

Woodlawn senior housing plan downscaled

BY ARTHUR CUSANO

A controversial senior housing project planned for Woodlawn has been downscaled by the developer after vocal opposition from residents.

The developer, Brooklyn-based Woodlawn Affiliates LLC, has reduced the scale of the project planned for 69-85 E. 233rd Street from 92 to 80 units.

The apartment makeup was also changed, from 92 studio apartments to a mix of 42 studio and 38 one-bedroom apartments.

Members of the Woodlawn Taxpayers & Community Association were informed of the change by staffers from Senator Jeff Klein's office, said association president Kenneth Nugent.

Klein and Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz have both called on the developer to make the project a bitter fit for the community.

"I have always supported senior housing, but we must ensure that any proposed development in Woodlawn meets the needs and desires of the seniors in the community such a project is designed to serve," Klein said.

Dinowitz said he was pleased the developer was taking input off the community and elected officials, but said they have to make additional changes.

"There still aren't nearly enough apartments for people with higher incomes than what was originally proposed, and there are still too many studios and not enough one-bedrooms," Dinowitz said.

Woodlawn Affiliates LLC

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BX-LEBANON SHOOTING

Former staffer kills doctor, self; injures 6

BY ARTHUR CUSANO

The management and staff of Bronx Lebanon Hospital on Grand Concourse is working to turn the page after a Friday, June 30 shooting that left a young doctor dead and six others injured.

The shooting occurred at around 2:50 p.m. Friday when Dr. Henry Bello, a Bronx resident, opened fire at the hospital and set fires before fatally shooting himself.

The 45-year-old doctor had resigned from the hospital two years

ago when he was told he would be fired due to complaints including sexual harassment.

Bello targeted doctors he had worked with, according to published reports.

Killed in the attack was 32-year-old Dr. Tracy Sin-Yee Tam of Queens.

Tam had been filling in for another doctor's shift when the attack occurred.

Two victims remain in critical

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Bronx Salutes America

The Bronx was the first in the nation to wish America a happy 241st birthday at the time honored New York Salutes America Boardwalk Festival and Fire Extravaganza on Thursday, June 29 at Orchard Beach. Bronxites viewed the spectacular fireworks display from the Bronx Riviera's sandy shores. See more photos in next week's edition.

Photo by Laura Stone

Shock, grief over police officer's 'assassination'

BY ARTHUR CUSANO

The Bronx is reeling from the sudden and completely unprovoked murder of a veteran NYPD officer from the 46th Precinct on Independence Day.

Police officer Miosotis Familia was shot Wednesday, July 5, while sitting in a marked NYPD command vehicle near the corner of Morris Avenue and East 183rd Street in the Bronx around 12:30 a.m., according to police.

Familia, a 12-year NYPD veteran, was taken to St. Barnabas

Hospital where she was later pronounced dead.

"Based on what we know right now, it is clear this was an unprovoked attack on police officers who were assigned to keep the people of this great city safe," NYPD Police Commissioner O'Neal told reporters at an impromptu press conference outside St. Barnabas.

NYPD Police Benevolent Association president Patrick Lynch called the shooting nothing less than an assassination.

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Bronx Times holds 25 Influential Women Awards

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

The Bronx Times Reporter played host to the news organization's eighth annual 25 Bronx Influential Women awards event.

At this year's awards gala, at Maestro's Caterers on Wednesday, June 29, women who have made a volunteer commitment to making the borough a better place were honored and given a chance to shine in the spotlight and speak about their accomplishments.

The event started with a dinner that was immediately followed by opening remarks from Mistress of Ceremonies Jennifer Goodstein, Community News Group president and publisher, who is co-owner of the Bronx Times and CNG with Les Goodstein, the CEO.

Jennifer Goodstein said that the women being honored were a dynamic Bronx resource who were nominated by an independent panel.

"Their stories are truly inspiring," she said of the women.

She offered thanks to the New York Yankees, the event's sponsor.

After Goodstein and Bronx



Sulma Arzu-Brown walks up to accept her award during the Bronx Times' 2017 Bronx Influential Women. Photo by Silvio Pacifico

Times publisher Laura Guerriero made their remarks, welcoming the honorees and their entourages of well wishers, the keynote speaker, Civil Court Judge Bahaati Pitt, addressed the room.

Pitt referred to a popular quotation about how women multiply

and enlarge whatever is given to them.

Pitt said that the event was one that brings together two things she strongly identifies with personally: being a woman and being a Bronxite.

This year's honorees were: Sara Bonizio, Metro Optics; Selma Arzu-Brown, Boogie Down Grind Café; Lorriane Corsa, attorney-at-law and The Columbian Lawyers; Carolina Di Fuccia, G&R Deli owner and Our Lady of Mount Carmel volunteer; Josephine Fanelli, St. Theresa School, principal and Forum of Italian American Educators president; Bernadette Ferrara, Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance president; Lourdes Melendez-Gamez, Confetti Kids owner; Roberta Gjonaj, school nurse/ Registered Nurse; Kerry Lee, Montefiore; Melissa Libran, Windows of Hip Hop; Ana Melendez, Nos Quedamos; Carolyn Murphy, Country Bank; Mary Murray, National Council of Negro Women; Karen Raushauser Nani, the Island Current newspaper; Yasmin Cruz-Otero, Image Market-



Jennifer Goodstein CNG president and publisher and Laura Guerriero, Bronx Times Reporter publisher during the awards ceremony. Photo by Silvio Pacifico

ing; Milagros Baez O'Toole, Aca-cia Network and Bronx Lebanon; Dana Carotenuto Rico, Senator Jeff Klein's chief of staff; Tamara Rivera, New York District Council of Carpenters Council; Frances Ann Rodriguez, Roberto Clemente State Park; Maria Rodriguez, Argus Community, Inc.; Melissa Sal-

guero, P.S. 48/Joseph R. Drake Elementary School; Carolyn Luella Smith, BronxNet; Marlene Taylor, Montefiore; Evelyn Torres, Foxy Family and Dr. Valerie Washington, Bronx Children's Museum.

Nani, who is a volunteer newspaper editor at the Island Current, used her time at podium urging the audience to support community newspapers.

Dana Carotenuto Rico said she grew up in Throggs Neck and felt especially honored to be recognized by her community paper.

An ovation was given to Murray, who at nearly 80, still takes three buses to a job in the court system she has held for five decades.

The selection committee was Rosemary DeLuca of the Wildlife Conservation Society; Anna Vincenty, formerly of Nos Quedamos and Congressman Jose Serrano's office; Lisa Sorin, Westchester Square Business Improvement District; Geri Sciortino of Bronx Design Group; and Elizabeth Figueroa of the New York Botanical Garden.

See photo spread in next week's publication.

W. 229th Step Street to get \$6.6M face lift

BY ROBERT WIRSING

Steps are being taken to refurbish a heavily trafficked 90-year-old Kingsbridge staircase.

NYC Department of Design and Construction acting commissioner Ana Barrio and NYC Department of Transportation Bronx Borough commissioner Nivardo Lopez joined local elected officials and community leaders on Wednesday, June 28 to break ground on the \$6.6 million reconstruction of the West 229th Street



A brave girl ascends the weathered and defaced colossal West 229th Street Step Street stairs.

Photo courtesy of NYC DDC

Step Street connecting Heath Avenue at its lowest point to Kingsbridge Terrace at the crest of the hilly western Bronx terrain.

Construction is anticipated to be completed in late 2018.

"Step streets have long been an important part of the local landscape in this community connecting areas where it's too steep to build regular streets at grade," explained Barrio. "This particular step street is frequently used by residents to access important bus routes as well as P.S. 360 and the Kingsbridge Community Center."

"Cracked and uneven steps have made this step street at West 229th Street difficult to navigate for the hundreds of pedestrians that use it to get from Heath Avenue to Kingsbridge Terrace," noted Lopez.

"I first brought these particular step streets to DOT's attention because I was so appalled at their terrible condition," shared Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz. "I believe that this newly rebuilt step street will demonstrate how much communities can benefit from well maintained, well-lit pedestrian routes."

The existing concrete step

street is approximately 230-feet long with ten segments of stairs, nine landings and an elevation change of 65 feet from top to bottom.

Sloped terraces with concrete pavers and outer retaining walls adorn both sides of the stairs.

The reconstruction project will replace the entire stairs with new granite steps built to accommodate modern safety and construction standards.

The towering structure's outer stone retaining walls will be repaired.

Its sloped concrete terraces and pavers will be replaced with new granite pavers set inside a concrete bedding.

New trees, drainage and lighting systems will be installed for the public staircase.

Two benches will be installed at two of the step street's landings.

In addition, new bicycle channels will be incorporated on both sides of the new stairs allowing people to more easily walk their bikes up and down the structure.

To further improve pedestrian safety, sidewalks will be widened at the crosswalks at Kingsbridge Terrace and at Heath Avenue.



(l-r) Community Board 8 chairman Daniel Padernacht, Lopez, Barrio and Councilman Cabrera broke ground for the project.

Photo courtesy of NYC DDC

The project's contractor is Paddilla Construction Services, Inc. of Westbury, NY while AECOM USA, Inc. of Manhattan serves as design consultant.

Temporary wooden stairs will facilitate pedestrian access throughout the reconstruction

phase.

"The reconstruction of the West 229th Street Step Street will enhance walkability, access to public transit, safety and improve the area's visuals attractiveness," expressed Councilman Fernando Cabrera.

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Woodlawn senior housing plan gets downscaled

from Page 1
chairwoman Erika Keller-Wala, who is also the chairwoman for Brisa Builders of Brooklyn, confirmed the changes to the plan after community feedback and said she would continue meeting with concerned parties in the area.

“We have made some revisions to the proposal that will be presented to the elected officials as well as the community,” she said.

Keller-Wala said that due to the lack of scheduled summer Community Board 12 meetings, the next presentation will likely be held in September.

Nugent said residents had been frustrated with the size and height of the project since it was announced, and

said the developer still had a long way to go to get residents on board with it.

“I still think it’s far too large,” Nugent said. “It’s going to dwarf everything around it.”

Nugent said parking in Woodlawn is already a disaster, and said the proposed project would make it worse.

“We have alternate side parking, and because of that parking is a very hot commodity,” Nugent said. “She’s proposed 13 parking spaces for 80 apartments, and there is a superintendent in there who’s definitely going to get a space.”

The Average Monthly Income, or AMI, mix of the project has also been changed, with 16 of the

units to be rented at 80 percent AMI – a larger percentage than previously proposed, which would allow people making up to \$45,480 to apply for a studio apartment, or \$61,120 to apply for the one-bedroom apartments.

Residents were relieved to see one-bedroom apartments put into the plan, Nugent said, since the original plan to include only studio apartments had been a concern to residents who feared a possible homeless shelter eventually taking it over.

The space that was pitched as a possible day-care or pre-kindergarten facility was also scrapped, as per the community’s wishes.



The plan for a proposed senior housing project on East 233rd Street in Woodlawn has been downscaled after feedback from concerned residents. Arthur Cusano



Armed Emergency Service Unit police officers prepared to enter the hospital. Photo by Aracelis Batista

Bronx-Lebanon shooting shocker; former staffer kills young doctor, self; injures six

from Page 1
condition while the other four have been upgraded.

Bronx-Lebanon Hospital spokesman Errol Schneer said Tam will never be forgotten by her hospital co-workers.

“She was extremely well liked, and a very dedicated physician,” Schneer said. “She came to Bronx Lebanon for a large part due to our reputation of servicing a community in need of all types of care, that has high incident rates of diabetes and asthma. She was very committed to helping address those serious health problems.”

A vigil planned for the afternoon of Thursday, July 6 in front of the hospital was being organized by the Local 1199, the New York State Nurses Association and the Committee of Interns and Residents.

Tam’s family has requested that information about her funeral and memorial services be kept private, Schneer added.

“The staff here provided an extraordinary response to the tragic events that took place this Friday,” he said. “There were countless acts

of heroism that were incredible in terms of staff that were willing to sacrifice their own lives to keep our patients safe and secure.”

The hospital was considering many options for Dr. Tam, including a special memorial in the Family Medicine Department where she worked.

Like Montefiore and Mt. Sinai, Bronx-Lebanon Hospital is a voluntary not-for-profit hospital.

Schneer said hospital staff had worked with the NYPD to train for just such an active shooter events.

“They provided a very quick response to the situation, they were at the hospital almost immediately,” he said

Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner represents the district the hospital is located in. She said the tragedy impacted her entire community.

“The thoughts and prayers of families throughout the 77th Assembly District are with those who were shot, their loved ones and their colleagues as well as the first responders who are on the scene,” Joyner

said. “The skilled medical professionals of Bronx-Lebanon Medical Center are in the thoughts and prayers of families throughout the 77th Assembly District.”

Senator Gustavo Rivera and Councilman Fernando Cabrera also expressed condolences for the victims and their families, and praised hospital staff and law enforcement for their response.

“I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of our first responders including the NYPD, especially police officers from the 44th and 46th precincts, the FDNY and the EMT, for the courage and professionalism displayed under the most strenuous of circumstances,” Rivera said. “Further, I want to express my profound appreciation to the doctors, nurses and personnel at Bronx Lebanon for their work in putting their patients out of harm’s way.”

Cabrera called for the community to unite against gun violence.

“We must come together as a community and firmly decide that gun violence is collectively reprehensible and commit to ending this scourge,” Cabrera said.



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A view along City Island's 'main street,' City Island Avenue, presents a quaint charm that visitors may not realize is within the limits of the borough or the city.

Photo courtesy of NYC & Company

City Island included in 'Island Hopping' promotion

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

City Island tourism, a perennial feature of summer in the borough, is getting a boost from NYC & Company.

NYC & Company just launched a new campaign, both locally and internationally, called Island Hopping, highlighting the exciting features found on the six smaller islands within the city.

Included among well-known tourist destinations like Ellis Island and Liberty Island was City Island, which Chris Heywood, NYC & Company vice-president said is much like 'the little Newport, Rhode Island of the city.'

"We thought it is summertime in New York City and we want to make sure that not only New Yorkers but visitors know that we have these wonderful islands around New York City and...island hop," said Heywood.

Heywood said that he finds City Island charming and summer is the perfect time to head to the New England-like community.

Materials produced by NYC & Company, the official destination marketing organization for the city, highlighted the seafood restaurants and

antique stores on City Island.

It featured New York Sailing Center, as well nearby Orchard Beach and the Bartow-Pell Mansion.

Gerard 'Skip' Giacco, City Island Chamber of Commerce president said that the effect on island business would depend on how much effort NYC & Company puts into Island Hopping, adding that in general promotion certainly can bring more visitors.

What he thinks is significant is the causal atmosphere and described it as a great place for people to take a stroll and have a bite to eat, he said.

"It is just the opposite of the gentrified area; if there is an appeal, that is the appeal," said Giacco of the island, adding that visitors who stop in his place, Lickety Split Ice Cream, appreciate not being inundated.

He said that this stands in contrast to many places, including Coney Island or parts of Brooklyn, which more actively court tourists.

He added that City Island is basically a residential community.

Paul Klein, CICC vice-president, said that any good

tourism-based publicity could translate into business and is a plus.

"Any promotion of City Island is a good idea," said Klein, adding just getting the word out about the unique atmosphere of the island in relation to it being located in the borough and city is a good thing.

Klein's business, Kaleidoscope Gallery, was mentioned in the NYC & Company's promotional materials for Island Hopping.

Klein said that the 2009 film City Island and a recent German magazine article have drawn tourists from all over the world.

In terms of worldwide appeal, NYC & Company has 17 representative offices around the world serving 28 global regions, said Heywood, in addition to a push for local appeal.

"We have eight and a half million people (in the city) who may or may not have heard of City Island," he said.

John Doyle, City Island Civic Association board member, said that he thinks island tourism is good and does provide jobs for some islanders.

HS ballplayer hopes to continue baseball catching in college

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

This young man wants to continue to 'play ball,' and to be of service to his local community.

Maxx Puya of Norwood, a recent high school graduate who is weighing several athletic scholarship offers at local colleges, says he turned down potentially lucrative out-of-town scholarship offers so he could stay in touch with his neighborhood.

Puya, a member of Fordham Preparatory School's 2017 graduating class, is a catcher on their team and graduated with honors.

He continues to weigh offers of athletic scholarships from coaches at local institutions like the College of New Rochelle and the CUNY system.

According to his father, Hugo Puya, he has been offered scholarships of \$700,000 from local and non-local colleges including Penn State, University of Scranton and Indiana / Purdue.

Puya said he is just looking for a college nearby where he can continue to play baseball because he enjoyed it so

much the first time around, after years of playing at Castle Hill Little League and Fordham Prep.

He said that towards the end of his senior year, he thought about hanging up his cleats for good, but then later reconsidered when he saw he might be able to keep playing.

And after a dearth of offers earlier in his senior year, some came in later on.

"I remember thinking to myself 'I don't think I am playing in college' and then I started getting emails from all of these other coaches," said Puya. "I got four or five and it really helped me keep the faith in terms of playing."

He said he wants to become a vital part of a college baseball team.

Puya certainly has been of service to the community, winning an award from the borough president for service.

During his high school years, he said, he volunteered at a soup kitchen Part of the Solution on Webster Avenue.

He also volunteered at The Children's Village in Dobbs

Ferry, NY at a mentoring program for children in a home for young men.

Part of the service was for Fordham Prep's requirement that its young men complete 15 hours of service in their junior year and 75 in their senior year, said Puya.

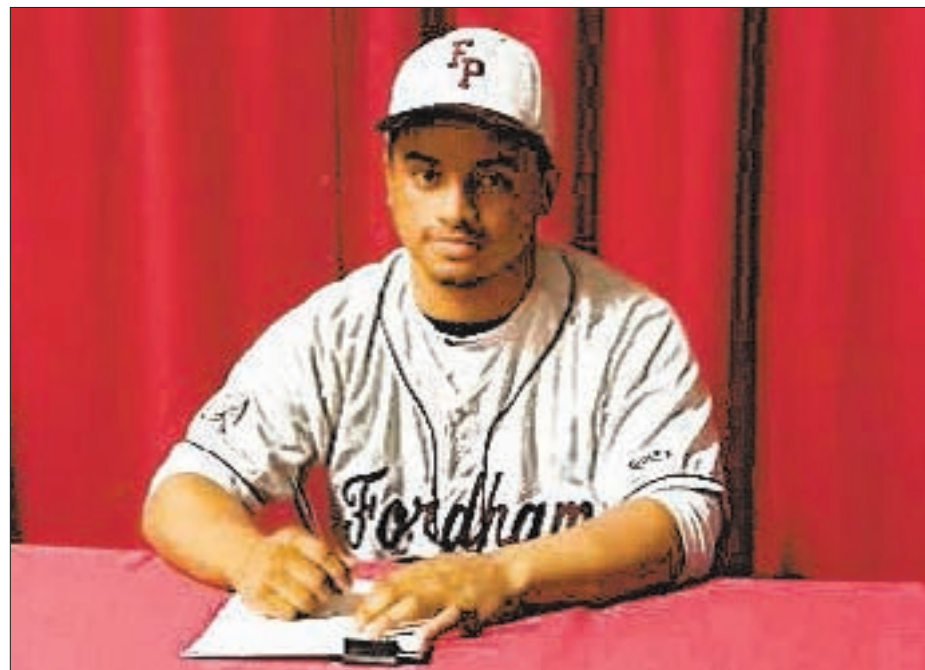
He learned time management from a variety of his activities, he said.

These include being a student athlete, achieving a black belt in karate at Excel Martial Arts, and remaining an honor student throughout his time at St. Ann Grammar School and high school.

Scouting reports supplied to the Bronx Times shows he has talent as a catcher, and hopefully a college will come along that strikes his fancy and is a good fit.

He said that he might participate in Reserve Officers' Training Corps in college.

"Right now it would be hard to make a decision on the spot," he said of his options, adding that it may come down to the school offering the best financial deal, as it does for so many college students.



Maxx Puya in his Fordham Preparatory School baseball uniform.

Photo courtesy of Hugo Puya



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Allerton Ave. International Food Festival Serves Up Summer Fun

Allerton residents satisfied their craving for summer fun and delicious ethnic food at a time honored neighborhood celebration. The Allerton Avenue International Merchants Association, Allerton Avenue Homeowners and Tenants Association, Assemblyman Mark Gionaj and senators Jamaal Bailey and Jeff Klein in conjunction with MAS Productions hosted the tenth annual Allerton Avenue International Food Festival on Saturday, June 24 on Allerton Avenue between Barnes and Wallace avenues.

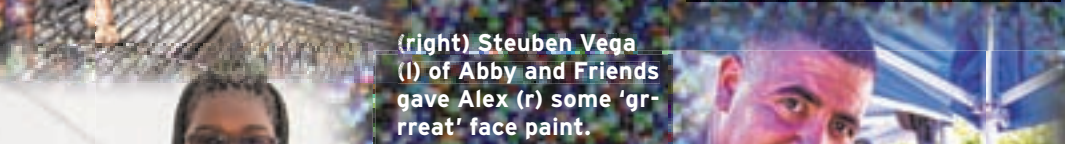


Singer-songwriter EC Salsero (c) performed at this year's festival.

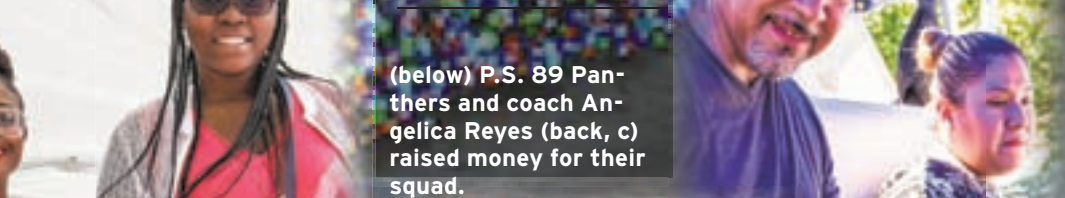


(left) Jesus Villarreal couldn't cook enough kebabs for the hungry festival goers.

(above) Patricia Vicaro (l) bought delicious food from Gina Tiarulli (back, l) at Mamma Rose's stall. Bailey Provetto, one of three judges of the food contest, was taste testing.



(right) Steuben Vega (l) of Abby and Friends gave Alex (r) some 'grreat' face paint.



(below) P.S. 89 Panthers and coach Angelica Reyes (back, c) raised money for their squad.



(left) Tiara Ruby Damon (l) and Olivia Guilford registered young ladies for the Talitha Cumi Urban Etiquette and Leadership Academy. Photo by Silvio Pacifico

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Rite for Business, Mutz help fill TN mall

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

A new business-to-business oriented financial services company is the latest addition to the thriving Throggs Neck Shopping Center.

RiteCheck, a check cashing and financial service center, officially opened its business-themed Rite For Business in the mall with a Thursday, June 29 ribbon cutting.

The grand opening of Rite for Business, along with other recently opened businesses such as Mutz, an Italian food eatery in a fast-paced environment, has brought the center to almost full occupancy.

Joseph Kelleher, president of Simone Metro Properties, said that the mall is now 90% leased.

Kelleher said he is already working with several perspective tenants to fill the remaining space in the 300,000 square foot mall.

Joseph Coleman, RiteCheck president, said that the 1,200 square foot storefront was a good fit for company, which now operates nine locations in the borough.

Coleman said the company's location at the Throggs Neck Shopping Center is going to be geared towards businesspeople, though



Nunzio Del Greco, Bronx Chamber of Commerce CEO and Joseph Coleman, Ritecheck president cut the ribbon on Rite for Business in the Throggs Neck Shopping Center.

Photo by Aracelis Batista

anyone can use it for the services traditionally found at its other financial service centers.

"We will still do all the services that financial service centers or check cashers do, but this is a new brand," he said. "Our fastest growing customer base are business customers, so we thought we would create a store that is business friendly."

At the Throggs Neck location,

businesses will have special VIP lines for faster service to clerks. Coleman explained this is because businesses are often more time sensitive and require larger transaction time.

There will also be privacy booth and a conference room available, said Coleman.

The location is close to a wide-variety of commercial enterprises of all kinds, and the easy access on

an off the Hutchinson River Parkway is a plus in terms of its siting.

Nunzio Del Greco, Bronx Chamber of Commerce president, said that he thought that Rite for Business would be extremely beneficial for small businesses, calling it a fantastic opportunity for them at this time.

"What they are doing is they are filling a very important gap, providing check cashing to busi-

nesses with money right on the spot, without waiting three days for checks to clear," said Del Greco.

On the other side of the mall's parking lot is Mutz, short for mozzarella. Joe Sansotta and Jessica Sansotta opened the Italian restaurant about two and a half months ago said Joe Sansotta.

The Sansottas could very well be the kind of local business owners that Del Greco was referring to, serving up fast, fresh Italian dishes as the customer views the preparation.

"Everything is made to order... in plain sight of our customers view," he said, adding the since mozzarella tops everything, the name for the restaurant naturally followed.

One of the highlights of the business is a brick pizza oven imported from Italy, said Joe.

According to Kelleher, Target occupies about half the mall's square footage, and the percentage of the space leased has risen steadily since it opened in November 2014.

A sign announcing a new Pop-eye's restaurant was also visible in the mall.

Shock, grief over police officer's 'assassination'

from Page 1

"Police officer Miosotis Familia, 48, the mother of three, gave her life protecting a neighborhood that had been plagued by gang gun violence," Lynch said. "Fully knowing the dangers that she faced, she suited up in uniform everyday and stood tall against those who threaten and terrorize the good folks of the Bronx."

Lynch also called on the community to report any potential threats to police to help prevent future assaults.

The gunman, a convicted felon with a lengthy rap sheet, had served seven years in a state correctional facility for a robbery upstate and had recently made threats online against police, according to published reports.

"When you see or hear someone making threats against NYC police of-

ficers you need to let us know, you need to be our eyes and ears," Lynch said. "Police officer Familia now joins the exclusive ranks of women who have heroically served and died in the line of duty. We will keep her in our hearts and minds as we do all of the women and men who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the city they loved."

A vigil was planned for Wednesday afternoon outside the 46th Precinct headquarters at 2120 Ryer Avenue.

The precinct posted a photo of Familia on its social media accounts, with just three words accompanying it: end of watch.

The precinct also thanked the community for its prayers and support.

Senator Gustavo Rivera said the shooting was yet another sobering reminder of the daily dangers faced by police while on duty.

"Let's keep officer Familia, her three beloved children, her loved ones and all members of our city's police department in our thoughts and prayers on this sad day," Rivera said. "Today, without a doubt, our city has lost one of its finest."

Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. also praised the fallen Bronx officer.

"Officer Familia was a dedicated servant to our city and the news of her passing is incredibly tragic. Please keep her family, friends and colleagues in the 46th Precinct in your prayers during this difficult time."

Familia and her partner were inside the mobile command post when the suspect, later identified as 34-year-old Alexander Bonds, fired through the vehicle's window, striking Familia in the head.

The police officer's part-



Police officer Miosotis Familia was shot and killed early Thursday morning after the July 4 festivities by a gunman in an unprovoked attack.

Photo courtesy of NYPD



Police and Emergency Service Units sealed off the area as they conducted their thorough investigation into the shooting homicide of 12-year veteran police officer Miosotis Familia.

Photo by Edwin Soto

the suspect, he drew a revolver.

The police officers fired at him, striking and killing him. A silver revolver was recovered at the scene.

The mobile command vehicle had been stationed in the area since March

due to a number of gang-related shootings in the area, O'Neal added.

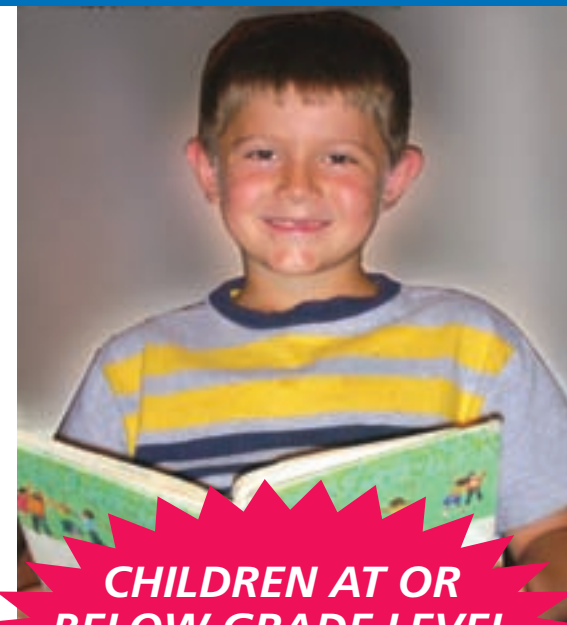
A bystander was also struck by a bullet during the incident. However, that person was in stable condition by Wednesday afternoon.

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