



NORWOOD NEWS

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THE BRONX TALKS HOUSING

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Bronx elected officials from all levels of government, led by District 16 City Council Member Althea Stevens, united to host the 7th Annual Housing Conference at the Reverend T. Wendell Foster Recreation Center in the Concourse section of the borough on Thursday, Oct. 3.

According to data from the NYS Comptroller's office, the low percentage of home ownership in New York is driven by the high share of multi-family housing in New York City, where

(continued on page 15)

Photo by Ariel Pacheco

(L TO R) CASA LEADER FITZROY Christian, District 16 Tenant Advisory Council Secretary Linda Kemp, and NYC Department of Social Services Deputy Commissioner Jamar Hooks serve as panelists for the 7th Annual Housing Conference at the Reverend T. Wendell Foster Recreation Center on Thursday, Oct. 3, 2024.



Bronx Dems Do Not Disclose \$400,000
pg 2



Norwood Businesses Water Supply Cut Off
pg 3



Mosholu Fall Festival Returns
pg 10

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Where's the Money? \$400K+ Missing from Bronx Dems Disclosures

By SAM MELLINS,
New York Focus

This story originally appeared in New York Focus, a nonprofit news publication investigating power in New York.

The Bronx Democratic Party which helps elect Bronx Democratic candidates, failed to disclose over \$400,000 in campaign contributions over the past four years, an apparent violation of campaign finance law.

It found that the State Democratic Assembly Campaign, chaired by local Bronx Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81), transferred the funds in 23 installments, ranging in size from \$15,000 to over \$50,000, beginning in April 2020 and continuing through June 2024. Yet, those contributions never appeared on the Bronx Democratic Party's paperwork.

It's unclear what the Bronx Democrats used the money for, given the lack of competitive elections in the borough, with the exception of the 2023 District 13 City Council race, where Republican Kirsty Marmorato defeated incumbent Democrat Marjorie Velázquez in the East Bronx, and the Party has not reported large expenses in recent years.

Every assemblymember in the borough is a Democrat, and The Bronx is generally one of the most heavily Democratic counties in the country. As money has flowed to The Bronx, Democratic assemblymembers have lost ground elsewhere in the State. In November 2022, the last statewide election cycle, Republicans unseated several longtime Democratic incumbents and gained five Assembly seats.

In the months leading up to that election, the Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee sent nearly \$200,000 to the Bronx Democrats, while also spending several million dollars boosting Democratic assemblymembers in competitive elections. At the same time, some threatened Democrats, elsewhere, received no support from the committee.

Former Assemblymember Steven Englebright (A.D. 5), a Democrat from Suffolk County, was defeated by Republican Edward Flood by less than 1,000 votes. Englebright told New York Focus that he requested support from the Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee but didn't get it.

"I remember putting a phone call in, and there were some conversations, but the conversations didn't materialize" into action, he said. "I really don't have any clear understanding of why the communication seemed to be so difficult." He doesn't blame the committee for losing his seat though, instead attributing his loss to a "perfect storm," an anemic Long Island campaign from Gov. Kathy Hochul and a Republican gubernatorial candidate, Lee Zeldin, who hailed from Suffolk County.



Photo by Sile Moloney

BRONX DEMOCRATIC PARTY headquarters located on Williamsbridge Road in the East Bronx on Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023.

Despite the vast sums received, financial disclosures show The Bronx Party has spent less than \$75,000 since 2020, mostly on campaign consultants. It's possible that their expense records are incomplete too, noted Robert Galbraith, senior research analyst at the nonprofit Public Accountability Initiative, when asked to review the filings.

"The worst-case scenario you can imagine is that they took the money in and didn't report bringing it in, and then spent it on something without reporting what that was," he said.

It's not surprising that regulators haven't taken action, Galbraith said, since the Board of Elections does not have a strong record of proactively policing campaign finance violations. "The systems that we have in place in order to monitor money in politics and track campaign donations just seem to not be working in terms of being able to get an accurate accounting of where money is going and coming from," Galbraith said.

One person who may have helped steer money towards the Bronx Party, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie (A.D. 83), is one of the most powerful figures in State politics and the honorary chair of the Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee. Heastie, who broadly represents the northeast Bronx, has chaired the committee since at least 2021.

Neither the Bronx Party nor the Assembly campaign committee, nor Bailey responded to New York Focus's request for comment. New York State's Board of Elections (BOE), which regulates campaign finance in the state, doesn't appear to have taken any action in response to the omissions. The board did not respond to a request for comment.

Heastie's office did not respond to a request for comment either. Dinowitz said he wasn't familiar with the contributions to the Bronx Party, but that there were "too many reports to go through" for him to determine why they were made. "I'm not the person who

signs checks. I'm not the treasurer, or anything like that," he said.

Dinowitz suggested that New York Focus contact the committee's Albany office for clarification. The Albany office did not respond to New York Focus's requests for comment.

Norwood News Editor's Note: Bronx Democrats held a rally at their campaign headquarters on Williamsbridge Road in Morris Park on Sunday, Sept. 8, in support of the Harris Walz presidential campaign. At that event, Bailey spoke about record "investments" by State Democrats in The Bronx in the context of election campaigning. The full story, "Bronx Democrats Hold Get-Out-the-Vote Rally for Harris Walz Campaign," can be read on our website.

When contacted, Norwood News received confirmation from New York Focus that the back-up documentation relating to the campaign finances for this story is based on public data available on the BOE website. We reached out independently to Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, The Bronx Democratic Party, NYS Board of Elections Division of Election Law Enforcement, the Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee, Bronx Democratic Chair Jamaal Bailey and State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie for comment on this story, and with some additional questions.

A representative for Dinowitz referred us to the Bronx Democratic Party. A representative for the Party responded on Oct. 16, saying, "The Bronx Democratic Party is fully committed to transparency and accountability. The discrepancy identified in our recent financial disclosures was an administrative error, and we are actively working to correct it. All necessary amendments will be filed promptly. We take our reporting obligations seriously and remain dedicated to maintaining the trust of our community." Norwood News had not received feedback from any of the other parties as of press date.

Lehman College Hosts Drug Policy Panel

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Lehman College hosted a drug policy panel event on Tuesday, Sept. 17, to discuss the ways in which the New York legislature, advocacy groups, nonprofits, and NYS Department of Health (DOH) have collaborated to create new solutions to tackle the issue of substance abuse and overdose prevention.

State Sen. Nathalia Fernandez (S.D. 34), who broadly represents the East

Bronx, Assembly Member Yudelka Tapia (A.D. 86), who broadly represents the Center/West Bronx, Toni Smith of the Drug Policy Alliance, and Allan Clear of the AIDS Institute rounded out the panel and discussed the different roles stakeholders have on the issue of substance abuse.

Smith talked about harm reduction as a strategy, saying, "There are a lot of different services for people related to



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

L-R TONI SMITH OF the Drug Policy Alliance, Assembly Member Yudelka Tapia (A.D. 86), State Sen. Nathalia Fernandez (S.D. 34), and Allan Clear of the AIDS Institute attend a Drug Policy Panel event at Lehman College on Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2024.

drug use, from different forms of treatment to counseling, including mental health counseling, including prevention, and education in schools."

He added, "Harm reduction is one of the strategies that acknowledges that drug use is going to occur, and that people need access to services that are going to meet them at a place that acknowledges that use occurring." He said this was so that people [users] could be a partner in driving what that looks like for them.

Tapia discussed a bill she sponsored, A06506B, which has passed in the Assembly and has been sponsored by Fernandez in the State Senate as S06084B. The bill prohibits the sale of Xylazine to anyone under the age of 21 without proof of intended use. It is currently under review by the Consumer Protection committee.

"Xylazine has been increasingly

found in illicit drug supplies often mixed with fentanyl," said Tapia. "This combination has had devastating consequences, contributing to severe overdoses that cannot be reversed by Naloxone, a life-saving treatment that typically reverses the effects of an overdose. So, between 2018 and 2021, Xylazine-related overdoses increased 1,238%. This bill aims to restrict the sale of Xylazine, limiting its availability to institutional or scientific purposes."

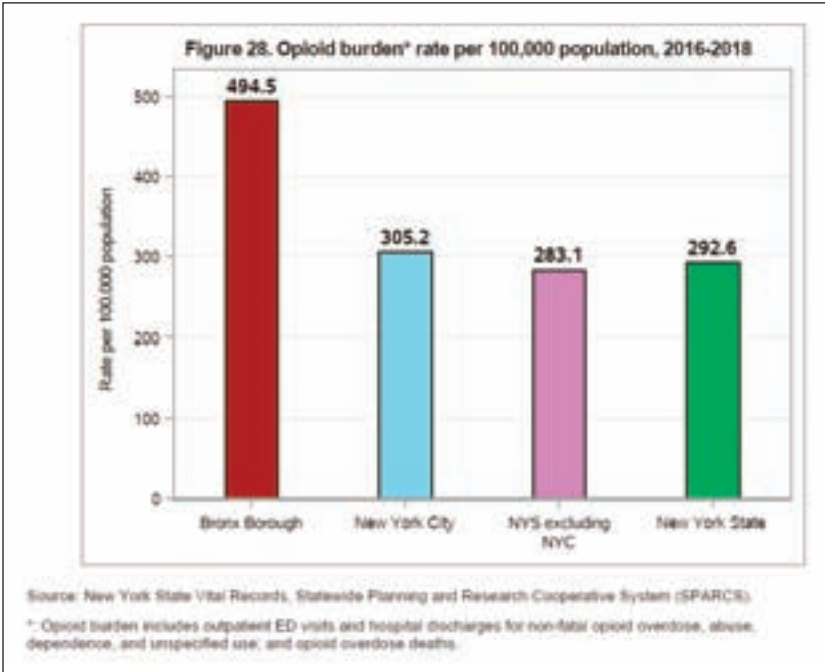
Meanwhile, Fernandez, chair of the State Alcoholism and Substance Use Disorders Committee, has sponsored several other bills, including S9728B (currently at committee level), which establishes a wound care kit and xylazine test strip distribution, and S7288 (which passed in the Senate), which would cap the total amount an insured person would pay to receive treatment for substance use disorder at \$500 for each episode of care.

"I have bills to support all levels of someone's journey," Fernandez said. "Instead of forcing people to go to jail for using and having drugs, you're going to go to treatment, and that's where you should be going first."

For his part, Clear said that new legislation was often good and well-intentioned but lacks the monetary power to make it work as intended. "Money has always been an issue," he said, adding that no matter how wonderful the bill is, neither the governor's office nor the assembly or senate provide enough money to implement some of the new legislation.

Towards the end of the discussion, audience members had the chance to ask the panelists questions, many of which centered around personal experiences related to the impact of drug use. Fernandez concluded the event, saying "We're here because we're dedicated to fighting until the very last minute."

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



Source: NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

OPIOID BURDEN RATES in Bronx County 2016-2018 compared to City and State rates.

Water Supply Cut Off to Webster Ave Businesses

By **DAVID GREENE**

A contractor performing work for a local Norwood business accidentally struck a water pipe, causing the water supply to several local businesses along Webster Avenue to get shut off.

According to Ted Timbers at NYC Department of Environmental Protection, a broken pipe was reported outside Before Beauty Spa, located at 3033 Webster Avenue on Friday afternoon, Oct. 11.

Timbers told *Norwood News*, "This was not a water main break, rather a private contractor damaged a private pipe." Timbers continued, "DEP shut off the water to allow the private contractor to make the necessary repairs."

According to Timbers, five businesses were without water service for 20 minutes while the repairs were carried out. A female employee at Mother's Deli, located around the corner at 395 East Mosholu Parkway North, said of the incident, "I had heard about it, but it didn't really affect us, but it did cause traffic [jams] in the area."

A photo taken on the day shows a man inside a hole in the street with water up to his chest. Several attempts to contact Before Beauty Spa were unsuccessful.



Photo by David Greene

A WORKER STANDS inside a hole on Webster Avenue on Friday, Oct. 11, 2024, in a chest-deep pool of water as a private contractor works to fix the issue created when he accidentally struck a water pipe.

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**



With both the New York Mets and the New York Yankees advancing to the playoffs, this week, we asked readers their opinions on the possibility of a Subway Series.



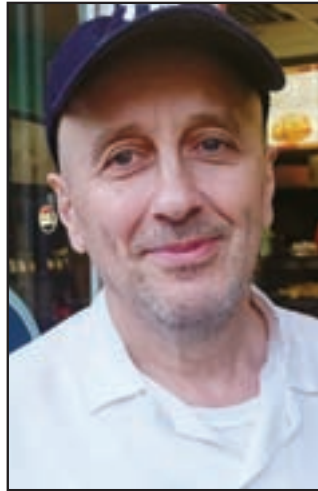
"It would be awesome! That would be great! I think it's going to happen, and the Yankees will win, because it's only happened twice in about 75 years; it's rare. It would really be a boom for the economy."

Michael Tirdo,
Fordham Manor
Photo by David Greene



I would love a Subway Series! The last one was 2000, right? We put a lot of trust in (Jacob) DeGrom and (Max) Scherzer and we have put some trust in some ace pitchers that didn't make it for us. A Subway Series will bring in a lot of money, prestige, and the world would be watching. I love it! It will give New York a lot of exposure. I'm hoping the Mets will win. That would be great, but first they must overcome the Dodgers."

Damon Davis,
Norwood
Photo by David Greene



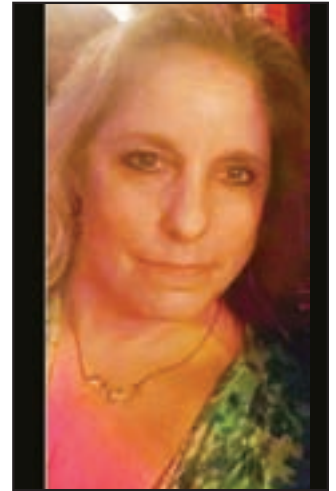
"I would love to see a Subway Series! The Yankees will beat the Mets down, because my brother is a Mets fan. We need that boost; we need something to come up with, some kind of strategy so we can win again. It would generate so much money. It would wake up the city again. The city is kind of dead now. My prediction is a Yankees sweep of the Mets."

Mario DeBona,
Bedford Park
Photo by David Greene



"I don't know what the odds are for a Subway Series, but I'm hoping for a Subway Series! We haven't had one since 2000. We need to have quality players on the team to keep the ball rolling. I'm a die-hard Yankee fan and would love to see a Subway Series! It would be a great thing for New York."

Bruno Hand,
Woodlawn
Photo courtesy of Bruno Hand



"I haven't been to a game since I went to Game 6 of the '81 World Series between the Yankees and the Dodgers. A Subway Series would be a big boom for the city and for transportation. I'd like the Yankees to win; my family, we have always been Yankee fans."

Lisa Meyer,
West Islip, New York
Photo courtesy of Lisa Meyer



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Gibson Allocates \$395K for Public Safety Goals

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, alongside City leaders and advocates, announced the allocation of \$395,000 for public safety initiatives on the steps of Bronx Borough Hall on Tuesday, Sept. 23.

NYPD Deputy Chief Keiyon S. Ramsey, Assembly Member Landon C. Dais (A.D. 77) and Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark were present for the announcement.

The public safety initiatives include new surveillance cameras, a new NYPD mobile command van, and generally supporting public safety efforts in The Bronx. Officials say the NYPD mobile command van will allow police to react swiftly to emergencies.

"We are here because we recognize that all New Yorkers and all Bronxites truly care about public safety," Gibson said. "It is one of the major priorities that we continue to focus on as an administration."

She continued, "Cameras are a part of our overall goal to keep residents safe and they serve as an important tool in our toolbox for community safety. Together, we will ensure that these cameras are placed strategically across the borough."

The borough president said cameras will be placed in areas where they are most needed, adding that their planned roll-out was mentioned during her State of the Borough address earlier this year, in efforts to deter crime in the borough.

Ramsey said, "We all know that cameras are a deterrent but sometimes the cameras are the only voice a victim may have in a bad situation." For his part, Dais said, "The reality is a lot of us are tired of having to stand here and talk about these issues going on in our community, but we do have our solution-oriented leaders that are trying to get something done."

Gibson said jobs and programs like the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) were also part of the solution in terms of dissuading youth from getting involved in crime. "By offering our young people constructive activities, recreation, and after-school programs, we are really setting them up for success and not failure," she said.

She added, "We are reminding them that are precious and valuable and that their lives matter."

Meanwhile, Clark said, "We need to prevent crime, and cameras in safety zones is one of the tools that we can use to make sure that we prevent crimes from happening. It helps people stay safe, but it is also a tool of accountability because when people don't want to cooperate in the things that are happening, we also continue to gather evidence to make sure that we can hold people accountable that are committing the crimes and keeping the Bronx unsafe."

During the budget discussion at the Sept. 11 Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) Parks committee meeting, it was mentioned that to help curb crime, se-



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT Vanessa L. Gibson announces the allocation of \$395K for public safety initiatives on the steps of Bronx Borough Hall on Tuesday, Sept. 23.

curity cameras had been requested by the board to be installed in all parks in the district, as well as in Mosholu Playground in Bedford Park, located next to P.S. 8, where a shooting had occurred in recent years.

CB7 Parks chair Barbara Stronczner said NYC Parks responded to the request advising that while it supports improved lighting, it does not maintain or operate any type of security cameras, and that this would have to be handled by the NYPD.

Stronczner added, "I can remember asking previous council people here about putting the cameras in this [Oval] park and the councilman, himself, said, not the current one [Eric Dinowitz], he felt it was an interference for people to have a camera when you're going in and out of the park, and a question of privacy and the lack of, so he would not support that." She added that it was possible the current councilman might support the request.

According to NYPD data, overall Bronx crime was slightly up (1.3%) this year compared to the same point (Sept. 29) last year.

In other crime prevention-news, Clark joined Gov. Kathy Hochul for the signing of a new package of bills on Oct. 9, to strengthen New York's gun laws. Among new tools and resources to help prevent gun violence, the governor said the bills will address

dangerous "pistol convertors," by requiring gun sellers to post tobacco-style safety warnings on their products.

Hochul said since she took office in August 2021, gun violence in New York State has declined 47 percent. "Gun violence is an epidemic that is tearing our country apart," Hochul said in part. "Thoughts and prayers won't fix this, but taking strong action will. That's why in New York, we're taking bold steps to protect the people of our State."

After several mass shootings in 2022, including one in Buffalo, NY, State legislators passed several bills which bar the purchase of semi-automatic rifles by anyone under 21 by requiring a license,

prohibits the purchase of body armor with the exception of those in specified professions, expands the list of people who can file Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs), and requires law enforcement to file ERPOs under a specified set of circumstances.

Loopholes relating to ownership of "other guns" were closed; and there were also new requirements to micro-stamp new semi-automatic pistols; eliminate grandfathering of high-capacity feeding devices; and require social media companies to improve the response to and reporting of hateful content. The latest State bills signed by Hochul build upon those earlier bills.

Two days later, on June 8, 2022, federal legislators in the House of Representatives voted 223 to 204 in favor of the "Protecting our Kids Act," which, among other measures, if passed in the U.S. Senate, would also raise the age to buy semi-automatic rifles from 18 to 21, and would restrict the sale of large-capacity ammunition magazines. It remains pending in the U.S. Senate.

Norwood News contacted Sen. Gillibrand's office for more information on its status. Her office responded explaining that the bill has not been reintroduced to Congress since it passed in 2022, and since Democrats lost majority control of the lower House. Her office suggested checking with Congressman Nadler for any additional information he may have, and we are following up on this.

Last month, on Sept. 26, U.S. President Joe Biden signed an executive order cracking down on unserialized ghost guns, and machinegun conversion devices. He also directed his Cabinet to help improve school-based active shooter drills. "It's our job to do better," Biden said.

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



Photo by Síle Moloney

AN NYPD MOBILE Command Center is seen on West Fordham Road and University Avenue near one entrance to Aqueeduct Walk on Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2024.

Fordham Manor: 9 Injured in University Ave Fire

By SÍLE MOLONEY

The FDNY said eight people, including at least one older female adult, were hospitalized following a 2-alarm fire that broke out in Fordham Manor on Tuesday evening, Oct. 8.

FDNY officials said they received a call at 5.05 p.m. for a report of smoke/fire at 2552 University Avenue located between West 192nd Street and West 190th Street. They said the fire was on the 3rd floor and extended to a degree to the 4th floor of a 5-story, multiple dwelling, drawing 25 fire units to the scene, comprising 106 fire and EMS personnel.

(Later, in his comments, in firefighting terminology, the FDNY deputy chief referred to the affected floor as the 2nd, extending to the third.)

FDNY said three civilians suffered serious but non-life threatening injuries and four civilians suffered minor injuries. They said one elderly woman was in critical condition and was transferred to NYU Presbyterian – Allen Pavillion. They said eight others were also transferred to area hospitals and one person refused medical attention at the scene. They said all injuries were smoke-related rather than burns.

Fire department officials said the fire was brought under control at 6.51 p.m. and the cause and origin of the fire is under investigation by fire marshals.

Deputy Fire Chief William McCormack (Division 7) and Deputy FDNY EMS Chief Mario Thompkins (Division 2) later described what they encountered on arrival. “The units arrived within minutes; there were no delays in the response,” McCormack said. “They were met with heavy fire on the second floor [third]. They were able to fight their way into the front of that apartment.”

He continued, “It was so severe, we actually had to put a line in through the window from the outside to fight the fire

from two directions.” He said while that was going on, firefighters had several units that were involved in rescues. “We removed nine civilians from the building. One of them is in critical condition,” McCormack said.

He went on to say that firefighters rescued two people by taking them out the window and down the fire escape at the front of the building. “We brought four people down the fire escape in the rear of the building, and we brought one person down a stair chair when conditions were better improved,” McCormack said.

Of the injured, Thompkins said, “The critical patient was initially assessed and was in stable condition and rapidly deteriorated due to smoke conditions and was transported rapidly to an area hospital.” He said nine people in total were assessed, eight hospitalized, and one refused medical attention. They said all were adults, ranging in age from around 30 to around 80 and added that the critical patient, a 79-year-old woman, was transported to the nearest “911 hospital.”

Asked if he thought the cause of the fire was suspicious, McCormack said, “The marshals are working on the cause. I have no reason to believe it is suspicious, but they’ll come down with their conclusion.”

In response to a question about a belief by one reporter that civilians had been seen from a helicopter on the roof of the building, the deputy fire chief said only firefighters were on the roof. “We will keep going up to make sure that there’s no fire extending up in a channel or a void in the building that goes right up to the roof,” he said.

“Once it hits the roof, it hits the cockloft area, the area underneath the roof, and it goes left and right. So we purposely put people [firefighters] above that, to cut that off, so it doesn’t get up into that situation. I have no reports of civilians on



Photo courtesy of the Citizens’ App

LARGE FIRE FLAMES are seen in the windows of a building located at 2552 University Avenue in the Fordham Manor section of The Bronx on Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2024.

the roof.”

The Red Cross were at the scene. Later, Desiree Ramos Reiner of the Red Cross said it registered 13 households (34 adults and 22 children) for emergency assistance. “Any residents displaced by this fire who did not connect with the Red Cross responders on scene should call 877-Red Cross (select option 1) to register for assistance,” she said.

In response to a question about where affected residents were rehoused in general, Ramos Reiner said, “After a fire in New York City, the American Red Cross typically provides temporary emergency lodging for displaced residents in area hotels. Depending on the circumstances, we also may work with local government agencies to open a congregate shelter at a nearby community center.”

District 14 City Council Member Pierina Sanchez, who is expecting a baby, was seen holding her clothing over her mouth to shield herself from the residual smoke at the site of the fire as she and her colleague spoke to the Red Cross and to residents.

Resident Natalie Roman, who lives on the second floor, said, “I really don’t know what started the fire. All I know is that my daughter, she started screaming, ‘There’s smoke! There’s smoke!’ and when I went to see, there was a lot of black smoke coming through my door, and then, out of nowhere, it was not smoke no more. It was like an intense fire coming through the door.”

Roman continued, “So, I just thought of my dog, my kids, and I said, ‘Let’s go through the window,’ and we just ran out the window and we ran down the fire escape, and we started screaming for help. By the time I came down, there was still no fire department, no police. We started screaming for help. They said the fire department was on the way.”

Roman added, “I said that my neighbor, she’s 90, that she needed help, that please somebody to go and rescue her so they made sure that she was the first one to get rescued.” She added that her neighbor lived alone, and was a wheelchair user.

Roman said he doesn’t believe the

fire started in her elderly neighbor’s apartment which she said was also on the second floor. “They took her out the window with her home attendant,” she said of the firefighters. Asked if she was ok, Roman said, “I don’t know how exactly. I know she didn’t get burned by the fire, and yeah, we are alive.”

Asked if her neighbor was outside with the other residents, she said, “I think they took her in the ambulance because she got really scared. She’s like 90.” Of her own circumstances, she said her three children are aged 13, 12, and 9. Asked if they had been scared, she said, “Yes, they were scared. I’m still shaking, myself. I got a friend who let me borrow these clothes because I wasn’t sure then with the PJs.”

Asked if the building holds regular fire drills, she said, “No. I guess we have that problem here. Everybody tends to ignore that because, like, sometimes people is cooking and it’s ringing [the alarm], so sometimes people ignore it. But I always tell my kids, ‘Think fast’ and the first thought was that: ‘Let’s jump out the window!’”

We also spoke to other residents, including one young family with a very young baby whose mother had held on to the baby and her other two small children as they made their way down the inside stairs amid the smoke. Meanwhile, McCormack said one of the patients who had been rescued had taken in heavy smoke conditions.

Referring to her elderly neighbor, Roman had said, “She’s always asking me for help but she was, at that time, with her home attendant. She was in bed.” We asked if her neighbor was a nice person. She said, “Yes, she’s in her ’90s, and she don’t walk. They broke the side of the building, the corner of her window, and that’s where they got her out from. You have to shout at her so she could hear.”

Visit <https://www.fdnysmart.org/> to read FDNY’s fire safety tips. “During a fire, always close the door behind you!” fire officials say. “It helps contain smoke and flames, giving you precious time to escape.”

“Miriam Quinones contributed to this story.”



Photo by Síle Moloney

FIRE UNITS AND The Red Cross are seen at the site of a residential fire at 2552 University Avenue in Fordham Manor on Tuesday evening, Oct. 8, 2024.

NEWS BRIEFS

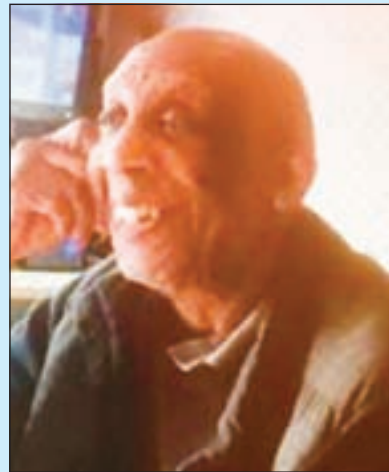
By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Police Appeal for help Locating Missing People

The NYPD is seeking the public's help locating a 13-year-old girl reported missing from Norwood. Police said that Amelia Cruz of 3366 Decatur Avenue was last seen leaving her home on Saturday, Oct. 12, at around 5.30 p.m. They said she is described as Black, female, around 5 feet, 2 inches tall, weighs around 160 pounds, and was last seen wearing a black and white sweater and black shorts.



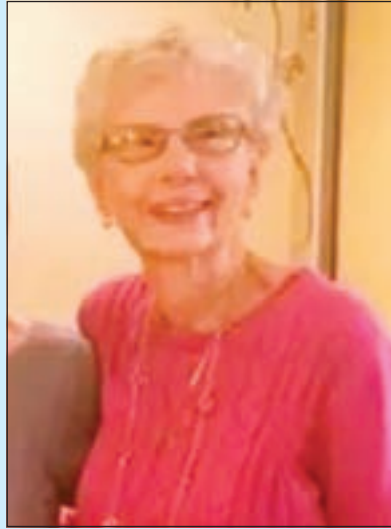
Police are also seeking help locating a 74-year-old man reported missing from Kingsbridge. Police said Alonzo Blanding of 3424 Kingsbridge Avenue was last seen at his home on Monday, Sept. 23, at around 2 p.m. They said he is described as male, is around 6 feet, 2 inches tall and weighs 190 pounds. They said he was last seen wearing blue jeans, black Adidas sneakers, and a blue/orange, hooded sweater.



Anyone with information 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. All calls are strictly confidential.

Margaret Collins, BMCA Member, Dies

Margaret Collins, described as an active member of the Bedford Mosholu Community Association (BMCA) who served as secretary for many years, died on Sunday, Oct. 6. Barbara Stronczer, president of BMCA, confirmed the news, adding that her wake was held on Oct. 9 at Fox Funeral Home, followed by mass at St. Philip Neri Church in Bedford Park. "May she rest in peace," Stronczer said.



Man Gets 45 Years following Death of Nicholas Feliz Dominici

The husband of Grei Mendez, the operator of El Divino Niño daycare center, where one-year-old Nicholas Feliz Dominici was fatally poisoned on Sept. 15, 2023, was sentenced to 45 years in prison on Oct. 16. Federal prosecutors said Felix Herrera Garcia, 35, was sentenced for trafficking fentanyl out of the Kingsbridge Heights daycare located at 2707 Morris Avenue, which resulted in Nicholas's death, and the poisoning of three other infants who survived. Herrera Garcia pleaded guilty on June 10 in federal court.

The court heard that from at least in or about October 2022 through September 2023, Herrera Garcia and others conspired to distribute, along with his co-conspirators, fentanyl and heroin, hidden in secret compartments located under the floorboards of the daycare playroom, where infants played, ate, and slept.

In addition, Herrera Garcia, from The Bronx, who was intercepted by authorities in Mexico having allegedly fled the U.S. after the daycare center was raided in September 2023, was also sentenced to 5 years of supervised release. Mendez, 36, Renny Antonio Parra Paredes, 38, and Carliso Acevedo Brito, 41, were also arrested, and face various State and federal charges, some including murder and drug trafficking. Parra Paredes pleaded guilty also and awaits sentencing in federal court.

The intersection of Kingsbridge Terrace and East Kingsbridge Road in Kingsbridge Heights was recently co-named in memory of Nicholas to mark the first anniversary of his death.

Fordham Road Fair Returns

By **MIRIAM QUIÑONES**

The 19th Annual Fordham Road Fair returned to Fordham Manor on Saturday, Oct. 12, along a four-block stretch on East Fordham Road between the Grand Concourse and Elm Place, where streets were closed off to street traffic.

Organized by the Fordham Road Business Improvement District (BID), the fair, held from noon to 6 p.m., was a successful event with children seen playing with Lego, in the bouncy house, and on the roller-skating rink. There was also food, fun, carnival games, music, art exhibitions, inflatable balloon rides, t-shirt and sneaker giveaways, stilt walkers and performers.

One couple told *Norwood News* it felt like a lovely summer day, nice and warm, while another man named Robert said he didn't like that the fair was held on a Saturday and felt it would have worked better on a Sunday.

One dad named Carlos said while his wife went shopping, he stayed with his daughters and watched them play.

The Fordham Road Business Improve-

ment District (BID) is a not-for-profit organization founded in 2005. Its primary mission is to foster and promote the growth and vitality of the Fordham Road commercial corridor.

It oversees the maintenance and sanitation of the district, provides business assistance and development services to its members, and facilitates the construction of public spaces and streetscape to promote an active and cohesive community.

It also works on district improvements for existing and new businesses and promotes Fordham Road's cultural assets and the importance of engaging with its diverse community.

With the fair drawing over 10,000 attendees last year, organizers said, "It's also a great way for local businesses to engage with the community and attract new customers."

For more information on the Fordham Road BID, visit www.fordhamroad.nyc.

**Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



Photos by Miriam Quiñones

(ABOVE) CHILDREN OF ALL ages play with Lego at the Fordham Road Fair on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, on East Fordham Road between the Grand Concourse and Elm Place in Fordham Manor. One dad named Carlos said while his wife went shopping, he stayed with his daughters and watched as they played.

(TOP LEFT) DEMITRIA LAMICELLA FROM The Paradigm Theatre performs at the Fordham Road Fair on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, on East Fordham Road between the Grand Concourse and Elm Place in Fordham Manor.

(MIDDLE) BINITHI HEWAWASAM FROM The Paradigm Theatre performs at the Fordham Road Fair on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, on East Fordham Road between the Grand Concourse and Elm Place in Fordham Manor.

(TOP RIGHT) DANI LEIGH FROM Skyz the Limit performs with Zaida and Anta Rodriguez at the Fordham Road Fair on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, on East Fordham Road between the Grand Concourse and Elm Place in Fordham Manor.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY ARIEL PACHECO & SÍLE MOLONEY



Presidential Election Deadlines

The presidential and general elections take place Nov. 5. The last day to register to vote in person and by mail is Oct. 26. Applications to register by mail must be received by Oct. 26. New Yorkers must register to vote to be eligible to vote on Nov. 5. There are also deadlines for making changes to your registration, such as changes to address or enrollment. Visit <https://vote.nyc/page/all-important-dates> for more information.

Teen Program

A free afterschool program for teens is taking place at Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, 3101 Kingsbridge Terrace, Bronx, NY 10463 Monday to Friday from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., with daily snacks/dinner, homework help, leadership and internship opportunities, peer mediation, trips and events, and more. Contact Bianca Perez at bperez@khcc-nyc.org for more information or call (718) 884 0700 Ext. 118.

Adopt-a-Dog Month

October is Adopt-a-Dog Month and Animal Care Centers of New York (ACC) are encouraging residents to welcome a new furry friend into the family. Adoption packages include spay/neuter (a \$150 deposit may be required), initial wellness vaccinations, free exam certificate from a participating vet, pre-registered microchip, leash and collar, heatworm test, Royal Canin adopter kit, free DNA testing kit from Royal Canin. Visit www.ny-cacc/app to view all available dogs. Adoption fees ranging from \$75 to \$150 apply.

Reimagining the Cross Bronx Expressway

Virtual information sessions on reimagining the Cross Bronx Expressway will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 23, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 26, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and on Monday, Oct. 28, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Visit www.cross-bronx.info/ for more information.

Health Notice for Veterans

VA Health Connect is advising veterans to call 800 877 6976 to ask a medical professional about any urgent health care concern before visiting an ER. VA Health Connect makes it easier for veterans to get the right care when they need it and is available 24/7. If you're having a medical emergency, dial 911. Call the veterans' crisis line on 988 and then press 1, or text 838255 to chat online with a VA responder.

New Trash Rules

Starting in November 2024, residents in buildings with one to nine units, including single or two-family homes, will need to use trash bins. In June 2026, those residents will need to use the official NYC Bin. Learn more at an information session. Visit nyc.gov/bins.

Bronx Dance Fund

The Bronx Dance Fund application cycle is now open, offering up to \$7,500 for individual Bronx-based dancers, choreographers, and dance organizations. The deadline to apply is Monday, Nov. 25, at 11.59 p.m. Virtual information sessions will be held on Friday, Oct. 18, from 3 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. and Wednesday, Oct. 23, from noon to 1.30 p.m. For more

information, visit <https://www.bronxarts.org/grants/bronx-dance-fund>.

Community Engagement Grants

Bronx-based artists, collectives, and arts organizations can apply for new work, arts fund, and community arts grants ranging from \$3,000 to \$10,000 for the same project. A virtual information session on the grants will be held on Monday, Oct. 21, from 6.30 p.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, visit <https://www.bronxarts.org/events/community-engagement-grants>.

Larry Lederman Photography Fellowship

The New York Botanical Garden has announced the third annual photography fellowship established by noted landscape photographer, Larry Lederman. The \$20,000 fellowship is awarded annually to an outstanding established or emerging photographer whose work focuses on gardens or landscapes and demonstrates excellence and a creative approach to the art of landscape photography. This year's application period runs from Oct. 1 through Jan. 6, 2025.

Young Voter's Registration

The Bronx Panther Party will provide free books, open discussions, legislation breakdown, and voter registration on Saturday, Oct. 19, at noon at the JBOLC Farmer's Market at 100 West Mosholu Parkway South, Bronx, NY 10468. For more information, email contact@jbolc.org.

Free Lawn/Leaf Bags

Grab a free leaf bag from Bronx Community Board 7 while supplies last Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

at 229-A E 204th Street, Bronx, NY 10458. NYC Department of Sanitation collects leaves on Sunday, Nov. 11, and on Sunday, Nov. 25. For more information, contact Steven Ochoa Camacho at (929) 496-7687 or sochoa-camacho@cb.nyc.gov.

Daffodil Planting Event

The Future of Mosholu Parkland is hosting a daffodil planting event on Saturday, Nov. 2, and Sunday, Nov. 3, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Mosholu Parkway, Kossuth Playground, and Whalen Playground. Everyone is welcome to participate. For more information, call (347) 371-3085.

Park Clean-Up

Bedford Mosholu Community Association will hold a park clean-up on Saturday, Oct. 19, from 10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. Meet at Webster Avenue Park House.

Affordable Housing Lotteries

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:

- 3377 Sedgwick Avenue, with a deadline of Oct. 21.
 - 285 East 163 Street, with a deadline of Oct. 21.
 - 2528 Grand Avenue, with a deadline of Oct. 24.
 - 3178 Villa Avenue, with a deadline of Nov. 21.
 - 114 East 198, with a deadline of Dec. 10.
- HPD frequently extends the announced deadlines. Visit <https://housing-connect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/searchlotteries> for more information.

Queen and Princesses Get Crowned at Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade Pageant

By MIRIAM QUIÑONES

In preparation for The Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade, which returns for its 38th anniversary on Saturday, Oct. 19, the "Señora" winners were crowned at The Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade Pageant held on Sept. 7 at 345 Brook Avenue in Mott Haven.

Participants proudly represented their respective Puerto Rican hometowns, as prizes were awarded to the various queens and princesses. A talent contest had also been held in August in advance of the pageant.

Maribel Mercado is president of the parade committee and said this year's theme is "*Nuestra Musica Folklorica, Bomba y Plena*" [Our folkloric music, *Bomba* and *Plena*], the latter, two musical traditions of Puerto Rico.

Meanwhile, Mercado said in addition to celebrating the rich heritage of Puerto Rico, the achievements of outstanding individuals and organizations who / which have made signifi-

cant contributions to the Puerto Rican community, and to the borough of The Bronx, will also be recognized. She said in addition to dinner, there will also be live entertainment with special guests, dancing, and opportunities for networking.

This year's honorees include:

Grand Marshall: Assemblywoman Karies Reyes, Puerto Rican / Hispanic Task Force; Madrina: State Sen. Nathalia Fernandez (S.D. 34); Public Civil Service Award: NYPD Sergeant Lorraine Perez; Education Award: Bernie Hernandez, Aspira; Nonprofit Community Advocate Award: Pilar Maschi, senior catalyst organizer, City Parks Foundation; Business of the Year Award: Barrio BX Restaurant; Artist of the Year award: Soundboy, AKA Hip Hop Jibarito – Ariel Cartagena.

Organizers describe the parade as a wonderful opportunity to come together and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Puerto Rican commu-



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

THE BRONX PUERTO Rican Day Parade Pageant queen and princesses are crowned on Sept. 7, 2024, at 345 Brook Avenue in the Mott Haven section of The Bronx. Pictured left to right are Maria Mercedes Figueroa, who won 2nd place as 1st princess, Doris Nelva Martinez who won 1st place Queen, Lisbeth Marie Garcia Calaf who won 3rd place 2nd princess, Hailey Miriam Antonetti, who was the Infantil Queen winner, and Josephine Celia Serrano, who won 2nd place as 1st princess.

nity in The Bronx. The parade will be preceded by a gala on Thursday evening, Oct. 17, at 6 p.m. at Villa Barone Manor, 737 Throggs Neck Expressway, Bronx, NY. Registration for the gala

and the parade is open.

An evening filled with music, food, networking and celebration is prom-

(continued on page 14)

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Sun Shines for Mosholu Fall Festival

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

After heavy rain dampened the atmosphere somewhat during last year's Annual Mosholu Fall Festival, this year's event could not have taken place on a more perfect day as the sun beamed down on Knox Gate Playground on Mosholu Parkway and Gates Place in Norwood and drew families, kids, and neighbors together for a fun-filled day.

Organized by Friends of Mosholu Playground in partnership with State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33), Council Member Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11), Assemblyman John Zaccaro Jr. (A.D. 80), Bronx Community Board 7, Partnership for Parks, NYC Parks, Bridgebuilders Community Partnership, Norwood Community Library, and the Albanian American Open Hand Association, Bedford Mosholu Community Association, the free event saw families take home boxes of fresh produce, there was live music, games for kids, arts & crafts, snacks, mime, and free books.

We spoke to Vladimir Cruz, community engagement director for Partnerships for Parks, a public private program between City Parks Foundation and NYC Parks Department, the aim of which is to support and champion neighborhood volunteers in activating their parks and green spaces.

"One way that we do this is through volunteerism," Cruz said. "We work with the Parks department to gather tools and deliver them to our neighborhood volunteers so that they can lead clean-ups or any other sort of stewardship opportunities like plantings. Our main focus is to operate within the spring and fall months, but the program does run year long."

Cruz said the organization offered grants to volunteer groups. "The NYC Green Fund Grants are small scale grants upwards of about \$2,000 or about 10% of an organization's operating budget, and those go towards funding stewardship opportunities as well as events in parks throughout the five boroughs," he said.

We discussed the ongoing underfunding of the City Parks department, which receives less than one percent of the City's budget annually and mentioned how there appears to be more funding available in Manhattan from various conservancies than in the outer boroughs.

"The reason why this organization exists is because of disinvestment in parks throughout the '70s," Cruz said. "You had folks in the surrounding neighborhoods around Central Park, Upper West

Side, Upper East Side, who decided to join together and start a conservancy. I think, in response to those conservancies, Partnerships for Parks was born."

"As for funding, we try our best to use our corporate sponsors on behalf of City Parks Foundation as supplement, where the government cannot reach those funds, but we do work, obviously, in conjunction with the Parks department," Cruz said.

"Half of the staff that makes up the program are government employees, and the other half are employees of the City Parks Foundation," Cruz said. "They do the best with the equipment that they have available to them to support these neighborhood volunteers."

Daniel P. Silvera, outreach specialist and community ambassador for Bridgebuilders Community Partnership, a resource center located at West 164th Street and Olgin Avenue in Highbridge, was also at the festival.

"We're here today expanding our services holistically to the whole families, because families need resources, especially through the fall, autumn season," Silvera said. "Our main two initiatives are our childcare voucher; if any family needs financial help, daycare, after-school...we even pay the babysitter, they could get financial [help]."

He added, "We also got kinship [help] to adopt another family member, niece, nephew, little cousin. They could also come and apply for Housing Connect [affordable housing lotteries]. They can also apply for different social services, and we will have events for initiatives for young adults. We also got different classes and workshops like financial [classes]. We have programs for different community partnership leaders and advocates as a networking space."

We also spoke to Roy Secord at the "Click Nature Photography for Bronx Youth" stand. "This was a summer 2024 program, teaching community youth nature photography, and it was sponsored by Bronx Council on the Arts," Secord said. Of the festival, he added that it was a great opportunity to showcase youth photography and get to know the local representatives.

Elizabeth Quaranta, executive director for FOMP, said she was relieved the event was a success, and thanked all the volunteers, participants and sponsors who helped make it happen. "Carmen Mendez did her magic and entering the playground was



All Photos by Síle Moloney

ROY SECORE DISPLAYS some nature photography by Bronx youth at the Annual Mosholu Fall Festival in Norwood on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024.



NORWOOD COMMUNITY LIBRARY tables at the Annual Mosholu Fall Festival in Norwood on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024.



RESIDENTS POSE FOR a photo at the Annual Mosholu Fall Festival in Norwood on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024.

an experience!" she said. Quaranta said the reason FOMP held the festival in Knox-Gates Playground this year was because a resident told her for the past 30 years, he had never seen a community event organized in it.

She said the playground is underserved, in need of renovation, and is not even listed on Google maps, despite being in a very densely populated neighborhood. "This is part of the work that Future of Mosholu Parkland brings to the community, and has done so for many years," she said.



CATHERINE GASTA KEEPS kids entertained at the Annual Mosholu Fall Festival in Norwood on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024.



ELIZABETH QUARANTA, EXECUTIVE director of Future of Mosholu Parkland, organized the Annual Mosholu Fall Festival in Norwood on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024.



BECCA, LEO AND Tyreed, a local family, attend the Annual Mosholu Fall Festival in Norwood on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024.

CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY, DAVID GREENE



University Heights: Group Sought for Shooting of Three Men

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying and locating three male suspects, some seen in the accompanying screenshot above who they say are wanted in connection with a nonfatal shooting that occurred in University Heights. Police said that on Thursday, Sept. 26, at around 4 a.m., in front of 1981 Cedar Avenue, three people fired multiple shots.

Police said they struck a 19-year-old male victim in the left hand, a 20-year-old male victim in the left hand, and a 21-year-old male victim in the left hand and left arm. They said the group fled in a gray 2022 Acura TLX bearing a Connecticut plate BJ-21369, traveling northbound on Cedar Avenue. The victims were transported by private means to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition.



Norwood: Man Sought for Armed Robbery

The NYPD is asking

for the public's help identifying and locating the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they say is wanted in connection with an armed robbery that occurred in Norwood. Police said that on Saturday, Oct. 5, at around 2.08 p.m., in the vicinity of Webster Avenue and Parkside Place, a 45-year-old male victim was approached by the suspect.

Police said he pushed the victim against an object and displayed a gun, demanding the victim's property. They said the victim handed over \$2,900, the suspect then fled in a black Audi SUV northbound on Webster Avenue, and the victim was not physically injured.

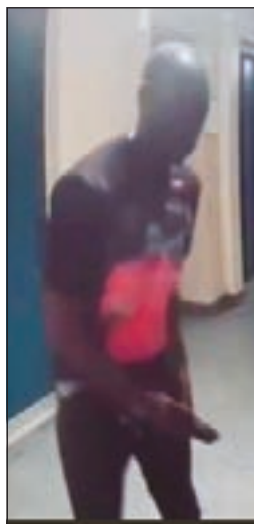


Norwood: Group Sought for Robbery of Older Adult

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 an assault and robbery of an older adult in Norwood. Police said that on Wednesday, Sept.

25, at around 4 p.m., outside 3405 Jerome Avenue, a 67-year-old male victim got into a dispute with a group, one of whom punched the victim in the face, and another entered the victim's vehicle and removed his cellphone.

Police said the suspects then fled the location on foot to parts unknown and the victim sustained minor injuries but was not hospitalized. One of the suspects is described as male, has a slim build and a medium complexion. They said he was last seen wearing a black vest, a gray, hooded sweatshirt, gray pants, gray sneakers, and was carrying a gray book bag.



University Heights: Rejected Man Sought for Shooting Incident

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating the person seen in the accompanying screenshot above who they say is wanted in connection with an attempted armed assault that occurred in University Heights. Police said that on Monday, Sept. 23, at around 2 a.m.,

a 28-year-old female victim was inside her apartment in the vicinity of Andrews Avenue and West 179h Street with an unidentified man she had met that night.

Police said the man made sexual advances, which the victim rejected, and as she escorted him out of her apartment, he brandished a gun and fired one round at her apartment door, damaging the wall. Police said the suspect then fled on foot to parts unknown. They said there were no physical injuries reported following the incident and added that the suspect is described as male, has a dark complexion, is estimated to be between 25 and 40 years of age, and has a medium build.

They said he was last seen wearing black jeans, a black t-shirt with a multi-color drawing on the front, and black sneakers. October marks Domestic Violence Awareness Month. NYS government officials say access to guns radically increases lethality risk in situations of domestic abuse, and abusers with guns are five times more likely to kill their partners.

They said every month, an average of 70 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner in the United States. Black women are twice as likely to be fatally shot by an intimate partner when compared to white women. They said 4.5 million women have reported being threatened with a gun by an intimate partner.

They said in 2020, a firearm was used in nearly half, over 45%, of all intimate partner homicides outside of New York City. Statewide, guns are used in 35% of all intimate partner homicides. They said that since its establishment in 2012, 17 of the 25 cases reviewed by the NYS Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team involved access to firearms.

On Oct. 9, Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark joined other City district attorneys and colleagues for the signing

into law by Gov. Kathy Hochul of the latest package of State gun violence prevention and protection bills. Meanwhile, the Bronx DA's 7th Annual 5K Run/Walk/Roll to End Domestic Violence takes place on Saturday, Oct. 26. Sign up at <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=x21MoFflk6pWxXaZIE7714Aec1HLDVHjTkV0BPie9dUMVdCTERPTE1LM1k1NTU0WE4wMDAxRUtDTS4u&route=shorturl>. The Bronx DA's domestic violence unit can be reached on (718) 838 6688. Call 911 if you are in immediate danger.

Nursing Assistant Gets 5 Years Probation for Stealing from Paraplegic Veteran

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark announced on Oct. 9, that a former nursing assistant at the James J. Peters Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Fordham Manor has been sentenced to five years probation after pleading guilty to stealing a patient's credit card and purchasing food deliveries, shoes, and other items.

The defendant, Unique Allen, 34, of Buck Street, The Bronx, was sentenced on Wednesday to five years probation on one count of fourth-degree grand larceny by Bronx Supreme Court Justice Timothy Lewis, having pleaded guilty to that charge on Aug. 30.

Prosecutors said that on or between Dec. 8,

2019, and Jan. 20, 2020, Allen, then a full-time nursing assistant in the spinal cord injury unit at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, located at 130 West Kingsbridge Road, used the credit card information of a 72-year-old paraplegic patient to buy food, shoes, bath items and movie tickets worth about \$600. They said she attempted to purchase \$2,000 in other items but was rejected. Allen was later fired from her position for an unrelated reason.

Norwood: Two Sought for Smoke Shop Burglary

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the people seen in the attached photo below who they say are wanted in connection with a burglary that occurred in Norwood. Police said that on Monday, Sept. 2, at around 1.40 p.m., two people broke into a smoke shop located at 330 East Gun Hill Road through a hole in a side wall. They said the two stole a sum of currency and later fled the location on foot to parts unknown.

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 @NYPD-Tips. All calls are strictly confidential.





Letters To The Editor

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

Vote "No" on Proposition #1

This is an example of a wolf in sheep's clothing. The bill would allow minors to request sex changes without having their parents' consent. It's all done in the name of equal rights. Minors would also be allowed to have an abortion without their parents' knowledge or consent. This bill destroys the concept of the traditional family which these radical progressives are pushing!

**Richard Marias
Norwood**

Editor's Note: According to the New York Bar Association, Proposition 1 WILL NOT impact parental rights. Prop 1 does not address parental rights, which are governed by other developed areas of State and federal law. Prop 1 does not change existing law with respect to parental consent, or parents' ability to be involved in decision-making about healthcare or medical procedures for their minor children, including gender-affirming care.

For more information, visit <https://www.nycbar.org/reports/prop-1-ny-equal-rights-amendment-what-the-amendment-will-and-wont-do/>.

MTA 2025-2029 Five Year Capital Plan

Bronx commuters should be concerned that the \$68 billion MTA 2025-2029 Five Year Capital Plan; for financial reasons, it is not worth the paper it is written on. Gov. Kathy Hochul claims she can find additional State and federal funding to make up for the missing \$15 billion due to delays in implementing congestion pricing from the current \$51 billion 2020-2024 Five Year Capital Plan.

She promises the same for making up the \$33 billion shortfall in the proposed plan. This leaves the MTA with a record \$48 billion shortfall in funding! It will be dead upon arrival when it reaches the desks of Gov. Hochul and the State legislature. Allocation of funding for advancing closer to reaching a state of good repair for all capital asset categories should be a higher priority than any system expansion projects.

Funding for the \$7.7 billion Second Avenue Subway Phase 2 and the \$5.5 billion Brooklyn/Queens Interboro Express Light Rail Connector would be better spent on state of good repair projects. The same holds true for placing Metro North Rail Road's \$3.1 billion Bronx East Penn Station Access project on hold. Forget about any consideration for the \$7.5 billion Second Avenue Subway Phase 3 125th Street Crosstown Extension as well.

Don't be surprised in 2025 when both the governor and State legisla-

ture reduce the proposed \$68 billion plan by billions. I predict it will end up some number in the \$50 billion range. The MTA will have to revise its proposed \$68 billion-dollar 2025 - 2029 Five Year Capital Plan to deal with a more realistic level of future funding availability.

**Larry Penner
Great Neck**

Rat Situation is Worse

Everywhere you go you see more rats. Anywhere you find an open garbage can or overflowing garbage in the street, you will find multiple rats. In the parks, under parked cars, in the subways, in your backyard, you will find more rats. What happened to the Rat Czar!!!!

The Bronx borough president should establish a special funding source to allow homeowners and landlords the necessary funds to hire more exterminators to better address this massive problem. If we don't address this soon, all of New York will become the ROTTEN APPLE!

**Abraham Cruz,
Norwood**

Editor's Note: A review of 311 rat sighting complaints for Norwood from Sept. 1 to Oct. 16, showed around 30 complaints logged. Norwood News reached out to NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY), which is solely responsible for getting rat food off the streets, as well as to City Hall and NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene for comment. The latter two are responsible for extermination and rodent mitigation.

A DSNY official said, "[DSNY] is getting New York City trash out of smelly leaky bags and into sealed containers. All businesses are currently required to put all their trash in a sealed bin, and as of Nov. 12, all trash from low-density residential buildings, including single-family homes, must be in a bin. In addition, universal mandatory curbside composting means that all food waste must now be in a sealed bin. These measures are removing rats' primary source of food, and if rats can't feed, they can't breed."

We will share any feedback we receive from City Hall and DOHMH in due course. Read our latest Bronx CB7 Parks meeting story online which covers the latest rules around trash containerization, check out our latest Neighborhood Notes also for more details on this or visit www.nyc.gov/bins.

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.

Out & About

Compiled by ARIEL PACHECO

EVENTS

The **38th Annual Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade** takes place on Saturday, October 19, at 11 a.m. starting at East 164th Street and Grand Concourse. The parade will celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Puerto Rican community in The Bronx. For more information, email inforprparade@yahoo.com.

Seniors are invited to visit St. James Recreation Center, 2530 Jerome Avenue, Bronx for a **Holiday 8-Ball Billiard Tournament** on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 11 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Players will compete against some of the best for a chance to win a first or second-place trophy. Participants must have NYC Parks Recreation Center membership to participate. Membership is free for youth and young adults ages 24 years and under. For more information, call (646) 447-2642, email Kelize.St.Bernard@parks.nyc.gov or visit nyc.gov/parks.

The MASC Hospitality Group in partnership with the Bronx Borough President's Office will host **Halloween at Fordham Plaza** on Saturday, Oct. 26, from noon to 7 p.m. at 1 Fordham Plaza, Bronx, NY 10458. There will be music, a silent disco, a costume contest, trick-or-treating, and live performances. For more information, visit www.maschospitalitygroup.com.

Visit the New York Botanical Garden as it celebrates **Three Years of the African American Garden** with a one-day symposium on Saturday, Oct. 19, at 10 a.m. at 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, NY 10458. The symposium is free and open to the public and will feature a conversation between celebrated chef Kwame Onwuachi, creator of New York City's restaurant Tatiana, and award-winning author Dr. Jessica B. Harris, as well as a panel of food scholars and community organizers. For more information, call (718) 817-8700.

Join Woodlawn Cemetery and Conservancy for an **Illuminated Sculpture Walking Tour** on Friday, Oct. 18, and Saturday, Oct. 19, at 6.45 p.m., 7 p.m., and 7.15 p.m. at 3800 Jerome Ave, Bronx, NY 10467. The tour will give you a chance to admire Illuminated mausoleums, sculptures, bronze doors, and monuments, as well as discover notable residents and architectural features. Flashlights will be provided. For more information, call (718) 920-1469.

LITERATURE

The Bronx County Historical Society will host **Book Talk**, an in-person discussion of *Secret New York City: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure* on Saturday, Oct. 19, at 1 p.m. at Edgar Allen Poe Cottage 2640 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10458. Author Rossilynne Culgan will discuss the research and writing process while sharing little-known treasures and curiosities of The Bronx. For more information, call (718) 881-8900. Poe Cottage remains open despite the roof renovation. Enter through the side door.

Join **One Book One Bronx** for a discussion of *Killing the Black Body* by Dorothy E. Roberts on Zoom on Tuesday, Oct. 29, from 7 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. To register, visit www.onebookonebronx.com.

MUSIC

The Lehman Center for Performing Arts will host the opening concert for the **Orchestra of the Bronx** on Sunday, Oct. 20, at 3 p.m. at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx, NY 10468. The 40-member orchestra of musicians will perform a program of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Mozart. For more information, call (718) 960-8000.

KIDS

Mosholu Public Library is hosting **Bangla Playtime for Little Learners** on Thursdays Oct. 24 and Oct. 31 at 11 a.m. at 285 East 205th Street, Bronx, NY 10467. Each session will focus on playful activities such as interactive games, songs, movement, and reading aloud for children aged 0 to 5. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

MOVEMENT

Join the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center for **Leap to the Beat** on Sunday, Oct. 20, from 10 a.m. to 10.45 a.m. at 3225 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467. Enjoy the benefits of working out while having fun with your favorite music. This class is open to all levels. Brenell Harrison is the instructor. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

The **3rd Annual Bronx All Day Community Relay** hosted by Bronx Sole takes place on Sunday, Oct. 27, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The relay includes walking, running, biking, skateboarding, and roller skating. Routes and estimated start times will be provided days ahead of the event. Bronx natives, residents, students, schools, churches, businesses and organizations are invited to participate. For more information, visit <https://linktr.ee/BronxSole>

CRIME STATS

BY SÍLE MOLONEY, DAVID GREENE



CompStat Book		Week of 10/07/24 - 10/13/24					
		28 Day			Year to Date		
	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	1	2	-50.0 %	24	12	100.0 %
Rape	- %	7	0	- %	27	16	68.8 %
Robbery	-53.3 %	27	33	-18.2 %	309	272	13.6 %
Felony Assault	8.3 %	62	61	1.6 %	695	646	7.6 %
Burglary	33.3 %	17	17	0.0 %	169	134	26.1 %
Grand Larceny	-42.9 %	48	38	26.3 %	531	442	20.1 %
Grand Larceny Auto	100.0 %	20	23	-13.0 %	173	226	-23.5 %
Total	-12.5 %	182	174	4.6 %	1,928	1,748	10.3 %
Patrol	-13.0 %	178	168	6.0 %	1,886	1,702	10.8 %
Transit	0.0 %	3	4	-25.0 %	18	23	-21.7 %
Housing	0.0 %	1	2	-50.0 %	24	23	4.3 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	7	8	-12.5 %	56	51	9.8 %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	4	7	-42.9 %	43	40	7.5 %
UCR Rape*	0.0 %	8	4	100.0 %	40	46	-13.0 %
Other Sex Crimes	0.0 %	8	10	-20.0 %	78	70	11.4 %
Petit Larceny	-17.4 %	77	86	-10.5 %	759	834	-8.0 %
Misd. Assault	-22.7 %	88	105	-16.2 %	907	992	-8.6 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	3	4	-25.0 %

MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS for the 52nd Precinct for the 28-day period ending Oct. 13, 2024, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 52nd Precinct as of Oct. 13, 2024, compared to last year (right).

Source: NYPD

CompStat Book		Week of 10/07/24 - 10/13/24					
		28 Day			Year to Date		
	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	1	5	-80.0 %
Rape	- %	4	0	- %	12	8	50.0 %
Robbery	0.0 %	12	10	20.0 %	116	123	-5.7 %
Felony Assault	-50.0 %	17	10	70.0 %	193	165	17.0 %
Burglary	200.0 %	12	9	33.3 %	130	115	13.0 %
Grand Larceny	0.0 %	48	52	-7.7 %	602	530	13.6 %
Grand Larceny Auto	14.3 %	26	27	-3.7 %	264	273	-3.3 %
Total	11.1 %	119	108	10.2 %	1,318	1,219	8.1 %
Patrol	25.0 %	117	104	12.5 %	1,263	1,146	10.2 %
Transit	-100.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %	4	8	-50.0 %
Housing	-100.0 %	2	3	-33.3 %	51	65	-21.5 %
Shooting Victims	-100.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %	3	5	-40.0 %
Shooting Incidents	-100.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %	3	5	-40.0 %
UCR Rape*	- %	4	1	300.0 %	20	21	-4.8 %
Other Sex Crimes	-100.0 %	2	4	-50.0 %	39	27	44.4 %
Petit Larceny	56.3 %	90	74	21.6 %	873	872	0.1 %
Misd. Assault	-25.0 %	45	23	95.7 %	277	248	11.7 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	2	2	0.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	1	2	-50.0 %

MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS for the 52nd Precinct for the 28-day period ending Oct. 13, 2024, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 52nd Precinct as of Oct. 13, 2024, compared to last year (right).

Source: NYPD

CompStat Book		Week of 10/07/24 - 10/13/24					
		28 Day			Year to Date		
	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	2	0	- %	10	9	11.1 %
Rape	- %	4	1	300.0 %	32	27	18.5 %
Robbery	-14.3 %	36	35	2.9 %	418	364	14.8 %
Felony Assault	-33.3 %	59	54	8.3 %	640	539	18.7 %
Burglary	66.7 %	18	11	63.6 %	160	171	-6.4 %
Grand Larceny	47.4 %	65	62	37.1 %	683	581	17.6 %
Grand Larceny Auto	100.0 %	25	24	4.2 %	278	273	1.8 %
Total	14.3 %	229	187	22.5 %	2,221	1,964	13.1 %
Patrol	20.8 %	228	181	26.0 %	2,180	1,921	13.5 %
Transit	-100.0 %	1	6	-83.3 %	37	38	-2.6 %
Housing	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	4	5	-20.0 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	4	0	- %	35	14	150.0 %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	3	0	- %	20	11	81.8 %
UCR Rape*	- %	4	2	100.0 %	48	47	2.1 %
Other Sex Crimes	100.0 %	7	8	-12.5 %	91	81	12.3 %
Petit Larceny	-11.1 %	143	213	-32.9 %	1,464	2,061	-29.0 %
Misd. Assault	-7.7 %	75	55	36.4 %	699	655	6.7 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	1	0	- %	3	0	- %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %	3	5	-40.0 %

MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS for the 52nd Precinct for the 28-day period ending Oct. 13, 2024, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 52nd Precinct as of Oct. 13, 2024, compared to last year (right).

Source: NYPD

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Public and Community Meetings

The 52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of the month, sometimes in person and sometimes online.

Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email distribution list.

The next BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7 (CB7) general board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 22, at 6.30 p.m. at Monroe College, 2501 Jerome Avenue. 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 (hybrid) meeting will be held in November (date tbc). Contact BX08@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list.

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



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Queen and Princesses Get Crowned at Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade Pageant

(continued from page 8)

ised. The parade itself will be held on Saturday Oct. 19, along the Grand Concourse between East 164th Street and Mount Eden Avenue and kicks off at 11 a.m. Organizers say it will showcase colorful floats, marching bands, cultural performances, and community organizations.

The parade organizers said, “We are excited to once again bring together the Bronx community and celebrate our Puerto Rican heritage. The parade and gala are opportunities to honor our ancestors, showcase our culture, and strengthen our community bonds.”

Editor’s Note: Norwood News freelance photographer, Miriam Quiñones, is a board member of the Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade.



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

DORIS NELVA MARTINEZ won first place as Queen of The Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade representing Humacao, at The Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade Pageant held Sept. 7, 2024, at 345 Brook Avenue in the Mott Haven section of The Bronx.

Bronx Talks Housing

(continued from page 1)

about 40 percent of the population resides. “Homeownership rates are as low as 20 percent in The Bronx and 24 percent in Manhattan,” Thomas P. DiNapoli, state comptroller said. That being the case, the conference aimed to provide tenants with vital information on tenant protection rights.

“The reality is deepening in the housing challenges that our community faces daily, but today, we’re taking an important step towards moving forward,” Stevens said. “This conference is about more than how. It’s about creating a space where our community can come together and speak directly to agencies and elected officials.”

Stevens added, “I think it’s important for us to reflect on how far we’ve come but also understand we still have a real long way to go. So, this is one of those things we have to make sure to continue to fight on.”

The councilwoman represents the Bronx neighborhoods of Morrisania, Claremont Village-Claremont (East), Concourse-Concourse Village, Highbridge, Mount Eden-Claremont (West), Yankee Stadium-Macombs Dam Park, Claremont Park, University Heights (South)-Morris Heights, University Heights (North)-Fordham.

Conference partner elected officials included Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, Congressman Ritchie Torres (NY-15), State Sen. Luis Sepúlveda (S.D. 32), Assembly Members Chantel Jackson (A.D. 79) and Landon Dais (A.D. 77).

“Something that we’re all champions for is ensuring that our housing stock for our community members, that it is sustainable, that it is affordable, and that it is built properly for them,” said Dais. “Most importantly, we want to make sure that your kids and your family secure and stay in the community that they’re from, and stay in the community they want to grow up in.”

Participating organizations at the conference included Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA), The Legal Aid Society, NYC Department of Buildings (DOB), NYC Department of Housing, Preservation & Development (HPD), NYC Department of City Planning (DCP), NYC Department

of Finance, NYS Division of Human Rights, Bronx Fountain House, and Arriva Bank.

The conference allowed members of the community the opportunity to speak both with these agencies, and with representatives of elected officials to obtain resources and information on housing.

Of course, of major concern to most tenants is affordability. HPD officials say housing is considered affordable if it costs about one-third or less of what the people living in the local area earn. Income eligibility and rent for City-financed affordable housing projects are based on a measure called Area Median Income (AMI).

The AMI for all cities across the country is defined each year by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The 2023 AMI for the New York City region is \$127,100 for a three-person family (100% AMI).

HPD’s most recent housing lotteries, described as affordable, seem anything but. Units at 114 East 198th Street in Bedford Park, are targeted at residents earning 130 percent of the AMI, ranging in eligible income from \$105,223 to \$181,740.

At 130 percent of the AMI, there are 17 studios available with a monthly rent of \$3,069 for those on incomes ranging from \$105,223 to \$161,590, and three one-bedroom units with a monthly rent of \$3,253 for residents on incomes ranging from \$111,532 to \$181,740.

Units at 368-372 East 194th Street in Fordham Manor are for residents earning 130 percent of the AMI, ranging in eligible income from \$110,880 to \$218,010. At 130 percent of the AMI, there are six one-bedroom units available with a monthly rent of \$3,234 for residents on incomes ranging from \$110,880 to \$181,740, and a two-bedroom unit with a monthly rent of \$3,811 for those on incomes ranging from \$130,663 to \$218,010.

Units at 3178 Villa Avenue in Bedford Park are for residents earning 130 percent of the AMI, ranging in eligible income from \$104,640 to \$161,590. There are 21 studios available at a monthly rent of \$3,052,

Units at 3056 Decatur Avenue in Norwood were available for residents earning 130 percent of the AMI, ranging in eligible income from \$82,286 to \$181,740. Three one-bedroom units at a monthly rent of \$2,400 were available.

Income Band	Percent of AMI
Extremely Low-income	0-30%
Very Low-income	31-50%
Low-income	51-80%
Moderate-income	81-120%
Middle-income	121-165%

Source: NYC Department of Housing, Preservation & Development

INCOME BANDS AND Percent of AMI

Units at 2621 Grand Avenue in University Heights were for residents earning incomes at 130 percent of the AMI, ranging in eligible income from \$84,755 to \$181,740. There were two studios available with a monthly rent of \$2,472 for residents on incomes ranging from \$84,755 to \$161,590; and nine one-bedroom units with a monthly rent of \$2,520 for those with incomes ranging from \$86,400 to \$181,740.

Meanwhile, according to the latest available district profile for Bronx Community District 7 (CD7) compiled by NYC Department of City Planning (DCP), which incorporates Norwood, Bedford Park, Fordham, Jerome Park, Kingsbridge Heights, and University Heights, around a third (30.8%) of residents living in Bronx CD7 have incomes below the NYC.gov poverty threshold.

Around 53.8% of households spend 35% or more of their income on rent, and around 8.6 percent of the district is unemployed. Based on the 2020 Census data, of the 50,161 housing units in the district, 47,564 are occupied, while 2,597 are vacant.

According to Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7)’s 2025 Statement of Needs for the district, CD7 is in need of quality, mixed-income housing. “Housing accommodations continue to be one of the primary issues facing district residents,” the board wrote. “While the district has some of the most af-

fordable, private market rental housing in the city, many rent-stabilized and rent-controlled apartments are disappearing due to evictions and tenant turnover.”

The board continued, “To make matters worse, the district is seeing an influx of new residents who have been priced out of other neighborhoods in New York City, increasing competition for the affordable units available in the district. There is also a prevailing feeling in our district that we have received a disproportionate share of supportive housing developments, which serve a population that does not currently reside in the district.”

Back at the housing conference, several members of the executive board of District 16 Tenant Advisory Council were honored by Stevens. President Mildred James, Vice President Sandra Thomas, Treasurer Gwendolyn Weekes, and Secretary Linda Kemp each received City Council citations.

Tenant advisory council

members said it provides community members with a direct platform to collaborate with local government, ensuring their voices are included in decision-making. The various tenant advisory councils focus on important issues for tenants like tenant rights, youth engagement, health and wellness, senior services, and multicultural initiatives.

Kemp also served as moderator for one of the panel discussions held during the conference. Panelists included CASA Leader Fitzroy Christian and NYC Department of Social Services Deputy Commissioner Jamar Hooks, who said, “Events like these are super important because many times community members don’t have access to the internet, or they’re not computer literate.”

Hooks continued, “So, these events are important to bring out the agencies to discuss what programs and services we provide, and to have direct communications with our constituents. We’re not in an ivory tower. We’re not to be isolated. We should be in a community having direct conversations with the people that we serve.”

For his part, Christian said, “What we do or what we aim to do is to make sure that we empower all tenants here in The Bronx to know their rights.” He added, “Statewide coalitions have come together to fight for housing because we believe that housing is a human right. It should not be a commodity.”

Food and beverages were served at the conclusion of the event.

*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.

	2010		2020		Change, 2010-2020		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Point
AGE							
Total population	139,286	100.00	146,813	100.00	7,527	5.4	0.0
Total persons under 18 years	38,098	27.4	34,554	23.5	-3,544	-9.3	-3.9
MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RACE / HISPANIC ORIGIN							
Total population	139,286	100.0	146,813	100.0	7,527	5.4	0.0
Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	90,379	65.3	99,985	68.1	9,606	9.9	2.8
White non-Hispanic	10,023	7.2	8,260	5.6	-1,763	-17.6	-1.6
Black non-Hispanic	26,365	18.9	24,456	16.7	-1,909	-6.5	-2.1
Asian non-Hispanic	9,156	6.6	10,021	6.8	865	9.4	0.2
Some other race, non-Hispanic	1,293	0.9	1,948	1.3	655	50.7	0.4
Non-Hispanic of two or more races	1,670	1.2	2,143	1.5	473	28.3	0.3
HOUSING OCCUPANCY							
Total housing units	50,361	100.0	53,180	100.0	3,019	6.0	0.0
Occupied housing units	47,564	94.8	50,996	95.9	3,432	7.2	1.1
Vacant housing units	2,597	5.2	2,184	4.1	-413	-15.9	-1.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary Files Population Division, New York City Department of City Planning

DATA FROM THE 2020 Census, which includes basic demographic and housing characteristics for Bronx Community District 7, compared to 2010.

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