streets with speed limits no greater than 30 MPH	Right lane and/or shoulder* straight when making a left turn	Right lane and/or shoulder* straight when making a left turn	Right lane and/or shoulder* straight when making a left turn	Bike Lanes and streets with speed limits no greater than 30 MPH	
Do I need to wear a helmet?	Recommended for all, Required for 16-17 year olds and working vehicles	Recommended for all, Required for 16-17 year olds and working vehicles	Yes, Required by law	Recommended	Yes, Required by law	Yes, Required by law	Recommended for all, Required for 16-17 year olds	

\*Including on bridges  
\*\*Including vehicle lanes on bridges

Image courtesy of NYC Department of Transportation

**TYPES OF E-BIKES & mopeds.** A DOT official said the rules outlined in this chart apply to mopeds that are both gas-powered and electric-powered. However, we don't yet know if the new safety campaign is just for e-bikes or all bikes.

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