



NORWOOD NEWS

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HOPEFUL SIGN FOR ARMORY?



Photo courtesy of Ed Reed/Mayoral Photography Office

NEW YORK CITY Mayor Eric Adams is joined by Building & Construction Trade Council of Greater New York (BCTC) President Gary LaBarbera at City Hall on Thursday, Nov. 21, 2024, for the announcement of two Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) with BCTC that will cover more than \$1 billion in construction projects throughout the term of the agreements.

By SILE MOLONEY

When New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced on Nov. 21 that two Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) had been secured with the New York City Building & Construction Trades Council (BCTC) for various ma-

ior City development projects, the news garnered positive feedback from Sandra Lobo, executive director of the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC). Lobo is a co-chair of the "Together for Kingsbridge" visioning process

and coalition behind the redevelopment of the City-owned Kingsbridge Armory.

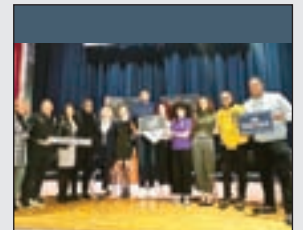
Following the extensive Request for Proposal (RFP) bidding process which started in September 2023, in March during the Bronx Community

Board 7 (CB7) land use meeting, an NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) representative said that the eagerly anticipated chosen project and developer for the Armory would be announced before year-end.

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The Holiday Train Show is back at NYBG pg 11

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Fordham Manor: Man Arrested for Fatal Stabbing

By SÍLE MOLONEY

A 35-year-old man has been arrested following the fatal stabbing of a second 48-year-old man on Monday morning in a well-known hot spot for crime and past tragedy in the Fordham Manor section of The Bronx.

Police said that on Monday morning, Nov. 18, at around 11.42 a.m., officers from the 52nd Precinct responded to a 911 call regarding an assault in progress in front of 2631 Marion Avenue. "Upon arrival, officers observed a 48-year-old male with stab wounds to his chest. EMS transported the victim to St. Barnabas Hospital, where he was pronounced deceased," an NYPD spokesperson said, initially adding that the investigation remained ongoing.

The deceased was identified as Bronxite, Padilla Nestor, from the Williamsbridge section. Pursuant to an ongoing investigation, on Monday evening, the NYPD said Junior Ovales, 35, of Fordham Manor was arrested at around 7 p.m. They said he was charged with second degree murder, first degree manslaughter, and fourth degree criminal possession of a weapon.

A vigil and candle memorial were seen at the sight of the stabbing later on Monday night as different groups of people gathered around the area. We asked a few people who appeared to be mourning the victim if they would like to speak about him or the incident, but they declined.

We also asked a few other people in the neighborhood if they would like to comment on the incident or if they had more information on how the stabbing unfolded. Speaking in Spanish, one local female employee who declined to be identified, said she just heard there was a fight, and someone got killed but didn't know much more. Another group of older men said they arrived at the location later that evening and had just heard about the incident, and didn't know much more about what happened. One man said people were hesitant to talk about it generally.



Photo by David Greene

AN OUTPOURING OF messages left by friends and family of Nestor Padilla, 48, around his photo, part of a memorial tribute seen on Saturday, Nov. 23, 2024, at the corner of Marion Avenue and East 194th Street in Fordham Manor, where he was killed on Monday, Nov. 18, 2024.

Another young local woman suggested it was dangerous to ask or to speak about what happened. We also spoke to some people living in Williamsbridge on Monday night close to where the victim lived. Nobody was aware at that stage that the victim had been killed and nobody had any comment.

The site of the stabbing at 2631 Marion Avenue is located at the intersection of East 194th Street. Our Lady of Mercy Church is located nearby at 2496 Marion Avenue, and Fordham United Methodist Church is also located on Marion Avenue close to East Fordham Road. In 2010, the 52nd Precinct installed a watch tower in the area. P.S. / I.S. 54 is also located a short distance away from the scene of the stabbing.

Earlier on Monday, in an unrelated incident, Police Commissioner Tom Donlon joined New York City Mayor Eric Adams and NYPD Chief of Detectives Joe Kenny in announcing that in a separate incident, a man had been arrested for an apparently unprovoked stabbing spree earlier that

day in Manhattan. Two people were initially stabbed to death and a third woman was also stabbed and remained in critical condition after the incident. The third victim also died later at an area hospital.

The suspect was arrested after a member of the public contacted a police officer who took action to apprehend him. The Manhattan incidents, which took place at three different locations, seemingly stemmed from a mental health episode which the suspect was experiencing. [There was no connection between The Bronx and the Manhattan stabbing incidents].

At the 52nd Precinct Community Council meeting on Nov. 21, we asked Deputy Inspector Chase Maneri, commanding officer of the 52nd Precinct, if, however, he knew if the Bronx dispute and stabbing had perhaps also stemmed from a separate mental health episode. He said, to his knowledge, it had not and was simply a dispute between the two people involved.

He added that the suspect had been picked up by police at a nearby bodega. At the meeting, Dr. Carmen Lopez, principal of Our Lady of Refuge school, raised concerns that the suspect could have been wandering around the area potentially endangering students before he was picked up, and asked why no school lockdown had been put into effect.

Maneri said the suspect was apprehended quite quickly after the incident as police had a strong lead on which direction he had fled. "We had that guy in custody in about 10 minutes after the stabbing," Maneri said. "So, we don't want to lock down any school. We will lock down a school, but it causes a huge problem for... especially at dismissal times, because then everybody's trying to pick up their kids, it causes gridlock. It's a nightmare. So, we always lean towards not locking down a school."

The deputy inspector explained that if a search of the suspect's likely destination after his most recent sighting had not yielded quick results, police may have considered a lockdown but as this was not the case, they didn't implement one.

In 2022, Mayor Eric Adams announced that New York City mental health professionals received a boost with a \$1 million donation towards student loan forgiveness. The program was designed to help attract and retain doctors, nurse practitioners, and other clinicians who care for New Yorkers with mental health or substance use needs as the U.S. faced a national mental health professional shortage.

In January 2023, a misdemeanor mental health court was launched in Westchester County, offering eligible individuals community-based, mental health treatment and services as an alternative to conventional prosecution.

Ovales is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.



Photo by Sile Moloney

A CANDLE MEMORIAL is seen around the corner from Neffry Liquor Store on Marion Avenue and East 194th Street in Fordham Manor on the evening of Monday, Nov. 18, 2024, after Nestor Padilla, 48, was stabbed to death at the location earlier that day.

Speeding ruins lives. Slow down.



NYC

Eric Adams
Mayor



Ydanis Rodriguez
Commissioner

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**



This week, we asked readers their opinion on the nominations of former Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi, an election results denier for the role of U.S. Attorney General, and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., an anti-vaxxer as head of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



"I think (President-elect Donald) Trump is bringing a lot of old inspiration back to America. Were those individuals charged with something? These are American-born people, right? So, I think that's Trump's angle. My problem with Trump is the way he goes about things. I think maybe he's pulling on the heart strings of people and trying to get people riled up as opposed to actually trying to be a leader. I don't think a lot of the conflict he's causing is necessary. I believe Trump loves America."

Javontae "Reverse" Feagin,
Manhattan resident visiting Kingsbridge
Photo by David Greene



"Regarding the nomination of Bondi, she's an election denier and I know the election results (from 2020) were correct and honest, so I don't like her being chosen for any type of job in government. She shouldn't have been an attorney general. The selection of RFK, Jr., is the most absurd selection. Just because his name is Kennedy doesn't make him qualified to work in government. He doesn't like vaccines and that's crucial to our existence. So, I don't like him either."

Naomi Jimenez,
Norwood
Photo by David Greene



"If you presume Trump won by popular vote, then you must presume America at this time trusts him, but there's no doubt his cabinet picks will, in some ways, bring us back to the 1950s. Some other picks, like his SEC (Security & Exchange Commission) nominee can bring us into the 2050s by advocating Bitcoin as currency. What does it all mean? Maybe join current USA exile Ellen DeGeneres?"

Anthony Riveccio,
Bedford Park
Photo courtesy of Anthony Riveccio



"Is this a part of Project 2025? It's supposed to eliminate Social Security and SSI and all public benefits, and I heard a couple of days ago that it's not going to be like that. It's very hard for me to say something before I see a person's performance. I already know what Trump has done. I know what he did on January 6th (2021), and as far as I'm concerned, people didn't learn from it."

Tommy Brown,
Jerome Park
Photo by David Greene



"Marco Rubio is a typical neo con (conservative), pro-Israel warmonger and not a good guy. He is a swamp creature, and it shows that Trump and his shtick was just that. The [now-abandoned Matt] Gaetz choice [for U.S. attorney general] was a disgrace. Pam Bondi is actually pretty hot for a 59-year-old former Democrat, but I don't know much about her."

Socrates Palmer, Jr.,
Pelham Bay
Photo courtesy of Socrates Palmer, Jr.

Editor's Note: According to a report by PBS dated Nov. 22, Bondi personally solicited a 2013 political contribution from Trump as her office was weighing whether to join New York in suing over fraud allegations involving Trump University. Trump cut a \$25,000 check to a political committee supporting Bondi from his family's charitable foundation, in violation of legal prohibitions against charities supporting partisan political activities. After the check came in, Bondi's office dropped suing Trump's company for fraud, citing insufficient grounds to proceed. Both Trump and Bondi denied any wrongdoing.

According to an article dated July 2021 by the Brookings Institute, the cryptocurrency, Bitcoin, was created (by a person or group that remains unidentified to this day) as a way to conduct transactions without the intervention of a trusted third party, such as a central bank or financial institution, which is the way traditional financial transactions are performed.

According to the article, its emergence amid the global financial crisis, which shook trust in banks and even governments, was perfectly timed. Bitcoin enabled transactions using only digital identities, granting users some degree of anonymity. This made Bitcoin the preferred currency for illicit activities, including recent ransomware attacks. It powered the shadowy darknet of illegal online commerce, much like PayPal helped the rise of eBay by making payments easier.

According to the ACLU, Project 2025 is a federal policy agenda and blueprint for a radical restructuring of the executive branch of the U.S. government, authored and published by former Trump administration officials in partnership with The Heritage Foundation. The latter is a longstanding conservative think tank that opposes abortion and reproductive rights, LGBTQ rights, immigrants' rights, and racial equity. Project 2025's largest publication, "Mandate for Leadership," is a 900-page manual for reorganizing the entire federal government agency by agency to serve a conservative agenda.



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Bainbridge Avenue Transitional Housing Development Paused for Now

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Further to a rally held by residents, members of Bronx Community Board 7, and elected officials on Oct. 30 in opposition to the opening of a transitional housing development at 2586 Bainbridge Avenue in Fordham Manor, as reported, Councilman Oswald Feliz (C.D. 15) announced at the Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) Land Use meeting on Nov. 12 that the project has been paused for now.

Prior to the councilman's announcement, *Norwood News* received a response from the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) about the project, further to our request for comment on same. As reported, a letter had been sent to the Adams administration in April by Bronx elected officials requesting a meeting on the issue, and we had also asked if that letter had been formally answered.

A spokesperson for MOCJ replied at the time saying a response had been sent by Deanna Logan, director for the MOCJ, to the councilman on Aug. 19, a copy of which *Norwood News* has since received. It referred to the mayor's commitment to keeping New York City "the safest big city in the country," that Fordham Road was "deeply important to the Administration," and that the latter "was committed to the neighborhood's continued progress."

It continued in part, "Housing is an essential building block of safety for New Yorkers. Ensuring that people with criminal justice history have the appropriate resources [including housing] to reintegrate to their communities is a key component of our shared overall goal of safe neighborhoods for all New Yorkers."

Logan said transitional housing was part of that effort, adding that finding somewhere to live under the best of circumstances was already difficult, let alone for the formerly incarcerated. "To facilitate public safety outcomes, MOCJ works with non-profit partners to find appropriate locations to provide temporary housing to individuals released from jail or prison."

In choosing 2586 Bainbridge Avenue for the development, the size, layout and proximity to goods, services, including transportation were cited as factors offering the best foundation to support the formerly incarcerated reintegrate to the community. Logan confirmed [before the councilman's announcement] that The Fortune Society was the chosen provider for the site. "Fortune has a strong track record of meeting participant needs while acting as a positive force and good neighbor in local communities," she said. "We are confident that they will continue their practice at this location."

A spokesperson for MOCJ also shared the following comments with *Norwood News* on the project, writing, "While this site is currently under review, this proposal reflects our commitment to delivering on shared goals of addressing homelessness and recidivism. At this site, we're aiming to fill a gap in the transition from housing instability to permanent housing for those impacted by the criminal justice system."

As this seemed to conflict with Logan's letter that The Fortune Society was already the site's chosen provider, we asked for further clarification. The MOCJ spokesperson later clarified that while The Fortune Society had been chosen as the provider, Bainbridge Avenue site was "under review as we receive feedback and continue to engage with community leaders about the plans here."

The MOCJ spokesperson continued, "After conducting a citywide search for available and appropriate sites, this location offers the best foundation for formerly incarcerated New Yorkers hoping to re-enter society. The Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice has proposed to work with The Fortune Society, whose proven track record working with the formerly incarcerated speaks for itself. We are committed to continuing to engage with community leaders on any questions they have about this project so together we can deliver on our shared goal of creating safe neighborhoods for all New Yorkers."

The spokesperson provided further specifics on the development as follows:

- The MOCJ proposed to contract with The Fortune Society to operate 83 beds of emergency and transitional housing at 2586 Bainbridge Avenue. Each unit will have a kitchen, bathroom, and one or two bedrooms, each furnished with a bed and dresser.
- This is part of MOCJ's emergency and transitional housing program, which aims to safely reduce its incarcerated population, prevent repeated justice system contacts for those released from incarceration, and provide stable housing to those who would otherwise need to rely on the city's shelter system.
- Residents at 2586 Bainbridge Avenue will be adults, aged 18 and older, who identify as male, and are justice-involved, experiencing homelessness, and at high risk for further justice system involvement without housing



Photo by Síle Moloney

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7 land use committee hold their meeting at CUNY on the Concourse in Fordham Manor on Thursday, Nov. 12, 2024.

or supportive services, or require housing post-release to support stabilization in community.

- Transitional housing like the plans proposed for this site provide housing with an array of services and supports that will fill a much-needed gap in the transition from housing instability to permanent housing for those impacted by the criminal justice system.

On the selection of the Bainbridge Avenue site, MOCJ said it considered the need for housing in the community for those impacted by the criminal justice system, the compatibility of the site with facilities in the immediate and surrounding neighborhood, the concentration of similar facilities, consistency with existing plans to prevent homelessness, the efficient and cost-effective delivery of services, and the potential effects on the neighborhood.

They said that MOCJ conducted a citywide search for available and appropriate sites, but due to the scarcity of available space suitable for emergency and transitional housing, no viable alternative sites were identified or proposed. They said that due to the size and layout of the 2586 Bainbridge building, as well as the site's proximity to essential goods and services — including transportation, youth programs, community gardens, public libraries, educational facilities, and religious institutions — the location offered the best foundation for formerly incarcerated New Yorkers returning to the community.

On the topic of community engagement, the MOCJ spokesperson said it had discussed the proposed use of the site with Bronx CB7 and Feliz and remained available to meet with community representatives if there were any questions regarding the site. Meanwhile, Cabrera Carrera said Bronx CB7 first became aware of the project when they received a letter about it in September and had understood it was designated for families, not adult men. We've asked MOCJ for comment on this point and will share any feedback we receive.

The MOCJ spokesperson also said that City Hall staff had been in touch with Feliz about the project frequently over the last year. The spokesperson went on to say that the site was consistent with the city's efforts to address the needs of the community for the following reasons:

Bronx CB7 identified affordable housing as the community's greatest need.

Fortune's operation of this site and the city's plan to address homelessness align with CB7's FY23 Statement of Community District Needs, which stated that there is a need for the City to supply more affordable housing opportunities to accommodate households in different income brackets.

- The Bronx Borough President's 2021 Strategic Policy Statement notes that many formerly homeless residents need active or passive support services in order to improve their lives.
- Additionally, the borough president committed to reducing recidivism in The Bronx, endorsing programs that assist people on probation to keep them from future criminal justice involvement.

At the November CB7 land use meeting, district manager Yajaira Arias alleged the Adams administration had misconstrued the board's request regarding housing.

Prior to this, we had asked The Fortune Society when they first discussed the project with the community and requested the project timeline. A spokesperson for the Society said, "Currently, The Fortune Society does not operate a housing residence at this location and does not have a signed lease or possession of the building. We have only had preliminary discussions with the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) regarding the provision of housing services in this area; however, nothing has been finalized."

This appeared to conflict with Logan's letter where she confirmed The Fortune Society had been chosen as the

(continued on page 13)



Photo by Síle Moloney

CITY COUNCILMAN OSWALD Feliz (C.D. 15) speaks at the Bronx Community Board 7 Land Use meeting at CUNY on the Concourse in Fordham Manor on Thursday, Nov. 12, 2024.

NEWS BRIEFS

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Shirley Chisholm Day Recognized

City Council Resolution 280, sponsored by Brooklyn Council Member Farah Louis (C.D. 45), which proposed to designate Nov. 30, annually, as Shirley Chisholm Day in New York City, passed in the council on Nov. 21. The day aims to recognize the late congresswoman's contributions as an educator, activist, and elected official. Chisholm became the first Black woman ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, and for seven terms from 1969 to 1983, represented New York's 12th Congressional District in Manhattan [currently represented by Democratic Rep. Jerry Nadler]. During this time, Chisholm was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus. In 1972, she became the first Black candidate to seek a major party's presidential nomination and was the first woman to run for the Democratic Party's nomination.

Local Bronx Female Leaders Honored

Sanjana Khan, co-founder and executive director of LAAL, a Bengali women's empowerment group based in Norwood which launched in 2019, was honored at the 30th anniversary and neighborhood dinner of The New York Women's Foundation (NYWF), held at Andrew Freedman House in the Concourse section of The Bronx on Nov. 13.

Khan received the Neighborhood Leadership Award in recognition of what was described as Laal's impactful work with Bangladeshi women. Khan thanked the organization for what she described as "the meaningful recognition" and congratulated all other honorees.

Another Neighborhood Leadership Award recipient was Wanda Salaman, executive director of Mothers on the Move, who was honored for her advocacy for environmental and housing justice in The Bronx, Mariana Ortega, director of IT and facility at Cooperative Home Care Associates, who was honored with the Spirit of Entrepreneurship Award for her dedication to equitable workforce practices, and Mary Ellen Geisser, a former NYWF board member, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Geisser accepted the award on behalf of Joan McKay, whose posthumous award celebrated their shared legacy of service in philanthropy and community leadership. In 1994, The New York Women's Foundation inaugurated the Neighborhood Leadership Award to promote and honor the power of women acting in and for their communities. This year, the group gathered in The Bronx "to pay tribute to extraordinary

honorees and community partners who are advancing innovative and bold solutions to create an equitable and just future for women and families in their borough and beyond." This year, Sandra Lobo, executive director at North-west Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition participated in a pre-event panel discussion on the Bronx Economic Justice Project.



Image courtesy of Sanjana Khan

SANJANA KHAN SPEAKS at the 30th anniversary and neighborhood dinner of The New York Women's Foundation (NYWF), held at Andrew Freedman House in the Concourse section of The Bronx on Nov. 13, 2024.

Is Ritchie Torres planning a Run for Governor?

Democratic Rep. Ritchie Torres (NY-15), who represents a large section of The Bronx stretching from the northwest to the South, wrote on social media on Friday, Nov. 22, "Kathy Hochul is the new Joe Biden. She may be in denial about the depth of her vulnerabilities as a Democratic nominee. A Democratic incumbent who is less popular in New York than Donald Trump is in grave danger of losing to a Republican in 2026 – an outcome not seen in 30 years." He continued, "Waiting until it's too late gave us a Republican President in 2024 and could give us a Republican Governor in 2026. Let's avoid repeating history and avoid sleepwalking toward impending disaster and defeat. 'Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.'"

Despite the Biden-Harris administration lowering the cost of prescription drugs for millions, passing the CHIPS and Science Act, which increased the global supply of electronic chips made in the U.S. from 10% to 30%, raising domestic manufacturing from 55% to 65%, expanding access to healthcare, passing the Inflation Reduction Act to tackle climate change, canceling student debt for more than 150,000 students, and passing major infrastructure legislation to rebuild America, among other achievements, the president has long been criticized for his age.

He is 82. He has also received criticism over U.S. support for the war in Gaza. Hochul is 66. She has been most harshly criticized for her last-minute reversal in June of the implementation of congestion pricing in Manhattan,

though a revised version of the plan was since approved in November.

Local Heroes Honored

The nonprofit, Kingsbridge Riverdale Van Cortlandt Development Corporation (KRVC), hosted a celebratory event on Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 5901 Palisade Avenue in Riverdale to honor 33 local community heroes of varying ages who elevate their local communities. Among the local honorees were Gary Axelbank of Van Cortlandt Village and Stephanie Coggins of Spuyten Duyvil. Axelbank, well-known host of "Bronxtalk" and "The Bronx Buzz" on BronxNet TV, also hosts The Bronx Music Podcast, which highlights local Bronx musi-

cians and is recorded live each month at The Artist venue on City Island.

Meanwhile, Coggins is a board member of the Kingsbridge Historical Society which hosts regular events of historical interest and is one of the moderators of the Bronx [City Council] District 11 Voters Forum on Facebook, facilitating the exchange of political news and views. Coggins was also among those who campaigned for a street co-naming at the intersection of Palisades and Independence Avenues in Spuyten Duyvil to honor the legacy of John J. McKelvey Sr., and his architectural contribution, Villa Rosa Bonheur, to the Spuyten Duyvil community. This was realized in April 2022.

MLB & Yankees Build New Sensory Room at One World Middle School



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND representatives from the MLB and The New York Yankees attend an announcement at One World Middle School, 3750 Baychester Avenue in Edenwald, The Bronx, on Oct. 28, 2024, on the planned opening of a new sensory room at the school.

By ARIEL PACHECO

Major League Baseball (MLB) and the New York Yankees hosted an event on Oct. 28 to unveil plans to build a new sensory room at One World Middle School in the Edenwald section. Sensory rooms provide a calm and safe environment for kids with autism.

Over 100 students from the school, located at 3750 Baychester Avenue, attended the announcement inside the school's auditorium. The MLB and the Yankees jointly donated \$50,000 to the school, marking the second time this year the parties have collaborated. Officials said One World Middle School helped redesign a separate sensory room at Yankee Stadium, located at the 300 level.

The principal of One World Middle School, Patricia Wynne, said, "One World was founded in 2011 on the belief that all children have the right to be acknowledged as unique individuals and that we all just learn differently. We are proud to say that we are an ASDNS school."

Wynne continued, "So, what does that mean? It means we also serve a population of students who are on the

autism spectrum, who are neurodivergent, and quite simply, just may think different or process different. There's a saying that if you know one child with autism, you only know one child with autism." Wynne was basically saying that every child with autism is unique and has different needs, and because of this, there's no one solution that fits all.

Valentina Lucre, a senior at One World Middle School, said of the project, "The benefit of a sensory room shows that all kinds of minds are normalized and that we can continue to support those that are having a hard time and to influence others that autism is not a drawback, but more of a determined path to bring good things to a generation."

Kansas City Royals catcher Salvador Perez also attended the event, making his first appearance after MLB announced he was the winner of the 2024 Roberto Clemente Award, which is given annually to the MLB player who "best represents the game of baseball through extraordinary character, community involvement, philanthropy, and positive contributions, both on and off

(continued on page 14)

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY ARIEL PACHECO

**Coat Drive**

The Office of the Bronx District Attorney is organizing a coat drive and is accepting donations of gently used coats (no rips, tears or damage) for the 36th Annual New York Cares Coat Drive until Friday, Dec. 6. Drop coats off at the 198 Building Lobby at 198 East 161st Street, Bronx, NY 10451.

Alternate Side Parking Suspended for Thanksgiving

Alternate Side Parking will be suspended on Thursday, Nov. 28, for Thanksgiving.

Emergency Snow Shovelers Wanted

NYC Department of Sanitation is looking to hire emergency snow shovelersto shovel snow and ice from bus stops, sidewalks, and other locations this winter. They will be paid \$18.54 per hour, and \$27.81 per hour after the first 40 hours worked in a week. Visit nyc.gov/dot to schedule an appointment.

Toy Giveaway

Bronx Community Board 7 and the 52nd Precinct are hosting a toy giveaway for the holidays. Donate a new or unwrapped toy by Friday, Dec. 20, at 3016 Webster Ave, Bronx, NY 10467 or at 229-A East 204th St., Bronx, NY 10458. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.

CIS Bronx Borough President's Cup

The Office of Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson is hosting a youth chess tournament for Bronx-based students on Saturday, Dec. 7, at P.S. 70X, 1691 Weeks Ave, Bronx, NY 10457. Times vary depending on grade levels. For more information, visit <https://chessintheschools.org/tournament/2024-12-7cis-bronx-borough-presidents-cup/>.

Free Leaf Bags

The Office of State Senator Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33) is distributing free leaf bags at 2432 Grand Concourse, Suite

506 Bronx, in Fordham Heights Monday through Thursday from 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. until Dec. 12. For more information, call (718) 933-2034.

Christmas Toy Drive

505BX, located at 505 West 236th Street in Riverdale is hosting a Christmas Toy Drive and will be gifting toys to 400 Bronx children living in shelters in the Riverdale/Kingsbridge community. The gift age range is for children and teens aged 0 to 16. For more information, email Laura4Bronx@gmail.com.

Meet NYC Department of Buildings Reps

Meet NYC Department of Buildings representatives to discuss various building-related queries at an event organized by Assemblyman John Zaccaro Jr. (A.D. 80) on Thursday, Dec. 5, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. at 2018 Williamsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10461. For more information, call (718) 409-0109.

Affordable Housing Lotteries

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

- 114 East 198th Street, with a deadline of Dec. 10.
- 2880 Jerome Avenue, with a deadline of Dec. 30.
- 2077 Ryer Avenue, with a deadline of Dec. 19.
- 767 East 232nd Street, with a deadline of Dec. 10.

Visit <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/searchlotteries> for more information.

Adopt a Pet

Animal Care Center New York has a variety of pets who are looking for loving homes. Check out the list of pets which are available for adoption at <https://nycacc.app/>. To become an ACC foster, visit nycacc.org/foster.

Norwood Man Charged in 9/11 Memorial Rose Theft

By DAVID GREENE

A Norwood man has been arrested and charged with stealing a gold-plated rose from a 9/11 memorial site located inside a Manhattan church.

Police said the theft was reported at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 20, at St. Francis of Assisi Church, located at 135 West 31st Street. A police spokesperson told *Norwood News*, "An unknown individual entered the church." The spokesperson added that the man "removed a gold-plated metal rose from the 9/11 Memorial inside without permission."

Police quickly released a surveillance photo of the suspect walking in the area while holding the rose in his hand. The following day he was identified and was subsequently arrested on Nov. 22. Police charged Deikel Alcantara, 21, of Dekalb Avenue in Norwood with grand larceny in the third degree.

Police said the rose, which has an estimated value of \$3,000, was not returned to the church. The church pastor told *Eyewitness News* that the suspect had frequented the church and was once asked to leave. Public records show Alcantara had three recent arrest records on Oct. 27, Nov. 9 and Nov. 22, all occurring in Manhattan.

A male resident of Norwood later said of the suspect after viewing the police surveillance photo of the incident, "The guy lives on the 5th floor; he's a problem." Later, speaking in Spanish through a female translator who was also a resident of the same Norwood building, the male resident said another resident of the same 6-story building knew the suspect. "He knows him; he's a young guy and he's got problems. He's a young guy, he used to live here but he's having prob-



Photo courtesy of the NYPD

THE 9/11 MEMORIAL gold-plated rose inside St. Francis of Assisi Church in Manhattan is seen in an undated photo before it was stolen on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2024.

lems."

Joined by another female resident of the building, the two residents then alleged the suspect had been squatting in the 5th floor stairwell of the building. Translating again for the second female resident, the female translator added, "I didn't even hear what she said, but she says that he's doing pee-pee, and all that stuff" [in the stairwell].

Speaking in broken English again, the male resident then said, "He's not a problem. The guy's no troublemaker, no

problem. He's a good guy, but the brains are no good. Maybe he [should] be put in a hospital, I don't know. Yeah, put him in the hospital."

When told that Alcantara stole an item from a 9/11 memorial site inside a church, the man responded, "Oh... hmm. He's a good guy, I don't know."

Norwood News has asked the NYPD if, to their knowledge, the suspect was perhaps experiencing a mental health episode at the time of the incident. We will share any feedback we receive.



Photo courtesy of the NYPD

POLICE RELEASED THIS surveillance photo of a man carrying a 9/11 memorial gold-plated rose out of St. Francis of Assisi Church in Manhattan on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2024.

Marcus Garvey Square Unveiled

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Huddled under raingear, tents, and umbrellas, a proud group of Bronx residents gathered in Olinville under the East Gun Hill Road elevated subway tracks and the day's drizzle on Friday, Nov. 22, to see a long campaign by community activists come to fruition with the renaming of Williamsbridge Square as Marcus Garvey Square.

According to the National Archives, Marcus Mosiah Garvey Jr., born on August 17, 1887, in Saint Ann's Bay, Jamaica, was the founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) which aimed to achieve Black nationalism through the celebration of African history and culture.

Through the UNIA, Garvey pushed to support the "back to Africa" movement, and created the Black Star Line to act as the Black-owned passenger line that would carry patrons back and forth to Africa. He also fostered restaurants and shopping centers to encourage black economic independence.

In 1922, Garvey was convicted of mail fraud charges and sent to Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, but President Calvin Coolidge commuted his remaining time amidst protests from Black Americans. In 1927, he was deported from the United States to Jamaica, where he continued his UNIA work and political activism before moving to London in 1935. He died on June 10, 1940, after multiple strokes. His ideology has influenced members of the Nation of Islam, the Black Power Movement, and the Rastafari movement.

Present for the event, among others,

were NYC Parks Bronx Borough Commissioner Jessenia Aponte Salamanca, State Sen. Jamaal Bailey (S.D. 36), City Councilman Kevin Riley (C.D. 12), Rev. Margaret DeMosh, Bronx Community Board 12 (CB12) Chair Beatriz Coronel, CB 12 District Manager George Torres, CB 12 Housing Chair Robert Hall, Sadie Campbell from the Jamaica Progressive League, First Deputy Commissioner of Parks Iris Rodriguez Rosa, and various representatives from the Jamaica Benevolent Arm & Cultural Center, Jamaica Progressive League, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New York, and NYC Department of Parks and Recreation.

After using the occasion to wish Rodriguez Rosa a happy birthday, Aponte Salamanca said of the Square, "This space has been under the jurisdiction of NYC Parks since 1926. Nearly a century later, the neighborhood has evolved, and the community's voice is being heard as we rename this area in honor of the late Marcus Garvey."

Aponte Salamanca said the community had followed Garvey's own words, "Lose not courage, lose not faith; go forward," in advocating tirelessly for the renaming, which she said was not an easy task. "He was considered the founder of the 'Black is beautiful' idea," she said. "Garvey's cultural movement continues to have a lasting impact on today's society. Hence the significance of this ceremony."

For her part, the reverend gave thanks for the rain amid the recent brush fires in the TriState area and thanked all those who had gathered for



Photo courtesy of Amanda Medina

ELECTED OFFICIALS AND community activists pose for a photo beside a sign denoting Marcus Garvey Square which was renamed as such on Friday, Nov. 22, 2024.

the occasion, blessing the elected officials and citizens, and all who were instrumental in bringing about the square renaming. "Because of the work of these people, each and every one of us can stand here and recognize the work of Marcus Garvey," she said. "Bless us and comfort us, strengthen us so we can continue to work together in this community, especially in The Bronx, so we can see the change that we wanted to see here in your place, in your community, in our neighborhood."

For his part, Riley said that since

2006, as he was starting his freshman year in college, the elderly Campbell, who he described as "this wonderful, beautiful woman behind me" had been trying to get the square renamed. He said she and others continued their efforts once he was elected to office and thanked them "for championing the values of empowerment, education and social action."

He added in part, "We figured out that we had to pass a local law in order for it to change, and that's why we're here today because we want to celebrate Marcus Garvey." To Campbell, he said, "We wouldn't be here today without you."

He said the renaming not only honored a towering figure in Black history, but also celebrated the rich, cultural legacy of the community, deeply rooted in Caribbean heritage and resilience. "We are creating a space that not only preserves history, but also inspires future generations. I stand on the shoulders of giants and advocates that thank you all for paving the way for moments like this."

Riley, whose office organized a food giveaway to coincide with the event, said Garvey reminded present day residents that a people without knowledge of their history, origin and culture were like trees without roots. "Today we honor his legacy by rooting his name and the vision here in The Bronx, our home, that has long been a beacon of Caribbean pride," he said.

"The square is more than a symbolic act," he added in part. "It's a call to action for all of us to continue uplifting our community, preserving our history, and celebrating the vibrant diversity that defines us. Let this space serve as a reminder of the power of unity, culture and community action as we move forward together."

Bailey said the fact that so many ventured out under the rain for the occasion spoke volumes about the community. "Rain will not do anything but make us



Photo by Síle Moloney

COUNCILMAN KEVIN RILEY (C.D. 12) organized a food giveaway to coincide with the remaining of Marcus Garvey Square on Friday, Nov. 22, 2024.

(continued on page 12)

CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY, DAVID GREENE

**Williamsbridge Attempted Murder**

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they say is sought in connection with an attempted murder that occurred in Williamsbridge. Police said that on Sunday, Oct. 13, at around 7.45 p.m., the victim, a 55-year-old man was in the vicinity of Bronxwood Avenue and East 219th Street, when the man seen in the photo allegedly approached him and stabbed him multiple times about the body. They said the suspect then fled on foot to parts unknown and the victim was transported to Jacobi Medical Center in Morris Park in critical condition. They said the suspect has been identified as 68-year-old male Ricaldo Swift.

**University Heights: Man Sought for Robbery & Assault of Senior**

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying and locating the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they said is sought in connection with a robbery and assault of an older adult in the University Heights. Police said that on Monday, Nov. 18, at around 4.48 p.m. in front of 21 West 183rd Street, The Bronx, an unidentified individual approached a 69-year-old female victim. "The individual pushed the victim to the ground, causing injuries to her lips and face, and removed a purse from her," po-

lice said.

"The individual then fled the location on foot, traveling northbound on Davidson Avenue. The victim did sustain injuries, but she was not hospitalized," they added. Police said the suspect is described as male, has a medium build and a light complexion, and was last seen wearing all black.

Kingsbridge: Man Sought for Group Assault

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo who they said is wanted in connection to an assault that occurred in Kingsbridge. Police said that on Wednesday, Nov. 6, at around 11.36 p.m. in front of 5716 Broadway, an unidentified person struck a 46-year-old male victim, a 32-year-old male victim, a 30-year-old male victim, a 43-year-old male victim and a 30-year-old female victim after a verbal dispute.

Police said EMS transported the 43-year-old male victim to NYC Health and Hospitals/Harlem in critical but stable condition and transported the other victims to NYC Health and Hospitals/North Central Bronx in stable condition. They said the suspect fled the location in a gray BMW X5 to parts unknown.

They said the suspect is described as male, has a dark complexion, is around 50 years of age, has a medium build, is 5 feet 8 inches tall, weighs 210 pounds, and has brown eyes. They said he was last seen wearing a yellow sweater, black pants, a black baseball hat, and black shoes with yellow shoelaces.

Man Arrested for Fatal Hit & Run in December 2022

Police said a 43-year-old man has been arrested in connection with a fatal road accident in Kingsbridge in December 2022. They said that on Saturday, Dec. 31, 2022, at around 4.34 a.m., police responded to a 911 call regarding an aided male at the intersection of Broadway and West 238th Street. "Upon arrival, officers observed a 62-year-old male, unconscious and unresponsive with trauma about the body," a police spokesperson said. "EMS responded and transported the aided male to Allen Pavilion Hospital where he was pronounced deceased."

Police said a preliminary investigation determined that the aided male was struck by a Dodge Ram traveling northbound on Broadway. They said the driver of the vehicle did not remain at the scene. There were no initial arrests, and the NYPD's Highway Collision Investigation Squad continued their investigation. The deceased was later identified as Edwin Rivera, 62, of Manhattan.

On Nov. 14, pursuant to an ongoing investigation, police said Algenis Chavez, 43, of New Jersey was arrested on Wednesday, Nov. 13 at 2.10 p.m. within the confines of the 50th Precinct. They said he was charged with leaving the scene of an accident resulting in death. Chavez is deemed innocent unless and

until convicted in a court of law.

Fordham Manor: Male Sought after Cash Stolen from Older Adult

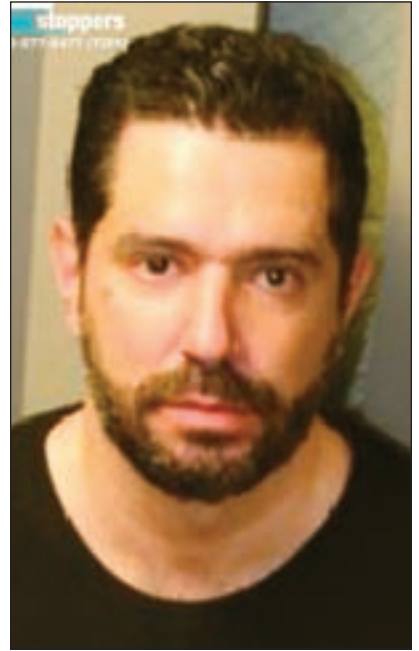
The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying and locating the person seen in the accompanying photo below who they say is sought in connection with the theft of money from an older adult in Fordham Manor. Police said that on Saturday, Nov. 2, at around 2 p.m. in front of Grand Avenue and West Kingsbridge Road, an unidentified individual approached a 62-year-old male victim.

They said the suspect snatched the victim's bag which contained some currency and fled the location on foot, traveling southbound on Grand Avenue. They said no injuries were reported as a result of the incident. Police said the person sought is described as male, has a slim build and a medium complexion. They said he was last seen wearing a red sweatshirt and black sweatpants.

**Kingsbridge Heights: Shots Fired at Kingsbridge Terrace**

There were no injuries reported, according to the NYPD, following reports of shots fired in the Kingsbridge Heights section of the Bronx on Wednesday morning. Video footage posted to the Citizens' App on Wednesday, Nov. 13, show police at a cordoned off scene 2754 Kingsbridge

Terrace around some parked cars, seemingly carrying out an investigation, with reports of shots fired at around 10.30 a.m. When contacted, the NYPD press office said there were shots fired but no reported injuries. The investigation continues.

**Man Calls Lehman College with Threat**

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying and locating the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they said is wanted in connection with an aggravated harassment incident. Police said that on Tuesday, Oct. 29, at around 12.37 in the afternoon, a known person sent an email to Lehman College, located at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard in the Bedford Park section of the Bronx, threatening a New York City sheriff.

They said the suspect has been identified as Dimitry Rappoport, 41. We asked the police if they could provide further context as to why the person would call Lehman College to threaten an New York City sheriff. We did not receive an immediate response.

There has been some backlash in recent months against law enforcement following the seizure of stocks following various smoke shop raids across the City which are usually coordinated by the Sheriff's department. We have no indication that there is any link between this and the referenced threat, however. We have also reached out to Lehman College and the Sheriff's department for comment and will share any updates we receive.

Anyone with information regarding these incidents is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.



Letters To The Editor

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

Congestion Pricing

Bronx transit riders, drivers and taxpayers beware. Since 2019, the party line was it would require a \$15 toll for congestion pricing to raise \$15 billion. This would help fund the MTA \$51 billion 2020-2024 Five-Year Capital Plan. Now five years later, Gov. Kathy Hochul claims that the same \$15 billion can be found with a \$9 toll. She proudly boasts that this 40% reduction in the price will save commuters and taxpayers a significant amount of money.

How do you justify the change in math five years later? No details were provided at Hochul's press conference to explain this. The MTA Tribor-

ough Bridge and Tunnel Authority, and Port Authority of New York and New Jersey periodically raise bridge and tunnel tolls. It will be the same with MTA Congestion Pricing before reaching \$15. So much for truth in advertising.

**Larry Penner
Great Neck**

Shame on Gov. Hochul

I was disgusted at how our esteemed Gov. Kathy Hochul signed a law outlawing the adultery crime which has been on the books for over a century. This law helped to keep traditional marriages intact and scared a person with jail if they violated the marriage covenant. Just two (2) weeks ago, the City of NY took the offense of jaywalking off the books because it affected certain groups of people. I see the moral decay and rot

of our society with these Democrats in office!

**Richard Marias,
Norwood**

Editor's Note:

AP reported on Friday, Nov. 22, that State legislators repealed adultery, a misdemeanor crime which dates back to 1907 and has long been considered antiquated as well as difficult to enforce.

According to theweek.com, many European countries once had anti-adultery laws on the books, but most were repealed in the 1970s and 1980s. The last European nations to decriminalize infidelity were Austria, in 1997, and Romania, in 2006. The story is similar in Latin America, which saw a flurry of decriminalization in the 1990s.

According to the United Nations (U.N.), treating adultery as a criminal

offense is a violation of women's rights to privacy, infringing the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It is also a violation of CEDAW's prohibition of discrimination in the family.

The U.N. notes that criminal law definitions of adultery seem gender-neutral and prohibit adultery by both men and women. However, in practice, the criminalization of adultery is overwhelmingly directed against women and girls, indirectly providing impunity for violence against women.

Please send all letters to the editor, along with supporting hyperlinked sources, to 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.

NYBG Premieres Holiday Train Show

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Ahead of the festive season, The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) premiered, on Nov. 12, its annual Holiday Train Show, a winter wonderland exhibit of miniature trains riding around miniature replicas of some of New York City's most iconic landmarks.

The 25 electric-model trains zoom through nearly 200 New York City landmarks including Yankee Stadium,

Grand Central Station, and the Statue of Liberty. These landmarks are hand-made out of twigs, bark, leaves, berries, and more by the team at Applied Imagination. Some trains even zoom along the intricate tracks on overhead bridges.

Jennifer Bernstein, NYBG CEO, said of the exhibit, "It is a winter wonderland unlike any other, where cherished seasonal traditions find a home in our absolutely enchanting train displays by day

or by night." She continued, "We look forward to welcoming visitors as they recall cherished memories and traditions or create new ones that last a lifetime."

According to NYBG, these landmarks can take hundreds of hours to complete. The latest landmark to be added to the display this year is the Hearst Tower. NYBG hosts Holiday Train Nights, with ten nights targeted at adults aged 21 or

over, filled with music, food, and more. Those nights are Nov. 23, Nov. 29, Nov. 30, Dec. 7, Dec. 13, Dec. 14, and Dec. 28, 2024, and Jan. 4, Jan. 11, and Jan. 18, 2025.

The other six nights are targeted at all ages with hands-on activities for everyone to take part in. These take place on Dec. 20, Dec. 21, Dec. 22, Dec. 23, Dec. 26, and Dec. 27. The Holiday Train Show will run through Jan. 20, 2025. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit <https://www.nybg.org/event/holiday-train-show-2024/>.



All photos by Ariel Pacheco

THE HOLIDAY TRAIN Show, seen here on Nov. 12, 2024, is currently on display at the New York Botanical Garden until Jan. 20, 2025.



A REPLICA OF Yankee Stadium is seen at The Holiday Train Show at the New York Botanical Garden on Nov. 12, 2024.

A REPLICA OF New York Public Library in Manhattan is seen at The Holiday Train Show at the New York Botanical Garden on Nov. 12, 2024.

THANK YOU FROM THE FUTURE OF MOSHOLU PARKLAND

To the Bedford Park-Norwood Bronx community for your support throughout this year with fulfilling projects that better our neighborhoods and ourselves. Many thanks to our volunteers, our Donors, and everyone who helped with our mission. We look forward to the new year with you.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2025

Give the gift of a greener community! Your donation supports FOMP programs, gardens, and education initiatives. Together, we grow and thrive.

To donate, visit website below or scan QR CODE

www.mosholuparkland.org
mosholuparkland@gmail.com

You can also send donations to:
Future of Mosholu Parkland Inc
3400 Reservoir Oval
Bronx NY 10467



Registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Marcus Garvey Square Unveiled

(continued from page 9)

grow,” he said. “It’s not going to make us wash away. They tried to bury us, but they didn’t know that we were seeds and we continue to grow.” The senator also paid tribute to “a young lady named Sadie Campbell.”

Paying tribute to Campbell, who he said had also advocated for the creation of a COVID memorial after the pandemic, he added that she had been named New York State Senate Woman of Distinction this past year. The senator also paid tribute to the “most vibrant Caribbean community in all of New York City.”

He acknowledged that there were many who may not even know who Marcus Garvey was or what he did. Quoting the famous lyric, “Emancipate yourself from mental slavery; None but ourselves can free our minds,” from Bob Marley’s “Redemption Song,” Bailey said, “That wasn’t Bob Marley. He was paraphrasing. We know that, but many of the people that were listening may not have known that that was Marcus Messiah Garvey.”

Bailey said it was very important to know what Garvey had done for both the Caribbean and African American non-Caribbean diaspora. “It’s critically important that me, somebody that comes from a non-Caribbean background, can also ascribe and point to the teachings of Garvey as a focal point in our community,” he said, adding, “You’ve heard me often say what

unites us is greater than what divides us.”

The senator gave a few culinary examples before adding, “Garvey wanted us to know that we are one people, and the great thing, out of the beautiful country of Jamaica, out of many, we are one people, and our reality is we are one people today. We are one people in the future, and this Square is a testament to that.”

For her part, Coronel said in part, “I was born and raised in Manhattan, where I saw the disparities at a very young age. My daughter is Jamaican, and so in 2017, when I was looking at where can I get her rooted in her ancestry and culture, I decided that this neighborhood was probably where we should invest, and so we did.”

Coronel said now her granddaughters are also Jamaican, Ecuadorian and Dominican. Adding that she worked in the mental health field, she said, “I think it is important that we do center our kids and that they’re rooted. One of the biggest risk factors is that they don’t have identity. They’re not learning about their history in the schools and so, it is up to the community to teach them their history and their roots and strengthen them and have them harvest from all the power of their ancestors.”

For her part, Campbell said she had been asked in advance of the event if there was going to be tents, food, if it was still going ahead due to the rain, and she

told them she didn’t know. “I am so proud of you all that you’re here in this rain!” she said. Accompanied by her daughter and grandson at the event, she talked about the fact that there was already a street sign in the area named in Garvey’s honor, adding, “Did the city know that a square has four sides?”

Of Riley, who she referred to as her other son, she said, “This young man, he made sure that it’s on the four sides! I’m so pleased and proud to be here at this moment. At one time, I was getting a feeling that we were just alone but now, when I look around and I see you all, I say, ‘Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!’”

Out & About

Compiled by ARIEL PACHECO

EVENTS

The Office of Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson is hosting a **Toy Giveaway** on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at The Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd., Bronx, NY 10460. The giveaway is only open to service members, veterans, and their families with proper credentials. Each child will receive one toy. For more information, (929) 286-0160.

Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) and Future of Mosholu Parkland (FOMP) are hosting their **Annual Tree Lighting** event on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 6 p.m. at Mosholu Parkway Lawn at the intersection of Mosholu Parkway and Bainbridge Avenue on the Norwood/Bedford Park border. This free event includes hot chocolate, holiday activities, music, and special entertainment. For more information, call (929) 496-0748.

Join the Office of Council Member Pierina Sanchez for its **Third Annual Holiday Tree Lighting** event on Thursday, Dec. 5, at 5 p.m. at Aqueduct Avenue & West 180th Street, Bronx, NY 10453. There will be treats, drinks, and a coat giveaway.

MUSIC

The Orchestra of The Bronx will present its **Annual Handel’s Messiah** concert on Sunday, Dec. 8, at 3 p.m. at the Lovinger Theatre at Lehman College, 250 Bedford Park Blvd. W, Bronx 10468. The Orchestra of the Bronx will be joined by soloists, a chorus of The Bronx Opera, and 23 guest speakers, representing residents from the political, business, media, and educational spheres in The Bronx. All are welcome, and entrance is free. For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx, NY 10468, proudly presents **El Parrandón de New York**, with **La Gran Manzana**, **El Equipo** and three-time Latin Grammy winner **José Alberto “El Canario”** on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024, at 8 p.m. Celebrating the spirit of the Christmas season, the concert

promises an unforgettable night filled with joy, music, and holiday cheer. For more information and to purchase tickets, call the box office at (718) 960-8833 or visit <https://www.lehmancenter.org/events/parrandon-new-york>.

The **Bronx Music Podcast**, available on YouTube, and hosted by BronxNet’s Gary Axelbank, will hold the next podcast event, recorded live as usual at The Artist venue, 249 City Island Avenue, City Island, The Bronx on Sunday, Dec. 1, at 1 p.m. and will feature one of the founders of hip hop. For more information, email to gaxproductions@gmail.com.

KIDS

The Mosholu branch of New York Public Library is hosting **Bangla Playtime for Little Learners** on Thursday, Dec. 5, at 11 a.m. at 285 East 205th Street, Bronx, NY 10467. The session will focus on playful activities such as interactive games, songs, movement, and reading aloud for children ages 0 to 5. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

SENIORS

Seniors are invited to participate in a free **Holiday 8-Ball Billiard Tournament** on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 11 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. at St. James Recreation Center, 2530 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, NY 10468. Players will compete against some of the best for a chance to win a first or second-place trophy. For more information, call (646) 447-2642.

LITERATURE

NYC Parks is hosting a **Spoken Word and Open Mic Night** on Friday, Dec. 6, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Poe Park Visitor Center 2640 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10458. This free event will be an evening filled with music, self-expression, and poetry. For more information, call (718) 365-5516.

MOVEMENT

Visit the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center at 3225 Reservoir Oval East in Norwood, The Bronx, for **Fit and Fabulous** on Friday, Nov. 29, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. This program consists of choreographed exercises to music and is open to all levels of fitness. Participants will complete a full body workout, ranging from low to high intensity that will improve cardiovascular and muscle endurance. For more information, call (718) 543-8672.

Campbell’s grandson, Dylan, later recited a poem he had written in honor of the occasion. It read:

“The honorable Marcus Messiah Garvey says
each race should be proud and stick to its own
and make the best of what they are and
always should be shown,

making sure to not trample on the civil liberties of others,
guided always by honesty, peace, love and harmony,
remaining firm in your convictions
that might is not always right.

Be bold, be brave, and stand on your own footing,
making sure that one-sided justice will never prevail.

Black, Yellow, or White will reside
with dignity and in safety.

Black people, you have been tested
more vigorously than all.

While the honorable Marcus Garvey has set the stage,
follow his principles, and you’ll surely overcome.
We have a beautiful history of our exploits, bold and brave.

If we pursue, our joy will be restored,
and the world will be astonished.

Friends, are you ready? Let’s get to work.”

No Injuries Reported after Grand Concourse Fire

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

There were no reported injuries following a recent residential fire in Fordham Manor according to the FDNY. A fire department spokesperson said the department received a call on Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 10.40 p.m. for reports of a fire in the walls of a 5-story, multiple dwelling (100 x 100) at 2395 Grand Concourse at East 184th Street and East 187th Street in Fordham Manor. The spokesperson said 12 units comprising 60 fire and EMS personnel responded to the scene.

They said the fire was brought under control at 11.42 p.m. and the cause remains under investigation. *Norwood News* contacted the Red Cross for information on any displaced residents and Desiree Ramos, said, "After the fire on Grand Concourse in the Bronx, the American Red Cross Disaster Action Team registered nine households (nine adults) for emergency assistance, including emergency housing. The responders also provided comfort items, including blankets, shoes and socks."

When *Norwood News* later visited the site of the fire on Wednesday, Nov. 20, two apartments on two different floors were seen boarded up, and an NYC Department of Building (DOB) "Full Vacate" order was seen posted to the building's entrance. There was also a notice posted by the American Red Cross on the front door, advising residents of how they could obtain assistance, if still needed.

The building is called "Paradise Traditional Housing," and comprises an apartment building and several commercial businesses on the street level. Water used to extinguish the fire appeared to have damaged several of the stores. These included Concourse Photo Framing Center, 2395 Grand Concourse, a seemingly popular store, seen closed on Nov. 20, Empire City Wireless, 2395 Grand Concourse, also seen closed on Nov. 20, New Concourse Pharmacy, 2395 Grand Concourse, seen open on Nov. 20, though a table blocked the front door with a sign that read, "Due to the recent fire incident, no customers are allowed inside temporarily. Please call this number (347) 590-2963."

Shops that connect to the building, but share a different address, and which did not appear to be impacted by the fire or by related water damage included Forever Young Vitamins and Herbs, 2391 Grand Concourse, and Tammy Nails Waxing Salon, 2391 Grand Concourse. *Norwood News* delivers the print edition of our paper to Forever Young Vitamins and Herbs and the former owner had previously moved the business from East Kingsbridge Road.

The site of the fire at 2395 Grand Concourse is located next door to a building at 2390 Creston Avenue, between East 184th Street and East 188th Street, that had also caught fire on Saturday, Sept. 14, as reported. The latter building is in turn located next door to the historic Paradise Theater building.

A brush fire broke out in the Norwood section of the Bronx on Saturday night, Nov. 16, one of several fires, including

another in Van Cortlandt Park on Nov. 9, that have broken out across the City in recent weeks amid a recent drought watch in New York City and in counties upstate that host the City's water reservoirs.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams took additional measures on Nov. 9 to mitigate the increased risk of such fires, banning grilling / barbecues in New York City parks, in addition to existing restrictions on open flames and smoking in public parks.

One person was injured in a University Heights fire at 2545 Sedgwick Avenue on Nov. 5. "During a fire, always close the door behind you!" fire officials say. "It helps contain smoke and flames, giving you precious time to escape. Your quick action can make the difference."



Image courtesy of the Citizens' App

FIREFIGHTERS RESPOND TO a residential fire at 2395 Grand Concourse in Fordham Manor on Sunday night, Nov. 17, 2024.

Bainbridge Avenue Transitional Housing Development Paused for Now

(continued from page 6)

provider. On this point, the MOCJ spokesperson later added, "There is a proposal but there is nothing final in place."

The Fortune Society spokesperson recommended reaching out to MOCJ and the building's landlord for more information and added, "Please note that The Fortune Society values community input and understands the importance of engaging with neighborhood residents and leaders. Should the project proceed, we remain commit-

ted to working closely with local stakeholders to ensure transparent communication and address any community concerns."

The Fortune Society was also appointed the managing partner of the contentious Just Home project located on the grounds of Jacobi Hospital in Morris Park. *Norwood News* had also reached out to other impacted elected officials for comment on the project i.e. Congressman Adriano Espaillat (NY-13), Assemblyman George Alvarez (A.D. 80) and Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson. We will share

any feedback we receive.

As reported, the main reason why there was pushback to the project was due to the oversaturation of similar housing in the district, as well as prevailing issues with drug use and other problems. Council Member Rafael Salamanca (C.M. 17) had similar complaints about the number of shelters located in his district as reported by News 12. Salamanca said in part, "We're asking for equity! While some council districts [...] have no shelters, District 17 has over 60. My community has done MORE than its fair share; it's

time for the rest of the city to step up!"

On Thursday, Nov. 21, New York City Council struck a \$5 billion deal with the Adams administration and the governor to move ahead with a revised housing plan that aims to address the citywide housing shortage and affordability crisis by building "a little more housing in every City neighborhood." Neighborhood planning studies will begin in 2025 for Bronx Community District 7, along with Bronx Community District 12 and Brooklyn Community Districts 12, 14, and 17.

Fordham Manor: Man Stable after Afternoon Stabbing

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

A 33-year-old man is in stable condition after a non-fatal stabbing took place in Fordham Manor. Police said they received a call at 2.37 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 24, for reports of a stabbing at 201 East Fordham Road at the Grand Concourse [a Chick-fil-A restaurant]. They said the victim was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition and remained uncooperative when questioned about the incident.

They said no perpetrator description was available, and the investigation remained ongoing. The same day police were seen cordoning off a section of the Grand Concourse located close to East 188th Street. We spoke to some employees of a store in the area who said the stabbing hadn't, to their knowledge, taken place there but the victim later arrived there injured, and had been waiting for an ambulance to arrive at the location.

They said they also phoned for an ambulance when they saw he was injured and added that he remained outside on the street. They said he appeared to have incurred an injury to his thigh.

We later spoke to a street vendor who was working close to the Chick-fil-A on East Fordham Road and the Grand Concourse, who said he had been there since 8 a.m. on Sunday. In reference to the stabbing, he said, "People tell me this all day, but I see nothing." Other vendors on the Grand Concourse also said they had not seen anything.

Police were seen on East Fordham Road and Valentine Avenue, a block from the Grand Concourse, later that day talking to some residents close to the Target store, though it was unclear if their discussions related to the stabbing incident or something else. [We have cropped out the people they were speaking to for safety reasons.]

Anyone with information in regard to this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, on X @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.

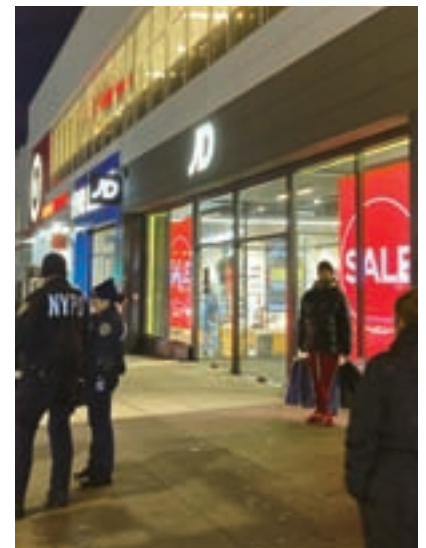


Photo by Síle Moloney

POLICE OFFICERS ARE seen outside the JD and Target stores on East Fordham Road and Valentine Avenue, a block from the Grand Concourse, on Sunday, Nov. 24, 2024.



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Public and Community Meetings

The next 52nd **PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meeting will take place on Thursday, Dec. 19, at 6 p.m. at Monroe University (formerly Monroe College), 2501 Jerome Ave, Bronx, NY 10468. 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, Dec. 17, at 6.30 p.m. also at Monroe University's Kings Hall, 2501 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, NY 10468. Contact KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list. All meetings are in person unless otherwise notified by Bronx CB7.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8** full board (hybrid) meeting will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 10, at 7 p.m. at Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, Fort Independence Houses, 3350 Bailey Avenue, Bronx, NY 10463. Contact BX08@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list.

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

MLB & Yankees Build New Sensory Room at One World Middle School



Photo by Ariel Pacheco.

STUDENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES from the MLB and The New York Yankees attend an announcement at One World Middle School, 3750 Baychester Avenue in Edenwald, The Bronx, on Oct. 28, 2024 to open a sensory room at the school.

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the field," per MLB's website.

The two sons of Puerto Rican legendary MLB player with the Pittsburgh Pirates, Roberto Clemente, who died in December 1972 in a plane crash he had chartered to take emergency relief goods to survivors of a massive earthquake in Nicaragua, Roberto Jr. and Luis, were also in attendance. Meanwhile, the \$50K donation is part of the 2024 World Series Legacy Project. The room is expected to be available to use in 2025.

Former Yankee pitcher Dellin Betances, who now serves as an ambassador

for the MLB, said, "Anytime you're able to provide kids with different tools to learn, it's a big deal. It gives these kids a chance to develop their skills in different ways. It makes me happy because you know it's about giving back and we're able to use our platform to continue to provide for the community."

For his part, Brian Smith, New York Yankee senior vice president of corporate and community relations, said "The New York Yankees and One World's common focus is to drive and generate awareness, access, and enhance that educational experience."



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Hopeful Sign For Armory?

(continued from page 1)

Meanwhile, on Thursday, Adams said the PLAs ensure union jobs are guaranteed on major City development projects. Lobo noted that during the mayor's press conference remarks it was noted that the Kingsbridge Armory was subject to a Project Labor Agreement. She said this was thanks to the advocacy of NWBCCC and other community stakeholders in recent years as part of the "Together for Kingsbridge" negotiations.

"Creating and sustaining good jobs is a fundamental principle of the City's vision to redevelop the Kingsbridge Armory, and it starts on Day One of construction," Lobo said. "For the Armory to truly live up to its potential as a once-in-a-generation economic engine for The Bronx, the project must commit to paying those who build, grow, and work within it a living wage from the very beginning."

In fact, Adams announced that in addition to the two secured PLAs, EDC had also signed a *letter of intent* with BCTC, to negotiate in good faith *additional PLAs* for the Hunts Point Produce Market, the Kingsbridge Armory, and the Science Park and Research Campus (SPARC) Kips Bay projects, amounting to a cumulative \$1.88 billion in construction work.

The major was joined for the PLA announcement by BCTC President Gary LaBarbera, Andrew Kimball, president and CEO of NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC), First Deputy Mayor Maria Torres Springer, Commissioner Thomas Foley of NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC), among others. Of LaBarbera, the mayor said in part, "He believes in unions, and he believes in ensuring that the people who built this City can afford to work and live in this City."

Adams said LaBarbera understood the mayor's wish to diversify the workforce, making sure it reflects the people of the City, and that LaBarbera was pushing for that. "A blue-collar mayor... this is a blue-collar city," Adams continued, adding that construction [and other] workers weren't asking for handouts. "They are asking to give the right salaries and benefits that they deserve for their families. You can't build luxury high-rises and affordable housing, when the men and women who are putting the shovel in the ground cannot participate in that success," he said.

Adams said the negotiated PLAs will connect New Yorkers to good-paying local jobs and career opportunities and promote and protect local economic growth. "That is why we are hiring from our communities and hiring union workers, and that is why these agreements also have ambitious M/WBE (minority and women-owned business enterprise) goals, because our minority / women-owned firms have been passed by for these projects for decades."

He said the agreements also mean the City will be "able to build and com-

plete projects faster and more efficiently by reducing bureaucracy, cutting red tape, and minimizing delays." He added in part, "As a mayor, probably one of the few mayors, not the only, that had a union card, I know what today means to all of us."

For his part, LaBarbera said in part, "PLAs make projects more efficient. They actually save money to the capital plan and the capital budget, which creates more opportunity. We also have historic provisions in PLAs to reach into underserved communities and bring people into the building trades through our pre-apprentice and direct entry programs and our recruitment programs."

LaBarbera added in part, "This is not just a construction job. It is a pathway into the middle class. This is just the beginning. We are doing things that have never been done before with the mayor's leadership in terms of these PLAs, the horizontal PLA never existed before the Adams administration."

LaBarbera acknowledged there had been a sense before that the M/WBE community and the unions could not work together but that this was no longer the case. "We can exactly accomplish workforce development, creating good union jobs and pathways into the middle class, and also supporting M/WBEs to come into this work and hopefully eventually through a mentorship program become good union contractors," he said.

Torres-Springer confirmed that the PLAs will incorporate DDC's "Design-Build" concept, which allows the depart-

ment to complete public projects faster and more efficiently by entering into a combined design and construction contract. According to DDC, Design-Build emphasizes collaboration, efficiency, and risk reduction.

Meanwhile, LaBarbera said the PLAs bring the cost of the project down and avoid the need to negotiate with individual unions. "It's an agreement that's signed by the affiliates of all the building trades in the City of New York," he said. In response to a question on the estimated savings from the use of PLAs, LaBarbera said in part, "A \$4 billion city PLA, the feasibility study demonstrated it's worth \$347 million worth of savings; that's a fact."

Adams added that NYCHA projects fell under the scope of the latest citywide \$5 billion-dollar revised housing plan, tentatively agreed with the City Council last week. It followed a prior zoning-related impasse linked to DCP's "City of Yes" zoning plan. It is understood that PLAs will also be negotiated for various NYCHA projects.

For a previous story in 2021 on safety and fairness within the construction industry in The Bronx, *Norwood News* spoke to a Bronx union representative who alleged at the time that some developers hire and pay untrained laborers as low as \$15 an hour, without any healthcare or benefits, and despite the dangerous nature of the work.

When at least one company we spoke to denied this, saying it complied with all applicable laws and safety regulations, the union rep alleged some developers circumvent the regulations by using subcontractors (which, presumably, are not bound by any contracts/regulations) to hire cheaper, untrained workers.

Norwood News has asked the City to confirm if the developers hired for City projects under these newly agreed PLAs, and specifically the Kingsbridge Armory project, will be held to account in this regard, and that any sub-contractors hired by these developers will be made subject to all applicable laws, regulations and agreements, including the terms of these PLAs. We will share any updates we receive.

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issues OSHA cards to construction workers usually following 10-hour or 30-hour safety courses. "Unfortunately, there has been an increase in fraudulent activity related to these courses over the past several years," an extract from OSHA's website reads. This was backed up by at least one construction worker we spoke to in the last year or so who alleged fake OSHA cards were being sold regularly on the black-market in New York City.

Norwood News reported in April that NYC Department of Small Businesses Services (SBS) was urging more than 17,000 active, construction workers to apply to SBS's no-cost training program after their site safety training (SST) cards issued by Valor Consulting were deactivated following the revocation of the company's status as a city-approved, safety training course provider.

Meanwhile, Lobo is optimistic about the PLA news as it pertains to the Armory, saying, "We are proud to have advocated for this Project Labor Agreement in the Request for Proposals and congratulate the building trades for landing these agreements on other key projects across the city. This is a promising first step toward the hundreds of good, union jobs we expect to grow out of the Armory project."



THE KINGSBRIDGE ARMORY, Kingsbridge Heights as seen on Nov. 16, 2023.

Photo by Síle Moloney

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