

# NORWOOD NEWS

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## BACK TO SCHOOL

THE BEST & WORST SCHOOLS IN DIST. 10 PGS 10-11



## EDITORIAL:

THE POWER IN VOTING | PG 2

# NEED FOR SPEED CAMS IN NW BRONX



Photo by Adi Talwar

**MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO** (at podium) stands with officials outside PS 95 in Van Cortlandt Village, announcing a new wave of speed cameras slated to be located near Bronx schools. Behind officials are two vehicles equipped with mobile speed cameras.

### By DAVID CRUZ

Two days before the new school year began, Mayor Bill de Blasio stopped by Van Cortlandt Village to announce the installation of new speed cameras near Bronx schools, complementing the city's traffic reduction measures so far.

And though a breakdown on which school zones will get

the cameras remains vague, the northwest Bronx may receive a swell of the cameras following some unfortunate statistics.

"Speed cameras are a wakeup call, they change behavior," said de Blasio, flanked by officials in front of PS 95, a grammar/middle school at Sedgwick and Hill-

man avenues, on Sept. 2. On Sept. 4 the streets were congested, with parents dropping off their kids for the first day of school.

In the backdrop of the news conference were two Ford Setinas equipped with a mobile speed camera, which snaps a photo of a driver who blows past a school zone 10

miles above the speed limit. Violators are hit with a \$50 fine.

### Broadening the Program

The expanded program, beginning as a pilot project during the Bloomberg Administration, costs roughly \$14 million. Revenue in the form of fines has offset those

*(continued on page 18)*



Community Pride at Norwood Center | pg 6



Reinventing Fordham Plaza | pg 8



Business Beat: A Unique Boutique at JGH-BID | pg 12



Out & About | pg 19



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# THE POWER OF THE VOTE

## EDITORIAL

The season of the Primary is drawing to a close, and the destinies of those seeking or continuing their service to public office hinges on you. After all, you are, in effect, an agent of change.

Think about it. How common is the right to vote in other countries? The numbers are growing, though some people in other parts of the world continue to be deprived of that right. Compared to regions such as the Middle East, where in the year 2014, men and women still lethally protest for fair elections, Bronxites have the luxury of choosing without fear of repercussions. In Mexico, voter fraud in the presidential election became so out of hand it resulted in violent protests.

In the Bronx, the civic act has been in decline for the last few years, unfortunately, despite efforts by the city and state Board of Elections to streamline the voting process. The answers over an electoral indifference vary—time constraints (though polls are open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. during the Primary and General Elections), unregistered voters or even chaos at the polls are reasons why voters are reluctant to vote. It's a shame since voter complacency can likely slow the progress for the Bronx, a borough that's seen fragments of good government overshadowed by a rogues gallery of dirty politicians.

Within the last 10 years, a cast of Bronx politicians that include the late Guy Vellela, Pedro Espada Sr., Nelson Castro, Eric Stevenson and Larry Seabrook took bribes, abused nonprofits, perjured themselves, or lived outside

the district they represented, turning a responsibility into a joke. In the cases of several politicians, laws were never quite broken, though many would argue they were derelict in their duties simply for their lack of presence.

Where did these political improprieties begin? It began within the confines of the polls. Who voted them in? You. Whether you actually went to the polls or not, you've submitted to this mess. This cannot stand.

But voting isn't bogged down to just showing up at the poll site to pull a lever or push a button. It means doing your homework by understanding who you are as a person, and assessing whether that politician asking for your vote closely matches your views. The

city and state Board of Elections offices offer a free guide to understanding the positions of incumbents and their challengers. Vote for the right reasons; ask yourself "what can this politician do for me?" Quite frankly, this is perhaps the best time to think of yourself.

The fruits of your vote will likely blossom in the coming months, perhaps in the coming years as the legislator you voted for moves on to higher office and presumably continues their commitment to a more evolved community. In the end, they'll have you to thank.

So go out there and vote. Think about it. Their success or failure starts with your input.

## KOPPELL AND KLEIN SPAR IN TV DEBATE



Photo by David Cruz

**BRONXTALK HOST GARY** Axelbank (left) moderates the highly anticipated debate between former Councilman Oliver Koppell (center) and Senator Jeff Klein (right). Check out what happened on [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org).

## Public and Community Meetings

**COMMUNITY BOARD 7** will meet Tuesday, Sept. 16 at the Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. CB7 committees are held on the following dates at the board office, 229A E. 204th St., at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Public Safety & QOL committee meets Thursday, Sept. 4; Environment & Sanitation and Health & Hospital committees meet Tuesday, Sept. 9; Community Relations/LTP and Economic Development committees meet Wednesday, Sept. 10; Traffic & Transportation committee meets Thursday, Sept. 11; Housing/Land Use & Zoning committee meets Wednesday, Sept. 17; and Education/Libraries & Youth Services committees meet Thursday, Sept. 18. Meetings are subject to change. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

**THE 52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meets Thursday, Sept. 18 from 7 to 9 p.m. at Christ Disciple International Ministries at 3021 Webster Ave. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.

**Note:** For the rest of the calendar year 2014, Council meetings take place every third Thursday of the month to compensate for holidays that fall on the day of regular meetings.



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# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE

This week we asked readers their thoughts on a proposed gun offender registry that works the same way as a sex offender registry. Those convicted of using an illegal firearm would be required to register as a gun offender for four years, after completing their sentence.



Yes I do agree. Just as if it was a sex offender, they [gun offenders] should register as well. If you find a gun and return it to the precinct, you get a reward. I think that's a scam because how did they just find a gun?

**Selena Valentin**  
Concourse



I think it would be a good thing for the community. It would give people a bit more insight on the dangers in the neighborhood and also dangerous people.

**Dee Cee Smith**  
Norwood



I think it would be a good idea, but think it would be hard to pull off. I think it would be fine if they actually enforced it. You don't want just anyone carrying a gun and acting crazy with them.

**Shaquill Houston**  
University Heights



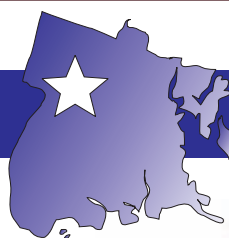
I think that's a good thing that would get a lot of good feedback. I would like to know if you get arrested with a gun or caught doing any type of crime. I don't want people like that around my grandkids that I love. It's better to know.

**Diana Gomez**  
Norwood



I'd support it, yeah, why not? I don't think it's really going to help, but it may help. But what about the people who don't get caught? And I know a lot of people don't get caught. It's always good to try something new.

**Anthony Williams**  
Kingsbridge



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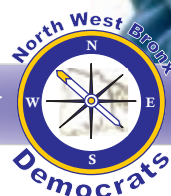
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# Churning Out Community Pride at Norwood Center

By DAVID CRUZ

For the past 23 years, several phases of Samantha Kogel's life have played out at a community institution in Norwood. From experiencing the thrill of hitting a ball off a tee at age 5, to hanging with friends at a constructive and fun environment at the teen center, to serving as a guidance counselor at a summer day camp during her later adolescent years, Kogel's upbringing is partly due to her membership with the social service center.

These days, at age 28, she's a single mother enrolling her 5-year-old son Tyler at the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, the same haven that gave her a well-rounded education away from school.

She's certainly a product of the center, a fact made evident during a recent board meeting where a longtime director recalled Kogel's first visit to MMCC.

"She [the director] said, 'oh my

God, I remember when you were five years old and now you have a five-year-old,'" said Kogel. Things have come full circle for Kogel, a Bedford Park resident who intends to continue her participation at the center, having already mulled the premise of becoming a substitute teacher there. She had once served as a member of the parent committee to provide input to MMCC.

"You can start here when you're five and they have the senior programs," said Kogel. "So you can stay here until you're a senior."

Kogel's story is one of tens of thousands at MMCC, a nonprofit located at the corner of DeKalb Avenue and East Gun Hill Road. It currently offers a wide range of services that include day care, summer day camp, Head Start, a baseball league and a Pre-K program.

"Wherever we could see the need, whether it comes from people talking to us from me being part of the community, my staff being part



Photo by David Cruz

**SAMANTHA KOGEL POSES** for the camera at MMCC. She and her son Tyler are products of the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, having been with the center for a combined 24 years.

of the community, we'll try to offer it," said Don Bluestone, MMCC's executive director.

Bluestone is somewhat of an ad hoc historian for the center, recalling MMCC's early years when it opened in 1942 amid the turmoil of WWII. As men served their country overseas, a group of eight women in the once Jewish neighborhood sought to provide child care, teen and senior services for the neighborhood. But space was limited.

"From 1942 to 1958, they basically used every little space they could find to provide programs," said Bluestone. "A lot of programs were in basements in various apartment buildings."

Eventually, a 30,000-square-foot home was built on DeKalb Avenue and East Gun Hill Road, thanks in large part to Montefiore Medical Center which leased the land to MMCC. The philosophy worked to create stability in Norwood, which warded off any permanent quality of life concerns in the neighborhood. The center has since expanded to 20 schools and several other building sites.

Bluestone has managed the center for 25 years, back then known as the Mosholu Neighborhood Cen-

ter. The center worked like that of a club, with residents paying a fee to take part in the programming. The largely Jewish community gradually shifted with a wave of Puerto Rican and African-American families settling in.

"As it changed, we developed our programs to really meet the needs of the changing community," said Bluestone.

Much of the help came from a changing federal government, which passed the Title 20 law that helped subsidize day care services and free meals for seniors. Head Start programs and a little league were later instituted at MMCC to cover the needs of the community.

The center has also dabbled in physical fitness, having partnered with Montefiore to help obese teenagers who resisted help.

"What we did together with them is we started to provide recreational services for them," said Bluestone. "The kids are definitely feeling a lot better as human beings."

Momentum has built as MMCC gears up for the fall season, having expanded its universal pre-K program, thanks to the De Blasio Administration.

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# “The Fix” Makes Bx. Debut Sept. 5

Laura Naylor’s award-winning documentary film, *The Fix*, will screen free to the public Friday, Sept. 5, 6 p.m. at Lehman College’s Lovinger Theatre, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd., W.

Winner of the Jury Prize for Best Documentary at the 2014 SOHO International Film Festival, *The Fix* follows the story of a group of recovering drug users in the Bronx who team to fight the Hepatitis C epidemic in their community. Knitting together personal stories with a profile of innovative programs at Albert Einstein College of Medicine’s methadone clinics, the film explores the concept of storytelling as an instrument of change and gives a voice to a marginalized population. *The Fix* is a story of redemption and hope, putting a face on addiction and disease. A panel discussion and Q & A follow the premiere.

Hepatitis C (HCV) affects 150,000 New Yorkers, causing more deaths each year than HIV. Transmitted via blood-to-blood contact, HCV is common among injection drug users and baby boomers. New treatments for HCV offer cure rates of up to 90 percent, though most individuals are unaware that they have the disease. This film viewing is intended to celebrate the efforts of HCV Peer Educators and spread awareness on HCV, harm reduction, and the new treatments available.

This event is sponsored by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine’s Division of Substance Abuse, and the CUNY School of Public Health Programs in Community-Based Public Health & Health Equity at Lehman College and Community Health at Hunter College.

For tickets, contact Sheila Reynoso: sreynoso@dosa.aecom.yu.edu.

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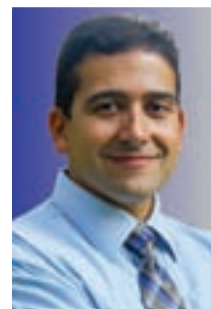
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By **KASIA ROMANOWSKA**

On Aug. 27, city officials gathered at Fordham Plaza, the heart of the borough, to break ground on the second phase of a multi-million dollar revitalization project on the plaza.

Located on Fordham Road between Third and Webster avenues, the plaza is pegged as “truly a reflection of what’s great about the Bronx; the energy, the vibrancy and the culture of diversity,” according to city Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg. The project is federally funded, with Trottenberg remembering when the project applied for funds from the United States Department of Transportation, where she served as the agency’s under secretary.

Upgrades include roadway repair, sidewalk reconstruction, tree plantings and construction of a brand new café-style seating area with a canopy intended for the nearly 80,000 pedestrians who hustle along the area daily.

Several factors contribute to the high volume of traffic. One of those factors includes its surroundings. Fordham Road makes up the bulk of the Fordham Road Business Im-

## Reinventing Fordham Plaza



Photo by Kasia Romanowska

**OFFICIALS TAKE PART** in a ceremonial groundbreaking ushering in the next phase of the Fordham Road reconstruction project.

provement District, the largest BID in the Bronx. It’s also home to Fordham University and One Fordham Plaza, housing thousands of students and office workers respectively.

According to the city Department of Design and Construction Commissioner Dr. Feniosky Peña-Mora, the redesign “will help to make this major transit hub a more welcoming gateway to the borough.”

The BID is the third largest pedestrian district in the city, an active

pathway for commuters daily. Fordham Road is also a major transit and commercial thoroughfare connecting Manhattan to Westchester County. It is a primary crossroad of the MTA’s Special Bus Service 12. It also boasts a Metro-North train station, the third busiest station in the system.

The winning project had to overcome fierce competition, eventually chosen over 1,000 applications. Considering that the BID is the largest

shopping strip in the Bronx and the third largest in the city, reimagining public space has remained pivotal for the economic aspect. The developments also come just in time as the Fordham BID is slated to begin managing the large plaza, taking a different approach from these past few years when ABC Properties oversaw the lot.

“Improved and beautified plazas make our communities more livable, safe and accessible, providing a boost to local businesses and encouraging job creation,” said Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. Nevertheless, some merchants worry about the chaos created by the reconstruction.

There may be limited street access, though Peña-Mora told the *Norwood News* his crew will keep the work inside the plaza without creating too many problems to commuters. For now, concerns can be directed to Jonathan Conte, acting as the DDC’s community liaison. His email is [FordhamPlazaCCL@gmail.com](mailto:FordhamPlazaCCL@gmail.com).

The project will be conducted in several phases and is expected to be completed by fall 2015.



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# Residents: Enough Is Enough to Gun Violence

By DAVID GREENE

They're standing up to violence. Residents of Williamsbridge and Wakefield joined in solidarity with representatives of several local officials from across the borough for Stand Up to Violence (SUV), an anti-crime demonstration at the site of a recent shooting where a bullet grazed a child.

Nearly two dozen people fed up with the senseless violence that has plagued the north Bronx recently gathered outside the Corner Street Deli at White Plains Road and 226th Street on Tuesday, Aug. 26. The message was simple: take back the streets.

Using a bullhorn to deliver his message to the community, Pastor Jay Gooding of the Fellowship Tabernacle Ministries on East Gun Hill Road sounded the alarm over this year's wave of violence. "We want to let this community know, no longer will we stand by while innocent babies are killed and our



Photo by David Greene

**JOE THOMPSON, PRESIDENT** of the nearby 49th Precinct Community Council, speaks to a crowd during an anti-violence demonstration in Williamsbridge.

young people are shot down," said Gooding.

Gooding, flanked by supporters, turned the bullhorn over to Joe

Thompson, another seasoned community leader, telling passersby that "we will never stand by while any child is injured because of gun violence."

"The most important thing we have is our children," said Thompson, as a handful of demonstrators held signs reading "Don't shoot, I want to grow up."

Thompson heads the 49th Precinct Community Council, a neighboring precinct that abuts the 47th Precinct, a stationhouse that responded to the latest shooting. The bullet grazed a three-year-old child on Saturday, Aug. 23, though cops say he was not seriously injured. So far crime within that precinct has spiked, largely from its increase in gun violence, with at least 55 percent more people hit by a bullet this year when compared to the same time last year.

And while major crimes including robbery, grand larceny and felony assaults have ticked down,

murder rose dramatically, prompting the Four-Seven to change tactics. City Councilmen Andy King, Ritchie Torres and Andy Cohen, who all represent portions of the north Bronx, have since sent a letter to NYPD Commissioner Bill Bratton requesting One Police Plaza incorporate the Shotspotter program to the precinct. The initiative pinpoints the origin of gunfire.

Another measure brought about by Albany was the introduction of SNUG, which has formerly incarcerated gang members quelling any potential tensions that could erupt in gun violence. More recently, an initiative pushed by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., which places gun offenders on a registry list, has been embraced by Torres.

Brian Millford, a community resident and official representing King's office, still worries for his little brother, offering "I don't want him fearing for his life as he goes to school every morning."

## Homicide on Decatur Ave.

It's still unclear who killed a 31-year-old man during the Labor Day weekend in a Fordham neighborhood. Police in the 52nd Precinct responded to a call at the Decatur II apartment buildings on Decatur Avenue just before midnight on Sunday, Aug. 31. It's there they learned the 31-year-old man was shot multiple times in the body in front of the Rafael Jr. Food Center, just down the block from the buildings.

The victim was later identified as Shawn Ross, a neighbor living near the complex. Before EMS arrived, Ross was driven to St. Barnabus Hospital where he later died of his injuries. --David Cruz

## Green Dot Card Scam

The police are warning the public about a new phone scam that's gaining momentum throughout the city. The scheme involves thieves calling your home, claiming they're from the IRS, utility company, or attorneys asking for a settlement in an auto accident. They then demand payment be placed in a Green Dot MoneyPak, a type of loadable debit

card that's purchased at any retail store. Funds upwards to \$500 can be placed in the card.

The victim, either threatened physically or the cutting of services, often supplies the schemer with the code linked to the debit card and later withdraws the funds. Police want to remind folks that government agencies would never demand payment over the phone. If this happens, or if the con artists ask for personal information, police ask you hang up and immediately call 911.

--David Cruz

## New Business Suffers Robbery

A newly opened clothing store in Norwood suffered its first smash-and-grab robbery that was quickly foiled by local cops.

It's been open just six weeks, but the V.I.M. store was the target of a robbery, with officers from the 52nd Precinct called around 10:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 19 to answer the call. They arrived at 3083 Bainbridge Ave. to find the store's glass window panes shattered.

One neighbor, who asked to remain nameless, said the job



**POLICE ARRIVE AT THE SCENE** of a smash-and-grab robbery at the V.I.M. clothing store on Bainbridge Avenue and 204th Street on Aug. 19.

was the work of one suspect who "broke into V.I.M. and stole some expensive sneakers."

"He broke the glass of the door and took six pairs of sneakers," said the neighbor. But as the suspect fled, he was caught red-handed by officers.

"The police brought them all back," said the source. But ac-

cording to the NYPD, who used a K-9 unit on the ground and a helicopter in the air for more than an hour, the suspect was not apprehended.

The NYPD obtained the store's surveillance video that recorded the incident as investigators continue their attempt to identify the suspect. --David Greene

# NORWOOD NEWS

## BACK TO SCHOOL

## GUIDE

### DISTRICT 10

By **DAVID CRUZ**

The days are getting shorter. The tinge of fall is just around the corner. Yep, it's that time of year where children are heading back to school.

The 2014-15 school year comes amid a time of expansion for the city Department of Education, where the de Blasio Administration's universal pre-K program, funded by the state, goes into effect. So far, 50,000 children throughout the city have been registered, according to figures released by the de Blasio Administration. But Comptroller Scott Stringer released a report last week indicating only 30 percent of approved universal pre-K sites have registered.

The semester will also usher in a fourth year of Common Core State Standards, the controversial testing method that raises the complexity of math and English tests for 3rd and 8th grade students.

The 2014 Common Core test scores released by the city Department of Education (DOE) showed that students in District 10, comprised of Norwood, Bedford Park, Kingsbridge Heights, Riverdale, and Mount Hope, fared second best, a point higher than 2013. The progress, albeit minimal, aligns well with the academic status of District 10, ranked as the highest performing school district in the Bronx.

Still, the district remains the most overcrowded school district in the borough, a distinction that goes back to the 1990s. The *Norwood News* broke down the best and worst schools in the district, using data from DOE's 2012-13 Student Progress Report, its most latest statistics.

#### Elementary Schools

District 10 elementary schools comparatively fare better than middle and high schools. Thirty-one elementary schools, running from kindergarten to fifth grade, canvass District 10. In data analyzed by the *Norwood News*, the district's pot of elementary schools earn an average of 55, which translates into an overall progress report grade of B.

Of the 31 schools, P.S. 007 Kingsbridge in Kingsbridge Heights stands

as the most highly ranked school in District 10 with an A rating, according to city Department of Education's 2012-13 Progress Report Overview. Student Progress, Performance and Environment was at District 10's highest, with each category earning a grade of A. On the opposite end of the educational spectrum is P.S. 024 Spuyten Duyvil on West 236th St. in Riverdale. The elementary school, with a current student body of roughly 900, earned a C overall grade with School Environment ranked the worst with an F.

#### Middle Schools

District 10 middle schools currently fare the best compared to elementary and high schools. Twenty-one middle schools cover the district, earning an average grade of A, according to the DOE data. Four of the 21 schools each earn a C grade, which lowered the middle school average.

Data analyzed by the *Norwood News* shows The New School for Leadership and Journalism in Kingsbridge Heights as the best school, earning an A across the categories of Student Progress, Performance and Environment. The school, with an enrollment of 695 sixth, seventh and eighth graders, boasts a record of allowing its students to travel abroad. Female students are able to join a sorority.

The more problematic middle school in the district goes to Thomas C. Giordano Middle School at 2502 Lorillard Pl. in Fordham, pegged with an overall grade of C. There, the school's environment was rated an F.

#### High Schools

For students entering high school in District 10, some may experience either a more intimate setting, a sea of ambitious fellow students or an overwhelmed school attempting to rescue itself from failure. The numbers indicate that District 10 high schools run

the gamut, with one of the city's highest achieving school just blocks away from one of the city's worst.

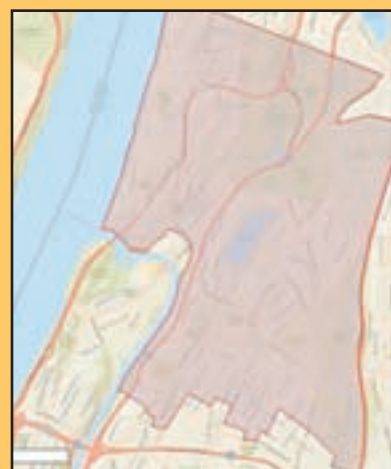
Overall, the 19 high schools in District 10 earned an overall progress report grade of B. The highly ranked high school in District 10 goes to International Leadership Charter High School in the Kingsbridge Heights Neighborhood. With a student body of 291, the school boasts an A across the board, including the College and Career Readiness category.

Earning the distinction as the worst performing school is DeWitt Clinton High School in Norwood, a heavily populated school that nearly closed after underperforming for several years. Its overall progress report grade stands at an F, with swollen student body of nearly 3,700. Student progress fared the worst for the school that once graduated notable figures such as Stan Lee, Ralph Lauren, and Congressman Charles Rangel. These days, the school is known for its daily fights, metal detectors and poor grades.

Not far from Clinton is the specialized Bronx High School of Science, another heavily populated high school which requires that students gain entrance to the school by passing a Specialized High School Admissions Test, an exam that's not well received by parents of black and Hispanic families who believe extracurricular activities should play a role in acceptance to the school. Currently, Asian students make up the bulk of the school with black and Hispanic students comprised of 11 percent of the student body, according to data by the New York State Education Department.

#### School's In

The first full day of public school in New York City is Thursday, Sept. 4. For parents still seeking to enroll their students, the Enrollment Office is found at 1 Fordham Plaza. Their number is (718) 741-8495. For the safety of students and all pedestrians, the city and state have taken prudent steps in deterring speedy drivers along school districts by installing speed cameras (see story on page 1).



# Be Healthy

# 207K

Number of students enrolled  
at Bronx public schools.  
(Source: New York City  
Department of Education)

Vital  
Stats

## Mentally Prepping the Kids for Back to School

No matter if your child is starting their first day of pre-K or their last year of high school, back-to-school season can often stir feelings of anxiety, stress and even fear. While many of these feelings quickly dissipate once the child makes friends and settles into their new environment, some children find the transition to a new grade or school a little more difficult.

“The key to reducing back-to-school jitters is open lines of communication and creating a sense of normalcy and calm,” said Kari Collins, Ph.D., director of mental health services at the Montefiore School Health Program.

Here are some tips for a smooth start to the new school year:

### Lead By Example

Maintain a positive attitude when talking about the new grade or school – highlight how exciting it is to meet new people and make new friends.

Children can sense when their parent is anxious, so remain upbeat and optimistic.

Let your child know that being nervous is a normal feeling and reassure them they will feel more comfortable as time goes on. Share examples of how you felt during your first day at school or a new job and explain that these feelings can be overcome.

### Preparation Is Key

Do walkthroughs: Visit the school campus ahead of time and arrange to meet the teacher. This will help to make your child familiar with the environment and more at ease with the new surroundings.

Gradually transition kids to an earlier bed- and wake-up time. Begin a week before school starts by moving everything in the routine back 15 minutes, for example move dinner to 6.30 p.m. instead of 6.45 p.m., bath time

then happens earlier, as does reading and bedtime.

### Practical Parenting

For preschoolers, set up group play-dates with other children to help them prepare for their new shared environment.

For pre-K and elementary kids, teach them how to introduce themselves to new people. Role play and practice saying “Hi, my name is [Jane]; what’s yours?” Of course it’s important to emphasize the difference between talking to peers and strangers.

### Teen Troubles

While many parents get the impression their teen wants to handle things on their own, it’s important to know what’s going on in your child’s life and offer support and guidance. Get to know the parenting coordinator at school, register for email updates to

be alerted about exams, college fairs, application deadlines and big sporting events. Sign up to receive the academic calendar and make sure you check in with your teen when an important date is approaching so you can offer assistance and let them know you’re there for them.

High school can be the most trying time of all. With more intense academic pressures and a new peer group, it can take longer to adjust. However if you’re still concerned about your teen’s ability to cope with their new environment after the first month of school, seek out resources and assistance from the guidance counselor.

“It’s a parent’s responsibility to know what’s happening in their child’s life and address any issues together,” said Collins. “Offering support, guidance and positive reinforcement goes a long way in helping your child succeed at school.”

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## BUSINESS BEAT

# A Unique Boutique At the BID

By **DAVID CRUZ**

Upon first glance, this boutique women's undergarment business in Norwood looks typical—a cozy atmosphere, cream-colored walls and common items sold at a fashion-centric shop. But if you look closer, the Women's Center at A&O Surgical Supply is just what the doctor ordered.

It's managed by Valerie Pagan, a personable orthotist and prosthetist who manages the salon catering to women who've undergone a mastectomy, a surgical procedure where part or all of a woman's cancerous breast is removed. The store at East Gun Hill Road and Putnam Place is quite unique, and perhaps the only one in the Bronx, according to a check in the online Yellow Pages.

With each visit, Pagan treats it delicately, understanding the trauma of a mastectomy and the apprehension in

arriving to the Women's Center.

"A lot of people are either fragile or in an emotional state," said Pagan. "My job is to make them feel better."

Pagan's background includes working as an operating surgical nurse at Englewood Hospital. In most cases, she is on the road at cancer centers at Columbia-Presbyterian, St. Luke's Hospital and Albert Einstein College of Medicine to evaluate, assess and fit mastectomy patients with the specialized bras.

### The Product

Mastectomy bras—an undergarment with a pocket meant for a silicon-made prosthetic breast—is the signature line of product sold. Two fitting rooms occupy the salon along with a storage room housing various size bras and lymphedema sleeves. "Lumpectomy, mastectomy, breast



**VALERIE PAGAN (R)**, manager of the Women's Center at A&O Surgical Supply, stands alongside employee Daphne Aponte posing with the store's signature product.

surgeries, we fit them all," said Pagan, adding the salon also sells the uncommon M size bras. "We're full service."

Pagan also looks upon a fitting from a physiological angle, factoring the weight of the prosthetic breast and symmetry. "There's a lot of variables," she said, adding Medicare covers the cost of one prosthesis once every two years and four mastectomy bras every six months.

The salon is an intriguing hybrid, mixing the medical needs of a woman with the cosmetic needs of a woman.

"There's nobody else that can, or very few people who do it, certainly not in the Bronx, on the scale that we're doing it," said Dennis O'Brien, Pagan's business partner and owner of A&O Surgical Supply Co., which abuts the center. The supply store at 266 E. Gun Hill Rd. is known for its specialized brand of medical equipment that caters to home needs. Equipment ranges, with thousands of supplies that include bathroom bars, wheelchairs, and even putty for stiff hands in stock.

In the back, a sign reading "It takes months to find a customer, seconds to lose one" can be seen hung by O'Brien's office. O'Brien keeps to that mantra, knowing that "in this business you don't want to lose your referrals."

"If you disappoint the patient, they're not coming back," said O'Brien. "In this business it's better to under-promise than over-deliver."

Competition has gradually become fiercer these days than in the over 40 years O'Brien's been in the business, so much so that he keeps the names of some institutions confidential. Bronx Lebanon and Montefiore Medical Center are regular clients, with some clients in Manhattan.

### Serving JGH-BID

Beyond that, O'Brien also serves as secretary for the Jerome-Gun Hill Business Improvement District, having been affiliated with the BID since the beginning. The change, he's noticed, has been "phenomenal in what's been accomplished."

"The neighborhood was really in decline, there's no other way to put it," said O'Brien, recalling the neighborhood feel prior to the BID's beginnings. "Shootings were common. Matter of fact we had bullets in the building here, from a shooting in the middle of the street at 3:30 in the afternoon."

These days the neighborhood's grown tame, and relatively free of graffiti and garbage thanks largely to the BID. As O'Brien sees it, "when people see graffiti and garbage, everything else is negative."



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# The Last Picture Show Under the Stars

By KASIA ROMANOWSKA

The season of the outdoor movies is coming to an end. But don't be shocked if you see a gigantic inflatable screen in the middle of Fordham Road one last time.

Instead, bring a lawn chair, snacks, and good company to enjoy the last days of summer viewing under the stars with a free film showing in Fordham, courtesy of the Fordham Road Business Improvement District.

This year's final flick, *The Lego Movie* is the first theatrical LEGO adventure film featuring the voices of Will Ferrell and Liam Neeson. It will be screened at Muller Park & Plaza on Fordham Road and Creston Avenue on Friday, Sept. 12 at 7:30 p.m.

The free film initiative started last year after the Fordham Road Business Improvement District (BID), the ad hoc commercial agency that manages the movie series, won the Neighborhood Challenge grant from the city Department of Small Business Services. The grant helped the BID create the

Summer Movie Series, part of a pilot project that offered Bronxites family-friendly films. The movie experience was akin to that seen in Manhattan's Bryant Park, where hundreds regularly turned up for free classics.

In the Bronx, the Summer Movie Series kicked off with four films seen throughout the summer last year. In April, July and September a few hundred people had the chance to watch *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Brave* or *Despicable Me*.

The production of the free movie series is about as hectic as producing a movie.

"There's a lot of background that goes into it. You have to get permits, approvals and copyrights," said Daniel Bernstein, co-executive director of the Fordham BID.

It can take a few months to organize the whole event. The BID is also a host of many other community events, such as A Bronx Storytelling and Music Festival at Poe Park or Fordham Fever Friday. The services, particularly



Photo courtesy Fordham Road BID

**THE FORDHAM BID** scored another great turnout among Bronxites for this year's free movie screening.

the movie events, have been part of the commercial agency's "Taste of the BID" initiative. It's intended to entice non-BID property owners to be affiliated with the BID and to help "expand the boundaries to improve this location." "And that was successful," Bernstein added.

Early this summer, over 100 moviegoers came to see *Frozen*, the Disney computer-animated musical comedy. Turnout surprised even the organizers.

The Summer Movie Series caps a relatively successful time for the Fordham BID, now on the heels of including the massive One Fordham Plaza office tower to its boundaries, continuing its status as the borough's biggest BID. Roughly 300 stores make up the BID, with national chains abutting family-owned small businesses.

For more information about the latest movie event, log on to [www.fordhamroadbid.com](http://www.fordhamroadbid.com).

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# NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

## School Registration

The Department of Education has Registration Centers open at various sites in the Bronx from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for new and re-entering students. To find the center nearest you, call 311.

## MMCC Services

The Mosholu Montefiore Community Center offers a number of services including SAT prep classes beginning Sept. 11 (ext. 350); food stamps (ext. 304); both at 3450 DeKalb Ave. For more information and details of classes and programs, call (718) 882-4000. In addition, there is Head Start and Universal Pre-K at the Van Cortlandt Jewish Center at 3880 Sedgwick Ave. Call (718) 654-0563 for more information.

## Special Needs Services

Parent Advocacy Services offers help for parents of children with special needs, finding the right high school for one's child and preparing students for college. For more information email Hazel Adams-Shango at info@BeingSpecialNYC.com.

## Citizens Police Academy

The 52nd Precinct is seeking two people to represent the stationhouse for the NYPD's 14-week Citizens Police Academy program, beginning Sept. 10 and then every following Tuesday. Applicants will undergo a background check. For more information, call Police Office Crystal Reveron at (718) 220-5824.

## Cash for Guns

Trade in guns for money, no questions asked, at three Bronx churches on Saturday, Sept. 20 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information and details, contact your local precinct.

## New York Cares Seeks Volunteers

New York Cares seeks volunteers to offer assistance in their communities. Applicants may attend a one-time orientation at Mott Haven Library on Tuesday, Sept. 9, or any other Bronx location. For more information or to register for an orientation in your area, call (212) 228-5000.

## Food Bank Assistance

The Food Bank of New York offers free meals and food for the needy throughout the Bronx. They also assist with other services including food stamps, income tax returns, job training, and legal assistance. To find a location near you, call (212) 566-7855 or visit <http://www.foodbanknyc.org/news/find-help>.

## NCBH Seeks Volunteers

North Central Bronx Hospital seeks volunteers to join its Auxiliary unit that helps plan special projects and group events. To apply, call (718) 519-4746. To volunteer to help with patients or elsewhere in the hospital, call (718) 519-4840.

## Recycle Clothes and Food

Recycle old clothes, food scraps for compost, and other textiles at GrowNYC's Poe Park Greenmarket, 192nd Street and the Grand Concourse, Tuesdays from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., through Nov. 25. For more information, call (212) 788-7964.

## Homebuying Assistance

The Northwest Bronx Resource Center hosts homebuying counseling workshops on the first or third Friday of every month. For more information or to RSVP for an appointment with a HUD counselor, call (718) 933-3101.

## 52nd Precinct Explorers

The 52nd Precinct Law Enforcement Explorers meets Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. at 3016 Webster Ave. The group is open to youth ages 14 to 20. Learn about law enforcement as a career, meet with local police officers, participate in projects, trips, and various activities. For more information, call PO Yvette Palermo-Ortega at (718) 220-5833.

## MMC Seeks Volunteers

Montefiore Medical Center offers volunteer opportunities in both patient and non-patient settings for those ages 16 and over, willing to donate a few hours. In-person interviews are required and are by appointment only. All volunteers are screened and trained. For more information including requirements, call (718) 920-4321.

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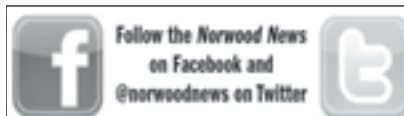
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**Wilder Balter PARTNERS, INC.**

# The Need for Speed Cams

(continued from page 1)

costs by \$9 million, according to city officials. In all, there will be 120 new cameras affixed to either cars or lampposts throughout the city, adding to the 20 older speed cameras in place. Three new cameras have been installed and calibrated, with roughly 40 new cameras to be hoisted by the end of the year.

Though PS 95 is slated to be in the mix of schools that will benefit from the cameras, it's still unclear which school zones will have cameras. Priority will be given to school zones with a troubled history of high traffic-related incidents, with input on the installations to be provided by local community boards. According to traffic statistics, from 2008 to 2012 there were 42 traffic-related incidents reported near PS 95. Seven of those accidents involved a pedestrian injury. The volume of accidents deemed the area a high crash corridor.

## Qualifying Schools?

A list compiled by the DOT during the Bloomberg Administration detailed high speed zones in school districts within the Bronx, mainly the Belmont/Fordham neighborhoods. They include:

Bronx Community Charter School

- 2348 Webster Ave. - Fordham Heights/Belmont

PS 159 Luis Munoz Marin Biling - 2315 Washington Ave. - Fordham Heights/Belmont

PS 163 Arthur A. Schomburg School - 2075 Webster Ave. - Fordham Heights/Belmont

PS 209 - 313 E. 183rd St. - Fordham

PS 23 The New Children's School - 2151 Washington Ave. - Belmont

PS 59 The Community School of Technology - Fordham Heights/Belmont

Should the city adhere to the list, it could work as a primer for where the cameras would be placed. So far, the DOT did not disclose a concrete plan to identify those school zones.

## Advocates Push for Cameras

The need for speed cameras began with advocates pushing for a change in the culture of city driving. In the Bronx, Greg Thompson Jr. of Tremont is part of Families for Safe Streets, a grassroots group that spreads awareness on safer driving. Thompson was compelled to be a founding member following the death of his sister, killed by a driver in Manhattan.

"All it takes is a second to be inconsiderate for a family like mine to suffer what we're suffering right



Photo by Adi Talwar

**MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO** scopes out the new mobile speed cameras placed near Bronx schools in an effort to deter reckless motorists.

now," said Thompson.

The state later responded with Governor Andrew Cuomo signing a bill authorizing New York City to install additional speed cameras within a quarter-mile of a school zone. Drivers are mandated to drive within the 20mph restriction to take into account passing schoolchildren.

The news came with relief for

Yani Fernandez, a resident of Amalgamated Houses near PS 95. On school days she's seen plenty of drivers pick up speed only to make a hard stop. "It's just very crazy in this area," said Fernandez, also pointing down the block to a five point intersection that produces all types of hectic maneuvering.

It will take up to two years for all 120 new cameras to be installed.



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is fighting hard to move our community forward.

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## VOTE JOSÉ RIVERA — September 9th

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# Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

## EDITOR'S PICK

### The Public Is Invited...

To a **free outdoor movie**, "The Lego Movie," on Sept. 12 at 7:30 p.m. at Muller Park and Plaza, East Fordham Road and Creston Avenue. Bring a chair or blanket. For more information, call (718) 562-2104.

To a **free film**, "The Fix," sponsored by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine Division of Substance Abuse, Sept. 5, at CUNY School of Public Health at Lehman College's Lovinger Theatre, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W. Doors open at 6 p.m.; film begins at 6:30 p.m. Panel discussion and appetizer buffet will follow film. For more information, contact sreynoso@dosa.aecom.yu.edu.

## Onstage

• The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents trio performing **Salute to the Duke**, songs by Duke Ellington, Sept. 6; and **La Gioconda**, performed by the NY Opera Forum, Sept. 13; both at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

• The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd. W., presents "**Obsesión**" featuring singer Danny Rivera, musical director Nelson González, pianist Emilio Morales, and a number of other Latin performers, Sept. 20 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$45 to \$60. For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

• Lasorsa Auto Group, 3510 Webster Ave., presents free, "**Just Nuts**," Sept. 6 from 4 to 7 p.m., featuring Jill Tirrell and hosted by comedian Roman Suarez. For more information, call (718) 828-2880.

## Events

• Soul Stoned Brothers and Tats Cru announce **Mural Tribute to Christopher "Shadow" Lee**, a highly-skilled sought-after artist, at The Point, 940 Garrison Ave., Sept. 6 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., open to the press only. The public and press are invited to a free buffet at Escape Restaurant and Lounge, 3489 Jerome Ave. starting at 2 p.m. For more information, call (646) 460-4404.

• Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (165th Street), presents free **First Friday**, Sept.

5, 6 to 10 p.m., featuring film, art performances, music and other special events. For more information, call (718) 681-6000.

• Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Arts Projects**: Become a Palisades Protector, to make a painted and collaged image to added to a group panorama installation, Sept. 6 and 7; and Frankenthaler Outdoor Painting, to paint a WH scene, Sept. 13 and 14; both in WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Grounds admission is free Saturdays and Tuesdays until noon all year. For more information and a schedule of events including tours and walks, call (718) 549-3200.

• The Jerome-Gun Hill BID presents its **Fall Festival**, Sept. 20 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. rain or shine, on Jerome Avenue between Mosholu Parkway and East Gun Hill Road. Activities include kids' jamboree, games, rides, chess lessons, domino tournament, and a celebrity basketball game and clinic. For more information, call (718) 324-4946.

## Exhibits

• The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, presents **Beyond the Supersquare**, featuring a variety of artwork, through Jan. 11. For more detailed information, call (718) 681-6000.

## Library Events

• The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children: **Gustafer Yelowgold**: Tale for ages 3 to 12, Sept. 13 at 2 p.m. For adults, there is **Advance Microsoft Word 2010**: Sept. 10 at 6

p.m. (in-person registration required); and **Computer Basics**: Sept. 11 at 2 p.m. (in-person registration required). For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

• The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children: **Body Basics**: (ages 3 to 12), Sept. 16 at 4 p.m. Teens/young adults can attend **Get Fresh**: Learn to make air fresheners, Sept. 4 at 4 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

• The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers

for kids: **Active Health at 4 p.m.**: (yoga and zumba, ages 5 to 12), Sept. 5, 12 and 19; and **Toddler Time at 11 a.m.**: (18 to 36 months), Sept. 10 and 17. For adults: **Computer Basics Open Lab at noon**: Sept. 4, 11, 16 and 18. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

**NOTE:** Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org), and should be received by Sept. 8 for the next publication date of Sept. 18.

## MUSICAL THRILLS AT OVAL PARK



Photo by Adi Talwar

**THE SOUNDTRACK AT** the Williamsbridge Oval Park on Aug. 25 was Latin, with Orchestra SCC lighting up the park with its brand of salsa tunes. The festivities were part of the Summer Concert Series sponsored by Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz and the Bronx Council on the Arts.

**Starting Saturday, September 27 And Every Other Saturday**

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Pork Chops, Grilled Chicken  
Breast or Tilapia.

#### Side Choices:

Rice & Beans, Fried  
Green Plantains,  
Fried Sweet Plantains,  
French Fries,  
Mashed Potatoes or  
Steamed Vegetables

### Choice of Dessert

Ice Cream or Flan

### Choice of Beverage

Optional for an Additional \$1  
Soda (Cola or Ginger Ale), Water,  
Iced Tea or Lemonade

If you have food allergies, please inform  
a staff member. *Si tiene alergias de comestibles,  
por favor decirle a uno de los empleados*

### Tacos

3 Tacos  
(Beef or Chicken)

French Fries  
and a Soda  
or Water



### Hamburger

2 Mini Burgers, French Fries  
and a Soda or Water



### Fried Rice

(Chicken or Beef) and a Soda or Water

### Choice of Salad

Optional for an Additional \$2  
Caesar, Mixed Greens or Watercress

If you have food allergies, please inform  
a staff member. *Si tiene alergias de comestibles,  
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