



# NORWOOD NEWS

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## Residents Say "No" to Proposed Bainbridge Ave Development

Photo courtesy of the Office of Council Member Oswald Feliz

**CITY COUNCIL MEMBER** Oswald Feliz (C.D. 15) at podium joins Karla Cabrera Carrera, district manager for Bronx Community Board 7, and residents, merchants and others at a rally at 2586 Bainbridge Avenue in Fordham Manor on Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2024 to oppose a new transitional housing development at the site.

**By SÍLE MOLONEY**

City Council Member Oswald Feliz (C.D. 15), Assemblyman George Alvarez (A.D. 78), Congressman Adriano Espaillat (NY-13) and Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson are backing a chorus of voices who

oppose the opening of a new, 83-bed, emergency and transitional housing development for men in Fordham Manor, operated by The Fortune Society.

In a prior letter dated April 30 to New York City Mayor Eric Adams, Feliz, Alvarez, Es-

paillat and Gibson laid out the reasons why they believe the proposed location at 2586 Bainbridge Avenue is not suitable.

Stating at that time that they had recently become aware of the planned development aimed at assisting very needy popula-

tions with potential substance abuse challenges, they wrote, "We are writing to express our deep concern regarding this proposal and to urgently request its immediate halt, followed by an emergency meeting

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N R W TO CORTLANDT STREET

# NORWOOD NEWS

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# Bronx Music Hall Holds Grand Opening

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

The Bronx Music Hall (BMH) hosted its grand opening on Oct. 18, marking the first newly constructed independent music performance venue in The Bronx in over 50 years, according to officials.

Located at 438 East 163<sup>rd</sup> Street in the Morrisania section of the borough, the \$15.4 million music hall and community cultural center covers a total of 14,000 square feet. The BMH features a 250-person capacity performance theater, an exhibition hall, a multipurpose room and dance studio, a green room for performers, a recording studio and post-production room, and amphitheater-style seating in two adjacent plazas for outdoor performances.

The BMH is owned and operated by Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco), a community development organization.

Davon Russell, president of WHEDco, told the *Norwood News*, “We are, and we have, and we will continue to be a curator of the history of music in The Bronx.”

To celebrate the grand opening weekend, BMH hosted several performances, including Afro-Haitian roots music band, Kongo, the Bobby Sanabria Multiverse Big Band, and Grupo Maburuaña.

Of BMH’s reach, Russell said, “What we aim to do is make sure that we are representing all (people), not only The Bronx but across New York City.”

The BMH plans to host live music, dance, and spoken word performances along with music and dance classes, theater workshops and productions, a youth orchestra, film screenings, art exhibitions, community showcases, and more.

Children, teens, and adults will also be able to participate in music and dance classes. BMH is located within a mixed-use housing development that includes



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**THE BRONX MUSIC** Hall interior is seen on Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024.

305 units of affordable housing known as the Bronx Commons, according to officials.

BMH will also serve as a cultural center, providing a new space for the Bronx Music Heritage Center (BMHC). BMHC was founded in 2010 to preserve and promote Bronx music, cultivate Bronx artists, spur neighborhood revival, and provide free cultural programs for the community.

The BMH’s co-artistic directors Elena Martínez and multi-Grammy nominated percussionist Bobby Sanabria will curate programming at the Bronx Music Hall.

Sanabria said, “When I was growing up, there were a plethora of clubs, and not only clubs but catering halls, dance halls, and you had church dances. You could make a living as a musician just by playing in The Bronx. At one time, The Bronx had as many or more nightclubs, catering halls, and dance halls than Manhattan.”

Sanabria added, “Here at the Bronx Music Hall, we are bringing that back, educating people about the great history, especially the new generation of Bronx-

ites.”

Kerry McLean, vice president of community development at WHEDco, said of the grand opening, “It really is our honor to bring a space where we can celebrate music, that we can continue to provide opportunities for music to be innovated here in our borough, as it has for so many decades, and to really nurture young people.”

Meanwhile, Nancy Biberman, WHEDco’s founder and president emerita, said, “To-

day marks the culmination of a long journey: countless hours of research and dialogue with neighborhood residents, elected officials, Bronx musicians & historians.

She added, “Over decades, The Bronx produced more popular music than any place in our country for the simple reason that different cultural traditions lived alongside one another. Puerto Ricans and Cubans brought mambo and salsa. West Indians brought calypso. African Americans brought jazz, rhythm and blues and harmonic singing. Garifuna music arrived from Hondurans, Guatemalans, Belizeans & Nicaraguans. Eastern Europeans, Italians, and migrants from the African continent settled and brought their own rhythms.”

Biberman concluded, “The Bronx Music Hall will spotlight the sounds of new Americans from around the globe, as well as Bronx-born artists like Prince Royce, Romeo Santos, Jennifer Lopez, Cardi B, French Montana, and Samara Joy.”

For more information on tickets, classes, or events, visit [Bronxmusichall.org](http://Bronxmusichall.org).

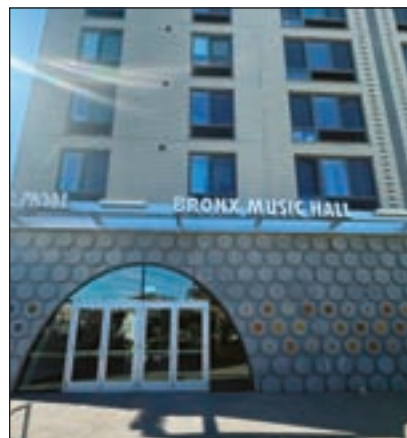


Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**THE BRONX MUSIC** Hall, located at 438 East 163<sup>rd</sup> Street in Morrisania, is seen on Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024.



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**THE BOBBY SANABRIA** Multiverse Big Band perform at the Bronx Music Hall Grand Opening in Morrisania on Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024.

# Are Bronx Veterans Being Supported?

By **FAHIMA DEGIA**

As veteran voters and other voters cast their ballots in this year's presidential election, we take a look at the support and resources available to Bronx veterans. On Oct. 29, officials from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) said that the department delivered more care and benefits to more New York veterans, survivors, and their families than ever before in 2024.

"Veterans deserve the very best from VA and our nation, and we will never settle for anything less," said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. "We're honored that more Veterans are getting their earned health care and benefits from VA than ever before, but make no mistake, there is still work to do," adding in part that the VA would continue to work to earn the trust of all those it served.

VA officials said this year the VA delivered over 3.7 million health care appointments to NY veterans, and that 10,197 New York veterans enrolled in VA health care. They said 146,376 NY veterans received compensation, and 5,215 received pension benefits this year, representing an estimated \$3.5 billion and \$70 million in earned benefits, respectively.

They said the VA processed 58,789 disability benefit claims for NY veterans, with an overall grant rate of 62.9%, provided no-cost emergency health care this year to more than 1,190 NY veterans in acute suicidal crises, and 4,025 NY survivors received pension benefits this year, representing an estimated \$39.2 million in earned benefits.

VA officials said 14,365 NY spouses and dependents received Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, representing an estimated \$291.5 million in earned benefits, and the VA also interred 4,349 veterans in the VA's national cemeteries in New York in 2024.

They said 14,797 NY women veterans

received compensation, representing an estimated \$383.5 million in earned benefits, 1,159 NY women veterans enrolled in VA health care, and the VA now has more women veterans enrolled in its health care system than ever before.

At the Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) veterans affairs committee meeting held in Bedford Park's Tracey Towers on Oct. 16, the main agenda topic was a presentation by Coco Culhane, founder and executive director of the Veteran Advocacy Project, who discussed the resources available to NYC veterans. Four board members and four others, some of whom are veterans, attended the meeting.

The Veteran Advocacy Project provides free legal services to low-income veterans and their families, with a focus on those living with post-traumatic stress, brain injury, and substance dependency. It aims to assist them with access to housing, health care, and income.

Resources discussed included protections for veterans under the "Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act," also known as the PACT Act, a federal law passed in August 2022, which expanded the VA's healthcare and benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances during prior deployments.

Culhane explained that under the law, there is a list of 23 presumptive conditions resulting from things like burn pit or Agent Orange exposure. She said that if a veteran served in a specific location within a specific timeframe, they do *not* have to prove their condition was caused by their military service — that link is presumed for a disability compensation claim.

Agent Orange is a herbicide used by the U.S. Military to control vegetation and was sprayed along with other tactical herbicides, during the Vietnam War. Veterans exposed to Agent Orange include those who served in Vietnam, the Korean Demilitarized Zone, and Thai Air Force bases, and others who flew on or worked on the C-123 aircraft. According to the VA, these deployments caused potential lifelong complications for veterans.

One veteran asked if a civilian doctor could attest that a veteran had been diagnosed with the designated symptoms and Culhane said yes, but that the VA would likely still carry out a compensation and pension (C&P) exam as part of the claim process.

In noting that the PACT Act is a large piece of legislation and contains many types of relief for veterans, Culhane also



Photo by Fahima Degia

**(L TO R)** BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7 (CB7) member Tobie Buford, CB7 Veterans committee chair Chad Royer, and CB7 chair of the budget, personnel and ethics committee Jean Hill attend the Bronx CB7 veterans affairs committee meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024.

spoke about the Camp Lejeune Justice Act, which allowed those exposed to contaminated water at the Marine Corps base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, to file a claim with the U.S. Department of the Navy.

She said anyone who spent at least 30 days on the base from Aug. 1, 1953, to Dec. 31, 1987, and developed health problems had the opportunity to file a compensation claim within a two-year window that closed in August 2024.

Culhane said that while veterans and their family members can no longer file a lawsuit under the Camp Lejeune Justice Act, disability compensation claims are separate from such lawsuits, and can still be filed with the VA.

Meeting attendees responded to board member Tobie Buford's question about why the benefit was only available for two years and it was clarified that the two-year period was only for lawsuits, not benefits. Still, several veterans expressed frustration, including Jeff Malone, a resident, who said, "They're waiting for all of us to die. They want for all these people to die so that the payout for the claims is less."

When it comes to lawyers' fees charged to veterans for the pursuit of claims, Culhane said there were caps for such fees which had been announced, and that veterans should be careful because some lawyers were charging much more than the announced fee caps.

Congressional Bill S.5130 - The Protect Camp Lejeune Victims Ensnared by Trial-lawyer's Scams Act or the Protect Camp Lejeune VETS Act was introduced to Congress a few years ago but has not yet passed. If passed, it would limit attorney's fees charged on claims involving eligible veterans.

Another topic discussed was discharges from the military. Discharge upgrades are obtained through the U.S. Department of Defense. Culhane said one type of review board has a three-year statute of limitation from the discovery of the discharge error or injustice and said under the law, this can be waived "in the interest of justice."

It was discussed that some lawyers may turn a veteran way if it has been more than three years, as some lawyers may not know the time limit is waivable. Culhane said any decisions taken on the

waiver of the statute of limitations is part of the upgrade application and is not a separate process.

Culhane also said that certain discharge narrative reasons automatically get a discharge review. These may include "less than honorable" discharge narratives which may refer to homosexual activity, homosexual conduct, or a homosexual declaration. She noted that the discharge upgrade application process is distinct from veterans' benefits and involve two separate agencies.

The board and residents agreed that, in general, veterans' benefits were not well advertised, and veterans typically learn more from each other.

After the meeting, committee chair Chad Royer said, "I think on the City level, the City has the greatest opportunity to increase its budgets to help the veterans who live, work, and play here, and the veteran organizations that do business here. Over the course of four to five years, they have not added the necessary increases in their budgets."

Board members later explained that Bronx CB7's budget requests would be discussed at the CB7 general board meeting later in October. After the meeting, Malone had some suggestions for the board's budget requests regarding infrastructure.

"On Grand Concourse, I know there's a couple of bumps. If you catch the 9 bus across the Grand Concourse, it's a little bouncy through there and there's actually a pothole on Grand Concourse; it's the ramp up from Valentine going west-bound," he said.

The board also discussed upcoming events such as the CB7 Veterans' Day Commemoration on Saturday, Nov. 9, at 10 a.m., on Mosholu Parkway between Marion Avenue and Hull Avenue in Bedford Park. A 5-day breathing workshop series is also taking place online from Nov. 6 to Nov. 10 from 6.30 p.m. to 9 p.m., and from Nov. 13 to Nov. 17 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Those interested can contact Project Welcome Home Troops board chair Leslye Moore at [leslye.moore@pwht.org](mailto:leslye.moore@pwht.org).

Van Cortlandt Park Alliance were also hosting a Veterans Day ceremony at Memorial Grove in Van Cortlandt Park on Sunday, Nov. 3, at noon.

*\*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



Photo by Fahima Degia

**(L TO R)** BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7 (CB7) veterans committee chair Chad Royer, CB7 chair of the budget, personnel and ethics committee Jean Hill, board member Bernard Wright, and Coco Culhane, founder and executive director of the Veteran Advocacy Project, attend the Bronx CB7 veterans affairs committee meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024.

# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**



This week, we asked readers their opinion on a housing lottery, described as affordable, announced by NYC Department of Housing, Preservation & Development and developed by Joel Mandel under the 114 East 198 BSD, LLC, for units at 114 East 198th Street in Bedford Park. In order to be eligible to apply, applicants for a studio apartment are required to earn over \$105,223 a year and pay a monthly rent of \$3,069.



"Honestly, I'm not saying that's low-income housing, but I think that the struggles we all have, if a person doesn't have three jobs nowadays, you're not going to earn that type of income. No, it's not low-income housing. As an American, I see our people will help people from other countries before they help us."

**Jessica Concepcion,**  
Burnside  
Photo by David Greene



"I do consider that low-income housing, especially how times are now. However, I remember a point in time when it was way cheaper than it is now because the government did things that they're not allowed to do now. And one of the biggest things is they keep raising our taxes and that's pushing up inflation."

**Richard Lowery,**  
Highbridge  
Photo courtesy of Richard Lowery



"Wow! And that is affordable housing? No, that's not affordable housing. That is expensive housing here in New York. No one in my neighborhood earns over \$100,000. As a matter of fact, I'm going for a job interview, and it starts at \$60,000 a year. Most of my friends make under \$100,000. That's unfair housing and business practices and we, the people, are standing up against these unfair business practices in the development of housing."

**Kim Antonio,**  
Yankee Stadium  
Photo by David Greene



"That's not acceptable because \$100,000 is not low-income. I don't know how they're determining \$100,000 as low-income. I don't know how they're calculating that based on how much everyone else makes in the neighborhood. I think it's taking advantage of the real estate opportunities here, and I don't know anyone who makes over \$100,000, so that's not fair. They need to make housing more affordable; one popular way is to increase taxes on the wealthy."

**Dorothea Dwomoh,**  
Bedford Park  
Photo by David Greene



"I don't think that's low-income housing. For real affordable housing, you must ensure that people have the support they need. I feel like it's too much and too costly. We're living through times where I sadly see some people on the streets. If they build more housing, it can't be gentrified and displace people, and it should benefit everyone. Our elected officials must address this issue swiftly and accordingly."

**Osei Dwomoh,**  
Bedford Park  
Photo by David Greene

*Editor's Note: 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).*

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\*According to the American Cancer Society 5-year tracked, relative survival rate based on the SEER database, maintained by the NCI.



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# Female Operator of Bronx Daycare Center where Nicholas Dominici, 1, Died from Fentanyl Poisoning Pleads Guilty

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Grei Mendez, 37, the operator of El Divino Niño Daycare Center in Kingsbridge Heights where one-year-old Nicholas Feliz Dominici died on Sept. 15, 2023, from fentanyl poisoning has pleaded guilty to federal charges brought against her following the incident, prosecutors announced on Tuesday, Oct. 29.

“Grei Mendez has just admitted she conspired to maintain and distribute large quantities of dangerously toxic fentanyl in a Bronx Daycare center, a place where parents expected their children would be protected and safe,” said Damian Williams, U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York.

He continued, “Mendez’s reprehensible conduct resulted in the needless and tragic death of a child, and the poisoning of three others. From the beginning, this case has shown the senseless collateral damage caused by the fentanyl epidemic, and should remind us all that the demand for illegal narcotics so often puts innocent bystanders at risk while drug traffickers ruthlessly pursue profits. This Office will continue to protect New Yorkers from the grave threat fentanyl presents.”

As reported, Mendez’s husband, Felix Herrera Garcia, 36, was recently sentenced to 45 years in prison for trafficking fentanyl out of the now-closed daycare, located on 2707 Morris Avenue, which resulted in Nicholas’s death, and the poisoning of three other infants, after he pleaded guilty earlier this year.

In addition to Herrera Garcia and Mendez, Renny Antonio Parra Paredes, 39, and Carliso Acevedo Brito, 42, a cousin of Herrera Garcia, were also arrested in connection with the incident, and face various State and federal charges, some including murder and drug trafficking. Parra Paredes has also pleaded guilty to the federal charges and awaits sentencing in federal court.

According to the investigation, on Sept. 15, 2023, at 2:43 p.m. in an apartment in 2707 Morris Avenue, a licensed daycare, and where Acevedo Brito, resided in a bedroom, four children were poisoned through exposure to fentanyl, resulting in Nicholas’ death and acute opioid intoxication requiring hospital treatment for an 8-month-old baby girl, her 2-year-old brother, and another 2-year-old boy. EMS used Narcan to reverse the symptoms of the brother and sister, but Nicholas died. Another infant



**GREI MENDEZ, OPERATOR** of the now closed Divino Niño Daycare Center, located on 2707 Morris Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights, where one-year-old Nicholas Feliz Dominici was unintentionally and fatally poisoned with fentanyl on Sept. 15, 2023, appears at Bronx Criminal Court on April 9, 2024. Photo by Sile Moloney

boy was treated at the hospital, and also survived.

As reported, a kilo of fentanyl was found in a closet in the daycare apartment, and six kilos of fentanyl, heroin and other controlled substances were found under a trap door in the floor, under a padded mat where children napped. Kilo presses and other drug paraphernalia were found in the apartment. All four defendants were remanded in custody. City health officials had previously confirmed the daycare center had passed prior inspections before opening, including at least one unannounced, on-site inspection.

One source told *Norwood News* Mendez’s own young children were not being cared for at the daycare she ran. As reported, prosecutors said that immediately prior to calling 911, Mendez called her husband twice.

They said the first phone call went unanswered and the second phone call

lasted just over 10 seconds. They said minutes before emergency services arrived, surveillance footage shows her husband, empty-handed, walking swiftly from the building next door into the daycare.

When Mendez appeared in Bronx Criminal Court on Tuesday, April 9, where she faced various State charges relating to the unintentional poisoning of Nicholas, in addition to the separate federal charges, her defense attorney said she was “not a monster.”

Speaking to *Norwood News* after the day’s court proceedings that day, her defense attorney, Javier Solano, said in part of his client, “She’s not some monster; she’s not. This is a person who’s literally cared for these [people?/inaudible]. She really wanted to do a good job as a daycare worker

at the daycare business. She’s a loving mother; every day her heart is breaking. If she could probably give up her life for those kids, she would, in a second.” Read our previous story which includes more comments from her lawyer on [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org).

As reported, Mendez has been charged with various federal crimes related to distributing fentanyl, including at the daycare center, allegedly between in or about July 2023 through at least in or about September 2023, along with her husband and alleged accomplices, Acevedo Brito and Parra Paredes, a/k/a “El Gallo.” Acevedo Brito is presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

According to [gveyspanish.com](http://gveyspanish.com), though “el gallo” literally means “rooster,” it is used in two different ways in Mexico. The first is to refer to a big, successful man, like the English phrase “cock of the walk.” The second is used to

refer to marijuana cigarettes.

As reported, at the State level, Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark previously announced that Mendez and Herrera Garcia, both of 2705 Morris Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights, along with Acevedo Brito, were charged with second-degree murder, first-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance, second-degree manslaughter, four counts of first-degree assault, five counts of second-degree assault, second, third, and fourth-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance, and four counts of endangering the welfare of a child before Bronx Supreme Court Justice Margaret Clancy in October 2023. The State cases for each defendant still have to be tried.

As reported, in December 2023, at the behest of Nicholas’s heartbroken parents, new laws were introduced by local legislators at a City and State level by City Council Member Pierina Sanchez (C.D. 14) and State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33), to protect children in daycare facilities from opioid exposure.

Read more about those laws, not all of which have yet passed on [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org) as part of our story, entitled, “**Nicholas Dominici Way Unveiled as Daycare Oversight Legislation Stalls in Assembly.**”

At a remembrance service for Nicholas held in October 2023, the little boy’s father, Otoniel Feliz Samboy, said he felt the love and support of his family and each person and was grateful for it. Speaking in Spanish, he added, “I know my son’s passing will not be in vain, not only because those who are guilty will pay, but also because due to his death, many things will change, not only in this City, but in this country and across the world.”

Nicholas Otoniel Feliz Dominici Way was unveiled on the first anniversary of Nicholas’s death on Sept. 15.

As reported, a Bronx man was sentenced on Oct. 16 in a separate case to 13 years in prison for operating a separate drug mill in the Morris Heights section of The Bronx that killed another 1-year-old infant in December 2018.

NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) provides training and regularly updated information on how to obtain and administer naloxone (Narcan). Visit <https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/naloxone.page> for more information.

# NEWS BRIEFS

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

## Launch of Publication of Election Information Booklet

The Jaspers Vote team at Manhattan University and the U.S. presidency class taught by Margaret Groarke, professor of political science, launched the publication of their presidential election information booklet, "The More You Know" on Tuesday, Oct. 29, on campus. State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33) was due to join for the occasion. Jaspers Vote is a non-partisan effort to encourage all eligible Manhattan University students to register and vote.

## Yankees React to Fans Ejected from World Series Game 4

The New York Yankees gave their reaction to reports that two fans were ejected from World Series Game 4 on Tuesday, Oct. 29, against the Los Angeles Dodgers for violating the fan code of conduct and interfering with Dodgers star Mookie Betts during play.

"Last night two fans were ejected from Yankee Stadium for egregious and unacceptable physical contact with Dodgers outfielder Mookie Betts," the statement read. "The safety and security of players, fans and Stadium staff is the foundational element of every event held at Yankee Stadium, and it cannot be compromised."

The statement continued, "Tonight marks the final home game of year, and we want every ounce of our fans' passion on display. Yankee Stadium is known for its energy and intensity, however the exuberance of supporting one's team can never cross the line into intentionally putting players at physical risk."

It concluded, "The Yankees and Major League Baseball maintain a zero-tolerance policy toward the type of behavior displayed last night. These fans will not be permitted to attend tonight's game in any capacity."

The Dodgers went on to claim their eighth World Series title on Wednesday night, Oct. 30, at Yankee Stadium, in 5 games.

## BCC Gets \$4 Million for Ohio Track & Field Upgrades

Bronx Community College (BCC) officials announced earlier this week that Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, along with the Bronx delegation of the New York City Council and State of New York, awarded a \$4 million capital funding investment to upgrade the Col-

lege's primary athletic field, the Ohio Track & Field.

BCC officials said the college's baseball and men's soccer team play their home games at the NCAA-sized Ohio Field, which features a natural grass surface, as well as a 200-meter track. BCC officials said an event took place on the field on Tuesday, Oct. 22, to celebrate the work of student athletes who had advocated for funding, and the impact the project was expected to have on students and the community in the decades to come.

BCC officials said the capital funding will be used to transform the entire baseball field, soccer field, and track, with infrastructure upgrades including a new outdoor control booth and audiovisual components such as a new electronic digital scoreboard and LED field lights. They said the upgraded sound system will also be used for graduation, which takes place each May on Ohio Field.

## One Dead, Three Injured in Belmont Fire

One person died and three others were injured in a residential fire caused by a lithium-ion battery in Belmont on Thursday, Oct. 24, the FDNY said. The department said they received a call for a report of smoke/fire at 2264 Beaumont Avenue, a 3-story multiple dwelling located between Grote Street and East 183rd Street at 11.49 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 24.

They said the fire was on the third floor of the building and that 12 units, comprising 60 fire & EMS personnel responded to the scene. They said four people were transported to St. Barnabas Hospital. One civilian was in critical condition and was later pronounced deceased. Another civilian had serious but non-life-threatening injuries and two firefighters incurred minor injuries.

They said hazardous (hazmat) material was required for the removal of a lithium-ion battery from the scene and the blaze was brought under control at 00.39 a.m. They said the fire was caused by the lithium-ion battery.

The Red Cross later registered six households (including eight adults) for emergency assistance, including emergency temporary lodging and financial assistance.



Image courtesy of the Citizens App  
**FIREFIGHTERS RESPOND TO** a fire on the third floor of 2264 Beaumont Avenue in Belmont on Thursday, Oct. 24, 2024.

# Montefiore Expands Breast Cancer Screening

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson and City Council Member Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11) joined Montefiore Breast Surgeon, Dr. Ethan Ravetch and other Montefiore leaders on Monday, Oct. 29, to present Montefiore Einstein with a check for \$800,000 for two new 3D mammogram machines, and \$600,000 to fund a new mammography mobile unit that will travel around The Bronx next year.

Montefiore Einstein officials said the latest expansion of cancer-related services builds on the efforts of Montefiore Einstein Comprehensive Cancer Center (MECCC), to meet people where they are by increasing access to breast cancer screening and bringing clinical care to more community settings.

MECCC was founded in 1971 and is the fourth oldest National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer center in the U.S. It's located at Hutchinson Metro Center at 1250 Waters Place in Pelham Bay.

The Montefiore Einstein Breast

Care Center opened at the same location in September 2023 as reported and is where the latest check presentation took place. Montefiore-Einstein officials said the Breast Care Center was designed with a single purpose: advancing Montefiore's ability to deliver the most personalized care to its patients.

Breast cancer affects one in eight women, and Montefiore-Einstein officials said, "In the Bronx, too often, we see these cancers diagnosed at later stages. That doesn't have to be the case. Screening for breast cancer is critical. When detected early, breast cancer is very treatable and curable."

Montefiore officials said, each year, Montefiore Einstein's research is advancing screening and treatment options and trying to reduce side effects that might impact some populations more than others.

With the new funding, they said the borough is better positioned to enhance access to screening for Bronx residents.



Photo courtesy of the Office of Councilman Eric Dinowitz

**(L TO R)** DR. SHALOM KALNICKI, associate director of clinical affairs, MECCC; Dr. Laura J. Hodges, director of breast imaging & interventions, MECCC; Dr. Sheldon Feldman, director of breast cancer services, MECCC; Councilman Eric Dinowitz, Dr. Philip O. Ozuah, president and CEO of Montefiore Medicine, Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, another guest attendee, and Mrs. Lorraine Cortes Vazquez, NYC Department of the Aging Commissioner and a Montefiore patient for 23 years, attend a check presentation for the expansion of breast cancer care services at Montefiore's campus at 1250 Waters Place in Pelham Bay, The Bronx on Monday, Oct. 28, 2024.



**(L TO R)** DR. SHELDON FELDMAN, director of breast cancer services, MECCC; Dr. Laura J. Hodges, director of breast imaging & interventions, MECCC; Dr. Shalom Kalnicki, associate director of clinical affairs, MECCC; and Dr. Alyson Moadel-Robbles, deputy director of community engagement and cancer health equity, MECCC attend a check presentation for the expansion of breast cancer care services at Montefiore's campus at 1250 Waters Place in Pelham Bay, The Bronx on Monday, Oct. 28, 2024.

# NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY ARIEL PACHECO & SÍLE MOLONEY



## Presidential Election Deadlines

The presidential and state and federal general elections take place Nov. 5. Early voting is currently underway until Sunday, Nov. 3. Visit <https://vote.nyc.gov/all-important-dates> for more information. Find your poll site at <http://FindMyPollsite.Vote.NYC>.

The last day to apply in person at your county board of elections is **Nov. 4**. Put your ballot in the mail ensuring it receives a postmark no later than **Nov. 5**. Drop off your ballot to your county Board of Elections office no later than **Nov. 5, by 9 p.m.** Drop off your ballot to an early voting poll site in your county between **Oct. 26 and Nov. 3**. Drop off your ballot to an election day poll site on **Nov. 5, no later than 9 p.m.** For more information, visit <https://nycvotes.org/>.

## Daffodil Planting

Future of Mosholu Parkland will be hosting a **Daffodil Planting** event on Saturday, Nov. 23, and Sunday, Nov. 24, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Mosholu Parkway, Kossuth Playground, and Whalen Playground. All are welcome to participate, and no prior experience is needed. Everything will be provided. For more information, email [mosholuparkland@gmail.com](mailto:mosholuparkland@gmail.com) or call (347) 371-3085.

## Veterans Day Commemoration

Bronx Community Board 7 invites you to help place flags at the Bronx Victory Memorial to honor all veterans and active military for their service on Saturday, Nov. 9 at 10 a.m. on Mosholu Parkway between Marion Avenue and Hull

Avenue. For more information, call (929) 496-0748.

## Bronx District Attorney's Office Youth Advisory Council

Teens aged 14 to 20 are encouraged to join the Bronx District Attorney's Office Youth Advisory Council to become advocates for change while getting the opportunity to share their insights with Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark. The deadline for registration is Friday, Nov. 8. For more information, email [ceu@bronxda.nyc.gov](mailto:ceu@bronxda.nyc.gov).

## Become a Citizen

City Councilmembers Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11), Pierina Sanchez (C.D. 14), Althea Stevens (C.D. 16) and Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson invite you to Lehman College, 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, APEX Auxiliary Gym, Bronx, NY 10468, on Saturday, Nov. 2, to apply for citizenship. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age. For more information, and to learn what documents to bring, call (646) 664-9400.

## Shop for High Schools Fair

Join the Office of Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson on Friday, Nov. 8, from noon to 3 p.m. at P.S. / M.S. 20, 3050 Webster Ave, Bronx, NY 10467, where over 30 high schools will be tabling at a high school fair. Eighth grade students and parents are invited, and 7th grade students who wish to attend must be accompanied by a parent. For more information, call (718) 588-7500.

## Kingsbridge Heights Community Center Teen Program

Kingsbridge Heights Community Center is running a free afterschool teen program from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. at 3101 Kingsbridge Terrace, Bronx, NY 10463. The center is offering daily snacks, homework help, and tutoring, leadership opportunities, internship opportunities, peer mediation, and more. For more information, call (718) 884-0700.

## BCA Call for Youth Journalists

The Bronx Council on the Arts is seeking a Bronx-based, youth journalist from the age of 18 to 24 for their Youth Employment Program to write articles related to the Longwood Art Gallery. A stipend of \$200 per 500-word article will be provided. Apply by Nov. 15. For more information, visit <https://bronxcouncilonthearts.submittable.com/submit/d0b38276-8e80-418c-9561-3df54843933a/2025-open-call-youth-journalist>.

## 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:

- 3178 Villa Avenue, with a deadline of Nov. 21.
- 2077 Ryer Street, with a deadline of Dec. 19.
- 114 East 198, with a deadline of Dec. 10.

HPD frequently extends the announced deadlines. Visit <https://>

[housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/searchlotteries](https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/searchlotteries) for more information.

## Medicare Advantage Panel

It's Medicare open enrollment time. Ask questions about coverage and more during a Medicare Advantage Panel on Friday, Nov. 22, at 10 a.m. at the Mario Merola Building, 851 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10451. For more information, visit [HIIP@aging.nyc.gov](mailto:HIIP@aging.nyc.gov) or call (212) 244 6469.

## 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.bronx-arts.org/grants/bronx-dance-fund>.

## No Trash, Curbside Compost or Recycling on Election Day

NYC Department of Sanitation announced that there will be no trash, curbside compost, or recycling collection on Tuesday, Nov. 5, Election Day. Residents who normally receive Tuesday trash, curbside compost, or recycling collection should place their material at the curb Tuesday evening for collection starting Wednesday, Nov. 6. Residents may experience collection delays, as is common after holidays. DSNY appreciates residents' patience as they work to collect the backlog of material.

# Steam Leak Injures Bedford Park Resident

By DAVID GREENE

A freak steam leak injured a Bedford Park man who reportedly suffered burns all over his body, emergency services said.

According to an FDNY official, the incident was reported from inside a 5-story building at 2857 Valentine Avenue at East 198th Street. The FDNY initially reported that the man suffered "major" burns during the incident which took place at 7.20 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 17.

The department later said the unidentified victim was transported to Jacobi Hospital in Morris Park with non-life-threatening injuries.

When contacted about the incident, David Maggiotto, deputy press secretary at NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) told *Norwood News*, "DOB did not respond to this incident, so we have no info to report."

Maggiotto was asked what type of scenario would prompt a DOB response. He replied, "In an emergency situation, first responders are called to the scene. If first responders determine they should call DOB,

or another city agency, then DOB or the other agency that is called will respond."

One resident of the area who only knows the victim by sight later recalled, "That day, I was supposed to go to work and I was coming out at like seven in the morning and I saw him with the firemen, and he had burns, and there was smoke coming out of his window of the building." [The FDNY later confirmed it was steam.]

Asked where on his body the man had been burned, the resident replied, "He was all burned. Yeah, his face, his hands, his neck, his ears. He went to the hospital the same day."

The unidentified girlfriend of the victim told WPIX News that after the steam shot out of the radiator, the man threw himself through a window and landed on the fire escape. The girlfriend also said the steam leak took place just after they had made a complaint about having no heat.

A day before the incident, New York City Council had held a hearing on radiator safety during which

Councilwoman Pierina Sanchez (C.D. 14) introduced 'Intro 925' which calls for additional steam radiator inspections.

Sanchez said at the hearing, "In December 2016, an unspeakable tragedy occurred when a radiator system steam leak claimed the lives of two sisters in The Bronx." Sanchez also said that a third child was killed by a steam leak earlier this year in Brooklyn.

If passed, the bill would require annual inspections of radiators and landlords would be required to make needed repairs within seven days. *Norwood News* reached out to the building manager, believed to be CSC Corporation Services, the name displayed in the lobby of the affected building, and attempted to reach the building's owner, believed to be Prime Residential Bronx, LLC, the name also displayed in the building.

Both are located at 80 State Street, Albany, NY. No telephone or email was available on Prime Residential's website. We called the number provided for CSC Corporation a few times and the line appeared to be constantly busy. We will update the story if any new information is obtained.



Photo by David Greene

**AFTER GETTING BURNED** in a freak steam leak from a radiator, an unidentified victim reportedly jumped through a window and landed on a fire escape on Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024, before firefighters arrived at this Valentine Avenue building, seen here on Sunday, Oct. 20, 2024.



# Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade Returns!

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

The 38<sup>th</sup> Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade returned in all its glory to the Grand Concourse on Saturday, Oct. 19, the first since 2019. Ahead of the day, the various “Señora” winners were crowned at The Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade Pageant held on Sept. 7 at 345 Brook Ave in Mott Haven.

Maria Mercedes Figueroa won 2nd place as 1st princess, Doris Nelva Martinez won 1st place as Queen, Lisbeth Marie Garcia Calaf won 3rd place as 2nd princess, Hailey Miriam Antonetti was the Infantil Queen winner, and Josephine Celia Serrano won 2nd place as 1st princess.

At that event, 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, president of the parade committee, said this year’s theme was “*Nuestra Musica Folklorica, Bomba y Plena*” [Our folkloric music, *Bomba* and *Plena*], the latter, two musical traditions of Puerto Rico.

Mercado said the achievements of outstanding individuals and organizations who / which have made significant contributions to the Puerto Rican community, and to the borough of The Bronx, were recognized at a gala on Oct.



Photo by Síle Moloney

**CITY COUNCILMAN RAFAEL** Salamanca (C.D. 17) cuts the ribbon to mark the return of the 38<sup>th</sup> Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade on the Grand Concourse on Saturday, Oct. 19, 2024.

17, at Villa Barone Manor, 737 Throggs Neck Expressway, Bronx.

This year’s honorees included Grand Marshall Assemblywoman Karines Reyes (A.D. 87) of the Puerto Rican / Hispanic Task Force; Madrina State Sen. Nathalia Fernandez (S.D. 34); NYPD Sgt. Lorraine Perez who received the Public Civil Service Award; Bernie Hernandez of Aspira, who won the Education in Service Award; Pilar Maschi, senior catalyst organizer at the City Parks Foundation who won the Nonprofit Community Advocate Award; Barrio BX Restaurant, which won the Business of the Year Award; and Soundboy AKA Hip Hop Jibarito, Ariel Cartagena, who won the Artist of the Year Award.

In addition to dinner, there was also live entertainment with special guests, dancing,

and opportunities for networking. Mercado and committee members, Emily Toro, Gloria Rodriguez, Kenji Mercado and Miriam Quiñones, described the parade as a wonderful opportunity to come together and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Puerto Rican community in The Bronx.

The parade took place along the Grand Concourse between East 164th Street and Mount Eden Avenue under glorious sunshine and showcased colorful floats, marching bands, cultural performances, and community organizations.

According to the Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at CUNY Graduate Center, in 2020, there were about 1.19 million Puerto Rican-origin people living in the New York City metro area. As of 2020, in New York City, the majority (39.7% or 265,517 people) live in The Bronx, compared to 21.9% in Brooklyn, 15.6% in Manhattan, 16.2% in Queens and 6.5% on Staten Island.

During a Trump Vance presidential campaign rally held inside Madison Square Garden in Manhattan on Sunday, Oct. 27, AP reported that rally speaker, Tony Hinchcliffe, a stand-up comic, said, “I don’t know if you guys know this, but there’s literally a floating island of garbage in the middle of the ocean right now; I think it’s called Puerto Rico.” Forbes later reported that

former U.S. President and 2024 Republican nominee Donald Trump said he didn’t “know” the comedian, Hinchcliffe, who made the remarks, and called the MSG rally a ‘Love Fest.’

The Board of Directors of the National Puerto Rican Day Parade later condemned what they called the “outrageous, racist, and misinformed statement.” They said, “First, Puerto Rico is a beautiful island whose U.S. citizens make tremendous contributions to this country in the military, medicine, science, education, sports, and many other disciplines.”

They continued, “Puerto Ricans alone have earned over 2,700 Purple Hearts in defense of the United States. Our historical and cultural legacy and the beauty of Puerto Rico are not just well-documented, but also globally recognized. Another 5.8 million American citizens who recognize and embrace their Puerto Rican ancestry live in the [States], in crucial voting states like Pennsylvania, Michigan, Georgia, and North Carolina.”

The statement concluded, “Shockingly, people choose to speak with ignorance about Puerto Rico, spewing garbage statements. This insult will not diminish who we are, or what we represent but should remind us of the critical importance of voting on November 5th.”

Puerto Rican artist Bad Bunny endorsed U.S. Vice President and Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris after the rally. Congressman Ritchie Torres (NY-15), who represents a large section of The Bronx stretching from the Northwest to the South, also weighed in, saying, “As a Puerto Rican, I am tempted to call

Hinchcliffe racist garbage but doing so would be an insult to garbage. When casting their ballots at the voting booth, Latinos should never forget the racism that Donald Trump seems all too willing to platform.”

In the days that followed, Bronx Puerto Ricans and allies held a rally outside Trump Tower in Manhattan. Former Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. said, “[It’s] not just that he [Trump] let his ASSHOLE friend’s insults go UNCHECKED, remember that when our families on Puerto Rico needed POTUS the most, all he did for them was throw paper towels and let thousands of Americans die!”

He continued, “Never Forget. I WON’T!! That’s why I’m with HER! @kamalaharris To ALL Boricuas if you ARE offended, DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT! If not NOW, THEN WHEN will you fight to protect your Dignity?!”

Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson also reacted, saying, “Any racist, vile, and hateful attack on the Puerto Rican community is an attack on our entire borough. We will always stand united against hate, celebrating our diversity and rejecting division.”

Editor’s Note: Miriam Quiñones is a freelance photographer for *Norwood News*.



Photo by Síle Moloney

**DANCERS PERFORM AT** the viewing stand at the end of the Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade route on the Grand Concourse on Saturday, Oct. 19, 2024.



Photo by Síle Moloney

**THE VARIOUS SEÑORAS** pose for a photo on a float during the Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade on the Grand Concourse on Saturday, Oct. 19, 2024.

# CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY, DAVID GREENE



### Belmont: Two Teenagers Shot

The NYPD said an 11-year-old boy was hospitalized after he was shot in Belmont on Saturday night, Oct. 26. Police said they were notified at 8.28 p.m. for reports of an 11-year-old boy who had been shot in the left leg at East 188th and Park Avenue. They said he was transported to Jacobi Hospital and is stable, there were no arrests, and the matter is still being investigated. The site of the shooting, a fairly deserted and poorly lit area, which was also littered with trash, with very few stores or activity, is located by a bridge under which the MetroNorth train runs.

A block north of the site of shooting is Fordham Plaza, where a Halloween Bronx Night Market had been in full swing earlier that evening, and at which many young people and children were present. When approached in the vicinity of the crime scene, one young man declined to talk. Another older man said he arrived after the shooting and just saw the police investigating outside the Bronx Church of God Seventh

Day on the corner of East 188th and Park Avenue. Residents are encouraged to always call 911 if they witness someone in distress or danger and authorities add that there are no repercussions for alerting the emergency services.

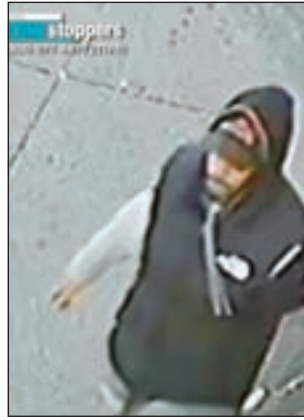
On Monday, Oct. 21, police said a 15-year-old girl had been shot in Belmont at the intersection of East 183rd Street and Crotona Avenue. They said she was shot in the lower back but is expected to survive.

### Bedford Park: Man Beaten & Robbed on Webster Ave

Police are looking for two people wanted in connection with an early morning armed robbery and assault in Bedford Park. They said the incident was reported at 1.40 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 28, when police were called to the sidewalk opposite P.S. 54, located at 2703 Webster Avenue, where a 39-year-old victim was approached by two males who demanded his jewelry, before he was struck twice in the head with a pistol.

They said the assailants stole the victim's bracelet and chain before fleeing in an un-

known direction. They said the victim sustained a minor laceration to the head and eyebrow and was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition. Police had no immediate description of the suspects, and no arrests have been made. The investigation remains ongoing.



### Norwood: Man Sought for Armed Robbery of Teen

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 Nor-

wood. Police said that on Friday, Oct. 25, at around 3 p.m., a 15-year-old female victim was entering a building in the vicinity of East 204th Street and Hull Avenue when an unknown male approached.

They said the man displayed a knife and snatched the victim's gold chains from her neck, valued at approximately \$3,000. Police said the suspect fled on foot westbound on East 204th Street to parts unknown, and the victim received a laceration to the hand and bruising to the neck but refused medical attention at the scene.

Police said the suspect is described as male, has a medium complexion, and is around 5 feet, 2 inches tall. They said he was wearing a black, North Face jacket, gray jeans, and black and white Jordan sneakers.

### Fordham Manor: Person Sought for Menacing Behavior Armed with Gun

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo at right who they say is wanted in connection to

a menacing incident that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said that on Monday, Oct. 28, at around 5.19 p.m., a 56-year-old female victim was approached by the person in the vicinity of 66 West Fordham Road.

They said the suspect displayed a gun, threatened the victim, and told her to follow him. They said the victim was able to flee the location and the suspect fled eastbound on West Fordham Road to parts unknown. No injuries were reported. Police said the suspect is described as male and has a medium complexion.



(continued on page 13)

CompStat Book		Week of 10/14/24 - 10/20/24					
		28 Day			Year to Date		
	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	2	-100.0 %	24	12	100.0 %
Rape	-50.0 %	8	2	300.0 %	28	18	55.6 %
Robbery	-62.5 %	27	43	-37.2 %	315	288	9.4 %
Felony Assault	15.4 %	65	58	12.1 %	710	659	7.7 %
Burglary	50.0 %	18	12	50.0 %	173	136	27.2 %
Grand Larceny	27.3 %	50	42	19.0 %	546	453	20.5 %
Grand Larceny Auto	-25.0 %	19	22	-13.6 %	176	230	-23.5 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>-12.5 %</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>3.3 %</b>	<b>1,972</b>	<b>1,796</b>	<b>9.8 %</b>
Patrol	-12.5 %	183	176	4.0 %	1,930	1,750	10.3 %
Transit	0.0 %	3	4	-25.0 %	18	23	-21.7 %
Housing	0.0 %	1	1	0.0 %	24	23	4.3 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	5	5	0.0 %	56	51	9.8 %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	3	5	-40.0 %	43	40	7.5 %
UCR Rape*	-66.7 %	9	6	50.0 %	41	49	-16.3 %
Other Sex Crimes	-50.0 %	8	9	-11.1 %	60	72	11.1 %
Petit Larceny	-44.4 %	73	89	-18.0 %	771	861	-10.5 %
Misd. Assault	-22.7 %	88	103	-14.6 %	924	1,014	-8.9 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	3	4	-25.0 %

All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Data Summaries as of 6/13/17. Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law ("NYSPL") definitions. \* Unarmed Crime Reporting ("UCR") Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape.

Source: NYPD

**MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS** for the 46<sup>nd</sup> Precinct for the 28-day period ending Oct. 20, 2024, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 46<sup>nd</sup> Precinct as of Oct. 20, 2024, compared to last year (right).

CompStat Book		Week of 10/14/24 - 10/20/24					
		28 Day			Year to Date		
	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	1	5	-80.0 %
Rape	0.0 %	1	0	- %	11	8	37.5 %
Robbery	-100.0 %	8	8	0.0 %	116	125	-7.2 %
Felony Assault	33.3 %	15	13	15.4 %	197	168	17.3 %
Burglary	-100.0 %	9	9	0.0 %	130	117	11.1 %
Grand Larceny	0.0 %	52	51	2.0 %	616	543	13.4 %
Grand Larceny Auto	14.3 %	24	27	-11.1 %	271	280	-3.2 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>-7.4 %</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>0.9 %</b>	<b>1,342</b>	<b>1,246</b>	<b>7.7 %</b>
Patrol	-8.3 %	106	101	5.0 %	1,284	1,170	9.7 %
Transit	0.0 %	1	2	-50.0 %	5	9	-44.4 %
Housing	0.0 %	2	5	-60.0 %	53	67	-20.9 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %	3	5	-40.0 %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %	3	5	-40.0 %
UCR Rape*	-100.0 %	1	2	-50.0 %	19	22	-13.6 %
Other Sex Crimes	- %	4	3	33.3 %	40	27	48.1 %
Petit Larceny	-44.2 %	96	96	2.1 %	896	915	-2.1 %
Misd. Assault	12.5 %	37	29	27.6 %	285	256	11.3 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	2	2	0.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	1	2	-50.0 %

All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Data Summaries as of 6/13/17. Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law ("NYSPL") definitions. \* Unarmed Crime Reporting ("UCR") Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape.

Source: NYPD

**MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS** for the 50<sup>nd</sup> Precinct for the 28-day period ending Oct. 20, 2024, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 50<sup>nd</sup> Precinct as of Oct. 20, 2024, compared to last year (right).



## Letters To The Editor

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

### Voting Options

No matter who one votes for this year, surely we all agree in democracy: the principle that we should vote for whoever reflect

OUR values, and we should be given the information to make sure that vote counts. I write this letter to spread the word in N

wood: New York residents have options which are not Democrat or Republican

Among them, Jill Stein of the Greens whose platform includes standing against the genocide, for an arms embargo of Israel, for universal healthcare, a federal job guarantee, reparations, student loan and medical debt forgiveness and free public college.

Stein is a WRITE IN CANDIDATE. You won't see her on the ballot, but she is an option. If these policies appeal to

you, the way to make your vote count is to carefully fill in the oval under "Write In" and write: "Jill Stein and Rudolph Ware." Whatever one's political views, please help democracy by spreading the word!

**Janet Clarke**  
Norwood

### Change of Politicians

Politicians should be changed as often as diapers because most are full of you know what! Remember this on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 5, before voting.

**Larry Penner,**  
Great Neck

*Please send all letters to the editor, along with supporting hyperlinked sources, to [norwoodnews@norwood-news.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwood-news.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

## A Flavorful Enemy in Fight Against Health Disparities in Black Communities

By JEWEL HARRIS

Although it has long been known that smoking cigarettes poses a serious risk to public health, flavored cigarettes have become prevalent in our communities and have begun to target vulnerable groups with marketing that aims for accessibility and appeal.

One enemy still present in the fight against health inequities, especially in Black communities, is menthol-flavored tobacco products. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids highlights a 2017 nationwide study which found that stores in neighborhoods with the highest proportion of African Americans have more than double the odds of being targeted with ad promotions for tobacco products, compared to stores in neighborhoods with the lowest proportion of African Americans.

Black communities already experience health disparities, such as higher rates of smoking-related illnesses and worse overall health outcomes (Bach 2020). This intentional marketing approach has led to a concerning rise in tobacco usage among Black adults and young people equally.

According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, during the 1970s, major tobacco companies sought for a place in the African American market share by sponsoring music and community promotional bar nights such as Brown & Williamson's "Kool Jazz Festival," R.J. Reynolds' "Salem Summer Street Scenes," and Phillip Morris's "Club Benson & Hedges."

As referenced in Bach 2020, this effort later led to menthol-flavored products also being heavily promoted to the Black community. The flavored tobacco industry has deliberately targeted Black customers with marketing activities.

Now, rather than conventional tobacco advertisements, we watch alluring commercials promoting products that frequently imitate the tastes of well-known candy and drinks.

Because these products take advantage of historical injustices and ingrained inequality in society, their appeal is enhanced by their placement within the cultural framework of our communities.

Additionally, a Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee's (TPSC) report and a Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) analysis conclude that African Americans are disproportionately burdened by the health harms of menthol cigarettes.

TPSAC concluded that the marketing and availability of menthol cigarettes increases the overall prevalence of smoking and reduces cessation among African Americans (Bach 2020).

Additionally, studies show that Black people are disproportionately affected by rising rates of respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular problems, and other smoking-related health problems. Compared to White Americans, Black Americans have a 50% higher risk of smoking-related illnesses.

Education and awareness campaigns are vital to inform youth and adults about the dangers of flavored tobacco products. It's critical to understand that the battle against flavored tobacco products is linked to the quest for justice and health equity.

As we confront this challenge, we must amplify the voices of those most affected. Our communities are not merely statistics; they are filled with individuals whose lives are impacted daily by the choices offered to them.

It is more important than ever to address flavored tobacco products. Black communities' health and wellbeing are seriously threatened by these products.

We must continue to fight back against this issue. We can accomplish this by supporting educational programs and organizing neighborhood-based efforts. All individuals, regardless of their background, deserve the opportunity to live healthy, fulfilling lives free from a flavored tobacco addiction. It is not just a health imperative; it is a moral one.

Jewel Harris is a Bronx Reality Check youth ambassador for NYC Smoke-Free Public Health Solutions



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**NYISE STUDENTS AND** teachers pose for a photo for White Cane Day on Oct. 15, 2024.

## Special Ed Students March for White Cane Day

By ARIEL PACHECO

Dozens of blind and visually impaired students ranging from age 5 to 21 from The New York Institute for Special Education (NYISE) took part in a march to celebrate White Cane Day on Tuesday, Oct. 15.

White Cane Day celebrates the achievements of people who are blind or visually impaired and originated in 1964. The marchers began at the Institute before crossing Pelham Parkway and walking down Williamsbridge Road to Lydig Avenue and concluded the route by returning to the Institute.

Alexandra Haley, an orientation mobility instructor at the NYISE, said "A white cane is an essential tool to give anybody who uses it the ability to achieve a full and independent life. It allows you to move freely and safely from place to place whether at work, school, or around your neighborhood."

Haley told the *Norwood News*, "This is about educating the community, a way to celebrate, to break stereotypes that people might have of people who are visually impaired or blind. The cane is a tool for them to use to become more independent or be able to travel

more safely, independently."

She continued, "We just want to let the world know people who are visually impaired, or blind, are very capable, can be independent, are very smart, and can live life just like anybody else. We want to educate the public because people don't know when they see that cane, what it represents."

Haley said the march has been a tradition for over 20 years. Assemblyman Michael Benedetto (A.D. 82), who broadly represents the Northeast Bronx and who is chair of the education committee at NYS Assembly, attended the march and told *Norwood News* he felt it was important for him to be there

in part because of his background as a teacher.

"I taught for 35 years, and for 27 of [them] I did it in special education, so special education is near and dear to me. I know the plight of these children and what they have to go through, and every day is basically learning how to cope with their disability, and go on trying to live a normal life," said Benedetto.

He continued, "Schools like this have been notoriously underfunded for years. I think that it's important that I show that maybe times have changed, and maybe we can do more for them."

(continued on page 13)

# Unity Dems, Rivera Campaign for “Yes” Vote to Prop 1

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

The Unity Democratic Party joined State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33) on Sunday, Oct. 13, in Riverdale to urge voters to flip their ballot and vote “Yes” to Proposition 1 (Prop 1) in the upcoming general election on Nov. 5.

Prop 1 is one of six proposals on the ballot this year and requires a vote by New Yorkers on whether to change the State Constitution, after the NY State Legislature passed the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in two consecutive legislative sessions.

According to a pamphlet issued by [nycvotes.org](http://nycvotes.org), an initiative of the NYC Campaign Finance Board, Prop 1 would add protections to the State Constitution’s Bill of Rights to prohibit discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, and sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, and pregnancy outcomes.

It would also protect New Yorkers who seek access to reproductive health care from discrimination on that basis. According to the pamphlet, a “Yes” vote puts these protections in the State Constitution, and a “No” vote leaves them out.

Abigail Martin, female district leader of A.D. 81 and a member of the Unity Democrats, said of the proposal. “This is an opportunity for New York State to be a pioneer for the rest of the country, to pass amendments to the State Constitution that protects against Republican future governments and state legislatures, and everybody has to have all hands on deck with this, so that once New York passes it, other states will follow.”

Ahead of their outreach efforts on Oct. 13, it was explained to those gathered that Prop 1 would enshrine the aforementioned rights into the State Constitution. Morgan Evers, former Democratic State committeewoman (A.D. 81) and Unity Democratic Club member, said, “We already have women’s right to an abortion, but this will enshrine it so that the courts can never walk back that right here in New York State. Prop I is all throughout New York State.”

Martin then explained why it was necessary to do this if abortion was already the law in New York. “Last year, we came within five points of having a Republican governor, and he could have defunded Planned Parenthood. This will protect that from happening.”

She added in part, “Prop I protects us from any sort of changes that we may have in our government. If New York City really turns out for Prop I, it can carry the rest of the State so we have to drive up the votes in New York [City].”

Betsey Knapp, president of the Unity Democrats, warned campaigners to be prepared for opposing arguments. Evers agreed, saying, “There is a well-funded campaign led by Republicans against Prop I. Minors still cannot have any sort of surgeries without parental consent.



Photo by Síle Moloney

**MEMBERS OF THE** Unity Democratic Club, State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33) and allies pose for a photo ahead of campaigning in favor of Prop. 1 on Riverdale Avenue on Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024.

This does not affect anyone playing on anyone’s children’s sports teams. Prop I doesn’t affect that. It really is only for public purposes. No private entities will be affected by Prop I.”

Martin said another objection was that passing Prop I would allow people to sue religious schools. “That’s not true,” she said. “Religious schools are protected under the federal constitution, so in no way it allows this.”

Asked why people would sue such schools, Martin explained in part, “Sue them to allow boys to go to girls’ schools or vice versa, or allow people who aren’t Jewish to go to Jewish schools, or people who aren’t Catholic to go to Catholic schools, and that’s not the case because those schools are usually private and they’re protected under the federal constitution, so it only applies to public, government....”

For his part, Rivera said in part, “The bottom line is that what the OPPO (opposition) is doing is they’re lying about what the actual amendment says.”

The senator referenced his Republican opponent, Dion Powell, who he said would say Prop I was about forcing kids to get sex change operations. “That’s what some of the talking points are,” Rivera said. “Let’s break it down. What does it actually say? Extend protections for all the categories that we talked about, enshrine abortion rights, basic, straightforward, simple, and ultimately necessary because of what’s happening [in other states].”

Knapp encouraged people not to give wrong information and to refer them to the website “Yes to Prop 1.” She added, “It doesn’t say anything about sex change. This stops discrimination against anyone on their gender identity.” She added, “I think it’s really important to be patient with people and kind and hear them out.”

Knapp spoke about a woman who had asked her about the potential impact of Prop I on girls’ sports. “I explained it very quietly to her, and she was like, ‘Oh, well, of course, I’m gonna vote for it then!’ So, I just want to point that out. When people really understand what it is they want it.”

Reading from his phone, Rivera said,

## Out & About

Compiled by **ARIEL PACHECO**

### EVENTS

NYC Parks will host a **Coffee and Canvas event** for adults at Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse in Kingsbridge Heights, on Wednesday, Nov. 13, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Participate in painting and free coffee. The event is open to the public. For more information, call (718) 365-5516.

Join the Woodlawn Cemetery and Conservancy for a **World War I Veterans of Woodlawn Walking Tour** on Sunday, Nov. 10, at 11 a.m. at 3800 Jerome Ave, Bronx. Join Kevin C. Fitzpatrick, the award-winning author of “*World War I New York: A Guide to the City’s Enduring Ties to the Great War*,” on a walking tour of the graves and memorials of those who served in the war. For more information, call (718) 920-1469.

Join the New York Botanical Gardens for its **Holiday Train Show** beginning on Saturday, Nov. 16 through Monday, Jan. 20, 2025, at 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx. Enter a winter wonderland like no other as model trolleys trundle through the lawn display, and in the landmark glasshouse, you’ll find plant-based replicas of famed local architecture. Tickets are available for purchase now. For more information, call (718) 817-8700.

The Bronx County Historical Society presents **The Surrealist Gypsy and The Poet Exhibit Closing, Book & Costume Party** on Saturday, Nov. 2, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Poe Cottage, 2640

“This proposal amends Article I Section 11 of the New York State Constitution. It prohibits any person, business organization, as well as the State and local governments from discrimination pursuant to law. The current protection of the Constitution covers race, color, creed and religion.”

He continued, “Then, the proposal will add ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcome, and reproductive health care and autonomy. That does not do any of the things that the Right is trying to argue that this does.”

Marcia Yerman encouraged people to refer voters to the New York Bar Associa-

tion’s website for further clarity, adding that she, herself, had also written about it on her own website. “It [NY Bar site] shows exactly what is covered and what isn’t.”

### LITERATURE

Bronx native horror author, Vincent Tirado presents a **Book Talk** on the book, “*We Came to Welcome You*,” on Friday, Nov. 8, at 7 p.m. at Poe Cottage, 2640 Grand Concourse, Bronx. Tickets are free. To register and find more information, visit [www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org/welcome-you](http://www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org/welcome-you).

### MUSIC

The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts will present Venezuelan legend, **José Luis Rodríguez, “El Puma,”** on Saturday, Nov. 2, at 8 p.m. at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx. El Puma is known for his songs “*Culpable Soy Yo*,” “*Dueño De Ti*” and “*Agárrense De Las Manos*.” For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

### ARTS

Join the St. James Recreation Center for a **Family Paint Along** on Saturday, Nov. 23, from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at 2530 Jerome Avenue, Bronx. Participants will be guided through a step-by-step art class while enjoying refreshments and socializing. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call (646) 447-2642.

### MOVEMENT

Shape Up NYC and NYC Parks are hosting Gentle Yoga Flow Classes every Thursday at the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center at 3225 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

Rivera encouraged campaigners to not get into any arguments with people who are vehemently opposed to their point of view.” One male campaigner said it was also important not to discount any voters who are not voting for the Harris Walz Democratic ticket, but who may still vote for Prop 1. Martin agreed, adding, “It’s a nonpartisan amendment.”

On Oct. 21, Republican City Council Member Kirsty Marmorato (C.D. 13), who represents the East Bronx, and oth-

(continued on page 14)

# CRIME FILE - CONTINUED

BY SÍLE MOLONEY, DAVID GREENE



(continued from page 10)

## Belmont: Man Charged in Fatal Shooting after Victim Tried to Protect Mother

A 26-year-old Manhattan man has been charged following the fatal shooting of a 29-year-old man who had come to the aid of his mother amid a petty dispute on Sept. 29, in Belmont, Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark said on Oct. 24.

Clark said the defendant, Herman Gayle, 26, of West 151<sup>st</sup> Street was arraigned on Oct. 24 on second-degree murder, first-degree manslaughter, two counts of second-degree criminal possession of a weapon, and possession of ammunition before Bronx Supreme Court Justice Brenda Rivera. Gayle was remanded in custody and is due back in court in January 2025.

As reported, on Sept. 29, at around 1:48 p.m., on East 182<sup>nd</sup> Street, Gayle allegedly got into an argument with a woman blocking a store entrance. The woman called to her son, Devonte Serrano, 29, who was nearby and told him Gayle was bothering her. Serrano confronted Gayle and the latter allegedly called someone on his cell phone and said, "Get my gun." Gayle then left the scene, later returning and brawling with the victim. He then allegedly fired at least three shots, striking Serrano in the chest and stomach. Gayle is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

nection with a robbery and assault that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said that on Tuesday, July 16, at around 8.09 p.m., in front of 4 East Fordham Road, an 18-year-old male victim was approached by four people who struck him in the head with a rock, and forcibly removed his necklace, before fleeing on foot to parts unknown.

Police said EMS responded and transported the victim to New York-Presbyterian Allen Hospital in stable condition. They said the first suspect is described as male, has a slim build and a dark complexion, and was last seen wearing a white tank top and black shorts. They said the second suspect is also described as male, has a slim build and dark complexion, and was last seen wearing a black tank top and black sweatpants.

They said the third suspect is described as male, has a slim build and dark complexion, and was last seen wearing a gray baseball hat, a black jacket, and blue jeans. Police said the fourth suspect is also described as male, has a slim build and dark complexion, and was last seen wearing a black and white beanie, a black T-shirt, and gray shorts.

## Upstate Man Charged in Grand Concourse Robbery

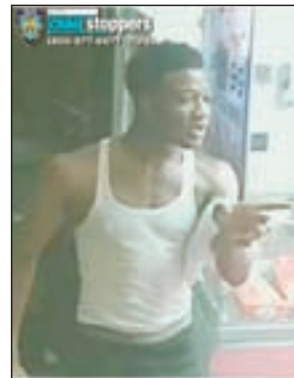
Police have charged an upstate man with an armed robbery in Bedford Park of a man who had been sitting in his vehicle. Police said officers were called to 3201 Grand Concourse at 4:23 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 24. They said the victim, 37, was sitting in his vehicle when the assailant displayed a gun and demanded his gold chain and bracelets. They said the victim was not injured during the incident and police later announced the arrest of Freddie Rosario, 29, of Rock Tavern, NY, who was charged with robbery. Rosario is presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

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.

## Fordham Manor: Four Sought for Robbery & Gang Assault

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating and identifying the four people seen in the accompanying photos above who they said are sought in con-



Patrol Borough: Bronx		Precinct: 652		Week of 10/14/24 - 10/20/24			
CompStat Book		28 Day		Year to Date			
	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg	2024	2023	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	2	0	- %	10	9	11.1 %
Rape	0.0 %	5	2	150.0 %	34	28	21.4 %
Robbery	-50.0 %	41	42	-2.4 %	427	380	12.4 %
Felony Assault	-7.7 %	55	51	7.8 %	652	552	18.1 %
Burglary	-50.0 %	18	14	28.6 %	164	179	-8.4 %
Grand Larceny	0.0 %	76	66	15.2 %	697	596	16.9 %
Grand Larceny Auto	80.0 %	22	22	0.0 %	287	278	3.2 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>-15.5 %</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>11.2 %</b>	<b>2,271</b>	<b>2,022</b>	<b>12.3 %</b>
Patrol	-14.0 %	218	192	13.5 %	2,230	1,978	12.7 %
Transit	-100.0 %	1	5	-80.0 %	37	39	-5.1 %
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*	0.0 %	6	4	50.0 %	52	49	6.1 %
Other Sex Crimes	- %	6	6	0.0 %	90	81	11.1 %
Petit Larceny	-55.3 %	133	191	-30.4 %	1,484	2,108	-29.6 %
Med. Assault	-45.0 %	71	62	14.5 %	711	675	5.3 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	3	0	- %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	3	5	-40.0 %

\* All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Oath Summonees as of 6/13/17. Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law ("NYSPL") definitions. \* Unlawful Crime Reporting ("UCR") Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape.

Source: NYPD

**MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS** for the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct for the 28-day period ending Oct. 20, 2024, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct as of Oct. 20, 2024, compared to last year (right).

## Special Ed Students March for White Cane Day

(continued from page 11)

After the march concluded, students returned to the Institute where they had a pizza party. Each class decorated their classroom door in celebration of White Cane Day and a vote was held by students to determine which doors they enjoyed the most.

In 2011, White Cane Safety Day was also named Blind Americans Equality Day by former U.S. President Barack Obama.

NYISE held its annual "Trike-a-thon" on May 15 to raise funds for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Manhattan. Meanwhile, on Oct. 8, Marvel's Daredevil actor Charlie Cox paid a visit to NYISE. Daredevil is a blind superhero, and Cox spoke on the importance of representation for visually impaired persons in movies.



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**NYISE STUDENTS AND** teachers pose for a photo for White Cane Day on Oct. 15, 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 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, Nov. 19 at 6.30 p.m. at Bronx Library Center, 310 East Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10458. 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 on Nov. 12, at 7 p.m. at the Riverdale Y, 5625 Arlington Avenue, Bronx. Contact [BX08@cb.nyc.gov](mailto: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@ve-rizon.net](mailto:bedfordmosholu@ve-rizon.net).

## CORRECTIONS

In our Oct. 17-30, 2024, edition of the *Norwood News*, in the page 10 story, "Sun Shines for Mosholu Fall Festival," the festival organizing group was incorrectly referenced at one point as "Friends of Mosholu Playground." The correct name of the group is Future of Mosholu Parkland (FOMP). We apologize for this error.

## Unity Dems, Rivera Campaign for "Yes" Vote to Prop 1

*(continued from page 8)*

ers held a press conference outside City Hall to oppose Prop 1, saying in part, "We just wrapped up a bi-partisan press conference that included parents, attorneys, students, women athletes, council colleagues. We urged the public to learn the facts of Prop 1 and the irresponsible and irreversible damage it would push onto our families and children! Vote NO!"

According to the New York Bar Association, Prop 1 will not impact parental rights as it does not address parental rights, which are governed by other developed areas of State and federal law. The Association said 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. They said for more information, voters can visit [https:// www.nybar.org/reports/prop-](https://www.nybar.org/reports/prop-1-nye-equal-rights-amendment-what-the-amendment-will-and-wont-do/)

[1-nye-equal-rights-amendment-what-the-amendment-will-and-wont-do/](https://www.nybar.org/reports/prop-1-nye-equal-rights-amendment-what-the-amendment-will-and-wont-do/). The information is available in several languages.

After the Oct. 13 gathering, Bernie Goldstein of Riverdale said another reason he was supporting Prop 1 was because his daughter has developmental disabilities. "We live in New York State because of the protections New York State provides, and we'd like to see disability rights in addition to LGBTQIA+ and reproductive rights enshrined in the Constitution as well.

In reference to Disability Awareness Month, which is marked in October, he added, "I just hope that we can do more and more to expand rights and the opportunity for independence for people with disabilities. They sometimes are barred from making minimum wage or having any kind of assets to get their life-sustaining rights, and I hope that this can become an even more disability-friendly state, and Prop I will do that."



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# ENOUGH! Housing Residents Say “No” to Proposed Bainbridge Ave Development

(continued from page 1)

to discuss the matter in detail.”

They said the local community [in Bronx Community District 7 and City Council District 15] had consistently voiced concerns regarding the oversaturation of facilities like homeless shelters and substance abuse centers in its district.

When *Norwood News* requested a breakdown from the Adams administration of the number of shelters and supportive housing projects in The Bronx compared to other boroughs, we did not receive it.

“The Fordham Road community in the Bronx serves as a prime example, where rather than receiving essential resources and community centers, it continues to face the influx of new social services programs solely,” the letter continued.

The elected officials said they were disheartened that instead of alleviating the burden in what they said was an already strained community, the Adams administration was considering further exacerbating the issue with the proposal. “Placing it steps away from an existing homeless shelter in one of the city’s most impoverished zip codes only compounds the challenges our community already faces,” they wrote.

They continued, “Furthermore, it is deeply troubling that our community was not formally notified or given the opportunity to participate in the planning process, which should be afforded to all communities.”

They said it was imperative that all communities have a voice in decisions directly impacting them. “Continuously

concentrating these services in the same few neighborhoods within New York City is not conducive to sound policy, and we cannot afford to overlook this issue any longer,” they wrote.

“We respectfully urge you to halt the proposed plans immediately and convene an emergency meeting to engage in constructive dialogue on this matter,” they added. They implored and welcomed the mayor’s office to take “a proactive role” in the siting of such services to ensure “equitable distribution across all communities” and to foster collective efforts to address the challenges faced.

After receiving a letter dated Sept. 30 about the proposed development, the Bronx CB7 Housing, Land Use and Economic Development Committee discussed it at their Oct. 8 meeting, at which the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice was unavailable to present, saying representatives would have someone present at the November meeting instead.

The CB7 committee voted to propose a motion to send a letter of opposition to the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice and to The Fortune Society regarding the development. Members discussed how the area around the proposed site already had many quality-of-life issues including illegal dumping, drug use and drug sales.

It was noted that the building was already constructed, though the board understood it was to be used for family housing. As confirmed at the Bronx CB7 executive meeting on Oct. 17, the motion passed.

At the board’s general board meeting held on Oct. 22 in Fordham Manor’s Monroe College, several residents voiced their

opposition to the project. Speaking in Spanish, Nancy Lucien said although she understood housing was a human right, as a woman and as a mother, she was scared.

“Recently, a 15-year-old girl was almost raped in the vicinity of the neighborhood, and I fear for my quality of life.” The NYPD reported that on Sunday, Oct. 13, at around 1 a.m. in the vicinity of Webster Avenue and East Mosholu Parkway South, a 25-year-old female victim was approached by a man who sexually assaulted her.

Lucien said she also runs a daycare and said the mothers of the children who attend the daycare have equally voiced their concerns about the development.

Another resident, Ms. Carballo agreed with Lucien, saying, “We have four decades in that block, and right now we have several issues going on with derelicts, drug users, you name it.” She also referenced the sexual assault. “We are constantly fighting with people, with dumping and these derelicts.”

Carballo continued in part, saying, “They dump garbage in our community. We do not have help from the city because they keep saying it’s a private street. We pay people to clean the neighborhood. There are always constant needles on the street. We have kids in the neighborhood, especially with the daycare; they can’t play outside, and these homeless people, they’re always on the street. We have separate issues with them, so we are here today to oppose [the plan].”

René Carballo also spoke to those gathered, accompanied by three children who appeared to be under the age of 10. “It’s rare that you see kids coming to a general meeting like this; there’s a purpose,” he said. “The purpose is that they have concerns. We run a daycare also.”

He then asked the kids, “What do you see in the back of the house?” One of the kids responded, “Needles.” He then asked another, “And what do you see in the back of the house?” The child responded, “Criminals.” He asked the third child, “What do you see in the back of the house?” The third child replied, “Drug addicts.”

Carballo added, “These are ideas that come not from me, from their heads.” He said the development was just going to bring another wave of crime. “We try to avoid them [the City] sneaking in another shelter like



Photo by Síle Moloney

**RESIDENTS VOICE THEIR** opposition to a new housing development at 2586 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, during Bronx Community Board 7’s general board meeting at Monroe College in Fordham Manor on Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2024.

they did between Decatur [Avenue] and Marion [Avenue],” he said in part.

Speaking in Spanish, another resident, Augustín, who also had a daycare, urged the mayor and The Fortune Society to reconsider the purpose of the building as he said it would affect the residents’ public safety and quality of life.

Another resident, Betty, said she, too, had a daycare. “We have a lot of issues back there and in front of the house,” she said. “We have a private house, like six, seven, eight. We don’t want another shelter because right now, it’s a lot of people that are using drugs. They cause a lot of disaster there.”

Betty said her kids were very scared. “They don’t want to play at [Poe] Park because they [adults] smoke marijuana.” She also said she was not opposed to dogs, but she said a lot of people had dogs who pooped in the area and that kids were getting it on their shoes and clothes.

“A lot of people smoke marijuana and use drugs there, and if they put another shelter over there, I think it’s gonna be very bad, and we don’t want this,” Betty said.

Speaking in Spanish, a female homeowner said she was tired of being bothered by people in her neighborhood, along with the trash and disorder she also frequently witnessed.

Cristian Ramos from the Kingsbridge Merchants Association also spoke, saying he represented more than 200 businesses in the area and called for more to be done to address public safety and quality of life between dedicated meetings on those topics. “As a merchant business owner, our corridor is

in danger,” he said.

He alleged Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33) informed him there was nothing that could be done about the drugs and needles in the area. Ramos said people should think about the next generation growing up. “I’m disappointed they say that we can’t go arresting these people,” Ramos said in part.

Representing the senator, Rachel Ferrari later thanked Bronx CB7 and the residents for their feedback, and said it was helpful to hold agencies and organizations who deal with various drug-related issues in the area accountable. She added that Rivera represented about 320,000 people, and that they needed to be heard.

Another Fordham Road area resident complained about noise in front of a church every Saturday and a food truck on Creston Avenue in front of Citibank which she alleged didn’t respect parking regulations and she questioned if it was selling food at a discounted rate that may not be refrigerated.

On Wednesday, Oct. 30, residents and merchants holding signs reading in part, “Keep our Kids Safe” joined Feliz and Karla Cabrera Carrera, district manager for Bronx CB7, for a rally at 2586 Bainbridge to once again oppose the project.

*Norwood News* reached out to the Mayor’s Office to see if the requested emergency meeting was ever held. We also asked The Fortune Society when they first discussed the project with the community and requested the project timeline. We also reached out to the impacted elected officials for any updates. We will share any feedback we receive.



Photo by Síle Moloney

**RESIDENTS ATTEND BRONX** Community Board 7’s general board meeting at Monroe College in Fordham Manor on Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2024.

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