

8th Annual Fair at the Square

BY STEVEN GOODSTEIN

An upcoming event will make for some very electric and exciting atmosphere in Westchester Square.

On Saturday, June 18, the Westchester Square Business Improvement District will host the eighth annual Fair At The Square, bringing local merchants, business owners, residents, families, children and friends together in celebration.

This year's Fair At The Square, which will take place on East Tremont Avenue between Silver Street and Lane Avenue (near Owen F. Dolen Park) from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., will include numerous festivities for those in attendance.

Season two of 'Bronx Idol', a live singing competition for Bronxites between the ages of 12 and 19, as well as an all-day concert series on two stages, hosted by Dennis 'Dion' Nardone of WVOX 1460AM Radio, Valerie Smaldone and Artie Rodriguez of the Diamante Show, will be some of the fair's highlights.

Platinum salsa musician Frankie Negron will be headlining this year's event, which being heralded as "bigger than ever."

The Fair At The Square will be unlike any previous events because the entire stretch of East Tremont Avenue, between Silver Street and Lane Avenue, will be closed off to vehicular traffic, providing attendees carefree access to the fair's different areas of interest.

Also contributing to the increased excitement for this year's event is the fact that all local

Continued on Page 4

911 CALL CENTER A NIGHTMARE?

24/7 staff will snarl local roadways

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

A recent addition to the Pelham Parkway skyline is raising concerns.

The imposing building at Pelham Parkway and Hutchinson River Parkway, the city's new 911 call taking center known as Public Safety Answering Center II, is about to be staffed.

P.S.A.C. II will take its first call this month and the facility will fully open gradually through 2017, stated a mayor's office spokeswoman.

Local residents have expressed concern about parking and traffic issues that may arise from the travel needs of employees who will work at the facility around-the-clock, keeping the city safe.

In addition, local elected officials are pushing for another access point into the Hutchinson Metro Center next to P.S.A.C. II, to accommodate increased traffic to the general area.

Community Board 11 chair-
Continued on Page 4



Springtime Masterpiece

The City Island Chamber of Commerce hosted its annual 'Spring Arts and Crafts Fair' along City Island Avenue on Sunday, June 5. More than 50 artists, craftspeople and local businesses transformed City Island's main street into a vendor's haven selling beautiful jewelry, candles, photography, paintings, clothing, woodwork and glassware. Morris Park resident and Carmela's Creations owner, Carmela Tarantino sold some of her trademark unique handmade creations at the annual fair. Photo by Laura Stone

Tenants protest 'NYC's Worst Landlord'

BY ROBERT WIRSING

Tenants united in their frustration are demanding changes from 'NYC's worst landlord'.

On Thursday, June 2, over a dozen tenants from several Ved Parkash-owned buildings met outside the Bronx Housing Court to announce the formation of the 'Parkash Tenant Coalition' and demand a face-to-face meeting with the landlord to address dozens of violations affecting their safety.

The coalition sought to deliver a letter to Parkash detailing tenant demands calling for professional repairs at their buildings, increased security, better communication with management and legal aggressive legal strategies.

Joining them were Councilman Rafael Salamanca, Public Advocate Letitia James, Community Action for Safe Apartments, Urban Justice Center's Commu-

Continued on Page 11

Mixed use building planned at 138th St.

BY STEVEN GOODSTEIN

A spectacularly designed residential building is planned for Mott Haven.

The Joinery, at 221 E. 138th Street, is positioned to offer an alternative to Manhattan's skyrocketing rents.

The seven-story, market rate development will feature 47 rental apartments consisting of one- and two-bedrooms, totalling 50,000 square feet of residential space.

The average apartment will contain 800 square feet.

The 10,000 square foot parcel was formerly occupied by an industrial warehouse.

Tahoe Development, the lead developer on the project, purchased the property for \$2.8 million in 2015.

The Joinery's amenities include hallways with natural lighting and exquisite views of the Harlem River waterfront, beautifully designed luxury kitchens, a

rooftop garden, gym, bike storage area, and 10-foot ceilings. Washers and dryers will also be included.

The lobby will include a doorman.

No on-site parking will be available.

Much of the building will be completed with concrete and high-end finishes, to match the identity of many other historic buildings in the neighborhood.

The residential project will also be energy efficient, and upon completion, the building will be either silver, gold or platinum certified by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

The development is proximate to the 4 and 5 subway stop at 138th Street and Grand Concourse as well as the BxM1, BxM2, BxM3, BxM4 and BxM18 bus lines.

Residents who own vehicles will have easy access to the I-87 Major Deegan Expressway and the FDR Drive.

"This is a great project - one that adds to the value of a neighborhood that has a great level of community value, diversity and vibrancy but is also making changes for the better," said Michael Muroff, owner of Michael Muroff Architects, the architect on record for the development. "This particular area of the Bronx is rich in manufacturing, education and social services that continues to rise up, and it's very exciting to be a part of a project in an area that continues to develop and grow."

"This project is an example of revitalization - revitalization that is taking place in a smart logical way," Muroff added, who also said that the Joinery's residents will benefit from being in close proximity to Manhattan and even Queens.

"This development is going to help push this neighborhood, which has already shown strides,



Rendering of the Joinery.

Photo courtesy of Michael Muroff Architects

to even greater heights," said Anthony Gurino, president of Tahoe Development, who added that the ground floor of the building will be reserved for commercial and retail space. "We feel that this project is in a perfect location, especially considering the fact that residents will live in a thriving

area within close vicinity to public transportation, and in time, will push this area of the Bronx to another level."

Gurino said that construction is expected to wrap up in the fall of 2017 and occupancy would follow later that year or the beginning of 2018.



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PSAC II began taking 911 calls in June.

Community News Group / Patrick Rocchio

911 call center a traffic nightmare

from Page 1

man Tony Vitaliano said, in his opinion, that P.S.A.C. II does not help the local community directly and that it will bring more vehicles to the local streets, based on experiences with other nearby facilities.

"The way it is situated, it is going to cause traffic congestion – that's the bottom line," said Vitaliano, adding he expected traffic congestion to increase on the parkways, Waters Place and Eastchester Road.

CB 11 advocated for a reduction in the overall size of P.S.A.C. II when it was originally designed several years ago, according to published reports in the Bronx Times.

Tony Signorile, Morris Park Community Association president also expected the facility to create traffic on the Hutchinson River and Pelham parkways, but expressed optimism about improved public safety.

Councilman James Vacca, expressed believes the P.S.A.C. II will bring more law enforcement personnel into the area, which will be beneficial to the economy.

"I think it is going to be very promising that we will have law enforcement personnel in and out of our neighborhood, all day long," said Vacca.

The councilman agrees, however, that traffic along the already congested Waters Place will get worse.

The councilman said that the sheer volume of traffic on Waters Place between Westchester Avenue and Eastchester Road at peak times require changes.

Both Vacca and Senator Jeff Klein said they are calling for creating an entrance/exit directly from the Hutchinson River Parkway into the Hutchinson Metro Center to relieve traffic elsewhere.

Vacca said that with planned further expansion at the Hutchinson Metro Center, the on/off ramp is necessary to mitigate increasing traffic from the complex and P.S.A.C. II.

Funding has been secured to study an on/off ramp into the Hutchinson Metro Center.

"The study will examine the feasibility of and develop a conceptual plan to construct a new south-bound access ramp to the Hutch Metro Center via the Hutchinson River Parkway, in addition to the creation of a service road and two-way public street connecting to the complex," stated Klein.

The Police Department and NYC Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications will operate P.S.A.C. II.

It will be a secure facility that is off-limits to the general public, according to published reports.

8th Annual Fair At The Square

from Page 1

merchants were presented with an opportunity to be involved in the fair while still being able to operate their businesses, which they will accomplish at various designated parts along the fair's route.

In previous years, merchants had to close their businesses while the fair was taking place if they were involved.

For this year's Fair At The Square, the Westchester Square BID will also reveal their new logo, which has generated much excitement in the community.

The performers include Elvis impersonator Gene DiNapoli, FDR Drive and Just Nuts. Additional festivities, many of which are free, include bounce houses, face painting, arts and crafts and other activities for children and families in attendance.

"It's always a very exciting event and always a great time," said Victor Sabatini from Just Nuts, a 70s and 80s cover band who will perform their new original song, 'Bronx Girl', at the event.

"The Fair At The Square is a culmination of everything that takes place in Westchester Square during the year," said Yamin Cruz-Opero, CEO and president of Image Marketing, Inc. "Not only does the event acknowledge the area, but it also makes a statement about the area - and it highlights and showcases all of the activity that takes place in this vibrant area.

"We are very grateful for the support of the 45th Precinct and Community Board 10 during this entire process and, of course, we are extremely excited and very proud to be involved with this great event that

Season two of Bronx Idol will be one of the many attractions at this year's Fair At The Square. Photo courtesy of Cappytann

gives back to the community and its merchants," she added.

"This event has grown significantly over the years and only continues to expand," said Lisa Sorin, executive director of the Westchester Square BID, who said this fair is Westchester Square's signature event.

"We are very excited for the opportunity to have bigger space for this year's fair while also allowing merchants to promote and showcase their businesses in ways they have not been able to in past year's events. This event is all about giving back to the community but also about giving back

to the merchants who have contributed to this area's renaissance."

Sponsors for this year's Fair At The Square include Hutchinson Metro Center, Metro Optics, Apple Bank, Bronx Council on the Arts, Crescent Companies, Empire City Casino, Havana Cafe, MetroPlus, Montefiore Medical Center, News 12 the Bronx, the Daily News, NYC Parks & Recreation, Rite Check, Turner Construction, Wendy's, Cappytann's Corner Presents and, of course, the Westchester Square BID, among others.

Image Marketing, Inc. will produce the event for the second straight year.



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2 parks win Parks Without Borders \$\$

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

Entrances and exits to two local parks will be spruced up after they won awards in this year's Parks Without Borders contest.

Hugh Grant Circle and Virginia Park both located outside Parkchester, as well as Van Cortlandt Park's West 242nd Street entrance, were winners in this year's competition after a long feedback gathering process.

Parks Without Borders gathers community ideas on how to make parks more inviting by focusing on making them easier to find, more accessible, as well as by expanding the beauty of the parks out into communities and creating vibrant public spaces by transforming underused areas, according to the NYC Parks Department.

Eight citywide parks will be allotted \$40 million from capital budget funding, with the rest going to parks still to be announced.

"The Parks Without Borders design concept will allow us the opportunity to enhance the major entrance at West 242nd Street



Much of Virginia Park's area is fenced-off and off limits to the general public.

Community News Group / Patrick Rocchio

at Van Cortlandt Park, making it more inviting and much more accessible, said Bronx Parks Commissioner Iris Rodriguez-Rosa. "At Virginia Park/Hugh

Grant Circle, we have an opportunity to create more access points that connect park goers to the rest of the surrounding neighborhood."

The next step will be to gather more insight from communities near the parks about the changes they would like to see, said Rodriguez-Rosa.

Design is expected to begin in the fall, stated a Parks Department spokesman.

Online voting and interaction gathered ideas about parks around the five boroughs, and some \$10 million additional in renovations will make the other parks more accessible.

Community Board 9 district manager William Rivera said that the board's parks committee and an urban planning fellow who helped the board survey all of the parks in the district, as well as community activist Nilka Martell of local non-profit Getting Involved, Virginia Avenue Efforts, all helped CB 9 go above and beyond in soliciting community input on to how best revitalize Hugh Grant Circle and Virginia parks.



A park at Hugh Grant Circle, next to an IRT train station, has a large fence bordering much of its open space. Patrick Rocchio

"When we saw (Parks Without Borders) we thought of Hugh Grant Circle because it has not been renovated since...1956," said Rivera, adding "It is a huge

hub with a lot of foot traffic."

CB 9 believed that the parks, adjacent to and right across the street from the busy Hugh Grant Circle IRT 6 station met the criteria for Parks Without Borders because the effort looks for greenspace near high-foot-traffic areas or transit hubs that were underutilized.

The parks themselves have fences that make much of the greenspace out-of-reach to the public, said Rivera.

Martell said that CB 9 gathered letters of support for the project from elected officials, and said that she hopes that the space could be use to celebrate the diversity of nearby communities.

"It is not going to be completed until 2020, but we are really excited and we have all these ideas about activating the space," said Martell.

Christina Taylor, of the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park, said that the group worked with the Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy to advocate for the park in this year's Parks Without Borders.

Assemblyman honors extraordinary teachers

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

Teachers from local schools were honored for going above and beyond their job descriptions.

Nearly 20 teachers from 14 schools in Pelham Parkway, Allerton and Morris Park were honored with awards at a teacher's appreciation breakfast after being selected by their principals for remarkable work over the course of the school year.

The Third Annual Pillars of Education Teachers Appreciation Breakfast paid homage to excellent educators and school leadership.

It took place at Don Coqui on Friday, June 3, and was hosted, as it is every year, by Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj.

The event acknowledges all of the educators and the work that they do, said Gjonaj.

Principals at the participating schools pick one or two teachers who have demonstrated excellence to bring to the breakfast and honor, explained the assemblyman, with each individual recognized.

"This allows us to single out those teachers who truly go above and beyond, and excel and giveback," said Gjonaj. "Not only are they good educators, but they are doing something more than is expected of them."

Doing something more than is expected could mean unpaid overtime, staying af-

ter the school day to help students keep up with their studies or reaching into their own pockets to purchase school supplies, said Gjonaj.

This year's group of honorees included a large number of special education teachers, proving, as Gjonaj said he believes, special education teachers truly are special.

"They are humble," said Gjonaj of the teachers. "They don't do it for recognition."

The teachers honored this year were Zoja Rugova, P.S. 83; Joseph Pugliese, P.S. 97; Priscilla Harper, P.S. 108; Jamal Haywood, M.S. 144; Ed Barone and Sal Ferone, Astor Collegiate High School; Veronica Bacino, Bronx Green Middle School; Sean Garvey and Henry Liu, Bronxdale High School; Seth Mactas, Collegiate Institute for Math and Science; Kris Forman, CUNY Prep; Fatai Omolaja, High School for Language and Innovation; Katrina Holmes,

Pelham Academy of Academics and Community Engagement; Eileene Krull, Pelham Gardens Middle School; Brian Rivera and Candice Walker, Pelham Preparatory Academy and Karisma Mora, The Young Voices of the Bronx school.

Assemblyman Michael Benedetto, a former educator with decades of experience as a special education teacher, stopped by



The teachers, educators and administrators who took part in the appreciation breakfast stand on the steps of Don Coqui. Photo courtesy of Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj's office

the event to speak to the group of educators.

Benedetto said the teaching profession has traditionally been well respected and put on a pedestal for the unglamorous but important work it does. But as of late, he said, teachers have been "raked over the coals" by reformers.

"As a teacher, you know that you want

to praise your students...and as grown ups, we like that occasional pat on the back for a job well done," said Benedetto.

Also at the event was a representative from Department of Education School District 11, Alice Cooper Jackson, as well as community education council and United Federation of Teachers officials, said a Gjonaj spokeswoman.

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Serviam Heights to offer senior housing

BY STEVEN GOODSTEIN

A new senior development is underway in the west Bronx.

Last week, Enterprise, Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation, NYC Housing Preservation and Development, NYC Housing Development Corporation and NYC Housing Authority announced they had closed on a deal to build senior affordable housing.

The \$100 million development, named Serviam Heights, is expected to provide 197 units of affordable housing for low-income and formerly homeless seniors.

The project will include a nine-story building, containing 140 units, as well as the conversion of a 4-story existing former convent offering 57 residential units.

The renovated structure will feature energy efficient upgrades such as aluminum double-hung windows with low-E, argon-filled glazing, high-efficiency Energy Star-rated lighting fixtures, Energy-star rated appliances and green plumbing fixtures including dual flush water closets and low flow sinks.

The project, upon completion, will be Enterprise Green Communities certified.

Serviam Heights, which is partially located on the Academy of Mount St. Ursula's campus, is the third project (Phase III) of FBHC's Serviam senior housing campus development, which includes Serviam Gar-



The four-story convent is being converted to make up part of Serviam Heights.

Photo courtesy of NYC Housing Preservation and Development

dens (Phase I), an 83-unit mixed-use project, and Serviam Towers (Phase 1), which provides 160 residential units.

Serviam Gardens and Serviam Towers were completed in 2009 and 2010.

"Fordham Bedford (Housing Corporation) is pleased to convert such an impor-

tant building and location in our community to senior housing," said John Reilly, executive director of lead developer Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation, who has held the position since the corporation's founding in 1980.

Reilly said that Serviam Heights has al-

ready received over 7,000 applications from potential residents.

He added that Phase IV of Serviam's senior housing campus development would include a mixed-income development at 198th Street and Marion Avenue, with construction on the project beginning sometime around the end of the year.

"Through Mayor de Blasio's Housing New York plan, we aim to push ourselves and our partners to find new, creative ways to develop much needed affordable housing," said HPD commissioner Vicki Been.

"Our senior population is growing rapidly, as is the demand for affordable housing," said Gary Rodney, president of HDC.

The total development cost for this project is approximately \$98.8 million,

HPD will also provide \$153,000 in federal HOME Investment Partnership Program funds, while Councilman Ritchie Torres will provide \$500,000 in Resolution A.

Additionally, Enterprise syndicated \$40.3 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits, while BNY Mellon provided the tax credit equity.

Serviam Heights is projected to be completed in December 2017, and HPD anticipates the opening of this development to take place in early 2018, after completion and rent-up.

Town hall responds to hefty rent hikes

BY STEVEN GOODSTEIN

A tenant town hall was held in response to a wave of rent hikes in the Bronx.

On Thursday, June 2, the Bronx Park East Community Association, along with tenant advocacy group Metropolitan Council, Real Rent Reform (R3) and Bronx housing advocacy group Neighborhood Initiative Development Corporation, hosted a tenant town hall in True Witness Shiloh Apostolic Church, where Bronx residents expressed their opinions regarding recent rent increases on rent-stabilized and preferential rent tenants.

At the meeting tenants learned that thousands of the borough's apartments are being hit with \$300 to \$800 per month rent increases.

Areas in the Bronx that have seen the biggest jumps in rent include Pelham Parkway, Morris Park, Castle Hill and Soundview.

These huge rent increases often happen when a building's management rescinds a tenant's preferential rent.

A preferential rent is a below-market rent. It is lower than the legal regulated rent that the property owner could lawfully collect.

There is nothing that tenants can do about these sudden rent hikes due to the state's 'Preferential Rent' Law, where preferential rents can be revoked whenever



Schweizer speaks at the town hall.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico

a lease is renewed and the landlord can start collecting the higher legal regulated rent.

This law gives tenants two options - either pay more for the apartment or move out.

Prior to 2003, before the law was

changed, preferential rent was more stable and the monthly legal rent for tenants stayed consistent, unless in unusual circumstances.

Additionally, there's a push to get rid of landlord's vacancy/eviction bonuses, which allows landlords to increase the rents in their buildings by 20% when an apartment turns over.

"These rent increases need to stop in order for long-term residents like us to continue living in this area," said Keith Davis, a resident of Allerton for over 25 years, a member of BPECA and former employee of the Beth Abraham facility, which was recently sold from CenterLight Health Care to Centers Health Care. "My monthly rent has increased by more than \$400 ever since my lease expired. The rent is too damn high!"

"It's very disturbing," said Angela Roker, another Allerton resident, referring to the rent hikes. "The residents of this area have worked too hard for too long and they are still thrown under the bus."

"Residents used to be safe - their rents were protected, so they didn't have to worry about monthly rent increases once their leases expired," said Raphael Schweizer, chairman of BPECA.

Assembly Bill A3809a/Senate Bill S2828b, which will prohibit landlords from



Tenant Andrew Laiosa.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico

taking away the preferential rent during the time that a tenant lives in the apartment, has been co-sponsored by senators Gustavo Rivera and Senator Ruben Diaz, Sr., and assembly members Latoya Joyner, Victor Pichardo, Luis Sepulveda, Jose Rivera and Marcos Crespo.

STAY SAFE WHEN DRIVING IN WET WEATHER

Drivers must modify their driving habits when weather compromises their visibility and makes road conditions unsafe. Rain can fall any time of year, but tends to be most problematic in spring.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, wet roadways, and rain in particular, are the main cause of weather-related vehicle crashes. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration notes that, between 2004 and 2013, rain caused 573,784 crashes.

To drive safely in the rain and avoid accidents, drivers should follow certain precautions.

- Maintain windshield wipers. Inspect and, if necessary change windshield wipers regularly to ensure they are working optimally. Always test wipers before driving in rainy weather.

- Turn on lights with wipers. Reduced visibility is a major contributor to wet-weather accidents. Drivers' views may be hampered by falling precipitation and glare from wet roadways. Cloudy conditions and fog also compromise visibility. When using windshield wipers, turn on your headlights as well. This makes your vehicle more visible to other motorists and improves your own ability to see the road and

pedestrians.

- Recognize changing road conditions. Roadways accumulate oil and engine fluids that can float in rainwater, creating slippery road surfaces. This is usually a problem during the first few hours of a rainstorm or in areas that receive little precipitation and then are subjected to downpours. These fluids make rain-soaked roads even more slippery. Slow down, leave more room between vehicles and try driving in the tracks left by vehicles ahead.

- Reduce speed. The automotive group AAA says hydroplaning, when the tires rise up on a film of water, can occur with as little as 1/12 inch of wa-

ter on the road. The group goes on to say that tires have to displace a gallon of water per second to keep the rubber meeting the road. Drivers should reduce their speeds to correspond to the amount of water on the roadway. New tires can still lose some contact with the roadway, even at a speed as low as 35 mph. Therefore, reducing speed and avoiding hard braking and turning sharply can help keep the rubber of the tire meeting the road.

- Rely on the defogger. Use the car's windshield defroster/defogger to improve visibility. Turn it on early and keep it on until the rain has stopped and visibility has improved.

- Recover from a skid. Skids can be frightening, but when skidding, resist any temptation to slam on the breaks. Instead, continue to look and drive in the direction you want to go and slowly ease up on the accelerator.

- Skip the cruise control. It's important to maintain control over the vehicle in rainy conditions, so avoid using cruise control.

- Maintain tires. Proper inflation and tire tread levels can improve traction. AAA recommends checking tread depth by inserting a quarter upside down into the tire groove. If you can see above Washington's head, start

shopping for new tires. Check tire pressure on all tires at least once a month. Get an accurate reading when tires are cold and adjust air pressure accordingly.

- Avoid other distractions. Distracted driving can be hazardous during good road conditions and even more dangerous when visibility and other factors are compromised. Switch phones and other devices off so you can fully focus on the road and other drivers.

Rainy weather can contribute to poor driving conditions. Drivers should make changes to speed and other factors to make wet weather driving as safe as possible.

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New Bronx American Legion commander

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

The Bronx County American Legion has a new county commander.

Anthony Salimbene, a member of Theodore Korony American Legion Post #253, took on the role of the Bronx County American Legion commander for a two-year term at an installation ceremony on Friday, June 3.

The swearing-in for the veterans' organization occurred at its county convention at Samuel Young American Legion Post #620.

Salimbene, who is also a Community Board 10 member, said that his number one priority would be to maintain and expand membership roles at legions in his district.

"If we don't have membership and people joining for the right reasons, then we are sunk," said Salimbene. "Membership is always a top priority, followed real close by continuing service in the functions we run."

Salimbene said he believes in Americanism 100 percent, fostering a sense of service and in outreach to children and youth. He says it is his goal to grow the number of members in the borough, currently 1,500 strong.

He has spent 28 years in the American Legion, and said he wants to foster a sense of service in its members on the grassroots level.

He believes that veterans need to have pride in what they did, and continue their service to those in need in local communities, state and nation.



Tony Salimbene (l), new American Legion Bronx county commander, with Theodore Korony Post #253 Legionnaire Chris DiCostanzo during his swearing-in ceremony on Friday, June 3. Photo by Miriam Quin

The most pressing need currently is obtaining services for returning veterans, especially women who served. Other needs of our time include jobs and medical care for newly returning service members, he said.

The new commander is a third generation Throggs Neck resident, and spent more than two decades in the Coast Guard as an investigator and a special agent in charge of investigations.

He credits growing up in a waterfront community for steering him into the U.S. Coast Guard, which he said he joined shortly after the Vietnam War era.

"I encourage all young people to give military service a shot," said Salimbene, who added that he knows of many young people who are doing quite well for themselves in the military, and believes that you don't have to have a very long career to be of service.

Salimbene is a graduate of St. Raymond High School for Boys, and earned top honors at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. He works with the developmentally disabled.

Being selected by your peers is among the highest honors you can receive, said Salimbene, adding that it means much more to him than other forms of recognition.

He said that he is going to focus on pride, integrity and service, adding that he credits past commanders for helping him see service as integral to the endeavor of any American Legion.

One of the past Bronx American Legion county commanders that Salimbene sees as a role model is Pat Devine, who said that there are about 15 or so active past county commanders who will be available to offer him support.

"He is highly recommended and we are there to support him," said Devine.

Salimbene replaces outgoing Bronx county commander Robert Feliciano of Co-op City American Legion Post #1871.

Tenants protest 'NYC's Worst Landlord'

from Page 1

nity Development Project and Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition.

Edward Lenis, NWB-CCC tenant organizer, said the coalition's attempt to deliver the letter were denied by a representative for Parkash.

"The conditions our tenants are living in are entirely unacceptable and we need to hold Ved Parkash accountable," said Salamañca.

Over 25 tenants from 1530 Sheridan Avenue rallied outside of Bronx Housing Court on Thursday, May 26 for their first court date against Parkash.

With support from Urban Justice Center's Community Development Project and CASA, the tenants sued Parkash to pressure him into completing vital repairs.

"We have had these problems consistently and we are tired of it," expressed tenant leader Luis

Ramos.

Located in the Grand Concourse, the 85-unit pre-war rent-stabilized building has fallen into disrepair during a succession of poor ownership.

Kerriann Pauls, staff attorney at Urban Justice Center's Community Project, said the landlord's attorney, Anurag Parkash, Ved Parkash's son, agreed to address all of the most severe 'C' violations over the next ten days, all 'B' violations in the next 30 days and all 'A' violations in the next 45 days.

A CASA spokesman said 1530 Sheridan Avenue's most severe violations include no window guards, lack of heat and hot water and lead paint.

As previously reported in the Bronx Times, Parkash was ranked 'number one' on Public Advocate James' '100 Worst Landlords in New York City' last November for accumulating a jaw dropping 2,369 violations in 11 of his

43 buildings.

Parkash owns approximately 40 buildings in the Bronx.

The problematic properties include 2675 Creston Avenue, 2125 Cruger Avenue, 2487 Davidson Avenue, 180 E. 163rd Street, 58 E. 190th Street, 751 Gerard Avenue, 815 Gerard Avenue, 750 Grand Concourse, 2820 Sedgwick Avenue, 2454 Tiebout Avenue and 835 Walton Avenue.

On Monday, April 4, 38 tenants from 750 Grand Concourse filed a complaint against Parkash to have him address the violations plaguing their building.

The landlord's attorney promised to make the repairs at 750 Grand Concourse within 30 days.

According to a CASA spokesman, as of Monday, June 6 only 220 of the original 500 plus NYC Housing Preservation and Development open violations remain open at 750 Grand Concourse.



Tenants, Community Action for Safe Apartments and Urban Justice Center members rallied outside Bronx Housing Court to pressure landlord Ved Parkash into making vital repairs at 1530 Sheridan Avenue. Photo by Silvio Pacifico

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