



NORWOOD NEWS

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STONEWALLED!



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

THE FORMER SITE of seven small businesses located on Bainbridge Avenue and East 204th Street in Norwood destroyed in a fire on Oct. 10, 2023, remains empty since the building's ruins were demolished on Oct. 17, 2023.

By **SILE MOLONEY, DAVID GREENE & ARIEL PACHECO**

Ever since arson was confirmed by the NYPD as the cause of a 4-alarm, nonfatal fire that ripped through seven small

businesses on Bainbridge Avenue by East 204th / East 205th Street in Norwood in October 2023, the affected small business owners, their employees, their patrons, and residents

have all been anxiously waiting to hear what is to become of the now demolished and formerly condemned site. Amid rumors that the site has been sold, their patience is waning.

As reported, Hillside Meat Market, Bainbridge Bakery, Curry & Kebab, La Familia Market (a Mexican deli), Shahjalal Grocery & Variety, Mz

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Fordham University Holds Climate Summit, Receives \$50M Grant

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Democratic Congressman Ritchie Torres (NY-15), gathered at Fordham University for a climate summit on April 8 to celebrate the awarding to the university of \$50 million in grants for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Region 2 environmental justice initiatives. According to Fordham, it is the largest grant the university has ever received in its 183-year history.

Fordham officials said the university will be tasked with managing and distributing the grant to community groups working to tackle climate change issues such as air pollution, toxic cleanups, and food access. They said the university has been appointed as the regional grant provider for EPA Region 2, which encompasses New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and eight federally recognized Native American nations.

Speaking at the summit, Schumer said, "This is a red-letter day for Fordham and for environmental justice in New York and here in The Bronx." He added, "We couldn't have thought of a better place than Fordham to dispense this to go to grassroots groups."

In August 2022, as reported, U.S. President Joe Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) into law, which created the largest investment in environmental and climate justice in the country's history. The EPA received \$3 billion in funds stemming from that bill to award grants and technical assistance to disadvantaged communities.

Speaking at the summit, Torres said, "We designed the Inflation Reduction Act to lift up the lowest-income communities of color, especially The Bronx, which has been Ground Zero for environmental injustice." The congressman's district, which stretches from the northwest of the borough to the South Bronx is among the poorest in the nation.

High rates of asthma among Bronx youth exacerbated by fumes emanating from the vehicle-heavy Cross Bronx Expressway which crosses the district, have long been a cause for concern. According to a September 2021 report by the City's health department on asthma-



Photo courtesy of Congressman Ritchie Torres
REP. RITCHIE TORRES (NY-15) and U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) attend a climate summit at Fordham University on April 8, 2024.



Photo courtesy of U.S. Majority Leader Chuck Schumer

(L-R) REP. RITCHIE Torres (NY-15), Fordham University President Tania Tetlow, and U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) attend a climate summit at Fordham University on April 8, 2024.

related health disparities in the Bronx, "There are several high poverty neighborhoods in The Bronx where two thirds or more of the residents are people of color. These neighborhoods persistently have the highest rates of asthma-related morbidity compared with the rest of New York City."

The report continued, "Residents of high poverty neighborhoods very often live in poorly maintained, substandard housing which subject residents to a number of common environmental asthma triggers, including pests, dust, mold, and smoking. These environmental triggers can in turn increase the frequency and severity of asthma symptoms and exacerbations."

In the context of sustainability and the environment, Fordham University President Tania Tetlow said, "There is no issue more urgent to the world than the ways that we care for our earth, our home."

The subgrants to be distributed by the university will range from \$75,000 to \$350,000, according to Fordham officials, with the goal of distributing \$40 million over a period of three years among 200 organizations. Fordham officials said the remaining \$10 million will be designated for "the grantmaking operation and related programming," meaning the management by Fordham of the \$40 million in subgrants, as well as for Fordham's own research.

According to information posted on Fordham University's website, the guidelines and criteria for receipt of applications for the subgrants have yet to be confirmed and the official launch date for the dissemination of grants is still pending.

In a separate, earlier statement, Schumer said, "This first-of-its-kind ef-

fort, that I made sure we amply funded in the historic Inflation Reduction Act, to directly invest in grassroots environmental justice groups, is critical to fighting the carbon pollution worsening asthma, driving climate change, and increasing the likelihood and severity of devastating extreme weather events."

The U.S. senate majority leader continued, "This \$50 million for Fordham University to fund environmental justice projects is the kind of program that can help our disadvantaged communities effectively fight the pollution that harms them."

He added, "I am proud of Fordham University, and I'm so excited to see how the vibrant network of New York and Puerto Rican grassroots environmental justice organizations access and activate this federal funding. I remain laser-focused on implementing the IRA so that we can ensure it lives up to its transformative potential to clean our air and combat climate change."

Meanwhile, in an earlier statement on the grant, Democratic Congressman Adriano Espaillat (NY-13), who represents parts of northern Manhattan and the west Bronx, said, "This funding will play a significant role in our efforts to develop climate solutions that will benefit our community for many generations to come."

The keynote speaker at the climate summit was Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, a marine biologist and co-founder of Urban Ocean Lab, a think tank nonprofit that focuses on creating equitable, and practical climate and ocean policy for the future of coastal cities.

"I think what the world needs right now, more than ever, are people who can move between different disciplines," Johnson said. "We need people to solve climate problems in business, in engineering, in law, in medicine. Everyone needs to know at some fundamental level what's happening."

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story*

Jerome Ave Post Office Finally Reopens

By SÍLE MOLONEY

The post office branch located at 3464 Jerome Avenue in Norwood reopened on May 2, after being closed for around one year. Google also lists the post office as reopened. As reported, a mobile unit parked outside the post office had been serving customers following confirmation from USPS last year that there was a raccoon infestation in the building.

Following complaints from residents regarding the reopening delay, particularly during the colder months, when contacted, Xavier Hernandez from USPS, said in October 2023, “The Postal Service is committed to providing effective retail and delivery service to every community we serve. While we would like to return to regular operations at this facility, as tenants of the building, we are limited in our capacity to address

pressing safety concerns. We remain hopeful that the landlord will resolve the issue as soon as possible.”

He added, “In the meantime, we continue to provide postal services at on-site mobile units. There are three additional postal locations for retail services in the 10467 Zip code. For address information of these and any other Post Office, visit www.usps.com and enter the zip code in our Post Office Finder.”

When *Norwood News* eventually spoke to Francisco Sandoval, a representative for the property owner, Luna Bros Realty Corp, in November 2023, he said the raccoon infestation had already been addressed in June 2023, and he did not know why USPS were continuing to operate outside the building from the mobile unit.

Sandoval also alleged at the time that USPS hadn’t been paying rent since June 2023, but that neither had the organization indicated or communicated to the property owner its intention to close and move to another premises permanently. Sandoval added, in part, “There is no reason why [USPS continues to operate outside in the mobile unit]. We fixed the problems during the summer, and having corrected everything, we have been calling the office, calling the manager. They don’t



Photo by Síle Moloney

JEROME AVENUE POST office in Norwood is seen on July 12, 2023, with the shutters up but with a mobile unit outside which was being used to serve customers.



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

JEROME AVENUE POST office in Norwood is seen reopened once again on May 15, 2024, after it was shuttered for around one year due to a raccoon infestation..

know exactly what was going on. They don’t know exactly when they’re going to go [back] in.”

Sandoval continued, “Because every time they said there’s something to be repaired, we repair everything right away. A couple of days ago, they said there was a leak because of the heavy rain. We fixed it. They are still there. I don’t know. There is nobody that we [can] get. We have been calling everybody. Nobody has an answer.” Sandoval also alleged that even though customers were not allowed inside the building, USPS employees were actually “using the bathroom and using everything” inside.

Norwood News contacted USPS again in November 2023, sharing Sandoval’s feedback and asked the organization for their comments. We did not receive a response. When informed that the post of-

ice branch was once again reopened, we once again contacted USPS and asked them for an update. USPS said it does not discuss lease agreements.

Meanwhile, in other USPS news, in August 2023, USPS officials said Adela Livingston was appointed as executive postmaster of The Bronx, becoming the 13th U.S. postmaster of the borough and the first woman of Trinidadian nationality to serve as executive postmaster of The Bronx. They said Livingston is responsible for administering postal operations for around 1.5 million Bronx residents, is supported by almost 1600 employees who provide services through 24 delivery units and 22 finance stations, ensuring delivery to more than 533,343 residential and business delivery points across the borough’s 42 square miles.

University Heights: Man Hospitalized in Two-Vehicle Collision

By SÍLE MOLONEY, DAVID GREENE & MIRIAM QUIÑONES

A 22-year-old man was hospitalized following a motor vehicle collision in the University Heights section of The Bronx at the weekend, police and EMS officials said.

An NYPD spokesperson said that on Saturday, May 11, at around 3.18 p.m., a 49-year-old man reported to police that he was driving westbound on West Fordham Road and Sedgwick Avenue in a 2007 Infiniti SUV when he collided with a two-wheeled vehicle driven by the 22-year-old man.

“Both vehicles were damaged in the collision,” the spokesperson said. “The 22-year-old male was transported by EMS to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition with injuries to his neck and

leg.”

Meanwhile, FDNY/EMS confirmed they also received a call at 3.19 p.m. on May 11 regarding a person who had been struck by a vehicle at West Fordham Road and Sedgwick Avenue. An FDNY spokesperson reiterated that one person was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital, adding their condition was unknown.

Video posted to the Citizens’ App showed the motionless victim stretched out on the ground in the middle of West Fordham Road as members of Ladder 59 and Engine 43 surrounded the man to protect him from passing traffic moving in both directions and they also rendered aid until paramedics arrived. Video also showed a damaged scooter leaning against a fence to Devoe Park.

A male witness inside Fordham Hill

Food, located at 2304 Sedgwick Avenue, who declined to give his name, said of the collision, “A car was making an illegal U-turn and struck the scooter.” He added, “The bone was sticking out of the guy’s leg; he’s in bad shape.” The man’s allegation could not be immediately verified by official sources. In the Citizens’ App video, it does show the man’s left leg bandaged.

Norwood News is also looking into another apparent crash a block away from the site of this collision where a female driver allegedly pulled a razor blade on another driver. We will share any updates we receive.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call the NYPD’s



Image courtesy of the Citizens’ App

A PERSON IS seen injured and lying on the street at West Fordham Road and Sedgwick Avenue in University Heights on Saturday, May 11, 2024, as firefighters/EMS personnel and others gather around him.

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.

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**



This week, we asked readers their thoughts on the soon-to-be implemented ‘congestion pricing’ where drivers of private vehicles will be charged an additional toll when they travel to Manhattan below 60th Street, beginning in June.



“It’s ridiculous! We live in the City of New York, and we must pay to go into Manhattan. So that means if I want to go out on a night out on the town, not only do I have to pay for my family and parking and everything else that I do, now I’ll have to pay a \$17 toll to go where I live (New York City)? It’s not like I live in Jersey and coming over to New York. This is the greediness of our politicians, and I don’t want to hear Democrat or Republican because they’re all the (expletive) same. My wife rides the train every day and that poor girl comes home every day with PTSD. Every day, she comes home and tells me a story about the trains. It’s such a (expletive) shame. I feel bad for her. How much money are we going to give the MTA? They’ve been crying they’re broke for 100 years already. I’m 56 years on this earth and every year they cry they’re broke because they don’t manage their money right. Somebody’s putting money in their pocket and they just don’t do the right thing.”

Frank Pugliese,
Castle Hill

“It’s not a good time for that. They should wait two or three years when the economy improves. Right now, it’s not good. It’s too much money to charge now. My wife and I both drive to Manhattan every day. I have no choice; I’ll have to pay. I’ve got to go but it’s not a good idea. It’s too much. I go there six days a week and my wife goes there too. That’s a lot of money, and then I’ll have to pay for parking when I go there. I don’t think the money will go to the subways. I think they’ll put the money in their pockets.”

Junito DeLeon,
Riverdale

All Photo by David Greene

“Yes, I’m a straphanger and I think if they use the money for what it’s actually for like they say, I think that is going to be a good thing, but the MTA, they usually raise the prices and do all kinds of stuff, and you see no evidence of that excess revenue in action or in practice. The money gets lost somewhere. So, if they’re really going to use it to make improvements, I don’t think that’s a bad thing. I think the price is horrible, I don’t think they really thought it through. Maybe there should be some concessions? Who drives in the middle of the night?”

Damon Tutein,
Bedford Park

“No, honestly, I think the traffic will get worse because everyone likes to be by themselves now. Everybody’s in their own world. Many will do illegal stuff because no one wants to pay. Yeah, they’ll use fake plates because they don’t want to pay. Why should we pay if we built this city? It’s like what they did in Michigan when they blocked off the bridge. We’re paying more money but not getting enough services back. No, I don’t see any improvements in the subway.”

Jamal Alkayfee,
Norwood

“I think it’s absolutely ridiculous! I think the city is expensive enough and I think we’re kind of over them pushing us out of our own city, and things like this make you feel like you’re being pushed out. Their claim of less traffic and emissions is b----t. Pardon my French, but it’s absolute b-----t.”

We know that this is just a money grab as everything else, like the E-Z Pass and the bridge and tunnel system and the Port Authority, and it’s completely ridiculous now to live in New York City. It’s truly saddening because I used to be proud of this city. I used to say I was proud to live here, and I don’t think I feel that anymore.”

Radames Ocasio,
Westchester Square

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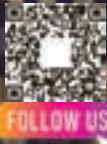
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BCC's "Run the Bronx" Encourages Healthy Living

By MIRIAM QUIÑONES & SÍLE MOLONEY

As The Bronx continues to rank last out of 62 New York State counties in terms of overall good health, those who choose to never stop fighting to change this ranking showed up once again for the 46th Annual "Run the Bronx" event hosted by Bronx Community College on Saturday, May 4.

Proceedings kicked off at 10 a.m. on the college campus with some motivational speeches delivered ahead of the event, which incorporates 10K and 5K runs and a 2-mile family fitness walk, all with the aim of improving the health outcomes of Bronx children and their families.

With Bronx residents having an estimated 85% higher risk of obesity than their Manhattan counterparts, and a 10% diabetes rate, BCC officials said the event celebrates fitness and wellness in the borough, while also showcasing the beauty of the college's University

Heights campus.

Located at 2155 University Avenue, a former NYU facility, this includes its ornate Hall of Fame, and the college's renovated, outdoor gym which was formally opened in December 2023, as reported.

Some local elected officials joined more than 2,000 participants from around the borough, the State of New York, and the world! BCC officials said this year, international participants included runners/walkers from Poland, France, England, and the Dominican Republic, while other participants included children, parents, students, and residents.

A long table filled with awards was later emptied as the medals and plaques were gradually presented to the various participants in different categories and age groups. Co-founded in 1978 by the late, distinguished Bronx Community College (BCC) President and Tuskegee Airman, Roscoe C. Brown Jr., Run the Bronx is the 2nd oldest footrace in NYC according to BCC officials.

Norwood News spoke to runner Michael Max Knobbe, BronxNet Television's executive director, on the day. "This run, the Roscoe C. Brown Hall of Fame, 'Run the Bronx' at Bronx Community College is inspiring," he said. "For so many, I participate."

Knobbe continued, "I live in The Bronx, born and raised in The Bronx. I've been part of this race for decades. Why? Because I feel like I have a lifelong commitment to health and fitness and the viability of our communities in The Bronx."

The "Run the Bronx" race routes start and end on BCC's campus and traverse surrounding neighborhoods and landmarks, including the legendary Grand Concourse. BCC officials said about half of this year's participants were K-12 students from The Bronx, and a new feature this year was the PeeWee Pavilion, which included child-friendly obstacle courses, hula hoops, bubbles, giveaways and more. Participation costs were covered for Pre-K-Grade 12 students and all CUNY students.

Elected officials in attendance in-



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

LUIS SOLTERO, U.S. Army veteran, carries a U.S. flag and is accompanied by his dog, as he approaches the finish line of the Annual "Run the Bronx" race at Bronx Community College campus on Saturday, May 4, 2024.



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

GENE FELIZ, 1ST PLACE male finisher in the 5K Annual "Run the Bronx" race at Bronx Community College campus on Saturday, May 4, 2024, poses with his prize.



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

RUNNERS CELEBRATE AS they approach the finish line of the Annual "Run the Bronx" race at Bronx Community College campus on Saturday, May 4, 2024.



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

FEMALE PARTICIPANTS SUPPORT one another at the finish line of the Annual "Run the Bronx" race at Bronx Community College campus on Saturday, May 4, 2024.

cluded local City Councilwoman Pierina Sanchez (C.D. 14), a martial arts aficionado who represents some or all of Kingsbridge Heights, Fordham, University Heights, Mount Eden and Mt. Hope, and State Sen. Robert Jackson (S.D. 31), who is known for having organized several walks/runs to Albany and who represents parts of northern Manhattan and the west Bronx.

The men's race (distance not specified) was won by Slawek Galeza, 44, in a time of 36 minutes, 58 seconds, while the first woman home (distance not specified) was Sammie Howe, 31, in a time of 44 minutes, 22 seconds.

We also spoke to Luis Soltero on the day. "I run for the veterans who can't run, who are serving now or will serve in the future," he said. "I'm a U.S. Army veteran. I served one tour in Afghanistan. I work for Lehman College. We're here with Team Lehman today. We have 50+ Team Lehman folks that came out to run and it's just to promote health and

wellness, as well as networking."

To view the full results, visit <https://results.raceroster.com/v2/en-US/results/rmwzmktxedz4ecnc/results>.



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

A YOUNG ATHLETE displays her medal following her participation in the Annual "Run the Bronx" race at Bronx Community College campus on Saturday, May 4, 2024.

NEWS BRIEFS

By **SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE**

Norwood-205th Bainbridge Ave Station Entrance Closed

Straphangers entering or exiting the Norwood-205th Subway Station, serving the D train will notice that two of the four entrances to the station are now covered by a construction shed as repairs to the entrance stairways are underway. The project is expected to be completed by July, according to NYC Department of Transportation.

Construction workers were observed on Friday, May 10, erecting a shed at

the subway station entrance on Perry Avenue by East 205th Street, and those wishing to enter or exit the station on Bainbridge Avenue at the west corner of East 206th Street were also met with a construction barrier on Sunday, May 12.

The construction barrier also covers the entrance to the popular Bainbridge Deli & Grill at 3161 Bainbridge Avenue on the corner with East 206th Street. According to Google, the store is temporarily closed. Meanwhile, a sign posted at the shuttered subway en-

trance read, “On or about Wednesday, May 1, through July 2024, this entrance will be closed for stair repair and improvement. Enter via the nearby stairway across Bainbridge Avenue and 206th Street. Please use crosswalk.”

Meanwhile, according to other signs and work permits issued by DOT, the contractor hired to carry out the work is CH. CO., Inc., of Astoria, Queens. *Norwood News* contacted DOT and asked when the RFP was issued for this project. We were advised that it was just for that area. We asked the MTA if the overall track maintenance affecting the 4 train weekend service is completed now. We were referred to the following site: <https://new.mta.info/alerts>.



Photo by David Greene

RIDERS OF THE D train learned one of two entrances to the Norwood-205th Subway Station on Bainbridge Avenue by East 206th Street will be closed until July as seen on a sign at the station entrance on Sunday, May 12, 2024.

Ad Hoc Weekend 4 Train Suspended Service

Due to track maintenance, there has been ad hoc suspended weekend service at certain Bronx subway stations serving the 4 train in recent months, as reported from time to time via our Neighborhood Notes listings. *Norwood News* witnessed repairs being made to the elevated tracks serving the 4 train over Jerome Avenue between Mosholu Parkway subway station and Woodlawn station on Saturday, May 11. We asked the MTA if these repairs were part of the ongoing track maintenance which has been causing these ad hoc suspended weekend service of the 4 line over the last few months and if so, if the required repairs are now complete across all Bronx stations. The MTA responded, saying, “Track maintenance did happen in that area. There are currently no plans for additional



Photo by Síle Moloney

WORKERS CARRY OUT repairs to the elevated train tracks over Jerome Avenue in Norwood serving the 4 train on Saturday, May 11, 2024.

maintenance work.” We replied asking if they mean in that area only or across all Bronx stations.

We were advised that it was just for that area. We asked the MTA if the overall track maintenance affecting the 4 train weekend service is completed now. We were referred to the following site: <https://new.mta.info/alerts>.

Mosholu Parkway Elevator Installation Update

As reported, plans to install the long-awaited elevators at Mosholu Parkway subway station, located at the border of Bedford Park and Norwood and which serves the 4 line, finally started to take shape in December 2022, when MTA officials said its board approved two contracts to advance ADA upgrades to the NYC Transit system under a public-private partnership (P3) delivery model, including Mosholu Parkway station.

MTA said at the time the Mosholu Parkway elevator installation would be part of a bundle of ADA upgrades, but that no specific timeline would be available until the contractor finalized their schedule. As reported, in November 2023, construction barriers placed on one side of Jerome Avenue underneath the subway station, to allow for preparatory work, were later opened up to allow sidewalk access on that same side of the avenue, and a sign was placed on the barrier indicating the elevator installation was due to be completed by Q3 2025.

(continued on page 10)

Pool Access Debate Resurfaces as Summer Beckons

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Debate over the lack of swimming pools in The Bronx has been raging in recent years, a situation further exacerbated during the pandemic. Frustration was evident during recent summers when, on hot days, long lines were witnessed outside Van Cortlandt Park’s renovated public swimming pool, while inside, only half the pool was open for safety reasons amid an ongoing lifeguard shortage.

In early January, New York Gov. Kathy Hochul unveiled NY SWIMS, the “New York Statewide Investment In More Swimming” program, the fourth proposal of her 2024 State of the State. “Access to swimming isn’t just about recreation; it’s about public health and climate resiliency,” **the governor said.** “NY SWIMS will be the largest statewide investment in swimming since the New Deal, expanding access for underserved communities and improving safety for kids across New York.”

Recognizing that drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 4, and that climate change will increase extreme heat events, the

governor said NY SWIMS will build out municipal pools in high-need areas, connect New Yorkers to the State’s rivers and lakes, deploy pools in urban environments, and invest in State parks and pools.

Hochul said it will also promote initiatives to help more New Yorkers swim safely by addressing the statewide lifeguard shortage, increasing swimming instruction, and increasing amenities at pools and beaches.

State officials said NY SWIMS will “deliver \$150 million in grant funding for localities to build out 10 new landmark public swimming pools in areas most in need, drive innovation in pool designs, and deploy pop-up, above-ground pools to combat extreme heat.” They said NY SWIMS will reverse decades of disinvestment to ensure public parks offer new, state-of-the-art swimming facilities which can serve thousands of daily visitors.

State officials said the State will also partner with New York City to bring the vision of +Pool, a filtered floating pool which can sit in New York’s rivers, to life by jointly funding a demonstration project which will ensure this innovative model can safely provide access for swimmers.

Last year, following the adoption of the city budget, *Norwood News* reported on the renovation, as confirmed by Councilman Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11), of the swimming pool located at DeWitt Clinton High School,

a public school located in the Jerome Park neighborhood.

Norwood residents, Sirio and Heather Guerino, whose children attended the school, had long advocated for the pool’s renovation, and were later disappointed to hear that an event was held at the school to celebrate the pool’s reopening, and they were not invited. When *Norwood News* made inquiries with NYC Department of Education (DOE), since the school does not speak directly to the press, about the grand opening, we were informed it was not a press event.

Given the public advocacy shown at various community board meetings by Sirio Guerino for the pool’s reopening, we asked the council member about the event and were advised by his team that he assumed the grand opening was organized by the school, and that the school had also sent out the invitations.

We were further informed that Dinowitz was certainly sad that the Guerinos were not present for the event. His team said that the council member first learned about the pool from Sirio Guerino and that he had called Sirio throughout the renovation to keep him updated on progress. Dinowitz said if it hadn’t been for Sirio’s advocacy, he never would have pushed so hard for the pool’s restoration.

We later asked DOE if the school’s pool would be open to the public as



Photo courtesy of the Office of Councilman Eric Dinowitz.

DEWITT CLINTON HIGH School renovated swimming pool.

well as to students. We were informed that all operational pools can be used by non-school parties outside of school hours, including during the summer via an extended-use permit, if not in use by the school or another program.

We were further informed that there are associated costs with extended use permits that cover supervision and operation of the pool and building. We asked DOE how the public could find out exactly how and when they can use the DeWitt Clinton High School pool, as well as the associated costs. We did not receive an immediate response. We will share any future updates we receive.

CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE



chase the victim, knocking him to the ground. They said the group then began to punch, kick, and stab the victim multiple times in the back before eventually fleeing the location on foot to parts unknown.

Police said the victim was taken to NYC Health and Hospitals/North Central Bronx by private means and later transferred to NYC Health and Hospitals/Jacobi in stable condition. They said the persons sought were each described as male, had medium to dark complexions, and were estimated to be between 18 and 25 years of age. The victim's companion was uninjured they said.



Fordham Manor: Group of 7 Sought for Gang Assault

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying and locating the people seen in the accompanying photos who they say are wanted in connection with an assault that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said that on Monday, May 6, at around 3.30 p.m., the victim, a 17-year-old male was approached by seven unknown individuals in the vicinity of Valentine Avenue and East Fordham Road.

They said that acting in concert, the individuals punched and kicked the victim about the body and slashed the victim in the face. They added that the group was last seen fleeing southbound on Valentine Avenue on foot and the victim was taken by EMS to NYC Health and Hospitals/Jacobi in stable condition.



Norwood: Four Sought for Gang Assault and Stabbing

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the people seen in the accompanying photos above who they say are sought in connection with a gang assault and stabbing that occurred in Norwood. Police said that on Monday, April 29, at around 1.37 p.m., a 40-year-old male victim was in front of 3300 Kosuth Avenue when he attempted to intervene in an altercation between a group of four males and another unidentified male with whom the victim had been playing basketball.

They said when the male who was being targeted by the group [and the victim] fled the location, the group of four became agitated and proceeded to



men were shot in Fordham Heights on Friday evening, May 3, at 4.06 p.m., police said, adding that both were hospitalized and stable. Police said the shooting occurred at 2407 Morris Avenue, and that one male (age unknown) was shot in the chest and another, 32, was shot in the right arm. They said both were taken to St. Barnabas Hospital, were expected to survive.

A large, black vehicle with darkened windows and several bullet holes was seen cordoned off by police at the crime scene. Describing the perpetrators, police said, "Two male Hispanics, and one male, Black, wearing ski masks. They fled northbound on Morris Avenue."

One man we spoke to, who had been in the vicinity of the shooting at the time it occurred, shared a video of the aftermath of the scene, which showed one young man lying on the street with several people surrounding him, a few seemingly assisting him, while others called for an ambulance. The man said he knew one of the victims but did not wish to comment further or give his name.

We also spoke to two other local employees in the area, neither of whom saw the shooting and did



Fordham Heights: Two Men Shot in Stable Condition

A criminal investigation is underway after two

not wish to be identified. The male employee said he just saw the street cordoned off and police arriving afterwards as he was

Patrol Borough: Bronx Precinct: 052

CompStat Book Week of 04/29/24 - 05/05/24

		28 Day		Year to Date			
	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %	1	1	0.0 %
Rape	0.0 %	3	2	50.0 %	20	12	66.7 %
Robbery	-20.0 %	39	36	8.3 %	174	132	31.8 %
Felony Assault	50.0 %	58	50	16.0 %	228	204	11.8 %
Burglary	0.0 %	17	15	13.3 %	66	79	-16.5 %
Grand Larceny	-14.3 %	54	60	-10.0 %	252	227	11.0 %
Grand Larceny Auto	12.5 %	28	30	-6.7 %	122	113	8.0 %
Total	3.7 %	199	194	2.6 %	863	768	12.4 %
Patrol	0.0 %	193	188	2.7 %	841	749	12.3 %
Transit	- %	4	5	-20.0 %	19	16	18.8 %
Housing	0.0 %	2	1	100.0 %	3	3	0.0 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	0	2	-100.0 %	11	7	57.1 %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	0	2	-100.0 %	7	7	0.0 %
UCR Rape*	0.0 %	3	3	0.0 %	27	18	50.0 %
Other Sex Crimes	-57.1 %	14	13	7.7 %	42	36	16.7 %
Petit Larceny	-42.2 %	152	207	-26.6 %	683	870	-21.5 %
Mod. Assault	-27.8 %	55	62	-11.3 %	278	254	9.4 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	1	2	-50.0 %

Source: NYPD

MAJOR CRIMES IN the 52nd Precinct for the 28-day period ending May 5, 2024, compared to the same period in 2023, as well as year-to-date major crimes in the 52nd Precinct as of May 5, 2024, compared to the same period in 2023.

on his way to work nearby. A female employee said she was unclear about what happened, adding, "Some people (customers) said two people were shot and others said three. I don't know."

Another local resident who did not wish to be identified and did not see the shooting said it was shocking, and added in Spanish, "Innocent people... [shot] just like that..." Pressed on whether he knew the victims were innocent bystanders, he

A woman was assaulted and robbed while seated inside her car with a friend in Norwood on Monday afternoon, May 6, police said. A 41-year-old woman was later arrested in connection with the incident. Police said the incident occurred sometime after noon in front of 3053 Hull Avenue.

Police said the report was for an assault and robbery, adding that a 30-year-old female victim was in a car with her friend when two unknown, masked individuals approached her and struck the victim in the head with what she believes was a rock.

Asked if the victim was still inside the car when she was hit, and if the window was open or shut, police said this was unknown. Asked if the victim's car was parked when the incident happened or was in traffic, police said they believe the car was parked.

"She was punched in the face and lip, and they removed \$14,000 of cash from her," police said of the victim.

They added that she was treated at the scene for her injuries. Police said the perpetrators fled southbound on Hull Avenue in a black BMW with an unknown plate. They added that a 41-year-old woman was later arrested. "She's been charged with robbery and grand larceny," they 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.

said he did not.

Norwood: Woman Assaulted, Robbed inside Car on Hull Avenue



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**



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 promocionar 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
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- Intervención en Crisis
- Instalación de Cerraduras
- Presentaciones educativas, y mucho más...



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Letters To The Editor

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

National Waitstaff Day

Tuesday, May 21, is National Waitstaff Day. Your neighborhood restaurant waitstaff are on their feet all day long, working long hours. They have to take and deliver

meal orders, follow up to make sure your meal is up to expectations, refill your coffee, tea or water glass, box any leftovers you want to take home, and prepare the check - all with a smile and friendly disposition.

On this day, why not show your appreciation and honor your favorite waitstaff? Leave a 25 percent tip against the total bill, including taxes. Remember that they usually have to share the tips with the bus staff. Drop off some flowers, a box of candy or some cookies as well.

Larry Penner
Great Neck

Please send all letters to the editor, along with supporting hyperlinked 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. Letter writers should aim to write no more than 300 words on local issues or in response to published articles.

By MELISSA RAE SANGER

Beneath the polished facade of the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show [which took place in Queens County from May 11-May 14] lies cruelty obscured by overgroomed coats and circumscribed poses: the suffering caused by deliberately breeding and inbreeding dogs to meet human-dictated "beauty standards."

Inbreeding leads to debilitating health issues, from reproductive complications to respiratory disorders, and even shortened lifespans. Flat-faced breeds like French bulldogs and pugs struggle to

Opinion

Skip Dog Pageants & Adopt Instead

breathe; short-legged breeds such as corgis and dachshunds have leg, joint, and back problems; and seemingly sturdy breeds including labradors and golden retrievers are prone to an early death from

cancer. The list goes on.

Dog shows that put animals on display treat dogs as customizable commodities, driving up demand and worsening the animal overpopulation crisis in which some 70 million animals are homeless in the U.S.

Shelters in New York City are filled to capacity. While a new Animal Care Center is under construction in The Bronx, animals in nearby shelters desperately need homes. Skip the pageantry and crown a real winner by adopting a dog instead.

Melissa Rae Sanger is a staff writer with the PETA Foundation.

NEWS BRIEFS

(continued from page 7)

We contacted the MTA more recently for an update on the timeline and an agency official said, "Two elevators are being installed at the station, one to each platform. Work has been underway at these areas for several months, [which] remain active work sites. The barricades on both sides are planned to be removed by the end of 2024, when the elevators will

be commissioned and placed in service."

The official added, "Due to ongoing design coordination with DOT, some sidewalk work may occur beyond this time period, but the majority of the barricades will be cleared by then." Given the proximity of the station to Tracey Towers, which houses a number of older adults and is adjacent to the station, as well as to Norwood's Montefiore Medical Center, located at 111 East 210th Street, and NYC Health + Hospitals/North Central Bronx, located at 3424 Kosuth Avenue, local elected officials, health workers, activists, residents, and out-patients have been organizing and calling for the elevators to be installed at the station since at least 2018.



Photo by Síle Moloney

BARRIERS ERECTED UNDER Mosholu Parkway subway station in Norwood, which serves the 4 train, seen on May 15, 2024, signify the advancement of the future installation of long-awaited elevators at the station.

Dominican Heritage Celebrated at Bronx Borough Hall

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Following both French and Spanish rule from as early as the 16th century, the island nation of the Dominican Republic (DR) declared itself an independent nation from neighboring Haiti [on Feb. 27] in 1844, according to the U.S. Office of the Historian. In 1861, the DR reverted to Spanish rule, until once again winning its independence in 1865.

This year marks the 180th anniversary of the island nation's first state of independence, celebrated each year on the island on Feb. 27, and in New York from mid-January to Feb. 27. In addition to her usual annual celebration to mark Dominican Heritage Month, which this year was held on Feb. 22, The Office of the Bronx Borough President hosted another celebration at Bronx

Borough Hall on Thursday, May 2, for the Dominican community.

Together with MetroPlus Health, Montefiore Einstein, Blue York City, Anheuser Busch, and others, her office hosted a Bronx Dominican Heritage Celebration to kick-off the 42nd Anniversary of the National Dominican Day Parade in the Rotunda of Bronx Borough Hall, located at 851 Grand Concourse.

The honorees recognized at the event were the Bronx's own Deputy Borough President Janet Peguero, who is currently expecting a baby; Bronx borough director of NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for Upper Manhattan & The Bronx, Fernando Oritz; award-winning, Eyewitness News ABC7NY journalist, Pedro Rivera; and president

of R.A.I.N., Anderson Torres, PhD.

Congressman Adriano Espaillat (NY-13), who represents northern Manhattan and the west Bronx, and State Sen. Robert Jackson (S.D. 31) who represents much of the same area, were among the elected officials present. Espaillat also delivered some remarks to those gathered. The evening also included performances by El Grupo Folclórico, Ninoshka, and recording sensation, Chiqui Taveras.

Norwood News later spoke to Rosemary Perez-Bell, who attended the event with a family member, and asked why it was important for her to be there. She said, "Well, for me, it's important to celebrate my parents and my family." Perez-Bell said her parents emigrated from Santo Domingo, the capital, in the '50s

I Had a Dream

January 15, 2020

By Victor Mastro c. Jan. 15, 2020

So nicely and so restive, I sleep
People and colors flutter by
Thoughts fly and feelings flow
Breathe on, breathe on
Dream on, dream on...

I had a dream,
January 15, 2020
But it changed into a nightmare
Ugly and demonic...

I cannot breathe
I cannot breathe the false air
of pollution and foulness
I cannot breathe the air of
illness and COVID-19
I cannot breathe the air of hatred
and violence
I cannot breathe the air of
hell, death, and the devil

Breathe on, breathe on
Dream on, dream on...
I can breathe
I can breathe the fresh air of the
goodness of the earth,
health and strength
I can breathe the air of
liberty, equality,
anti-violence, and respect
for one another
I can breathe the air of the
Glory of God and the
Holy Spirit
I can breathe the air of the
Victory of Heaven and Life
Breathe on, breathe on
Dream on, dream on...

I had a dream...

and came to New York, set up a life here, and had a family.

Reflecting on her childhood in the U.S., she said, "At home, it was learning about Dominican culture. They made sure that we could, from a very early age, read, write, and speak Spanish so we could communicate with our relatives."

She continued, "Way back then, there wasn't any internet; you had to write letters. So, they [parents] made sure of that, and they also made sure that we understood what the [Dominican] flag meant, who our founding fathers were over there, what that meant. My first trip back home was at the age of six and

(continued on page 11)

Out & About

Compiled by **ARIEL PACHECO**

EVENTS

The Office of the Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson will be hosting, in conjunction with the Bronx Tourism Council, the Annual **Bronx Week Parade & Festival** on Sunday, May 19. The parade will kick off at 10 a.m. and the route will be along Mosholu Parkway from Hull Avenue to Van Cortlandt Avenue East. (Line up and check in at Hull Avenue and Mosholu Parkway). This will be followed by the **Bronx Week 2024 Concert** from noon to 6 p.m. at Mosholu Parkway and Bainbridge Avenue, featuring artists DJ Ralphie Mercado, Tano, Luis Figueroa and many more. This is a free event, and all are welcome.

Everyone of all ages is invited to display their unique talents at the **Bring It Talent Show** at the

Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, located at 3225 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467, on Friday, May 31, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, reach out to Kelsey.Phoenix@parks.nyc.gov or call (718) 543-8672.

The Bronx Historical Society presents a **Bronx History in 5 Objects** event on Thursday, May 16, at 3 p.m. The event is free for all who attend and will take place at the Belmont branch of the New York Public Library, located at 610 E 186th Street, Bronx, NY 10458. Join Dr. Steven Payne for a free, interactive exhibit and talk as he journeys through Bronx history with five items from the historical society's collections.

The Green House Gallery, located at 315 E. 201 Street Bronx, NY 10458, is the venue for a **one-day-only thrift event** with jewelry, clothing, and comics available on Sunday, May 26, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., organized by 315 Thrift. Music will be provided by DJ Curly Nez. For more information, contact @thegreenhousegallery315 on

Instagram.com.

Brand Nubian, Onyx, and more.

FASHION

Bronx Fashion Week is launching its show, **"Decade of Dreams,"** at The Mall at Bay Plaza located at 200 Baychester Avenue, Bronx, NY 10475 on Saturday, May 25, from 4 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. For more information, visit eventbrite.com and search under "Bronx Fashion Week Presents Decade of Dreams at The Mall at Bay Plaza."

MUSIC

Hip Hop Fever returns to the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, located at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx, NY 10468, on Saturday, May 18, at 8 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at \$70, \$65, \$60, \$45, or \$40 by calling the Lehman Center box office at (718) 960-8833 Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and beginning at 4 p.m. on the day of the concert, or online at lehmancenter.org. Featured artists will include the Sugar Hill Gang,

ART

The Mosholu branch of the New York Public Library is holding James Baldwin inspired art classes **"My Hands are My Heart"** with instructor Blanka Amezkua on Saturday, May 18, and Saturday, June 1, from 1 p.m. to 2.30 p.m., at 285 E 205th St, Bronx, NY 10467. Participants will engage in activities like embroidery, gluing, painting, printing, and cutting with all materials provided. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

MOVEMENT

The 52nd Precinct and partners are hosting their **Annual Autism Awareness Walk** on Wednesday, May 29, at noon, at the stationhouse at 3016 Webster Ave, Bronx, NY 10467. For more information, contact Community Affairs Officers Stephen Echevarria and Jessalyn Capo at (718) 220-5824.



Photo by Sile Moloney

ACCOMPANIED BY A family member, Rosemary Perez-Bell attends a Bronx Dominican Heritage celebration to kick-off the 42nd anniversary of the National Dominican Day Parade, hosted by the Office of the Bronx Borough President and partners, at Bronx Borough Hall on May 2, 2024.

As a former Spanish colony, we asked what diplomatic relations with Spain were like now. Perez-Bell replied, "I mean, there's a lot of Dominicans all over the world." We asked if the Dominican Republic got a lot of Spanish tourists, and she said they did, along with tourists from all over the world, referencing the nation's 180th anniversary of its independence, which she said is adding to the festivities.

"They're expecting an even larger boom in tourism this year," she said. "There's a lot more to do in the country, and the president came to New York a couple of months ago and forged a cou-



Photo by Sile Moloney

AWARD-WINNING JOURNALIST PEDRO RIVERA; and president of R.A.I.N., Anderson Torres, PhD., celebrate being honored during a Bronx Dominican Heritage celebration to kick-off the 42nd anniversary of the National Dominican Day Parade, hosted by the Office of the Bronx Borough President and partners, at Bronx Borough Hall on May 2, 2024.



Photo by Sile Moloney

DIGNITARIES AND HONOREES pose for a photo during the Bronx Dominican Heritage celebration to kick-off the 42nd anniversary of the National Dominican Day Parade, hosted by the Office of the Bronx Borough President and partners, at Bronx Borough Hall on May 2, 2024.

Dominican Heritage Celebrated at Bronx Borough Hall

(continued from page 10)

we were taken over to the Colonial City and taught [about] from when Columbus came to the island, all the way to present day, at that time."

Perez-Bell said for her parents, it was a rite of passage to make sure that their daughters knew just as much about their Dominican culture as they were learning in school about their American culture.

ple of more relationships that are going to establish the country even better." Referencing Disneyland's monorail system, she went on to say that DR also now has "functioning monorail transportation."

Perez-Bell said it also has an underground transit system and [a "Teleférico"] cable car system. "They have two of those, I believe, so there's a lot of progress," she said. Perez-Bell, who, we understand, may work in the area of healthcare, then said DR has also either just broke ground or cut the ribbon on

a new hospital/hotel system, whereby Dominicans can travel to the capital for surgery from anywhere on the island and have a place to stay until they've recuperated and are ready to go back home.

She added that there is a similar system in Colombia. "Some of the Caribbean islands have a relationship with that, she said. "Now, in the Dominican Republic, we have the same thing." In conclusion, she said, "I call the Dominican Republic home. It's a beautiful culture to celebrate."

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY ARIEL PACHECO & SÍLE MOLONEY



Upcoming Voter Registration & Election Deadlines

The primary elections for Congress, State, and party positions will be held on June 25. Early voting starts Saturday, June 15, until Sunday, June 23. The last day to register to vote is June 15 in the local primary.

Mammograms for Mother's Day

RadNet and Lenox Hill Radiology are hosting a Mother's Day MammoGlam party at 350 E Fordham Road, Bronx, NY 10458 on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. WNBA legend Sheryl Swoopes will be in attendance along with government officials to help empower women to prioritize their health. For more information, contact timothymerchant@radnet.com

Job Fair with On-Spot Interviews

BronxWorks is hosting a job fair at 1130 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10456, with on-spot interviews on Thursday, May 23, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Participants should bring their resumes and dress for success. For more information, contact Andy Frica at africa@bronxworks.org or call (929) 581-2660.

Participatory Budgeting Voting is Open

All New Yorkers, 11 years and older, regardless of citizenship status, are eligible to vote on which City projects should benefit from \$870,000 of participatory budgeting funding. Each person gets one vote only but can vote on as many projects as they like. Only the top 5 projects will get funded, and voting lasts until Wednesday, June 12. To view and vote on potential projects, visit nyc.gov/pb and use code "BXC7B." For more information, contact Karla Cabrera Carrera at kcabrera@carrera@cb.nyc.gov or (929) 496-0748.

CERC 8th Annual Parent Workshop

The Rose F. Kennedy Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center at Montefiore will be hosting its 8th annual parent workshop for parents, caregivers, and young adults with disabilities only (no children) on Wednesday, May 22, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the second floor of the Van Etten Building, located at 1225 Morris Park Avenue, Bronx, NY 10461. Registration is required before attending. For more information, contact CERCparentworkshop@montefiore.org.

Affordable Housing Lotteries

NYC Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) has opened affordable housing lotteries for housing units at the following locations, among others, 1821 Prospect Avenue, with a deadline of May 20, 3633 Kingsbridge Avenue Apartments, with a deadline of May 23, 1148 Washington Avenue, with a deadline of May 20. For more information visit <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/search-lotteries>.

Free Breast & Cervical Cancer Screening Day

Register now for free breast and cervical cancer screening offered by Montefiore Einstein, on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Greene Medical Arts Pavilion, 3400 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10467. Free mammograms and pap tests for women aged 21 to 64 are available. No insurance is needed. To register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/3748tf8d> or call or leave a message at (718) 430-3613.

Naloxone Nasal Spray and Testing Strips

State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33) is offering free, live-saving packs of Nalox-

one nasal spray and testing strips at his district office located at 2432 Grand Concourse, Suite 506, Bronx, NY 10458 Monday to Thursday from noon to 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 933-2034.

Americorps 2024-2025 Application Recruitment Period Opens

NYC Service is now accepting applications for the 2024-2025 AmeriCorps Service year. Applications will close on Monday, June 24. To register for an info session and to apply, visit nyc.gov/serveync.

She Built NYC Open Call to Artists

The City of New York seeks artists interested in creating public monuments that honor remarkable women in all five boroughs, including civil rights pioneer Elizabeth Jennings Graham in Manhattan; the legendary Billie Holiday in Queens; Dr. Helen Rodríguez Trías in The Bronx; and Katherine Walker on Staten Island. In Brooklyn, a monument honoring the great Shirley Chisholm is already underway. Artists interested in this opportunity may submit samples of past work and supplementary materials to be considered. Visit <https://nyculture.submittable.com/submit> to apply.

Three E-Bike Fires reported in The Bronx in 12 Days

By DAVID GREENE

FDNY officials confirmed three e-bike fires broke out across the borough in the first 12 days of May. An FDNY spokesperson told Norwood News an e-bike fire was reported at 11.49 a.m. on Sunday, May 12, when firefighters were called to 2105 Ryer Avenue in Fordham Heights, between East 180th and East 181st Streets. The spokesperson said four e-bikes were discovered burning outside the front entrance of the 5-story building. Fortunately, no injuries were reported, they said.

A video posted to the Citizens' App of the incident showed members of Tower Ladder 33 and Engine 75, based at 2175 Walton Avenue, pouring water on what appeared to be e-bikes and scooters. Citizens App user, LuvaGurw115, asked, "Another bike fire?" before adding, "If so, when (are) people going to understand that these bikes are dangerous?"

Meanwhile, the same FDNY spokesperson confirmed a second, e-bike fire was reported at 5.09 a.m. on Sunday, May 5, at 383 East 152nd Street in the

Melrose section of the borough, between Melrose Avenue and Courtlandt Avenue. The spokesperson said firefighters were called for "a report of a fire at the location," which was later confirmed to be burning on the first floor.

The FDNY spokesperson added that a haz-mat (hazardous materials) unit was requested at the location to handle an e-bike. The spokesperson said that fire was brought under control at 5.57 a.m. and no injuries were reported. The spokesperson added that the cause of the fire remains under investigation by fire marshals.

The same spokesperson also confirmed firefighters were called to Eastchester Road and Boston Road in the Williamsbridge section at 9.15 a.m. on Sunday, May 5, for a "report of an outdoor e-bike fire." However, the spokesperson said the FDNY later determined in the end that the blaze was actually caused by an outdoor trash fire, not an e-bike.

Norwood News also asked the FDNY about an unconfirmed report of a scooter fire allegedly at 32 East 183rd Street

in Belmont at 1.26 p.m. on Thursday, May 2. The spokesperson reported having trouble accessing information on that alleged fire.

The spokesperson did confirm a third e-bike fire in the Morrisania section at 1250 Franklin Avenue between East 168th Street and East 169th Street, which was reported at 6.07 a.m. on Wednesday, May 1. "Report of an e-bike fire in a second-floor apartment," the spokesperson said, adding, "FDNY haz-mat resources requested for possible lithium-ion batteries involved."

The spokesperson added that 12 units, comprising 60 firefighters brought that fire under control at 6.44 a.m. and no injuries were reported. Fire marshals continue to investigate the cause of the fire.

Despite legislation recently enacted at various levels of government which aims to regulate the use of lithium-ion batteries in e-bikes and scooters, along with outreach efforts by the FDNY to educate the public on the use of such batteries, the FDNY spokesperson said, as of Jan. 1, citywide, 77 investigations have been carried out on fires originating from lithium-ion batteries to date this year.

Democratic Congressman Ritchie Torres (NY-15), who represents a large section of

The Bronx, stretching from the northwest to the south, announced that H.R. 1797, the Setting Consumer Standards for Lithium-Ion Batteries Act, introduced in March 2023, would be voted on in the House of Representatives on May 15. The bill passed in the House.

The bill would require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to establish a final consumer product safety standard for rechargeable lithium-ion batteries used in micromobility devices, like e-scooters and e-bikes, to protect against the risk of fires caused by such batteries.

Torres' office said the bill "underscores Rep. Torres' unwavering commitment to improving fire safety for New Yorkers and all Americans." The congressman previously introduced the "Empowering the U.S. Fire Administration Act" in the wake of the deadly Twin Parks North West fire in Fordham Heights in January 2022, which U.S. President Joe Biden later signed into law.

Torres is currently leading the "Safer Heat Act of 2023" to



Image courtesy of the Citizens App
MEMBERS OF LADDER 33 / Engine 75 extinguish an e-bike / scooter fire outside a 5-story building at 2105 Ryer Avenue in Fordham Heights on Sunday, May 12, 2024.

address underlying manufacturing issues and safety concerns with space heaters. As reported, last month, a broad coalition of companies and interest groups, including DoorDash and Uber, sent a letter to congressional leadership urging the passage of the legislation.

Meanwhile, the FDNY spokesperson said of the 77 citywide fire investigations linked to lithium-ion batteries carried out to date this year, there was one death and 38 injuries.

**Síle Moloney contributed to this story.*

Winner Crowned at Annual P.S. 94 Spelling Bee Contest

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Norwood's P.S. 94 Kings College held its Annual Spelling Bee Contest for the school's 4th and 5th graders on March 27, which saw 4th grader Bersour Poda emerge victorious out of a field of 20 contestants.

As Bersour confidently and correctly spelled the final word of the contest, "ostentatious," the auditorium, filled with students, faculty, and parents, erupted in cheers and applause. To win the final round, Bersour also had to correctly spell the word "subservient." That word proved a little too tricky for 4th grader Kevin Vinansaca, who finished in second place.

Meanwhile, Mozdah Tuba, a fifth grader, finished in third place. The contestants in the final were each selected due to having already placed in the top two during prior spelling bee tests conducted in their respective classes. The final spelling bee contest lasted 15 rounds over the course of 90 suspenseful minutes.

Speaking to *Norwood News* after his win, Bersour said, "I was very stressed the whole time," adding that "photosynthesis" was the one word he worried he might mess up. A mere 10 years of age, Bersour said he spent more than one hour every single day for several weeks preparing for the contest. "I was good at spelling, but I got better by practicing," he said.

Some of the other words the 10-year-

old spelled correctly in the later rounds of the contest included "seismologist," "autochthonous," [meaning indigenous] and "flabbergasted."

Norwood News also spoke to Bersour's mother after the event, who said, "I always practice with him but yesterday, he refused to practice because he said, 'I'm fine, Mom. I'm ready!'" Bersour's mom also said he told her he was going 'to bring the trophy home.' The beaming mother continued, "I am so happy! I am so proud of him, and I cry because I can't believe it!"

The school, located at 3530 Kings College Place, celebrated both Bersour's victory and all the contestants' hard work with a pizza party after the contest. This year marks the public school's 16th Annual Spelling Bee Contest, now a firm tradition. Bersour, Kevin, and Mozdah each walked away with trophies for their efforts.

P.S. 94 also holds a Spelling Bee contest for its 2nd and 3rd graders, school officials said. A panel of four judges presided over the latest spelling bee competition, and contestants were allowed ask for the chosen words to be repeated, the definition of the words, and for the words to be used in a sentence.

Addressing the students on the day, Elizabeth Rosario, P.S. 94's library media specialist, said, "This was a tough one, huh? You guys did awesome! Everyone that participated, you did a great job!"



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

P.S. 94 SPELLING BEE winner Bersour Poda holds up his trophy after the contest which took place at the Norwood school on March 27, 2024, and poses for a photo with his mother.



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

(L-R) MOZDAH TUBA, KEVIN Vinansaca, and Bersour Poda hold up their respective trophies at P.S. 94's Annual Spelling Bee Contest held at the Norwood school on March 27, 2024.



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Public and Community Meetings

The next 52nd **PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meeting will take place on Thursday, May 23, at 7 p.m. at Bedford Park Senior Center, 243 E 204th Street, Bronx, NY 10458. 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, May 28, at 6.30 p.m. at Monroe College's Kings Hall, Mintz Auditorium, 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 Bronx CB7.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8** full board meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 14, at 7 p.m. at St. Stephen's Methodist Church, 146 West 228th Street, The Bronx. It is also a hybrid meeting. Contact BX08@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list.

The **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meetings are usually held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy. South in Apt. B1 (lobby floor). The next meeting will be in June. For more details, please contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

Montefiore Launches Long COVID Clinical Trial

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Montefiore Medical Center has been selected to participate in a new research study as part of an initiative by the National Institute of Health (NIH) called "Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery (RECOVER)."

Montefiore officials said Dr. Seth Congdon, medical director of Montefiore's COVID-19 Recovery (CORE) clinic is the principal investigator and will lead the "Recover-Autonomic study," assessing possible treatments for adults who have an autonomic [involuntary/unconscious] nervous system disorder called postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), related to long COVID.

They said the study will include adults who had COVID-19, and who still have one or more of the following autonomic dysfunction symptoms when they stand up from sitting or lying down: fast heart rate, dizziness, and fatigue.

Montefiore officials said study participants will be split into groups. Some will receive Ivabradine, an oral medication that reduces the heart rate, some will get a placebo, and some will receive guided, non-drug care, such as exercise and nutrition guidance via weekly phone calls.

A placebo can be roughly defined as a sham medical treatment. Common placebos include inert tablets like sugar pills, and inert injections like saline. Generally, participants who consent to taking part in a drug trial do not know

whether they are being given a placebo or some other type of activating medication.

Montefiore officials said Montefiore's participants will be paid for their time, and that the results will be combined with results from participants around the country to determine the best treatment for patients with long COVID-related POTS.

According to the NIH, the RECOVER initiative is a large, nationwide research program designed to understand, treat, and prevent long COVID. Gary H. Gibbons, M.D., director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at the NIH, who is also co-chair of RECOVER, said "The [RECOVER] trials were developed with input from people living with long COVID, caregivers, community representatives, clinicians and scientists all with unique expertise in the field."

Gibbons added, "We are grateful for their collective involvement which significantly shaped the trials and the choice of interventions."

Montefiore's CORE clinic, launched in June 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, provides follow-up and recovery engagement to patients who had COVID-19, helping to address their ongoing symptoms and chronic conditions, as well as any new issues that arise related to their COVID-19 infection.

For more information about the new clinical trial at Montefiore, people can email scongdon@montefiore.org and rosina.antwi@einsteinmed.edu.



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(continued from page 1)

Mexicana Grocery, and 7S Fish Market, all located at the one-story, commercial site, located roughly between 3117 and 3335 Bainbridge Avenue, were all decimated in the blaze, which the FDNY was alerted to at 3.49 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 10.

The adjacent CVS Pharmacy also closed temporarily due to some damage but as reported, has since reopened, as has the Bainbridge Bakery, though at a new location across the street from its former premises.

According to City records, ownership of the entire lot was transferred in February 2012 to Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC, with an address at 1122 Avenue J in Brooklyn, from the prior owner, Bainbridge Three Realty Corp., with an address at 225 West 34th Street in Manhattan.

The deed was signed on behalf of Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC by Morton Kriger. Several prior attempts to reach Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC for comment after the fire were unsuccessful as no contact information could be found for the business.

Attempts to obtain a direct number or email for Morton Kriger were unsuccessful, but we did locate two business ad-

resses for him, the first at 1122 Avenue J in Brooklyn, the address for Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC, and the second at 1203 Avenue J, also in Brooklyn.

No telephone number was listed for the address at 1122 Avenue J, Brooklyn and Google searches appeared to show the office as closed. We therefore called the number listed for 1203 Avenue J in Brooklyn on May 14.

The following automated recording was heard, "Thank you for calling 10 Plaza," before the call was then transferred to an extension. A man with a European accent (possibly Dutch) answered the call.

We identified ourselves and asked to speak to Kriger. The unidentified man said, "Morton is not in, but this is regarding what?" We explained the reason for our call, citing the arson, and asked what about the future plans for the Bronx property at 3117 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, demolished on Oct. 17, 2023. The man responded, "We'd rather not discuss this, ok? No comment."

Acknowledging the man's response, we asked if he could at least confirm if the number we called was for Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC, since we were unable to retrieve any direct number or email for the organization, only locating a number for Kriger. The man responded,

"No."

We then asked if the man could at least confirm if the property owner of 3117 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx was definitely Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC, as listed in the City's records. The man hung up. We called back but did not reach anyone. When we called again the next day, again, a man hung up.

Norwood News had earlier also reached out to the legal firm which represented Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC at the time of the transfer of ownership in February 2012 i.e. Michael J Schaffer, of Meltzer, Lippe, Goldstein and Breitstone LLP, with an address in Mineola, NY to try to connect with Morton Kriger or Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC. We did not receive an immediate response.

Following our phone call with the office in Brooklyn, we later followed up with NYC Department of Finance and asked if they could confirm if indeed the owner of 3117 Bainbridge Avenue is still Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC. We did not receive a response.

Previously, *Norwood News* had also contacted Bainbridge Realty Group, which has an office located 280 East 204th Street in Norwood, on a block not far from the fire site, and we asked if that business was affiliated with Bainbridge Realty Associates LLC. A representative confirmed it was not.

In the immediate aftermath of the blaze last October, some local residents commented that the owner of the nearby Foodtown, located on East 204th Street in Norwood, had allegedly sent some of his

workers to the fire site to volunteer to help with clean-up efforts, and they wondered if perhaps this was an indication that Foodtown was planning to buy the site. We attempted to reach the Foodtown owner at different times, both in person and by phone, for comment on these rumors but to date, have not managed to speak with him.

We also reached out to some of the small business owners impacted by the fire. Some were unavailable. The son of the owner of Hillside Meat & Deli said the family continue to operate another store in Mount Vernon, NY as they have done for 20 years. Of the demolished Norwood site, he said, "We're waiting to see if they're [the property owner] going to give us the opportunity to make another store over there [in Norwood]."

We also later spoke to the owner of Hillside Meat & Deli. In reference to the commercial landlord for his now demolished business, he said, "They're very evasive, very evasive. I don't know if these people are being evasive on purpose or what the story is."

Asked if he had heard anything about a possible new owner of the property, including rumors of a possible Foodtown takeover, the owner said, "I heard that. Listen, anything could be possible here. I mean I don't know what the story is here. You hear all kinds of stories. You don't know what's going on." He mentioned that his former store in Norwood had been there since 1983.

Meanwhile, despite following up over the course of several months with the FDNY for the final report on the investigation into the cause of the fire, citing the NYPD's earlier confirmation that it had opened a criminal investigation into the incident due to reported arson, we have yet to receive a formal response from the FDNY.

Instead, FDNY officials said the incident was still under investigation. *Norwood News* was later informed that we had to submit a "FOIL" [Freedom of Information] request to obtain the report, which we did in early April, and await the results.

In the meantime, we also followed up with the NYPD and asked if anyone has been arrested in connection with the fire, or if any charges have been brought against anyone. We were referred to the FDNY.

Norwood News has also asked the Bronx District Attorney's Office if any charges have been brought against anyone in relation to the fire. We've been advised that the team is looking into the matter and will share any updates we receive.

As reported, the October 2023 fire is the third major commercial fire to hit the area since 2009, and at least the second linked to arson. Check out www.norwoodnews.org to read our previous coverage of both this fire and the previous ones.



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

THE FORMER SITE of seven small businesses located on Bainbridge Avenue and East 204th Street in Norwood destroyed in a fire on Oct. 10, 2023, remains empty since the building's ruins were demolished on Oct. 17, 2023.

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