

Beware of phone scammers

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

Phone gifters working the Green Dot MoneyPak scam are at it again in the east Bronx.

The police are once again urging the public to be vigilant against a scheme known as the Green Dot MoneyPak Card Scam, where people are conned out of their money, supposedly to pay bogus debts.

The gist of the scam is that someone calls you claiming to be from a utility company or the IRS, and demands immediate payment of a debt using Green Dot MoneyPak prepaid debit cards, according to the NYPD.

Or someone pretends to be a family member who has been in a car accident, or threatens physical violence to a family member unless a debt is paid immediately through the use of Green Dot MoneyPak cards.

The scam became prevalent in the local area in the past year, and examples of mostly elderly victims can be found across the country. The cards are not linked to any bank account, making it easier for the con-artists to launder the plundered money.

Cops warn public

As reports were surfacing from Pelham Bay and Locust Point of attempted crimes on at least two potential victims, 45th Precinct Crime Prevention Officer Erin Rabbitt urged the public to be alert.

"No federal, state, or city agency is going to ask you to open a bill using Green Dot cards," she said. "If they are

Continued on Page 4

FIREWORKS CRACKDOWN

NYPD issues warning and reward

BY BEN KOCHMAN

Put those bottle rockets, Roman candles, firecrackers and even sparklers down, Bronxites – and leave blowing things up to the pros.

That's the word the NYPD is sending out as it launches its annual crackdown on amateur fireworks in the weeks shortly leading up to the Fourth of July.

Police are offering a cool \$1000 reward for any information leading to the arrest and conviction of someone without a state pyrotechnics license caught possessing or selling fireworks.

Cops are also spreading the

word that anyone caught with explosives is subject to a \$750 summons and can even be arrested, if the supply is big enough.

East Bx on watch

In the Bronx, the 49th Precinct plans to have vans cruising up and down both sides of Pelham Parkway on July 4, keeping an eye out for illegal firework igniters.

"It really is not worth it to light off fireworks yourself," said Detective Vic DiPierro, a community affairs officer at the precinct covering Morris Park, Van Nest, Pelham Parkway and Allerton.

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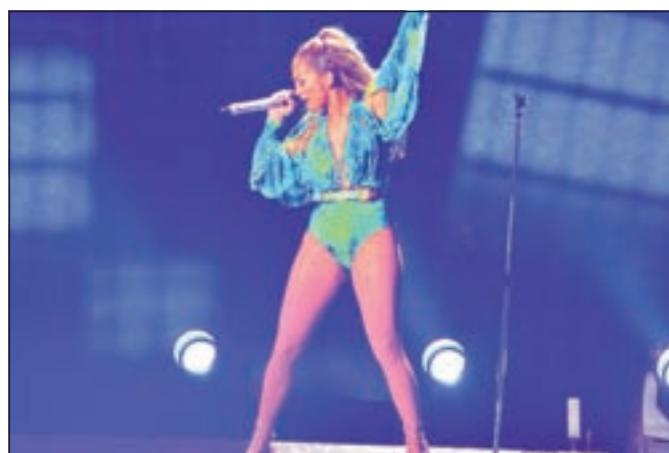


Photo by Alexander Belisle

Coming Home Celebration

J. Lo wows the crowd at Orchard Beach on Wed., June 4. Photos on page 7.

Legal feud freezes Armory deal

BY BEN KOCHMAN

Trouble is yet again brewing under the soon-to-be ice at the Kingsbridge Armory.

The plan to turn the long vacant Armory into the world's largest ice rink center has hit a snag in recent weeks, with the project's developers now feuding with each other in dueling lawsuits over who will control and profit from the completed complex.

The City Council signed off 48-1 in December on the project,

to be called the Kingsbridge National Ice Center. But now the development team has split and is squabbling in a public legal battle, with the city's Economic Development Corporation still yet to finalize the lease on the cavernous Kingsbridge property.

Conflicting stories

Three former members of KNIC – the firm that promised the city it would fund the project with over \$300 million in private money – claim that Kevin

Parker, KNIC's founding member, pushed them out after they shouldered the bulk of the work getting the project approved, according to a May 22 suit filed in Manhattan Supreme Court.

The trio – Jonathan Richter, Jeff Spiritos and Marcus Wignell – used their expertise to spearhead the project "only to be wrongfully excluded from the Partnership business," according to their court papers.

Meanwhile, Parker fired

Continued on Page 11



The developers of the City-approved Kingsbridge National Ice Center are tussling with each other in court, as the Kingsbridge Armory itself remains vacant.

File Photo

Refund for 'Field of Dreams'

Kaufman helps Pelham Bay Little League gets \$ back

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

The nightmare at a "Field of Dreams" in Pelham Bay may finally be over.

Former Assemblyman and Throggs Neck attorney Steve Kaufman has won a \$9,500 settlement for Pelham Bay Little League after a contractor hired by the city Parks Department badly damaged an underground sprinkler system on one of their fields.

The damage led to a three-month delayed start to the 2013 season at the little league, a staple in the Pelham Bay community since the 1950s, and forced league officials to shell out the repair costs themselves for the underground sprinkler system at Naclerio Field.

"These are not-for-profit corporations," said Kaufman. "You shouldn't take advantage of anyone, but

you should defiantly not take advantage of a little league because they don't have a lot of money."

Kaufman met with league president Vinny Prestopino at the field on Friday, June 6 to present a check from the contractor's insurance company.

Prestopino said that shelling out about that amount from league fees from players' families and local sponsors proved to be a real hardship.

"We were happy to get the \$9500 for our sprinkler system back," said Prestopino, who added that the check was going straight from his hands to league vendors. "Thank God Mr. Kaufman was kind enough to offer his services free of charge."

Kaufman said he did not hesitate for a moment when league officials asked for his help, and not the first time

he helped settle another similar type of dispute for the league for free.

"I feel good helping," said Kaufman.

Capital Project

The league received a \$200,000 capital grant from Councilman Jimmy Vacca in 2008, and it was left to the Parks Department to find a contractor. But the project remained in limbo for several years until UA Construction was selected.

Sometime during the construction process, the contractor drove heavy equipment onto the field and broke parts of the sprinkler system, located several feet below grass and clay, said Prestopino.

The renovation left a lot to be desired, added Prestopino, who pointed out that \$82,000 was spent on a backstop which was not tall enough and lacked proper



Steve Kaufman, holding \$9,500 check from a settlement he won for Pelham Bay Little League, with league president Vinny Prestopino on his left.

Photo by Patrick Rocchio

fencing to prevent some fly balls from leaving the field.

The money obtained was a win, and Kaufman was

made an honorary member of league, as Prestopino and league officials Will Fesco, Thomas Montilli, Margher-

ita Prestopino DiSalvo and Charley McDonanld celebrated with PBLL players and volunteers.

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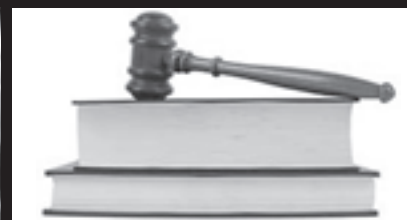


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NYPD's crackdown on fireworks

From Page 1

East Bronx community leaders said that locals are still prone to setting off their own fireworks, though the explosions have plummeted since Mayor Giuliani engineered a massive crackdown in the Nineties.

"It hasn't been a huge problem since Giuliani, but you will still find fireworks in private homes here," said Joe Thompson, president of the 49th Precinct Community Council.

Police at the 45th Precinct, which covers the easternmost slice of the borough, said they haven't heard many complaints yet about illegal fireworks rocking the neighborhood.

But like always, they're on high alert this time of year.

"If you see your neighbor lighting them, stop them and tell them that it's illegal," advised an officer in the precinct's Community Affairs bureau.

Sparkler danger!

Even the most innocuous looking firework – the handheld wire sparklers – is illegal under state law, after Gov. Cuomo vetoed a law in 2013 that would have made them legal for adults over 18.

"Anything you can put a match to can get you in trou-

ble," said DiPierro.

Fireworks may look fun – who are we kidding, they are definitely fun – but medical experts warn that amateur shows often lead to seri-

People don't realize how hot sparklers are. Those things can heat up to over 1000 degrees.

Dr. Ernest Patti

ous injuries.

Children and teenagers are especially vulnerable to burns and ruptured eardrums, said Dr. Ernest Patti, senior emergency room physician at St. Barnabas Hospital in Belmont.

Particles can blow into the eyes and face, while fingers are especially open to injury, said the doctor. Sparklers are especially dangerous, he said, because adults often give them to children without realizing the risks.

"The problem is that people don't realize how hot sparklers are," said Patti. "Those things can heat up

to over 1000 degrees Fahrenheit."

Patti said the ER sees victims of firework injuries every summer – though some of the victims claim that the burns happened in other, less illegal ways.

"Sometimes people come in and say 'I was in an accident' but don't say how," said Dr. Patti. "They are real hesitant to say it was because of fireworks."

Besides the scorching hot sparklers, the doctor warned against so-called "M-80" firecrackers, small round fireworks packed with gunpowder and which have a very short fuse.

Bronxites seeking a safer experience can celebrate legally at a fireworks show June 27 at Orchard Beach, co-sponsored by Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and State Senator Jeff Klein.

There are no fireworks planned in the borough on Independence Day itself, with the city's big Macy's show shooting off on the East River by the Brooklyn Bridge.

"Go to a legal fireworks show," advised DiPierro, the community affairs detective at the Four-Nine. "Celebrate with your family, have a nice cookout, but please: Leave the fireworks out of it."

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Beware of recent Green Dot MoneyPak telephone scam

From Page 1

calling and asking you to do that, it should be a red flag."

A NYPD bulletin urges the public to be suspicious of callers who demand immediate payment for any reason, to never give out personal or financial information, never wire money or provide debit cards like Green Dot, and to

know that utility companies and government agencies will never contact you demanding immediate payment using GreenDot money cards.

Local victims

For recent victim Margaret Annunziata of Pelham Bay, the scam was particularly disturbing because the caller pretended to be her grandson who sup-

posedly was in a car accident.

"The phone rang and a young man's voice said 'grandma?'" she said. "It may have been power of suggestion, but I said yes, Jimmy, (her grandson's name)."

The caller asked her to please not tell anyone else in the family that he had been in a car accident in the Do-

minican Republic with a friend. He said he needed to money to pay restitution. When the caller tripped up in his pronunciation, she realized that it was not her grandson, but continued to play along. She wonders how the caller even knew she was a grandmother.

"I just think it is a shame that they do this

to people," said Annunziata. "I could see where people could fall for it. The initial reaction was panic...but I always said I would never fall for a scam and now I am proud of myself."

LocustPointresidents Frank and Cathy Facente were also nearly victims on Wednesday, June 4 when a caller demanded immediate pay-

ment of a bogus tax bill on behalf of the IRS.

In the beginning, they sounded legitimate, but then Cathy got on the phone and asked for her husband's Social Security number. At that point, the caller hung up the phone.

"I am sure it must work for every so many callers to make it worth their while," she said.



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Bronx Chamber expo draws biz crowd

Attorney General Schneiderman keynote speaker

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

When neighborhoods deteriorate from foreclosures, local businesses also suffer.

With that in mind, State Attorney Eric Schneiderman brought his office's efforts to help save homeowners from foreclosure to the Bronx Chamber of Commerce's Business Exposition on Wednesday, June 11.

More than a hundred businesses were showcased with a wide range of products and services, along with representation by a number of city agencies at the exposition, held at the Villa Barone in Throggs Neck.

Schneiderman spoke

about his office's Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP) which helps save the homes of people who may be facing foreclosure. HOPP works with homeowners to help them understand their finances, connects them to free legal services, and even speaks to banks on their behalf.

"No one in New York is ever going to lose their home because they could not get access to a lawyer to help them understand their rights," the attorney general said.

The program has counseled over 1,000 people in the Bronx alone, he said, and reached over 28,000 in

the state, getting over 9,000 loan modifications.

Schneiderman also spoke of his office's efforts to deal with abandoned homes, as well as zombie properties - those vacated by the mortgage holder but still not in the bank's possession because they have not gone through the foreclosure process.

In addition, the attorney general addressed wage theft, reforming regulations governing non-profits, and funding bullet-proof vests for police officers.

He explained how his office seeks to work with what he called "good actors to make the business environ-

ment fair."

Chamber Chairman Joseph Kelleher in his remarks to the room, expressed optimism that the Bronx would become an even more attractive place for people and investments.

In order for the borough to prosper, Kelleher said it was necessary "to create that environment where people want to work, live, and play."

He cited the area around the Hutchinson Metro Center, which he helped develop as president of Simone Metro Properties, as indicative of the growth and opportunities that the borough offers.



Attorney General Schneiderman speaks to the Bronx Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday, June 11. Photo by Aracelis Batista

Among the new developments he spoke of are Metro North stations and a Marriott Residence Inn Hotel.

The exposition, co-sponsored by the Bronx Times

Reporter, included workshops on topics including social media, technology, healthcare, and Minority/Women-Owned Business certification.

Throggs Neck group joins smoke-free

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

A local community group dedicated to stopping youth substance abuse has joined a growing chorus of organizations going smoke-free.

The Archdiocese of New York Drug Abuse Prevention Program, based in Throggs Neck, announced on Wednesday, June 4 that it was going smoke-free at its Schurz Avenue headquarters in an effort to bolster awareness about the dangers of smoking and the health of its member partners and workers.

The announcement was made in conjunction with the Bronx Smoke Free Partnership, which is part of a city-wide initiative advocating for smoke-free grounds at community

and residential facilities.

"The evidence is clear that secondhand smoke presents an unacceptable level of risk of serious respiratory disease in those exposed to it," said Frances Maturo, executive director of ADAPP. "We are proud to do our part in providing a more healthful environment for our staff and our community."

ADAPP is an organization dedicated to stopping teen drinking and substance abuse in the Throggs Neck community, and so its goal of achieving a smoke free campus headquarters dovetails with its mission.

Senator Jeff Klein, who supports ADAPP's initiatives in his district, cheered the move.

"I commend ADAPP's decision to make their building and their surrounding area smoke-free and in doing so, sending a message that the health and well-being of their staff and visitors is the priority," said Klein.

Bronx Smoke Free Partnership Lisa Spitzner said that ADAPP, like a lot of other local organizations, should find a ban on smoking beneficial to their organization.

"It is useful not only for health benefits, but also reduces cigarette litter and fire risk," said Spitzner.

Organizations that have already adopted a smoke-free policy or have designated spaces where smoking is permitted in an otherwise smoke-free



Members of the Throggs Neck community, the Bronx Smoke-Free Partnership, and The Archdiocese of New York Drug Abuse Prevention Program (ADAPP) proudly display a "Tobacco Free Zone" sign at 2789 Schurz Ave., where TNAP is located. Photo by Silvio Pacifico

campus include the Mary Mitchell Center, Bronx YMCA, Kingsbridge Heights Community Association, Riverdale YWHA, CUNY campuses, and Montefiore Medical Center, she said.

"They find it beneficial because these organiza-

tions have missions that are community and quality-of-life focused, so this fits right into their mission," she said. "Definitely for organizations that have community members frequenting facility, reducing second-hand smoke is a [benefit], with

asthma rates in the Bronx high."

When an organization adopts a smoke-free policy, it is often makes it more likely that smokers on their staff might try smoking cessation, which could help them kick the habit, added Spitzner.

J.LO

AT ORCHARD BEACH



She's still 'Jenny from the Block!' The Bronx welcomed J.Lo with a free concert on Wednesday, June 11 at Orchard Beach for 25,000 ticketholders. J.Lo, Jennifer Lopez, wore an outfit similar to an iconic Versace dress that she wore to the 2000 Grammy Awards. Ticketholders got to see one of their favorite stage and screen stars, with fireworks welcoming J.Lo's appearance on stage and thousands of smartphones recording her every action. A less than expected crowd nevertheless took part in what was an enjoyable and memorable evening. Lopez grew up in Castle Hill, so the concert was something of a homecoming.

Lo performs to an enthusiastic crowd.

Photo by Alexander Belisle



Shannon Lepre and Jonathan Suazo share a moment before the concert

Photo by Alexander Belisle



A happy fan enters the concert.

Alex Belisle

Bronx city workers honored

Civil servants showing 'commitment to the public good'

BY JAIME WILLIAMS

Two Bronx workers were recently honored with city government's highest public service award.

Janice A. Halloran, the Network Senior Associate Director of the Department of Emergency Medicine at North Bronx Healthcare Network and Arnaldo Bernabe, Director of Public Safety at Hostos Community College were two of six winners of the Sloan Public Service Award, presented on June 4.

Award

The 41-year-old award, which comes with a \$10,000 prize, is given each year by the Fund of the City of New York to civil servants at all levels of city government.

"Our civil servants not only make New York City function efficiently day to day, they spark the innovations and drive the achievements that make our city a

global leader," said Dr. Paul L. Joskow, president of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. "This year's Sloan Award winners have embodied this excellence throughout their careers with their unparalleled commitment to the public good."

The six award recipients were nominated by their colleagues, peers and friends and selected from more than 250,000 eligible city workers.

Janice Halloran

Janice Halloran has 24-hour operational responsibility for the emergency rooms at both Jacobi Medical Center and North Central Bronx hospitals. These emergency rooms, including Jacobi's Level I Trauma Center, receive 175,000 visits annually.

She has helped to manage numerous Bronx emergencies included the 2011 bus accident on I-95,



Bronx workers Janice Halloran and Arnaldo Bernabe were among the winners of the 41st annual Sloan Public Service Awards on June 4, presented by the Fund for the City of New York. Halloran oversees the emergency departments at Jacobi and North Central Bronx hospitals, and Bernabe is director of public safety at Hostos Community College.

Photo by Sarah Shatz

the Metro-North crash in Spuyten Duyvil last year, and Hurricane Sandy. Dur-

ing the hurricane, she spent 96 hours at Jacobi Hospital. She is the chairperson for

Network Emergency Preparedness and the Bronx Emergency Preparedness Coalition.

"She is completely devoted to delivering better health care, her colleagues respect and admire her, and she thrives under pressure," said Health and Hospitals Corporation President Dr. Ram Raju. "She is also an extraordinary emergency planner and manager, and constantly seeks ways to improve the hospitals where she works."

"I didn't know anything when I first started in 1991, but when I landed here I immediately found my niche," said Halloran about her 23-year career with NYC HHC.

Arnaldo Bernabe

Bernabe leads the Hostos Community College campus security force, which serves nearly 7,000 students who attend classes at the

Mott Haven Campus.

He is credited with carefully developing his staff and creating a positive environment for the student body, many of whom speak English as a second language. He has also gone above and beyond the duties of a security officer by finding help for students who face homelessness.

"Chief Bernabe is not only a safety officer at Hostos; he is an educator, a role model, a person of true wisdom, and the one person absolutely everyone calls upon," said one Hostos faculty member.

"We need to be more than security officers," said Bernabe. "We have to understand the difficulties students face on a daily basis and act as colleagues working together to create a safe and rewarding educational community."

Boro animal shelter at risk

Rescue group faces \$ crisis

BY JAIME WILLIAMS

The Bronx's only animal shelter is running out of time and money.

New Beginning Animal Rescue, the only Bronx animal organization with its own facility, is in danger of closing in a matter of months.

Pedro Rosario founded the non-profit rescue group in late 2010 in connection with his for-profit animal boarding company, NYC's Top Dog, south of Westchester Square.

For the first year or two, Rosario said the company was able to support the non-profit rescue group by boarding dogs for other rescue groups, but in the past year business has slowed.

Several months ago the shelter, which has a no-kill policy, ran out of money, and it has been in a precarious situation ever since. Do-

nations have helped keep the shelter afloat until now, and Rosario said there is enough to stay open for two more months.

Beyond that, Rosario doesn't know what the shelter's fate will be. He'd like to see it prosper and continue to serve the community, but he's afraid he'll have to shut his doors.

Long term solution

Rosario said that while all donations are helping in the short term, he is looking to a long term solution through a private sponsorship or public funding. In order to keep the shelter open for the foreseeable future, he said he needs consistent help to cover his \$10,000 a month operating costs.

The shelter has three employees, down from five, and ten volunteers who care for the dozens of ani-

mals that Rosario and others rescue and try to place for adoption.

Rosario said the dogs they take in are found in the street, are surrendered by owners, or are rescued from NYC Animal Care and Control centers before they are euthanized.

City shelter needed

There is currently no Animal Care and Control center in the Bronx, and Rosario said the presence of one would help the animal situation in the borough. But he feels there also needs to be a private no-kill shelter, which he is struggling to provide. If it were to close, some animals would be given to other rescue groups, Rosario said, but others would have to go to Animal Care and Control.

And without the shelter's services, "There'd

be more animals on the streets," he said.

Helping students

In addition to saving animals, Rosario's shelter also helps students from local schools who intern there. Rosario said that working at the shelter gives the kids an idea of how to treat animals gives them something productive to do after school.

"It takes kids off the street," he said. "They come here, interact with the animals, get school credit and they learn something."

Rosario, who has worked with animals his entire 19-year career, wants the chance to continue to help both animals and people.

"We're here for the community," he said.

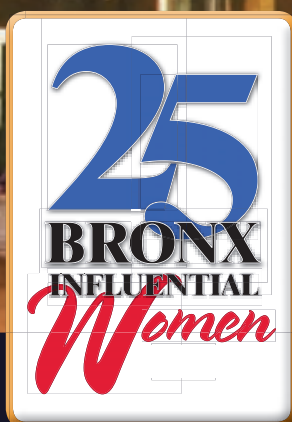
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New Beginning Animal Rescue founder Pedro Rosario with recently abandoned Samantha, a one-year-old pit bull terrier mix. The only shelter in the Bronx is in danger of closing for lack of funds.

Photo by Jaime Williams

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ITUNES





Jeff Klein is hanging tough, sitting pretty, and apparently intends to stay that way as co-leader of the Senate with Republicans.

While **Gov. Cuomo** now says there *might* be a reunited Democratic senate with the return of Jeff's five-member Independent Democratic Conference after the November elections, others have been pleading with/threatening Klein, including the Working Families Party, which is backing former Attorney General **Oliver Koppell** against him in the primary.

But Jeff told us he can still do more remaining right where he is, thank you very much, including delivering for the Bronx.

When we asked if he's thought about floating his IDC's vote back and forth across the aisle, depending on the issue, he responded "We do that every day."

"If I turned around and went back tomorrow, the progressive agenda would fail – because there's not enough Democratic votes," he told us. "Nobody counts the numbers."

"The Dream Act failed because of two Democrats. Campaign finance? Reverend Diaz adamantly opposed it. He's the 32nd member that could pass it. He won't vote for it."

Klein has no love for the Working Families Party, "once again, trying to take someone out of power that benefits the Bronx – just how they created a City Council Speaker and somehow the Bronx got left out of the mix."

"When you make believe that it's about a progressive agenda, you believe you're on the side of the angels," he said. "So you can screw anybody. You don't have to keep your word – or keep a deal."

JLOW

Excuse us if we're jaded over **J.Lo.** Maybe the Bronx is too, despite the aging pop tart's long-time-coming efforts to pay back the borough she shrewdly used to give the middle-class, Preston High School grad "street cred."

Turns out that highly publicized concert at Orchard Beach, with 25,000 free tickets given away, was a bit of a bust. A highly placed source tells us the official clicker count at the gate shows only 9,600 folks actually showed up for show, with Daily News rock critic **Jim Farber's** review noting that Lopez "falls far from the rank of great, or even good, singers."

"She's played out. She's old," sayeth one former fan. "People have moved on."

NUMBERS GAME

Jerry Skurnik, the political numbers wizard at Prime New York, notes

that the two Bronx assembly districts in the hot 13th Congressional District race between **Charlie Rangel** and **Adriano Espaillat** could be key in the Tuesday, June 24 primary.

We'd call Harlem minister **Michael Walrond** a potential spoiler in this one, since Charlie beat Espaillat in the 2012 primary by only a thousand or so votes.

Skurnik noted that the Bronx turnout of 7,354 voters in that 2012 contest was telling for lack of interest in the congressional race.

While there was a large vote for mayoral candidate **Bill de Blasio**, only 33% of the voters who showed up in the largely white 81st A.D. covering Riverdale/Kingsbridge voted in the congressional primary. About 36% voted in that contest in the heavily Hispanic 78th A.D.

covering Fordham, Kingsbridge Heights, Bedford Park, and Belmont.

"If I were either candidate, I'd be working those districts verrrry hard," sayeth Jerry. "The trick is delivering a different message in each district."

IN THE GAME

Kenny Agosto, redistricted out of his current district leader's job in the 80th AD in Morris Park, tells us he's running for state committee in the 78th A.D. and supporting local venerable Assemblyman **Jose Rivera** for reelection.

CONGRATS

To **Annie Boller**, finally appointed to Bronx Community Board 10 after being involved with community organizations all over the place for years.

COP CORNER

Happy anniversary. To the 41st Precinct stationhouse on Simpson St., opened 100 years ago,

weathering the Fort Apache 'Bronx is Burning' years, and now home of Bronx Detective Command. And to the Fort Apache crowd who held their reunion last week, great seeing you guys!

Congrats. To Bronx Borough command's anti-crime unit, the guys and gals that work to get guns off the borough's streets, awarded a unit citation at NYPD Medal Day ceremonies at 1 Police Plaza on Tuesday, June 10.

BRONX BIRTH-DAYS

June 14 - Life photographer **Margaret Bourke-White** (1904-1971)

June 16 - **J.C. Polanco**, former Bronx Republican commissioner and head of the City Board of Elections.

June 17 - **Marricka Scott-McFadden**, deputy chief clerk of the Bronx Board of Elections.

Legal feud freezes Armory deal

From Page 1

back in his own lawsuit in Bronx Supreme Court on June 5, claiming the former KNIC members have launched a "scheme" to sabotage the project and shake down money from Parker after leaving the development team of their own volition.

The trio of former KNIC partners even sent an email to EDC, the city's economic development arm, in the midst of negotiations claiming that "you should be aware that Kevin Parker has no authority to act on behalf of KNIC Partners or KNIC Properties," according to Parker's lawsuit.

History of trouble

This month's squabble is only the latest roadblock for the Armory, which has sat empty for decades as city officials' attempts to redevelop it were stymied.

After two previous plans for the 180,000-square-foot site fell through, Mayor Bloomberg announced in April 2013 that the city had selected KNIC's nine-rink ice center plan.

The project then breezed through the city's land-use process when the developers signed a community benefits agreement, promising to pay workers a living wage and fund millions of dollars in local programs.

City: All is well
City officials are play-

ing down the legal tussle. EDC spokeswoman Kate Blumm stated in an email that the city is "advancing contract negotiations to move forward with this transformative project, and in our current view, there are no significant delays from the original timeline."

Borough President **Ruben Diaz Jr.** – who championed the project through its approval process – was similarly optimistic.

"My office is confident that this greatly anticipated project will continue to move forward," said the Beep, "and come to fruition as a definitive component of the 'New Bronx.'"



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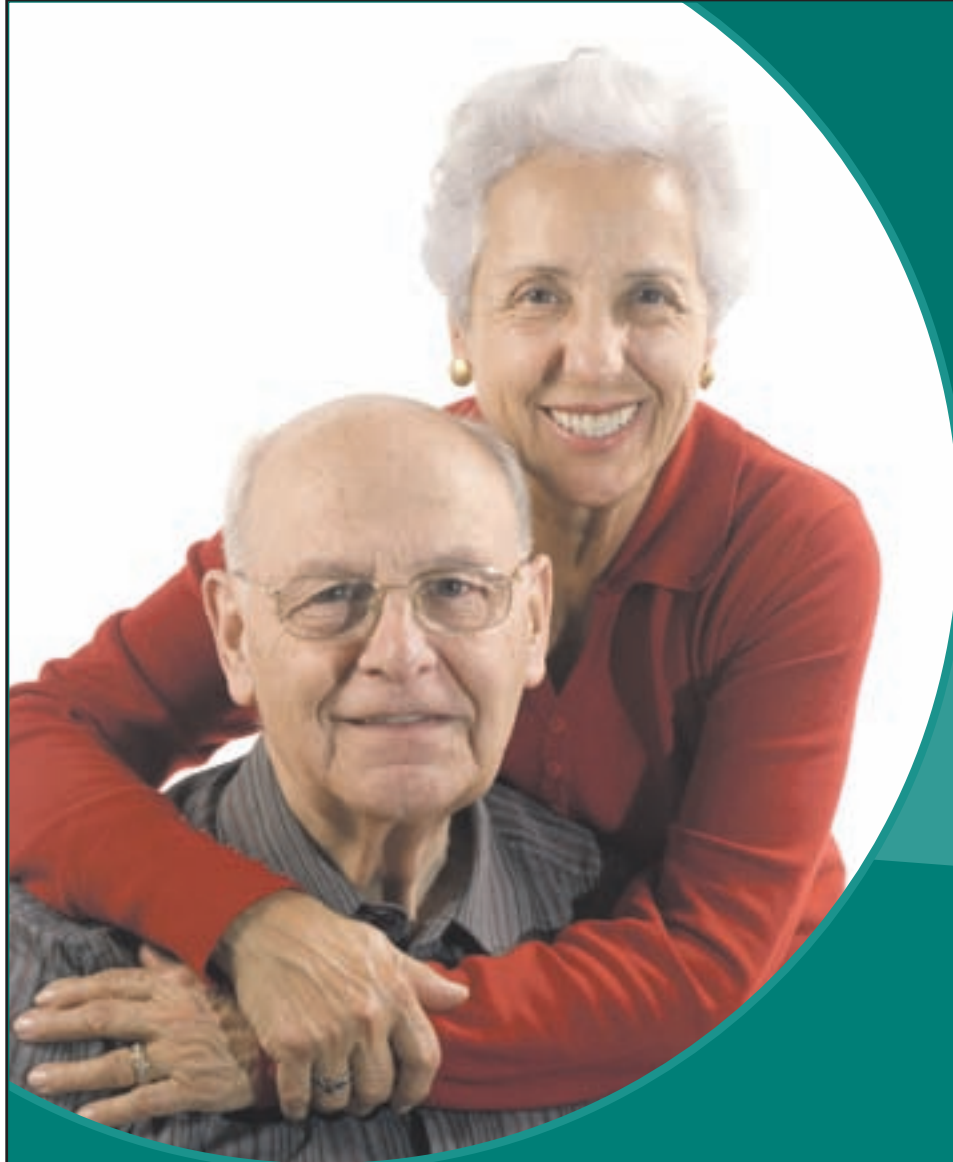
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