

## LeFrack City residents sue Bd. of Elections

BY BILL PARRY

Community groups and residents of LeFrak City in Corona filed a complaint Tuesday with State Supreme Court charging the city's Board of Elections is in violation of the state Constitution after moving a polling site that has been in use for more than 50 years.

The LeFrak Tenants Association, the Black Leadership Action Coalition and the Black Institute led by community activist Berth Lewis contend that removing the polling site from the complex's Continental Room represents voter suppression and discrimination just weeks before the New York City Primary.

Lewis has endorsed City Council candidate Hiram Monserrate in the race for the District 21.

"Voter suppression is rife in our country, but I am in total shock that it is taking place in my city, New York City, in what is supposed to be the most progressive city on the planet," Lewis said. "The actions taken by the Board of Elections just weeks before a critical primary election in New York City are hor-

*Continued on Page 8*

# Sunnyside condo on firing line

## City, state open multiple probes into property manager's tenant harassment

BY BILL PARRY

New York City and state Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced separate investigations into allegations of tenant harass-

ment and intimidation at a condominium at 47-55 39th Place in Sunnyside, which has displays of Nazi and Confederate imagery, swastikas and other symbols of hate in the lobby.

The NYC Commission on Human Rights launched its probe following reports from City Councilman Jimmy Van Bramer (D-Sunnyside), tenants and condo owners of a hostile environment due to

alleged tenant harassment by the property manager, Neal Milano, who sits on the condo's board.

Under the city's Human Rights Law, it is illegal to discriminate against or harass tenants because of their race, color, religion, immigration status, sexual orientation and other protected classes.

"Despite hostile rhetoric on the national level, no one in New York City has permission to harass or threaten another person because of who they are, what they believe or what they look like," said Hollis Pfitsch, NYC Commission on Human Rights Deputy Commissioner of the Law Enforcement Bureau. "The commission will continue to use every tool it has to investigate and prosecute violators and encourages anyone who witnesses or is a victim of discrimination or harassment to step forward and report it to the commission."

Residents of the building are also encouraged to submit complaints to Schneiderman's office at 1-800-771-7755.

Multiple city agencies joined Van Bramer for a Day of Action Tuesday where they distributed fliers on tenants rights and discrimi-

*Continued on Page 8*

## CARIBBEAN CELEBRATION



In Far Rockaway, the neighborhood gets a jump on celebrating the Caribbean-Labor Day Carnival with a parade and a show - this one starring the King of Calypso, Mighty Sparrow (r.), with state Sen. James Sanders decked out in feather headdress.

Photo by Nat Valentine

## Study: NYC lagging on women in office

BY GINA MARTINEZ

A new report from the City Council's Women's Caucus revealed that New York City is on track to have fewer than 10 women on the City Council by the end of the 2021 term.

The study, "Not Making It Here: Why

*Continued on Page 8*



Former NBA player Royal Ivey brings his love of dancing and knowledge of basketball to his clinic.

Photo by Naeisha Rose

## Hoops clinic returns to Hollis

BY NAEISHA ROSE

More than 100 kids dressed in gray NBA shirts came out for the two-day Royal Ivey Life and Basketball Skills Clinic last week at Renaissance Middle School

(IS 192) in St. Albans.

Royal Ivey, the former NBA player, current assistant coach of the Oklahoma City Thunder, and an IS 192 alum, was proud of the turnout and happy to help the youth of southeast Queens improve their skills

on the court.

"This is great and we are in our 10th year," said Ivey, beaming as he watched the young basketball stars in the making on the court working together in unison. "This is something to keep the kids off

*Continued on Page 8*

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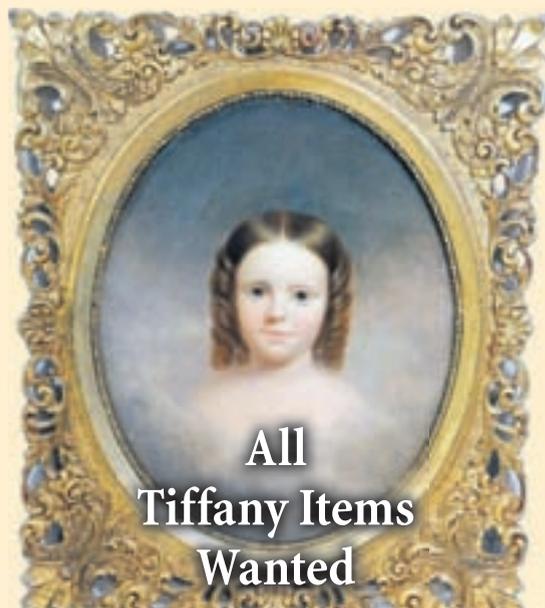
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# City will close Corona Holiday Inn shelter in 2019

BY BILL PARRY

The city will stop housing homeless people at a Corona hotel by 2019 as the de Blasio administration begins a phase-out of 35 commercial hotel facilities in Queens.

The use of hotels, including the Maspeth Holiday Inn Express which drew nightly protests last year, and private apartments known as cluster sites, will be replaced by 90 shelters as part of a five-year plan that will offer homeless New Yorkers the opportunity to be sheltered in their home boroughs. This will keep the homeless closer to their support networks like schools, family members, healthcare, houses of worship, and neighborhoods where they once lived.

“As we work to turn the tide on homelessness, we are phasing out every single cluster site and commercial hotel facility across

the five boroughs, including all remaining 35 commercial hotel facilities in Queens. Ending use of this location by 2019 is an important step towards that goal,” Department of Social Services Commissioner Steven Banks said. “We are proud to partner with fundamentally compassionate New Yorkers citywide to raise the standards for our homeless neighbors across the board, ensuring they have access to high-quality facilities and providing the supports necessary to stabilize their lives within the communities they last called home.”

The Holiday Inn Express on Horace Harding Expressway will be the first to be phased out in Queens, which has more hotels housing the homeless than any other borough. State Assemblyman Francisco Moya (D-Jackson Heights) made the announcement with Banks outside his



Assemblyman Francisco Moya (c.) announces a phase-out plan for sheltering homeless people at a Corona hotel.

Photo by Bill Parry

district office Tuesday in Jackson Heights.

“New York City has a moral and legal obligation to provide shelter to those who’ve fallen on hard economic times, victims of domestic abuse and people with disabilities,” Moya said. “Unfortunately, the affordability gap for renters has widened and we’re seeing more individuals struggle to maintain stable housing. Although the

city has used hotels as a temporary stop-gap solution, homeless New Yorkers deserve more suitable housing while they transition back into a home of their own.”

Mayor Bill de Blasio’s “Turning the Tide on Homelessness” plan, announced in February, will move slowly as talks begin with community boards and civic associations as to possible locations for

the new shelters.

“Addressing the homelessness crisis is a moral imperative for our city,” U.S. Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-Jackson Heights) said. “We need to do right by our most vulnerable New Yorkers by ensuring they are placed in adequate spaces that meet their families’ day-to-day needs, and given the best opportunities to get back on their feet. I applaud the phasing out of cluster and commercial hotels as shelters, and I’m encouraged by the efforts of the Department of Homeless Services to implement a more effective system that gives homeless New Yorkers the best shot at pulling themselves up.”

State Sen. Jose Peralta (D-East Elmhurst) discovered the city had begun using the Holiday Inn Express to house the homeless in September 2016,

without informing the community.

“Later, we also uncovered that there was a Level 2 sex offender living in the shelter, which not only endangered people in the facility, but also children from the nearby schools,” Peralta said. “It is my hope, once and for all, that DHS informs community members and their elected officials of its homeless shelter plans, and avoids similar situations now and in the future. The same way DHS is informing of the closure of this shelter more than one year in advance, I hope the city agency applies the same philosophy when opening shelters to avoid discovering their existence when they are already up and running.”

Reach reporter Bill Parry by e-mail at [bparry@cn-glocal.com](mailto:bparry@cn-glocal.com) or by phone at (718) 260-4538.

## Politicians call for express bus service at Belmont

BY MARK HALLUM

Queens elected officials gathered at Belmont Park in Nassau County to urge the MTA to bring permanent express bus service to the area for residents of the surrounding areas.

The initiative comes as the popularity of the transportation option has increased during what Gov. Andrew Cuomo dubbed the “Summer of Hell,” a period of eight weeks in which subway infrastructure would be overhauled coinciding with 20 percent reduced service at Penn Station due to upgrades tracks and switches.

Those rallying said the LIRR station at Belmont Park, normally only used on race days, should be opened up for daily use.

“Eastern Queens has been a transportation desert,” Assemblyman Clyde

Vanel (D-Queens Village) said. “The people of our area that may work in or even want to visit Manhattan are subject to grueling and time-consuming travel. We have a LIRR station in Belmont Park that is used only on race days, a massive parking lot which commuters can access to safely leave their vehicles, but is currently left largely unoccupied. We also need an express bus to the city. This is a quality-of-life issue and the people of Eastern Queens have suffered enough.”

Commuters in northeast Queens face a unique transit challenge with very limited subway service and poor access to bus service in some areas. A permanent bus option would offer a park-and-ride option for riders going into Manhattan for work, City Councilman Barry Grodenchik (D-Oakland Gardens) said.



Queens pols call for the MTA to fund regular express bus service from Belmont Park to Manhattan.

youtube.com

“We have a shortage of mass transit options in eastern Queens and western Nassau,” Grodenchik said. “There is no subway service and limited railroad service; buses are our only form of mass transit. Commuters could park at Belmont and take a direct ride to Manhattan.”

State Assemblyman

David Weprin (D-Fresh Meadows) said parking is available to accommodate thousands of commuters and would help to take cars off the over-crowded streets of Queens.

“Allowing eastern Queens and Long Island commuters the option to use Belmont Park as a park-and-ride facility is a

common-sense idea whose time has come,” Weprin said. “Utilizing the already available space at Belmont Park for commuter parking will make for an easier commute for thousands, help to reduce congestion on our city’s roads and reduce pollution in Queens and Long Island.”

According to U.S. Rep. Gregory Meeks (D-Jamaica), offering bus or train routes for residents in the transit desert of eastern Queens would open the door to the rest of the city for his constituents.

“Our city has a great opportunity to expand access and opportunity for the residents of eastern Queens and western Nassau,” Meeks said. “The establishment of permanent bus or railroad service at Belmont Park would serve as an essential transit hub

for communities that have historically been ignored by public transportation programs.”

Queens Village residents often suffer through the toughest commutes and would likely to be the closest Queens residents to Belmont Park, state Sen. Leroy Comrie (D-Jamaica) said.

“Largely due to the lack of public transit infrastructure, Queens Village residents suffer some of the longest commute times in our entire city,” said Comrie. “We should be seeking to take full advantage of the limited infrastructure that does exist.”

The MTA and Amtrak announced Penn Station repairs were wrapping up in the last week of August with full LIRR service to be restored as planned Sept. 5.

# Electeds speak out against East River bridge fees

BY MARK HALLUM

Opposition to new tolls on free East River bridges was loud and clear from Queens elected officials Sunday in support of working families in the outer boroughs.

The rally at the foot of the Queensborough Bridge came two weeks after Gov. Andrew Cuomo proposed congestion pricing as a means of funding the MTA and critical upgrades to infrastructure in the subway, prone to system-wide meltdowns. The protest was not directed against the MTA, but any new tolling on bridges that have been free since 1911.

Many of the lawmakers in attendance represented eastern Queens, known for scant public transportation options, and economic leaders from the borough.

"Tolling the East River bridges would be devastating for Queens, Brooklyn and Long Island residents" state Assemblyman David

Weprin (D-Fresh Meadows) said. "The people who rely on these bridges are a diverse group of New Yorkers who are trying to make affordable choices in this city and any future transportation plan for New York must take into the account the needs of outer borough residents."

Borough President Melinda Katz said tolls on East River bridges would isolate Queens from the rest of the city, economically, and cut New Yorkers off from one another.

"It would landlock our borough," Katz said. "Just as it's hard to justify any fare increase for riders, it's also hard to justify a bridge-and-tunnel toll that isn't coupled with specific increases in service. We are one city, and it is fundamentally unfair to charge residents a fee to travel within one city, from one part of the city to another. It is certainly unfair to the families who live in the transit desert of Queens."



Queens politicians rally together in opposition to tolling on East River bridges.

Courtesy of Assemblyman Weprin

City Councilman Barry Grodenchik (D-Oakland Gardens) claimed tolls on formerly free bridges would have the biggest impact on Queens residents and create an unfair burden considering how little public transportation is offered through much of the borough.

"Tolling the free East River bridges is a misguided proposal that is unacceptable to the residents of eastern Queens," Grodenchik said. "These tolls are, in fact,

a regressive tax on people who have limited public transportation options and would impose an unjustifiable financial burden on Queens residents, especially commuters, who are already struggling with rising costs of living. It is time for the MTA to get its fiscal house in order before further burdening area residents."

According to the Thomas Grech, executive director of the Queens Chamber of Commerce, making transporta-

tion more costly between boroughs would only further drive enterprising individuals out of the city, altogether.

"Doing business today in NYC is tougher than ever," Grech said. "Putting tolls on the East River Bridges will be just another incentive for firms to think about relocating out of New York."

Kevin Forrestal, president of the Queens Civic Congress, explained that many people use free East River bridges as an alternative to the subway for a variety of reasons, including disabilities and financial disenfranchisement.

"There is a [misconception] that those who drive into Manhattan and back out do so for selfish reasons," Forrestal said. "While that may be true for some, most do so for valid reasons. There are many such reasons, including limited physical disabilities that make navigating stairs impossible, a need to carry tools or other items especially when platforms and

cars are overcrowded, being ill and seeking specialty care at tertiary health centers, as well as many others. Most of those who utilize our East River crossings are lower- or middle-income residents who have seen their buying power reduced over the last decade. They should not be burdened by imposing tolls."

Cuomo's congestion pricing proposal sparked controversy despite the murky, unformed details of the plan, but Jon Weinstein, a spokesman for Cuomo's office, said the best interests of the outer boroughs would be kept in mind for any further developments.

"This administration has been working with interested parties and the Legislature to develop a proposal that would not negatively impact the outer-boroughs. Bottom line – clearly congestion pricing is an idea whose time has come and we need to be discussing all options so we can invest in our system long-term."

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# NYC Ferry opens long-awaited Astoria route

BY BILL PARRY

Ferry service has returned to Astoria for the first time in more than 80 years. NYC Ferry launched its Astoria route Tuesday morning from its landing on Hallets Cove with stops at Long Island City and Roosevelt Island, Midtown Manhattan and Wall Street.

Residents of the Astoria Houses will be able to reach East 34th Street in just 29 minutes, cutting commuting times by nearly half and costing the same as a subway ride at \$2.75.

"That's exactly what we're trying to do — make it easier to get around this city," Mayor Bill de Blasio said. "It's a new way for people to get around, and we've got to take advantage of it. Our streets are too crowded, our subways are too crowded, our waterways are nice and open. That's why we knew we had to get back to the water. More and more New

Yorkers need a better way to get around and a faster way to get around, and NYC Ferry is part of that answer."

City Councilman Costa Constantinides (D-Astoria) rode the 6:30 a.m. ferry with other elected officials as well as Astoria community leaders and praised the new transit option for residents.

"I'm excited to join our community for this inaugural ferry ride along the Astoria route," Constantinides said. "After years of advocacy and planning with the neighborhood, we're happy to open this new route. The NYC Ferry system expands public transit options for western Astoria residents and will help revitalize Hallets Peninsula."

The route also adds a second ferry landing in Long Island City, at the north end of Gantry Plaza State Park, bringing relief for riders of the beleaguered No. 7 subway line.

"The new Astoria ferry



Astoria residents and community leaders board the first ferry boat as the new transit option launched early Tuesday morning.

Courtesy Mayor's office and NYCEDC

route will be life-changing for the people of western Queens, cutting travel time in half for many public housing residents and those living along the East River in Long Island City and Astoria," City Councilman Jimmy Van Bramer (D-Sunnyside) said. "I hear every day from my constitu-

ents of the need for reliable transportation options to get to work, school, and other appointments on time. Starting today, this new ferry route will bring a faster, smoother commute, and I'm thrilled to join my constituents today for the inaugural ride."

The route also stops at Roosevelt Island where the

new Cornell Tech campus will officially open Sept. 13. Cornell Tech committed \$2.5 million to support the NYC Ferry service to the island.

"The new ferry will provide another seamless connection for island residents, students, faculty, staff and the companies at The Bridge, and visitors to travel seamlessly between Roosevelt Island, Manhattan, and the growing tech community in western Queens," Cornell Tech Senior Director of External Relations Meghan French said. "The Cornell Tech campus is all about openness and collaboration, and we can't wait to welcome New Yorkers when we officially open next month."

Since launching May 1, NYC Ferry has proven so popular that the city and Hornblower, the ferry's operator, have chartered additional vessels and ordered larger boats for its fleet to cut down on lines and wait times. A recent survey by the New

York Economic Development Corporation of over 1,300 riders found that 93 percent of customers gave the service a satisfaction rating of seven or higher on a 10-point scale, with 66 percent giving the highest possible score.

"NYC Ferry is off to an amazing start, serving more than 1.5 million rider in less than four months," NYCEDC President and CEO James Patchett said. "With today's launch of the Astoria route, we're expanding this great service to thousands of families in western Queens and Roosevelt Island. New Yorkers that have faced limited access to public transit will now have a fast, comfortable and affordable way to connect to good jobs and opportunities across the city."

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# Penn 'hell' nearly finished

LIRR schedule returns to normal Sept. 5 as repairs come to an end

BY MARK HALLUM

The MTA and Amtrak announced the wrap-up of vital infrastructure repairs to the nation's largest transit hub, signalling the near-end of what Gov. Andrew Cuomo termed the "Summer of Hell."

Train times in and out of Penn Station will return to normal Sept. 5, bringing a close to eight weeks of reduced service by 20 percent. MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota called the mitigation effort by the Long Island Rail Road a success, with little disruption of service for commuters coming from Long Island and Queens.

"Our goal was to provide our customers with a range of alternative travel options and planning tools to limit the repair work's impact on the daily commute," Lhota said. "I want to thank our customers for their patience and willingness to try the temporary travel options, as well as our employees for their hard work to make the transition as smooth as possible. Together, we were all able to get where we needed to go this summer with minimal disruption, and we are pleased that our customers will return from the Labor Day holiday to their regular timetables."

The mitigation effort included trains with extra cars and express buses carrying people from points in



The MTA and Amtrak announce the wrap-up of Penn Station repairs and a return to normal train schedules in conclusion to the "Summer of Hell." Courtesy of the MTA

Long Island and dropping them off near Penn Station in Manhattan. Ad hoc ferry service was dialed back by the MTA halfway through the eight weeks of overhauls, as ridership turned out to be lower than expected.

"We thank customers for their patience while we renew the infrastructure at New York Penn Station. We also appreciate the collaboration and support of our commuter partners, NJ Transit and the Long Island Rail Road," Amtrak Co-CEO Wick Moorman said. "Our engineering forces are making great progress and we look forward to resuming scheduled opera-

tions Sept. 5."

According to Amtrak, the eight weeks of repair work centered around a mechanism for sorting trains entering the station and onto their assigned platform.

New Jersey Transit and Amtrak riders experienced extensive delays and cancellations April 3, which reverberated beyond the scope of the city into New Jersey and the Northeast Corridor. Eight of the 21 tracks in Penn Station were shut down by a Jersey Transit derailment at a critical switching point. The tracks were not up and running again until April 7, upending commutes for many pas-

sengers on the LIRR. It was the second derailment in the station within 10 days.

The "Summer of Hell" has coincided with a state of emergency, declared by Cuomo due to the dire straits of the city's subway system. Cuomo hoped to expedite repairs to the ailing city transit system by suspending bureaucratic processes and pouring an extra \$1 billion in the MTA's capital funds.

Last week, Cuomo announced work had begun at the former Farley Building adjacent to the Penn Station to transform the iconic structure into Moynihan Train Hall, a LIRR annex to Penn Station.

# Truck survey to ease traffic in Flushing

BY GINA MARTINEZ

In an effort to relieve delivery traffic in Flushing, the Department of Transportation and Councilman Peter Koo (D-Flushing) teamed up for the "Smart Truck management Plan."

Planners from the DOT Office of Freight Mobility conducted door-to-door surveys of local businesses' truck deliveries last Friday in order to improve traffic congestion in downtown Flushing. The Planners surveys were conducted and translated by DOT and Koo's office and, according to Koo, will help in the effort to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood through safe, reliable, and environmentally responsible movement of goods.

Planners were split into three teams and spoke directly to business owners and challenges of deliveries, parking, and loading and unloading.

Koo said coordinating truck deliveries around rush hours and other peak travel times is an important element in reducing overall congestion in Flushing.

"Hundreds of deliveries every day make truck traffic in downtown Flushing a significant contributor to traffic congestion," Koo said. "By surveying each business in the area, we will better understand their delivery needs, and most importantly, the city of New

York will be able to strategize and better manage traffic congestion throughout this important transit hub. I'd like to thank the DOT for continuing to work with my office in this effort."

According to DOT, the "Smart Truck Management Plan" aims to improve the city's understanding of truck route usage and compliance, movement of goods, needs of shoppers and receivers and community concerns.

There are more than 200 supermarkets and restaurants in downtown Flushing that get deliveries everyday. According to DOT, New World Mall food court, alone, receives up to 100 truck deliveries daily. The survey outreach is the second phase of the Smart Truck Management efforts in Flushing after a workshop with local businesses in May.

DOT Queens Borough Commissioner Nicole Garcia said it is crucial to get input directly from businesses and residents in Flushing about truck movement in Queens.

"These series of surveys are key to helping shape a borough-centric plan that keeps goods and services flowing into our city and region, while addressing quality-of-life issues for New Yorkers," she said.

Reach Gina Martinez by e-mail at [gmartinez@cnglobal.com](mailto:gmartinez@cnglobal.com) or by phone at (718) 260-4566.

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# Clinic

*Continued from Page 1*

the streets. This is something positive that they can do and look forward to every summer before they have to go back to school. This is something positive for the whole family.”

Day One of the event had kids learning calisthenics, exercises that do not require equipment, and learning how to improve their basketball technique. Professional coaches were on board to volunteer their time and show them proper structure on the court.

On Day Two, it was time for basketball games, skills contests, dancing, and music from '80s hip-hop to present day hits. During the fun in the sun, parents sat back and relaxed under a tent as they watched their children play as the summer break draws to a close.

Antonio Menzis, of Rochdale Village, has two kids who came back to the basketball clinic this year.

“It’s a great event,” Menzis said. “My daughter has been coming every year since she was 4 — she is 10 now. Royal does a great job with them. I will definitely do this every year so that my kids can enjoy it.”

His daughter, Mia, and

son, Antonio Jr., both hope to become professional basketball players. Antonio doesn’t know which team he wants to play for, but Mia knows exactly what she wants to do in the future.

“This event is really fun. I’ve been doing it since I was little,” Mia said. “I would like to join the New York Liberty after this.”

Menzis wasn’t the only parent who enjoyed the event.

“I love it,” said Carmela Nassa, who lives only a few blocks from the school, which is located at Hollis Avenue between 204th Street and Run DMC Grandmaster Jay Way. “They get more independence and focus. Earlier [Royal] said ‘It’s not all about the ball.’ He’s talking about having discipline in everything in life.”

Midway through the event students from the Devore Dance Center performed a hip-hop dance routine, and kids from the basketball camp jumped at a chance to win prizes for a free-style dance competition.

The swag up for grabs included autographed shoes, Jordan hats and school supplies. The event ended with a pizza party.

Ivey was a dancer at Cardozo High School and at Devore. He believes dance

helped him with his skills on the court.

“We have a dance contest every year to promote creativity,” Ivey said. “Dance helped me with my vertical movement and my quickness.”

Ivey learned to dance jazz, modern, tap and ballet for six years during his time at Cardozo and Devore.

Ryan Woodworth, a fellow Cardozo and IS 192 alum, was proud of Ivey.

“He was a good teammate and a real good guy at Cardozo,” Woodworth said. “He’s doing a real good job bringing the kids out. This is a good thing for the community.”

Dr. Bob Lee, a host on WBSL 107.5, was happy to see someone from southeast Queens who made it big come back and do something for the community, too.

“They are helping others get what they need out of life,” Lee said. “Not everybody comes back to give back, so when they do come back, you got to take advantage of it. This helps to guide our youngsters and give them something positive to do.”

*Reach reporter Naeisha Rose by e-mail at nrose@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4573.*

# LeFrack City

*Continued from Page 1*

rific and must be stopped immediately. It is so clear that this is an act of discrimination, disenfranchisement, voter suppression, and a flagrant disregard for 15,000 residents’ constitutional right to vote.

“We have filed a complaint in our state’s highest court today, but this is only the beginning. The corrupt board, our elected officials and the court will need to cop to this racist and heinous attempt at voter suppression and we will not stop until they do.”

The Board of Elections could not be reached for comment. In conjunction with the lawsuit, the plaintiffs will be seeking a temporary restraining order that will allow LeFrack City residents to utilize

their traditional polling site for the upcoming primary.

“The board has totally ignored all of our requests for reconsideration,” LeFrack City Tenants League Coordinator James Galloway said. “When we went before the board to file a complaint, they said they would work with us to find a solution. But they haven’t. Instead, they’ve been giving us the runaround. I think they’re hoping they can run out the clock and make it impossible for us to vote in a convenient and safe site.”

The Board of Elections moved the polling site to three locations less than a mile away because the Continental Room did not comply with federally mandated accessibility laws. The affordable housing complex is populated primarily by black and Hispanic tenants and it is seen as a hotbed of

Monserrate supporters in his race against state Assemblyman Francisco Moya (D-Jackson Heights), who has been endorsed by the Queens Democratic Party.

“A strategy to influence the outcome of an election by discouraging or preventing people from voting, the way this Election Board is doing in LeFrack City, is morally wrong and downright disgusting,” National Action Network Queens Chapter President Rev. Dr. Phil Craig said. “The Queens residents will not tolerate such behavior from the NYC Board of Elections or any public office for that matter.”

Both Moya and Monserrate support keeping the polling site in LeFrack City.

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

# Council

*Continued from Page 1*

Women are underrepresented in New York City Politics,” said that only 26 percent (13 of the 51 seats) in the Council are currently held by women, which lags behind most major cities in the country. This number is set to decrease in the next term since four current councilwomen are leaving due to term limits.

City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Vivierito (D-Manhattan) launched an initiative “21 in 21” aimed at recruiting more women in politics and having at least 21 women in City Council by the 2021 term. The caucus has already endorsed three women running for City Council in this year’s election.

The City Council’s Women’s Caucus advances women’s rights and promotes the goal of equality in New York City through influences in public policy, education, legislation and advocacy. The non-partisan organization encourages participation of female legislators within the Council and works to promote and pass legislation

as well as push and support budget items that will positively affect the everyday lives of women in New York City.

The study said that New York City is not the only local government facing representation issues. According to the study, female representation in government has not improved much since the '90s and considering women are 50 percent of the U.S. population, representation is vastly disproportional. While female representation in New York City is at 26 percent, the largest 100 cities in the United States average 34 percent, the study said. The leading cities are Phoenix with 50 percent, Seattle with 55 percent and Austin with 70 percent.

The study found more female representation at the local level leads to different outcomes and lives up to the idea of equal and fair representation. Research from the Journal of Politics cited in the study revealed that female legislators have been shown to introduce more legislation directly affecting women, children and families, introduce more overall legislation in general and are

better at working across party lines.

The study said the imbalance is caused by a “political ambition gap” and gender roles that cause women to prioritize family as opposed to careers.

According to a CUNY study that found a confidence gap between genders, women are 50 percent less likely to consider themselves ready for office, while men were 65 percent more likely to describe themselves as ready.

Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley (D-Maspeth), a member of the caucus, said they were trying to level the playing field and push the idea that women can be leaders, too.

“We want to encourage newcomers,” Crowley said. “Women are socialized from a young age to not be political. If they feel they’re ready, they will put their best effort to get elected. Sometimes all they need is a mentor in the Council to show them it’s possible.”

*Reach Gina Martinez by e-mail at gmartinez@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4566.*

# Nazi

*Continued from Page 1*

natory harassment, and answered questions on legal protections and services against discrimination.

“It is now more important than ever for New Yorkers to stand united as one city and reject discrimination and intolerance,” Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a statement. “We will not let tenants in Sunnyside or across the five boroughs be intimidated or threatened for speaking out against hatred.”

Van Bramer joined community leaders for a rally outside the building last week where residents came and went without speaking to the media, afraid of being caught on surveillance video.

“The tenants of this Sunnyside condominium have

been terrorized at the hands of this property manager for far too long,” Van Bramer said during the Day of Action. “After speaking with the commissioner on behalf of the tenants and condominium owners, I’m pleased that the Commission on Human Rights has decided to open an investigation into this condominium board member and property manager after tenants reported constant intimidation, harassment, and retaliation. Clearly, their rights are being violated. And with the announcement of this investigation today, we send a strong message that we uphold and defend the rights of tenants in New York City.”

Van Bramer was shocked to discover the building listing includes the names of notorious Nazis Jose Mengele and Rudolph Hess and he said the investigations

come at a fortuitous moment. Milano, who boasts of having guns in his apartment, according to Van Bramer, is expected to return from an extended vacation soon.

“The people in the building are asking me and others what will happen when he comes home — he will be very angry because of what’s happened — and what he will do to us,” Van Bramer said. “All of us have an obligation to protect these people to make sure they’re safe in their homes and that there are no acts of retaliation.”

He also said the NYPD is engaged and is “very well aware of what has happened in this building.”

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

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