

\$33 million for local roads

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

Major changes are planned for a swath of east Bronx roads and highways that will finally unclog an everyday bottleneck.

Assemblyman Michael Benedetto, working with the state Department of Transportation, has obtained an approximately \$33 million traffic mitigation plan for I-95 between Country Club Road and the Hutchinson River Parkway, Pelham Parkway and for a new exit off the Hutch into Co-op City.

It is fully funded in the state budget and ready to go.

The changes do not require any new large-scale infrastructure, but uses existing underutilized areas near the roadways and a new extended onramp to create new traffic patterns for the area.

The proposed plan, which could be completed in just a few years, would reduce entrances and exits onto I-95 from seven to four in the vicinity of Pelham Parkway.

It will create two new intersections for highway access just east and west of the highway on Pelham Parkway, said the assemblyman.

"Most of the changes will be directed at alleviating a lot of the I-95 (north) corridor backup that exists beginning around the Country Club Road exit and extends up to Pelham Parkway," said Benedetto, who added "The state DOT, being creative and thinking outside of the box, has suggested a number of improvements and changes to this whole situation."

Beside the amount of traffic on these roadways that necessitate the new measures, DOT believes that the amount of entrances and exits in the I-95 north roadway in such a short span is a major factor contributing to the traffic slowing down, indicated Benedetto.

The DOT's ideas, would still allow for the same amount of access onto I-95 southbound and northbound, would also be a boon for pedestrians looking to reach Co-op City by providing traffic controls

Continued on Page 4

IMPAIRED DRIVER KILLS 3 IN HALLOWEEN HORROR



Police and fire workers investigate the accident that claimed three lives on Halloween.

Photo by David Greene

Out-of-control car takes off

BY ROBERT WIRSING

On Halloween, a day of trick or treating turned into a terrible nightmare, that left three dead, including a 10-year-old girl.

On Saturday, October 31 at 4:53 p.m. an out-of-control vehicle went air born near the intersection of Morris Park and Bogart avenues, mounted the sidewalk and struck several individuals celebrating the holiday.

Police officers from the 49th Precinct discovered Louis Perez, 65, of 755 Morris Park Avenue, unconscious and unresponsive having sustained severe head trauma after being hit by a black 2011 Dodge Charger.

Five others were also hit, before the car slammed through a fence.

EMS responded to the accident

Continued on Page 4

Community mourns loss of Ben Randazzo

BY STEVEN GOODSTEIN

Throggs Neck is mourning the loss of a caring, kind and community-comes-first type individual.

Ben 'Benny' Randazzo, an 74-year-old lifelong Throggs Neck resident, passed away on Monday, November 2, filling many local residents with sadness and sorrow.

Born on August 28, 1941 to Frank and Mary Randazzo, Benny attended and graduated from Mount St. Michael Academy and eventually began working at his

family's business on Arthur Avenue, Randazzo's Fish Market, in the late 1960s after briefly working for the original AT&T company.

Many of Benny's business buddies often referred to him as 'Red' because of his red hair, somewhat unusual for an individual of Italian descent.

In October 1966, Benny married his wife Maria.

In the early 1980s, along with his brother Cosmo, Benny ran the Shelter Cove Marina (near Clar-

ence Avenue) after they bought the property with other parties, a location they would both operate until the early 2000s.

After selling the marina, Benny was introduced to Assemblyman Michael Benedetto after Benny's son, Frank, who was a member of Benedetto's Chippewa Democratic Club, had recommended that his father work for Benedetto part-time.

After working part-time for a few years, he was appointed as

Benedetto's chief of staff in 2007.

In that position, Benny was instrumental in organizing two of Throggs Neck's biggest annual events - the Halloween Day Parade along East Tremont Avenue and the Christmas Tree Lighting at De-rosa O'Boyle Triangle.

At about 9:15 a.m. on Saturday morning, while setting up for this year's Halloween Day Parade, Benny suddenly became unconscious and unresponsive.

Continued on Page 11

CB4's DM announces resignation

BY STEVEN GOODSTEIN

The district manager of Community Board 4 recently announced his resignation from the position.

Jose Rodriguez, CB4's DM for nearly the last eight years, made his announcement early this month.

Rodriguez, who was appointed in 2008, informed the community board that he would be leaving the position to pursue another career opportunity in the Bronx.

He has not yet disclosed the job position that he will take once he finishes his tenure as DM.

Rodriguez also did not confirm which day will be his last at the board, although he expects it to take place sometime at the end of November.

Now that he is in his last month, Rodriguez has had time to reflect on his experiences during his term.

"During my time with the board, I learned three principles - expect more than others think is possible, dream more than others think is practical and risk more than others think is safe," said Rodriguez, who has spent his whole life living in the Bronx, including areas of Co-op City, Parkchester and currently Morris Park. "This change is bit-



(Right) Rodriguez, who was appointed to the position of district manager nearly eight years ago, said that his resignation is bitter-sweet. Photo courtesy of Community Board 4

tersweet, because I have received so much support from this board as well as the community and I will miss everybody very much. How-

ever, I am also looking forward to this new opportunity along with other opportunities that will follow."

It is clear that CB4 will miss Jose's leadership.

"I hope he cancels his resignation," joked CB4 chairwoman Kathleen Saunders, who knows that his departure is inevitable. "He was involved in so many fun community activities and positive programs for the area, such as Movie Night and Family Day."

"It will definitely be a loss for our community and the board, but over these last eight years, he has been a real pleasure to work with and I certainly wish him well in the future."

Saunders, who has been the board's chairwoman for the last ten years, said that CB4 will not begin looking for a new DM until after his last day, when they will begin to review resumes for potential candidates.

Rodriguez was the board's fourth DM, after Margarita Hunt held the position for over 20 years and David Mojica was DM from 2005-07. Herbert Samuels was the first DM in the board's history.

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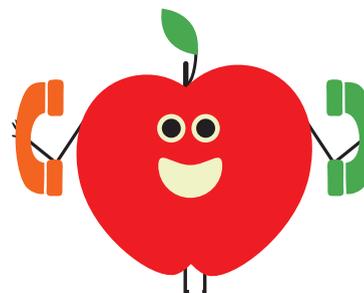
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Impaired driver kills 3 in Halloween horror

from Page 1

and pronounced Perez dead at the scene, police said.

Twenty-four-year-old Kristian Leka, of 1733 Unionport Road, and 5th grader Nyanna Aquil of 716 Morris Park Avenue, were transported to Jacobi Medical Center where they were pronounced dead.

Perez's three-year old granddaughter, Jasmina Aquil; Kristian's nine-year old sister, Fiona Leka and Kristian's fiancée, 21-year old Greata Leka were transported to Jacobi Medical Center to be treated for non-life-threatening injuries.

All three have since been released from the hospital.

Eight-year old Sanaya Aquil was trick-or-treating with her family, but was unharmed due to her heroic grandfather pushing her away from the oncoming car.

Howard Unger, 52, the driver was transported by EMS to Jacobi Medical Center where he is listed in stable condition.

According to an NYPD spokesman, an investigation into incident revealed Unger was traveling westbound on Morris Park Avenue when he bumped the rear of a Toyota Camry.

His car then veered over the double yellow line and continued traveling westbound on Morris Park Avenue. It then mounted the sidewalk and struck six pedestrians before crashing through a brick wall and a fence at 936 Morris Park Avenue.

Police added the investigation is still on going and is being conducted by the NYPD's Collision Investigation Squad.

Local residents and elected officials paid their respects to the three victims and offered their prayers to those injured in Saturday's tragedy in a well-attended somber Sunday, November 1 candlelight vigil at Morris Park and Bogart avenues.

A makeshift memorial for the victims has grown at the site.

"This horrible incident literally happened about a block away from my private real estate office," said Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj. "I've known the Leka family for many years and I've come to develop a relationship with the Perez family during this difficult time.

"As a community, we pray that God will give them the strength and faith to get through this," he added.

According to Gjonaj, he is working with Mayor de Blasio, Congressman Joseph Crowley, Borough President Ruben Diaz, Senator Jeff Klein, Councilman James Vacca and Assemblyman Michael Benedetto in the coming weeks and months to have Morris Park and Bronxdale avenues to Williamsbridge Road closed next Halloween until 6 p.m. so children and their families can safely enjoy the day and honor the victims' memories.

In Throggs Neck, a makeshift memorial for Nyanna was created by Pink Shisha Beauty Bar clients and employees outside of the 3604 E. Tremont Avenue business where Aquil's mother, Natalia Perez, has worked as a makeup artist since April 2015, according to Perez's sister, Milly Lopez.

She added Perez would often bring her daughters,

Nyanna, Jasmina and Sanaya, to her work.

"Natalia lives for her daughters and they are her pride and joy," said Lopez. "Nyanna was a beautiful girl so full of life and would dance every chance she had. She always said that she wanted to become a Disney actress one day and that's why she loved dancing so much."

Leka was waked on Tuesday, November 3 at Parenga Brothers Funeral Home and a Mass at Our Lady of Shkodra Church in Hartsdale was held for him the next day. Leka was laid to rest at the Gates of Heaven Cemetery in Hawthorne.

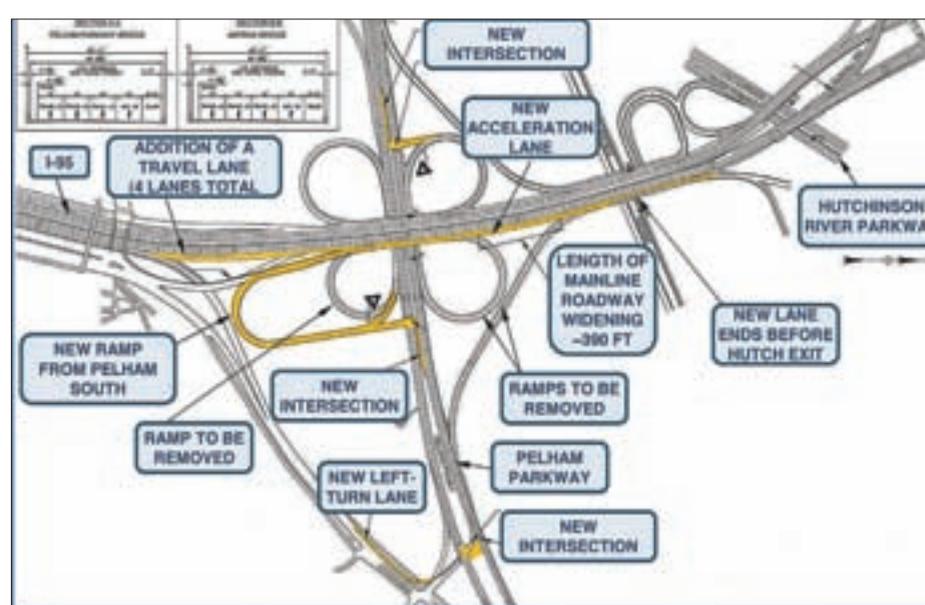
Aquil and Perez will be waked at McNulty Funeral Home on Friday, November 6 from 3 to 8 p.m. and Mass will be held the next day at Harvest Fields Community Church at 2626 E. Tremont Avenue at 10 a.m.

Both will be laid to rest at St. Raymonds Cemetery.

Mourners are asked to wear sky blue or turquoise blue in memory of Aquil - her favorite colors.

GoFundMe pages for both families were created to help pay for funeral expenses and donations can be made to the 'Fundraiser for Kristian Leka' by visiting www.gofundme.com/kristianleka and to 'Nyanna and Louis' Funeral Fund' at www.gofundme.com/nayannaandlouis.

Donations will also be accepted at the Morris Park Community Association located at 1824 Bronxdale Avenue on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Monday through Friday 5 to 8 p.m. and weekends 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



A map showing proposed changes to the I-95 interchange at Pelham Parkway.

hoto courtesy of Assemblyman Benedetto's office

Assemblyman Benedetto obtains \$33 million for local roads

from Page 1

for people on foot to cross several roadways including Pelham Parkway, he said.

"This is major," said the assemblyman. "It is fully funded, there is no new infrastructure construction in this plan, and therefore, they will be able to complete the improvements in a timely manner."

Had the changes had included major construction the cost could have skyrocketed to over \$100 million and taken 10 to 15 years to build, he said.

This will take less time because the plan works with existing infrastructure, he said.

"They came up with a plan that was inventive and that I think will work," he

said.

According to Assemblyman Benedetto, the changes are:

- widening the northbound roadway on I-95 from the exit 8B (Orchard Beach and City Island) to exit 9 for the Hutchinson River Parkway north, explained the assemblyman.

- creating two new intersections allowing traffic traveling in both directions on Pelham Parkway to reach I-95 both northbound and southbound.

- a new acceleration lane from the eastern intersection at Pelham Parkway which would allow both east and westbound traffic, as well as traffic coming from the direction of Pelham Bay, to access I-95 north.

- another new connector at the new western Pelham Parkway intersection that allows eastbound traffic to turn onto an existing on-ramp to I-95 south.

- a new off ramp and intersection leading into Co-op City from the Hutchinson River Parkway northbound at the Hutchinson River Parkway East service road and Bartow Avenue, where there will be a new intersection where motorist can make left and right hand turns.

"It might not be the perfect plan, but it is a good plan, and one that can work on many different levels," said Benedetto, who added "Relief can be done in our lifetime."



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Bronx' restaurant week kicks off

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

From Latin Fusion to Italian dishes to French eats, the borough's ethnic diversity is evident during its annual restaurant week.

The fifth annual 'Savor the Bronx' Restaurant Week, a 12-day promotional event, kicked off with Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and The Bronx Tourism Council at Patricia's Morris Park on Thursday, October 29.

The event has grown to its largest assortment of restaurants and eateries ever – with over 40 – and includes a large contingent of Morris Park eateries this year.

The borough president said at the launch that he worked to create a restaurant week when he saw that there were virtually no restaurants from the borough in a similar citywide celebration.

"Our borough has an amazing food culture and 'Savor the Bronx' is a great way to explore our epicurean delights while taking advantage of this 12-day promotional event to try something new," said Borough President Diaz. "I invite foodies from not only all over the Bronx, but all over the region, to take advantage of this wonderful event and sample the many flavors the borough has to offer."

Savor the Bronx is ongoing Monday, November 2 and Friday, November 13, and there will be specials at many of the restau-



Borough President Ruben Diaz presented proclamations to Patricia's Morris Park, Conte's Pastry Shoppe and Bronx Brewery. (l-r) Bronx Tourism Council's Olga Luz Tirado; Alessandro Borgognone, owner of Patricia's; Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.; Sal Paljevic, owner of Conti's; Andrew Steigbigel and Assemblyman Marcos Crespo.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico

rants involved.

The Bronx Tourism Council helps coordinate the festivities.

"We have a lot more restaurants involved this year than ever before," said Olga Luz Tirado tourism council executive director, adding "(We hope) to encourage people not only from inside the borough but also outside of the Bronx to savor the flavor of the Bronx."

"When the borough president's office reached out to me, I accepted the challenge to recruit some restaurants," she said. "They give me a list of businesses they hoped would participate, I used my personal diplomacy and the rest is history."

Six restaurants from Morris Park are involved this year, but in previous years, none participated, she said.

Alex Borgognone, the owner of Patricia's Morris Park where the Savor the Bronx launch took place, said that the borough has a vibrant restaurant scene and running Patricia's helped him learn about the business.

Also taking part in the start of the week were Conti's Pastry Shoppe and Bronx Brewery.

Among the participating restaurants this year are the following: Bistro SK, Xochimilco, P&K's Grill, Luquillo, Enzo's Restaurant, Travesis, Mike's Deli, Giovanni, 900 Park, Muscle Maker Grill, Lucca, Made in Puerto Rico, Ceetay, Artie's, Patsy's Pizzeria, Don Coqui, Havana Café, Spoto's, Santa Fe Grill and Bar, Patricia's Morris Park, Mott Haven Bar & Grill, Cabo, Jake's Steakhouse, Icehouse, Hard Rock Café, Bronx Alehouse, Tosca Café, The Bronx Beer Hall, Thai No. 1, Mamajuana Café, Charles, Antonio's Trattoria, Lotus Flame, Hudson Garden Grill and Cozy Cottage.

She said that people in local communities know that may great eateries exist in their neighborhoods, but people from elsewhere may not be as aware of all the borough has to offer.

Ruth Papazian, a Morris Park resident, served as the borough president's liaison to community restaurants after she had expressed dismay that Morris Park eateries were not taking part in the promotion.

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ASSEMBLYMAN BENEDETTO HOSTS ANNUAL



The annual Throggs Neck Halloween Parade was held on Saturday, October 31, where local residents dressed in Halloween costumes came out to celebrate the national holiday. The parade, which started on Harding and East Tremont avenues, continued to the Throggs Neck Expressway Service Road and ended at the Throggs Neck Little League fields, where a Halloween street fair, carnival and costume contest took place. The parade was primarily sponsored by Assemblyman Michael Benedetto, along with Councilman James Vacca, Senator Jeff Klein and Congressman Joe Crowley.

(Top left) (l-r) Assemblyman Michael Benedetto, Senator Jeff Klein, Tom Messina from Congressman Joe Crowley's office, Councilman James Vacca and Judge Darcel Clark gather during the parade. Photo by Silvio Pacifico



(Left) (l-r) Sandy Lusk face paints Emmanuel and Ailamme Rios during the carnival and street fair.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico

(Far left) (l-r) Josiah and Eri Alcantara dressed as 'Batman' for the parade. Photo by Silvio Pacifico

(Bottom) (l-r) Erica and Alice Roman with Angelina and Sidney Pentecost during the festival. Photo by Silvio Pacifico



RIGHT HAND PAGE

(1) Laura (Maria from Little Red Riding Hood), Monica (gothic mom), Monica (Alice in Wonderland) and Matthew (SWAT police) Ramirez Photo by Laura Stone

(2) Jose Ruiz, Joshua Ruiz (Cookie Monster) Dolis Ruiz, Ashley Rodriguez, Joseph Ruiz (ninja), Tati and Yolanda Silva in costume. Photo by Laura Stone

(3) (l-r) Assemblyman Michael Benedetto with Benny (monster), Massimo, Daisy and Erica Lociero during the Throggs Neck Halloween Parade. Photo by Silvio Pacifico

(4) Danielle Raia, captain and commanding officer of the 45th Precinct, poses with her dog, Danika, during the parade. Photo by Silvio Pacifico

(5) (l-r) Tom Messina from Congressman Joe Crowley's office, Councilman James Vacca, Gabriel Cuebas, Elizabeth Cuebas and Michael Rivendeneyra from Councilman James Vacca's office with children (l-r) Lisa Gramble, Ishmeil and Matthew Cuebas. Photo by Silvio Pacifico



THROGGS NECK HALLOWEEN PARADE



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(6) Costume contest winners, five to seven years old: (l-r) astronaut Liam Lopez (first place), cake Karoline Jessino (second place), bubble gum Angela Ortiz (third place) with Assemblyman Michael Benedetto

Photo by Laura Stone

(7) Costume contest winners, eight to ten years old: (l-r) grinch, Leonardo Vazquez (second place), Abby from Monster High, Angelina Curbelo (third place), Headless Horseman, Jose Padilla (first place) with Assemblyman Michael Benedetto

Photo by Laura Stone

(8) Emily Fernandez sold stuffed animals at the carnival following the parade.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico

(9) Costume contest winners, 11 to 13 years old: (l-r) werewolf, Jabari Reid (third place), Maleficent Star Norwach with her dragon (first place) and fat Grim Reaper, Adrian Beckles (second place) with Assemblyman Michael Benedetto.

Photo by Laura Stone

(10) Julius Lopez (The Flash) and Ishani Santana (Wonder Woman) during the carnival.

Photo by Laura Stone



Costume contest winners, four years old and under: (l-r) Julian Alonzo (Hulk) and Valentina Vazquez (Cindy Lou from How The Grinch Stole Christmas with Assemblyman Michael Benedetto. First place winner, Cate-laley Katechis (Bride of Frankenstein) was camera shy and is not pictured.

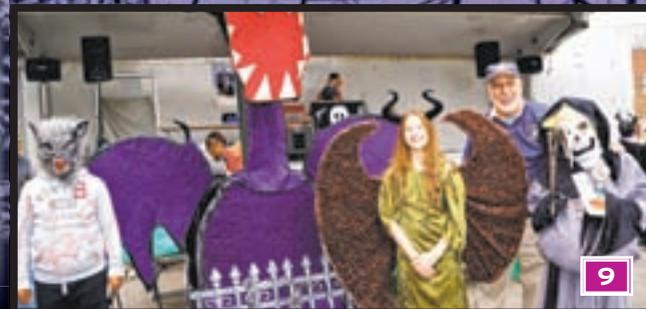
Photo by Laura Stone



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(11) Aiden Martinez and Jenna Castro during the parade.

Clark elected as new Bronx DA

BY STEVEN GOODSTEIN

The results are in to determine the next district attorney of the Bronx.

On Tuesday, November 3, Democratic candidate Darcel Clark garnished nearly 86 percent of the borough's votes in the election for the position, making her the first woman in the borough's history to be a DA.

Clark, who ran against Republican and Conservative candidate Robert Siano, has over 25 years of combined experience at the Bronx District Attorney's Office and the Bronx County Supreme Court.

At Clark's 'Election Night Get Together', which took place at Eastwood Manor following the election voting, Clark thanked her supporters and outlined her plans for the next four years, such as handling prosecution, passing reforms to reduce violence and tackling issues on Rikers Island.

She also discussed her VISTA Plan, which will include a restructured DA's office to minimize case transfers, public corruption and time sensitive so-



Clark (center) celebrates with fellow Democrats after winning the election for Bronx DA.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico

lutions for victims and maximize active investigations.

"It has been incredibly inspiring to meet so many members of the community who are passionate about the Bronx," said Clark, who stepped down from her position as justice in the First De-

partment of the Appellate Division in New York State Supreme Court on Sunday, September 27 to make her run as Bronx DA.

"I stand truly humbled that the voters have provided me with this opportunity to serve as the first woman district attorney in

our borough," she said.

Runner-up Siano, Clark's running opponent, who also has previous experience in the New York State Supreme Court, intended to focus on wrongful convictions, drug addiction amongst teenagers and young adults as well as

gang violence if he was elected.

Although he only received 14 percent of the borough's votes, he was very gracious in defeat as he reflected on the experience.

"Despite the results, the last five weeks of campaigning and getting my name out there has been a truly amazing opportunity that I never thought I would be a part of," said Siano.

"Maybe this isn't my time, but I have no regrets and I am looking forward to the opportunities that present themselves in the future."

Siano, who will still focus on his priorities while continuing his private practice as an attorney, congratulated his opponent and thanked his supporters.

"I would like to congratulate District Attorney Darcel Clark for winning this election and thank my supporters for believing in me and helping me get my name out there."

Clark replaces former DA Robert Johnson, who held the position since 1989 and won a judgeship to the state's Supreme Court.

Vacca-sponsored elevator repair bill to become law

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

An east Bronx councilman is coming to the rescue of often-stranded Allerton tenants, who are suffering elevator outages in their building.

As of press time, Mayor de Blasio is expected to sign into law a bill chiefly sponsored by Councilman James Vacca that would establish an emergency elevator repair program in the city by July 2016 or sooner.

The law, which is slated for the mayor's signature on Wednesday, November 3, mandates that the Department of Housing Preservation and Development hire appropriate contractors to fix elevators and bill landlords once the Department of Buildings issues a violation.

DOB currently issues violation after violation to a building owner if an el-

evator is out of service too long, said the councilman, when the property owner isn't making the repair in a timely fashion.

"Right now in New York City no agency has the wherewithal to do an emergency repair on an elevator, said Vacca, adding "We have...no emergency elevator repair program."

Councilman Vacca drew attention to the needs of tenants suffering from elevator outages on Monday, November 2, when he met with tenants at 2714 Wallace Avenue.

The tenants who met with Vacca said that the only elevator in the six-story building has been out of service for about four to five months.

A man at the location, who said he was the landlord, but declined to give his full name, said that the elevator had been out for about

three months.

Either way, Vacca and tenants said that the long outage illustrates why his legislation is needed.

Specifically in regard to the Wallace Avenue building, Vacca cited examples of two tenants in their 80s who may have issues climbing and descending staircases because they live on the fourth and sixth floors.

"When you have women with children, expectant mothers and senior citizens, an elevator is not a luxury, it is necessity," said Vacca as he stood with tenants outside the building.

Tenant Fernando Colon, who is disabled, added that he is having difficulties walking up the stairs because he had an operation that affected his feet and he is also a diabetic.

"It is still a bad position to me," said Colon, who lives



(l-r) Baron Spencer, Debra Spencer, Councilman James Vacca, Fernando Colon, Robert Piotrowski and Ramona Lopez stand in front of the only elevator at 2714 Wallace Avenue, that tenants say hasn't worked in four to five months. Vacca called on the landlord, who was on site during his visit, to make the repairs immediately.

Community News Group / Patrick Rocchio

on the second floor and who said he had reached out to the Neighborhood Initiatives Development Corporation and Councilman Vacca to foster change at the building.

Fifth floor resident Ramona Lopez said she is having trouble with the stairs because she has heart prob-

lems.

"I climb the stairs four or five times a day," she said, adding that she has started going to the grocery store more frequently so she does not have to carry so many bags upstairs at one time.

Tenants said the building has other problems as well: a leaky roof, unsecured en-

trance doors, non-working intercoms and spotty heating. It also appears that the city has baited the building for rats.

"(The landlord) is now saying he is fixing the elevator...and that it will be done in two weeks," said Vacca, adding "I'll believe it when I see it."



(l-r) Fr. Jonathan Morris, Jerome Raguso, Tony Signorile and Domink Chianese, who appeared on the HBO series 'The Sopranos.'



Belmont's favorite singer Dion DiMucci, (c) with Jon and Josephine Dellamonica.



Honoree Msgr. John A. Ruvo receiving award from Michael Mongiovi.



(l-r) Honorees Rosanna Bizzarro, Msgr. John A. Ruvo and Carmen Navedo, with Fr. Jonathan Morris and Bishop Genald Walsh.

Mount Carmel Church holds Dinner Dance

Our Lady of Mount Carmel's 109th Annual Dinner Dance was held on Sunday, October 25. Honored during the event was former pastor Msgr. John Ruvo and church volunteers Carmen Navedo and Rosanna Bizzarro.



Rita Calabro, of the dinner dance committee, received flowers from Fr. Jonathan Morris

All photos by Edwin Soto



Tony Signorile, (l) Rosemary DeLuca and actor Dominic Chianese.



(l-r) Marge Marcone, honoree Msgr. John Ruvo, Joseph Aragonesi and honoree Carmen Navedo.

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Jacobi Medical Ctr. displays domestic violence artwork

BY ROBERT WIRSING

Art can help heal even the most deepest of personal scars.

For the entire month of October, Jacobi Medical Center served as host to the 'Clothesline Project', a visual display reveals violence against women and as its namesake suggests features shirts decorated to represent a particular woman's experience whether a survivor or someone close to one which are hung from a clothesline.

Originating in Massachusetts in 1990, the Clothesline Project's mission is to bear witness to the domestic violence survivors and victims; aid in the healing process for people who have lost a loved one or are survivors of domestic violence; to educate, document and raise society's awareness of this problem's extent and to provide a nationwide network of support, encouragement and information for other communities starting their own Clothesline Projects.

Jacobi Medical Center

staff members and many of the hospital's patients created their own shirts expressing their thoughts and emotions regarding this community-wide public health epidemic.

According to Karen Cohen, licensed social worker in JMC's emergency room, the hospital has held this exhibition for four years and this year's edition saw approximately 150 shirts on display inside Building 8's Atrium for visitors, staff and patients to view as they pass through.

Cohen explained the project's participants who come from all walks of life and cultures find working on these shirts to be an incredibly therapeutic experience.

"I have seen through the years people become very emotional while working on these shirts and visitors to the exhibit are always moved by all of the messages conveyed on them," said Cohen.

Participants create shirts by cutting them out of paper and decorating them with

words or designs that convey their own experiences with domestic violence and are written in different languages such as Spanish, Albanian and Creole as well as English

Some of the shirts on display send powerful messages such as "if he hits you, he doesn't love you" and "don't blame yourself" among many others.

Cohen shared one instance of how powerful an affect this art exhibit has had on spectators.

"It was during our first year we were holding the Clothesline Project display that I noticed a shirt that had not been there the day before and realized it was placed there some time during the night," said Cohen.

That shirt read "Better to be alone than be beaten. My guys were always normal and boring, so I chose a guy who was edgy, wild and exciting. On our third date, he beat me up for hours. I was trapped and all the time he was laughing. Be smarter

than me and follow your instincts, they will protect you."

"I am very proud of this person for doing this and examples such as this one speak of the ability this project has in reaching people, validating themselves and finding strength in numbers," said Cohen. "Healing is part of the puzzle that these victims need and art helps provide that for them."

Children and adults alike have participated in the annual Clothesline Project helping to better educate people on domestic violence.

Some shirts, created by children, read "don't hit mommy" and "stop the violence".

Cohen said patients sometimes dedicate shirts they make to family members who have or are experiencing domestic violence.

"The Clothesline Project sparks discussion among people who've experienced domestic violence before



Throughout all of October, Jacobi Medical Center displayed shirts expressing domestic violence survivors' thoughts and emotions on the issue in a visually stunning Clothesline Project display inside the hospital.

Photo courtesy of Jacobi Medical Center

and it really helps educate people," she said. Cohen said anyone experiencing domestic violence can contact Safe Horizon's free anonymous domestic violence and abuse hotline at (800) 621-4673.

Community mourns loss of Ben Randazzo

from Page 1

He was taken to Albert Einstein College of Medicine and then moved to Montefiore Medical Center, where he died two days later.

"I could not have asked for a better chief of staff than him (Benny), said Benedetto, who added that he saw Benny as a good friend as well as a hard worker.

"He took his job very seriously, he was loved by my staff and he was always helpful to my constituents. He was a very caring and trustworthy individual who always had my back and he never asked for recognition even though he did so much."

"In the end, he died doing what he loved - setting up for one of his favorite community events," Benedetto added. "He will be greatly missed by so many people in this neighborhood."

To those who knew him best, like his daughter Annemarie Randazzo, Benny

was a Notre Dame Fighting Irish and New York Giant fanatic and an active member of St. Frances de Chantal for over 50 years.

"My father loved football - especially Notre Dame, he loved his church and he loved his country," said Annemarie. "He was both hardworking and passionate and he loved to meet and interact with people. He was a truly remarkable man who always gave you the shirt off his back and asked for nothing in return."

"He really had a passion for community and civic duty," said Annemarie's husband Thomas Matzel. "He loved helping others and volunteering for all causes - and that's what made him so special."

Benny is also survived by his son, Frank, the Bronx County Public Administrator, and two grandchildren.

Benny's funeral service took place at St. Frances de Chantal, 190 Hollywood Avenue, on Friday, November



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