

## Archdiocese letter angers parishioners

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

A group of parishioners who fought to have their concerns about a former pastor's conduct investigated are not satisfied with the archdiocese's conclusion on the matter.

The Concerned Parishioners of St. Frances de Chantal sent a letter to Archdiocese of New York officials and Pope Francis taking exception to an ADNY letter to the parish explaining its findings in the Fr. Peter Miqueli debacle that nearly tore the parish apart.

District Attorney Darcel Clark, who was handling the criminal aspects of the parish's charges against Fr. Miqueli, recently concluded its investigation and found that he improperly reimbursed himself \$22,450 in parish funds that he will effectively repay.

The district attorney recommended a series of greater financial controls, which the archdiocese is implementing, according to parishioners.

The ADNY letter, dated Thursday, October 26 and read at Sunday masses that weekend, stated that the district attorney now considers the matter closed, and stated that while \$22,000 is a significant sum, it is a far cry from allegations of \$1 million to \$2 million being misappropriated, that some members of the church claimed was the case.

The Concerned Parishioners of St. Frances' response, dated Friday, November 10, stated that what the ADNY calls the priest's "improper reimbursement" and "misappropriation" of other people's money is called grand larceny by any reasonable person."

The group feels that they have been ignored, and one of its members, Janet Bitner, said that their correspondence is meant to inform the archdiocese that they don't feel this is a satisfactory conclusion.

*Continued on Page 4*

# COOP GRAPPLES WITH SHELTER



## A Salute To Our Heros

This past Veterans Day, November 11 was celebrated by veterans groups throughout the Bronx. Ceremonies were held at the Winged Memorial in Pelham Bay Park, Rudy Macina Peace Memorial Plaza (above), Van Nest Memorial Plaza and by many individual veterans groups. The weekend ended Sunday with a Veterans Breakfast hosted by Senator Jeff Klein and the annual Veterans Day Parade in Throggs Neck. See photos on pages 10, 11, 16, and 17.

Photo by Laura Stone

## Fordham Hill residents ready to fight DHS

BY BOB GUILIANO

In the fiery aftermath of a town hall meeting on Wednesday, October 25, about a soon-to-be opened men's homeless shelter, which did not satisfy the Fordham Hill Owners Corporation, the board of directors is now seeking the help of Councilman Fernando Cabrera to intervene with the NYC Department of Homeless Services.

The board sent a letter to the DHS and Bowery Residence Committee on Friday, November 3.

But as of Wednesday, November 15, it had not received a

response, according to Rachel Miller-Bradshaw, the board's vice president.

"I stand with Fordham Hill Owners Corporation and its views on the 233 Landing Road project," Cabrera said. "I'm disappointed that Senator Gustavo Rivera has openly supported more shelters in our district."

Attempts by the Bronx Times Reporter to contact Steven Banks, the commissioner of DHS, resulted in a referral to the agency's press secretary Isaac McGinn.

*Continued on Page 4*

## Van Nest Monument Plaza rebuild slated for spring of 2018

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

The Van Nest Memorial area honoring veterans will be receiving a renovation next year.

The memorial, a tribute to veterans who served in foreign wars, will see major renovations to the Greenstreet park where the granite monument is located, in 2018.

The monument dates back to 1919 and has been at its present location at White Plains Road, Unionport Road and Mead Street since the 1920s.

It is a project supported by the Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance.

The triangle will feature new planting beds, a new flagpole that will be put in place with \$60,000 in capital funding allocated by Councilman Ritchie Torres, 1939 World's Fair replica benches, rosette and a wheelchair accessible ramp leading to the monument inscribed with the names of local veterans from world wars

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# KFC test-markets its new hot-honey chicken locally

BY BOB GUILIANO

The Bronx Times Reporter dispatched a hungry reviewer to a local Kentucky Fried Chicken to try its newest offering being test-marketed in the Bronx for a limited time.

The site of choice was 1959 Bruckner Boulevard on Thursday, November 9, for an all-expenses paid lunch/work break.

The order, chicken tenders, with iced tea, was not too hot, not too sweet - and as Goldilocks said after she sampled the Three Bears' porridge - the taste of this dish was "just right."

Crispy chicken tenders, doused with sweet honey and a kick of heat from spicy peppers, challenged the palate, and were mellowed with a side of mashed potatoes and gravy, and a tasty biscuit. Butter on the biscuit can provide some added heat relief.

Sodas are not exactly the choice drink when trying to douse the heat of hot peppers, since carbonation tends to exacerbate the heat, so iced tea was selected.

KFC's new southern-inspired flavor, Hot Honey Chicken — extra crispy chicken with a sweet-

heat hot honey sauce — is being marketed in select restaurants throughout Norfolk, VA, as well as the Bronx for a limited time, according to the company.

Other participating KFC locations in the Bronx are: 1731 Webster Avenue, 375 E. 149th Street, and 1125 E. Gun Hill Road.

Billed as an authentic southern mash-up created by blending golden honey with mild peppers, a balance of sweet and heat.

The Hot Honey sauce complements KFC's Extra Crispy Chicken, creating a crunchy, sweet-heat flavor with every bite.

The sauce is available on extra crispy tenders, Chicken Littles, and extra crispy chicken.

Along with the new crispy, sweet-heat flavor, KFC also introduced a new Kentucky colonel unlike ever before with the Colonel Bear, marking the first time that Colonel Sanders is not personified by a human or by a human form.

The honey bear-ified version of the original chicken salesman, Colonel Harland Sanders, thinks he's welcome everywhere (because he's so cute) and has an unquenchable desire to sell Hot



Kentucky Fried Chicken at 1959 Bruckner Boulevard is among the KFCs in the Bronx test marketing its new hot honey chicken. The Bronx Times Reporter sampled it on Thursday, November 9.

Community News Group/Bob Guiliano

Honey Chicken all the time (regardless of whether it's a good time to talk about chicken or

not).

"The crispy sweet-heat of Hot Honey Chicken creates a finger

lickin' good flavor that you can't resist," said Mike Wesley, KFC U.S. senior marketing director. "And equally as irresistible is Colonel Bear — our cutest colonel yet."

Marking the fourth southern-inspired flavor by KFC, Hot Honey Chicken follows the successful national launch of spicy, smoky, crispy Nashville Hot, Georgia Gold honey mustard BBQ and the introduction of Smoky Mountain BBQ Fried Chicken with test markets in Indianapolis, Pittsburgh and Chicago in August.

In addition to the new Hot Honey Chicken, select restaurants in the Bronx will offer patrons a taste of KFC's Smoky Mountain BBQ for a limited time.

The crispy, sweet, smoky flavor is in Extra Crispy Tenders, Chicken Littles, and Extra Crispy Chicken.

KFC Corporation, based in Louisville, KY, is the world's most popular chicken restaurant chain, with nearly 21,000 outlets in almost 130 countries and territories around the world, according to the news release.



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# Coop grapples with shelter; residents ready to fight DHS

from Page 1

McGinn said he was researching the matter, but then never provided answers to the questions raised by the board.

The spokesperson's office phone and two cell phones are usually unanswered and have no voice mailboxes set up, so messages cannot be left.

Miller-Bradshaw said on Wednesday, November 15, that the board expects to meet with Cabrera to address issues that were unresolved at the town hall meeting.

Cabrera's office is researching the matter, according to his spokeswoman. Board members hope to meet with Cabrera on Friday.

Meanwhile, the board again addressed issues in the November 3 letter, stating that University Heights residents are concerned that up to 200 men will be living at the 233 Landing

Road site slated to open in December, but residents have not been made aware of the men's employment status or backgrounds.

Residents expressed concerns that the shelter is within walking distance of DeVoe Park and Fordham Landing Playground, both heavily used by neighborhood children.

"We want to ensure that people recruited into shelters are not on the sex offenders' list," the letter stated.

The board also requests that the facility have an on-site presence to address mental-health needs, including therapy, medication, etc.

It also wants the DHS and BRC to find veterans from the James J. Peters VA Medical Center in need of housing, and offer them shelter beds and permanent housing prior to other applicants.

The board also wants

DHS to insist on adding more police surveillance in the area and along Sedgwick Avenue to address the sudden increase in residents and surge of random car break-ins.

Also, metal detectors at the entrances of the entire building are requested, to "add peace of mind to the residents or our community," the letter stated.

The board also asks for full-time staff at the site to be hired from the local community, referring to the BRC saying that 71 staff positions will be available.

"We would like to see professional and skilled job seekers from our community have opportunities to seek employment," the letter stated.

In addition to Miller-Bradshaw, the letter was signed by Myrna Calderon, FHOC board president; Chad Royer, secretary; and Blandon Casenave, director.



The Concerned Parishioners of St. Frances take issue with the Archdiocese of New York's interpretation of an investigation into a controversial former pastor. Community News Group / Patrick Rocchio

## NY Archdiocese letter infuriates St. Frances de Chantal parishioners

from Page 1

"We don't expect responses," said Bitner, knowingly.

A key member of the St. Frances group, James Corbett, said that he believes that after the Bronx DA made her findings, the archdiocese should not have offered additional comment.

"They should have just let it go," said Corbett. "There was no reason to send out a letter. We were willing to let it lie, but they wanted to vindicate themselves."

The November 12 letter accused church officials of putting "a cosmetic spin on the disgrace they allowed to continue, casting doubt on the veracity, decency and integrity of the abused parishioners."

The group believes that the ADNY's letter is an effort to recast the issue as an accounting error, said Corbett.

It was the group's lawsuit in 2015 that ushered in the media's interest in Fr. Miqueli's alleged romps with a male bodybuilder, and this appears to have



A recently concluded investigation by the office of District Attorney Darcel Clark found that the former pastor, Fr. Peter Miqueli, was improperly reimbursed \$22,450 from parish funds. Charges weren't preferred against Fr. Miqueli.

made the ADNY remove him as pastor, said Corbett.

The group had been talking with clergy and ADNY representatives for two years prior to going public in late 2015, yet it took five days of front-page coverage in the city's major tabloids to prompt his removal, said Corbett.

After conversations

with parishioners and at Fr. Miqueli's previous assignment, a decade-long stint as pastor at St. Frances Xavier Cabrini on Roosevelt Island in Manhattan, their group still feels that there could be much larger financial mistakes, misappropriation or wrongdoing, perhaps up to \$1 million, said Corbett.

One of the members of the Roosevelt Island parish took part in their lawsuit, said Corbett, adding that someone anonymously left copies of Fr. Miqueli's financial documents in his mailbox showing that the priest had an investment portfolio worth approximately \$700,000, in addition to owning a home in Brick, NJ that he purchased all cash for \$264,000.

Corbett said he believes Fr. Miqueli earned about \$32,000 a year as a priest.

The group would like Cyrus Vance Jr., Manhattan's district attorney, to investigate the Roosevelt Island allegations those parishioners have encountered, and hopefully determine the source of Fr. Miqueli's alleged wealth.



Carlos Martin expresses his concerns over the planned opening of a men's homeless residence at 233 Landing Road, during a town hall meeting held Wednesday, October 25, at St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church. File photo by Aracelis Batista



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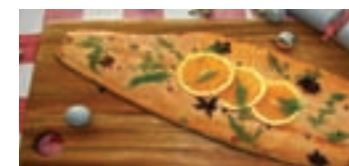
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Large.....\$60

#### Green Peas & Pearl Onions

32oz.....\$14

#### Zesty Cranberry Sauce

32oz.....\$12

#### Baked Carolina Yam Halves

Small.....\$25

Large.....\$50

#### Stuffed Mushrooms

Small.....\$35

Large.....\$70

#### String Beans Almondine

Small.....\$20

Large.....\$40

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Family Life Academy Charter Schools management and project partners celebrate the beginning of the new middle school's construction during a groundbreaking ceremony held on Friday, November 10, at 316 E. 165th Street.  
 Photo by Silvio Pacifico

## Family Life Academy plans 4th charter school

BY BOB GUILIANO

Additional seats for grades 5 through 8 will soon become available at a planned charter middle school campus set for 316 E. 165th Street, with expectations to open for the 2018 school year.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on Friday, November 10.

Family Life Academy Charter Schools will bring to the Bronx its fourth middle school, according to the Rev. Raymond Rivera.

Founded in 2000 by Rev. Rivera, FLACS opened its first school in 2001, and since has inaugurated two others.

The reverend said the newest project is seeing the fulfillment of his vision, inspired during his tenure as pastor for 25 years in High Bridge.

He had the vision to create a charter school when he saw that School District 9 was the lowest performing out of 32 districts in New York City.

Now it's next to the lowest, replaced by SD 7, where the other two charter schools are located, as the lowest performing district.

"My vision was always to reach those in the system that the (NYC) Department of Education was not educating," Rev. Rivera said.

Over the last 50 years, there has been an educational crisis in this coun-

try, with all children, including those of color, unless they're in private or parochial schools, just not meeting educational standards, he said.

"My belief was that if you created a school and had the right visionary leadership and teachers that were committed to the children, and competent teachers, that we would give them the training necessary that our kids could perform as well as any kids in the suburbs," Rev. Rivera said.

"We've proven that, now 17 years later, we are among the highest performing (schools)," he said. "We outperform the city, the state."

The secret of the schools' success is that they are community-grown charter schools, with decisions made by people closest to the children, combined with visionary leadership and competent teachers, according to the reverend.

Neighborhood schools, organic to the community, with a significant amount of parent involvement, and community control of schools, allow the people closest to the children to make policy and programmatic decisions, he explained.

"In an effort to continue to provide excellent education to our students, the board of trustees of Fam-

ily Life Academy Charter Schools started discussing options the last few years," said board chairman/president Miguel Peña.

"It was resolved three years ago that the best way to accommodate our growing student population was to expand into a new facility," Peña said.

FLACS is a network of community-grown charter schools dedicated to educating the whole child, affirming values, promoting academic excellence, and creating conditions for self-empowerment, according to Peña.

The new FLACS middle school campus will be a 4-story, 56,000-square-foot charter school providing students with various amenities, including a high school-regulation gymnasium and cafeteria on the first floor, and numerous classrooms and offices on the remaining floors.

The school will accommodate approximately 650 students.

As the president and founder of LPAC, the community sponsor of Family Life Academy Charter Schools, "I believe it is important that the community own its education — and we do! That is what makes us a community-grown charter school network," Rev. Rivera said.

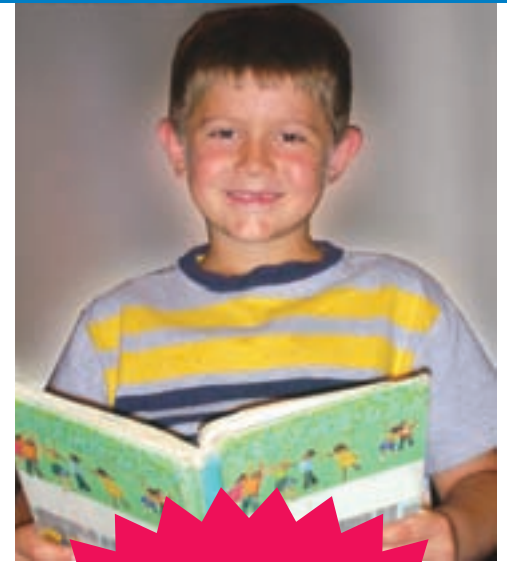
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# Teachers struggle to park cars near PS/MS194

BY BOB GUILIANO

Teachers at P.S./M.S. 194, at Waterbury and Zerega avenues appeared before a recent 45th Precinct Community Council meeting to seek help in clearing out illegally and unregistered vehicles eating up all the parking near the school.

Walking great distances in the desolate Zerega Industrial Park area in the morning darkness is what teachers are encountering when parking their cars to go to work.

A union rep claims the school's only reaction to the teachers' parking plight has been to issue them tardy slips when they arrive to class late due to the lack of parking.

The United Federation of Teachers' union delegate at the school has spearheaded an effort to rectify the parking situation, attending various meetings and making numerous phone calls to two police precincts and the local City Council members. But all efforts have failed to rectify the situation.

School principal Rosa Sifuentes-Rosado did not respond to phone calls and emails from the

Bronx Times Reporter to comment on the teachers' complaints.

The problem was discussed at the Thursday, November 2 council meeting.

Among those in attendance were Robert Bieder, council president, and 45th Precinct Captain Carlos Ghonz.

The lack of teacher parking is exasperating for teachers because the spots are occupied by illegally parked, unregistered and uninspected vehicles, along with dozens of taxi cabs, the teachers charged.

Tractor-trailers that take up multiple spaces are parked way longer than the legal three hours, and many even remain overnight, it was pointed out.

After vehicles are towed, the teachers say, they reappear back on the street within a day or two.

Captain Ghonz turned to a traffic enforcement agent during the meeting and asked her about summoning the illegally parked vehicles, and those without inspection stickers or registrations, but the agent said she was reluctant to put more than one summons on a car that continues to park illegally,



Vehicles parked illegally on Monday, November 6, on Waterbury Avenue off Zerega Avenue, around the corner from P.S./M.S. 194, take away parking spots from teachers who have to walk a distance to the school in morning darkness in a desolate commercial area.

Community News Group/Bob Guiliano

because she doesn't want the vehicle's owner to feel 'harassed.'

Captain Ghonz raised additional concerns for the safety of the

teachers when he pointed out that the area near the school has been the location of active drug sales.

"I contacted the 45th and 43rd

precincts to do a joint towing and ticketing operation in that neck of the woods," said Community Board 10 district manager Matt Cruz, adding that the school is located on the boundary between CB 9 and 10.

"In a nutshell, in some cases commercial vehicles are parked there overnight," Cruz said. "The taxi vehicles are not technically commercial vehicles, so they can park there."

Some taxi companies have their own parking facilities, some don't. Taxis include black cars, green and yellow cab companies.

Cruz said he was working with the NYC Department of Sanitation to create some alternate side of the street and nighttime parking regulations at that location, but local community opposition to the plan nipped it in the bud, according to the UFT union rep.

Bieder suggested that the school approach its neighbor, a Montefiore facility, to score some needed parking relief in its sizable parking lot.

"If they could work something out, that'd be great," Bieder said. "Certainly we would love to have them do it as a good neighbor."

## MP 1980s memorabilia collector shares 30,000 memories

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

A Morris Park resident has found a unique way to remember his childhood and celebrate his favorite decade.

John-Paul 'JP' Annunziato is sharing his collection of 1980s memorabilia, containing over 30,000 items, online and on social media platforms to encourage and inspire others to pursue to their dreams despite any adversity.

What started out as collecting materials related to his youth after the passing of his parents in 2009, and healing from his own injuries sustained in two auto accidents, has now been transformed into a project called '80s Then, 80s Now.'

"I want to share this kind of time capsule so that people who were not old enough can experience the 1980s for the first time," said Annunziato. "For the people who are older, I want to give them another go round on this."

Much of that collection can now be viewed on 80sthen80snow.com, and its curator said that project began as a way to recreate his childhood and remember his mom and dad who died tragically.

Annunziato said he just pur-



JP Annunziato enjoying some breakfast with vintage cereal boxes from his favorite decade.

Photo courtesy of JP Annunziato

chased more and more memorabilia from the 1980s, which is his favorite decade – everything from cereal boxes to fast food packaging to video games to toys.

The collection was purchased piece by piece online and at venues for used items like the Salvation Army and Goodwill, he said.

The collection, as viewed on his website, includes items that people in their 30s and 40s, as well as older people in their 50s, 60s, and 70s should remember fondly and

have favorable memories about, he said.

Those who were children during the era will remember items on the site like Cabbage Patch Dolls and GI Joe action figures that they may have played with in their youth.

There is also memorabilia related to WWF wrestling entertainment and Atari video games: media that young people of the time period from 1980 to 1989 consumed.

For men, there are copies of Joe Weider's Muscle and Fitness and Playboy magazines, along with USA-made Jockey shorts.

In a women's section of the website, are photos of everything from Harlequin Romance Books, various types of aerobic records and Women's Day magazines, along with Jane Fonda workout tapes, Avon and Donna Mills personal care products.

There are also Aqua Net aerosol hair spray cans and Swatch

watches.

Those who were adults during the 1980s have contacted Annunziato about products that they used like cereal or dish cleaners, as well as products and services like Salad Crispins, Hush Puppies and the Columbia House record club, he said.

Virtually all of the people who have contacted him have been positive and supportive of his project, said Annunziato.

"People are sharing very personal stories that are hitting me to the core because this is hitting them to the core," he said. "I am getting a lot of support."

Some of the items that Annunziato said that he cherishes the most and would never part with were dinnerware like the kind his family used when he was a youngster, and McDonalds Happy Meal toys and collectables that remind him of good times at fast-food restaurants.

Annunziato has amassed what he believes is the largest collection of 1980s-specific memorabilia in the world.

In addition to being on 80sThen80sNow.com, Annunziato has a presence on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter.



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# 33rd annual Veterans

United Veterans Parade Committee of Greater New York held their 33rd Annual Bronx Veterans Day Parade in Throggs Neck on Sunday, November 12. This year's grand marshal was Christopher J. Devoy from Edgewater Park, a retired USMC master sergeant. Lining the parade route were students from 15 local schools. The march along East Tremont Avenue, Randall Avenue and the Throggs Neck Expressway service road culminated with a ceremony at Bicentennial Veterans Memorial Park.



World War II veteran Seymour Goodman's family honors his memory during the parade.  
Photo by Silvio Pacifico



St. Theresa School had a large contingent of students at the parade.  
Photo by Silvio Pacifico



Country Club Civic Association members stand together to salute veterans.  
Photo by Silvio Pacifico



Cub Scout Pack #182 from First Lutheran Church of Throggs Neck marched with pride.  
Photo by Silvio Pacifico



St. Benedict's School in Throggs Neck had a strong patriotic showing during the march.  
Photo by Silvio Pacifico



Marchers carry 21 folded flags to make the public aware of the 21 veterans who commit suicide every day.  
Photo by Silvio Pacifico



Our Lady of Assumptions' Girl Scout and Brownie troops honored our nation's heroes.  
Photo by Silvio Pacifico



# Parade in Throggs Neck



P.S. 304 students line the parade route.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico



Gianna Morales (c) won a \$250 prize for her composition about veterans. Standing with her were Dana Carotenuto (l) of the veterans parade committee and Anthia Morales, Gianna's mother.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico



Color guards made a formation at the end of the parade at Bicentennial Veterans Memorial Park.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico



Throggs Neck Memorial Unit #1456 American Legion auxiliary marched.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico



Grand marshal Christopher Devoy, U.S. Marine Master Sergeant and Vietnam War veteran, marches on East Tremont Avenue during the parade.

Photo by Silvio Pacifico



# Chamber schedules holiday party

BY NUNZIO DEL GRECO  
PRESIDENT AND CEO  
BRONX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Bronx Chamber of Commerce Annual Holiday Party is an excellent opportunity for large and small businesses to host their office or company party at a great venue, feast on the delicious buffet, enjoy live music and entertainment, photo booth, Ugly Holiday Sweater Contest, dancing, Charity Toy Drive, raffles, door prizes and have fun.

The holiday party is scheduled for Wednesday, December 13, at the elegant Villa Barone Manor, 737 Throggs Neck Expressway. Small and mid-sized companies will significantly benefit by taking advantage of the affordable ticket price and all inclusive

Following is more information on the holiday party and the top three reasons why large and small businesses should host their office or holiday party with the Bronx Chamber of Commerce:

1) Save money: Making reservations on your own at a restaurant or catering hall would be much more expensive and less fun especially for groups of ten or more. Take ad-

vantage of the early reservations discount. For more information call Phil Cardone (718) 828-3900 or email: phil@bronxchamber.org.

2) All inclusive - Reservation price includes tax, gratuity and:

- Have your guests feast on delicious buffet selections;
- Enjoy your meal with complimentary wine and beer;
- Have your guests enjoy live music by Just Nuts Party Band;
- Be host of your table(s) at this elegant venue with valet parking;
- Your guests and friends can have fun with the photo booth;
- Wear your 'Ugly Holiday Sweater' - contest/prize for winner;

• Bring your dancing shoes to dance and have fun;

• Sponsorship opportunities are available for special recognition

• Charity Toy Drive to benefit the Bronx YMCA

• Raffles, 50/50 and door prizes

3) No worries: The professional staff of the BCC will process and expedite all reservations, assign individual and group table assignments.

Popularity of the successful Meet-Up networking and major



NUNZIO DELGRECO

events sponsored by the Bronx Chamber of Commerce continues to grow. Over 300 members, friends and guests attended the 2016 holiday party.

There are many additional excellent benefits of membership listed in the Bronx Chamber brochure. It is important to also mention that membership dues, event ticket cost, advertising in the publications, and event sponsorship are legitimate business deductions for

tax purposes to the fullest extent of the law. For more information on membership contact Sashee Rivera, membership director at (718) 828-3900 or email: Sashee@BronxChamber.org.

I am proud to be leading the Bronx Chamber of Commerce and actively participating in the renaissance taking place in the Bronx. The Bronx Chamber of Commerce is one of the most influential, professional and successful organizations and voice for busi-

nesses in Bronx County. Professionals and companies are drawn to the successful companies and active members affiliated with the Bronx Chamber of Commerce. Membership includes businesses ranging from large corporations, cultural institutions, universities and colleges, hospitals and medical centers, non-profits, and mid-sized to small companies. Visit: [www.BronxChamber.org](http://www.BronxChamber.org).

Helping you grow your Bronx business is our goal!

## AARP Driver Safety Program

As a service to his constituents, Assemblyman Michael Benedetto will be sponsoring an AARP Driver Safety course on Tuesday, December 19, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The course is held at Fort Schuyler House, 3077 Cross Bronx Expressway.

Space is limited. Registration for this class begins on Monday, November 20, at 9:30 a.m. No reservations will be taken prior to that time.

To reserve a seat, call Assem-

blyman Benedetto's office at (718) 892-2235.

The cost is \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members.

This 6-hour course will refresh your driving knowledge with a review of time-tested safe driving tips. Those who complete the course will receive a reduction of approximately 10 percent from the base rate of automobile and motorcycle liability premiums each year for three years.

## What to do if you get the flu by Healthy Seniors CliCC

The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu shot, and now is the time to get one. Sometimes, however, even with the shot you may come down with the flu, although it will usually be milder than if you had not gotten one.

If you do have flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, aches, a sore throat), stay home and avoid contact with other people for seven days after your symptoms began, or until you've been symptom-free for 24 hours except to get medical care.

You should also call your healthcare provider. A healthcare provider can prescribe one of two antiviral drugs: oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) or zanamivir (relenza®), which work best if taken early in the illness, so call your provider as soon as possible.

Other things you should do to get better as quickly as possible are:

### Get Some Rest

Get enough sleep and drink plenty of fluids. Water and soup are great ways to stay hydrated. Try to avoid caffeinated drinks, which won't hydrate you as well.

Make Yourself as Comfortable as Possible

Because you might be cold one minute and hot the next, wear layers of clothes so you can easily add or remove them as needed.

### Look Out for Emergency Warning Signs

Because the flu can lead to serious health problems, call your healthcare provider or go to the emergency room immediately, especially if you live alone, and you have any of these symptoms:

- High or prolonged fever (above 101-102°F or a fever lasting more than 3-5 days)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

• Pain or pressure in the chest

- Near-fainting or fainting
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting and/or the inability to keep down food or water

You can stop the spread of the flu with simple precautions:

Wash your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand gel — especially after you sneeze or cough, and before eating.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the upper part of your sleeve.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Try to avoid close contact with people who are coughing or otherwise appear sick.

Brought to you by Montefiore Medical Group, R.A.I.N. and the Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing @ NYU, based on American Geriatric Society materials.

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Police officer Melvin Hernandez, one of two honored veteran speakers, addresses P.S. 108 students on Friday, November 10. Community News Group / Patrick Rocchio

## P.S. 108 continues annual salute to local veterans

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

For the ninth year, a school in Morris Park has celebrated veterans in a big way.

P.S. 108 held its 9th Annual Veteran's Day Celebration on Friday, November 10, inviting about three-dozen veterans to the school to honor their service and draw attention to their accomplishments.

The school's former custodial engineer, Michael Tierney, founded the annual event with the support of the entire school community, and emceed it this year.

Honored veteran speakers who spoke to the students about their military service were Tony Salimbene and police officer Melvin Rodriguez of the 49th Precinct.

"We do this for those who served, but I always say that Veterans Day is for the guys who never came back," said Salimbene.

Salimbene, a U.S. Coast Guard veteran, said that the celebration was a prime example of how to have success in public education.

Rodriguez, a U.S. Army veteran, told the children that in the military he lost some friends and made oth-

ers that he knew he could count on.

He told that children that he knew that there were future veterans in their group and that it was something they shouldn't be afraid of.

Tierney said that he started the event several years ago because of an interest in World War II that went back to his childhood and as a project for a class he was taking in leadership.

"I was thinking how can I combine my job with my interest in World War II," said Tierney, who added that at the time he believed that many of the students may not know a lot about World War II and that some veterans might have been forgotten.

"I really just wanted to show the veterans we have not forgotten them and at the same time show the students why we are free and have freedoms, and why we should be thankful," Tierney said.

He hopes that students take away from the annual event that it is good to give back to the people who have sacrificed for us and that they realize that many countries don't have the same kind of freedoms

Americans enjoy.

Key to making the annual event a success in he beginning were Morris Park veteran Chris DiConstanzo and the late-Joseph Garofalo, a World War II veteran who founded the Bronx Veterans Museum housed at John Dormi and Sons Funeral Home.

This year's event included the presentation of a flag by Theodore Korony American Legion Post #253, the viewing of Eric Spink's short film featuring Garafalo called 'The Scavenger,' and student performances and readings.

Sal Fasulo, a Vietnam veteran from Spencer Estate who attended the event, said that he hoped the children would not forget what was discussed, and that they remember the history surrounding those who served.

Angelo Pinto, the current curator of the Bronx Veterans Museum, said that he tries to give a voice to the veterans of the past, and believes Garofalo, who founded the museum, would be proud of how the museum has flourished and how the popularity of the P.S. 108 event has grown.

## God's Love We Deliver makes Vietnam vet's life fulfilled

BY SARAH VALENZUELA

Thanksgiving meals are about more than the family gathering and heaping dishes of food for God's Love We Deliver.

The organization focuses on "improving the health and well-being of men, women and children living with serious illnesses by alleviating hunger and malnutrition," according to their mission statement.

Their service to the metro New York area may seem vast, but for Morrisania resident, Charles Bell, their service over the last two years has meant more than words can really describe.

"I'm a strong believer in God, and God's Love has brought the theory of God to reality and to my life with their tender, love and care that they've demonstrated each and every day to me," Bell said. "Whoever named it God's Love had to be a genius."

Bell is a Vietnam War veteran whose medical conditions now keep him almost completely disabled.

Before he was introduced

to the organization, Thanksgiving was not a holiday Bell celebrated because he lives by himself.

Thanksgiving meal deliveries are only a small part of the deliveries the organization makes, as they craft and cater over seven thousand meals every week throughout the year to the specific medical conditions and needs their clients are facing, free of charge.

However, the gesture has been most welcomed by Bell who said he had basically been twiddling his thumbs through the holiday.

"It's meant a life of liberty and a pursuit of happiness," Bell said of what the organization means to him.

The holiday season can either be rewarding or a reminder of loneliness for many who are not able to spend time with family or friends.

Although he is not able to be with his family during Thanksgiving, Bell noted he speaks with his family on a very regular basis.

Bell lived in Bulgaria before he moved to the Bronx, and now spends most of his time in his apartment because

of his congestive heart failure and diabetes.

"I live alone but I'm not lonely," Bell mentioned in a statement to the organization. "If I didn't have you (God's Love) I would have no other option."

He only leaves his home to go to the James J. Peters VA Medical Center in Kingsbridge. It was through Bell's VA social worker he was introduced to God's Love We Deliver.

More than 25-percent of God's Love clients are from the Bronx but about ten percent of all their clients are veterans. Bell is one of the organization's regular clients.

"God's Love greets me twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday," Bell added. "I'm very appreciative for all the services that I've received."

God's Love was founded in 1985 and has since delivered over 20-million meals through all five boroughs, Westchester, Nassau and Hudson counties.

Aside from delivering special meals on Thanksgiving, God's Love We Deliver also crafts Christmas meals for their clients in December.



Charles Bell has received weekly meals from God's Love We Deliver for the last two years and this year will be his third time receiving a Thanksgiving meal from the organization.

Photo Courtesy of Dom Pisanelli





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# Senator Klein sponsors 10th

Senator Jeff Klein hosted his 10th annual Veterans Day Breakfast before Throggs Neck's 33rd annual Bronx Veterans Day Parade on Sunday, November 12. The breakfast was hosted in partnership with Assemblyman Michael Benedetto, Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj and Councilman James Vacca. During the breakfast, the elected officials gave awards to the families of the parade's honorary grand marshals. Klein also provided \$15,000 in funding for the Bronx Veterans Mentors.



(l-r) Assemblyman Gjonaj, Assemblyman Benedetto, Senator Klein and Pat Devine with family members of honorary grand marshal Robert Booth.

Photo by Laura Stone



(l-r) Senator Klein, grand marshal Chris Devoy and last year's grand marshal Ron Watson.

Photo by Laura Stone



(l-r) Grand marshal Master Sargent Chris Devoy, with family members son-in-law; Det. John O'Brien; son Lt. Bobby Devoy and nephew Matthew Scallan. Also, last year's grand marshal Lt. Colonel Ronald Watson (2nd from left)

Photo by Laura Stone



# annual Veterans Day Breakfast



(top) (l-r) Senator Klein, Assemblyman Benedetto, Pat Devine and Assemblyman Gjonaj with family members of honorary grand marshal Anthony Mara

Photo by Laura Stone

(middle left) Special check given to Bronx Veteran Mentors given to (l-r) Dwayne Gathers of Bronx Veteran Mentors, with Senator Klein and Pat Devine.

Photo by Laura Stone

(middle right) (l-r) Senator Klein, Assemblyman Benedetto, Pat Devine and Assemblyman Gjonaj with a family member of honorary grand marshal Michael Roche

Photo by Laura Stone

(l-r) Senator Klein, Assemblyman Benedetto, Assemblyman Gjonaj and Pat Devine with family members of honorary grand marshal Brendan Devine.

Photo by Laura Stone



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## DEADLINE NOTICE

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the deadline for Classified Advertising will be **Wednesday, Nov. 22nd at 4PM** for the November 26th issue. To place your ad, call 718-260-2555. Have a safe & enjoyable holiday!



# Veteran family gets help from Rebuilding Together

BY SARAH VALENZUELA

Remodeling a portion of a house can be very inconveniencing and stressful at times, to the homeowner, as well as expensive.

But for those on the construction side it is a chance to lend a helping hand and make someone's home more attuned to their needs.

Rebuilding Together has been doing just that since 1988 and for long-time Bronx resident, David Gaymon Jr, the group's work has made his family all the more excited about the upcoming holiday season.

Gaymon's home had all the touches of family and comfort, but the back room of the house was in dire need of repairs.

"We got raccoons, we got possums... skunks and everything was coming up in the room," Gaymon said. "They were coming up through the holes someplace, making the whole house smell."

The 64-year-old veteran served for two years in the



(front, l-r) Rebuilding Together NYC executive director Kimberly George, David Gaymon, Jr and David Gaymon III with members of the the Rebuilding Together construction students and director of Construction Terry Scott (back). Community News Group/Sarah Valenzuela

Army before being medically discharged with hearing complications.

Gaymon also struggles to walk and uses a motorized wheelchair and stairlifts to get around.

Gaymon explained his predicament to personnel at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center in Kingsbridge and they connected him with Rebuilding To-

gether, who was all too ready to help.

As the volunteer work approaches week three of the project, a great deal of progress has clearly been made.

"The room was more like an [enclosed] aluminum sun porch so it didn't actually have any foundation or [traditional] walls," said Kimberly George, the

executive director of Rebuilding Together NYC. "So what we're doing here is we removed the aluminum and we're building an actual room."

Along with creating a sturdy and sealed foundation, the project has also called for wider door frames with doors that swing in both directions so Gaymon can get in and out of the room in his wheelchair without help.

There is also a plan to move the family's washing machine and dryer into the new room and out of their kitchen where it currently sits.

The organization runs a workforce training program that spends half its time in a classroom and the remaining half on construction sites helping the Rebuilding Together team with projects like the one for Gaymon's house.

A Rebuilding Together construction team is usually comprised of both experienced and newer

builders and at the Gaymon's home project the new students have been sent to get their first taste of field work.

"This is what we do, we work, even when it's cold and I'm excited to be here," said Terry Scott, the director of construction of Rebuilding Together NYC.

For this project and many like it, Scott and the Rebuilding Together team have tried to make the stress of construction and home improvement enjoyable for both the workers and the families they help, by holding a group cheer with the workers that literally starts with yelling, "I'm fired up."

But for Gaymon and his family, having them there has been like having friends around.

"I appreciate it so much," Gaymon added.

The project is expected to be completed before Christmas according to Scott.



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## Van Nest Monument Plaza rebuild slated for spring of 2018

from Page 1

I and II, the Korean conflict and Vietnam War.

The renovation began as an effort to erect a new flagpole for the Van Nest Memorial, said Bernadette Ferrara, VNNA president.

After the funding allocation by Torres for the flagpole, the NYC Parks Department has allocated additional funds for improvements to the Van Nest Park's memorial plaza, said Ferrara.

"It is going to be beautiful," said Ferrara. "The whole square is going to be redone and it is great because it is such a central, focal-point of Van Nest."

Richard Vitacco, a VNNA member who is East Bronx History Forum president and the coordinator of annual Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies at the monument, said that the location represents a connection between Van

Nest's past and present.

"The whole park area is in a sense the 'town-square,'" said Vitacco, adding it is a gathering place for people for civic events, including the annual Van Nest Christmas tree lighting.

According to Parks, the wrought-iron fence surrounding the war monument will be lowered from four feet to two feet and six inches to facilitate viewing and reading of names on the monument.

The lowering of the fence is part of an initiative called Parks without Borders to make parks more open and welcoming.

A formal entrance to the monument area will be a part of the reconstruction, stated a Parks spokeswoman.

Four new trees will be added as part of the project, and the plantings will be added to existing tree pits as well as other



A NYC Parks Department schematic of the renovations planned at the Van Nest Memorial at White Plains Road and Unionport Road. Photo courtesy of Van Nest Neighborhood Association

locations in the park, with construction expected to begin in spring 2018.

"We've worked closely with the community on the design for this project," said Iris Rodriguez-Rosa, Parks Bronx commissioner. "We'll be

replacing the time-worn concrete, making the memorial greener and adding a ramp to make sure veterans and others with disabilities can view the memorial up close."

Torres said that monument area's importance to the community

couldn't be overstated.

"The \$60,000 allocated by my office will beautify the park with new plantings and seating, and the new flagpole will further cement our gratitude to all who serve our country in uniform," said the councilman.

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# TOP DRIVER DISTRACTIONS

## Using mobile phones

Leading the list of the top distractions behind the wheel are mobile phones. Phones now do more than just place calls, and drivers often cannot pull away from their phones, even when driving. According to the California Department of Motor Vehicles, studies have shown that driving performance is lowered and the level of distraction is higher for drivers who are heavily engaged in cell

phone conversations. The use of a hands-free device does not lower distraction levels. The percentage of vehicle crashes and near-crashes attributed to dialing is nearly identical to the number associated with talking or listening.

## Daydreaming

Many people will admit to daydreaming behind the wheel or looking at a person or object outside of the car for too long. Per-

haps they're checking out a house in a new neighborhood or thought they saw someone they knew on the street corner. It can be easy to veer into the direction your eyes are focused, causing an accident. In addition to trying to stay focused on the road, some drivers prefer the help of lane departure warning systems.

## Eating

Those who haven't quite mastered walking and

chewing gum at the same time may want to avoid eating while driving. The majority of foods require a person's hands to be taken off of the wheel and their eyes to be diverted from the road. Reaching in the back seat to share some French fries with the kids is also distracting.

Try to eat meals before getting in the car. For those who must snack while en route, take a moment to pull over at

a rest area and spend 10 minutes snacking there before resuming the trip.

## Reading

Glancing at an advertisement, updating a Facebook status or reading a book are all activities that should be avoided when driving. Even pouring over a traffic map or consulting the digital display of a GPS system can be distracting.

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