

Jewish school proposal riles Cambria folks

BY SADEF ALI KULLY

Almost a hundred Cambria Heights residents, including civic association and elected officials, collectively spoke out against a proposed religious school for the Chabad-Lubavitch community in Cambria Heights Dec. 3 during a land use hearing at Borough Hall in Kew Gardens.

A Chabad-Lubavitch entity, a sect of the Hasidic Jewish community, proposed construct a four-story religious school and dormitory which would cater to over 300 students not including the 64 that would be living on the premises. The school, covering three properties 224-12 and 224-20 Francis Lewis Blvd., would be next door to one of the holiest sites for the Chabad-Lubavitch in North America, the Ohel Chabad-Lubavitch, the burial site of the famed Rebbe Menachem Schneerson at the Montefiore Cemetery.

The proposal requires a variance to allow a construction of such a large size in an R2A zoned neighborhood. R2A, is a residential zoning district, which allows for the expansion of existing homes, but the facade has to be consis-

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Forest Hills still burning

City authorities meet with Bukharian leaders to discuss boosting security

BY GABRIEL ROM

After six weeks of fear and uncertainty as an arsonist targets homes being built by Bukharian Jews, city authorities are stepping up foot patrols and surveillance measures throughout the besieged Forest Hills community.

Community leaders met Tuesday morning with Borough President Melinda Katz, NYPD Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce and a host of other city lawmakers. Packed into The Bukharian Jewish Community Center in Forest Hills, they offered what reassurance they could.

"This is something that we take extremely seriously and the community stands together in making sure that we find this arsonist that is out there destroying not only people's homes, but people's lives and people's dreams," Katz said at a news conference following the meeting.

On Monday, the NYPD added two fire sites to the list of suspected arsons that now stretches back to Oct. 20. All of them have targeted Jewish-owned homes under construction in the heavily Bukharian neighborhood of Cord Meyer.

After Tuesday's meeting, civic and religious leaders

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NYPD Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce emerges from a meeting with leaders at the Bukharian Jewish Center after the seventh arson incident in the neighborhood. Borough President Melinda Katz (r) and the area's City Council member Karen Koslowitz arranged the meeting.

Photo by Micahel Shain



The NYPD reclassifies Sarker Haque's beating as a hate crime investigation after a second interview with the Astoria shopkeeper.

Photo by Bill Parry

Muslim man attacked in Astoria

BY SADEF KULLY AND BILL PARRY

The NYPD's investigation into Saturday's beating of a Muslim shopkeeper in Astoria has been reclassified as a possible hate crime, according to the commander of the 114th

Precinct.

The suspect in the attack was arrested and charged with assault and criminal mischief, but after a second interview with 53-year-old Sarker Haque, the NYPD's Hate Crimes Unit was notified.

"When my guys first got

there, at no point did he mention there was a religious epithet," NYPD Capt. Peter Fortune said. "Maybe he was in shock or there was a language barrier, but since then the victim has mentioned 'I kill Muslims.' Once that came

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Jamaica residents list gripes at transit forum

BY SADEF ALI KULLY

The city Department of Transportation's first public meeting on the Jamaica Transportation Study brought in a full house of community members and elected officials' representatives with a long list of complaints.

The traffic study is designed to examine how to regulate congestion in the busy transit hub.

The study consists of three parts focused on neighborhoods in and around South Ozone Park, Richmond Hill, Jamaica, Hollis, St. Albans and Rochdale Village.

The Dec. 2 public forum was called to identify issues such as pedestrian and bicyclist safety, traffic and congestion, parking, truck movement and loading, transit, quality of life and environmental factors.

"Jamaica has always been recognized as a growth center and the input we receive tonight will literally write the next chapter of this study phase," Department of Transportation Borough Commissioner Nicole Garcia said.

Hollis resident Sharon Linder, who has lived in the

area for 63 years, came with a prepared letter addressed to each of her elected officials in her district as well as the borough president.

"I not a community activist or anything. I am a regular citizen who is concerned," Linder said. "My mama left me this home and I want to leave it to my daughter when my time comes. But if this area continues to go downhill, she won't want our family home."

Linder wanted a larger police presence at both transit hubs, Parsons Boulevard and Sutphin Boulevard stations, as well as more police attention to such issues as vehicles parked in the bus lane, illegal dollar cabs, double-parked commuter vans and criminal activity.

Each table was devoted to a transportation issue, such as traffic, pedestrian safety and trucks, where a designated DOT representative would sit with community members and pinpoints problem sites on a large map.

Michael Griffith, who is leading the study, said all the information gathered from the community will help identify problems. The data

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Joe Moretti (c), a Jamaica blogger, points out to DOT officials the area in his neighborhood where large trucks are a nuisance.

Photo by Sadeef Kully



LaGuardia Community College student veterans celebrate a \$20,000 gift from NYSID to establish a new Battle Buddy Center at the school.
Photo courtesy LaGuardia Community College

Student vets get center

LaGuardia CC given grant to set up Battle Buddy facility

BY BILL PARRY

LaGuardia Community College has received a \$20,000 grant from the New York State Industries for the Disabled, Inc. to establish a Battle Buddy Center for student veterans. The new center will replace and expand the Veterans Services Center that has been at the Long Island City college since shortly after it opened in 1971.

The Battle Buddy Center will be a one-stop comprehensive service and recreation facility for veterans transitioning from military service to student life, according to school officials. Resources will include registration guidance, benefits assistance, career advising, peer mentoring, computer resources, and opportunities to meet other veterans enrolled at the college.

"We are committed to providing our veterans with the support they need to have a smooth path towards college and earning a degree," La-

Guardia Community College President Gail Mellow said. "Since we opened our doors over 40 years ago, LaGuardia Community College has provided veterans with education, training and services they need as they transition."

There are currently more than 350 veterans enrolled at the college. Each served an average of six years in the military.

LaGuardia student Rick Malone, a U.S. Coast Guard veteran and vice president of the Student Veterans Club, spoke of the importance of having a dedicated facility for veterans during the presentation of the grant last week.

"We know firsthand how difficult things can seem shortly after leaving the highly disciplined world of the military," he said. "And we hope this new center will help make the transition to civilian life as easy as possible."

The Battle Buddy Center is NYSID's 10th facility created since 2011 in colleges around

the state, but it is its first one in Queens. "Battle Buddy" is a military concept that partners soldiers to assist each other both in and out of combat and it offers activities to encourage camaraderie and foster veterans to give and receive mutual support.

"NYSID supports LaGuardia Community College and its veterans services office in assisting veterans to achieve success personally, academically and professionally," NYSID President and CEO Ron Romano said. "NYSID supports job creation efforts for a diverse group of New Yorkers with disabilities through our member agencies and assists with veteran's support programs, promoting quality of life for veterans as they reconnect to the New York state workforce."

Reach reporter Bill Parry by e-mail at bparry@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4538.

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Rego Park soup kitchen looking for new home

Masbia Food Pantry, which serves kosher meals to underprivileged, may close doors

BY GABRIEL ROM

A Rego Park food pantry and soup kitchen that helps the homeless, among others, may soon be homeless itself.

According to Alexander Rapaport, co-founder and executive director of the Masbia network of kosher soup kitchens and food pantries, the group's lease on its current location at 98-08 Queens Blvd. has already expired and they may be forced to vacate within the next few weeks.

"Our landlord wants to develop the site and we are really having trouble finding a new location," Rapaport said. "We have known for a long time that at some point we would need to move."

Rapaport pointed out that when looking for new real estate in the area, Masbia carries a certain stigma because of the service it.

"There are vacant storefronts on our block that don't want to sell to us," he said.



Masbia, a kosher soup kitchen, has served over one million meals to the needy in Queens.

"When some brokers hear that we are a food bank, they run away, they would prefer a bank. But we are trying. Everything is in flux."

Since 2005 Masbia has served as a refuge for the city's hungry residents who follow kosher dietary restrictions.

The non-profit, which has three locations in Brooklyn, opened in Rego Park in 2010 and now serves hot dinners five nights a week.

"Hopefully, we will never get to the point where we have to close," Rapaport concluded.

Government funds account for less than 40 percent of Masbia's budget, Rapaport told the TimesLedger in 2014. This included \$105,000 from the City Council in fiscal year 2015. The remaining amount of Masbia's funding comes from private donations, he added.

Reach reporter Gabriel Rom by e-mail at grom@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4564.

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Move NY toll plan splits Queens

Electeds, community leaders divided over proposal to impose fee on East River bridge crossings

BY MADINA TOURE

Lawmakers and community leaders are divided over Move NY's proposed tolling plan for East River bridges.

Over the weekend, state Assemblyman David Weprin (D-Fresh Meadows), state Sen. Tony Avella (D-Bayside), City Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Assemblywoman Alicia Hyndman and others rallied against the proposal, which calls for the addition of a \$5.54 cashless toll on the four East River bridges—the Ed Koch Queensboro, Williamsburg, Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges — if drivers use E-ZPass or an \$8 cash toll. There would only be electronic tolling.

The tolls would be employed to reduce traffic in the city and lower transit costs for New Yorkers. The plan also would reduce tolls on the Henry Hudson, Cross Bay, Marine Parkway-Gil Hodges Memorial, RFK/Triborough, Whitestone, Throgs Neck and Verrazano-Narrows Bridges.



State Assemblyman David Weprin (l.) and state Sen. Tony Avella (r.) have led the opposition to Move NY's tolling proposal.

Photo by Ellis Kaplan

Weprin has introduced legislation in the Assembly that would ban the city from placing tolls on the East River

bridges. Avella has sponsored legislation in the Senate.

Weprin's alternative is bringing back the 1 percent

commuter tax on workers who do not live in the city, half of which will go to the MTA and the other half toward the city

for expenses such as sanitation, police, fire and transportation.

"It's going to disproportionately affect Queens residents and it's going to disproportionately affect small businesses and low- and moderate-income people that can't afford it," he said.

Alex Matthiessen, Move NY's campaign director, said the proposal caps the number of tolls for commercial businesses or vehicles at one round-trip toll per day and that it will create a \$350 million dedicated road and bridge fund.

"The system we've got is completely broken and these guys (Avella, Weprin) know that and we've got a plan that's been five years in the making and which reflects the input of hundreds of thousands of stakeholders," Matthiessen said.

He said Move NY is planning to introduce legislation some time during the next legislative session in 2016 and is in the process of drafting the bill.

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Mayor joins boro Muslims to denounce Calif. attacks

BY SADEF ALI KULLY

Less than 24 hours after Mayor Bill de Blasio spoke about the Muslim community as an ally, Sarker Haque, a Muslim grocery store owner in Astoria, was reading the news in the middle of a slow afternoon moments when he was attacked by a 50-year old Florida man, police said.

Haque, who has lived in the city for 16 years, said his attacker said he would kill Muslims while punching him several times. He was scared for his life.

While federal authorities in California pieced together the reasons behind the fatal shooting that left 14 dead in San Bernardino, de Blasio joined the Muslim community last Friday at the Jamaica Muslim Center to condemn



At the Jamaica Muslim Center on 168th St., members of the congregation welcome the mayor and condemn the recent attack in California.

Photo by Sadeef Kully

the attacks.

Hundreds of members of the congregation, the young and old, gathered to welcome the mayor at a time when Muslims across the world face

criticism as terrorist assaults on innocent lives in the name of their religion grab media headlines.

After Queens' Muslim leadership
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NYPD investigates homegrown terrorists

BY SADEF ALI KULLY

call for the NYPD.

The NYPD counterterrorism unit for Patrol Borough Queens North spoke Tuesday with district managers for Queens community boards at Borough Hall about new tactical training and gathering intelligence on would-be terrorists.

The attacks in San Bernardino, Calif., and Paris have local, federal and international authorities following up on intelligence and looking for clues to thwart future attacks.

The married couple in California who fatally shot 14 people gave no hints of radicalization until federal investigators delved deep into their social media accounts.

In New York, the Paris and California onslaughts have become a real wake-up

In the past year, Queens has been home to five accused terrorists and their failed plots. All of the suspects in those plots have been arrested. If convicted, they are facing life sentences in federal prison.

"There are no credible threats but that does not mean we stop doing our jobs," Lt. Thomas Loeffel from the Patrol Borough Queens North Counterterrorism Unit said.

Loeffel said the Paris attack changed the way the NYPD was looking at possible terrorist assaults. Rather than just focusing on hard targets, such as tourist attractions, police will also focus on softer targets such as busy areas similar to the cafés that were attacked in Paris.

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New parks initiative looks for fresh ideas

BY TOM MOMBERG

The city Department of Parks and Recreation is asking residents to help it find ways to improve parks throughout the city by making suggestions about how some of the \$50 million from Mayor Bill de Blasio's OneNYC plan should be allocated.

Parks Commissioner Mitchell Silver presented the Parks Without Borders initiative to Borough President Melinda Katz and the Queens Borough Board Monday, hoping community board leaders would encourage their neighborhoods to take part.

The department launched a web page in mid-November where people can make suggestions on a map. The page, <http://www.nycgovparks.org/planning-and-building/planning/parks-without-borders>, will only be live for a set period of time, closing to the public after Feb. 28.

"This is the first time we have asked New Yorkers throughout the city where they think we should be making park improvements," Parks Deputy Director of Planning Steve Leonard said. "Not only can you suggest individual parks, but you can zoom in on the park and tell us exactly what you want, exactly where you want it."

The initiative specifically aims to improve accessibility and visibility in parks throughout the city to make them more inviting and to encourage more use and stronger care for the urban green spaces.

About \$40 million of the

initiative's funds have been allocated for new improvement projects at eight existing parks. Silver guaranteed each borough at least one project.

Once the projects are selected based on community input, the department said it would adhere to the typical capital design process, which requires community board input.

As Silver stressed the importance of lowering fences and shrubs to open up and connect parks with neighborhoods to serve as centers of communities, borough board members had concerns for the potential impact on crime, particularly in larger parks where visibility is limited.

"We've been asking for additional park enforcement officers and a mounted unit to cover Highland Park and Forest Park," Community Board 5 Chairman Vincent Arcuri said. "We've spent tons of money on the (Ridge-wood) Reservoir, which is not really accessible. We need our parks to be accessible, but we also need security."

Silver said each project would deal with specific concerns, working with the community before considering keeping gates unlocked and removing fences.

"This is voluntary," Silver said. "If people have discomfort about the program to either lower, eliminate or open up (fences) and the edges (of parks), we have thousands of choices and if there isn't a level of public support, we will not proceed."

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NYCHA to be updated

Agency CEO outlines progress and challenges in Queens

BY TOM MOMBERG

New York City Housing Authority Chairwoman Shola Olatoye faces a unique challenge in the city and in Queens: updating an outdated model for public housing while also trying to make up revenue lost because of cuts in federal funding.

Olatoye visited the Editors Roundtable at the Community News Group's Brooklyn offices last week to outline the progress she has made since being appointed by Mayor Bill de Blasio in February 2014.

She said that over two-thirds of NYCHA's housing stock is more than 60 years old, which leaves the agency with \$17 billion in capital needs.

"Our plan is based around updating our funding model and operating model—and underlining this effort is the question of how we interact with our residents," Olatoye said.

A lack of funding is one of the biggest issues, which has resulted in tangible neglect of public housing in every corner of the city.

In Queens, the result of funding cuts can be seen in the many single-family homes owned and operated by NYCHA, which whether occupied or abandoned, have fallen into



NYCHA Chairwoman Shola Olatoye briefs the editors of Community News Group on some of the agency's new initiatives.

Photo by Stefano Giovannini

disrepair.

Olatoye said NYCHA is standing ready to work on those houses with state Homes and Community Renewal pending federal approval. The city bought up many of those

homes in areas like Jamaica in past decades, when blocks of housing were neglected and attracted little interest from

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Rail line passes first CB5 vote

BY GABRIEL ROM

Community Board 5's Transportation and Public Transit committees narrowly recommended Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley's (D-Glendale) proposed commuter-rail plan from Glendale to Long Island City at a meeting last week.

John Maier, co-chair of the Transportation Services Committee, drafted a resolution for both committees to vote on in support of Crowley's concept during the committees' joint meeting.

The committees voted 7-5 in favor of the resolution, with one non-vote and one abstention.

Crowley hopes to establish a rail commuter service line from Glendale to Long Island

City on the LIRR Lower Montauk line, which carried passenger service until the late 1990s and is currently lightly used to transport freight.

The plan would create new passenger stations at the Atlas Park Mall in Glendale, the M train station at Metropolitan Avenue in Middle Village, the abandoned Fresh Pond Road station beneath the Metropolitan Avenue overpass, Flushing Avenue in Maspeth and the Hunters Point Terminal in Long Island City.

"We have an elected official who has spoken to agencies trying to get resources invested in a part of the city that doesn't have many resources for mass transit," said Toby Sheppard Bloch, a CB 5 member who lives more than a

mile from the nearest subway station. "It seems like a slam dunk."

Crowley anticipates a rail car to cost about \$3 million. The tracks and the right-of-way—two of the most expensive pieces—have been secured for the future project, according to a Crowley spokeswoman. Bob Holden, a committee member, said the plan would only be feasible if it went to Jamaica and was connected to the Rockaway Line, which he said would alleviate many commuting problems on Woodhaven Boulevard.

"They need a transportation master plan," he said. "The plan is not really a plan, it's just an idea."

See full story on Timesledger.com



Parks Commissioner Mitchell Silver (l.) and his deputy director of planning, Steve Leonard, answer questions from the Queens Borough Board regarding the new Parks Without Borders initiative.

Photo by Tom Momberg

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Mayor's stats wrong on Rikers: Seabrook

BY BILL PARRY

The rift between the head of the prison guards' union and City Hall over safety at Rikers Island is growing wider.

During a graduation ceremony for nearly 600 new correction officers last Friday, Mayor Bill de Blasio and Department of Correction Commissioner Joseph Ponte highlighted the reduction in serious assaults on staff and the city's unprecedented investments of nearly \$200 million in new staff, equipment, training, technology and repairs for correction officer safety.

They said that inmate assaults on staff with serious injury have dropped 11 percent this year, and uses of force with serious injuries are down 17 percent department-wide during the same period.

"We know the challenges of this job, and this is why we are deploying every tool we have to fulfill our obligation to protect New York's Boldest," de Blasio said. "For too long, Rikers was an unsafe island for both officers and inmates, but through sustained investments and dedicated leadership, we are rewriting the tale of Rikers and transforming it into an island of safety, fairness and rehabilitation."

The graduates will play a key role in Ponte's 14-point anti-violence agenda, rolled out earlier this year, which includes new strategies to keep weapons and drugs out of the jails, control house inmates more effectively to reduce violence, bring comprehensive camera coverage to DOC facilities and implement educational opportunities to keep inmates meaningfully occupied.

"Our 14-point anti-violence reform agenda is creating safer jails," Ponte said. "It has taken some time, but now the statistics are beginning to catch up to the innovations. We cannot return to the failed methods of the past, and we will continue our push until a culture of safety reigns in the Department. DOC will once again command its rightful place as a national leader in the field of correction."



Union President Norman Seabrook rips Mayor de Blasio for selectively choosing statistics to show a decline of violence at Rikers Island.

Courtesy of COBA

After Ponte's comments when the mayor had departed, the president of the Correction Officers' Benevolent Association Norman Seabrook, went ballistic on the statistics.

"You are entitled to your own opinion but not your own facts," Seabrook said. "Selectively choosing statistics to show a reduction in violence directed at jail staff is simply disingenuous. Just look at what happened to Officer Calderon, who was slashed within an inch of his life only last month, and it's clear the jails are not getting safer for staff."

Correction Officer Raymond Calderon, 31, was in the graduation audience. He needed 26 stitches to close wounds he received on his head, face and hands in a slashing attack by two inmates on Rikers Island. The union contends that this year, through the end of November, there have been 280 serious injuries to correction officers, including fractures, stitches, slashes and more. That is compared to 216 injuries last year, they said.

Transit

Continued from Page 2

will be collected and then observed by DOT officials at the specific site over several months before the conclusion of the study, which is tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2017.

Residents like Joe Moretti, founder of Cleanup Jamaica Now blog, had

a range of issues they wanted to see addressed, but the biggest issue for Moretti is large trucks and private waste trucks coming down his street at all hours of the day.

"Instead of the trucks going around on Hillside and traveling down a main street to get to Jamaica Avenue, they take shortcuts into residential streets where they have no business being," he said.

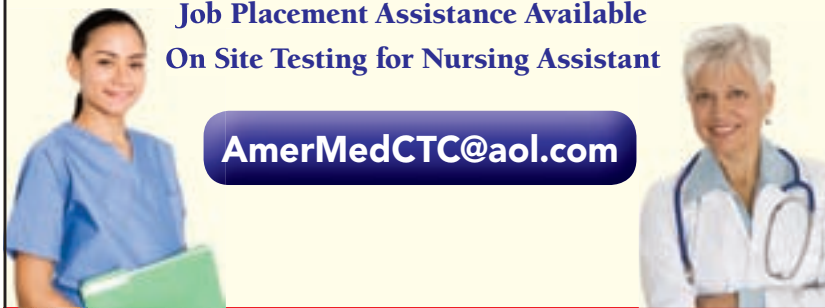
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Cadillac Man gets a place of his own

After decades on Astoria streets, homeless veteran lands an apartment with help of friends

BY BILL PARRY

Cadillac Man has come in from the cold. Thomas Wagner, perhaps the most famous homeless person in the borough, moved into his own one-bedroom apartment after spending most of the last 21 years living on the streets of Astoria.

After fumbling with the lock of his new home in the George T. Douris Tower, Wagner entered his immaculate, freshly painted and sun-splashed new home Friday with members of his support group known as the "Cadillac Care Team," several people who spent years trying to get the 65-year-old homeless veteran off the streets for good.

Known as Cadillac Man, after he claimed he was struck by several of them during a six-week stretch nearly 15 years ago, Wagner became a cause celebre in literary circles after penning his memoir, "Land of Lost Souls: My Life on the Streets," which was published in 2009.

After reading Wagner's self-described survivors guide to homelessness, film actor Richard Gere was inspired to portray a vagrant in the hit movie "Time Out of Mind" last year. Wagner and his girlfriend Carol Vogel were Gere's guests of honor at the film's premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

"Richard is a real friend of mine, we talk often," Wagner said in the warmth of his new home. "He once asked me how much would I need to get off the street and I said nah. I couldn't take money from a friend."

And so he stayed homeless, living mostly in the 33rd Street viaduct of the Hell Gate Bridge, which he can see from his living room on the 12th floor of the Douris Tower, the affordable housing for seniors building on Hoyt Avenue South. Wagner shared a small apartment in East Elmhurst for a brief period last year before the landlord sold the property.

"I've been out there 24/7 with no shelter, living on trains, in factories, even in the mausoleums at St. Michael's Cemetery over on Astoria Boulevard," Wagner said. "I was convinced I was going to



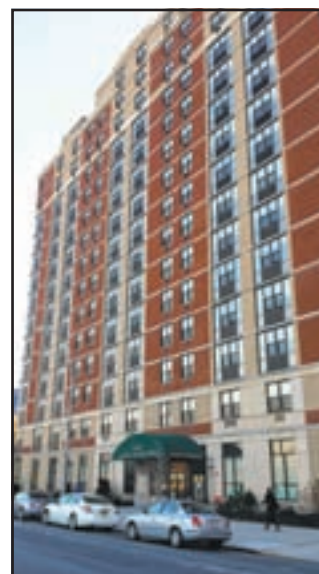
Cadillac Man toasts the first day in his new home after spending most of the last 21 years living on the streets of Astoria.

Photo by Bill Parry



Thomas Wagner sees the 33rd Street viaduct (above) of the Hell Gate Bridge, where he used to live, from his new apartment. Cadillac Man can now look out on the streets that once were his home from his 12th-floor apartment in the George T. Douris Tower.

Photos by Bill Parry



die out there. I tried living in a shelter, but I had a bad experience there. Everyone has a horror story from the shelters."

He would not go into specifics as to what he experienced but remembered life on the streets during the Giuliani administration.

"Whenever it got dangerously cold they would give you the choice: shelter or jail," Wagner said. "Many chose jail."

Cadillac Man began his life in the streets in 1994 after losing several jobs in New Jersey. He was arrested for shoplifting, which made employment harder to find.

The collapse of his second marriage soon followed and Wagner found himself homeless and depressed living in each borough except for Staten Island. In 2001 he stepped off the N train at the Ditmars Avenue station, and he fell in love with Astoria.

TimesLedger reporter Matthew Monks introduced Cadillac Man to Queens readers in 2005. After several interviews with him, Monks wrote: "Cadillac knows hundreds of local residents by name and cherishes his role as the block's street dwelling concierge. He spends hours each morning greeting people on their way to work. Despite the man's imposing

presence - he's a beefy 6-foot-1 with an intense, wind-chapped face - many stop and chat."

A decade later Cadillac was still so much in love with the neighborhood, he refused to leave when he had a chance. Nicole Branca, an assistant commissioner at the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs met with Cadillac Man in September, when she presented him with several housing options that were available to him because he served in the Army between 1968 to 1971.

"The apartments that became available weren't anywhere near Astoria," Branca recalled. "The people in the

neighborhood had become his family and he really didn't want to leave them."

Branca left Cadillac Man that morning because she had a business lunch set up with John Napolitano, the director of community development and planning at HANAC, Inc., the owners of three senior assisted-living centers in Astoria.

"I told John about Cadillac Man and he said he just happened to have a vacancy in the Douris Tower," Branca said. The 184-unit senior living facility, with support services, 24-hour security, senior center, library and rooftop terrace had one more thing: a vacant one-bedroom apartment that was set aside for homeless veterans.

The "Cadillac Care Team" swung into action procuring a Section 8 subsidy for veterans paid for by the federal government.

Last Friday, Cadillac Man, Branca, his friend Cynthia Stuart, administrators from HANAC and Commissioner Loree Sutton, of the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs, stood in a circle in his new living room, toasting him with sparkling cider.

"This is absolutely mind-boggling, it's like a dream come true," Cadillac Man said, his voice cracking with emotion. "These people right here all know how much I love Astoria and now I have a million dollar view of it."

He was given a bag full of towels, sheets and a welcome mat with a capitol C as a house warming gift. The man who wrote of "scattering peanut shells" around himself before going to sleep so he would hear intruders approach out on the streets was awaiting the delivery of his new bed — the first one he would own since 1994.

"The little things you take for granted are luxuries for street people like me," Cadillac Man said. "You make do with what you've got - like sleeping in a cemetery - who's going to bother you there? Now I'll be able to sleep without keeping one eye open and when I close my eyes for the last time, I'll be closing them here in Astoria."

Reach reporter Bill Parry by e-mail at bparry@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4538.



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Christ the King Community Kicks Off 2015 Christmas Season with Tree Lighting Ceremony

Christ the King Community kicked off the 2015 Christmas Season at their Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony last Friday. More than 300 people within the community joined in the festivities. Santa was on hand for pictures and families enjoyed an indoor Winter Wonderland filled with games, activities, bouncy castles, and hot chocolate. CK's Musical Theater Group was also on hand, singing Christmas carols, along with performances by the CK Drum Band and Choir. Fun was had by all!



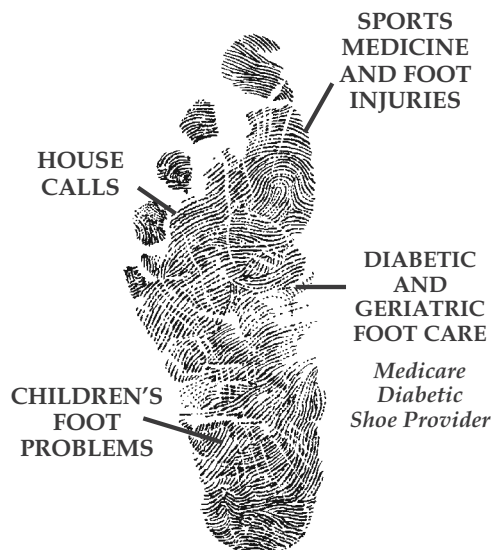
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POLICE Blotter

Off-duty cop kills alleged robber: Police

SPRINGFIELD GARDENS — An off-duty transit cop who responded to a Craigslist ad about a white BMW for sale, Monday night shot and killed an armed robber in Springfield Gardens, police said.

The off-duty NYPD transit cop, Mehbubur Rahaman, told police officials both men tried to take his wallet at gunpoint at which point he drew his weapon and fired several rounds at the suspect with his gun, according to police.

Police said the off-duty cop struck one of the suspects, 30-year-old Devon Holder from Brooklyn, in the torso and left leg. Emergency responders took Holder to Jamaica Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Officers from the 105th Precinct answered a 911 call after 10:30 p.m. from an off-duty NYPD officer in need of assistance near 145th Avenue in Springfield Gardens, according to police.

The off-duty cop informed the responding officers he was confronted by two men, one of whom had a gun, according to police officials.

Police said the off-duty officer was taken to Long Island Jewish Hospital for treatment and observation.

According to police officials, the second suspect fled the scene in a white BMW and was still at large as of Wednesday afternoon.

Police said the investigation was being conducted as a crime against the victim of a robbery incident.

Police said a black air pistol was recovered at the scene after the incident.



Police said a gun was found at the scene of where an off-duty cop fatally shot two suspects who he accused of robbing him in Springfield Gardens.

Courtesy of NYPD

Robbery suspect hits man with gun: NYPD

JAMAICA — Police were looking for a suspect in a robbery outside a storage facility in South Jamaica Nov. 29.

Police said after 2 p.m. an unidentified man entered Ace Moving and Storage on 95th Avenue allegedly armed with a handgun. He demanded money from a 46-year-old male employee, police said.

The employee said there was no cash and the suspect struck him with the firearm, according to police officials.

Officials said the suspect left in a beige-colored Ford Windstar, driven by an unidentified individual.

Police said the employee suffered injuries to the back of his head and was taken to Jamaica Hospital by emergency responders for evaluation.

Police described the suspect as a black male wearing a black baseball cap, eyeglasses, a black jacket over a dark-color hoodie, blue jeans and white sneakers.

Anyone with information in regards to this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 800-577-TIPS.



Police say the robbery suspect (pictured here) fled in a beige-colored Ford Windstar, driven by an unidentified individual who is wanted for questioning.

Courtesy of NYPD

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HATE STRIKES OUT

Queens, which prides itself on its diversity, has been the scene of several suspected hate crimes targeting Hindus and Bukharian Jews.

Fire was the weapon of choice in the torching of Hindu religious flags outside a house in Woodhaven and in the burning of several large houses under construction for Bukharians in nearby Forest Hills.

Add to this mix the shadow of terrorism as the ripple effect from the San Bernadino, Calif., attack reached Queens, creating widespread unease in the Muslim community that it could be held accountable for the actions of two radicals.

The borough is the epicenter of ethnic integration in this country and tolerance, although not always evident here, has generally been practiced when cultures meet in school, work and government.

Singling out one religious group as prey sends a shudder through Queens, which has been a safe haven for immigrants seeking freedom from discrimination and persecution for many years.

Elected officials gathered last Friday for a "We Are One Rally" on the corner of 89th Avenue and 90th Street to protest the desecration of 40 Hindu flags on Thanksgiving morning. Police described the suspect as a man in a baseball cap who fled the scene.

After the seventh fire in six weeks destroyed another Bukharian building site, community leaders met Sunday and lambasted authorities and the media for not drawing more attention to the serial arsonists.

The last fire was set early Sunday morning at the future home of a Bukharian rabbi, which was the scene of another suspicious blaze Nov. 15.

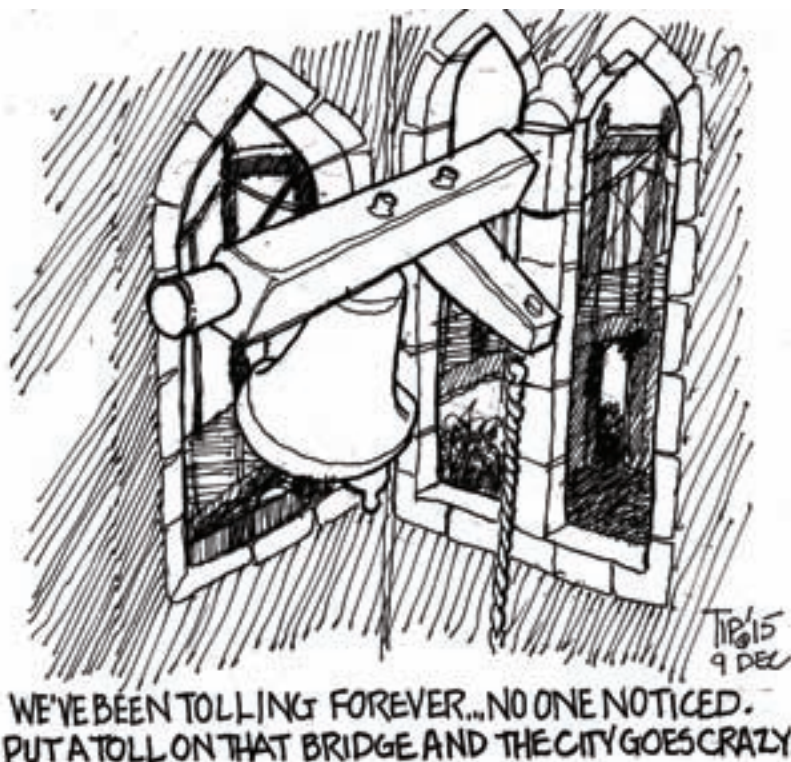
Members of the insular Bukharian community believe they have been marked because of growing dissatisfaction in the neighborhood over their quest to build opulent houses, where more modest homes once stood. They also fear possible anti-Semitism.

Police have identified the arsonist as a man in a hoodie, but the NYPD and the FDNY have only begun to add special patrols.

At least one Bukharian official was miffed that Mayor Bill de Blasio had gone to the Jamaica Muslim Center Friday night to reassure the community they were the city's allies in the fight against terror but had not contacted the Forest Hills fire victims.

The mosque was jammed with hundreds of worried congregation members and a number of lawmakers as GOP Presidential candidate Donald Trump ramped up his rhetoric against Muslims.

Queens is an imperfect experiment in mixing cultures and resolving ethnic differences. Any hate act is a strike against the world's borough and will not be allowed to divert our mission.



OTHER VOICES

The city needs to rethink rezoning

The Department of City Planning will be holding a public hearing on Mayor de Blasio's two proposals to increase the number of affordable housing units and senior housing units to be constructed in our city. The proposals, known as "Zoning for Quality and Affordability" and the "Mandatory Inclusionary Housing" text amendment, have come under much well-deserved criticism.

Most everyone understands the need for affordable and senior housing units in our city. These two proposals, however, would undermine the contextual rezonings that have been accomplished over the past several years that help protect our communities from reckless overdevelopment. Under these proposals, develop-

ers could construct buildings with increased height and bulk in many different zoning areas. Parking requirements would be reduced or eliminated for senior housing units in certain areas. There are other serious problems with the two proposals as well.

It is important for all concerned New Yorkers to let their elected officials know that these proposals must be withdrawn and re-evaluated with input from all stakeholders. My civic organization, the Auburndale Improvement Association, has garnered almost 300 petition signatures from local residents opposing these proposals, and has sent those petitions to elected officials and appropriate city agencies.

The City Planning Commis-

sion hearing mentioned above will be held Dec. 16 at 9 a.m., at the National Museum of the American Indian, at One Bowling Green, Manhattan, near Battery Park. People from all over the city are encouraged to attend and testify, or send an opposition letter to Carl Weisbrod, Chair, City Planning Commission, 120 Broadway, 31st Floor, NY, NY 10271.

Let's hope that the City Council, which has the last word on these two proposals, will vote them down and follow the lead of the majority of community boards and borough presidents in our city who have already rejected these two misguided proposals.

Henry Euler
Bayside

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One fare for all commuters won't work

The proposed New York City Council bill that would allow New York City residents to pay the same \$2.75 fare on the Long Island Rail Road or Metro North Rail Road as they do to ride the subway sounds great on paper, but look at the details. It could have significant adverse impacts on Queens residents who are already daily LIRR commuters.

This holds true for offering the same riders a free transfer from either the LIRR or Metro North to the subway. The bill introduced by Councilman Daneek Miller (D-St. Albans) and supported by Transportation Committee Chairman Ydanis Rodriguez clearly illustrates their lack of understanding concerning how transportation works.

Those city residents who already utilize either the LIRR, Metro North, MTA Bus or NYC Transit Express Bus are aware the cost is more than either the bus or subway. If you agree and follow the logic of Council members Miller and Rodriguez, there should be a reduction in the

cost of any New York City Transit or MTA Express Bus Service from \$6.50 to \$2.75 as well. There are already almost 100,000 NYC residents who travel on weekdays to and from work paying extra to ride the LIRR, Metro North, MTA Express Bus or New York City Transit Express Bus. All are aware that they are paying for a premium service.

Existing scheduled LIRR trains serving Little Neck, Douglaston, Bayside, Auburndale, Broadway and Murray Hill on the Port Washington branch might be able to accommodate 1,000 to 2,000 new riders if they are spread out over the 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. morning rush and 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. evening rush-hour trains. Few will have seats.

Don't forget that several hundred to a thousand more customers may be attempting to board when the new Elmhurst LIRR Station opens in 2018. Can you even imagine the crowds if only several thousand of the daily 66,000 New York City Transit subway riders who utilize the Flush-

ing Main Street No. 7 station decide to become regular daily LIRR customers. What if you add potentially even more new riders attempting to board a LIRR train at Woodside? There is no way existing Port Washington branch rush-hour service could accommodate 5,000 to potentially 10,000 and more new Queens customers without adding more trains.

Part of the problem is the cost of \$2 million or more per car or \$20 million per ten-car train set. Between design, engineering, procurement, construction and delivery, along with inspection and acceptance, it could easily take five years for the LIRR to acquire additional rolling stock. The LIRR also needs additional maintenance and storage capacity for any significant fleet expansion.

In addition, there is no room to run additional trains in or out of Penn Station during either a.m. or p.m. rush hours. Penn Station is currently operating at 100 percent capacity during rush hours. If one of the four tunnels is temporary-

ly out of service, the result is numerous delays and cancellation of trains. Nothing will change until East Side Access to Grand Central Terminal is open for revenue service. The anticipated revenue service date has slipped on numerous occasions. The MTA schedule calls for a December 2022 opening day. Based upon the previous history of delays and recovery schedules, adding up to 11 years' worth of broken promises, don't be surprised if the first day of revenue service occurs in 2023, 2024—or later.

Miller and Rodriguez also want to offer new LIRR and Metro North riders a free transfer to the subway. Obviously neither has traveled through either Grand Central Terminal or Penn Station during rush hours. Both the East Side 4, 5, and 6 subway lines or the West Side 1, 2, and 3 subway lines are already operating at or above capacity. The same is true to a lesser extent for Atlantic Avenue Brooklyn Station travelers attempting to access subway lines. There

is little room for new riders who might want to take advantage of a free commuter-rail to subway transfer. If offered, there are thousands of city residents already riding the LIRR and Metro North who would also want the same free transfer.

The \$70 million estimated cost for a \$2.75 fare for all trips for residents within NYC riding on both the LIRR and Metro North is just a guess. It is not based upon any concrete data. The cost could easily be \$100 million to \$200 million—or even more. The MTA had to cut \$5 billion out of the pending 2015-2019 Capital Program. The MTA has no surplus operating dollars available to cover these costs. Will Miller and Rodriguez convince Mayor Bill de Blasio to increase NYC's level of operating assistance to pay for this? Don't count on it.

*Larry Penner
Great Neck*

For the NYPD, this has been a terrible year

Can New York City be harmful to your health?

Not one year ago, elected officials from all levels of government were flaunting the progressive left's notion that police officers were not to be trusted. Whether it was President Obama, former Attorney General Holder or Mayor de Blasio, they didn't miss a beat to bang hard on the drum with great indignation, fueling disrespect for law enforcement in every corner of our nation. Can this type of dangerous rhetoric be harmful to your health? Police officers cer-

tainly think so. It's been a terrible year.

But what about us? The murder rate the city is now up, and shooting incidents and victims are bountiful. Communities across this city are sick and tired of seeing police funerals. Poor judgment and irresponsible, dangerous rhetoric do matter and elected officials should take heed in all venues and circumstances. And now...they dare to lecture us on political discourse in regard to the Planned Parenthood clinic attack where another police officer was

murdered. As Lou Turco, president of the Lieutenant's Benevolent Association explained, the hypocrisy is just too rich. The progressive left has made it more difficult for police officers to do their job and in the same vein, caused a segment of the public to distrust the very people who are sworn to protect them, thus proving that New York City can in fact be harmful to your health.

The city has never been Shangri-La to those struggling, those seeking to build their way out of poverty. It is

up to government officials to provide a path and various methods for all to engage and better their plight in life, uniting our citizens and not dividing them. In unity there is great strength. Police officers provide the security framework which allows those individuals the hope that they too can succeed. Crushing the hope of the poor in our city by alienating them from their protectors is disgraceful and dishonest.

However, elected officials who are sowing the seeds of discontent and disrespect for

those who are sworn to protect the public, have only emboldened the criminal element in our society. Patrick Lynch, president of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, was sickened by the tone of the rhetoric as he stood shoulder to shoulder with police officers mourning the assassination of Police Officers Liu and Ramos and then Moore and then Holder. Too many deaths lay at the feet of elected officials.

*Joseph R. Concannon
Retired NYPD Captain
Bellerose*

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Have we let our fears run away with us?



Lenore
Skenazy

■
*Rhymes
with Crazy*

Have we really all become convinced that we are under constant terrorist threat?

The New York Times seems to think so. In the wake of the San Bernardino shootings, it ran an article titled, “I Think About It Daily: Life in a Time of Mass Shootings.”

But is this true?

Seems to me that since 9/11, we’ve learned we’re made of, if not sterner stuff, then at least more rational stuff. We know that violence is random and rare.

Yes, rare. Especially here.

Let’s talk about local crime for a sec.

In New York City, as in most of the country, crime peaked around 1993 and has been going down pretty steadily since then. In 1990, there were 2,245 murders in the city. Last year the number here was 333.

That’s an amazing drop.

But what about this very instant? Isn’t crime suddenly “surging,” as the headlines suggest?

The Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law crunched the numbers we’re hearing about. It found that while the murder rate is projected to go up 11 percent in America’s 30 largest cities this year—a stat that does sound alarming—the numbers are still far lower than 10 or even five years ago. Here in New York, the projected number of murders by year-end is 357.

That is sad, of course. But as the report notes, “in absolute terms, murder rates are so low in many cities now that even an increase or decrease of just a few occurrences can cause a large change in percentage terms.”

For instance: If one person in a million dies from a deadly spider bite and the next year two people die this weird, icky way, that’s a 100 percent increase. But it’s not as if deadly spiders are taking over America. (Yet!)

The picture gets clearer if we think in terms of deaths per 100,000.

“In 1990, there were 29.3

In New York City, crime peaked around 1993 and has been going down pretty steadily since then. In 1990, there were 2,245 murders in the city. Last year the number here was 333.

murders per 100,000 residents,” according to the report, which cited FBI and police statistics. “In 2000, there were 13.8 murders per 100,000. Now there are 9.9 per 100,000.”

So while “Murder Rate Up!” makes for a paper-selling headline, “Americans Far Safer Than They Were 20, 10 and Even Five Years Ago!” is just as true.

During the 14 years I spent at the New York Daily News, my editor would sometimes remind me that people read the paper because “they want to know what can kill them.”

But that isn’t precisely the case. No one is writing thumbsuckers about the fear of heart disease. Only the most shocking and unpredictable deaths get this kind of treatment. And these reinforce the idea

that simply by stepping out of your home—or, god forbid, letting your child step out of the home—death beckons.

The Times chose to reinforce the idea that not only are we all panicking about mass shootings, but that this dread is normal and perhaps even sensible after the California and Colorado murders. It did this by surveying the public with an online question: “How often, if ever, do you think about the possibility of a shooting in your daily life?”

Naturally, the people who answered are those for whom this question resonates—many of them apparently crippled by an all-consuming fear of random violence.

“I would say I think about the possibility of a shooting in my life regularly,” wrote one

15-year-old.

The parents who responded sounded even more terrified. They wrote things like, “The oldest of my three children is in kindergarten. They have lockdown drills. I imagine the fear and chaos of a school shooting. The children, my son, the life and love that can be taken away. How will I live with myself if something happens to them? I’m so scared.”

And another:

“Is this the day? Will a shooter pick my daughter’s school because it only has one access road? What will she be thinking as she cowers in a closet? Or under a desk? Will she be crying for me?”

But the odds overwhelmingly say she will simply go about her day and take her math test.

Crime is at historic lows. We are lucky to be living in such safe times. Until we embrace reality instead of the headlines, we will not be able to enjoy life or let our kids outside.

That is a tragedy.

Lenore Skenazy is a keynote speaker and the author and founder of the book and blog Free-Range Kids.

Don’t play politics with the lives of carriage horses



Tom
Allon

■
*Mayoral
Spin Cycle*

Stella, Caesar, Blondie, Chris, Doreen, Charlie, Pumpkin, Tickles and Oreo are just some of the names of New York horses that have been killed or injured while working.

Working, really? That would imply choice, right? It’s really no different than an elephant in chains in the circus. Like the decorated elephant, carriage horses have more pain than pomp in their day.

And why is politics getting in the way of their release from this prolonged bondage? Which Council members are saying

“Neigh!” to their redemption?

We’re going to make a naughty list below. These council members should only get coal in their stockings this holiday season because they are standing in the way of humane treatment of our horses. But first, here’s some context.

In 2013, when candidate Bill de Blasio was running for mayor, he vowed to ban horse-drawn carriages in New York City. On “Day One,” he said. Well, now it’s past “Day 700.”

New York has the highest carriage-horse accident rate in the country. Other cities, like Palm Beach, Santa Fe, Las Vegas, Toronto and Salt Lake City have banned this antiquated practice.

Sure, it was lovely to have a horse take you for a ride when we needed the transportation. But why is it necessary now?

Should a horse have no access to pastures, have a nine-hour workday, ride between SUV’s and taxis honking and blowing exhaust fumes in their faces? Should animals that get “spooked” by loud sounds be the victims of an industry that insists upon their backbreaking work so that they can make a living?

There are other ways for them to make a living, and NYClass, an animal rights organization, has come up with a healthy alternative to the ugly and cruel industry. Electric cars. Awesome, fancy, cool-looking electric that cars can take tourists on rides through Central Park and the congested streets of Manhattan.

The big problem in all of this is that we have political gamesmanship interfering with what is really a humani-

tarian issue. In 2013, de Blasio repeatedly and emphatically said he would solve this issue.

De Blasio blames the Council. Well, he’s partially right, because he does need their votes to ban this industry, but it seems that if he pushed harder he could have secured the 26 votes needed to pass the law to ban the horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

But good news may be on the way. On Nov. 25, de Blasio proposed a compromise that would limit the carriage horses to Central Park, keeping them off the city’s streets. He has also proposed building stables inside the park so that the horses don’t have to walk the one to two miles back to their stables in Hell’s Kitchen. And finally, this compromise suggests reducing the number of working horses from more

than 200 to about 70.

Just to be sure, the Council members must once again hear our voices — we do care for all beings.

So we’re naming the City Council “Neighsayer.” Let’s pressure them for this new proposal, which is not perfect but a heck of a lot more humane.

In Brooklyn: Robert Cornegy; Rafael Espinal; Daneek Miller; Jumaane Williams.

In Queens: Costa Constantinides; Elizabeth Crowley; Karen Koslowitz; Rory Lancman.

In Manhattan: Corey Johnson.

In the Bronx: Andy King
Like Mahatma Gandhi said: “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”

How Queens marked the holidays in 1959

QUEENS LINE

... the timeline of Queens

The Greater Astoria Historical Society

In conjunction with the Greater Astoria Historical Society, the TimesLedger newspaper presents noteworthy events in the borough's history

In December 1959, the Board of Education was re-evaluating its school fallout shelter program to determine whether better—or closer—shelter accommodations had become available to students. The Board reported that thousands of Queens students in 49 school buildings in Queens would be without adequate protection in the event of an atomic attack on the city.

About half of the students would have had to be transported to a suitable location not more than 20 minutes away.

Astorian John Martino faced 20 years in prison in Cuba on charges that he had plotted to smuggle refugees out of that nation. Martino

was president of the Neptune Engine Company of 25-38 31st Ave., which manufactured generators and electronics equipment. He had gone to Havana to seek patents for an invention which he described as “the only brushless generator in the world.” The Cuban government’s charges against him were never made public. After hearing the evidence in a trial which lasted only five hours, the Cuban military court sentenced Martino to a 13-year prison term. His attorneys planned an appeal.

Mr. and Mrs. Norman Poulin returned from Saigon, Vietnam, to Forest Hills. Poulin was an official with the International Cooperation Administration. He was active in many American Aid programs and helped carry out the world-famous “Operation Exodus” in which almost a million refugees from North Vietnam were transported to

the South. He was one of the last Americans to leave North Vietnam as he officially closed the ICA office there in May 1955.

The last veteran of the Civil War, Walter Washington Williams, died in Texas at the age of 117. His body, dressed in a Confederate general’s uniform lay in state in a blue and grey casket draped with the Confederate flag. Across the world, American flags flew at half staff, and President Eisenhower proclaimed a period of national mourning until Williams’ burial.

The first rabbi to volunteer as a Navy chaplain after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Captain Joshua L. Goldberg, rabbi-emeritus of the Astoria Center of Israel, was to retire from the Navy on Jan. 1, 1960. He had made over 87 crossings of the Atlantic and traveled throughout Asia and Africa. The rabbi thought that the main threat to America was “softness” of discipline at home—in the moral fiber of business, in human relations and in general attitude. His retirement was caused by the 64-year age limit. He didn’t bother to do so before the Nov.

1 deadline for “tombstone” promotions, where those retiring are boosted one rank, because he didn’t think “being called ‘Admiral’ was that important.” He was the first Jewish officer to achieve the rank of ‘Captain.’

The spirit of Christmas turned in a twinkle when Detective Edward Egan completed the transformation from Santa Claus to detective. Egan, who dressed in a standard Santa Claus costume, arrested 17 persons in four days. Most of the arrests were in Harlem for narcotics violations, including a 35-year-old man posing as a woman and having 30 bags of heroin in his possession. (And they claim the 1950s was a boring conformist decade!)

The Christmas season in Queens saw bright lights up in most shopping districts on the North Shore. Santa Claus made many appearances. Christmas lights lit trees in the yards of one- and two- family homes throughout the borough. A giant 35-foot Christmas tree in front of Borough Hall was lit by Borough President John T. Clancey on Dec. 15.

“Jaywalking is against the law,” boomed the voice of a

talking traffic signal installed in Flushing at Main Street and Roosevelt Avenue. The talking signal, a tape recording synchronized with the visual traffic signal, announced the beginning of the flashing “Don’t Walk” period and cautioned pedestrians of the dangers of jaywalking during the steady “Don’t Walk” period. Traffic commissioner T. T. Wiley said the messages were well-heeded by pedestrians, and that the audio devices were being tried at crowded intersections before the decision to install them permanently.

Queens moviegoers could enjoy “Anatomy of a Murder,” starring James Stewart; “A Hole in the Head,” starring Frank Sinatra, Edward G. Robinson and Eleanor Parker; “The Mummy,” starring Peter Cushing; “The Bat,” starring Vincent Price; and “Pillow Talk,” starring Doris Day and Rock Hudson.

That’s the way it was in December 1959!

For further information, contact the Greater Astoria Historical Society at 718-278-0700 or visit their website at www.astorialic.org.

A presidential race that is breaking all the rules



William Lewis
in
Political Action

As we observe the 2016 presidential campaign at this time, it is certainly an unusual campaign. In the Democratic Party, Hillary Clinton seems to have the nomination sewed up, as her two opponents seem to have no chance of making significant gains in the polls high enough to seriously challenge her.

In the Republican Party we started out with 17 candidates, although a number of them have dropped out. This type of situation has not occurred

in the past. The question is, will this primary, with two levels of candidates appearing for debates, lead to a political atmosphere that is less than effective?

Since World War II, it has been the Democratic Party that has been looked upon as divisive and fractionalized. That was certainly true in 1948 when the Democratic Party ran as three different political parties with three different presidential candidates. The organization candidate, Harry Truman, won the race by a narrow margin. The Democratic Party also had a significant number of candidates competing for the party nomination in 1972 and 1976.

The Republican Party during the years leading up to 1980 had many, many candidates. In 1980 Ronald Reagan

won the nomination and then won the two presidential elections after that. Today we face a new challenge in the Republican Party with more different factions vying for power within party circles.

In Congress there are numerous Republican factions, but they all agreed to compromise thanks to House Speaker Paul Ryan.

Usually when there are three or four parties running in a national election, these parties have broken off from the two major parties, as occurred in 1948 in the Democratic Party and in 1912 when a third party emerged, led by Theodore Roosevelt. However, after these campaigns ended the major party candidates won.

When choosing party nominees, some type of democratic

In Great Britain, national elections by law run for three weeks. I am not saying that we should adopt that system but the process could be improved.

system should be worked out so that the number of candidates would be more manageable.

In addition to this we really need a shorter campaign both for the primary and general election. These things could contribute to a more effective election process.

In Great Britain, national elections by law run for three weeks. I am not saying that we should adopt that system but the process could be improved.

During the election cycle every four years, the most interest in politics is generated. That will be true next year and the interest will be put into the election by the voters.

We have a strong democracy in our country, but there is always room for improvement as we move forward in the 21st century. Let us hope that the national election next year will bring us the best government in 2017.

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Queens' Cannibal Cop fully acquitted by court

BY GABRIEL ROM



GILBERTO VALLE

A disgraced former Forest Hills cop had his acquittal on charges of conspiring to kidnap, kill and eat women upheld by the U.S. Second Circuit Court of appeals in a decision last week.

Gilberto Valle—known as the Cannibal Cop—was arrested in 2012 after his wife discovered Valle's online correspondences in which he mused over plots to kidnap and cook his wife and other women. Valle was convicted of the kidnapping conspiracy in March 2013 after prosecutors revealed chat-room discussions in which he talked about his cannibalism fetish. After serving 21 months in prison, his sentence was overturned by Judge Paul Gardephe in Manhattan federal court in 2014. But prosecutors from the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Southern District appealed Gardephe's decision, arguing that Valle's fantasies could have led to real violence.

The 31-year-old was an officer for the NYPD, but he was fired from the force after he was charged with kidnapping conspiracy.

A Manhattan federal judge overturned the guilty verdict in July 2014, saying that Valle's plot was just a fantasy.

Prosecutors had appealed, but Dec. 2 two of three appellate judges reviewing the case upheld the acquittal, saying Valle's fantasies did not cross the line into criminal intent.

"Although it is increasingly challenging to identify that line in the Internet age," Circuit Judge Barrington D. Parker wrote, "it still exists and it must be rationally discernible in order to ensure that 'a person's inclinations

and fantasies are his own and beyond the reach of the government."

Valle's lawyers lauded the decision as both a victory for Valle and civil rights.

"The court's decision today confirms what we have said from the outset of this prosecution: fantasies, no matter how repugnant, are not crimes," Valle's lawyers said in a statement. "This ruling is a very important victory not just for Mr. Valle, who has now been cleared of all criminal charges, but for an open society that treasures freedom of thought and expression."

Circuit Judge Chester Straub criticized his colleagues' opinion in his dissent.

"This is not a case about governmental intrusion on one's personal inclinations and fantasies nor is it a case about governmental punishment of one's thoughts," he wrote.

"It is, instead jury's determination of guilt for a conspiracy based on definitive conduct... a police officer's use of the official database to obtain, outside the boundaries of his official duties, data about a woman whom he knew."

Redesign of Principe Park raises sport safety concerns

BY GABRIEL ROM

Community members are not yet fully sold on a proposed redesign of Maspeth's Frank Principe Park, which some say would create safety risks.

The original design from the city Department of Parks and Recreation was presented during a session held Dec. 2 by the Parks Department and Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley (D-Glendale).

The proposed design provides for two fully functioning softball fields and a soccer field, but safety concerns arose at the meeting over the proximity of the two fields.

"If you allow the kids to hit toward the soccer field, you have problems," said Gary Giordano, district manager of Community Board 5. "But if you face the fields towards Maurice Avenue, you will have the issue of balls going over and hitting vehicles."

Community Board 5 Parks Committee Chairman Steve Fiedler presented an alternative plan which he said would have the softball fields face away from the soccer fields, eliminating safety risks. On his own time Fiedler met with a private architect and drew up his own proposal, which, according to Crowley's spokeswoman is essentially

Continued on Page 49



Renewing Struggling Schools

by Michael Mulgrew
President,
United Federation of
Teachers

Cities and school districts across the country have tried a range of strategies to deal with the problems of poor children and struggling schools.

Under former Mayor Bloomberg, New York City relied on a "shutdown" strategy, eventually closing 150 schools, including some that the Bloomberg administration itself had created.

While Bloomberg's cheerleaders lauded his approach, the fact is that many of our schools – both older ones and those started during Bloomberg's tenure – continue to struggle.

In contrast, the de Blasio administration has listened to teachers and members of school communities. We know that it is difficult, but struggling schools can succeed – if provided the proper support and resources, and a team approach that brings all a school's stakeholders together.

The city's new Renewal program, created with input from stakeholders, is designed to focus on some of the neediest schools in the system. Early returns show that many of these schools have stabilized and in some cases are started on the road to improvement.

Students in these schools start out with deficits. Nearly 20 percent are English Language Learners and almost a quarter are classified as special education. Thousands live in shelters or are doubled up with relatives. Many are hungry, lack winter clothes, or have medical needs, including glasses and hearing aids. Many have parents who are unemployed or who work long hours at minimum-wage jobs.

Teachers at these schools see these problems not as excuses, but as issues that need to be addressed to ensure that all kids have an equal opportunity to learn.

Renewal schools are being paired with non-profit agencies to deliver services like health care and counseling to students and their families. What's more, the nearly \$400 million the administration is investing in these schools over the next three years includes funds for hiring teachers, academic

coaches, social workers and other professionals, along with professional development for the staff on the skills necessary to work with children facing these challenges.

While in 2013-14 nearly one-third failed to meet targets for student achievement, the 2014-2015 School Quality Report shows that now 87 percent of the renewal schools are moving in the right direction, measured by better attendance, more family involvement and other criteria. As a group, they showed gains in both reading and math on state tests.

Many of these schools have a long way to go. Turning them around is difficult, particularly in the face of years of cutbacks and systemic indifference. These schools will require a multi-year strategic intervention built on sound education practice, including custom-tailored supports for each school's particular needs. With its Renewal program, New York City is taking on tough work that no one in the country has attempted before on this scale.

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Rosedale girl competes in Miss Teen pageant

BY TOM MOMBERG

Nyah Stevens, 15, of Rosedale is preparing for her first beauty pageant in January, hoping to go from there to representing the state as Miss New York at the National 2016 Miss Teen USA pageant.

Stevens is a freshman at Bayside High School, where she maintains a strong academic standing and competes on the track and field team. She says pageantry is something she is looking forward to.

"I always wanted to do this since I was a little girl," Stevens said. "It kind of developed from there as I got older. I developed some independence and realized I would have to put in the work myself to achieve my goals."

And Stevens has pushed herself as she gets ready to compete in the pageant the weekend of Jan. 15 at the Purchase College Performing Arts Center—something she said has helped her gain a sense of responsibility and self-respect.

The Miss New York Teen USA pageant pushes teenage girls to have poise. It is supposed to be less about competing with talent and ability, and more about exhibiting strong personality, creativity and beauty.

"I don't look up to celebrities as much as I look up to my mom and my other family members," Stevens said when asked what has encouraged her. "Many of my immediate family members are immigrants, and I've seen how the women have pushed and worked hard to be where they are... It's all about how you present yourself to others as a woman and how you define your own success."

Stevens said her group of friends have been very supportive of her efforts to get involved with the pageant. She is currently picking out dresses and practicing public speech in preparation for the event.

But one thing the young woman still



Nyah Stevens of Rosedale is competing in her first pageant for Miss Teen New York in January.
Courtesy of Sarahdine Stevens

needs is sponsors. Her sponsorship fee of \$1,500 goes toward pageant fees, room, food and board for the weekend of the event.

Stevens already has the support of her family, but the state directors of the pageant urge contestants to connect with and ask community businesses and leaders to make small contributions to help them on their way.

Business sponsors can promote their brands when they become sponsors, and they are represented as such during the weekend of the pageant.

Potential sponsors can reach out to Stevens' parents, Sarahdine and Tyronne Stevens, at ketia06@gmail.com, or donate directly at .

Reach reporter Tom Momberg by e-mail at tmomberg@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4573.

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Photo by Ellen Dunn

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Astoria Blvd. unsafe

BY BILL PARRY

Some 40 residents of Astoria and East Elmhurst joined elected leaders and officials from the city Department of Transportation to discuss traffic safety improvements along a dangerous stretch of Astoria Boulevard between 77th to 92nd streets.

Since 2010, there have been three fatalities and almost 200 injuries, eight of them serious, along the roadway, according to the DOT.

Nearly 60 percent of vehicles were found speeding in a recent study of the area that normally carries 2,000 cars during a normal rush hour. There are only six crosswalks over these 16 blocks, so pedestrians must walk up to 1,000 feet between each crossing before they can get across the street.

In addition, Astoria Boulevard is 100 feet wide, making crossings very long for seniors or pedestrians with disabilities to navigate in the time allotted. The area also contains several multi-legged intersections with confusing lane designs.

"This workshop provided an opportunity for residents to collaborate and exchange ideas about traffic safety improvements in this area," City Council-



East Elmhurst and Astoria residents join Councilman Costa Constantinides for a workshop on traffic safety along Astoria Boulevard.

Photo courtesy Constantinides' office

man Costa Constantinides (D-Astoria) said. "Suggestions will be taken into consideration as a comprehensive traffic safety plan along Astoria Boulevard is designed."

Ridgewood loses shop

BY GABRIEL ROM

A store with over 70 years of history in Ridgewood will be forced to close this January.

The 1/2 Price Kids shop must have everything out of its 60-84 Myrtle Ave. building, which was recently sold, by Jan. 1. The 13,000-square-foot store, in its last month of its lease, sells brand-name baby gear at discount prices.

"It's not an easy thing to digest," said store manager Ely Kairey.

"We are a family store and we grew up alongside the children. Everyone is choked up."

The children's clothing and accessory store, owned by Robert Elbaz and his family, has been at its current location in Ridgewood for 17 years. Prior to that, the Elbazes had owned the Wonderland Youth Center, also on Myrtle Avenue.

In a show of gratitude to the neighborhood, the store is selling its remaining stock at 50 percent off.

"We've had a strong relationship with this neighborhood and it is a way of giving back," he said. "We know people on a first-name basis, we tell them they can always come in to the store if they are in trouble. But now, the neighborhood is in disbelief," Kairey said. "People are coming in asking 'How did this happen?' 'Where are you going next?'"

Kairey says that the property was

sold for around \$7 million.

"We're looking for other locations, but it's pretty difficult," he said. "The rent is astronomical and this type of thing has happened to other stores in the area."

Straddling the border with Brooklyn, Ridgewood has experienced a wave of mostly younger people fleeing Bushwick's rising rental costs for the comparatively cheaper rates just over the border in Queens.

A note was been posted on the window of 1/2 Price Kids declaring "Hello Unemployment. Goodbye Ridgewood." The message has since been taken down, but Kairey said the idea behind it remains true.

"My employees are not fly-by-night, they have been here for years," he said. "They tell me that their rents are also going up, that they may have to leave Ridgewood, too."

While disheartened, Kairey hopes to stay near the community that he has known for so long.

"There is an expression I keep reminding myself," Kairey concluded. "When one door closes, another opens."

Even though 1/2 Price Kids will be closing its Ridgewood location, they have two other locations—one in Brooklyn and one in Mount Vernon—as well as a website where customers can continue to shop.

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Council approves private school security fund

BY TOM MOMBERG

The City Council passed a bill Monday that would establish a program to reimburse private schools for costs for security guards—allowing Catholic schools, yeshivas and other private schools to provide strong security for their students.

The measure passed 43 to 4, with bipartisan support, and now awaits Mayor Bill de Blasio's signature to go into effect in the next school year.

The bill outlining the \$20-million-a-year program to reimburse up to 300 private and religious schools with more than 300 students for hiring private security agencies listed as qualified providers was introduced shortly after Thanksgiving.

The bill picked up 45 Council sponsors, though some of those sponsors were absent when it came time to vote.

The legislation that passed was a compromise on a previous \$50-million proposal, which would have funded and mandated the NYPD to pro-

vide school security agents for as many of the city's over 600 private schools as wanted to take part.

Councilman Daniel Dromm (D-Jackson Heights), chairman of the Council's Education Committee and a former teacher, has publicly been in opposition to any program that would put taxpayer money toward security at private institutions. He cast one of the four nay votes on the bill.

Dromm could not be reached for comment on the recent Council vote on the bill, but has said previously the city should not put funding toward private schools at a time when so many public schools are in need of additional money.

The bill was one of the first pieces of legislation Councilman Barry Grodenchik (D-Oakland Gardens) got to vote on since being inaugurated into the Council. He said the legislation and bipartisan support on the bill reflected growing public concerns that religious institutions may be a target for terror or other violent acts.



A bill that passed City Council this week replaced a stronger bill that would have funded NYPD school safety officers at all private schools.

"Private schools or schools of any other denomination will be able to apply for funding to provide security on the basis that all the children in

this city are our children and they need to be protected," Grodenchik said. "We live in uncertain times."

Reach reporter Tom Momberg by e-mail at tmomberg@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4573.

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Sights and sounds of the season



In Woodhaven, the organizers handed out Santa hats to the youngsters who turned out in the unusually warm weather for the tree lighting right off Jamaica Avenue.

Photo by Micahel Shain



In Bayside Hills, the accordionists from music teacher Linda Holcomb's class at PS 203 play Hanukkah songs as well as Christmas carols as the sun went down.

Photo by Michael Shain



City Council Member Daniel Dromm (c) helps with the Christmas tree lighting duty at Regal Heights Rehabilitation and Health Care Center in Jackson Heights. Students from IS 230 and their teacher, Lisa Mesulam (left of Dromm), provide the music.

Courtesy of Council Member Dromm



In Bayside Hills, the civic association first lit up a king-sized menorah for the first night of Hannukah before the Christmas tree lights were switched on.

Photo by Michael Shain



The Queens Botanical Garden crowns a daylong holiday celebration in Flushing with its own tree lighting, tastefully done in green.

Courtesy of OBG/Anne Tan-Detchkov



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Feline heroics earn 104th national recognition

After rescuing a cat from a burning home in Glendale, NYPD receives award from PETA

BY GABRIEL ROM

After rescuing Kit Kat, an injured cat, from a burning home in Glendale, the 104th Police Precinct is getting national recognition from an unlikely place.

Last week, PETA, a national animal advocacy organization, bestowed the men and women of the 104th with the Compassionate Police Department Award. As a further token of the group's appreciation, a box of vegan cookies is also in the mail.

"We hope your team's effort will inspire others to come to the aid of animals in need," the letter from PETA President Ingrid Newkirk read. "Thank you again for your compassion."

The award also comes after the 104th rescued another cat stuck in a sewer main earlier in November. Officers opened the main and found the cat, which was hidden from sight.

For Mark Wachter, captain

of the 104th, saving animals is part and parcel of being a New York City cop.

"To be recognized by an organization as large as PETA is good for the precinct and good for the department," he said. "It's not all about cops and robbers all the time. We are here to help everybody, from the littlest cat to whoever else is in distress."

A picture of the distressed feline receiving oxygen from an officer from the 104th went viral on Twitter, showing a gentler side to daily police work.

"A lot of people like cats apparently," Wachter said.

Wachter announced the award at the precinct's daily roll call and said that especially around the holiday season, the rescue story boosted officer morale.

"It shows the officers that the small actions that we do can have a real positive effect," he said.

Some 60 firefighters re-



Kit Kat, who was rescued from a Glendale house fire in November, has been restored to health and is back at home with her owner.

sponded to the fire at 88th Street, near 81st Avenue, but no other injuries were reported. Firefighters were able to resuscitate Kit Kat with small breathing units on the sidewalk after she passed out from smoke. Kit Kat was then put in

a special oxygen chamber and rushed to a veterinary hospital, along with another feline survivor, Jinx.

One of the cats was saved after being spotted under a pile of moving laundry, while the other was found huddled

next to a TV set. A third family cat, Bo, was found dead in a bathroom.

The two cats are in good health and have been reunited with their owner, officials at a BluePearl Veterinary hospital in Forest Hills confirmed.

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- Leon Metzger

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2015

GIFT GUIDE

Gift shopping with an artistic touch

Queens Museum gets heated this weekend with its Warming Up Winter Holiday Market

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

Shopping, live performances and art form a seasonal trifecta when the Queens Museum holds its Warming Up Winter Holiday Market this weekend.

More than 65 vendors will be on hand hawking artwork, handmade crafts, books and other one-of-a-kind gifts.

"This is a time to connect with artists and artisans in this borough. To celebrate the joy of making and creating," Silvia Juliana Mantilla Ortiz, Queens Museum artist services coordinator, said. "We have professional artists, as well as folks from our communities who make beautiful things in their spare time. We invite you to support them and get unique gifts for the holiday season."

The market is divided into eight areas sorted by category.

In "A Little Bit of Everything," shoppers will find baked goods, CDs, jewelry and even pickled vegetables. Other spots will be dedicated to home goods, clothing, jewelry, skin care, books and paintings.

A section labeled "Curiosities" will offer the out-of-the-ordinary items, like henna tattoos.

In the books, cards and print section, shoppers will find Elmhurst-based visual



Members of the children's mariachi group, Academic De Mariachi Nuevo Amanecer (middle row), will perform as part of the Queens Museum Warming Up Winter Holiday Market this weekend.

Photo illustration courtesy Queens Museum

artist Susan Varo and her My Works of Art, LLC.

She will be selling original hand-painted holiday cards, art-inspired notebooks and acrylic paintings in various sizes, as well as 6-inch-by-6-inch original oil paintings.

Flushing-based QNSMADE creator Amy Wu and her staff are looking forward to their

second year in the holiday market.

The popular all-things-Queens website featuring portraits of locals, will be launching several new products at the market and selling "a limited supply of everything" from their online shop: hats, T-shirts, pins, bags and more.

When you are done shop-

ping till you drop, or just in need of a quick break, the museum has plenty of family-friendly, live performances

Younger audience members will probably get a kick out of the Queens College Puppets performing "Miki and the North Wind." The story revolves around young Miki, whose father has gone miss-

ing in the land of ice and snow. Miki must now be the family provider, and must persevere against the North Wind.

Other acts on tap include a concert by the Corona Youth Music Project and performances by the children's mariachi group, Academia De Mariachi Nuevo Amanecer, and by the Ecuadorian youth dance group, Ñukanchik Llakta Wawa Kuna.

"As a museum, we feel committed to Queens and the people in this borough, and we know first-hand, the amazing creative and cultural production that in all shapes and forms enriches our neighborhood," Ortiz said. "Let the festivities begin."

IF YOU GO

Warming Up Winter Holiday Market

When: Sunday, Dec. 13, from 1 pm-5 pm

Where: Queens Museum, New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Cost: \$8/adults (suggested), \$4/seniors (suggested), Free/children 18 and under

Contact: (718) 592-9700

Website: www.queensmuseum.org

Give the gift of relaxation from Blue Bungalow

Wrap up the holidays with everything from facials to massages at Rockaway Park spa

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

High-tech gadgets, designer handbags, sparkly jewelry and name-brand items make awesome gifts, but as stress levels rise, some New Yorkers are opting for a relaxing experience over stuff this holiday season.

Blue Bungalow Spa & Wellness at Beach 116th Street in Rockaway Park is a great place to relax, de-stress and rejuvenate.

Clients enjoy much-needed down time in a serene environment, while benefiting from cutting-edge technology. And specials abound.

"You can buy a shirt, scarf or any gift...anywhere, anytime. But to give someone the gift of one hour in a place to totally relax and feel good about themselves, is priceless," owner and lead esthetician, Patricia Rorke, said. "We are so thrilled to offer some awe-



Blue Bungalow Spa owner Patricia Rorke (front, r) and her staff photographed at the Rockaway Park spa. Photo courtesy Blue Bungalow Spa

some, holistically wonderful workshops to our clients."

The creative spa owner has

also developed her own skin fitness program, designed to target all layers of the skin. It's

a full circuit of non-invasive cosmetic treatments, with the latest technology, along with pure and active natural skin-care ingredients. It strengthens the muscles in your face, and enhances the skin's natural glow.

Blue Bungalow Spa's massage therapists are some of the best in the city and have quite a list of clientele. All are New York state licensed and certified. And all therapists are now trained in different forms of energy healing to enhance the treatment.

"In between your treatments of a facial or massage, you can use our Infrared Sauna, and I could go on and on about the benefits," Rorke said.

Prices for treatments start at \$60, and budget-friendly package pricing is offered.

"Every product we sell is something I have used and fallen in love with. The girls

make fun of me because I get so excited when I find something new," she said.

For 23 years, Rorke had a successful design career, but at age 50 or so, she decided it was time for a change to reinvent herself, so she went back to school and got her esthetics license.

"I've always loved making people happy and feel good about themselves, and this type of work is like therapy for me also. We all have things to deal with in life, and sometimes, it's quite difficult...this journey we are on. If we can just take a little bit of time out to take care of ourselves, we can handle the stresses in life a little easier," she said.

And everyone on her team is like family.

"Our staff is mostly local and some of the therapists have worked at prestigious

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HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Select a gift to tantalize their senses this season

This elegant Swedish Ten-Minute Trifle makes a great dessert, especially for berry lovers. Sweden, home of the smorgasbord, a tempting spread of sweet and savory dishes, is a rich source of healthy, delicious, special occasion recipes for home entertaining.

One of their secrets: Sweden's forests are full of tart-sweet lingonberries, picked and served with everything from waffles and pastry to Swedish meatballs.

The lingonberry was featured on "The Dr. Oz Show" as a superberry, loaded with antioxidants and bursting with juicy flavor.

The next time the party's at your place, take a tip from Swedish home cooks: You can serve lingonberry jam with ham or turkey instead of cranberry sauce, or use it as a topping on pancakes or waffles for a festive brunch.

For a quick and delectable dessert your guests will love, try this Ten-Minute Trifle from the makers of Felix Lingonberry jam—it's a fresh take on an all-time classic.



Lingonberries create the base for this trifle.

Ten-Minute Trifle

8-10 ginger biscuits (or biscuits of your own choice), crushed

2/3 cup Felix Lingonberries

1 cup whipping cream, whipped

1 teaspoon vanilla sugar

Crumble some ginger biscuits, putting half in the bottom of a glass. Whip cream together with vanilla sugar. On top of the biscuit crumbs, add a layer of lingonberries, then a layer of whipped cream. Repeat, finishing with a layer of cream. You can also mix the cream with the berries.

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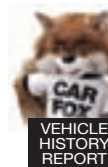
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Man dies after colliding with bus near St. John's

BY MADINA TOURE

A 60-year-old man driving the wrong way on a Hillcrest street in front of St. John's University died after he crashed into an MTA bus Monday night, police said. The bus driver and a female passenger on the bus suffered injuries.

At about 8:30 p.m., police responded to a call of a motor vehicle accident at the intersection of Union Turnpike and 174th Street, according to the police.

The accident involved a 2004 Ford Sedan and a 2011 MTA New York City Transit bus, police said.

The operator of the Ford was pronounced dead at the scene by EMS, officials said.

"The university was saddened to learn of a tragic occurrence on Monday night that resulted in a fatal car accident outside one of our main gates on Union Turnpike," the university said in a statement. "The entire St. John's community mourns the loss of life and our thoughts and prayers go out to the victim and his family."

The 44-year-old male operator of the bus was taken to Elmhurst General Hospital with minor injuries and a 64-year-old female passenger on the bus was taken to Queens General Hospital with minor injuries, police said.

A preliminary investigation revealed that the Ford was traveling westbound on Union Turnpike when it veered into the eastbound lanes and collided head-on with the bus, which was traveling eastbound in the right lane on Union Turnpike east of East 174th Street, police said.

The identity of the Ford's driver was pending family notification and the investigation was ongoing by the NYPD's Collision Investigation Squad, a police spokesman said.

Kevin Ortiz, an MTA spokesman, said the structure of the bus may have saved lives.

"The overall structural integrity of the bus was able to prevent an even further tragedy by protecting the bus operator and customers on the bus," Ortiz said in a statement.

Driver charged in three deaths of car crash victims in Bayside

BY TOM MOMBERG

The Jackson Heights woman who drove into another car, killing a mother and her two daughters, in a Bayside crash in July has been charged with manslaughter, the Queens DA said.

Deborah Burns, 46, had allegedly driven recklessly at excessively high speeds in a 25 mile-per-hour school zone, DA Richard Brown said, based on the police investigation into the incident.

"This frightening crash happened right in front of a school and could have been even more horrific if students had been present at the time," Brown said in a statement. "This is another example of how deadly motor vehicles can be and the consequences of climbing behind the wheel of a car and engaging in reckless behavior. The defendant is now facing a long prison sentence, if convicted."

Burns was arraigned in Queens Criminal Court this week after the criminal complaint was filed with the DA.

She was arraigned on three counts of second-degree manslaughter and three counts of criminally negligent homicide, as well as two counts of felony assault and two counts of reckless driving, the DA said. Brown said if she is convicted, she could face up to 15

years in prison.

According to the police investigation from the July 1 incident and the resulting criminal charges, Burns allegedly was speeding while driving northbound on 210th Street behind MS 74, and crossed the double-yellow line on the road into oncoming traffic, before coming up on the Horace Harding Expressway service road.

The crash data from the on-board computer of Burns' 2006 Ford Explorer indicated she was traveling faster than 60 miles per hour just seconds before striking a Toyota Camry carrying a family of five from Flushing, according to the criminal complaint.

The Camry spun out of control and struck a tree, the complaint said. The three passengers in the rear seat of the Camry died as a result of the accident.

Susanna Ha, 42, and her daughter Angelica Ha, 10, died at the hospital within hours of the crash, and her other daughter, Michelle Ung, 8, died days later in the hospital as a result of her injuries, according to the complaint.

Susanna Ha's father, Young Ju Ha, 74, who was driving the Camry, and mother, Chung Ock Ha, 67, who was in the front passenger seat during the crash, survived but sustained severe injuries.

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Putting the holiday spirit into action



Getting ready to the march in the Second Annual Children's Parade down up Bell Boulevard, the contingent from PS 41 rolls out its banner.

Photo by Julie Weissman



Bayside's version of the Rockettes get a kick line going for the Children's Parade on Bell Boulevard.

Courtesy of the Bayside BID



At the Queens Center Mall, state Sen. Jose Peralta distributes toys to non-profits and shelters as part of his Holiday Toy Drive. Twenty local organizations received gifts to give away.

Courtesy of State Sen. Peralta



Councilman Paul Vallone, Thomas Grech of the Queens Chamber of Commerce and Santa Claus celebrate the tree lighting in Whitestone with some of Christmas' biggest fans.

Courtesy of Councilman Vallone



Little Pammy Fawkes shows off her local-interest T-shirt at the Bayside holiday parade.

Photo by Julie Weissman

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Early start for computer classes

Schools are pushing to bring technology to all students beginning with kindergartners

Today's youth are well versed in transitioning their computers and phones from school to home, and futurists believe that will be even more necessary in coming years.

That is something to consider when buying technology devices this holiday season.

Project Tomorrow's recent Speak Up Data shares that "students in a blended learning environment — utilizing both physical books and online digital resources — are more likely to self-direct their learning outside of school."

Personal learning devices are once again projected to be popular gifts this season. The best tech device options allow your student to learn and play anytime, anywhere and in any environment.

The critical items to consider are devices that allow full access to learning applications. You also want 9-plus



A group of second-grade students take a computer science class. Schools in New York City and San Francisco have committed to offering computer classes to students in all grade levels.

AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

hour batteries, keyboards friendly weight, powerful loading videos and access to easy connectivity, a backpack browsers that allow for fast school assignments and re-

search tools. A technology device that will position your student to be successful now and in their transition to college and career is the perfect holiday gift.

Cost-effective technology such as the Intel processor-powered Chromebook is being embraced by entire school districts for its fostering of streamlined education allowing faculty and IT administrators to communicate with students at school and at home. As a bonus, your student can also use a Chromebook to socialize with friends and engage in fun learning apps and popular gaming sites.

"This is a whole new definition of what school looks like," Alice Keeler, Google for Education certified innovator, said. "Students can ask questions by posting to the stream in Google Classroom 24/7, and since other students have ac-

Continued on Page 39

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High School Graduates, Build Skills in Fields That are Hiring Through Affordable, Short-Format NYUSPS Diploma Programs

This spring, the NYU School of Professional Studies (NYUSPS), a leader in professionally focused education, will offer a new, affordable option of study that will provide individuals who have earned a high school degree with the opportunity to acquire industry focused skills that will prepare them for jobs in fields with growing levels of employment. New Diplomas, offered through NYUSPS Professional Pathways, are designed as immersive programs of study that can be completed in as little as one semester. During Spring 2016, seven Diplomas will be offered. They include:

The one-semester **Diploma in Basic Project Management**, which prepares you for a career in this growing field by gaining a hands-on understanding of the essential terminology

and the application of the basic tools, techniques, and practices required to become an effective and contributing member of a project team.

The **Diploma in Bookkeeping**, a one-semester, blended program, which imparts the knowledge and skill sets to perform functions within the bookkeeping cycle, manually and with QuickBooks and Xero. Ground yourself in accounting ethics and best practices, while exploring basic concepts including debits, credits, "T-accounts," journal accounting, GAAP concepts, accrual and double-entry record keeping, and more.

The **Diploma in Construction Administration**, a one-semester, blended program, which provides the skills to secure an entry-level position within the

commercial or residential building sectors of the real estate industry. Learn about the construction process and document administration. Gain an introduction to construction methods and materials, building systems, drawings, estimating, and scheduling.

Developed in collaboration with the NYU Langone Medical Center, the four-semester **Diploma in Medical Coding** teaches you to compile, process, and maintain medical records by becoming proficient in ICD-10 medical coding.

The one-semester **Diploma in Residential Property Administration** introduces you to real estate investment concepts and property management principles. Learn how to market properties, negotiate and execute leases, manage staff, and oversee day-to-day op-

erations of a property.

The one-semester **Diploma in Residential Real Estate Brokerage** for licensed New York real estate salespersons with at least two years of experience, provides training to increase your knowledge of licensing laws and regulations, as well as real estate valuation, finance, construction, land use, fair housing, transactions, business development, and more.

The one-semester **Diploma in Restaurant Operations and Guest Service** will provide you with a comprehensive understanding of front-of-house and back-of-house restaurant operations, and what it takes to succeed in the food and beverage industry. Benefit from site visits to NYC restaurants and from the invaluable experiences of seasoned industry veterans.

All Diplomas will provide industry specific career modules presented online in a self-paced format, which help students to better understand the job market. Upon completion of your diploma, you also will have access to an online portal featuring job postings and a resource library. Annual networking events will provide opportunities to meet with peers and employers in the field. Each program of study provides students with a tangible take-away project that can be added to their résumé and presented to prospective employers.

For more information, visit sps.nyu.edu/diplomas07 or call 212-998-7200.



DIPLOMA PROGRAMS



Members of PS 154's Green Team received an award for their sustainable initiatives during a ceremony at the Flushing school last year.

Schools see green when they recycle

Green teams are forming at elementary and high schools all over the country and reinventing the way their communities view waste and recycling.

Students and teachers build sheds and design bins to house hundreds of collected bottles and cans. They use their schools' daily announcements to share original songs and music videos about how to drop it in the bin.

Devoted teachers, such as Drew Johnson of Salem, Ill., are leading the way by advocating for the creation of these groups and empowering students to become leaders themselves.

An avid recycler, Johnson first introduced recycling to his school in 2010 and today he co-sponsors the school's Green Clean Recycling Team alongside teacher Kari Thackrey.

The duo oversees a group of 30 students who have rallied the school and community to collect thousands of beverage containers to date.

Leaders are shining at schools nationwide, their success rewarded and measured by organized school recycling programs, such as PepsiCo's Recycle Rally, whose 1,500 participating

schools recycled more than 51 million bottles and cans since the program kicked off in 2010.

School recycling programs provide structure and incentives for teachers and PTA parents so they can take recycling to the next level at their schools. Recycle rally, for example, provides curriculum, guides and performance reports, plus multiple opportunities to earn supplies and rewards.

What You Can Do:

In addition to helping your kids recycle cans and bottles, there are several steps you can take at home to make the world a greener place, including:

- Look around the house for plastic containers that can be upcycled to create something new.
- Turn off lights when you leave a room to conserve energy.
- Plant a garden or tree in your backyard.
- Use both sides of a piece of paper when taking notes or creating artwork. Throw scrap paper in a recycling receptacle instead of a trash bin.
- Beautify your neighborhood by organizing a garbage pickup.

Computers

Continued from Page 38

cess to the stream, students are able to learn from and help each other."

The ability to handle such multitasking is projected to serve youth well in the coming decades as technology evolves, according to a 2012 survey by the Pew Research Institute.

More than 50 percent of respondents agreed that by 2020, "the environment itself will be full of data that can be retrieved almost effortlessly, and will be arrayed in ways to help people young and old navigate their lives."

The Intel-powered Chromebook addresses that need for multitasking with several advantages over ARM process-based models.

In a report last year, those advantages included a 57 percent longer battery life while web browsing, 46 percent less waiting to read a textbook or take notes online, 47 percent less waiting to do math homework online, 50 percent less waiting to create an English presentation, 46 percent less waiting to team up in science class and 100 percent more frames per second while rendering an anatomy situation.

That's partly why school district IT specialist Kyle Pace calls it "the biggest no-brainer in education."

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TimesLedger, December 11-17, 2015

Q GUIDE

TO THE ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND DINING



Dan McCarthy (l-r) on violin, Aya Hamada on harpsichord and Anneke Schaul-Yoder on cello, rehearse for the upcoming Queens Consort concert in Jackson Heights.

Photo courtesy of Ben Rezendes and Elise M. VanderKley

GOING FOR BAROQUE

Queens of Consort perform holiday music on period instruments at Yuletide concert

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

These days you don't come across many musicians who have a particular interest in Italian baroque music and have the ability to play period baroque instruments at baroque pitch.

But it seems clear that the conservatory-trained musicians in the group Queens Consort do.

Three members come from the Juilliard School in Manhattan and the

group has performed this style of European classical music for years.

"We are inspired to bring authentic period instrument performances to the Queens community," founding director and baroque violinist Claire Smith Bermingham, said. "We value historically informed performance practices to study and recreate the original intentions of the composers and strive to reflect this in our music."

The Jackson Heights resident

formed the group earlier this year, along with longtime Sunnyside friend Margret Hjaltestad, who plays baroque viola. They asked the other members — Dan McCarthy, Aya Hamada and Anneke Schaul-Yoder — to join them.

Now the core group contains two violins, one viola, one cello and harpsichord. Their stringed instruments have gut strings and are set up in the traditional baroque style, and the musicians play with baroque bows,

which are shorter and have different strengths for the repertoire they perform than bows for modern stringed instruments.

Smith said they are all looking forward to the group's evening Yuletide concert on Dec. 19 at St. Mark's Church in Jackson Heights, where they can share their love of ancient music with the community.

"We feel the concert — requested by

Continued on Page 47

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THEATER CALENDAR



PRODUCTIONS

"A Christmas Carol" – Titan Theatre Co. presents a new production, with music, of the Charles Dickens' holiday classic tale of redemption.

When: Through Dec. 20

Where: Queens Theatre, 14 United Nations Ave. South, Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Cost: \$18

Contact: (718) 760-0064

Website: www.titantheatrecompany.com

"All in the Timing" – First String Players presents this collection of one-act, mostly comic, plays by writer David Ives, which focus on language and wordplay, complications with romantic relationships and the meaning of life.

When: Friday, Jan. 8 and Saturday, Jan. 9, at 7 pm; Sunday, Jan. 10, at 3 pm

Where: Our Lady of Mercy, 70-01 Kessel St., Forest Hills

Cost: \$10

Contact: (718) 268-6143

Website: www.sites.google.com/site/

firststringplayers/

"First Frost Festival" – For its final festival at the Chain Theatre, Variations Theatre Group presents a series of comedy performances, one-act plays, a visit from The Usual Rejects and their movie parody and a new version of last year's live radio production of "It's a Wonderful Life."

When: Through Dec. 18

Where: The Chain Theatre, 21-28 45th Road, Long Island City

Cost: \$15

Contact: (866) 811-4111

Website: www.variationstheatrecompany.com

MEETINGS

North Shore Playwrights Circle Meeting

– Formerly known as the Playwrights Circle of Great Neck, this open group features discussion, workshoping and writing exercises for playwrights in Queens and Nassau counties.

When: Every other Wednesday, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Where: Atria, 96 Cutter Mill Road, Great Neck

Contact: Muriel, (718) 225-7382

For more hyper-local Queens news on your computer, smartphone, or iPad, visit **TimesLedger.com**.

sudoku

Answers in Sports

Easy #37

	6	4				9	3	
			3		7		6	2
		5	8					
6	7	8						
			7		5			
						7	4	3
					3	4		
5	8		6		4			
	3	2				8	1	

Hard #37

	9							1
			2		5			
4							6	
9		2		1				6
		7	5		4	2		
5				8		3		9
	1							3
			1		9			
6							2	

Fill in the grids so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. There should be no repeats; which means that no number is repeated in any row, column or box.

Tips at www.sudoku.com
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Week 45

Love is in the air at Queens Library

Romance authors share trade secrets at annual Langston Hughes Literary Arts Festival

BY MADINA TOURE

Renowned African-American romance novelists discussed everything from how they get inspired to creativity in romance writing at the seventh annual Langston Hughes Literary Arts Festival at the Langston Hughes Community Library in Corona over the weekend.

The panel, titled "For the Love of the Words: Master Storytellers" featured Rochelle Alers, author of "Cherry Lane" and more than 50 titles; Donna Hill, author of "My Love at Last," who is considered the one of the early pioneers of the African-American romance genre; and Renee Daniel Flagler, an award-winning writer and creative writing teaching artist.

Alers has visited the library multiple times, saying that it is like "coming home." Flagler teaches creative writing courses at the library throughout the year and Hill worked for the Queens Library



A panel of African-American romance authors discuss their passion for romance writing.

Photo by Madina Toure

for 10 years.

Alicia Evans, president and founder of the Sugar & Spice Club, moderated the panel. The authors fielded questions about how they got into romance writing, what makes the genre appealing and how they keep their romance stories fresh.

Hill said it can be challenging to come up with new ideas for sex scenes, which must be written in a way that is not sleazy given the genre's romantic nature.

"I think the biggest thing that I have is, you write enough romances, how many ways can you have sex?" she said, jokingly. "OK, so on the table, in the hallway, in the beach, in the kitchen, on the floor, what else can I say? That's the most difficult part to write."

For Flagler, romance is the perfect genre simply because "love rocks."


"It's real and it is powerful and I'm a champion of it because I don't think it gets

Continued on Page 46

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Holiday Happenings

GingerBread Lane — Experience Jon Lovitch's 500 square feet of gingerbread houses, businesses, parks and a boardwalk, which has just been certified with its third consecutive Guinness World Record for the largest gingerbread village.

When: Through Jan. 9

Where: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., Corona

Cost: \$15/adults, \$12/seniors, students and children ages 2 - 17

Contact: (718) 699-0005

Website: www.nysci.org

Hollis Hills Tree Lighting — The Hollis Hills Civic Association will hold its first tree lighting ceremony with carolers, free hot chocolate, holiday candy and donut holes.

When: Friday, Dec. 11, at 6 pm

Where: Union Turnpike and 220th Street traffic island

Cost: Free

Website: www.hollishillscivic.org

31st Annual Langston Hughes Kwanzaa Celebration — This day-long event includes music, arts and crafts, African folktales and stories.

When: Saturday, Dec. 12, from 10 am - 8 pm

Where: Langston Hughes Library, 100-01 Northern Blvd., Corona

Cost: Free

Contact: (718) 990-0700

Website: www.queenslibrary.org

Continued on Page 46

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

TimesLedger Newspapers
Dec. 11-17, 2015

By Ed Canty

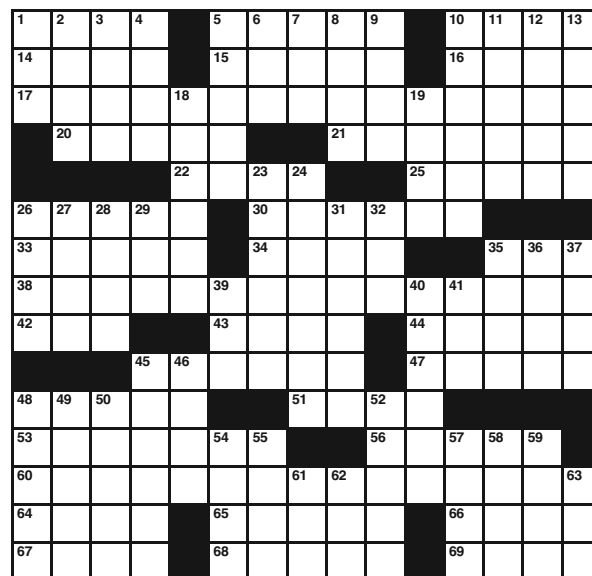
Old Glory

LAST
WEEK'S
ANSWERS

ALL LEVELS OF ENFORCEMENT
TISAR REDO ACID
REMO UTICA SOLO
ANNA BASTE INKS
COUNTY SHERIFF
ERASER TINISM
SAL LEFT ACADIA
FEDERAL AGENT
USITA AIL EDGE
STATETROOPER
MAKEDO STEP ASS
ARE INS RIDDLE
CITY POLICEMAN
GLAD ARTOO PITS
NERO SATED TREE
PEEL TOWS HESS

Across

1. Links rental
5. AOL activities
10. Shiny on top?
14. Defendant's part of the bargain?
15. Place for a fast buck
16. Apple spray
17. Colorful entree
20. "Sesame Street" character, with "The"
21. Deadly meetings?
22. Blacken, in a way
25. Saxophonist's supply
26. New Zealand tribesman
30. Paul and Carly
33. Pertaining to base 8
34. Store safely
35. Fordham mascot
38. Valerie Jarrett & others
42. "Hold on a ____!"
43. Smell -- (be suspicious)
44. "Horrible" Viking
45. Apothecary tool
47. Rehab candidates
48. Picture book?
51. Bed board
53. Mexican menu choice
56. I.V. league member?
60. High level investigation group



64. "I cannot tell ____"

65. One who cries "Uncle!"?

66. Game piece

67. 1040 IDs

68. Alcohol burners

69. Religious statue locale

Down

1. E.M.T.'s skill

2. Baldwin or Guinness

3. Start all over

4. No-no

5. Box

6. Babe

7. Infomercials, e.g.

8. Boston party drinks?

9. Loudness measure

10. Noble partner

11. "The Brady Bunch" housekeeper

12. Added punch to the punch?

13. Shift, e.g.

18. Store, as corn

19. Mend socks

23. Arrange

24. Ceremonial acts

26. Applies blades to blades

27. Advil target

28. Applying to ears

29. A mazing animal?

31. "The Producers" star Zero

32. Be outstanding?

35. Anger

36. Way, way off

37. G.M. and G.E. (e.g.)

39. Owns

40. "Hold your tongue"

41. Profs' helpers

45. Uses the blender

46. Prince of Persia?

48. Hebrew fathers

49. Quiet times

50. Bean Town skater

52. Queen ____ lace

54. Food sticker

55. Final notice

57. Pro ____

58. Sassy sort

59. Congers

61. Big name on the Thames?

62. Goose, in Spain or Italy

63. Acting Majors?

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York College slips into 'Intimate Apparel'

BY VALERIE VICTOR

In Lynn Nottage's 2004 play "Intimate Apparel," a black seamstress dreams of opening her own business in early 20th-century New York City.

The period piece touches on issues of race and gender, but its main focus is on the lead character and her struggle not to give up on her goals.

"We did research on the year 1905 to prepare for this play. It's about an African-American woman in New York City during a time when women were at the bottom of the totem pole," Janice Capuana, the play's director, said. "We really needed to understand the time and the period to really have the actors portray these characters well."

The plot develops as the main character Esther, a seamstress played by Danielle Taylor, works to open a beauty salon, and describes everything she encounters throughout the process.

"We really want the audience to see the yearning and diversity in the characters. The strength and the dreams, and the hope the characters have despite the world being against them," Capuana said. "We want to get them to dream that unfulfilled dream we all have as human beings."

Nottage even throws in a little romance and betrayal to flesh out the



Alvaro Rivera (l) and Danielle Taylor appear in an scene from "Intimate Apparel" playing at York College through Saturday.
Photo by Valerie Victor

story.

"The seamstress falls in love and gets her heart broken, and everything that happens after that is a sight to see," political science major Marianne Tiesler-Megna said.

The play has received plenty of good

reviews to date.

"I liked the way it's set up, how they portray feelings, it was very realistic," Shabeena Sameed, 19, said. "I think it's a great life experience."

During a recent performance, many of the audience members stopped to

talk to the actors afterwards.

"I liked it a lot. I like the drama," Dom Jones said. "I like the cast, and most of all, it has very strong acting. It's a classic tale, a woman falls in love too fast."

The cast and the director want the audience to enjoy the experience and walk away with a number of different messages.

"What the audience will take away from this is that not everything will end up how you think it will," Alvaro Rivera, who plays the character Mr. Marks, said. "Even though things are going in one direction, it can go in another direction."

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Novelists

Continued from Page 43

enough credit," she said. Alers, who described writing as a "sedative," is working on a project that features romance for baby boomers, who are sometimes deemed too old for passion.

"Unfortunately, one of my editors ... thought they were too old for love," she said. "So I said, 'OK.' I couldn't give it to her. I just couldn't give it to her. Baby boomers need love, too. So I was able to find an editor who's a baby boomer and was more than willing to take it."

Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center is recognized as a literary landmark by United for Libraries. It is the first public institution named for the famed poet and author of the Harlem Renaissance.

"Most of the things that are now very commonplace in libraries throughout the country and the world in many cases were started



John Crow Alexander, a community associate for the Langston Hughes Community Library, shares the library's history.

Photo by Madina Toure

right here at Langston Hughes Library," John Crow Alexander, a community associate for the library, said. "Your Harlequin books, your DVDs, CDs, VHS, those were first circulated here at Langston Hughes Library, before any other place."

The event kicked off with a presentation by author Mary Bounds on her book, "A Light Shines in Harlem: New York's First Charter

School and the Movement It Led."

MK Asante, an author, filmmaker, rapper and college professor, presented his memoir, "Buck: A Memoir." Kwame Alexander, a poet and author of 18 books, presented his book, "The Crossover." Radio show host and blogger Flo Anthony discussed her journey as a writer and her latest works.

Holiday

Continued from Page 44

Jingle Bell Jazz — Linda Ciofalo and Co. present traditional holiday music with a jazzy twist.
When: Saturday, Dec. 12, at 2:30 pm
Where: Ridgewood Library, 20-12 Madison St.
Cost: Free
Contact: (718) 821-4770
Website: www.queenslibrary.org

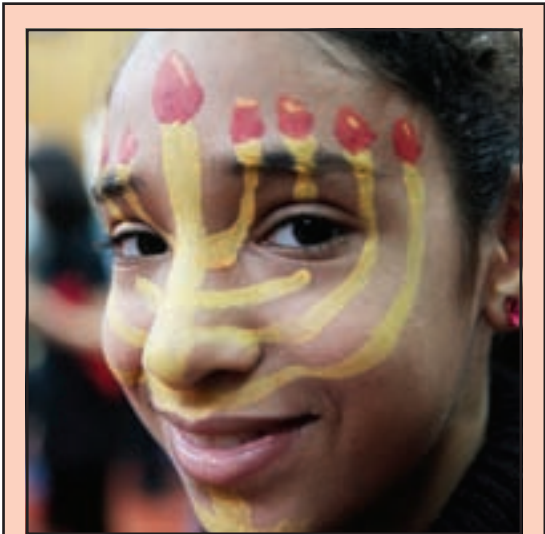
Hands on History: Winter Wonderland — Learn how the holidays were celebrated in 19th century Queens. Make a snowflake and scented ornament.
When: Saturday, Dec. 12, from noon - 3 pm
Where: King Manor Museum, Rufus King Park, Jamaica Avenue and 153rd Street, Jamaica
Cost: Free
Contact: (718) 206-0545
Website: www.kingsmanor.org

Route 9 Ensemble: Standards and Holiday Highlights — The string quartet will perform standard chamber music, including Schubert's

"Quartet No. 14 in D minor," as well as classic holiday carols.
When: Saturday, Dec. 12, at 3 pm
Where: Jamaica Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd.
Cost: Free, but tickets, available on Eventbrite.com, are required.
Contact: (718) 990-0700
Website: www.queenslibrary.org

Jingle Bell with

Richard Lanham — This family concert includes performances of Christmas carol classics.
When: Saturday, Dec. 12, at 3 pm, and Saturday, Dec. 19, at 3 pm
Where: Dec. 12 at Laurelton Library, 134-26 225th St.; Dec. 19 at Queens Village Library, 94-11 217th St.
Cost: Free
Contact: (718) 990-0700
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CONSORT

Continued from Page 41

St. Mark's Church and community – will be a beautiful way to help celebrate the spirit of the holiday season, and just days before Christmas,” Smith said. “For the performance, we will include two recorder players as guest artists, friends Daphna Mor and Lewis R. Baratz. The addition of the recorders will add a nice texture for the music we are programming.”

Audiences will hear ancient music, specifically written for Christmas by Arcangelo Corelli, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, Johann Christoph Pez and Giuseppe Torelli, as well as early Christmas carols.

During the baroque era (between 1600 - 1750), church music featured the contrasts of solo voices, chorus, and orchestra. And in instrumental music, the period saw the emergence of the sonata, the suite, and particularly the concerto grosso, as in the music of Corelli, Vivaldi, Handel and Bach.

All professional musicians, both on baroque and modern instruments, the close-knit members of Queens Consort regularly perform together in

IF YOU GO

The Queens Consort, Yuletide Celebration Concert

When: Saturday, Dec. 19, 7 pm

Where: St. Mark's Church, 33-50 82nd St., Jackson Heights

Cost: \$15/general, \$10/students, wine and food reception in the Parish Hall after concert

Website: www.queensconsort.com

chamber music and orchestral settings in many different ensembles. Over the years, they have given performances in Queens, Manhattan and beyond: at concert halls, including Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, on Broadway; on television; and in professional recordings. In fact, Smith has been concertmaster of the Astoria Music Society orchestra for the past 10 years.

The group's inaugural concerts took place in mid-October, when 90 people came to their Manhattan concert and 120 attended their Queens performances, according to Smith. There folks got a taste

of what early music was all about when they experienced a hauntingly beautiful performance of 17th century Venetian baroque composers, or composers who influenced the Venetian baroque composers living at the time. The concert program was inspired by Smith's then-recent travel to Venice and other regions of Italy.

With television performances on “Late Night with David Letterman,” “Saturday Night Live,” “The View” and others under her belt, Smith has been featured in a variety of venues on both modern and baroque violin. Cellist Schaul-Yoder appeared in a televised performance of Lincoln Center's, “American Songbook” series on PBS.

“We were overwhelmed by our audience support at our first two concerts, and felt incredible support and enthusiasm from the audiences in both boroughs,” Smith said. “It was particularly important to us that we had a good turnout in Queens because our intent is to bring early music to this borough where we live. We are committed to bringing quality baroque performances to this community and consider ourselves the first early music group for the borough.”



Co-founding director of Queens Consort, Claire Smith Bermingham (above), plays the violin. Margaret Hjaltestad (top), the group's other co-founder, plays the viola.
Photo courtesy Ben Rezendes and Elise M. VanderKley



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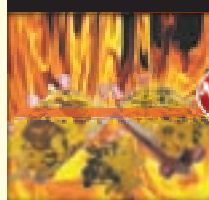


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Move NY

Continued from Page 4

The proposal has received support from about four dozen elected officials, including state Sen. Jose Peralta (D-East Elmhurst), City Councilman Jimmy Van Bramer (D-Sunnyside) and City Councilman Donovan Richards (D-Laurelton) as well as Make Queens Safer, the Riders Alliance and Transportation Alternatives, according to Matthiessen.

Peralta, the first lawmaker to support the proposal, said the Assembly is not considering the commuter tax and that the opposition is coming from northeast Queens where public transit is limited.

"The people so far who

have been against it are the people who represent the Bay-side area, the David Weprins and the Tony Avellas of the world and Barry Grodenchik," he said.

The plan would bring equity to the cost for commuters and improve the transportation infrastructure, he said.

Mayor Bill de Blasio has said he wants to have a bigger conversation with stakeholders in the metropolitan area about how to strengthen the MTA for the long term, ideas he said have been looked upon negatively in Albany and would be hard to achieve.

The proposal would increase traffic speeds inside the central business district by as much as 20 percent, reduce tolls by 45 percent on the RFK, Whitestone, Throgs Neck and

Verrazano and by 48 percent on Henry Hudson, Cross Bay and Gil Hodges, Matthiessen said.

Avella called the proposal "nothing more than a tax on those who can least afford it."

"In an economy where the middle class has been squeezed dry, real people will absolutely struggle to pay for this policy and we should not be putting them into that position where they have to," he said in a statement.

Borough President Melinda Katz has also opposed the plan.

Reach reporter Madina Toure by e-mail at mtoure@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4566.

NYCHA

Continued from Page 5
developers.

The daughter of a Nigerian immigrant said occupied houses that NYCHA owns have not gotten the maintenance they need. The agency works with nonprofits like Habitat for Humanity and the Restored Homes Housing Development Fund Corporation to help those families, some renting the houses, restore homes and get on a path to homeownership. As for the 110 abandoned single-family homes in southern Queens under NYCHA's care, Olatoye said she is awaiting approval from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development for funds to repair them. That approval was expected to come by the end of this year, but Olatoye said she now anticipates that it will come early in 2016.

"We just need to get them off our balance sheet and into the hands of organizations that can use these homes to start low-income families' pathway to homeownership," Olatoye said.

When she was appointed, Olatoye said she was handed a \$2.5 billion operating budget deficit. She said making up the difference requires efforts on two fronts: actively pursuing as many federal funding and grants as the agency can and pursuing a different model for generating revenue.

NYCHA was able to cut costs last year by farming out the work to private contractors on 10 different restoration or construction projects

now available through its Section 8 housing voucher program, in which families pay no more than 40 percent of their adjusted monthly income toward rent.

The city housing agency not only provides public housing, but leases out commercial property and provides affordable housing as well. As the city's largest single landlord, NYCHA is actively looking for ways to take its current stock and create new commercial and residential units that it can lease to create revenue.

Olatoye said while NYCHA is the largest such organization in the country, it is also the most outdated. It used to be that federal funds helped balance the budget to provide housing and transitional services to people and families who needed it. Now NYCHA needs to start making money off some of its properties to reduce the costs of running public housing.

To improve the quality of life for residents, she said the agency needs to set up new revenue streams to maintain properties and establish better communication and collaboration of data with the police and other city agencies.

"I don't think you can just put this same way of doing things back together," Olatoye said. "We will need a completely new model—something that will be unique to New York but borrow models and ideas from other cities."

Reach reporter Tom Momberg by e-mail at tmomberg@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4573.

Muslims

Continued from Page 4

ers condemned the attacks in Paris and California, the mayor was welcomed with loud applause.

"This city is a stronger city, because every kind of community exists here. We are a stronger city because of the Muslim community here. This community wants a relationship with the city," he said.

He said New Yorkers should reject the notion that the city could be torn apart by racism-driven fear.

"This Muslim community of New York City is an ally in the fight against terror," he said. "We need to be clear. The people of this community desire peace and harmony and understand a sad fact: When acts of terror occur, all com-

munities suffer."

Blasio pointed out there were 1.6 billion Muslims across the world and almost a million across the city.

"[Muslims] are law-abiding, good people and the few who have chosen a different path does not define them," he said.

DeBlasio said violence against any community is not tolerated and would be pursued as a hate crime by the NYPD.

The Jamaica Muslim Center, also known as Masjid Al-Mamoor, is a multi-purpose mosque that caters to religious studies, prayers, celebration, after-school programs and food service for all denominations at 85-37 168th St. in Jamaica.

Many Muslim men at the event, who feared a backlash against the community, said

they worked hard, enjoyed their families and had big dreams for their children to do great things, just like every individual in this country.

"This is absolutely historic," said 29-year-old Muhammed Salahuddin, from Jamaica. "The feeling was always like we weren't being heard. We were being marginalized. The racism has not always been direct. It has been small, carefully crafted comments. But as a Muslim you try to understand where the other person is coming from -- people are scared but so are Muslims. We are scared, too."

Reach Reporter Sadeef Ali Kully by e-mail at skully@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4546.

Principe

Continued from Page 16

Parks' design flipped. Many of those at the meeting favored Fiedler's design, according to a Crowley spokeswoman.

The Parks Department said it would take the comments from the planning session for further consideration in its final design plan.

"The park hasn't seen any significant renovations in over 25 years," Crowley said. "There's a lot of drainage problems with many puddles, even in the warm weather. It wasn't well thought out in the initial construction."

According to a Meghan Lalor, spokeswoman for New York City Parks, the synthetic turf used for the fields provides a uniform surface for multiple activities and is easier and more cost-effective to maintain. The Parks plan would also have the existing asphalt track reconstructed and painted, along with new site amenities that include installation of drinking fountains and trash receptacles.

In December 2014 Crowley allotted \$5.7 million to update the park's four baseball fields and construct a running track. The current track is lined with asphalt and is not suitable for an ideal running experience,

Crowley said. That money, and the redesign process in general, aim to address flooding issues at two of the baseball fields and replace the other two with a soccer field.

Much of the park has not seen any significant upgrades since its inception in the 1980s. The last major capital project for the park was done in 1996 which included a \$3 million upgrade to the playground, tennis and basketball courts.

Reach reporter Gabriel Rom by e-mail at grom@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4564.

Parks

Continued from Page 5

Besides the fund for the eight new projects, the other \$10 million is supposed to be dispersed to more than 30 current capital improvement projects the department is already working on.

Those current projects have already been funded, but in addition to what those site plans already call for, entrances could be improved or added, while adjacent spaces and edges of the parks could be more visible, lush and inviting with money from the Parks Without Borders fund, he said.

Silver said the suggestions the department gets from the public will also be considered for those existing projects.

While opening up those parks might appeal to both law-abiding citizens and criminals, the commissioner said the initiative is more about making the best use of park space, removing dead space and making it more accessible—trying the strategy out in just a few parks to start with.

"In terms of safety, there is something called crime prevention through environmental design. We've met with the NYPD—what helps the park is better visibility and more eyes from the street—good uses pushing out bad uses," Silver said.

Reach reporter Tom Momberg by e-mail at tmomberg@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4573.

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Sliced Filet Mignon with Red Wine Reduction and Colossal Shrimp Stuffed with Crabmeat and Lobster Sauce

~or~

Roasted Long Island Duck Breast with a Bitter Orange Sauce

~or~

Filet of Barramundi with a Sauce of Baby Shrimp, Asparagus, Lemon and Garlic

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Sports



Francis Lewis senior guard Taliyah Brisco looks for a layup against Truman.
Photo by Michael Shain

Despite sloppy play, Lewis beats Truman

BY BRANDON MAUK

Francis Lewis coach Steve Tsai simply did not like how his team played, even though that play resulted in a win.

The Patriots missed easy shots, turned the ball over, and almost surrendered a late double-digit lead, but they still managed to rack up a 59-54 victory over Truman in PSAL girls' basketball Monday.

"We have a system in place," Tsai said. "Some of the stuff we were doing is definitely not what we advocate as a program." Francis Lewis (3-0) struggled in the first quarter, turning over the ball 10 times in the period, and neither team scored until about 2½ minutes in. Truman led 7-5 at the end of the first quarter.

Both teams shot the ball better in the second quarter; Truman (2-1) closed the frame on a 7-0 run in the final two minutes to take a 29-

22 lead into the break. Lewis (3-0) knew it had to slow the pace of the game down and play together instead of forcing shots.

"I don't know what that was, especially in the first half," Tsai said. "But I told the girls, for us it's always next play. This game was just about survival."

In the third quarter, Lewis' two stars took the game over. Taliyah Brisco scored seven of her 15 points in the first four minutes of the second half to give Lewis a 9-2 run.

"We all talked to each other at halftime, we built each other up," Brisco said. "We spoke over all the wrong things that we did and that's why we came out stronger."

After Truman built its lead back to four, it was Sierra Green's turn. The senior, who finished with a game-high 26 points, hit three three-pointers to give Lewis a four-point lead early in the fourth.

Continued on Page 552

Royals rout Loughlin

Ashlie Howell's triple-double fuels 19-point win for CK



Ashlie Howell (c.) contributed 22 points, 11 rebounds and 10 blocks to Christ the King's winning effort against Bishop Loughlin Monday.
Photo by Louise Wateridge

BY JOSEPH STASZEWSKI

Christ the King coach Bob Mackey said in the preseason that senior center Ashlie Howell was the key to his team's year, especially with injured star forward Kaela Kinder out until at least January.

The 6-foot-3 Howell proved him right against Bishop Loughlin in a battle between two of New York City's top teams. She recorded the first triple-double of her career with 22 points, 11 rebounds and 10 blocks. Howell tallied 17 of those points in the second half to help turn a tight contest into a comfortable 66-47 road victory in CHSAA Brooklyn/Queens girls' basketball Monday.

"I tried to fill in her spot and more," Howell said.

The Royals, defending diocesan and CHSAA state champions, led just 29-22 at the half before Howell asserted her dominance on both ends of the floor. She took full advantage inside with Loughlin sophomore forward Zaria Dorsey out with an injury. Her team-

mates saw it and kept going to her to exploit it.

"I was really hyped for her," Louisville-bound guard Sydney Zambrotta said. "She was grabbing rebounds, going back up. She was going for spins and moves I've never seen her do before."

Howell, who has scholarship offers from St. Peter's, Mount St. Mary's and Robert Morris, shot 8 of 10 from the free-throw line and sparked a 12-2 fourth-quarter run that put the game away. CK went from leading by 10 after three to 52-32 on a Dominique Toussaint layup with 4:40 to play in the game.

Zambrotta scored 14 points and dished out eight assists and the Virginia-bound Toussaint added eight points. Brandy Thomas chipped in a team-high 19 rebounds. Milicia Reid paced Loughlin with 18 points and was the only Lion in double figures. CK, playing its fourth game in five nights, is off to a 3-1 start because others have stepped up in Kinder's absence.

"To play four times in five

days and to come out with that type of performance in the second half is good," Mackey said.

The Royals' zone defense forced the Lions (3-1) to take jump shots they didn't make or to drive into Howell's outstretched arms. The effect of that was negated at times because of the Royals' turnovers. CK's back court is young and inexperienced once you get past the ACC-bound pair of Toussaint and Zambrotta.

"Second half, I know my team needed a boost," Howell said.

Loughlin was able to turn its own miscues and missed jump shots into transition points, and the Lions pulled to within 34-28 with 1:17 to play in the third.

But the Royals—with plenty of help from Howell—pulled it together in time to leave Brooklyn with an important win.

"The past year I've been in a shell," Howell said. "I'm breaking out of that shell now."

Ex-Dozo star Rhoomes is excelling at Fordham

Joseph Staszewski
■
Block Shots



Fordham University's senior forward Ryan Rhoomes is off to a strong start this season.
Photo by Robert Cole

Ryan Rhoomes is exceeding his own expectations.

The Fordham University senior forward is one of the most efficient and productive big men in the country in the early season, after a solid junior campaign. The former Benjamin Cardozo star, who averaged 6.4 points and 8.6 rebounds a contest last year, got right to work with first-year head coach Jeff Neubauer and his staff once they took over in late March. He's been a different player since.

"They forced me to be a better player," said the 6-foot-8, 235-pound Rhoomes. "He wanted more out of me than I wanted for myself. I just had to perform."

And so he has.

Rhoomes is averaging 15.7 points and 7.6 rebounds per game over his first seven contests. He tallied 20 points and 10 rebounds in a win over borough rival Manhattan and followed that up with a career-high 26 points and 12 boards to help the Rams rout St. John's. He is doing this while shooting an astonishing 75 percent from the field, which leads the nation.

"He's taking the right shots," Neubauer said. "He is getting to his spot on the floor and scoring the ball."

The upswing has come thanks to a retooling of Rhoomes' post game and a rebuilding of his confidence.

Neubauer said Rhoomes is unselfish by nature and often passed to his teammates too much out of the post instead of asserting himself. He aggressively attacked the basket against St. John's and yelled at the crowd in celebration of each big hoop.

"I just think I have been trying to score every time I get the ball," Rhoomes said.

Rhoomes got to that point by being in the gym consistently for eight months. Neubauer said they worked on his patience when he catches the ball with his back to the basket. It's not just the quickest shot or quickest pass any more, but the best shot or best

play. He has become a better defender also. Rhoomes' improvement has helped Fordham to its first six-game winning streak to open a season since 2000.

The team and personal success has Rhoomes thoroughly enjoying his senior season after three straight losing campaigns. The possibility of defeat doesn't enter his mind any more, just doing whatever it takes to win.

"When I went out to play St. John's, I didn't even think about losing," Rhoomes said. "My team has my back, my coach has my back. I just have a lot more confidence this year."

Truman took advantage of Lewis' anxious play. A 9-0 run, capped by a three-pointer by Dyona Davis, made it a two-point game with 25 seconds left.

Green went to the line with 11.1 seconds remaining and hit both free throws to push Lewis' lead back up to four.

"The pressure, we're not used to that yet," Green said. "We started rushing. We have new girls, so we've got to adapt to it."

After forcing a missed three-point attempt in the final seconds, Brisco iced the game at the free-throw line.

Perhaps much of Lewis' struggles was due to the new makeup of the roster, with players taking on new roles because of the loss of key players from last year. Three games in, the Patriots still consider themselves a work in progress.

"We're all still trying to play together," Brisco said.

Queens-born boxer loses Barclays bid

BY JOSEPH STASZEWSKI

Will Rosinsky couldn't fully size up Joe Smith Jr.

The Ozone Park native couldn't build off a strong start and lost a unanimous decision, 98-92, 97-93, 96-94, to the bigger and harder-hitting Joe Smith Jr. in a light-heavyweight bout at Barclays Center Saturday. The fight was part of the undercard of the middleweight title fight between Danny Jacobs and Peter Quillin.

"I was boxing better in the first couple rounds," said the 5-foot-8 Rosinsky. "His size played a role in the later rounds. He's a big guy, a tough guy. He had a lot of little elbows, hitting right at the belt line, which was smart. The refs didn't catch it."

Rosinsky (10-3, 10 KOs), who now lives in Lynbrook, clearly won the first two rounds, thoroughly outboxing the long-armed, 6-foot-tall Smith. The Archbishop Molloy and Queens College grad was super aggressive, landing some well-timed combinations. Things were going the way he wanted.

"The plan the whole time was to pretty much box him," the Brooklyn firefighter said.

But the tempo of the fight changed after Smith (20-1, 16 KOs) landed a sharp right in the fourth round. Smith then began landing numerous

hard shots and picked up the pace. A solid right in the fifth round opened up a deep cut over Rosinsky's left eye and hampered him for the rest of the bout.

"I wasn't in pain, but when the blood goes in your eye, it kind of blurs your vision," he said. "I kept wiping it to get it out of my eye. I didn't want to show that it was bothering me, but I had no choice."

Smith, who has sparred with Rosinsky regularly, dominated the middle rounds. Rosinsky said nothing took him by surprise, other than his jab being a little better.

Rosinsky eventually found his footing again in the seventh and ninth rounds. He returned to throwing the combination punches he landed early, but Smith connected on too many power shots in between.

Rosinsky said he enjoyed the night despite the loss. A large contingent of fans made their way down with a huge banner from his Engine Company 234 in Crown Heights. Rosinsky brought a flag from the group to the ring and had the numbers on his trunks. The experience was memorable.

"I think it is even more so now that I am a fireman," Rosinsky said. "A lot of then showed out for that and more firemen showed up. I had fun."



Ozone Park native Will Rosinsky (l.) dropped an eight-round decision to Joe Smith Jr. at Barclays Center last Saturday.
Photo by Steven Schnibbe

Lewis

Continued from Page 51

"We started listening to our system and trusted [coach Tsai] and we started playing as a team," Green said.

Lewis used a 15-2 run in the fourth to go up 56-45 with less than four minutes left. But instead of using the shot clock to take time off down the stretch, they began to press with shots.

SJU gives Mullin first MSG win as coach

BY STEPHEN ZITOLO

St. John's has been consistently inconsistent this season. The trend continued on Sunday afternoon at Madison Square Garden as the Red Storm escaped with a 63-56 victory over St. Francis College at the MSG Holiday Festival. The win marked the 1,800th in program history for St. John's, making them only the ninth program in the nation to reach the historic mark.

"Tonight wasn't a pretty game, but we will learn from



Durand Johnson hit key shots to help coach Chris Mullin win his first game at Madison Square Garden. Photo by Gina Palermo

it," St. John's Coach Chris Mullin said. "It's nice to win. But there's a lot of stuff we need to do better."

The Red Storm men's basketball team (5-3) had trouble getting things going early on both ends of the floor. Turnovers continued to hurt the Johnnies on offense as the Terriers (3-5) capitalized on the sloppy play. With a little more than 6:00 left in the first half, the Red Storm were down 23-14 before finally taking control of the game.

St. John's dominated the remainder of the first half by going on a 19-2 run to return into the locker room with a 33-25 lead. Graduate student Durand Johnson led the charge with 10 of his game-high 19 points during that run. Mullin hopes it is a sign of things to come.

"I think he can develop back into a consistent offensive presence," Mullin said of Johnson. "He's been up and down this year and frustrated at times, but the layoff is something you can't underestimate. I thought [Durand] was big tonight and we will

see more of that as the year goes on."

His club did not pull away from St. Francis in the second half. Ten second-half turnovers almost doomed the Red Storm, as the Terriers made a late second-half run to close within 57-55 with 36 seconds remaining. Johnson again stepped up and sealed the game with a left-wing jumper and later sank two free throws. It was a bounce-back win following a loss to Fordham.

Freshman center Yankuba Sima was also a key to holding off the Terriers. He scored nine

points and corralled six rebounds in the half. It was part of his best game to date. Sima, who Mullin called a tough kid, shook off the effects of a dislocated pinky on his right hand in the first half to score 17 points and grab 10 rebounds.

"It was really painful because my finger was dislocated," Sima said. "But when they put it back in, it was way better. It didn't affect me at all. I think I played better in the second half."

Yunus Hopkinson and Antonio Jenifer each scored 10 points for St. Francis, which

is coached by former St. John's assistant Glenn Braica.

Redshirt junior forward Christian Jones pitched in 13 points and nine rebounds to help Mullin get his first victory as a coach in Madison Square Garden. It only added to his collection of fond memories from the World's Most Famous Arena.

"I love this place," Mullin said. "I always have and I always will. I think I enjoyed playing here more than coaching, but it was another new experience."

Easy #37								
7	6	4	1	5	2	9	3	8
8	1	9	3	4	7	5	6	2
3	2	5	8	9	6	1	7	4
6	7	8	4	3	1	2	9	5
9	4	3	7	2	5	6	8	1
2	5	1	9	6	8	7	4	3
1	9	6	2	8	3	4	5	7
5	8	7	6	1	4	3	2	9
4	3	2	5	7	9	8	1	6

Hard #37								
2	9	6	8	4	3	7	5	1
1	7	8	2	6	5	9	3	4
4	5	3	9	7	1	8	6	2
9	8	2	3	1	7	5	4	6
3	6	7	5	9	4	2	1	8
5	4	1	6	8	2	3	7	9
8	1	5	7	2	6	4	9	3
7	2	4	1	3	9	6	8	5
6	3	9	4	5	8	1	2	7

Week 45



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Fires

set up at 112th Street and 68th Avenue.

Harrison said police have a list of 29 buildings that are currently under construction in the Cord Meyer neighborhood.

Police have not yet provided a motive for the arsons, but said they do not believe it is a hate crime.

But Manashe Khaimov, who works closely with Bukharian community organizations, connected the arsons to an upswing in global anti-Semitism.

"There is a saying that if you open up an umbrella in France, you must open up an umbrella in Odessa, too," he said. "Well, what is happening in France is beginning to happen here."

"If this isn't a hate crime, then what is?" he added.

The Bukharians' explosive population growth and preference for constructing large homes has created long-simmering tensions between them and longtime Forest Hills residents.

But Raphael Nektalov, who came to the United States in 1993 after fleeing political and religious repression in previously Soviet-occupied Uzbekistan, spoke of his dream to

express his culture and heritage, building taste included, undeterred.

At his office at the Bukharian Jewish Center in Forest Hills, Nektalov proudly opened a book of historic, long abandoned Bukharian homes in Uzbekistan. "See this one? It's beautiful," he said. "Our homes, they were beautiful."

State Sen. Toby Stavisky (D-Flushing) concluded Tuesday's news conference by connecting the Bukharians' troubled history of state-sanctioned persecution with the current crimes.

"As I was sitting at the meeting I was thinking about the conditions that brought the Bukharian community to the United States," she said. "It's sad that they cannot feel safe in their homes anymore, that they left a disturbing situation in the former Soviet Union and they have to face this in their new home."

Lilianna Zulunova, who was standing outside the press scrum, whispered to herself "that's so true, so very true."

Reach reporter Gabriel Rom by e-mail at grom@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4564.

Land use

Continued from Page 1

tent with the scale and character of the neighborhood.

The proposed school would stand four-stories tall, instead of two floors required in a R2A district. The maximum expansion allowed under R2A zoning is 6,177 square feet while the proposed building would expand nearly six times that size.

While the relationship between the Chabad-Lubavitch community and Cambria Heights has not been the best for many years.

At the hearing, women, men and the attorney Sheldon Lobel representing the Chabad community supported the plan. The members of the Jewish community brought almost a dozen young boys to the hearing, "They are learning how democracy works," Rabbi Adam Brooker, assistant director at Keren Peulos, the entity that proposed the school.

In October, Community Board 13 members unanimously voted against the school proposal citing the existing issues they had with the visitors at the Ohel.

According to the residents

complaints at the hearing, Ohel visitors have trashed their neighborhood and blocked their driveways. They said the neighborhood was zoned to go against the very project the Chabad community had proposed.

Rabbi Abba Refson at the Ohel Chabad-Lubavitch said the proposal of the new school was not connected with the Ohel center.

The group Keren Peulos, which proposed the school, has an online school and owns the three properties, for the proposal, neighboring the Ohel.

Rabbi Brooker said the learning format would be lecture based as well as one on one instruction. He added that the majority of the students would be younger grades. He added, "This is the most holiest place for us in this country."

Borough President Melinda Katz concluded the hearing, "I understand the commitment to the community and I also understand the importance of a educational institution."

Katz will vote on the issue in the coming weeks, if the proposal is completely rejected then it will be submitted to the city's Board of Standards and Appeals.

Assault

going to kill me. This went on for 7 to 8 minutes when a regular customer of mine came in and saw blood coming from my eye, my nose and my mouth."

Haque said the customer, a Hispanic man who did not want to be identified, helped him hold down Kolvani until police arrived. They were called to the scene by a passerby, who heard Haque's screams for help.

"I was terrified, I really was," the shopkeeper said. Haque was rushed to Mount Sinai Hospital Queens where he was treated for bleeding, bruising and a dislocated left elbow.

"When I came home, I told my wife and she was scared," Haque said. "I didn't tell my kids because I didn't want them to be scared."

Haque was back in his store Tuesday nursing the injured elbow and a black left eye.

He was still sore and appreciative of the help from his customer and the person who called 911. He was also sure of what triggered the attack.

"He did it because he saw the newspaper," Haque said. "He looked at that photo for at least 2 or 3 minutes. I don't

want this to happen to anyone, doesn't matter religion, color, man or woman."

Elected officials in Astoria were appalled by the attack.

"In our neighborhood and our nation, we pride ourselves on our diversity and tolerance," state Sen. Michael Gianaris (D-Astoria) said. Hateful rhetoric leads to hateful and violent acts that must be denounced and dealt with aggressively."

City Councilman Costa Constantinides (D-Astoria) said, "This targeted assault it unconscionable. This crime is the antithesis of what Astoria is all about. The strength of our community lies in our diversity. This small business owner is part of the fabric of our community and we all condemn this hate crime."

Kolvani was charged with assault and criminal mischief, according to the NYPD. He was given a desk ticket and told to report to court on Jan. 12.

The investigation by the NYPD's Hate Crimes Unit continues.

Reach reporter Bill Parry by e-mail at bparry@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4538.

Terror

Continued from Page 4

"It was not a sophisticated attack like 9/11. They were going for more small-scale attacks," he said. "A couple of the [Paris] incidents were much like a drive-by shooting. The people had one thing on their mind—to kill and die."

Loeffel said the NYPD will bring in a new emphasis on social media as part of their intelligence gathering and already collects an estimated 90,000 messages per day. "The focus is the homegrown terrorist," he said.

Last month, the NYPD began practicing active-shooter drills similar to those carried out in the Paris attack.

The new counterterrorism units, Critical Response Command and the Strategic Response Group, are trained to respond to an attack. Both units are more heavily armed and their goal is to respond to a terrorist incident much faster than before.

"Sixty percent of the time the attack is over before the

police even get there," said Loeffel about the worldwide assaults they have studied.

The community board district managers had different questions that ranged from securing their public meetings to how to identify suspicious people.

Loeffel said the best thing to do is look at suspicious behavior, such as a single person receiving several packages a day by mail.

"Just call the NYC SAFE line, we get the intel," he said. "No one will call you back—we will follow through and you never know, your tip could be something that connected to a bigger puzzle. Those calls matter."

Loeffel said people who feel anxious about walking into a mall, for example, should leave the area.

"If the hair is standing up on the back of your neck, something doesn't feel right," he said. "Leave and come back 10 minutes later."

Loeffel pointed out that if a crime is occurring, call 911, but if it is something suspicious call NYC SAFE, 1-888-NYC-SAFE (692-7233).

Continued from Page 1

from the Bukharian community hugged and shook hands.

"Today's meeting was a very good sign that both the community and the Police Department, Fire Department and elected officials are all interested in solving the problem at hand," said Aron Borukhov, a Bukharian community leader.

Borukhov said community security patrols were being organized in conjunction with the police to monitor the sites. He called the patrols a "work in progress."

As calls for action from within the community have grown louder, the Bukharian Jewish Center announced it will offer a \$50,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of the arsonist. The NYPD is also offering up to a \$12,500 reward. A second video of the suspect has been released which shows a hooded male walking near one of the fire sites on 69th Road.

Deputy Inspector Judith Harrison, commanding officer at the 112th Precinct, said a new command post has been

Continued from Page 1

out Hate Crimes reopened the investigation."

It was around 1 p.m. Saturday and Haque was alone in his store, the Fatima Food Mart on 21st Avenue in Astoria, when a stranger entered and began asking if the merchandise was free. He picked up a newspaper and looked at a photo of the woman from the San Bernardino shooting, and then he snapped, according to Haque.

"Out of nowhere he punched my head with his left hand," Haque said in an interview with the TimesLedger. "I asked him 'what's wrong with you?' and that's when he said 'I kill Muslims.'"

Police said Piro Kolvani, a 55-year-old resident of Jacksonville, Fla., then assaulted the Bangladeshi Muslim.

"I ran behind the counter and tried to call the police, but he came behind the counter and started punching me many times," Haque said. "At one point he fell on top of me and I thought this is where he's

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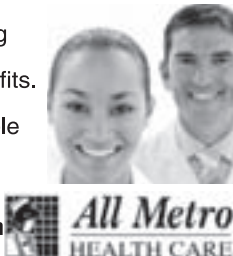
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Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Queens County on Oct 08 2015, bearing Index Number NC-000638-15/QU, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at 89-17 Sutphin Boulevard, Jamaica, New York, 11435, grants me the right to: Assume the name of (First) DONNA-MARIE (Last) WARNER. My present name is (First) DONNA (Middle) MARIE (Last) WARNER AKA DONNA M. WARNER. My present address is 172-24 133rd Avenue, Apt. #2F, Jamaica, NY 11434-3901. My place of birth is QUEENS, NY. My date of birth is October 21, 1955.

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Queens County on DEC 1 2015, bearing Index Number NC-000743-15/QU, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at 89-17 Sutphin

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Boulevard, Jamaica, New York, 11435, grants me the right to: Assume the name of (First) VALERIA (Middle) ELIZABETH (Last) LANCE. My present name is (First) VALERIA (Middle) ELIZABETH (Last) LANCE AKA VALERIA ELIZABETH LANCE, AKA VALERIA E. LANCE. My present address is 176-14 Sunbury Road, Jamaica, NY 11434-1920. My place of birth is MANHATTAN, NY. My date of birth is April 12, 1960.

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Queens County on NOV 19 2015, bearing Index Number NC-000791-15/QU, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at 89-17 Sutphin Boulevard, Jamaica, New York, 11435, grants me the right to: Assume the name of (First) AAXIOAKYYOXII (Middle) OIGHNQUIXOTE (Last) TTAKODA. My present name is (First) AKY-YOSHI (Middle)

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IYURI (Last) TAKODA AKA AKYOSHII TAKODA, AKA AKY-YOSHI I. TAKODA. My present address is 107-39 159th Street, Apt. #2C, Jamaica, NY 11433-2334. My place of birth is BROOKLYN, NY. My date of birth is May 09, 1974.

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Queens County on NOV 12 2015, bearing Index Number NC-000764-15/QU, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at 89-17 Sutphin Boulevard, Jamaica, New York, 11435, grants me the right to: Assume the name of (First) NORMAN (Middle) JUDE (Last) ONCHENGCO. My present name is (First) NORMAN (Middle) JUDE (Last) LINGA. My present address is 143-25 84th Drive, Apt. #4E, Jamaica, NY 11435-2221. My place of birth is PHILIPPINES. My date of birth is December 04, 1994.

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Supplemental Summons and Notice of Object of Action
Queens Supreme Court of the State of New York County of Queens
Action to Foreclose a Mortgage
INDEX NO.: 704018/2015
M O R T G A G E D
PREMISES:
108-33 157TH STREET
JAMAICA, NY 11433
BL #: 10146 - 7

-----X
Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae), a Corporation Organized and Existing Under the Laws of the United States of America Plaintiff,

vs.
Amos Aderiye, if living, and if he/she be dead, any and all persons unknown to plaintiff, claiming, or who may claim to have an interest in, or general or specific lien upon the real property described in this action; such unknown persons being herein generally described and intended to be included in wife, widow, husband, widower, heirs at law, next of kin, descendants, executors, administrators, devisees, legatees, creditors, trustees, committees, lienors, and assigns, all of whom and whose names, except as stated, are unknown to plaintiff; Chase Bank Usa NA, Arrow Financial Services L.L.C. A/P/O Creditmax, New York City Environmental Control Board, People of the State of New York, United States of America Acting Through the IRS;

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John Doe (being fictitious, the names unknown to Plaintiff intended to be tenants, occupants, persons or corporations having or claiming an interest in or lien upon the property described in the complaint or their heirs at law, distributees, executors, administrators, trustees, guardians, assignees, creditors or successors.) Defendants.

-----X
To the above named defendant:
You are hereby summoned to answer the Complaint in this action, and to serve a copy of your answer, or, if the Complaint is not served with this Supplemental Summons, to serve a notice of appearance, on the Plaintiff(s) attorney(s) within twenty days after the service of this Supplemental Summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within 30 days after the service is complete if this Supplemental Summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York). In case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

The Attorney for Plaintiff has an office for business in the County of Erie.

Trial to be held in the County of Queens.

The basis of the venue designated above is the location of the Mortgaged Premises.

To: Amos Aderiye, The foregoing Supplemental Summons is served upon you by publication, pursuant to an order of HON. LEONARD LIVOTE of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, dated the 15th day of October, 2015 and filed with the Complaint in the Office of the Clerk of the County of Queens, in the City of Riverhead.

The object of this action is to foreclose a mortgage upon the premises described below, executed by Amos Aderiye dated April 4, 2001, to secure the sum of \$118,750.00 and recorded at Book 5857, Page 2149 in the Office of the City Register of the City of New York, Queens County on April 30, 2001. The mortgage was subsequently assigned by an assignment executed April 4, 2001 and recorded on July 25, 2001, in the Office of the City Register of the City of New York, Queens County at Book 5955, Page 62. The mortgage was subsequently assigned by an assignment executed January 28, 2003 and recorded on May 1, 2003, in the Office of the City Register of the City of New York, Queens County at CRFN 2003000113467.

The mortgage was subsequently assigned by an assignment executed November 7, 2003 and recorded on February 25, 2004, in the Office of the City Register of the City of New York, Queens County at CRFN 2004000113401. Plaintiff is also holder of a mortgage dated July 14, 2003 executed by Amos

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Aderiye to secure the sum of \$3,333.53 and recorded at CFN 2004000113402 in the Office of the City Register of the City of New York, Queens County on February 25, 2004. Said mortgage was consolidated with the mortgage referred to at Book 5857, Page 2149 by a Consolidation, Extension and Modification Agreement executed by Amos Aderiye dated July 14, 2003 and recorded February 25, 2004 at CRFN 2004000113403 in the Office of the City Register of the City of New York, Queens County to form a single lien in the amount of \$117,500.00. The consolidated mortgage was subsequently assigned to Federal National Mortgage Association by an assignment executed on October 10, 2014 and sent for recording in the City Register of the City of New York, Queens County; The property in question is described as follows: 108-33 157TH STREET, JAMAICA, NY 11433

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YOU ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING YOUR HOME

If you do not respond to this summons and complaint by serving a copy of the answer on the attorney for the mortgage company who filed this foreclosure proceeding against you and filing the answer with the court, a default judgment may be entered and you can lose your home.

Speak to an attorney or go to the court where your case is pending for further information on how to answer the summons and protect your property.

Sending a payment to your mortgage company will not stop this foreclosure action.

YOU MUST RESPOND BY SERVING A COPY OF THE ANSWER ON THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PLAINTIFF (MORTGAGE COMPANY) AND FILING THE ANSWER WITH THE COURT.

DATED: November 19, 2015
Gross Polowy, LLC
Attorney(s) For Plaintiff(s)
1775 Wehrle Drive, Suite 100
Williamsville, NY 14221

The law firm of Gross Polowy, LLC and the attorneys whom it employs are debt collectors who are attempting to collect a debt. Any information obtained by them will be used for that purpose.

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF QUEENS Plaintiff designates QUEENS as the place of trial situs of the real property S U P P L E M E N T A L SUMMONS Mortgaged Premises: 108-29 154TH STREET JAMAICA, NY 11433 District: Section: Block: 10143 Lot: 11 INDEX NO. 706621/2015 JAMES B. NUTTER & COMPANY, Plaintiff, vs. CECIL JAMES, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT L. JAMES; WILLIE JAMES, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT L. JAMES;

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FLORA GEORGE, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT L. JAMES; WILMA JAMES, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT L. JAMES; JESSE JAMES, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT L. JAMES; WANDA JAMES, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT L. JAMES; LENA DAWSON, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT L. JAMES, any and all persons unknown to plaintiff, claiming, or who may claim to have an interest in, or general or specific lien upon the real property described in this action; such unknown persons being herein generally described and intended to be included in the following designation, namely: the wife, widow, husband, widower, heirs at law, next of kin, descendants, executors, administrators, devisees, legatees, creditors, trustees, committees, lienors, and assigns, all of whom and whose names, except as stated, are unknown to plaintiff; SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT; NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION AND FINANCE; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, "JOHN DOE #1" through "JOHN DOE #12," the last twelve names being fictitious and unknown to plaintiff, the persons or parties intended being the tenants, occupants, persons or corporations, if any, having or claiming an interest in or lien upon the premises, described in the complaint, Defendants. To the above named Defendants YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the complaint in this action and to serve a copy of your answer, or, if the complaint is not served with this summons, to serve a notice of appearance on the Plaintiff's Attorney within 20 days after the service of this summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within 30 days after the service is complete if this summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York) in the event the United States of America is made a party defendant, the time to answer for the said United States of America shall not expire until (60) days after service of the Summons; and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the

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complaint. NOTICE OF NATURE OF ACTION AND RELIEF SOUGHT THE OBJECT of the above caption action is to foreclose a Mortgage to secure the sum of \$487,500.00 and interest, recorded on January 16, 2009, at CRFN 2009000014885, recorded in the Office of the City Register of the City of New York in the County of QUEENS County, New York, covering premises known as 108-29 154TH STREET JAMAICA, NY 11433. The relief sought in the within action is a final judgment directing the sale of the premises described above to satisfy the debt secured by the Mortgage described above. QUEENS County is designated as the place of trial because the real property affected by this action is located in said county. NOTICE YOU ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING YOUR HOME If you do not respond to this summons and complaint by serving a copy of the answer on the attorney for the mortgage company who filed this foreclosure proceeding against you and filing the answer with the court, a default judgment may be entered and you can lose your home. Speak to an attorney or go to the court where your case is pending for further information on how to answer the summons and protect your property. Sending a payment to the mortgage company will not stop the foreclosure action. YOU MUST RESPOND BY SERVING A COPY OF THE ANSWER ON THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PLAINTIFF (MORTGAGE COMPANY) AND FILING THE ANSWER WITH THE COURT. Dated: October 23, 2015
RAS BORISKIN, LLC
Attorney for Plaintiff BY:
THOMAS ZEGARELLI, ESQ. 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 106 Westbury, NY 11590 (516) 280-7675

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF QUEENS Plaintiff designates QUEENS as the place of trial situs of the real property S U P P L E M E N T A L SUMMONS Mortgaged Premises: 104-31 205TH STREET SAINT ALBANS, NY 11412 Block: 10908 Lot: 42 INDEX NO. 702849/2015 JAMES B. NUTTER & COMPANY, Plaintiff, vs. JOHN FOWLER AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF BESSIE FOWLER; RUTH MAE FOWLER AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF BESSIE FOWLER; any and all persons unknown to plaintiff, claiming, or who may claim to have an interest in, or general or specific lien upon the real property described in this action; such unknown persons being herein generally described and intended to be included in

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the following designation, namely: the wife, widow, husband, widower, heirs at law, next of kin, descendants, executors, administrators, devisees, legatees, creditors, trustees, committees, lienors, and assigns, all of whom and whose names, except as stated, are unknown to plaintiff; SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT; BANK; PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, "JOHN DOE #1" through "JOHN DOE #12," the last twelve names being fictitious and unknown to plaintiff, the persons or parties intended being the tenants, occupants, persons or corporations, if any, having or claiming an interest in or lien upon the premises, described in the complaint, Defendants. To the above named Defendants YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the complaint in this action and to serve a copy of your answer, or, if the complaint is not served with this summons, to serve a notice of appearance on the Plaintiff's Attorney within 20 days after the service of this summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within 30 days after the service is complete if this summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York) in the event the United States of America is made a party defendant, the time to answer for the said United States of America shall not expire until (60) days after service of the Summons; and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the complaint. NOTICE OF NATURE OF ACTION AND RELIEF SOUGHT THE OBJECT of the above caption action is to foreclose a Mortgage to secure the sum of \$625,500.00 and interest, recorded on February 10, 2009, at CRFN 2009000039148, of the Public Records of QUEENS County, New York, covering premises known as 104-31 205TH STREET SAINT ALBANS, NY 11412. The relief sought in the within action is a final judgment directing the sale of the premises described above to satisfy the debt secured by the Mortgage described above. QUEENS County is designated as the place of trial because the real property affected by this action is located in said county. NOTICE YOU ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING YOUR HOME If you do not respond to this summons and complaint by serving a

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copy of the answer on the attorney for the mortgage company who filed this foreclosure proceeding against you and filing the answer with the court, a default judgment may be entered and you can lose your home. Speak to an attorney or go to the court where your case is pending for further information on how to answer the summons and protect your property. Sending a payment to the mortgage company will not stop the foreclosure action.

YOU MUST RESPOND BY SERVING A COPY OF THE ANSWER ON THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PLAINTIFF (MORTGAGE COMPANY) AND FILING THE ANSWER WITH THE COURT. Dated: August 31, 2015 RAS BORISKIN, LLC Attorney for Plaintiff BY:

THOMAS ZEGARELLI, ESQ. 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 106 Westbury, NY 11590 (516) 280-7675

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF QUEENS Plaintiff designates QUEENS as the place of trial situs of the real property S U P P L E M E N T A L SUMMONS Block: 12547 Lot: 14 Mortgaged Premises: 176-25 133rd Road, Jamaica, New York 11434 INDEX NO. 706082/2015 ONEWEST BANK N.A.,

Plaintiff, vs. THE HEIRS AND DISTRIBUTEES OF THE ESTATE OF LEROY G. BISHOP; any and all persons unknown to plaintiff, claiming, or who may claim to have an interest in, or general or specific lien upon the real property described in this action; such unknown persons being herein generally described and intended to be included in the following designation, namely: the wife, widow, husband, widower, heirs at law, next of kin, descendants, executors, administrators, devisees, legatees, creditors, trustees, committees, lienors, and assigns, all of whom and whose names, except as stated, are unknown to plaintiff; MIGNON SMITH, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF THE ESTATE OF LEROY G. BISHOP; BERYL BRAFF, AS HEIR AND DISTRIBUTE OF ESTATE OF LEROY G. BISHOP; SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT; NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION AND FINANCE; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; BENEFICIAL FINANCE COMPANY OF NEW YORK, INC.; BANK OF

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AMERICA, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION F/K/A FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF BOSTON, "JOHN DOE #1" through "JOHN DOE #12," the last twelve names being fictitious and unknown to plaintiff, the persons or parties intended being the tenants, occupants, persons or corporations, if any, having or claiming an interest in or lien upon the premises, described in the complaint, Defendants. To the above named Defendants YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the complaint in this action and to serve a copy of your answer, or, if the complaint is not served with this summons, to serve a notice of appearance on the Plaintiff's Attorney within 20 days after the service of this summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within 30 days after the service is complete if this summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York) in the event the United States of America is made a party defendant, the time to answer for the said United States of

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America shall not expire until (60) days after service of the Summons; and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the complaint. NOTICE OF NATURE OF ACTION AND RELIEF SOUGHT THE OBJECT of the above caption action is to foreclose a Mortgage to secure the sum of \$544,185.00 and interest, recorded on July 26, 2007, at CRFN 2007000444774, of the Public Records of QUEENS County, New York, covering premises known as 176-25 133RD ROAD, JAMAICA, NEW YORK 11434. The relief sought in the within action is a final judgment directing the sale of the premises described above to satisfy the debt secured by the Mortgage described above. QUEENS County is designated as the place of trial because the real property affected by this action is located in said county. NOTICE YOU ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING YOUR HOME If you do not respond to this summons and complaint by serving a

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copy of the answer on the attorney for the mortgage company who filed this foreclosure proceeding against you and filing the answer with the court, a default judgment may be entered and you can lose your home. Speak to an attorney or go to the court where your case is pending for further information on how to answer the summons and protect your property. Sending a payment to the mortgage company will not stop the foreclosure action. YOU MUST RESPOND BY SERVING A COPY OF THE ANSWER ON THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PLAINTIFF (MORTGAGE COMPANY) AND FILING THE ANSWER WITH THE COURT. Dated: 8/11/2015 RAS Borislin, LLC Attorney for P l a i n t i f f BY: _____ THOMAS ZEGARELLI, ESQ. 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 106 Westbury, NY 11590 (516) 280-7675

Michael Fenton Esq as Administrator CTA for The Estate of Jerome Cramer is procuring bids for 115-43 167th Street Jamaica NY 11434 opening bid will be no less than appraised value this property is offered in as is condition a 20% down payment must be tendered at the time of auction closing must take place within 30 days of executed contract call broker Mitchell Todd for More Information 718-224-3083. No bids under: \$221,000



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