

# ACROSS THE BOARD

**APRIL 2015**

**VOLUME 37, NO. 4**

## *District Manager's Report*

### *Good News!*

This spring, long awaited resurfacing will take place on **Sterling Place from Kingston to Classon Avenues** (Project # K2015-01-01) and **Park Place from Franklin to Bedford Avenues** (Project # K2015-08-4).

### *Parks*

Big things are happening in our parks! A scope meeting with the Dept. of Parks and Recreation was held to discuss a **new skate park in Brower Park**. The Parks Department plans to add 3 additional skate units to the park. A scope meeting was also held to discuss plans for a **new comfort station, storage facility, and office space near the tennis court at Lincoln Terrace Park**.

On March 26, 2015, Commissioner Mitchell Silva invited Community Board Chairpersons, Parks Committee Chairpersons, and District Managers for a roundtable dialogue to discuss ideas for improving parks and green spaces in Brooklyn. If you have any ideas, please forward them to the District office via email at [brooklyncb8@gmail.com](mailto:brooklyncb8@gmail.com).

## *PlaNYC*

Every 4 years, New York City writes a plan to help chart our course as a city. This year, Mayor deBlasio is asking all New Yorkers to help.

Every New Yorker has a voice in this plan and can participate in building an equitable city in the future. Here are some guiding questions that may be helpful regarding sustainability, resiliency, growth, and equity:

- How can we make it easier to participate in NYC's civic, economic, and cultural life?
- How can NYC accommodate a half million more people over the next 30 years?
- How can we grow an equitable and diverse economy that creates good paying jobs?
- How do we create healthy, sustainable, and resilient communities?

Leave your mark on the future of New York City. Take the survey now by visiting [www.on.nyc.gov/survey](http://www.on.nyc.gov/survey). Or, post your ideas, questions, or comments to [www.nyc.gov/ideas](http://www.nyc.gov/ideas).

***Stormwater Greenstreets and Bioswales***

You may have noticed some **unusual sidewalk construction** taking place in your neighborhood. Here is what is happening: Newtown Creek Project and the Gowanus Canal Project.

**The projects consist of the construction of a multitude of bioswales**, which basically look like a larger tree pit with plantings. Bioswales takes the first inch of rain water and allows it to seep into the ground. New York City has a lot of impervious areas, but bioswales open them up and makes the area permeable to accept water. The goal of bioswales is to take storm water off the streets and have it percolate into the ground, thus reducing the amount of storm water in the drains.

Bioswales in the Gowanus Project, which includes Prospect Heights, are going to be located at the following locations:

*37 6th Avenue, 65 6th Avenue; 508, 550, 730 Bergen Street; 44 Butler Place, 594, 618, 645, 683, 760 Dean Street; 818, 847 Pacific Street; 169, 331, 344, 386, 397 Park Place; 60 Plaza Street East; 190, 249, 269, 321 Prospect Place; 214, 215 Sterling Place; 326, 349, 352, 285, 292 St. Johns Place; 89, 235, 270, 280 St. Marks Avenue; and 121, 153, 353 Underhill Avenue.*

Newtown Creek Bioswales, which includes Crown Heights North, will be located at the following locations:

*1195, 1197, 1199, 1238, 1249, 1269, 1270, 1295, 1297, 1331, 1347, 1374 St. Marks Avenue; 137, 151 Rochester Avenue, 1903, 1905, 1907 Pacific Street; 158, 161, 169 Buffalo Avenue; Ralph Avenue side of Kingsboro Houses, Dean Street Side of Kingsboro Houses, Bergen Street side of Kingsboro Houses, 1782, 1782, 1784*

*Bergen Street; 1453, 1477, 1479, 1481 Prospect Place; and 1539, 1543, 1544 Park Place.*

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Community Board office at 718-467-5574.

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***IDENTIFY AND REPORT GAS LEAKS***

In the wake of the deadly gas leak and explosion in the Village, Community Board 8, Con Edison, and National Grid are urging customers to be diligent in noticing and reporting gas leaks.

Natural gas has a distinctive, strong odor similar to rotten eggs. If you see a white cloud, mist, fog, bubbles in standing water, blowing dust, or vegetation that appears to be dead or dying for no reason, or hear a roaring, hissing, or whistling sound, it may be an indication of a gas leak.

If you suspect a gas leak, evacuate immediately and inform your neighbors to do the same. If the smell is very strong, open your windows before evacuating to give the gas an opportunity to escape rather than collect in a confined space, thus increasing the chances of an explosion. Call Con Ed (if outside of Brooklyn) immediately at 1-800-752-6633 or National Grid (only in Brooklyn) at 718-643-4050.

Do not do anything that could create a spark, thus igniting the gas and causing an explosion. Sparks are caused by many normal activities and things that we would not suspect. Do not light matches, turn on or off appliances and light switches, use a telephone of any kind, ring a doorbell, or start a car. Any of these

activities would be enough to cause a deadly explosion if indeed there is a gas leak.

For additional information and safety tips on natural gas, visit [www.coned.com](http://www.coned.com) or [www.nationalgrid.com](http://www.nationalgrid.com) and go their customer support sections.

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### ***E-VERIFY***

**E-Verify** is a free and easy-to-use internet based system run by the Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) that lets employers make sure their new hires can legally work in the United States. It takes information entered on the employee's Form I-9 and compares the information against existing records in the Social Security Administration or DHS. Employers may not use E-Verify to discriminate, such as prescreening applicants.

If you have an initial reported mismatch, also known as a "Tentative Non-Confirmation" (TNC), you can contest it. Your employer will give you a referral letter with instructions, and you will have eight workdays to begin resolving the TNC. While you are resolving the TNC, the employer may not change your hire date, fire you, stop your training, lower or withhold your pay, or treat you differently.

For more information call 888-897-7781 or go to [www.dhs.gov/E-verify](http://www.dhs.gov/E-verify).

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### ***COMMUNITY SERVICES***

Staff from the **New York State Dept. of Labor** is working with **Councilman**

**Robert Cornegy's** office to match long-term unemployed residents of central Brooklyn with available jobs at his District office located at 1360 Fulton Street, Suite 500, Brooklyn. The Unemployment Strikeforce is available Mondays and Tuesdays from 9 AM to 5 PM.

**The Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB)** will also make the Councilman's office **the first permanent location for "CCRB Community Partners."** CCRB Community Partners is designed to help challenge police misconduct and is available to anyone that would like to make or follow-up on a CCRB claim. Hours are Fridays from 3 PM to 8 PM. Please call 718-919-0740 to schedule an appointment.

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### ***HOW TO FILE A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT***

**If you believe you have been the victim of discrimination in the City of New York in the areas of employment, housing, or public accommodations based on the protected classes of equal opportunity, *you may file a complaint with the Law Enforcement Bureau of the NYC Commission on Human Rights,*** located at 100 Gold Street, Suite 4600, in lower Manhattan. The law requires that the complaint be filed within one year of the last alleged act of discrimination.

It is recommended that you make an appointment for an intake interview but walk-in appointments are available. To schedule an appointment, call 212-306-7450. If you are physically unable to travel to the Commission's offices, other arrangements will be made for you.

Please bring all information covered in the complaint such as names, addresses, and phone numbers of the people or organizations you are charging and the exact dates of the events. You can also speak to an attorney in one of the Commission's Community Service Centers.



### ***CREDIT REPORT CHANGES***

Changes to credit reporting are a big win for consumers! If you have ever struggled to have incorrect credit information fixed at one of the three credit bureaus, or if you have been turned down for credit or housing due to that bad information, you will appreciate the changes that are coming.

The Attorney General for the state of New York has negotiated consumer protections with the three credit bureaus: Experian, Equifax, and TransUnion. Highlights of the changes include:

- You will have a say. In the past, credit bureaus have simply taken the word of banks, lenders, and creditors that you owed a certain amount of money even if you did not. Now, if you can dispute something on your credit report, the bureaus will be required to use specially trained employees to check the information.
- You can submit documentation online. Your best bet might still be to send copies by mail as choices in the drop down online menus might be limiting.
- You can get an extra free updated report if changes have been made after dispute resolution. To get your free annual reports, go to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call

877-322-8228. Hint: order one every quarter from a different credit bureau.

- One of the biggest changes involves medical bills. Far too many consumers with perfect credit have seen their credit scores plunge when they've been hit with medical bills. Now, credit bureaus will not put any medical debt on a credit report for 180 days. And as a bonus, if a delinquency has been reported, once the debt has been paid, it will disappear from the credit report and not linger for long periods as happens with other types of debt.

To read more about the coming changes, go to the New York Attorney General's website at [www.ag.ny.gov](http://www.ag.ny.gov) and click "Media Center," then "Press Releases," and scroll down to the article.



### ***CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES***

**Center for Behavioral Health Services** has a long history of **providing employment services to people living with mental illness, as well as those with mental illness who have a history of arrest and/or incarceration.** Their employment services are built on the principles of Supported Employment, an evidence-based practice proven to be effective in helping mental health consumers find, get, and keep employment.

Center for Behavioral Health Services helps participants navigate the challenges and frustrations of employment by helping them pursue the right job leads; complete online and written job applications; build a stand-out resume



and cover letter; prepare for interviews; plan for how earned income will impact SSI and other benefits; negotiate for the best possible employment conditions, supports, and accommodations; and keep the job with the help of follow-along supports.

The program also offers employment-focused counseling with the goal of addressing barriers to employment, as well as benefits counseling to ensure that those receiving public benefits such as SSI or SSDI report earnings to avoid sanctions or sudden discontinuation of benefits.

If you have questions on the services provided or would like additional information, please call 718-210-3800 ext 3021.

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### ***KINSHIP CARE PROGRAM***

When parents are unable to care for their children, **kinship caregivers are increasingly asked to raise their grandchildren, nieces, nephews, great-grandchildren, and siblings.** In NYC, almost 78,000 children are being raised by relatives. These kinship families have diverse and complex needs.

**The Kinship Care Program (KCP) is designed to promote family stability** by offering emotional support, case management, advocacy, and benefits information. **KCP services are free** and available at the JBFCS Brooklyn location (2020 Coney Island Avenue), through home visits, in schools, and at community centers.

The KCP offers case management for financial entitlements such as TANF funds/public assistance, Food Stamps,

Social Security benefits, Medicaid, Medicare, and health insurance options; weekly support groups for caregivers and youth in care; short term parent and youth counseling; parent education; educational advocacy and activities supporting school engagement; referral for legal assistance for permanency planning; informational forums for caregivers and youth in care; and training for professionals.

For more information, visit [www.jbfcs.org](http://www.jbfcs.org).

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### ***FREE ADULT COMPUTER CLASSES***

**Beginning Wednesday, April 15, 2015 and each Wednesday thereafter until June 24, 2015, free adult computer classes** will be offered at Community Learning School PS 335 **from 3 to 5 PM.** Take one class or all in the 11 part series. You must RSVP to reserve a seat by calling 646-460-3289. No supplies are needed.

Sharpen your computer skills, get job hunting tips, learn the ins and outs of email, social media, and much more.

PS 335 is located at 130 Rochester Avenue, Brooklyn, NY. For more information, contact Charlene Corbett at 646-460-3289 or 718-604-1380 ext. 207.

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### ***FREE GED PREP***

**Anyone over the age of 21 is eligible for free GED preparation classes. Classes are held every Monday and Thursday from 4 PM to 7 PM at PS**

**335/MS.584 located at 130 Rochester Avenue, Brooklyn, NY.**

All you need is a desire to pass the GED (TASC) exam; availability of 6 hours per week at 3 hours each time, and a positive attitude.

For more information, contact Charlene Corbett at 646-460-3289 or 718-604-1380 ext. 207.

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**TAX LIEN**

Did you receive a Lien Sale Warning? To protect your home, join Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams on **Wednesday, April 15, 2015 from 4 to 8 PM** at Brooklyn Borough Hall located at 209 Joralemon Street, Downtown Brooklyn (Community Room) **for guidance on how to deal with your lien.**

A lien is a legal claim against your property for unpaid water and sewer charges, property taxes or emergency repairs, as well as other municipal charges. Meet one-on-one with representatives to discuss eligibility for exemptions from lien sale; eligibility for debt assistance; and eligibility for no money down payment agreement.

For more information or to RSVP, call 718-802-4875.

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**ANNUAL TOWN HALL MEETING**

The Crown Heights North Association Inc. invites you to their **Annual Town Hall meeting** celebrating the 2015 designation of Phase III of the Crown Heights North Historic District. This

year's theme is "Sustaining Healthy Communities."

The town hall will be held on **Wednesday, April 15, 2015 from 6:30 to 9 PM at the Brooklyn Children's Museum** located at **145 Brooklyn Avenue** (corner of St. Marks Avenue). Refreshments will be served.

For more information, call 718-774-3834 or visit [www.crownheightsnorth.org](http://www.crownheightsnorth.org).

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**MAGIC AND MEMORY: AN EXPLORATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL FANTASY**

Weeksville Heritage Center is pleased to offer Magic and Memory: An Exploration of African American Historical Fantasy on **Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:30 PM from April 15, 2015 through May 6, 2015.**

Writer-in-residence **Zetta Elliot** will offer a **free, four week writing class** at the center. Designed for beginners, this class will offer an introduction to historic Weeksville and an opportunity to write creatively about the 19<sup>th</sup> century Brooklyn community.

Participants will be required to keep a writing journal and will be asked to read texts that combine history and fantasy. Participants will consider whether magic helps African Americans to remember, reconstruct, and/or recover from the past.

To register for the free class, email [writer@weeksvillesociety.org](mailto:writer@weeksvillesociety.org). **Enrollment is limited to 20 participants.**

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## ***OPERATION PROM BROOKLYN***

**Operation Prom Brooklyn is a national, non-profit organization that relies solely on donations.** The organization is currently accepting new and gently used formal wear to help graduating high school seniors in financial need and who are in good academic standing attend their prom. **Donations will be accepted through April 20, 2015.**

Donation sites include Brooklyn Borough Hall located at 209 Joralemon Street; Councilwoman Laurie Cumbo's office located at 1 Hanson Place, Suite 201; Councilman Robert Cornegy's office located at 1360 Fulton Street, Suite 500 among a few others.

For more donation sites and additional information, visit [www.operationprom.org](http://www.operationprom.org).

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## ***WOMEN AND HEALTH***

Women are not only a driving force in today's economy, but also key decision makers in both business and family financial arenas. **Women make or share responsibility for a majority of the family's financial decisions. *Yet women are behind in many areas of financial planning as well as overall financial knowledge and confidence.***

**Get educated about how to build and protect your wealth,** no matter how much you currently have. Learn strategies on how to defer taxes, plan for your retirement, protect your investments, and more on **Thursday, April 23, 2015 from 6:30-8:30 PM at Brooklyn Borough Hall located at 209 Joralemon Street,**

**Downtown Brooklyn.** RSVP at [www.womenandwealthny.com](http://www.womenandwealthny.com).

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## ***MINORITY PROCUREMENT CONFERENCE 2015***

**NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer** is issuing a special invitation to minority business owners to come learn about certification and getting contracts. Interested parties and business owners should attend the Minority Procurement Conference 2015 presented by the New American Chamber of Commerce (NACC) on **Thursday, April 23, 2015 from 8 AM to 5 PM at BNY Mellon, 101 Barclay Street, Manhattan.**

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## ***LIVING HEALTHY LIVES: TAKING CHARGE FOR YOU AND YOUR GRANDCHILDREN***

**The Brooklyn Grandparent's Coalition and the Department of Social Work at LIU Brooklyn are pleased to co-sponsor a **free forum for New York City Relative Caregivers.****

**Living Healthy Lives: Taking Charge For You and Your Grandchildren,** is a **workshop and resource fair** that will be held on **Friday, April 24, 2015 from 9:30 AM to 2 PM** at **LIU Brooklyn located at 1 University Plaza, Arnold and Marie Schwartz Gymnasium, Downtown Brooklyn.**

**Registration is required by April 17, 2015.** To register, call 718-676-4251 or email [jwatkins@jbfcs.org](mailto:jwatkins@jbfcs.org). For more information call 718-246-6443 or email [community@brooklyn.liu.edu](mailto:community@brooklyn.liu.edu). Lunch and metrocards will be provided.

### **FREE SHREDDING EVENT**

Join the Crown Heights North Association for a **free shredding event** on **Saturday, April 25, 2015 from 10 AM to 2 PM** at 991 St. John's Place (corner of Brooklyn Avenue), Brooklyn, NY. Shred your papers, documents, books, etc. For more information, call 718-774-3834.

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### **PROSPECT HEIGHTS CRAFT FAIR**

**Vendors and artists are wanted for the Prospect Heights Craft Fair!** With spring around the corner, the Prospect Heights Craft Fair, entering its 7<sup>th</sup> year, is looking for participants.

On **Saturday, April 25, 2015 from 11 AM to 6 PM** at **PS 9 located at 80 Underhill Avenue (between St. Marks Avenue and Bergen Street)**, join the PS 9 Parent Teachers Organization for a showcase of independent artists and designers from Brooklyn and beyond. Vendors and artists are encouraged to apply online now by visiting <http://prospectheightscraftfair.com/apply>.

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### **JAZZ BY THE SEA**

**Join the New York Aquarium-Coney Island** for Jazz by the Sea with a special performance by **The William Spaulding Quintet** as part of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival.

The performance will be on **Friday, May 8, 2015 from 4 to 6 PM** at the New York Aquarium-Coney Island located at Surf Avenue and West 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Brooklyn, NY.

Visit [www.nyaquarium.com](http://www.nyaquarium.com) for more information.

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### **THE CENTRAL BROOKLYN JAZZ FESTIVAL**

The **Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival** is coming to a venue near you! Visit <http://www.centralbrooklynjazzconsortium.org/> for more information.

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### **GREENEST BLOCK IN BROOKLYN**

**Brooklyn Botanic Garden is pleased to present the Greenest Block in Brooklyn, a friendly contest that Brooklyn always wins.** The Greenest Block in Brooklyn contest is free and open to all residential and business blocks in Brooklyn. Entrants must be a block association, merchant association, business-improvement district, or civic neighborhood organization. The top winners, which will be announced in August, receive prizes for their blocks.

Visit [www.bbg.org/greenestblock](http://www.bbg.org/greenestblock) to request a street gardening clinic on your block. Buy great plants for beautifying your block at the BBG annual plant sale on May 6, 2015 from 9 AM to 8 PM and May 7, 2015 from 9 AM to Noon.

For assistance entering your block, please call 718-623-7250 or email [greenbridge@bbg.org](mailto:greenbridge@bbg.org).

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### **VOLUNTEERING WITH TEALS**

According to a 2013 study by Code.org, **90% of US high schools do not teach**



**computer science.** With software engineers in high demand in the private sector, schools often cannot find instructors with a computer science background, and struggle to compete with the compensation packages offered in industry.

**TEALS helps high schools teach computer science by providing a team of trained volunteers to partner with a classroom teacher and deliver computer science to their students.** In just 2 years, the classroom teacher will gradually take over the responsibilities of teaching the course.

TEALS volunteers create a ripple effect, impacting not just the students they teach, but the hundreds of students who will study computer science with the teacher they help prepare.

Volunteers are needed. For more information on TEALS, visit [www.tealsk12.org/volunteers](http://www.tealsk12.org/volunteers). To apply to become a TEALS volunteer, visit [www.tealsk12.org/apply](http://www.tealsk12.org/apply). Contact [info@tealsk12.org](mailto:info@tealsk12.org) if you cannot find what you are looking for on their website.

**FREE PORTRAITS FOR CROWN HEIGHTS RESIDENTS**

Rusty Zimmerman, Portrait Artist to Governor Andrew Cuomo, will give **FREE portraits to residents of Crown Heights**, Brooklyn for one year to create a portrait of the place through its people. Zimmerman will paint 175 residents of Crown Heights from June 2015 through May 2016, and will work with local galleries to display the work as it emerges, show the entire collection in 2016, and give the paintings to their

subjects for FREE. As a community Arts initiative, the project will be crowd-funded with a Kickstarter campaign launching on April 15th, with a goal of \$48,000 to fund the work for an entire year. Visit [www.rustyzimmerman.com](http://www.rustyzimmerman.com) to participate or for more information,

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We urge everyone to adhere to the **Dept. of Sanitation's routing times of 8 AM to 9 AM and Noon to 1 PM daily.** The front of your property should be swept and free of debris 18 inches into the street. All sweepings must be bagged and disposed of properly. This will help us improve our scorecard rating which was **82.3 for streets and 88.5 for sidewalks** for the month of March.

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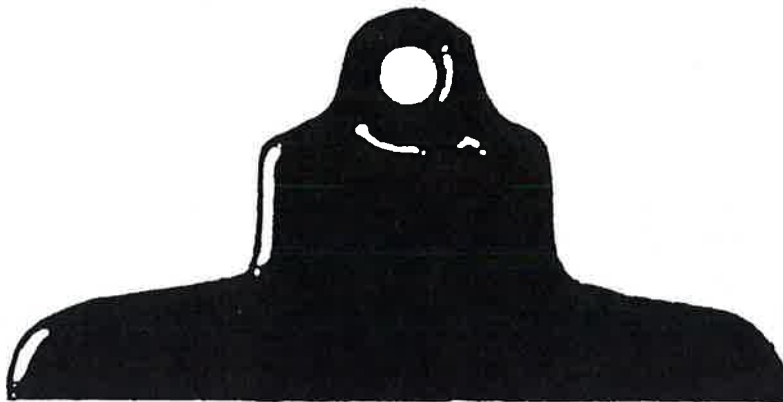
The following is a summary of the year-to-date CompStat Crime report covering the week of 03/23/15 through 03/29/15.

|                         | Year-to-Date |      |       |
|-------------------------|--------------|------|-------|
|                         | 2015         | 2014 | %Chg  |
| <b>Murder</b>           | 1            | 1    | 0     |
| <b>Rape</b>             | 8            | 6    | 33.3  |
| <b>Robbery</b>          | 68           | 58   | 17.2  |
| <b>Felony Assault</b>   | 78           | 85   | -8.2  |
| <b>Burglary</b>         | 54           | 79   | -31.6 |
| <b>Grand Larceny</b>    | 102          | 101  | 1.0   |
| <b>Gr. Larceny Auto</b> | 21           | 30   | -30   |

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**NEWLY CONSTRUCTED APARTMENTS FOR RENT**

626 Flatbush APTS is pleased to announce that applications are now being



accepted for 51 affordable housing rental apartments now under construction. Income restrictions apply.

To request an application, mail a post card to: 626 Flatbush APTS, 243 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Box 425, New York, NY 10016. Or, an application can be downloaded from <http://www.phippsny.org/properties/using/housing-applications-list/>.

Applicants will be required to meet income guidelines and additional selection criteria. Completed applications must be returned by regular mail only to a post office box number that will be listed with the application and must be postmarked by May 25, 2015. Applications will be selected by lottery and applicants that submit more than one application will be disqualified.

We would like to wish the happiest of birthdays to Ms. Princess James and Dr. Frederick Monderson.

The next 77<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council meeting will be held on **Monday, April 13, 2015** at 7:30 PM at Calvary

Community Church located at 1575 St. John's Place (corner of Buffalo Avenue).

The next 78<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council meeting will be held on **Tuesday, April 28, 2015** at 7:30 PM at the 78<sup>th</sup> Precinct located at 65 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The next meeting of **Community Board No. 8** will be held on **Thursday, May 14, 2015** at 7 PM at Center Light Health Care Center located at 727 Classon Avenue (between Park and Prospect Places), Brooklyn.

**ACROSS THE BOARD** is a monthly publication:

**Nizjoni Granville, Chairperson**  
**Michelle George, Dist. Manager/Editor**  
**Melanie Grant, Community Assistant**  
**Julia Neale, Community Associate**

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