



# NORWOOD NEWS

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## "OPERATION PADLOCK" CONTINUES

Photo by David Greene

**A POLICE OFFICER** removes several bags of illegal contraband from the Organic Smoke Shop on East Gun Hill Road in Norwood on Saturday, Aug. 3, 2024.

**By DAVID GREENE & SILE MOLONEY**

The latest government crackdown of unauthorized smoke shops, "Operation Padlock to Protect," continues across Norwood and Bedford Park as two smoke shops and a deli were recently shut down and untaxed

cigarettes, vapes, and bags of cannabis were confiscated.

Tipped off by a police radio transmission, Norwood News heard a police officer from the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct requesting the NYPD's Emergency Service Unit (ESU) to cut through a lock on a commercial business located on

East Gun Hill Road in Norwood at 1.38 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 3. [The NYPD is looking to limit the media's access to such radio transmissions next year.]

Police officers were already inside Gun Hill Exotics, located at 346 East Gun Hill Road, between Decatur Avenue and Hull

Avenue. Inside the shop, a man in a t-shirt and shorts was observed talking to officers and reading some documents, while a member of the ESU was observed cutting through the store's lock with a saw. Officers later removed at least four bags

*(continued on page 15)*



**Tracey Towers Celebrates 50th Anniversary | pg 2**



**Suspect Sought in Fordham Manor Murder | pg 7**



**52nd Precinct Community Council Bestows Honors pg 13**

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# Tracey Towers Celebrates its 50th Anniversary

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Residents of Bedford Park's Tracey Towers gathered to commemorate the building's 50th anniversary on Saturday, Aug. 3. Elected officials, local vendors, and community members also joined the celebration.

Tracey Towers opened in 1974 and comprises two high-rise structures offering a range of unit sizes, including one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments. Located on the border of Bedford Park and Norwood by Mosholu Parkway subway station, the towers stand tall against the local skyline, each comprising around 39 floors.

Part of NYC Department of Housing, Preservation & Development's Mitchell Lama affordable rental and cooperative program for middle-income families, the Tracey Towers complex is a memorable and imposing landmark, and a symbol of the collective strength of community.

Jean Hill, president of the Tracey Towers Tenants Organization, and resident of the development since 1975, said of the occasion, "We wanted to celebrate for the people who are here now, to let them know how we started and what we are about. We just wanted to say thank you to everybody for sticking with us. Yes, we know we have issues, but even with having the issues, it's still a really great place to live."

As reported, around 50 frustrated



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**JEAN HILL, PRESIDENT** of the Tracey Towers Tenants Organization, speaks at the Tracey Towers 50th Anniversary celebration on Aug. 3, 2024.

tenants joined local elected officials for a rally at the towers on June 15 to protest what they said were poor living conditions in the 871-unit housing complex. Residents said they had been grappling with a slew of problems like frequent water leaks, a significant rat infestation, and perpetually malfunctioning elevators for several years.

A spokesperson for R.Y. Management Co, Inc. later said in part, "Lingering financial effects of the pandemic continue to plague the economic health of many properties, including Tracey Towers. Tenant arrears are at an all-time high.

This fiscal constraint hinders management's ability to do the kinds of capital-intensive upgrades and improvements needed at Tracey Towers."

The statement continued in part, "Management joins the tenant association in calling on our elected leaders at all levels of government to help provide supplemental funding or other creative solutions necessary to address some of the short and long-term issues at Tracey Towers. We hope that by working together, we can continue to make Tracey Towers an affordable, attractive, safe and comfortable place for our residents to call home."

Back at the birthday bash, Assemblyman John Zaccaro Jr. said, "It's a beautiful day because today we're celebrating 50 years of Tracey Towers in the amazing community that we've built here in Norwood and I'm just excited to be here."

Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson did not attend the celebration due to the death of her mother, Phyllis Gibson. A representative from her office who attended the celebration on Gibson's behalf said, "For the last 50 years, these two buildings have represented a community. I just want to say that Tracey Towers represents a state of mind. Tracey Towers is these beautiful buildings that overlook the river, the park, and we're here for another 50, 100, 150 years."

The Morrisania Band Project performed numerous classic songs throughout the day, as residents danced and sang. Local vendors offered food and refreshments and nearby, children had access to bouncy houses.

When the late Sallie Caldwell, a former Tracey Towers resident and community leader, died in 2023, former District 15 City Council candidate Kenny Agosto, who now works for the Office of the Bronx Borough President, paid a heartfelt tribute to her.

Referring to the 84-year-old as the "Mayor of Tracey Towers," he described Caldwell at the time as "the original, the indomitable, the unsinkable Ms. Sallie Caldwell, proud mother to all of our community, God-loving Christian, [a] bona-

*(continued on next page)*



Photo by Ariel Pacheco.

**BOUNCY HOUSES ARE** seen at the Tracey Towers 50th Anniversary celebration on Aug. 3, 2024.

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(continued from previous page)

fide NYS legislative public servant, [a] super NYC municipal worker, [and] powerful Tracey Towers resident advocate.”

Among other roles, Caldwell served on the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Community Council for many years. A former commanding officer of the Precinct, Deputy Inspector Thomas Alps recalled at her funeral how he would sometimes of an evening stand outside the stationhouse, located at 3016 Webster Avenue in Norwood, look out into the distance and wonder if Caldwell’s watchful eyes were looking back at him from her tower window, keeping an eye on everything. A plaque made in her image and in her memory hangs in one of the towers’ hallways



Photo courtesy of Cindy Rivera

**MIKEY MALAVE, 22**, OF Yonkers, in an undated photo.

[still keeping an eye on proceedings].

The towers’ residents have also witnessed their fair share of tragedy over the last 50 years with a Legionnaire’s Disease outbreak in 2019, and a fairly major fire breaking out on the 21<sup>st</sup> floor of one of the towers in July 2021, causing near devastating consequences, as some residents questioned if the fire alarm had gone off.

In July 2022, beloved resident, Monica Akua, 52, was tragically murdered inside her apartment in an apparent

domestic violence incident. “She had always had God inside her,” a friend previously told us of Akua. When she needed help resetting her password, reportedly Akua requested it to default to “God’s Love.”

Akua’s partner, Anthony Erzuah, 59, was charged with her alleged murder. He is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law. In 2023, Mikey Malave, 22, of Yonkers, also died in tragic circumstances at the Towers. Back at the party, Deidra R. Moore, who is running for Civil Court Judge in The Bronx, said, “I grew up in Twin Parks [the Fordham Heights location of a tragic fatal fire in January 2022] so when I see Tracey Towers, it reminds me of the development I grew up in. I’m just here to support and to be supportive.”

One Tracey Towers resident told us, “It’s nice to see the community come out and come together to celebrate. It’s a really hot day, but people are still coming out which is nice to see.”

Designed by architect Paul Rudolph, Tracey Towers is home to both longtime Bronxites and a substantial Ghanaian community, among others. At a 2023 Black History Month celebration at the towers, Hill spoke of the common bond all residents share, despite their different origin stories.

“It’s about the everyday working man and woman who has to raise their children, bring their children up,” she said. “We live in a time with strife. A lot

of time what people are trying to do is divide the soul, and we cannot exist as a house divided. We must work together. That’s the only thing that’s going to make America strong, and never perfect but a work in progress.”

*\*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



Photo courtesy of Sallie Caldwell

**SALLIE CALDWELL, 84**, LONGTME Tracey Towers resident, board member of the Jerome Gun Hill BID, and honorary member of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Community Council, has died.



Photo by José A. Giralt

**A FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH** of the late Monica Akua is placed on a chair in front of family and friends attending a memorial at Tracy Towers, located at 40 West Mosholu Parkway in the Jerome Park section of The Bronx on Friday, July 22, 2022. Akua, 52, a resident of the towers, died during an apparent act of domestic violence in her home on July 14, 2022.

# National Night In Celebrated with Bronx Precincts!

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Due to the torrential rain which flooded Bronx County on the evening of Tuesday, Aug. 6, most National Night Out events planned across the borough ended up being National Nights In!

From 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, who, as reported, recently announced the death of her mother Phyllis Gibson, canvassed the county in celebration of National Night Out Against Crime visiting various public service areas and 12 NYPD Precincts from Mott Haven and Melrose to Kingsbridge and Wakefield.

In the north Bronx, among these were the 48<sup>th</sup> Precinct on Prospect Avenue between East 179<sup>th</sup> and 180<sup>th</sup> Streets, and the 47<sup>th</sup> Precinct located on Grenada Place between Ely and Laconia Avenues.

The latter hosted their event at the Eastwood Manor where Gibson thanked NYPD Commissioner Edward Caban, who was in attendance, and Commanding Officer of the 47<sup>th</sup> Precinct, Deputy Inspector Jonathan P. Korabel for their collaborative work, together with community residents, in fighting crime and keeping streets safe.

Also in attendance at the 47<sup>th</sup> Precinct event was New York City Mayor Eric Adams and NYPD Deputy Com-

missioner Kaz Daughtry. The latter made headlines earlier this week for going head-to-head with a NY Daily News reporter over its coverage of the NYPD. The mayor said he aims to bring down the temperature of the discussion.

Held annually across the U.S. on the first Tuesday of August, except in Texas where it is held on the first Tuesday in October, National Night Out was created to enhance police community relations by bringing communities together under positive circumstances. The evenings often feature a block party, cookout, and various other community events, which are usually held outdoors under the summer sunshine.

Despite the rain, NYC Department of Veterans Services Commissioner James Hendon joined residents, members of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct, and 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Community Council in Poe Park in Kingsbridge Heights under the bandstand for “good vibes and cheer to celebrate the people who make NYC the safest big city in the country!” Several proclamations were awarded to various recipients in recognition of their service to the community in relation to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct and across the borough. “Thank you for your continued dedication to our community’s safety!” Hendon said.



Photo courtesy of the Office of the Bronx Borough President

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT** Vanessa Gibson joins members of the NYPD’s 47<sup>th</sup> Precinct at Eastwood Manor east of Williamsbridge to celebrate National Night Out on Aug. 6, 2024.



Photo courtesy of NYC Department of Veterans Affairs

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF Veterans Affairs** Commissioner Hendon joins Brenda Caldwell, president of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Community Council, 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Community Affairs Officer Stephen Echevarria and a colleague for National Night Out in Poe Park in Kingsbridge Heights on Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2024.

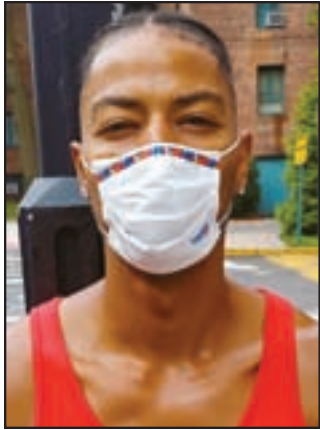


# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**

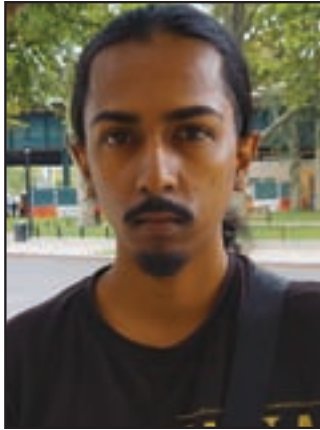


This week, we asked readers for their thoughts on the Listeria outbreak linked to Boar's Head meat products that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said has killed two people and caused 34 people to become ill, including 33 hospitalizations, across 13 states, including New York.



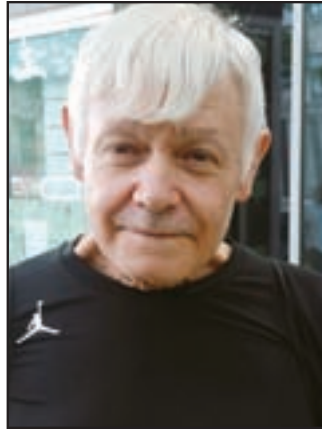
"They could prevent this with better safety measures. These are big factories that people are running, so you need more people doing their due diligence watching over as these products are being made, regarding safety and clearly that wasn't done in this situation."

**Lawrence Alexander,**  
Parkchester  
Photo by David Greene



"I believe there was probably an outbreak in the factory where they have the meats. They need to investigate what happened. I'll wait before I buy any cold cuts until they sort everything out and will probably continue to buy afterwards. There should be more government inspections at places where these meats are coming from."

**Joshua Naunan,**  
Parkchester  
Photo by David Greene



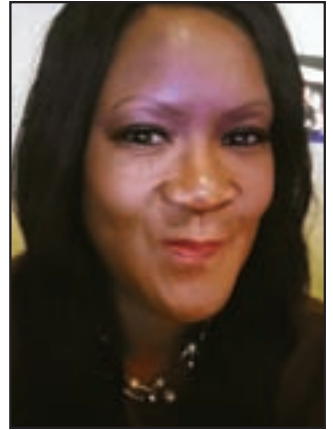
"I rarely eat cold cuts, thank God; it didn't affect me. There could be several reasons why this happened. We won't know until they do the investigation. They should have rules in place that will be effective and proper."

**Jose Nunez,**  
Bedford Park  
Photo by David Greene



"I regularly eat deli meat. The news of a deadly listeria outbreak linked to Boar's Head is heartbreaking for me and millions of people. As a result, I had to change my lunch routine to avoid risking my health. This situation is very concerning. Food safety is crucial. Boar's Head should face significant penalties."

**Kausar Mumin,**  
Concourse  
Photo courtesy of Kausar Mumin



"I have major concerns about any recall or outbreak, whether it be food or products. Both types can cause damage and / or harm. The Boar's Head outbreak is a great concern to me because it is a deli product that I tend to choose. As this brand has increased in price over the years, and with the cost of food rising, product control for contamination needs to be much better. I am paying more for a better product."

**Maria Williams,**  
Wakefield  
Photo courtesy of Maria Williams

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# “Slaughtery” Gang Members Charged with 14 Shootings, Slashing of Rival in Courthouse, Bragged Online

By **SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE**

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and New York City Police Commissioner Edward A. Caban announced on Friday, Aug. 2, that 20 people, including five teens, were charged with various violent crimes that include 14 shootings in the Fordham Heights, Kingsbridge, Highbridge, and Morris Heights areas, as well as a brutal slashing of a young woman outside the “youth part” courtroom inside the Bronx Criminal Court’s Hall of Justice.

Prosecutors said at least some of the gang members are seemingly influenced by drill rap music and posted videos on social media about some of the shootings, taunting their rival gang members. Clark said the defendants, 17 male youths and three young women, are part of the Slattery aka “Slaughtery” gang that held sway near Slattery Playground on East 183rd Street in Fordham Heights and are variously charged in a 176-count indictment.

The defendants are Israel Lugo Aka “Izzy” 26, Feenix Charley aka “Fee/Fee Banga,” 24, Nasiem King aka “EBK,” 22, Dayron Williams aka “Dayryer,” 22, Nadine Asamoah aka “Naybenz,” 18, Joseph Illery aka “Jojo,” 20, Shyhiem Martin Chambers aka “Shyloso/Shy,” 19, Benito Buxton aka “Nito,” 19, Clarence Roberts aka “Rico,” 18, Jahmeal Martin Weekes aka “Mill,” 23, Brian Cespedes aka “6Shotz/Herbo,” 24, Briana Portallatin aka “Brii Rose,” 19, Keith Douglas aka “Polo,” 24, Rodney Asamoah aka “Roddy,” 20, and Joseph Valdez aka “Chucky SB,” 25.

Five other defendants who were 17 or under were identified only as K.R. 17,

Y.S., 17, G.M. 17, E.L. 17, and J.L. 16. According to the prosecution, the 18-month investigation covered a conspiracy involving the gang obtaining guns and committing acts of violence against opposition rival gang members from June 15, 2020, through June 27, 2024.

Prosecutors said this included 14 shooting incidents, the slashing inside the Bronx Supreme Court of a rival gang member, a gunpoint carjacking, a stabbing, and gun possessions. They said the investigation revealed that members of the Slaughtery gang utilized various social media platforms, primarily Instagram and Facebook, to threaten rival gang members and promote themselves.

They said Slaughtery members and associates posted Drill rap videos on YouTube in which they bragged about shootings and mocked murdered rivals. They said 15 handguns and pistols were recovered during the investigation.

According to the prosecution, on June 18, 2020, at Morris Avenue and East 184th Street in Fordham Heights, the defendants, King and Williams, ran towards a crowd of individuals who were playing cards and King allegedly fired at least six shots at the group, striking three people who were not involved in gangs. The two then fled from the scene. Just a few minutes later, Williams was shot by members of a rival gang and King allegedly returned multiple shots at the rival gang.

On July 11, 2020, King and Charley went to East 194th Street and Briggs Avenue in Fordham Manor, where Charley discharged four shots at a purported rival but struck a passerby instead.

On Jan. 27, 2023, Charley and others

were in the Bronx Hall of Justice in Concourse when they spotted members of a rival gang standing outside the Youth Part on the fifth floor. Charley and the others approached the individuals and began to assault them. Charley allegedly used a sharp object [scalpel] to strike one of the individuals, causing a large laceration from her lower chest area to her abdomen. The victim was taken to a hospital and received 35 stitches.

The same day, Charley boasted about the slashing at the courthouse on social media, saying in sum and substance that the courthouse was his territory. A week prior to the incident, Charley had posted a video on Instagram bragging about smuggling in scalpels every time he is in the courthouse and showing viewers how to accomplish this. [He seemingly hid it in his lower lip inside his mouth.]

According to the website “History of Hip Hop,” drill rap is a subgenre of Hip Hop music is sonically similar to the trap music subgenre and lyrically similar to the “gansta rap” subgenre. According to various media sources, early drill artists are noted for their explicit, confrontational style of lyricism and association with crime in Chicago.

Mayor Eric Adams weighed in on the influence of drill rap on crime in New York City in February 2022 and called on social media companies to ban drill music after an 18-year-old rapper from the genre, Jayquan McKenley, aka Chii Wvttz, was shot and killed outside a recording studio in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn.

*Norwood News* asked law enforcement and representatives for the DA’s office how Charley was able to get a [presum-

ably metal] scalpel through the metal detectors at Bronx Criminal Court [Hall of Justice] to attack his female victim.

Clark responded, saying, “Yeah, good question. Well, a lot of times like it’s becoming very sophisticated so it’s [the scalpel] not necessarily metal. They wrap it in things.” Clark added, “They’ll wrap it so it’s undetected. Sometimes they’re plastic so that it won’t be detected as well but the [heat?/inaudible] just felt like regardless of what it is, I’m going to show you how to do it and get it in, and and you see the mayhem that it caused.” A member of law enforcement added, “There are multiple kinds of material.. porcelain, plastic, sometimes metal.”

Prosecutors said the 17-count indictment includes second-degree conspiracy, attempted murder in the second degree, first-degree robbery, first-degree assault, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon, attempted gang assault in the first degree, second-degree robbery, and other related charges.

They said eleven of the defendants have been arraigned before Bronx Supreme Court Justice Tara Collins, and the rest are awaiting arraignment. Asamoah, Illery, Chambers, Buxton, and Portallatin were detained in custody. Bail was set at \$100,000 / \$600,000 / \$600,000 for Weekes. Bail was set at \$50,000 / \$350,000 / \$350,000 for Cespedes, and bail was set at \$75,000 / \$500,000 / \$500,000 for Rodney Asamoah.

They said G.M. was detained in custody, bail was set at \$25,000 / \$250,000 for Y.S. and at \$50,000 / \$250,000 for E.L. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

## BMCA Holds Last Meeting Before Summer Break

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

The Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BMCA) held its last monthly meeting before its summer hiatus on Wednesday, June 5, at 400 East Mosholu Parkway South, where several topics were on the agenda and discussed at length.

BMCA President Barbara Stronczer said Con Edison reached out to the association to ask if anybody in the community used any type of chest respirator, rocking bed respirator, or chemo dialysis respirator. “Con Edison would like to know ahead of time just in case there is a blackout,” she said. For those affected, they can reach out to Con Edison at (877) 582-6633.

Stronczer also said that according to the BMCA’s bylaws, the association is required to have elections each year in June. She said BMCA asked if anybody wanted a position on the committee and didn’t get any responses, so the committee will remain unchanged for now.

As recently reported, each year, BMCA honors a community recipient with the Jack Kelly Memorial Award. “Jack Kelly was one of the original powers of this organization back in the late 1970s,” said Stronczer. “So, the Jack Kelly Memorial Award, in recognition of outstanding service to our community, is presented to Síle Moloney, the editor of the *Norwood News*.”

Stronczer later provided an update on the Frisch Field renovations. She said funding was initially allocated by former City Councilmember Andrew Cohen (C.D. 11) before he left office, but the recent discovery of an underground stream at the field led BMCA to believe the renovations would require additional funding.

Stronczer said she reached out to current District 11 City Council Member Eric Dinowitz’s office, and was told, “It seems that additional funding will not be needed.”

“They’re going to get DOT [NYC De-

partment of Transportation] to fix whatever has to be fixed, and the work should start in about a year, so that’s a plus for the neighborhood,” Stronczer said. “It will be nice once it’s finished.”

One of the 52nd Precinct’s Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCOs) was present at the meeting and said crime declined in Sectors C and D of the 52nd precinct from May 6 to June 2. “We’ve seen a decline in crime a little bit, not much, but small amounts,” the NCO said.

Representatives from the offices of Assembly Member John Zaccaro Jr. (A.D. 80), Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33), and District 15 City Council Member Oswald Feliz were also in attendance for the meeting and provided various legislative updates and share details of upcoming events.

*Norwood News* usually includes fliers for such events, including any back-to-school giveaways, in our regular Neighborhood Notes features. [We have

more capacity to list more events online than in the print edition. Check [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org) in the coming days for the latest updates.]

The next BMCA meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, September 4.



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**THE BEDFORD MOSHOLU** Community Association hold their monthly meeting on June 5, 2024 at 400 East Mosholu Parkway South in Bedford Park.



# Fordham Manor: Six People Shot on Morris Avenue and East 190th Street Expected to Survive

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Six male adults, aged between 20 and 40, who were shot in Fordham Manor on the south end of St. James Park on Wednesday night, Aug. 7, are expected to survive, police said.

During a press conference held on Morris Avenue on Wednesday night, Assistant Chief Benjamin Gurley, commanding officer of Patrol Borough Bronx, said the group of six were shot at 191st Street and Morris Avenue. He said based on a preliminary investigation, the shooting unfolded at around 8.15 p.m.

“There’s several people hanging out under the scaffolding next to me, to my left,” Gurley said. “Two males, one with a helmet, one without, come through St. James Park. They park a scooter in the park. They come up the stairs to my right. They fire approximately nine rounds at the group hanging out, striking six people.”

He continued, “All of our victims, five males in their twenties, one male in his early thirties, all shot [are] not likely to die.” He said the victims were all shot in different parts of their bodies, one in the stomach, one in the right hand, one in the groin, one in the right leg, one in the torso, and one in the right arm.

Gurley said when police arrived, there were just two victims at the scene, two other victims had fled in a vehicle and later flagged down EMS and were taken to an area hospital, and two other victims walked into two different hospitals, one in Queens and one in The Bronx.

Asked about a motive, Gurley said, “No, motive at this time. We’re still trying to figure that out. We’re trying to talk to victims. There’s victims in surgery right now, then there’s victims that aren’t in surgery, but our detectives are spread out throughout the hospitals, trying to interview and find out.”

Asked if the victims were cooperating, Gurley said, “Some are. Some



Photo by Síle Moloney

**NYPD OFFICERS ARE** seen guarding the crime scene following the shooting of 6 people on Morris Avenue beside St. James Park in Fordham Manor on Wednesday night, Aug. 7, 2024.

aren’t.” When asked if the shooting was gang-related, Gurley said that was not yet known.

We spoke to one young woman who declined to be identified, along with her mom, on 191st Street and asked her if she had witnessed the shooting. She said she heard it as she lives on the first floor of a building that faces onto Morris Avenue but said there was some scaffolding blocking her view of the street, aside from some holes where she could see through.

“I heard a loud boom and then I went out to the window, and I looked,” she said. “You can’t really see because it has this thing. So I just moved my little potted plant that I have inside and I happened to look outside and I all I can see is, like, somebody’s feet coming from another car.”

“All I saw was their feet,” the young woman continued. “Like their whole body was under the car but just their feet was coming up and then, well, she (my mom) was outside, so I called her, and I was like, ‘Mom, where are you?’” The young woman continued, “And so then

they got out from under the car and all I hear is this ruckus, everybody asking each other, like, are they okay. I guess they dropped everything. They were looking for their phones and stuff.”

Asked if the people under the car were shot or if they were just bystanders hiding from the flying bullets, the woman said, “All I can see was one person and then one was walking from this way with his hand wrapped with a sweater. He was like, ‘I was shot. I was shot. They hit my arm.’” She said the victims then appeared to be calling each other by their names, looking for each other.

Asked if they were young guys, she said they all looked young and looked to be in their twenties. We asked if the people under the car appeared to be breathing and she said, “They were breathing. They were just hiding.”

Asked how she felt now having witnessed the shooting, she said, “We were scared. Well, mostly me, because my mom was outside right when it happened, and I was calling her and she just happened to be on the corner when it was happening, so she was on this side. I work on the other side of the street. I work in Kingsbridge, but my mom works on this side on Jerome, and we walk this way at night all the time.”

Asked if there were a lot of people on the street at the time the shooting took place, she said, “no.” We asked how many shots she heard. She said it sounded like a lot of fast shots all at once like the sound of a machine gun. “It didn’t sound like pew, pew, pew.” she said.

A group of male youths, who appeared to be teenagers, were seen hanging out near the crime scene after the shooting. We asked if

they had witnessed the shooting. They said they knew nothing about it.

We also spoke to one local resident of Morris Avenue, a single father, who declined to be identified and was clearly still shaken several hours later. He said he had been home at the time of the shooting with his young daughter when they heard the shots fired. He said they both hit the floor inside their apartment.

Appearing extremely concerned for what could potentially have happened to his daughter had bullets flown through their window, the man just said he really didn’t want to get involved. “It’s time to move to Florida,” he said. Asked how many shots he heard, he said “A lot.”

We spoke to some other residents to ask if they had seen the incident. Speaking in Spanish, one local resident, Rafael Roja, said he had not, as he arrived home later. Roja said it was the first time he recalled seeing anything like that in the neighborhood. He said he came outside to check his bike was still parked on the street where he left it. It was.

We mentioned that there had been another shooting involving four adults and two kids in broad daylight a year prior on the opposition side of the park, and asked the resident if he remembered it. He said he didn’t and added that the south side of St. James Park was generally quieter than the north side. He also mentioned that the latest shooting took place quite late.

Another male resident who declined to be identified and who also had children said although he was shocked, it was still just a regular day for him. “Got to get out of The Bronx,” he said. Yet another male resident, who also declined to be identified, said what had happened was “scary.” He had not witnessed it.

Anyone with information in regard to 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 Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on X @NYPDtips.



Photo by Síle Moloney

**NYPD INVESTIGATORS ARRIVE** to carry out an investigation at the crime scene following the shooting of 6 people on Morris Avenue beside St. James Park in Fordham Manor on Wednesday night, Aug. 7, 2024.



Screenshot courtesy of the NYPD

**DETECTIVES FROM PATROL** Borough Bronx hold a press conference on Morris Avenue by St. James Park in Fordham Manor following the shooting of 6 people on Wednesday night, Aug. 7, 2024.



# NEWS BRIEFS

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

## Montefiore Grant Will Support Seniors' Program

Montefiore Health System announced on July 9 that it has received a Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in partnership with New York University Rory Meyers College of Nursing and JASA. Officials from the private hospital said the grant will be used to train 5,000 healthcare professionals in providing age-friendly care for older adults in The Bronx.

They said unique aspects of the grant include placing a JASA social workers in Montefiore Medical Group sites to address barriers in referring older adults to Bronx community resources, the expansion of the curriculum for community health workers at Montefiore regarding specialized services for older adults, including people living with dementia, and the development of a polypharmacy/medication management clinic.

## Rebirth of Grand Concourse Landmark with Fine Fare Supermarket

The Fordham Heights community celebrated the grand opening of a new Fine Fare supermarket on June 23 in what was the landmarked Dollar Savings Bank site at 2530 Grand Concourse and Fordham Road. Long vacant for over a decade, representatives said this beacon of commerce in The Bronx will be vibrant once again. Elected officials including Congressman Adriano Espaillat (NY-13), Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, and City Council Member Oswald Feliz (C.D. 15) joined community leaders, city officials and owners to celebrate the opening of the

store and the public and private investments Fine Fare representatives said made the project possible.

They said after the business owners gained approval from the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the store underwent construction for over a year as crews carefully restored the historic interior of the old banking hall. The building is an interior and individual NYC Landmark, and those involved in the project said the opening represents the successful adaptive reuse of the unique, grand, pink granite space.



Photo courtesy of Fine Foods Supermarket

**ELECTED OFFICIALS JOIN** community leaders, city officials, and owners to celebrate the opening of a new Fine Fares supermarket at the former and landmarked site of Dollar Savings Bank at 2530 Grand Concourse in Fordham Heights on June 23, 2024.

## Consumer Protection Department Warns Military of Scams

To mark Military Consumer Protection Month in July, the Department of State's Division of Consumer Protection warned members of the military to be aware of scams targeting service members. They said scams are surging nationwide, and members of the military are frequent targets. They said according to the Federal Trade Commission, fraud cost veterans, service members and their families \$477 million in 2023, and there were 93,735 fraud reports within the community during that time. Imposter scams, online shopping scams, and investment-related scams were the top three types

of scams targeted at military members, veterans and their families. Officials also warned against seemingly friendly car sellers and fake property rentals.

## JBOLC Marks James Baldwin Centennial

The James Baldwin Outdoor Learning Center (JBOLC) along with Bronx community partners, hosted a James Baldwin Centennial Celebration at its Garden Community Farmers Market on Aug. 3, to mark what would have been Baldwin's 100th birthday. The celebration, attended by Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81) and Councilman Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11), took place on the north campus of DeWitt Clinton High School, which Baldwin attended from 1938 to 1942. The great American writer and civil rights activist was born in Harlem in 1924 and died in 1987 at the age of 63.

JBOLC Garden Community Farmers Market first opened in August 2020, during the height of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide access to healthy and affordable local produce, and sustainable and healthy, locally made products in an open air, safe environment. Now in its 5th season, members say it continues to be a hub of fresh food, art, movement, education, resources and love for the garden community it has activated.



Photo courtesy of Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz

**(L TO R) ASSEMBLYMAN JEFFREY DINOWITZ**, Ray Pultinas, founder of the JBOLC, and Councilman Eric Dinowitz attend a James Baldwin Centennial Celebration at Dewitt Clinton High School in Bedford Park on Aug. 3, 2024.

## Montefiore Maternal Child Health Competency Fair

Montefiore Health System officials recently announced the launch of a new nursing education program which provides annual competency training and skills fairs for nurses across its maternal child health departments and neonatal intensive care units at its Wakefield and Weiler campuses. They said each fair includes around 30 nurses who attend a full day of hands-on education and training, led by nurse educators, patient care coordinators, and fellow nurses.

They said the training is focused on a range of important health topics including post-partum hemorrhage, preeclampsia, newborn resuscitation, infection control and breastfeeding. They said the bimonthly fairs provide interactive learning workshops that help nurses stay up to date on current best practices and evidence-based information. They added that the fairs, which will be assessed and adapted annually, are a fun and engaging way for almost 400 nurses across the campuses to participate in a comprehensive education program that aims to improve maternal and infant health outcomes in the local community.



Photo courtesy of Montefiore Health System  
**PARTICIPANTS OF A** new nursing education program launched by Montefiore Health System which aims to improve maternal and infant health outcomes are seen at Montefiore's Weiler campus on July 16, 2024.

# Fordham Manor: Police Release Photo of Suspect in Fatal Stabbing

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

The NYPD has released a video and photo of a suspect wanted in connection with the murder that occurred in Fordham Manor on Wednesday afternoon, July 31. They are asking for the public's assistance identifying the man who is described as male, has a medium complexion, a slim build, and braids.

They said he was last seen wearing a gray, hooded sweatshirt, blue jeans, a tan t-shirt, and white and black sneakers, and was last seen going northbound on University Avenue on foot to parts unknown.

Police launched the murder investigation after a 34-year-old man, who has since been named as Cristian Torres of University Avenue in The Bronx, died

following a fatal stabbing. One resident said the killing occurred following a dispute.

Police said they responded to a 911 call at around 1.37 p.m. on July 31 about a man who had been stabbed at 2448 University Avenue. "Upon arrival, officers observed a 34-year-old male with a stab wound to the chest inside the location," a police spokesperson said. "The victim was transported by EMS to St. Barnabas Hospital, where he was later pronounced deceased." Police said there were no arrests, and the investigation remains ongoing.

On male resident of University Avenue who said he lived in the building next door to the Torres' building said he had been with him right before the

stabbing incident unfolded. Speaking in Spanish, he said, "We were sharing a moment together, hanging out around the corner [on West 188th Street]. I was splashing myself with water [from the fire hydrant] and he was sitting on a chair having a beer."

The resident continued, "One guy approached him and started complaining to him about something. The guy was from the same building [2448 University Avenue]." The resident said Torres lived on the second floor. Asked if the two building residents knew each other, the resident appeared to think they did. He said the man who approached Torres then left and allegedly called who the



Photo by Síle Moloney  
**NYPD DETECTIVES CARRY** out an investigation at 2448 University Avenue in Fordham Manor on Wednesday afternoon, July 31, 2024, following a fatal stabbing of a 34-year-old man.

(continued on page 8)



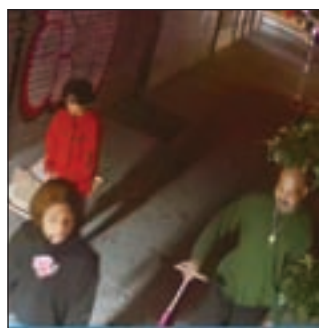
## CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY &amp; DAVID GREENE



### Fordham Manor: Man Sought for Armed Robbery

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they say is sought in connection with a robbery that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said that on Monday, July 1, at around 00.38 a.m., a 28-year-old man who was in front of 305 East Fordham Road was approached by a second man, who displayed a sharp object and stole the victim's property. They said the suspect then fled the location on foot in an unknown direction, and the victim refused medical attention at the scene.



### Gang of 7 Wanted for Robbery and Assault of Older Adult

The NYPD is appealing to the public for help identifying the three people seen in the accompanying photo who they say are sought in addition to four others for questioning in relation to a robbery and assault on an older person that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said the incident unfolded on Friday, July 26, at around 3.20 a.m.

They said a 69-year-old male victim was walking near the intersection of Davidson Avenue and West Kingsbridge Road when an unidentified male placed him in a chokehold. Meanwhile, they said six other males began going through his pockets. They said the group stole \$200 and a cell phone, before fleeing to parts unknown.

Police added that the victim was treated for minor injuries at St. Barnabas Hospital.



### Van Cortlandt Park Area: Two Sought in Armed Robbery Pattern

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the people seen in the accompanying photo above who they said were wanted in connection to an armed robbery pattern identified across Kingsbridge and Van Cortlandt Park in July. Police said the first incident occurred on Saturday, June 1, at around 8.20 p.m., opposite 3545 Jerome Avenue in Van Cortlandt Park, when a 46-year-old male victim and a 51-year-old male victim were approached by two unidentified male individuals.

They said the two displayed

a black gun and demanded money from the victims. "The individuals removed approximately \$360 and fled in a white four-door sedan, traveling northbound on Jerome Avenue," a police spokesperson said. "No injuries were reported as a result of this incident."

Police said the second incident took place on Monday, June 17, at around 3.30 a.m. when three unidentified male individuals entered the gas station

located at 317 West 230th Street in Kingsbridge and approached a 48-year-old male victim. "The individuals displayed a black firearm and removed approximately \$439," a police spokesperson said. "The individuals fled in a white four-door sedan, traveling eastbound on West 230 Street. No injuries were reported as a result of this incident."

Police said the first suspect is described as male, who was last seen wearing a black hat, a black ski mask, a black hoodie, grey jeans and black sneakers. They said the second suspect is described as male who was last seen wearing a red hat, a black ski mask, a black

hoodie, black sweatpants, and grey/white sneakers.

They said a third incident took place on Sunday, July 28, at around 5.17 p.m. when two unidentified people approached a 26-year-old male victim in the vicinity of Jerome Avenue and East 233rd Street also inside Van Cortlandt Park, southwest of Woodlawn Heights. They said the two displayed guns and stole the victim's jewelry before fleeing northbound on Jerome Avenue in a white vehicle. They said there were no injuries reported as a result of the incident.

### Queens Woman Charged with Immigration Scam Stealing \$73K from Bronxites of Caribbean Descent

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark announced on July 31 that a Queens woman was charged with defrauding ten Bronxites of Caribbean descent out of \$73,000 by promising to improve their immigration status.

Clark said the defendant, Windella Sanderson Wells, 54, of Hollis, Queens, was arraigned before Bronx Supreme Court Justice Raymond Bruce on a 44-count indictment charging first-degree scheme to defraud, second-degree grand

## Fordham Manor: Police Release Photo of Suspect in Fatal Stabbing

(continued from page 7)

resident referred to as "the friends" who he said later arrived at the scene and started fighting with Torres.

The resident said he, himself, then left the scene and said Torres started to run into his own building, the group followed him and that somewhere inside the hallway, to his knowledge, the stabbing took place, though he said he didn't know exactly where. "They killed him," the resident said. The front entrance to the building had been cordoned off by police and detectives were seen carrying out their investigation.

Asked if the man who first approached Torres and argued with him was among the group who later attacked him, the resident said he was not. He added, "He left the area but later he returned around two minutes after the stabbing took place."

We asked the resident if he, himself,

had felt scared. He replied, "No, what I felt was sadness and anger because we're all friends." Asked to describe Torres, the resident said, "He was a good youngster. He was only like 23 or 25 years old or something... I'm 45 so for me, he's like my son. He's a really good guy." Asked if he knew what the argument had been about, he said he did not.

Later, *Norwood News* spoke to Jada, a female family member of the victim who said Torres was her "uncle but not by blood." When asked by one reporter what her reaction was when she found out he had been stabbed, she said, "I couldn't say nothin'. I was just shocked." She later further explained her relationship with Torres, saying, "He's like my dad's friend. He's seen me grow up but I haven't seen him in a couple of years, so I don't really know what to say but I consider him my uncle."

Asked about the last time she saw Torres, she said in part, "Earlier today. I was with him, hanging out with my dad." Asked what they had been doing, she said, "We were sitting around having fun. My dad was drinking with his friends. I was there [inaudible]."

Asked how she heard the news of his stabbing, Jada said, "I was here." She said she didn't see the stabbing itself but saw him being put on a stretcher. Asked to describe Torres, Jada said, "He was a good person. He was nice. He had a good

heart, a very big heart. He was very giving, understanding. He would talk to you. He was a very good person."

We also spoke to some local residents, none of whom wished to be identified, in the aftermath of the stabbing about what happened. Some said they recognized Torres from seeing him around the building at 2448 University Avenue. Some said generally it was safe in the area, but more police presence would be good.

We asked one resident of the area how he felt knowing the victim had been fatally stabbed. Speaking in Spanish, he responded, "Sadness, because the family must be grieving and it's something that could be avoided."

Speaking in Spanish, one woman called Cecilia said she didn't live in the immediate area and only came to get her hair done at the salon from time to time. Asked how she felt knowing that a murder had taken place in such close proximity, she said, "It feels ugly...bad."

Speaking in Spanish, another female resident of the area said, "It's a pity." We the neighbors if they felt safe in the neighborhood. The same woman replied, "Well, I live here a long time and thanks be to God, I haven't had any problems with anyone. Nobody has any problems with anyone here." Asked if she had ever witnessed anything similar happening in the neighborhood, she said, "No, not

here."

We asked Jada if she knew if Torres had had any enemies and she said, "No, he didn't."

Anyone with information in regard to 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 Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on X @NYPD-Tips.

All calls are strictly confidential.



Photo courtesy of the NYPD

**THE NYPD RELEASED** this photo of a suspect wanted in connection with the murder that occurred at 2448 University Avenue in Fordham Manor on Wednesday afternoon, July 31, 2024, and are appealing to the public for help identifying the man.



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## Letters To The Editor

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

### Take an Ice Cream Day

You scream, I scream, we all scream for ice cream. Take a day off from worrying about cholesterol, triglycerides and your weight. Treat yourself, beat the heat and humidity by going to your favorite local ice cream parlor and order a banana split.

Sunday, Aug. 25 is National Banana Split Day. It was invented by 23-year-old apprentice pharmacist David Evans Strickler at his Latrobe, Pennsylvania store's soda fountain in 1904. The cost for this tasty treat was 10 cents, which was twice the price of any other ice cream sundae.

Why not have an all-ice cream diner? Enjoy a couple of scoops of your favorite ice cream. It should be properly served in a long dish sometimes called a boat. The banana is cut in half lengthwise

with three scoops of ice cream in between. Tradition has scoops of vanilla, chocolate and strawberry, but many substitute in other flavors.

Add some hot fudge, whipped cream, crushed nuts, maraschino cherries and other toppings. It will put a smile on your face and bring back childhood memories of when you frequented Jahns Ice Cream Parlor or another favorite ice cream emporium. The original Jahns Ice Cream Parlor opened in 1897 in Mott Haven, was followed decades later by those in Eastchester, Fordham, and in other neighborhoods around Brooklyn and Queens.

**Larry & Wendy Penner  
Great Neck**

### Shame on the Olympics

I am outraged at how "The Last Supper" was used in the opening ceremony for the 2024 Olympics in Paris, with a drag queen imitating Our Lord. Such a desecration would never take place with the Mus-

lim religion or their leader, Allah. The consequences for such disrespect would be fatal. But since it is against the Christian faith, it is acceptable. Why isn't there outrage expressed by our Jewish brothers and sisters as well as the Hindus and Buddhists?

Also, I respectfully object to the front-page picture of the recent *Norwood News* with a gay, married couple on the cover. May I refer these gentlemen to Google the Bible passage, 1 Corinthians 6: 9-11, and to know that the Good Lord reserved the holy and sacred sacrament of matrimony for Adam and Eve and not Adam and Steve!

**Richard Marias,  
Norwood**

*Editor's Note: The director of the opening ceremony of the 2024 Paris Olympics Games, Thomas Jolly, has stated since the ceremony that the image which some people interpreted as a mockery of Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper" painting was not, in fact, inspired by that painting*

but by "Le Festin Des Dieux" (*The Feast of the Gods, c. 1635-1640*), a painting by Dutch painter, Jan van Bijlert.

*Destination Tomorrow, 452 East 149th Street, Bronx, New York 10455, is a grassroots agency and the designated LGBTQ+ center for the Bronx borough. It is the belief of those who run the center that no individual should have to leave his, her, or their neighborhood to access LGBTQ+ specific services. Contact the center on (646) 723-3325 Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. or email [info@destination-tomorrow.org](mailto:info@destination-tomorrow.org).*

*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.*

# Opinion

## Project 2025 The Bronx Fights Back

By **SILVIA BLUMENFELD**

Folks in The Bronx are fighters. We care about all the issues that affect our lives and shape our communities. Healthcare, housing, justice, and education are top priorities, but some of the pundits would have you believe that threats to democracy itself are less important to our citizens. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I've lived and worked in neighborhoods across The Bronx for my entire life. Many of my neighbors and friends are first generation Americans, as am I. Like my own family, many escaped war, authoritarian rule, and ongoing violence in their countries of origin. We get it. That is why the alarm bells are ringing for us as we come to understand the full extent of the MAGA plan to transform our society.

Project 2025 is a nine-hundred-page document that methodically describes the plan to end democracy and our constitutional protections here in the United States. It is a playbook for Republicans that

outlines steps that they will take if they gain power next year. It's focused on attacking our rights, undermining our votes, and giving hand-outs to billionaires.

The armed forces would be used within our own borders to arrest and detain undocumented immigrants for deportation. When Trump speaks of immigrants "poisoning the blood of the nation," he's borrowing a phrase from Adolf Hitler.

Trump has repeatedly lauded the Heritage Foundation and the authors of the Project 2025 playbook. At least 140 people who worked in the Trump administration had a hand in putting together this manifesto for overhauling our government.

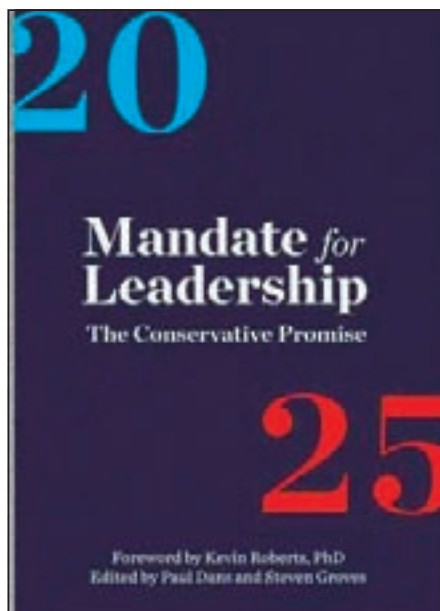
The threat is real, and the Bronx says no! Vote for Kamala Harris and

don't forget to vote in all the down-ballot races too. We will need a Congress willing to work to restore our rights. Reproductive freedom is just one of those endangered rights. There's much that's imperfect in our democracy, but we must preserve it so that we can con-

tinue the fight for equality and justice.

Together, we can do it, and we can only do it together.

*Silvia Blumenfeld is a Bronx resident and a member of Northwest Bronx Indivisible.*



## FDNY Responds to Car Stuck in Water

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

An FDNY spokesperson said department officials responded to a report of a car that was stuck on the Major Deegan Expressway on Tuesday, Aug. 6, amid heavy flooding. The spokesperson said FDNY was alerted at 6.51 p.m. to a car that was stuck in water at Exit 10 on the Major Deegan Expressway at West 230th Street. They reported no injuries.

The National Weather Service

(NWS) had issued a flood advisory on Aug. 6, for Bronx County. Urban and small stream flooding was caused by excessive rainfall. Some cars were seen driving through a heavily flooded Mosholu Parkway by Van Cortlandt Avenue in Bedford Park at one point, while others were seen reversing, causing some traffic chaos. Elsewhere, the Williamsbridge Oval park and adjacent skate park were completely submerged in water.



Photo by Silé Moloney

**THE PLAYING FIELD**, running track in the Williamsbridge Oval in Norwood is seen flooded on Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024, amid heavy rain.



## NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY ARIEL PACHECO



### Back to School Giveaway

Backpacks, school supplies, free school uniforms, and light refreshments will be provided at the First Annual Asthma Awareness Event on Sunday, Aug. 11, between 184th Street and 185th Street & Webster Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call (646) 567-6466 or email [taylorjacqueline114@gmail.com](mailto:taylorjacqueline114@gmail.com).

### MTA Hiring 2,000 Bus Operators

The MTA is hosting an Open House on Saturday, Aug. 17, at the Bronx High School of Science, 75 W 205th St., Bronx, NY 10468, from 9 a.m. to noon. The MTA is hiring 2,000 bus operators and entrance to the Open House is guaranteed for the first 1,000 attendees. For more information, visit <https://new.mta.info/article/mta-bus-operator-job-fair-august-17-2024>.

### Microsoft Excel for Beginners

Join Mosholu Library on Wednesday, Aug. 21, at 4 p.m. at 285 East 205th Street, Bronx, NY 10467, to learn the basics of working with spreadsheets using Microsoft Excel. Topics include entering data and formulas, moving and copying data,

formatting, and print previewing worksheets. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

### NYC Budget Forum

Join Council Member Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11) for his annual community forum to discuss the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget on Thursday, Aug. 8, at 7 p.m. at Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, 3450 Dekalb Avenue Bronx, NY 10467. For more information, call (718) 549-7300.

### Free Naloxone Sprays and Testing Strips

Stop by the Office of State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33) for free Naloxone sprays and testing strips Monday-Thursdays from noon to 4 p.m. at 2432 Grand Concourse, Suite 506, Bronx, NY 10458. For more information, call (718) 933-2034.

### Annual Pop-Up Career Closet Donations

The Fordham University Career Center is hosting its annual Pop-Up Career Closet this fall and is accepting donations of women's, men's, and gender-neutral clothing suitable for interviewing

and office wear. The clothing and items should be appropriate for undergraduates, graduate students, professionals, and continuing education students. The deadline for donations is Aug. 22. For more information, email [bperez33@fordham.edu](mailto:bperez33@fordham.edu).

### Call for Artist Submissions

Arthouse.NYC is calling for artist submissions for its 10th Annual Autumnal Juried Exhibition. Artists are invited to show their colors and submit their finest work that captures the essence of the season. Whether your medium is painting, photography, or digital art, Arthouse.NYC wants to see your work. For more information, email [curator@arthouse.nyc](mailto:curator@arthouse.nyc).

### Cooling Centers

Visit Bronx cooling centers to stay cool to protect yourself from extreme heat. For more information, visit [NYC.Gov/BeattheHeat](http://NYC.Gov/BeattheHeat).

- Spuyten Duyvil Library, 650 West 235th Street, Mon-Thurs, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- MMCC, CDC AOC Main Building, 3450 Dekalb Avenue, Mon-Fri, 9

a.m. to 5 p.m.

- Mosholu Library, 285 East 205th Street, Mon-Thurs, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Belmont Library, 610 East 186th Street, Mon-Fri, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sat, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Pelham Parkway Van Nest Library, 2147 Barnes Avenue, Mon-Fri, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **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:
  - 234 East 203 Street, with a deadline of Aug. 26.
  - 3349 Webster Avenue, with a deadline of Aug 26.
  - 2532 Grand Avenue, with a deadline of Aug. 22.
  - 3055 Sedgwick Avenue, with a deadline of Aug. 19.
- HPD frequently extends the announced deadlines. For more information, visit <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/searchlotteries>.

## CRIME FILE - CONTINUED

BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE



(continued from page 8)

larceny, third-degree grand larceny, third-degree criminal possession of stolen property, third-degree unlawful possession of personal information, practicing or appearing as attorney-at-law without being admitted and first-degree falsifying business records.

Officials said an arrest and search warrant were executed at the home of Sanderson Wells by law enforcement and \$425,000 in cash along with thousands of client applications were seized during the raid. They said that in February 2023, federal officials referred the case to the Bronx District Attorney's Financial Frauds Bureau. According to the investigation, the defendant allegedly targeted people from the Guyanese, Jamaican and Hai-

tian communities.

They said that between Sept. 1, 2019, and May 1, 2023, Sanderson Wells allegedly posed as both a licensed attorney and an accredited immigration preparer, claiming she was experienced in assisting undocumented immigrants. They said she also promised her victims she would get their applications approved and directed them to sign the documents.

They said Sanderson Wells allegedly collected exorbitant fees varying in amount, and in one case, she allegedly demanded and received \$22,000 in cash. They said she allegedly took a total of \$73,000 from ten people, and all the applications she filed were rejected.

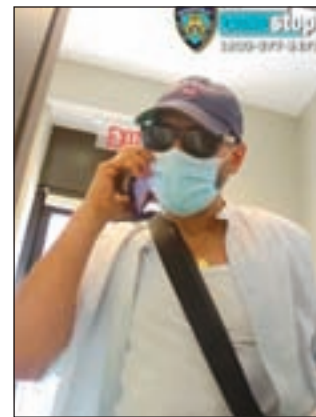
Officials from the Bronx DA's office said anyone who believes that they have been

victimized by Sanderson Wells is encouraged to contact the Bronx District Attorney's Immigrant Affairs Unit on (718) 838-7201 or at [bximmigrant@bronxda.nyc.gov](mailto:bximmigrant@bronxda.nyc.gov).

### Van Cortlandt Village: Man Sought for Ridgewood Savings Bank Robbery

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo at right who they say is sought in connection with a bank robbery that occurred in Van Cortlandt Village. They said that on Monday, Aug. 5, at around 2.47 p.m., an unidentified person entered Ridgewood Savings Bank, located at 3899 Sedgwick Avenue in Van Cortlandt Village, and approached a 20-year-old female victim.

They said the suspect passed



a note to the victim demanding \$20,000, and in the end, stole around \$478 before fleeing the location. They said he fled on foot, traveling southbound on Sedgwick Avenue, and that no injuries were reported as a result of the incident.

They said the suspect is

described as male, has a slim build and a light complexion. They said he was last seen wearing a blue baseball hat, sunglasses, a light blue, button-down shirt, light blue shorts, white sneakers, and was carrying a black, cross body bag. *Norwood News* has reached out to Ridgewood Savings Bank for comment and will share any updates we receive.

*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.*

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# Out & About

Compiled by **ARIEL PACHECO**

## EVENTS

Join the Woodlawn Conservancy for **Dorothy Parker and the Talk of the Town New Yorkers Trolley Tour** on Sunday, Aug. 18, at 2 p.m. at 4199 Webster Ave, Bronx, NY 10470. Dorothy Parker was an author, poet, and crusader. The trolley tour will visit her gravesite along with notable artists, captains of industry, explorers, performers, and writers. For more information, call (718) 920-0500.

Explore **Garden Grounds and Poisonous Plants** at the New York Botanical Gardens with a Guide on Sunday, Aug. 11, at 2 p.m. Take a look at plants that may look harmless but can harbor some of the most deadly poisons known, while also having medicinal benefits. For more information, call (718) 817-8700.

Listen to the Full Oral Histories from the **Allerton Coops in Living Color**, opening at the Museum of Bronx History 3266 Bainbridge Avenue,

Bronx, NY 10467, starting Monday, Aug. 12. Explore the recovered histories of African American and multi-racial residents of the Allerton Coops, a hub of working-class radicalism and avant-garde Yiddish and African American cultures during the 1930s to 1960s. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Join the Literary Freedom Project for **Melissa Coss Aquino in Conversation** on Thursday, Aug. 8, at 5 p.m. at Urban Health Plan, 1065 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, NY 10459. Coss Aquino is a Bronx writer and author of *Carmen and Grace*, an emotional, coming-of-age drama about two cousins from The Bronx lured into the drug trade at a young age and the ties that bind them, as one seeks power and the other a way out. For more information, email [info@literaryfreedom.org](mailto:info@literaryfreedom.org).

## FOOD

Visit the **White Plains Road Farmers Market** on Saturday, Aug. 10, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at White Plains Road and East 212th Street, Bronx, NY 10467 to discover more about local produce, artisans, and sustainable practices in a lively community setting. For more information, call (347) 391-7189.

## FASHION

Join the Bronx River Art Center to celebrate their 2024 Summer Program Projects with a **Pot Luck and Sustainable Fashion Show** on Friday, Aug. 9, at 1087 Tremont Avenue, Bronx, NY 10460. This will be followed by an Artist Talk by Aurelio Del Muro at 2 p.m. For more information, call (718) 598-5819.

## KIDS

Join Council Member Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11), the Jerome Gun Hill BID, and the Moshulu Preservation Corporation for **Movies in the Park After Dark** on Monday, Aug. 19, at 8 p.m. for a screening of Disney's "Encanto" at the Williamsbridge Oval Track and Field, 3325 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467. Entry is free. For more information, email [D11scheduling@council.nyc.gov](mailto:D11scheduling@council.nyc.gov).

The Kingsbridge Library is hosting **Little Movers**, an early literacy class for infants ages 18 months to 36 months on Wednesday, Aug. 14, from 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at 291 West 231st Street, Bronx, NY 10463. Join to hear stories, sing songs, and get those wiggles out as you help your active child build important early learning skills and discover ways

to promote early literacy. For more information, call (718) 548-5656.

Join the 52nd Precinct's Youth Coordination Officers for the **Police Commissioner's Day of Play** every Wednesday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Williamsbridge Oval, 3325 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467. Youth of all ages are welcome. For more information, call (718) 220-5822.

## MOVEMENT

NYC Parks is hosting a **Youth Sports Jamboree** on Wednesday, Aug. 21, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, 3225 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467. The day will be full of sports clinics, games, and fun competitions. Activities include basketball, ball hockey, cornhole, flag football, GaGa, kickball, pickleball, soccer, track and field, volleyball, wiffleball, and more. For more information, call (212) 360-3311.

Join Phipps Neighborhoods Public Health Corp and Montefiore Einstein for **Zumba at Fordham Plaza** as part of "Feel Good Fridays" led by Charisse Cash on Friday, Aug. 9, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1 Fordham Plaza Bronx, NY 10458. For more information, call (347) 329-3929.



## Breastfeeding for Latinx Women in America: Beyond the First Feeds

by **NEREYDA FRANCO**

August is National Breastfeeding Month. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that mothers exclusively breastfeed their babies for the first six months of life. This means feeding only breastmilk, instead of formula, water, or any type of food.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that 86.6% of Latinx mothers in the United States begin breastfeeding after baby's birth, the highest percentage of all groups surveyed. However, a large amount of Latinx mothers stop exclusive breastfeeding early and a National Institutes of Health survey showed that only 18% of their babies were exclusively breastfed by six months.

Feeding breastmilk as the first and only food source helps babies grow strong immune systems and a healthy microbiome, the good bacteria in the digestive system. Breastmilk also reduces a child's chance of getting chronic diseases like asthma and diabetes, and allergies, conditions that are higher in

Latinx children.

To extend exclusive breastfeeding, it is important to understand why some mothers start, then stop. We can learn about this pattern by studying the experiences of many Latinx women. What are the beliefs and support systems that promote exclusive breastfeeding after birth, and what are the barriers to feeding only breastmilk for six months?

One belief that undermines exclusive breastfeeding is the idea that breastmilk alone is not enough. By four months, many Latinx mothers have stopped exclusive breastfeeding and feed some formula and some breastmilk. Feeding "los dos" or "both" is more common among women who have been in the United States for longer times. Breastfeeding support is weaker in the United States and formula is more widely available here compared to other countries. Formula advertising also promotes the belief that formula is needed for infant health, despite decades of scientific research that shows that breastmilk is a complete food source for the first six months.

Other obstacles to exclusive breastfeeding include time and money. Some jobs do not give paid maternity leave. This means that women must return to work soon after birth. If they want to continue providing their baby breastmilk for six months, they need to pump milk during the work hours, store it, and bring it home which is logistically challenging to say the least. Moreover, some employers do not provide the legally required, appropriate pumping spaces and break time. This is often true if someone

is working a low-wage job or "off the books."

It's often said that "it takes a village to raise a child." A "village" or an environment that supports nursing can make an enormous difference to exclusive breastfeeding rates. In Latin America or the Caribbean, many people live with their family or extended family. Women observe and often help with the breastfeeding that occurs around them. This type of experiential learning and hands-on support has immense value.

Latinx women can find other forms of support however, including Spanish-language breastfeeding groups, in-person or online, or free, Spanish-language, breastfeeding hotlines or maternal mental health hotlines. And after a birth, spouses, family members, and friends can help a mom breastfeed by doing household tasks and baby care, like diapering, burping, bathing, or putting the baby to sleep. They can also help care for other children.

Here are some tips for anyone looking to breastfeed. During pregnancy, learn about breastfeeding, birth, infant care, and perinatal mental health through free classes in your language.

Montefiore, as a baby-friendly health system, offers an array of services to support breastfeeding. Montefiore's breastfeeding and perinatal topics website in Spanish includes Spanish fact sheets, videos, FAQs, listings for Spanish zoom



classes, support groups, and websites.

After birth, join in-person or video breastfeeding support groups in your language.

After birth, call this breastfeeding hotline with Spanish options, **(646) 965-7212**.

Educate your loved ones about breastfeeding and the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for six months. Tell them how they can help you breastfeed by bringing you the baby when they are hungry, and doing other household and baby care tasks so you can save your energy for breastfeeding.

Speak to your OBGYN, pediatrician, or a breastfeeding specialist.

Breastfeeding is a natural act that does not always come naturally! To help, please share this article and the resources above with anyone involved in the care and wellbeing of breastfeeding parents.

*Nereyda Franco MPH, MCHE, is a senior health educator with the Office of Community and Population Health at Montefiore Health System.*



# Awards Presented at Precinct Meeting

By **SÍLE MOLONEY & ARIEL PACHECO**

The 52nd Precinct Community Council held their last monthly meeting before their annual summer break, on June 20 at Monroe College in Fordham Manor, where several community members were recognized for their outstanding service and dedication to the community.

The first award recipient, who was not present for the occasion, was Officer Samuel Winsbacher, who was awarded “Cop of the Month” for May. “Officer Samuel Winsbacher is a midnight patrol officer who had information about a group of individuals who were stealing rims and tires off vehicles,” said NYPD Community Affairs Office Stephen Echevarria.

“He was able to identify the vehicle they [the thieves] were in and was able to recover some of the stolen things,” Echevarria added. “Through that investigation, it was determined that they were doing this throughout The Bronx and Manhattan, and he’s given Cop of the Month for May for this reason.”

Commanding officer of the 52nd Precinct, Deputy Inspector Chase Maneri also received a plaque by the council which reads, “In appreciation of all your outstanding services and commitment you have given to this community in which you serve.” Maneri took over as commanding officer of the Precinct in December 2023 from Deputy Inspector Jeremy Scheublin, who now leads the 46th Precinct.

Brenda Caldwell-Paris, president of

the council, also recommended that Echevarria be promoted to detective. “He’s often recognized by the council, but I just think that it’s time that we push for something real.” she said.

George Cooke, a staff member for District 15 City Council Member Oswald Feliz, was also recognized for his commitment to the community. Caldwell-Paris said of Cooke, “One thing I have to say about George is that, and I’m sure everyone will know, is that every meeting that we have, George is here! Every time we have something at the precinct, George is there, very time! He’ll be the last one to leave us. It’s a little something, but it’s just to let you know that we appreciate you as a representative.”

Asked for his reaction, Cooke later told *Norwood News*, “I was surprised! I’m the people’s man, just like the council member and I’m always here to help. I also live in the district too so I’m always glad to help out because these are my neighbors. They aren’t just constituents.”

Sari Mendoza, director of community affairs for State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33), was also recognized for her work and support to the community.

Caldwell-Paris said, “Sari is another person who is always there. We talked about the paper-shredding, and she made sure the senator got that for us. She’s here all the time. So, this here is for you. We, the council, just want to give you this as an appreciation of all your service and commitment you have given to this community.”



Photo by Síle Moloney

**GEORGE COOKE, STAFF** member for District 15 City Council Member Oswald Feliz, is presented with an award by Brenda Caldwell-Paris, president of the 52nd Precinct Community Council, during the Council’s meeting on June 20, 2024 held at Monroe College in Fordham Manor.

Speaking later to *Norwood News*, Mendoza said, “I was just happy to be here. It’s my job so I was just happy.” Mendoza also provided an update from Rivera about the Rent Guidelines Board’s decision to increase rent on stabilized apartments. “The mayor’s Rent Guidelines Board did increase the rent for a one-year lease by 2.75% and for two-year leases, it is 5.25%. They were voted on, and if you have any

questions, please contact our office,” she said.

For more information on the Rent Guidelines Board, visit <https://rent-guidelinesboard.cityofnewyork.us/>. The council usually meets on the third Thursday of each month at different locations. The next meeting will be in September. Call (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email distribution list.

## Bedford Park Resident Receives B.S. in International Transport & Trade

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Keri Ann Campbell, a former resident of Bedford Park, received her B.S. in International Transport and Trade from SUNY Maritime on May 24.

Campbell still resides in The Bronx and is now working with an international shipping insurer in New York City. Campbell is a graduate of P.S. 8 Isaac Varian, Bronx Dance Academy (M.S. 308), and St. Barnabas High School, a private Catholic high school which, as reported, has closed, though a petition has been launched to save it.

Campbell’s father, Mickey Bourke, said of his daughter’s achievements, “She’s a lowkey go-getter. She goes after stuff and when she wants something, she very methodically goes after it.”

Bourke added, “I think in some ways, being a part of The Bronx environment made her understand that she’s going to get ahead.”



Photo courtesy of Mickey Bourke

**KERI ANN CAMPBELL**

## Mess of the Month

By **DAVID GREENE**

A recent visit to the Bronx River Forest between Webster Avenue and Bronx Park East found several piles of garbage containing beer bottles, food containers, discarded e-bikes and scooters, and even a part of a porcelain urinal. Parks Department officials acknowledged experiencing a high level of illegal dumping at the location and said they are working to remove the debris as soon as possible. Parks officials also urge all New Yorkers to refrain from illegally dumping trash in public parks.

Meanwhile, Bronx residents can now start ordering a Brown Bin for compost for your building! Starting Oct. 6, Curbside Composting will be available to all Bronx residents! No sign-up is needed. Compost will be picked up every week on your recycling day. Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island residents can now order a free Brown Bin until Oct. 28. For more information, visit <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/forms/curbside-composting>.



Photo by David Greene

**A LARGE PILE** of garbage consisting of beer and food packaging, as well as a discarded porcelain urinal, is seen along the banks of the Bronx River on the Norwood / Allerton border on Thursday, Aug. 1, 2024.







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### Public and Community Meetings

The 52<sup>nd</sup> PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of the month sometimes virtually and sometimes in person. Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email distribution list.

The next regular BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7 (CB7) general board meeting will be held in September, after the summer hiatus, unless a special meeting is held before then. The monthly meetings are held at various locations in the district. 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 (hybrid) meeting will be held in September after the summer hiatus. Contact [BX08@cb.nyc.gov](mailto: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 group usually takes a summer hiatus and will meet again in September. For more details, please contact [bedfordmosholu@verizon.net](mailto:bedfordmosholu@verizon.net).

### CORRECTION

In our page 2 story entitled, "Will Immigration Determine the Election Outcome?" published in Norwood News Vol. 37, Edition No. 15, July 25- Aug. 7, 2024, we incorrectly reported that the raid of a migrant shelter which was being illegally run at 305 East Kingsbridge Road in Fordham Manor was the location of a furniture store. In fact, the man who ran this Bronx shelter also illegally ran another shelter out of a furniture store in Queens. A nail and hair braiding business is located at the same Kingsbridge Road address as the Bronx shelter. We apologize for this error.

### NOTICE TO READERS

*Norwood News is on our annual summer hiatus until Sept. 5. Enjoy the rest of the summer, stay dry, stay happy, and thanks for reading!*

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# “Operation Padlock” Continues

(continued from page 1)

of what appeared to be contraband from the store.

According to the New York City Sheriff's Office, the Joint Compliance Task Force conducted an inspection at Gunhill Exotic 1 Corporation, which was “inspected and padlocked” after the seizure of tobacco products, flavored vape products, THC vape products, and cannabis flower, as well as THC pre-rolls and THC edibles.

One resident told *Norwood News* the shop had been previously raided. When queried, the Sheriff's office confirmed this was the case. A spokesperson at the Sheriff's office said, “This location was inspected previously on May 30, 2024, in which no cannabis products were found and therefore the location was not padlocked.”

The spokesperson added that the prior inspection “resulted in the seizure of other tobacco products and flavored vape products.”

At the same time, a simultaneous raid was being carried out at the Organic Smoke Shop at 236 East Gun Hill Road, between Kings College Place and Tryon Avenue. The near-empty store saw a potato chip rack with loaves of bread on three of the shelves, while two others were empty. A white unmarked Sheriff's vehicle arrived with an NYPD 4 X 4, joining another NYPD van already outside the store.

One male resident of the area watching the joint operation was asked if he remembered the marijuana crackdown of the 1970s. He replied, “Oh, come on, you know it! I was smoking then, you know, that sh\*t; it was easier then.” He said of the latest crackdowns, “The government's getting their cut.”

Asked if he was in favor of pot shops on every street corner, the man replied, “No, not that many; there's too many. They can't all get rich.” The man added, “When it first started, it was alright.”

According to the Sheriff's office, the Joint Compliance Task Force inspected and padlocked the Organic Smoke Shop. Authorities said the inspection resulted

in the seizure of untaxed cigarettes as well as other tobacco products, flavored vape products, and an undetermined amount of marijuana.

The Sheriff's office reported no arrests at either East Gun Hill Road location.

Also on Aug. 8, the Sheriff's office reported an inspection of Connie's Deli, located at 240 East 204th Street in Bedford Park, which they say resulted in the seizure of 13.8 cartons of untaxed cigarettes which they said were recovered “from a concealed compartment” inside the deli.

On Saturday, June 8, SeshNYC, the first brick-and-mortar New York State licensed dispensary in the north Bronx held its grand opening at 4219 Webster Avenue in Woodlawn Heights. SeshNYC is owned by Richard Montero and Anthony Rivera, two Bronx-born and raised entrepreneurs.

“It's a dream come true for us to get this store open in The Bronx, said Rivera, co-owner of SeshNYC. “For the last year, we've been doing deliveries across The Bronx, Upper Manhattan and Lower Westchester. We'll still do deliveries but now have a storefront and a big parking lot for our customer's convenience.”

Rivera added, “We're doing this the right way, selling tested products, paying taxes, giving back to the community and can't wait for people to check us out in person. We're most proud of the people who make the SeshNYC family. We hired locally from The Bronx, and they're doing the work to educate consumers and offer the best customer experience in the best borough.”

According to the New York City Sheriff's Office, since Operation Padlock began, the task force has closed more than 715 unauthorized locations citywide, including 160 in The Bronx. During those raids, officials issued over \$59 million in civil penalties and confiscated over \$28 million in illicit products.

Meanwhile, on July 12, New York State's Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) issued a recall on all cannabinoid hemp products, including the “Sky High” brand, produced by Eat Sky High LLC. Officials said the unregulated products



Photo courtesy of SeshNYC

**RICHARD MONTERO AND** Anthony Rivera are the two Bronx-born and raised entrepreneurs who run the first licensed cannabis store to open in the North Bronx, SeshNYC, located at 4219 Webster Avenue in Woodlawn Heights.

were sold through licensed cannabis and cannabinoid hemp dispensaries throughout New York State.

They said the affected products were produced by an unlicensed cannabinoid hemp processor and have multiple safety violations posing a risk to public health and safety. They said the recall was a precautionary measure because the required testing for consumer safety and product quality couldn't be confirmed. They said OCM didn't receive, at that stage, any reports of adverse effects caused by the consumption of the products, and an investigation into the matter was ongoing.

Violations pertaining to the products included, but were not limited to: processing by an unlicensed facility; amount of THC-A present in the product; unverified testing of product to OCM standards; labeling violations including but not limited to missing warnings, processor information, and lot numbers; production with hazardous food products, as defined in the law; and misleading labeling, making the product appear to be an authorized adult-use product with NYS Universal Symbol imagery.

These products include, but are not limited to: dessert toppings including caramel drizzle 500mg THC-A, white chocolate 500mg THC-A, strawberry drizzle 500mg THC-A and chocolate drizzle 500mg THC-A, dipping sauces including honey mustard 500mg THC-A, honey garlic 500mg THC-A, ranch dressing 500mg THC-A, sweet n' sour 500mg THC-A, and Chipotle mayo 500mg THC-A.

It also includes condiments including ketchup 500mg THC-A, BBQ sauce 500mg THC-A, hot sauce 500mg THC-A, mayo ketchup 500mg THC-A, and sweet chili 500mg THC-A, and ice cream/gelato/sorbet, including grape 200mg/500mg THC-A, guava 200mg/500mg THC-A, mango 200mg/500mg THC-A, coconut 200mg/500mg THC-A, snickers 200mg/500mg THC-A, chocolate 200mg/500mg THC-A, green apple 200mg/500mg THC-A, watermelon 200mg/500mg THC-A, passion fruit 200mg/500mg THC-A, fruity pebbles 200mg/500mg THC-A, and cookie monster 200mg/500mg THC-A.

Officials said dispensaries and distributors had to cease distribution and sales

of the affected products immediately.

They said consumers who purchased any products produced by Eat Sky High LLC and who wish to return the recalled products can contact the retail dispensary where they were purchased and return them even if they are opened.

OCM officials reminded consumers to report any incidents related to the use of such cannabis products or any others by completing an incident form available at <https://cannabis.ny.gov/report-an-incident>. They also said to seek immediate medical attention or advice if experiencing a serious or troublesome cannabis-related symptom(s) and to call a health care provider or the Poison Center at (800) 222-1222.

Signed into law by former Gov. Andrew Cuomo on March 31, 2021, among other elements, the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA) permits the use of cannabis by adults of 21 years and older, and automatically expunges or removes records of cannabis-related convictions.

As outlined in the MRTA, the cannabis industry is regulated and administered in New York State by the Cannabis Control Board (CCB), which oversees the distribution of licenses to individuals looking to start cannabis-based businesses. The aim of MRTA was to invest 40 percent of all tax revenue generated by cannabis sales back into communities devastated by the “War on Drugs.”

In 2018, then-New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer conducted an analysis of such convictions and identified a list of neighborhoods across the five boroughs with the highest, average, cannabis-related arrest rates from 2010 to 2017. Nearly half of all Bronx neighborhoods were among the top ten. They included Concourse, Highbridge, Mount Eden, Belmont, Crotona Park East, East Tremont, Bedford Park, Fordham North, Norwood, Morris Heights, Fordham South, and Mount Hope.

In addition, the racial breakdown of total cannabis arrests during the same period was 53 percent Black, 35 percent Latinx, 11 percent Asian, and 3 percent White.



Photo by David Greene

**A RESIDENT WATCHES** as a member of the NYPD's Emergency Service Unit uses a saw to cut the lock of Gun Hill Exotics store on East Gun Hill Road after tobacco and vape products as well as an undetermined amount of cannabis flower were discovered inside the shop on Saturday, August 3, 2024.



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