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GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS



Photo by Bristol Hendrix

Story on page 12



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Canarsie Courier

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Ramadan Mubarak, Canarsie

By Jibreel Jalloh

As the crescent moon signals the arrival of Ramadan, Muslims in Canarsie and around the world prepare for a month of fasting, prayer and self-reflection. Expected to begin on the evening of February 28th (depending on the moon sighting), Ramadan is one of the holiest times of the year for Muslims. It is a period of spiritual renewal, gratitude and giving back — values that resonate across all faiths and cultures.

For those unfamiliar, Ramadan is more than just a time of fasting. From sunrise to sunset, Muslims abstain from food and liquids. But beyond the fast, this month is about strengthening one’s connection to a higher power, deepening empathy for those in need and embracing a sense of discipline and self-reflection. Each day begins with a pre-dawn meal (suhour), followed by a day of work, school or daily responsibilities. At sunset, the fast is broken with iftar, a communal meal often shared with family and friends, followed by evening prayers at home or at the mosque.

This time of year is filled with joy, but it is also demanding — especially

for those balancing fasting with work or school. A little understanding can go a long way. If you have Muslim friends, coworkers or students, small acts of kindness — like being mindful of their fast, offering flexibility in schedules or simply greeting them with “Ramadan Mubarak” (Blessed Ramadan) — can make a difference.

Ramadan also emphasizes charity and service, with many Muslims increasing their giving during this time. It is common to see food drives, fundraisers and community service projects aimed at supporting those in need. In a community like Canarsie, this spirit of generosity is something we can all take part in, regardless of faith.

However, this holy month also comes at a time when misunderstandings and biases about Islam still exist. Just as we stand against discrimination of any kind, we must also ensure that our Muslim neighbors feel safe, supported and respected — not just during Ramadan, but all year-round.

The month concludes with Eid al-Fitr, a joyful celebration marking the end of fasting. Let us embrace the values that Ramadan represents. Whether you



observe or not, this is a time to celebrate the diversity that makes Canarsie such a strong and vibrant community.

Ramadan Mubarak, Canarsie!

Jibreel Jalloh is an award-winning organizer with experience working at the highest levels of government. He is the Founder and Executive Director of The Flossy Organization, a nonprofit dedicated to closing the advocacy gap through education and activism. Over the past few years, they have worked to end gun violence, increase transit options and secure investments in local green spaces. Jibreel recently won the prestigious Obama Foundation Scholar award at Columbia University. You can learn more at theflossy.org and follow @theflossyorg.

What's Happening

Tuesday, February 25th Nieuw Amersfort Community Association Meeting Special Town Hall Meeting with Councilwoman Farah Louis Express your community concerns and speak with city agency representatives. St. Paul’s Lutheran Church 3913 Avenue J 7 p.m.

Thursday, March 6th Special Town Hall Meeting Community Board 18 1097 Bergen Avenue 7 p.m.

A Special Town Hall regarding the planned lithium-ion battery storage facilities on Flatbush Avenue near Quentin Road. The company, NineDot, did not notify the community board, elected officials or area residents. Please join Community Board 18 and local elected officials for answers from NineDot and New York City agencies.

Saturday, March 8th Maintaining Marine Park’s Forever Wild Natural Areas Salt Marsh Nature Center 3301 Avenue U 1:30 p.m.

Discover how you can become involved and help care for your park.

East Flatbush

Police Looking for Dollar Van Shooter

By Linda Steinmuller

The NYPD has released surveillance of an individual wanted in connection to the homicide of a dollar van driver that occurred within the confines of the 67th Precinct on Sunday, January 12th.

Police said the victim, Johanci Chapman, 25, of East Flatbush, was shot in the arm in front of 837 Utica Avenue around 12:55 p.m. He succumbed to his injuries at Kings County Hospital (see “Shooting Leads to Death of Dollar Van Driver in Possible Road Rage Incident,” Canarsie Courier, January 16, 2025).

Anyone with information regarding this shooting is asked to call the NYPD’s Crime Stoppers Hotline at 800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/, or on X @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.



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East New York

Teen Stabbed on Subway Platform at Broadway Junction

By Linda Steinmuller

The NYPD is asking for the public's assistance in tracking down a suspect wanted in connection to an assault at the Broadway Junction station earlier this month.

Police said an unidentified man approached an 18-year-old male around 5:55 a.m. on Saturday, February 15th, on the "A, C" northbound platform at Broadway Junction. A dispute ensued, and the suspect stabbed the victim with a knife, causing a laceration to the back.

The suspect also punched the victim in the left eye using brass knuckles, causing bruising and swelling on the face. He fled the location on foot on a northbound "A" train.

The victim was taken to Kings County Hospital by private means in stable condition, police said.

The suspect has a light complexion and was last seen wearing all black, a baseball cap, headphones and eye-glasses.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on X @NYPDTips.



Flatbush

Two Injured in Crane Collapse



By Baqir Ahmad

Two men suffered minor injuries when a crane collapsed onto a parked dollar van they were sitting in, around 11:15 a.m. on Tuesday, February 18th, at the intersection of Nostrand Avenue and Glenwood Road. The construction crane also crashed into a storefront.

Members of the FDNY and Department of Buildings (DOB) arrived on the scene to assess the damage. The injured were taken to Kings County Hospital in stable condition, the FDNY Battalion Chief told the *Canarsie Courier*.

An investigation is ongoing by the DOB to determine what led to the collapse of the crane.

Police Searching for Two Suspects in Connection to a Non-Fatal Shooting

By Linda Steinmuller

The NYPD is looking for two individuals being sought in connection to a shooting that occurred in front of 988 Williams Avenue, within the confines of the 69th Precinct, on Thursday, December 5, 2024, around 12:20 p.m.

Police said a 54-year-old male was shot once in the groin by two unidentified individuals on scooters. The victim was transported by EMS to Brookdale Hospital in stable condition.

The suspects fled the location on scooters traveling eastbound on Cozine Avenue.

The NYPD has released photos of the suspects and is asking for the public's assistance in ascertaining their whereabouts.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the CrimeStoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on X @NYPDTips.



East New York

Crash on Belt Parkway Claims Life of New Jersey Man



By Baqir Ahmad and Linda Steinmuller

A driver lost control of his car, skidded off the roadway and hit a tree, killing him instantly over the holiday weekend.

Marcus Joseph, 41, of New Jersey, was traveling eastbound on the Belt Parkway, between Exits 14 and 15, around 4:10 a.m. on Sunday, February 16th, when the tragic crash occurred.

He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Photo by Baqir Ahmad

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Sixty-Ninth Precinct Holds Sector B Build the Block Meeting

By Baqir Ahmad

The 69th Precinct held its first Build the Block meeting of 2025 for Sector B on Thursday, February 20th, at Consuming Fire Ministries International Inc., 9623 Avenue L.

Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCOs) gave an update on crime statistics for the most recent 28-day period. NCO Daniel Irving said there were six grand larceny autos, three robberies and one rape in the vicinity of Sector B, which encompasses the area from East 94th Street to East 108th Street, from Flatlands Avenue to Seaview Avenue.

The officers urged residents to stay vigilant with their vehicles and always lock their cars.

In the case of the six grand theft autos,

all of the vehicles were left running. Irving suggested everyone should consider placing AirTags and steering wheel locks in their vehicles. After concluding their report, the officers addressed issues presented by residents in attendance.

Many say they are fed up with ongoing scams in the neighborhood. The officers shared tips on how the community could protect themselves from being victimized.

The meeting ended with Jennifer Viechweg-Horsford from State Senator Roxanne Persaud's office bringing greetings and an update for Senate District 19. She distributed several flyers with additional safety tips from the NYPD. Tax and youth council resource materials were also handed out.



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- SEPTEMBER 28-OCT. 9. 2025 Greek Isle and Turkey Cruise on NCL Viva.**
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Hebrew Educational Society Hosts Youth and Family Day

By Brenda Cox

The staff at the Hebrew Educational Society (H.E.S.), located at 9502 Seaview Avenue, went all out for their first Youth and Family Day held at the facility on Sunday, February 23rd. The event's theme was "Together We Shine," and the day was jam-packed with educational and fun activities in which both the children and their parents participated.

They bonded over projects such as art therapy, which promoted social and emotional learning, by painting and experimenting with various colors while learning their effects on one's mood. These activities were accompanied by soothing classical, yoga or instrumental music.

In other activities, a mother made bracelets with her children's names, from assorted beads, while families made popcorn, baked and decorated cookies or even built a volcano.

There were also youth sports activities, including basketball and soccer games in which the children were completely immersed, as well as a bingo game that included all attendees.

A Black History Museum, which was created by the students, was also on display at the event. It showcased many influential African Americans, from emancipation to present day, and noted their accomplishments and contributions to society. The exhibits covered areas of inventions, sports, entertainment and music.

Some of the notables featured were track and field Olympian, Jesse Owens; civil rights activist, Rosa Parks; jazz pioneer and leader of the Harlem Renaissance, Louis Armstrong; agricultural scientist and inventor, George Washington Carver; inventor, Sarah Boone; and Olympic gymnast, Gabrielle (Gabby) Douglas.

A "Dream Board" posted in the lobby paid special

homage to the late Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It highlighted many "dreams" expressed by the students who began working on it in preparation for MLK Day which was observed on January 20th.

Councilwoman Mercedes Narcisse, whose children attended the H.E.S. when they were young, had nothing but high praise for the institution and all involved in making the event the success that it was. "They are making a real difference in our community," she stated.

Katleen Belony, director of registration and marketing at the H.E.S., told the *Canarsie Courier*, "This event was created to support the needs of our families, to connect them with everything we offer at H.E.S. and give them a behind-the-scenes look at our programs."

The occasion ended with a series of performances which included piano and dance recitals, yoga and even martial arts.

To learn about all the other great programs the H.E.S. has to offer, including summer camp, early childhood, music lessons and more, visit thehes.org or call (718) 241-3000.



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Senator Hosts Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Webinar

By Angela G. Nannetti

State Senator Roxanne Persaud hosted a meaningful and informative "Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Webinar" via Zoom on Wednesday, February 19th.

Persaud invited stroke survivor and heart health advocate, Tabitha Ellis; System Chair of Emergency Medicine at Mount Sinai, Dr. Benjamin Abella; and Brookdale Hospital Medical Center cardiologist, Dr. Moshe Gunsburg, to share a wealth of valuable information with members of the community, in time for Heart Health Month.

Persaud emphasized the importance of preventing heart attack and stroke through awareness: knowing the risk factors, knowing your own personal metrics (blood pressure, cholesterol level, glucose readings), knowing the symptoms of



State Senator Roxanne Persaud



System Chair of Emergency Medicine at Mount Sinai, Dr. Benjamin Abella

such an event and what to do should one occur.

Both Abella and Gunsburg agreed that using illicit drugs, smoking, diabetes, uncontrolled hypertension (high blood pressure) and high cholesterol were some of the most common risk factors for heart attack and stroke. They explained that the warning signs of a heart attack are sometimes ignored or misdiagnosed as indigestion or anxiety but usually include chest pain or discomfort, which can radiate to the back, arms, neck or jaw. Other symptoms to watch for include cold sweats, nausea, dizziness, vomiting and shortness of breath. They advised the group that these symptoms should immediately prompt a call to 911.

Abella, who has conducted research on cardiac arrest and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), explained that bystanders are often afraid to assist in emergency situations for a variety of reasons. "No one likes the idea of putting their mouth on a stranger," he granted, informing the group that performing hands-only CPR, which does not require rescue breathing, has proved equally as effective as traditional CPR and can be learned in under a minute (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxEfQJP3MQk>). He also assured the group that Good Samaritan Laws are in place to protect bystanders who perform CPR from being sued and that Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), which can be found in many public places, are designed for use by the general public and do not require formal training to operate.

Ellis shared her account of the stroke she experienced at age 28, which manifested as sudden dizziness upon standing, accompanied by tingling in the face that extended down her arms and legs. She explained that time is of the essence with a stroke, and that recognizing the signs and getting to the hospital in time for doctors to administer a thrombolytic is what made her recovery possible. "Time is brain," Gunsburg agreed, elaborating that a stroke happens when a blood vessel in the brain becomes blocked by a blood clot and cuts off the oxygen supply, making every minute count. "Symptoms can run the gamut," he said. "Depending where that blood clot is in the brain, it manifests different symptoms," listing weakness and tingling in the extremities, confusion, speech, vision and personality changes as possible warning signs.

During the hour-long webinar, attendees learned about various treatment options, advances in cardiovascular research and the support available to patients and caregivers. To access the video, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/SD-19SenatorPersaud/videos/senator-persaud-webinar-heart-health-month/1981245802355146/>



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Before filing, taxpayers should have their:

- Social Security numbers for everyone listed on the tax return.
- Bank account and routing numbers.
- Tax forms such as W-2s, 1099s, 1098s, records of digital asset transactions and other income documents.
- Form 1095-A, Health Insurance Marketplace statement.

- IRS letters they may have citing an amount received for a certain tax deduction or credit.

2. **Report all types of income on the tax return to avoid receiving a notice or a bill from the IRS.** Include income from: goods created and sold on online platforms, investment income, part-time or seasonal work, self-employment or other business activities, and services provided and paid through mobile apps.

3. **Avoid paper returns. Filing electronically with direct deposit is the fastest way to get a refund.** Plus, tax software helps taxpayers avoid mistakes. It does the math and guides people through each section of their tax return.

4. **Choose tax filing options based on personal situation and comfort level with tax preparation.**

- Personally file taxes.
 - Use online filing services.
 - Hire a tax professional and choose carefully.
- Most tax return preparers are professional and honest; however, dishonest tax return preparers who file false income tax returns do exist. The IRS has a [Directory of Federal Tax Return Preparers with Credentials and Select Qualifications](#) on IRS.gov.

Most of the information above is also available on the IRS.gov [Let us help you page](#).

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Community Board 18 to Sue City after City of Yes for Housing Opportunity Passes

By Linda Steinmuller

Although Community Board 18 (CB18) board members were in strong opposition to the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity and voted unanimously against the controversial zoning amendment at a May 30, 2024 public hearing (see "Community Board 18 Votes Down City of Yes for Housing Opportunity," *Canarsie Courier*, June 6, 2024), it was passed on December 5, 2024 and enacted into law on December 18, 2024.

Paul Graziano, an urban planning, land use and zoning expert, was invited to speak at a public hearing held during the February 19th meeting of CB18 to talk about how the new law will affect area residents and discuss actions that could be taken to reverse the zoning amendment.

There are 59 community boards in New York City,

and the final vote was close – 20 City Council members voted in opposition to the City of Yes. "We needed about five or six more to stop it," Graziano said. "Unfortunately, some of the council members who said they were going to vote against it changed their vote at the last minute because they got whatever they wanted from the speaker," he said, referring to City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, who Graziano said forced the plan through in collaboration with Mayor Eric Adams.

The goal of the City of Yes is to add "just a little more housing in every neighborhood," but Graziano said the plan is "written by developers for developers to allow them to build whatever they want wherever they want in the city."

He explained that the City of Yes targets lower density communities like CB18, which has the highest

homeownership in Brooklyn, at 60%, compared to the citywide average of 31%.

Graziano said the plan, which he called "devastating," came directly from the chair of the City Planning Commission, who was quoted as saying, "Low density communities don't deserve to exist; we need to get rid of one-family zoning, we need to get rid of two-family zoning. These things are against New York City."

The zoning amendment will allow one-family zones to become de facto two-family zones, and two-family zones to become de facto three-family zones.

As an example, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are now allowed on all one- and two-family properties. ADUs can be built in a backyard, as an addition to a home, a garage conversion, in an attic or a basement unless your home is in a designated flood zone. However, ADUs are not allowed in row houses, which was one of the Council's modifications.

Graziano said that CB18 is one of the most vulnerable communities because the district is in an environmentally dangerous area – prone to flooding and it is already overcrowded.

"The goal is to densify every single community," he warned.

The size (footprint) of a building and lot coverage can now be expanded, and permitted obstructions, which include porches, chimneys and ADUs, are also allowed. That means a building on a corner property can now cover 80% of your property, and a property mid-block can cover 40 to 60% of your property (increased from 30 to 40%).

This eliminates green space, which helps to absorb water, and will increase flooding significantly, Graziano explained.

He called the proposal "propaganda" because it promised to create affordable housing. "This plan will not create affordable housing. It never was going to create affordable housing."

A number of communities, including CB18, plan on suing the city under an Article 78 proceeding, which is "the public's ability to sue the city or a government agency for a number of reasons, including arbitrary and capricious decision-making."

Graziano said the document put together by the Department of City Planning is fraudulent and that there were no checks and balances in the governmental and political process because the City Council was more interested in cutting a deal than questioning why this plan was going forward.

"We stand on the fact that there is no question that based upon what is called the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that every kind of process like this has to go through, this is the most deficient EIS I have ever seen in my life," Graziano said.

The deadline to sue the city is April, and Graziano said they plan to file a lawsuit in March.

"We expect this to be a blockbuster case. There has never been a case where we have tried to overturn the entire change to the zoning resolution. The zoning resolution is what guides everything in the City of New York," he explained.

Those who would like to help with legal fees can donate on GoFundMe by looking up "City of Yes."

The floor was then opened to comments and questions by board members. And, as schools were closed for Presidents' Week, Millennium Development Executive Director Paul Curiale arranged for students from P.S. 312, P.S. 207, P.S. 119 and I.S. 78 Roy H. Mann to attend the meeting to see how the community board process works.

Emma from Roy H. Mann asked several questions, one of them being "How does this problem make housing more expensive?"

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you can develop more. Your property is worth more because of the speculative value of that property," Graziano replied. "You could build an apartment building where you couldn't before."

When Emma asked how kids could help, Graziano said, "Tell your parents!" He also said since kids are social media mavens, they can get the word out, as well as write letters to elected officials and the community board.

The community board submitted a list of budget requests for the preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2026, requesting help from various city agencies, including the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). After the agencies give their responses, the board sends a "letter of comment" to Mayor Adams, which CB18 District Manager Sue Ann Partnow read to attendees.

The lengthy letter said the agencies' responses "reflect an ineffectual effort to direct adequate goods and services from the city toward our struggling middle-class community and crumbling infrastructure."

Superstorm Sandy occurred on October 29, 2024, causing flooding and irreplaceable damage. The board blamed the disaster on an inadequate sewer system that is generations old and outdated. The letter stated that long-term infrastructure, as well as short-range improvements, is needed until full capital funding becomes available.

The board receives the same responses year after year, with responses like "the location needs further study," "the project cannot be funded" or "resubmit the request for the following fiscal year." This is the first year, however, that the board is being asked to actually remove some of the submissions entirely, including the reconstruction of catch basins and sanitary sewers in various areas within CB18.

A new municipality application for microbusiness with retail authorization and alteration of an existing premise license at 2600 Flatbush Avenue, site of the former 10,000 square foot Sam Ash building, was tabled until the March meeting.

Curiale, who is also the chair of the SLA and Cannabis Committee, explained that the business intends to grow, manufacture and distribute cannabis with retail. This is the first time the committee has seen a request to grow and manufacture the product.

Curiale said a strong definite timeline, as well as a clearer picture of the proposal, is needed.

A new application for an adult-use retail dispensary premises license for NSH LLC, at 2280 Flatbush Avenue (site of the former Fillmore Real Estate) was turned down for three reasons.

The committee feels that there is an oversaturation of cannabis businesses along Flatbush Avenue, with two to the north and one to the south. "We don't want to see every block filled with cannabis businesses," Curiale said.

In addition, the location is very active; it's near a bus depot and a firehouse, and parking is horrendous. Finally, the committee felt that the applicant had a weak business plan.

The next meeting of CB18 will take place on Wednesday, March 19th, at 7 p.m. at 1097 Bergen Avenue.



Paul Graziano gives a presentation on the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity.

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Anti-Violence Event at Bildersee Addresses Rising Gun Violence in Canarsie

By Bristol Hendrix

Against the backdrop of a troubling rise in gun violence, the NYPD Community Affairs Section, Brooklyn South, and 69th Precinct Youth Officers hosted a urgent call to action at I.S. 68 Isaac Bildersee, 956 East 82nd Street, on Monday, February 17th. Titled “NYPD and Youth Against Violence,” the event drew over 50 residents, activists and leaders to confront a crisis that has gripped Canarsie, where shootings surged by 18% in 2024 compared to the previous year, according to NYPD crime statistics.

Canarsie, always known as a tight-knit, family-oriented neighborhood, has recently seen escalating conflicts tied to social media disputes and gang activity. The 69th Precinct reported 34 shootings in 2024 — a stark contrast to pre-pandemic levels. Many of these incidents involved youth under 25, mirroring citywide

trends where 40% of shooting victims in Brooklyn are teens and young adults.

“This isn’t just a policing issue — it’s a community issue,” said Pastor Rashidi Denson, senior pastor of Fire Global Ministries and a keynote speaker at the event. “When young people are dying over Instagram arguments or TikTok disrespect, we’ve failed to give them alternatives to resolve conflict.”

The seminar centered on raw, firsthand accounts. Shelly Johnson, 24, spent two and a half years in prison for gun charges and had to watch his first child grow up behind bars. He’s working on turning his life around and regaining all the years he lost in prison.

Now mentoring teens, he warned, “Gang life looks appealing when you’re struggling, but it’s a dead end. I sold my soul for quick cash, but legal money lasts longer than a reputation.” He wanted young adults



to know violence is not really worth it. “Before you make that decision and try to do something that you’re going to regret later on down the line, step back and think about it. No jail is worth it — or even being killed by a gang.”

Jayla Johnson, a single mother from Bedford-Stuyvesant, recounted losing her child’s father to a barbershop shooting last year in Canarsie. He had recently come home from prison but found himself back in the street life, which unfortunately became his demise. “Gun violence doesn’t just take lives — it leaves families broken,” she said, her voice trembling. “My son asks for his dad every day. How do I explain that pride and a bullet stole him?”

Her story reflects a grim reality: Nearly 60% of gun violence victims in Canarsie are linked to personal disputes, per NYPD analysis. Many involve individuals with prior arrests, highlighting cycles of retaliation.

Denson also noted, “Beefs start online with a comment or a meme, then spill into streets. Kids don’t realize a ‘clapback’ can lead to a funeral.”

Denson also finds that often people think that they don’t count, until they come to these spaces and see how much they matter. “It doesn’t matter whether the event has two million people or the event has 25 people. If we can impact somebody and give them information so that they allow to be transformed and change, that’s what I’m here for,” he said. “This was a community coming together to let people know that the 69th Precinct is not just here to lock your children up, but they are here to do preventative services.”

While the NYPD emphasized enforcement, community leaders stressed prevention. Canarsie’s Cure Violence chapter, part of a citywide interrupter program, reported 22 potential conflicts de-escalated in 2024 through mediation. However, funding gaps persist.

“We don’t need more cops — we need more counselors, jobs and after-school programs,” argued Saradine Lewis, a mother of three who attended the event after her son narrowly avoided a shooting near Flatlands Avenue. “Kids here have nowhere to go. Closed rec centers and understaffed schools push them to the streets.”

Her concerns align with city data showing Canarsie’s youth unemployment rate at 28%, nearly double the city average. Denson’s PMD Advanced Consultants aim to bridge this gap through workforce training, but scalability remains a hurdle.

Attendees praised the precinct for facilitating an environment where community concerns could be addressed and partnerships strengthened. Officers were on hand to interact with residents, discuss safety initiatives and build trust within the neighborhood.

The 69th Precinct also had the Domestic Violence Unit, Crime Prevention, Auxiliary Division, Youth Leadership and Chaplain Services in attendance.

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CCDI and NOAA Suborganization to Study Flooding and House Sinking in Canarsie

By Amanda Salazar

Canarsie Community Development Inc. (CCDI) and the Consortium for Climate Risk in the Urban Northeast (CCRUN) are beginning a three-phase project in Canarsie to study residents' experiences with flooding and sinking and to, hopefully, identify some potential solutions.

CCDI is a Canarsie-based nonprofit looking at ways to improve the neighborhood in terms of quality of life and resiliency to climate change. The organization was born after Superstorm Sandy — which hit Canarsie and neighboring waterfront communities hard — and looked for ways to rebuild the area.

CCRUN, a suborganization of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

(NOAA), is a multidisciplinary group of several universities, including CUNY, the City University of New York. It studies climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies for states in the Northeast.

The Canarsie study is in its first phase, which is to learn about the issues the community faces, the scope of the situations and how widespread the problems are.

“A few people came to [CCDI] with these kinds of situations of homes sinking, not knowing what to do,” CUNY Graduate Center earth and environmental sciences PhD student Charles Overton, who's working on the project with CCRUN, said. “The thinking is that, potentially, there are a lot more people, but they're kind of suffering in silence because of



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Who Is It For?

Canarsie renters and homeowners, frequent visitors to the area, and family and friends of Canarsie residents.

Who Created it?

The Canarsie Community Development, Inc. and researchers from the Consortium for Climate Risk in the Urban Northeast (CCRUN) and funded by U.S. NOAA (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration)!

Please Take the Survey!

No local, state, or federal government agencies are directly associated with this data collection effort. The survey is confidential, and we will not share individual results with any government agency or insurance company. We only ask for your street and cross street to locate where the problems may exist.

CCDI and CCRUN study of the Flooding and House Sinking in Canarsie:
Please complete survey by scanning the QR Code on Flyer or Physical Copies in stamped address envelopes can be requested by contacting harold.jones105@yahoo.com or 9175925875. The survey doesn't ask for name, address or any identifying information, just block and cross streets.

There is an option to leave your email address if you want to be updated on future developments. This email address will be used to randomly select three respondents to win either a \$300, \$200 or \$100 gift cards as an incentive to fill the survey.

fear of being kicked out of their homes.”

To do this, the researchers are asking Canarsie residents, workers and frequent visitors to fill out an anonymous survey, where they can talk about any flooding or sinking — formally called land subsidence — they have experienced, observed or heard about. People are encouraged to fill out the survey even if they haven't personally dealt with these issues, as it will give the researchers a clearer understanding of roughly how many, or how few, people are actually dealing with this. The same goes for people who just work in Canarsie or visit but do not permanently reside there.

The link to this survey can be found in the form of a scannable QR code, present both at the top of this article and in the accompanying advertisement. Physical copies of the survey can be mailed to CCDI at 4809 Avenue N, Suite 149, Brooklyn, NY 11234.

Three survey respondents will be randomly selected to win either a \$100, \$200 or \$300 gift card, as an incentive to get people to fill out the form.

The survey doesn't ask for the name, address or any identifying information of the participant, but there is an option to leave your email at the end if you want to stay in contact with the team.

With a mix of multiple choice and written questions, the survey could take around 10 minutes to complete, depending on how detailed you get on the open-ended answers. They ask about heavy rain, hurricanes, coastal flooding, water from blocked drains, ditches, culverts, blocked sewers and water rising from the ground.

Flooding and land sinking are common issues in Canarsie, a community that regularly deals with sinkholes, flooded basements, overflowing catch basins, a rising Fresh Creek and water leaks in the middle of streets. Structural damage to homes can result from a lot of this.

In fact, preliminary results of the survey show around 40-43% of homes are dealing with some sort of structural damage. CCDI Founder and Executive Director Harold Jones has experienced this firsthand, his basement

receiving 6.5 feet of flooding during Superstorm Sandy and the piles under his home coming up.

“The problems seem to be more serious than we thought,” Jones, who has an engineering background, said. “The people who live in the area, especially the area where the sinkholes were, are scared because they don’t want the publicity, but we have to do something as far as that’s concerned.”

Residents may keep these experiences hush-hush out of concern that their insurance will drop them or raise their rates, that they’ll have to pay for the costly process of getting their house raised or that they’ll have to move out of their home entirely if the damage is too severe. However, the longer these problems are left to fester without being dealt with, the worse they can become.

The research team believes these issues could be widespread in the community, so the survey is an opportunity for the researchers to see if this is the case.

“Right now, the diagnostic is far from being over; the doctor is just simply taking the different signals, temperature, blood pressure and all that,” Drexel University civil geotechnical engineer Dr. Miguel Pando, who is new to the team, said. “We cannot really yet say much about whether it’s a very critical issue.”

Once the results of the survey are in, the team will analyze the data and try to map out where the issues are specifically (exact addresses will not be requested on the survey, but cross streets will).

Following this, the second phase of the project will be to share the findings with the community and to try to “chart a path forward” with solutions. This will be done through community meetings and workshops with residents. Potential solutions include further geological studies or finding grants to address the issues.

The third and final phase of the project is to actually implement the solutions that were generated in phase two. It is not yet clear what these solutions will be.



Canarsie regularly struggles with flooding, houses sinking and water leaks.

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Marine Park

Brooklyn-Based Author Tells the Tale of Wuffy



By Brian Moreno

Parents and their children gathered on a bright and cool Saturday morning, February 22nd, at the Carmine Carro Community Center, at 3000 Fillmore Avenue, to see Brooklyn independent children’s author Helen Rogosin introduce the grumpy yet lovable Wuffy, who teaches the importance of friendship and imagination.

Organized by the Marine Park Alliance (MPA), the center was packed as families were entertained by Rogosin as she read the first book in her series, *Wuffy & the Magic Lintball*. After introducing Wuffy and how he came to be, she showed the audience a song version of the story.

“I was a sickly little kid, and my father brought home this toy from the pharmacy to make me feel better,” Rogosin said. “He had this lintball on his nose, and my brother thought it would be a good idea to say he has a magic lintball and he looks like a Wuffy. From there, *Wuffy & the Magic Lintball* was born.”

“I thought about all the books I wanted to write as a teacher and put them off for someday. The moment I retired, I knew that was the day I was going to start getting these books in the hands of kids and that Wuffy was going to be the little hero who encouraged them to value friendship and family and creativity and science and all the things that I grew up thinking was important to me.”

After storytelling time, families participated in arts and crafts, creating their own books, even making their own paper bag “Wuffies,” with cut-out construction paper and googly eyes.

“When my wife and I both have off on the weekend, we like to find things to do and not be home, and we noticed the event,” D.B. Grissom said. “We thought it would be a nice opportunity to see something that’s going on in the neighborhood, see and support an independent author. It was a nice arts and craft project.”

At MPA events, families get to engage in projects with each other, and members of the community get to learn and explore new things.

“We’re always trying to expand our *Just for Kids* series to offer more free programming for parents and families in the neighborhood,” MPA Executive Director Scott Middleton said. “This is our first shot at an indoor *Just for Kids* event, and I’m very pleased with the turnout and pleased that we are able to promote a local author and illustrator and also invite people to join all of our upcoming *Just for Kids* programs.”



The Grissom family make their own puppet of Wuffy

After the reading of *Wuffy & the Magic Lintball*, families participate in an arts and crafts project.

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UNFURNISHED APT

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E Flatbush: Newly renovated Large 2 BR, HWFs, near transportation, \$2,300. Broker (347) 393-9403

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