

Train buff's got a new loco notion

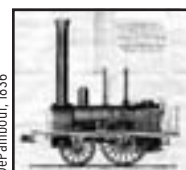
BY NATALIE MUSUMECI

High-tech scientific testing detected a 20-foot-long metallic “anomaly” below Atlantic Avenue — adding coal to the fire of an urban legend centered around a 19th century steam locomotive rumored to be buried inside a long-abandoned tunnel.

Engineering consultants detected the odd finding under the surface of the bustling street near Hicks Street, deep inside a half-mile tunnel that was built in 1844 as part of a planned route to Boston, according to an investigative study conducted by Brinkerhoff Environmental Group.

The project got shelved in 1861 and was lost to history until railway aficionado Bob Diamond discovered an open section of the obsolete Long Island Rail Road tunnel running from Hicks Street to Boerum Place in 1981 when he

Continued on page 2



DePambour, 1836

OFF THE RAILS:

Train aficionado Bob Diamond says this is buried under Atlantic Avenue.



Photo by Paul Martinka

Heart-warming

Michael Bernstein proposed to Courtney Stein after an icy ocean dip on New Year's Day at the legendary — and legendarily cold — Polar Bear swim in Coney Island. She said “yes.” **See more Polar Bear photos on page 3.**

SLUDGE FUND

Feds stick city with bill to keep sewage out of Gowanus Canal

BY NATALIE MUSUMECI

The federal government will force the city to prevent millions of gallons of raw sewage from polluting the Gowanus Canal in a surprising addition to the much-hyped Superfund cleanup — likely through the construction of massive, \$78-million catch basins buried alongside the banks of the fetid waterway.

Two gigantic holding tanks would catch storm water and hazardous raw human waste discharged when sewers overflow during storms at the head of the canal near Butler Street and at the middle of the waterway near Third Street, according to the Environmental Protection Agency's newly revealed half-billion-dollar proposal.

Combating sewage overflow

was not the initial focus of the Superfund plan, which will dredge 10 feet of highly contaminated muck at the canal floor and cover it with a protective cap of sand, clay and gravel to prevent remaining toxins from seeping back into the ecosystem.

The feds originally targeted the crud at the bottom of the canal because it was known to be loaded with dozens of dangerous contaminants including heavy metals like mercury, lead, copper, and other chemicals. But when investigators found cancer-causing compounds laden with gasoline, diesel, and coal tar residues in sewage runoff flowing into the Gowanus, they ordered the city to keep wastewater of the Canal as well.

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Fuel for the fire

BY COLIN MIXSON

The city will incinerate debris left behind by Hurricane Sandy instead of turning it into mulch because burning the lumber is more environmentally sound, officials decided last Tuesday.

The Department of Environmental Protection

approved a variance this week to install as many as four air curtain burners at the Floyd Bennett Field that can light up toppled trees, allowing for the 24-hour, high-tech incineration of unwanted lumber from now until April 17 — despite concerns from neighbors and

Continued on page 5



Photo by Stefano Giovannini

DIRT BAG: Researchers want soil samples from areas flooded by Hurricane Sandy.

Scientists: Give us your dirt

BY DANIELLE FURFARO

If you ever wanted to get the real dirt on Hurricane Sandy's impact on Brooklyn, here's your chance.

A pair of upstate chemistry professors are asking Brooklyn residents to send them dirt that was inundated with floodwater during the storm so they can

determine how dirty it really is.

Experiment leader and Vassar educator Alison Spodek Keimowitz says the goal of the project is simple: to find out if Sandy's huge storm surge made soil harmful for human contact.

“My first hope is to be able to reassure people that

the dirt is not very contaminated,” said Keimowitz, who is working on the project — dubbed Send Us your Dirt from Sandy, or SUDS — with Marist College professor Neil Fitzgerald. “But if it is contaminated, we're going to notify agencies like the [Environmental Protec-

Continued on page 5

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Train

Continued from page 1
was just 19 years old.

Diamond has long claimed there's a locomotive buried at the end of the tunnel, and he says the discovery of a metal object is the biggest proof yet.

"It's one thing to believe that something is real for more than 30 years and it's another thing to actually know it exists," said Diamond, founder of the Brooklyn Historic Railway Association.

"It's like finding a giant hoard of gold," he said. "That locomotive has been sitting there since the outbreak of the Civil War — it's like a living piece of history."

The train buff spent 28 years leading visitors down a manhole for popular tours of the abandoned passage until the Department of Transportation closed the tunnel by the order of Fire Department officials, who deemed it a safety hazard in 2010.

Diamond filed suit in an attempt to reopen the tunnel and managed to obtain a copy of the "top-secret" scientific findings — uncovered by a team of experts hired by National Geographic for a proposed television special on the urban legend — more than a week ago as part of his year-long case against the city.

The documents detail how engineering consultants from the New Jersey-based firm scanned Atlantic Avenue from street-level with high-powered, ground-penetrating electromagnetic devices in search of the cast iron locomotive in January of 2011.

"It is conceivable that the suspect locomotive is located between the middle and south sides of Atlantic Ave. and a separate smaller anomaly is located on the northern side of Atlantic Ave.," wrote Matthew Powers, director of geophysical services for the firm, in an inside e-mail obtained by this newspaper.

"Based upon Brinkerhoff's interpretation of the geophysical data, there is no question that something(s) metallic is buried under Atlantic Ave., it's just a matter of what and in what orientation," wrote Powers.

Diamond has no doubt



TRAIN OF THOUGHT: Railroad history buff Bob Diamond, who discovered an abandoned tunnel under Atlantic Avenue in 1981, thinks an old locomotive is buried inside — and now he claims high-tech scientific testing proves there's a train waiting to be excavated.

File photo by Tom Callan

that the 20-foot-long intact metallic structure is a locomotive dating back to the 1800s and that the smaller metal item is a railroad car.

"The only object that was on a railroad back in those days that was 20-feet-long and that would give off a strong magnetic signal would be a locomotive," he said. "There is nothing that a railroad used back then that would fit that description — everything else was made out of wood."

Diamond, who believes the locomotive is buried behind a four-foot-thick stone wall and 70 feet of dirt, is itching to get back into the tunnel and feast his eyes on the historic steam-powered locomotive.

"If I could get back down into the tunnel I would be digging with my teeth and fingernails trying to get at that thing," said the railway enthusiast. "It will make my lifelong mission in life fulfilled."

However, excavation won't happen without city permission.

Department of Trans-

portation officials would not comment because of the ongoing litigation, but city lawyer Warren Shaw said the locomotive hasn't had much power in court so far.

"The issue of a possible locomotive was raised in previous court proceedings," he said. "The judge dismissed every aspect of the complaint related to the alleged locomotive."

But Diamond is optimistic — and he says the city could turn this train into an engine for Atlantic Avenue.

"I'm hoping that the city is going to realize what a great find this is ... and use this as a world-class tourist attraction that has the potential to help revitalize the western end of Atlantic Avenue," he said. "This is our big chance to make something out of the tunnel and this amazing archaeological find."

Officials at Brinkerhoff Environmental Group declined to comment on the matter because of Diamond's ongoing lawsuit with the city.

SWIMMING INTO NEW YEAR

3 JAN. 6, 2013, BROOKLYN WEEKLY

Polar Bears take annual dive into waters off Coney

BY SHAVANA ABRUZZO

Who needs Hawaii in January?

Bold beach buffs from the Coney Island Polar Bear Club embrrr-aced 2013 by frolicking in the frigid waves off the Boardwalk with smiles as wide as the sun, while thumbing their noses at the frosty temps.

Swimmers put their nerves on ice for the famed group's 110th annual daredevil dip in the Atlantic, stripping down to their smalls and proudly strutting their stuff on the shoreline before making a big splash on New Year's Day.

The thrills were non-stop. Prospect Lefferts Gardens resident Michael Bern-

ing personality, but I had to get a 2XL and wear the bottom backwards to make it fit!" said Rosenblum, adding proudly that he was repeatedly asked to pose for a photograph.

Rosenblum, who was left homeless by Hurricane Sandy, said he gladly took his very first glacial drenching because this year's proceeds will benefit storm victims, as well as a charity for children with life-threatening illnesses.

"It was for a good cause," he said, vowing to return next year.

Polar Bear veteran Megan Walsh said the icy swim is all about community.

"Everyone is happy and excited — it brings together groups of people who normally wouldn't interact," said the 26-year-old executive assistant from Bay Ridge, who has taken part since she was 7.

The event's mounting popularity was evidenced at Ruby's Bar and Grill — a semi-official launching pad and go-to spot for hot chocolate and chili — which had an elaborate system in place to accommodate the swarm of swimmers, according to Walsh.

"Years ago, everyone who went could fit in there, but you

had to wait on line this year, you got a wrist band, and every 15 minutes a new wave would jump in," she said.

And as the New Year's Day party continues to grow, the freezing fiesta remains a Brooklyn tradition worth keeping, according to its biggest dipper.

"It's a way of leaving the old behind and welcoming the new with a shock to the system!" said Dennis Thomas, president of the group, which claims to be the nation's original winter bathing club.



DANGER ZONE: Emergency medical teams were on hand to help swimmers maintain their body heat. Some, like this woman, required treatment.

stein proposed to stunned girlfriend Courtney Stein as the pair emerged from the surf (she accepted!), while Brighton Beach teacher Jared Rosenblum, 29, rode the chutzpah wave to the fullest, parading his buff bod in a teensy-weensy gray bikini.

He picked up the skimpy outfit at the Beach Shop on the Boardwalk after he lost a bet to a pal — and realized he wouldn't be able to squeeze into any of his female friends' swimwear.

"This one stood out because it matched my outgo-



COLD, PLAY: (Clockwise from top) Crowds of brave beachgoers celebrated New Year's by taking a chilly swim in the ocean with the Coney Island Polar Bear Club. Bay Ridge residents Megan Walsh and Mary O'Regan made a splash. Jared Rosenblum found a novel way to keep his upper body warm. Some participants wore only swimsuits. Others kept their jackets on. Michael Bernstein and Courtney Stein took one plunge after another by getting engaged following their freezing dip.

Photos by Paul Martinka

Finally! Sandy relief center opens in Sheepshead Bay

New federal facility will save residents 45-minute trips

BY COLIN MIXSON

Sheepshead Bay residents who remain without heat and hot water got what they really wanted for Christmas — a disaster recovery center.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency opened a relief hub at the Sheepshead Bay Yacht Club on Emmons Avenue last Wednesday, pleasing storm-slammed neighbors who have long complained about a lack of government aid following Hurricane Sandy.

Civic activist Laura McKenna of the Bay Improvement Group cheered the federal agency's decision to open up shop between Brown and Batchelder streets, saying the site is nearest to the people who need it most — including some residents who are still living without basic utilities.

"This location is closest to the impacted part of the community and will have high visibility," said McKenna.

"We hope it will bring an increase to services to the

area as we move from relief to recovery," she said.

The disaster recovery center will operate from 9 am to 6 pm, Monday to Saturday through Jan. 28, providing Brooklynites with information on government aid programs and allowing people to register for help.

Neighborhood civic leaders told this newspaper they wish the disaster recovery center had opened sooner — but it's better late than never.

"We really feel like it's overdue, but we're happy to have it," said McKenna.

The news comes as a relief to residents in Sheepshead Bay and nearby Plumb Beach, many of whom lost vehicles in the storm's 14-foot tidal surge — making it hard for them to access similar federal response hubs in other Southern Brooklyn neighborhoods.

"That will really help people out," said Stanton Road resident Mike Rodriguez, who remains without heat and hot water more than two months after the storm.

"It'll be much easier to

take a walk around the corner instead of having to go down to Gerritsen Beach or Coney Island to talk to people."

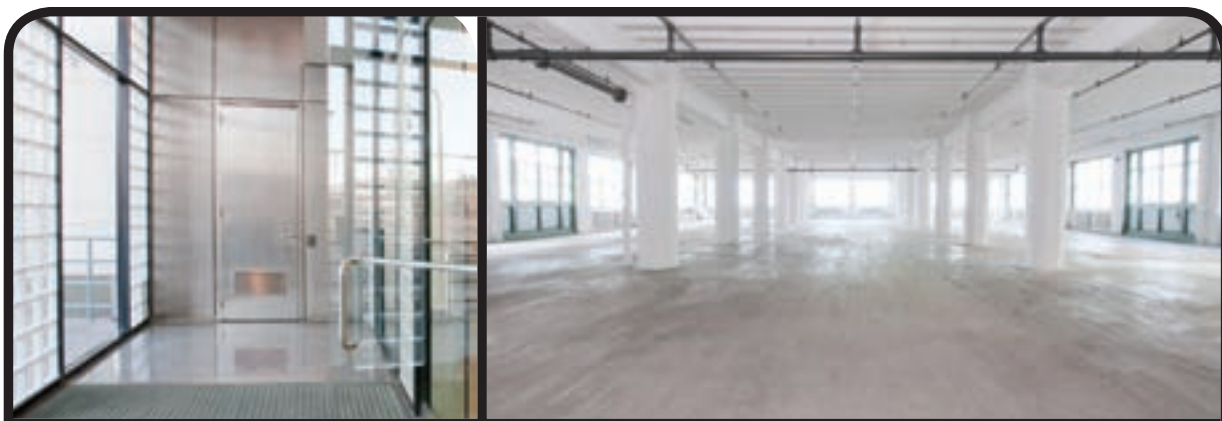
The response hub aims to help residents and mer-

chants alike by opening its doors to the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Organizers are seeking additional relief groups interested in helping out.



HELP US OUT: Mike Rodriguez said the Sheepshead Bay disaster recovery center will help residents still without heat and hot water get information on government aid. Photo by Steve Solomonson



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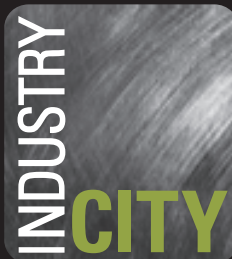
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Boro's new babies ring in 2013

BY SHAVANA ABRUZZO

He was born to be a star! Adorable East New York baby boy Orane Clarke almost stole the spotlight from the ball drop at Times Square on Jan. 1 when he arrived just minutes later to cheers at SUNY Downstate Medical Center, where he created quite a buzz as Brooklyn's first baby of 2013.

The doe-eyed darling arrived at the stroke of 12:12 am to cheers at the East Flatbush hospital, where he gently tipped the scales at 6-pounds 14-ounces and embraced his new stardom by snoozing peacefully in the arms of jubilant mom Nickesha, while doting dad Odane hovered close by.

Orane is the second child for the couple — already parents to 2-year-old Odane, Jr. — and his awesome addition is to rave for, says the family.

"I'm just overwhelmed, proud, and happy that we have another child!" beamed the happy mommy.

At New York Methodist Hospital in Park Slope, Jungmin Oh and Benjamin Brown also had reason to pop the cork! They rang in the New Year by welcoming their bundle of cuteness — baby girl Gena, weighing 7-pounds 2-ounces and measuring 19.5 inches in length — as the clock struck 12:54 am.

Jungmin, who hails from the Gangnam district of Seoul, South Korea made popular by pop star Psy, and hubby Benjamin say they're just happy it's all over — or just beginning, depending upon your perspective!

"We didn't care whether she was the first baby of the year, or anything like that," said the delighted dad. "We just were hoping that she would be happy and healthy — we can't think of a better way to start 2013."

Precisely 22 minutes later, the festivities continued in full swing at Maimonides Medical Center in Borough Park, where Kensington mom Shamima



HAPPY NEW YEAR: Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center's first baby of 2013 was Yomil Vallejo — who brought New Year's cheer to his parents Lorenza Rojas and Clarito Vallejo.

Hossein had staffers celebrating at 1:16 am when she gave birth to the hospital's first newborn of the year — a beautiful, bouncing girl, weighing 5-pound 10-ounces, but as yet without a name in keeping with cultural rites.

We're told baby, and mom and dad Anwar, who already have four children, are doing just fine.

FatherTime didn't forget Brookdale University Hos-

pital and Medical Center at Brookdale Plaza, where lil' Yomil Vallejo made his dazzling, 7-pounds 2-ounce debut at 4:35 am, becoming the year's first baby there, while delivering glad tidings to thrilled parents mom Lorenza Rojas and dad Clarito Vallejo.

Courier Life and Community Newspaper Group extend hearty congratulations to all of Brooklyn's 2013 babies and their families.



RIGHT ON TIME: (Top) Orane Clarke was born at 12:12 am at SUNY Downstate in East Flatbush to East New York couple Nickesha and Odane Clarke. (Below) Baby Gena was born to proud Park Slope parents Jungmin Oh and Benjamin Brown at 12:54 am at New York Methodist Hospital on Seventh Avenue.



Field fire

Continued from page 1

activists who fear the fire will damage air quality and hurt their lungs.

Environmental activists including the New York Public Interest Research Group, the Sierra Club, and the American Lung Association argued the fallen hardwoods would be better off sold as mulch, but authorities said turning the trees into ash creates less pollution than turning them into compost.

The reason why? Bugs.

To keep the ravenous Asian Longhorned Beetle — an invasive hard-shell pest known to attack maple, elm, willow, birch, poplar, and ash trees — from potentially compromising roughly half of the city's five million trees, the lumber must be chipped or incinerated.

But in order to shred the wood in a way sure to eradicate any pesky insects, the city must feed wood through its chippers twice — each time creating harmful emissions from the machines themselves, the "fugitive dust created by the shredding process," and the trucks that will haul the mulch to its final destination, according to a variance memorandum sent from Department of Environmental Protection commissioner Carter Strickland to a contractor.

A November test run led the city to conclude that burning unchipped



BURN, BENNETT, BURN: The city will burn trees knocked down by Hurricane Sandy, and this map indicates smoke will barely reach residential areas. Department of Environmental Protection

wood in the shipping-container-sized furnaces for 24 hours per day, seven days per week "would not have a significant impact on air quality in surrounding communities at ground level," according to the report.

A diagram included in the city's memorandum showed low levels of pollutants reaching the Marine Park Golf Course, Mill Basin, and the Toys 'R' Us on Flatbush Avenue, and slightly higher levels at the Aviator

Sports and Recreation complex.

But New York Public Interest Research Group senior environmental associate Laura Haight says the city is grossly underestimating the amount of emissions created by burning the wood — and claims the practical applications of chipped wood more than make up for the added cost of eradicating the Asian Longhorned Beetle.

"Much like burning coal, this variance is going to allow for increased air pollution, which can

make people sick and send them to the hospital," said Haight, who fears the incineration may bring an affliction called "Rockaway cough" to some of Brooklyn's Hurricane Sandy-battered neighborhoods. "We're talking about concentrating more pollutants in areas that are already suffering from mold and dust."

And she says the city wouldn't struggle to find buyers for the double-chopped wood.

Dirt

Continued from page 1

tion Agency]."

The researchers are urging Brooklynites to gather a sandwich bag worth of soil, label it with cross streets and the name of the nearest body of water, and mail it upstate.

So far, the pair have received about 70 samples, not only from the Brooklyn neighborhoods including Gowanus, Red Hook, and Gerritsen Beach, but also other parts of the city such as the Far Rockaways and Manhattan.

"We weren't asking them to go into Superfund sites," said Fitzgerald. "Just to collect what they would come in contact with anyway."

The unconventional, open-sourced approach to scientific inquiry forces the researchers to sacrifice some control of the experiment — but it helps them take in a large quantity of samples with little time in the field.

"I teach classes, so I can't run all over getting

samples," said Keimowitz. "Right now, we don't have the time."

The researchers have already been inundated with samples from scientists — both amateur and professional — as well as from concerned locavores.

"We got samples from a lot of people involved in community gardening who wanted to know what was in the food they were growing," said Fitzgerald.

Gowanus resident Ey-mund Deigel said mailing soil to the upstate scientists will help all Brooklynites gain real understanding about the storm of the century.

"More data means better information and better discussion," said Deigel. "There's a lot of paranoia and a lot of people saying nothing happened. The more we know, the more we can actually get things done."

Brooklynites can send samples to:

*Alison Keimowitz
Vassar College
124 Raymond Avenue
Poughkeepsie, NY 12604*

Sludge

Continued from page 1

"When we were doing the investigation three or four years ago we did not know whether or not the [combined sewage overflows] were an ongoing source of chemical pollution — now we know," said EPA regional administrator Walter Mugdan.

Superfund rules require the city to take some form of action — and building and maintaining the underground basins on city-owned land near the canal is far cheaper than reworking the neighborhood's sewers to keep overflow out of the canal when rains flood the system.

The feds suggest catch basins at the two outfall sites that currently spew most of the harmful runoff into the waterway. The proposed tanks will hold up to eight million gallons of runoff until storms pass, then push the slop back through sewers to the Red Hook and Owl's Head wastewater treatment plants — reducing raw sewage discharges into the canal by an estimated 58 to 74 percent.

Officials say sewage isn't

the primary form of pollution in the canal — but dredging the foul crud from the bottom of the waterway will serve little use if runoff recontaminates it every time it rains.

"The [combined sewage overflows] are not the dominant source of toxic pollution at this point, but they are an important source of it and the importance of that source will increase when the other sources are cut off," Mugdan said. "[It] needs to be controlled in order to get the full cleanup."

Neighborhood activists expected the Superfund cleanup to focus exclusively on the toxic canal-bed, and they are thrilled the feds will target the discharge, and the nasty stench that comes with it.

"We have been trying to get the city to do something about the [sewer] pollution forever," said Linda Mariano, co-founder of Friends and Residents of the Greater Gowanus. "It's a very good thing that they are going to make the effort. That's what we have been advocating for, for all of these years — I'm happy."

The details of the plan are not yet set in stone — the feds will finalize the proposal



PIPE CLEANERS: The city must stop raw sewage from flowing into the Gowanus Canal after storms — presumably through the construction of two gigantic holding tanks priced at \$78 million, the Environmental Protection Agency decided.



Photos by Elizabeth Graham

within the next year after a 90-day public commentary period including two eagerly anticipated community meetings on Jan. 23 and Jan. 24.

For now, the city says it will do what it has to do to clean up the canal.

"We look forward to carefully reviewing the details of the EPA's proposal and working with our state and federal partners to improve water quality and support the cleanup of the canal," said the city's Department of En-

vironmental Protection in a statement.

Along with the city, the feds have tapped three-dozen polluters to foot the bill for the cleanup, which is expected to cost between \$467 million to \$504-million, including the energy giant National Grid, formerly the Brooklyn Union Gas company, Con Edison, and Verizon.

The worst contamination of the 150-year-old Gowanus Canal comes from its past as a major industrial trans-

portation route for manufactured gas plants, paper mills, tanneries, and other chemical plants that operated along its banks, agency officials said.

From the 1860s to the late 1950s, the waterway fueled the nation's growth into an industrial power — but in the process, generated a by-product called coal tar that contains an array of hazardous compounds and has seeped 150 feet down below the canal.

The state's Department of Environmental Conservation will oversee the cleanup of polluted plots of land where three gas plants once stood along the canal and will hold responsible National Grid, the company that inherited legal liability.

The Superfund cleanup proposal also calls for:

- Blocking of any illegal hookup into the city's sewer system that pollutes that canal.

Continued on page 8

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Mini-golf, big cause

Putting it all on the line to help Red Hook businesses

BY NATALIE MUSUMECI

Now you can tee off for a cause.

The owners of Brooklyn Crab in Red Hook will host a miniature golf tournament on the 1950s-style putt-putt course in the seafood eatery's backyard benefitting the Hurricane Sandy-battered businesses of the waterfront community.

Co-owner Jamie Vipond of the rustic Reed Street crab shack, which braved the October super storm with no serious damage thanks to its beach-y but durable design, said that he's putting on the kid-friendly match to "contribute to the fund-raising effort that has been made by many businesses and individuals in Red Hook."

"Most businesses are still not open in Red Hook, and are facing the reality of re-opening in mid-winter, which for most is the slowest time of the year," he said.

All entrance fees of the Jan. 5 tournament will go directly to Restore Red Hook, a non-profit organization created in the wake of Hurricane Sandy that aims to help the small businesses of the tight-knit neighborhood get back on track after the super storm's floodwaters inundated them, ruined inventory, and crippled livelihoods.

Dozens of neighborhood favorites such as Bait and Tackle, Dry Dock, the Good Fork, Red Hook Lobster Pound, and Sunny's Bar, just around the corner from the seafood joint, fell victim to Sandy's wrath.

There will be a \$10 fee for teams of two to play on the 18-hole course and each attendee will get a complimentary beer or soda courtesy of Union Beer Distributors, Troegs Brewery, Blue Point Brewery and Greenport Harbor Brewery — the beer retailers sponsoring the competition.

There will also be \$5 draft beer specials all day



FORE!: Jamie Vipond of Brooklyn Crab in Red Hook is hosting an 18-hole mini-golf tournament in the seafood eatery's backyard on Jan. 5 to raise money for neighborhood businesses that suffered during Hurricane Sandy.

File photo by Melanie Fidler

long for those who want to booze it up.

Competing teams will tally their scores based on the honor system and the squad with the best overall score on the entire course wins.

The winning team will receive a \$50 gift certificate for food and drinks at the Brooklyn Crab and all par-

ticipants will take home a "fun free gift" as well.

The fun will continue after the four-hour tournament for football fans with the screening of the NFL playoffs in the crab shack's main bar with happy hour food and drink specials running through the duration of the game.

Restore Red Hook has

raised more than \$217,000 out of its \$2-million goal as of press time.

Mini-golf tournament for Red Hook's Hurricane Sandy relief at the Brooklyn Crab [24 Reed St. near Van Brunt Street in Red Hook, (718) 643-2722, www.RestoreRedHook.org]. Jan. 5, noon-4pm. \$5 per person for every team of two.



MUSIC MAN: Rick Cimato drummed in a handful of Brooklyn heavy metal bands. Courtesy of Thinning The Herd

Williamsburg metal musician killed in crash

BY DANIELLE FURFARO

Metal fans, friends, family, and neighbors are mourning Brooklyn drummer and singer Rick Cimato after the Williamsburg resident died in a head-on car crash last Wednesday.

The 37-year-old hardcore and metal stalwart — who fronted Gods Green Earth and played drums for Thinning The Herd — was driving through Connecticut with his brother and girlfriend after visiting family in Maine when a vehicle going the wrong way on the highway collided with his car.

The other driver perished in the wreck, while Cimato's girlfriend and brother suffered serious injuries, but are expected to survive.

Bandmate Gavin Spielman, Thinning The Herd's lead singer, said he was heartbroken and that the group would probably call it quits.

"Rick was the best friend a guy could have," said Spielman, who met Cimato in 2007 when he was still manning the sticks for Nassau Chainsaw. "He was trustworthy and personable, and an amazing musician. Everyone who knew Rick loved him, he had an easy and calm way — and a great smile."

Thinning The Herd finished a new album "Free-

dom From the Known" last month and was planning to release the record — which was made with help from Nirvana producer Steve Albini — in early 2013.

Cimato's bands frequently played venues such as St. Vitus in Greenpoint and Trash Bar in Williamsburg, where he took the stage for the last time in early December with Thinning The Herd in a tribute show for deceased Pantera guitarist Dimebag Darrell and the Hurricane Sandy victims.

"Rick always stood out for his various musical talents and thanks to his commitment to the New York metal and hardcore scenes, he will never be forgotten," said Jo Schuftan, who runs Horns Up Rocks, a New York-based heavy music blog and promotion website. "I first saw him on stage with Nassau Chainsaw, but it was when I saw him fronting Gods Green Earth that his energy and humor captured my attention."

Cimato's fans weren't just metalheads — he had plenty of followers on the nights he bartended at Brooklyn watering holes including Grand Victory in Williamsburg.

Spielman is working on organizing a Brooklyn memorial for the musician.

Gowanus

Continued from page 6

•Seven options for dredging the waterway.

•Seven options for treating and disposing of the foul gunk scraped up from the canal-bed, either on-site or out of Brooklyn, where it will be burned, turned into fuel, or used as landfill.

•Supplementary techniques to keep sewer water out of the canal including street-level plantings and water-retaining green spaces, funded by federal and city grants.

Federal officials say that the three-dozen potentially responsible parties will have the option to choose how exactly to dispose of the toxic waste under the oversight of the EPA — but no matter what they choose they will cover the costs.

After the plan is finalized, there will be an estimated two-year design phase and the actual cleanup will go on until about 2020, agency officials said.

Environmental Protection Agency public meetings on Superfund cleanup proposal at PS 58 (330 Smith St. near Carroll St. in Carroll Gardens) on Jan. 23 at 7 pm and at Joseph Miccio Community Center (110 W. Ninth St. near Henry St.) on Jan. 24 at 7 pm. The agency will accept written and public comments on the proposal until Mar. 28, 2013. E-mail gowanuscanalcomments.region2@epa.gov or write to:

Christos Tsiamis,
project manager

Central New York Remediation Section

US Environmental Protection Agency

290 Broadway, 20th floor

New York, NY 10007-1866

HERE THEY ARE: THE

No one knows what the future holds — but that doesn't mean we can't make educated guesses. These movers, leaders, shakers, and makers will likely have a profound impact on Brooklyn in 2013, our panel of experts concluded.

#1 State Sen. Eric Adams

It's hard to believe it, but Borough President Markowitz won't be borough president forever. This year will be his last year in office — and someone will need to fill his shoes.

The current frontrunner in the beep race is Prospect Heights state Sen. Eric Adams, a former cop who made a name for himself by trying to stop the sale of assault weapons, battling stop-and-frisk, and attempting to "Stop the Sag" — an effort to keep the borough's youth from wearing pants below their waistlines.

"I've always wanted to be borough president," Adams told us in 2012. Watch to see if 2013 is the year when his dream comes true.

#2 Joshua Rechnitz

Reticent Manhattan philanthropist Joshua Rechnitz came out of nowhere in 2012 when he announced his whopping \$40-million donation toward the construction of a velodrome and athletic facility at Brooklyn Bridge Park. Then he stunned Brooklynites for a second time by buying up a derelict Gowanus warehouse dubbed the "Bat Cave" in a bid to turn it into an art space.

What's next for the borough's tight-lipped, bike-riding benefactor? We'll keep an eye out! Let us know if you hear anything.

#3 Mitik the baby walrus

Times are bound to get easier for Brooklyn's big-



File photo

gest baby in 2013.

Mitik, the new walrus in Coney Island, had a tough first year. The infant nearly lost his life when he was separated from his pack and left stranded in the ocean off Alaska. Human rescuers nursed him back to health and brought him to the New York Aquarium, where he was scheduled to rest in quarantine before meeting his new walrus buddies and legions of adoring fans — but Hurricane Sandy promptly slammed the People's Playground and put the tourist attraction under water.

Mitik escaped the storm



Courtesy NYC Fieldhouse



Photo by Stefano Giovannini



Courtesy New York Aquarium



Associated Press



Photo by Elizabeth Graham



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13 TO WATCH IN 2013

9 JAN. 6, 2013, BROOKLYN WEEKLY

without injury, but the damaged aquarium isn't expecting to reopen until May at the earliest. Lovers of undersea life will have to wait until then before they finally have their chance to meet the borough's handsomest mustached mammal.

#4 Frank Seddio

He's the new boss — and only time will tell if he's the same as the old boss.

Ex-judge and former Assemblyman Frank Seddio took control of a fractured Brooklyn Democratic Party after Assemblyman Vito Lopez stepped down from the influential post amid allegations of sexual harassment.

Seddio, a longtime Lopez ally and member of the old-guard Thomas Jefferson Democratic Club, will spend 2013 leading a party split between former backers of the Lopez-machine and those who fought to overthrow it.

Politicos will watch to see if he can keep the union together — and he told us last year that times have changed since Lopez left.

#5 Silent Barn

Queens's loss could be Brooklyn's gain.

The quirky, experimental art space Silent Barn (whose members are pictured at left) is making the move from Ridgewood to Bushwick — and 2013 will determine the future of the acclaimed do-it-yourself venue.

Will Silent Barn continue to book the kinds of wacky, buzzed-about, of-the-moment arts events that made it a must-hit destination for gallery-hoppers now that it's in the county of Kings? Or will it become just one more drop in the paint bucket that is the Bushwick art scene?

Stop by in 2013 and find out.

#6 Sir Patrick Stewart

Plenty of stars have settled in Brooklyn — but none has traveled as far to get here as legendary Star Trek captain Sir Patrick Stewart.

The man who made his



Photo by Gregory P. Mango



Photo by Stefano Giovannini

name playing Jean-Luc Picard relocated to Park Slope in the summer of 2012 and immediately won the respect of his neighbors when he turned to Twitter to rant about how tedious it was to get his cable hooked up, earning him an honorary column in this newspaper.

Tech-connected Brooklynites should be sure to keep an eye on his tweets in the coming year.

#7 State Sen. Diane Savino

Puff, puff, and pass that bill!

That's what state Sen. Diane Savino hopes to do in Albany this session, where the Bay Ridge politician is leading the way in the push to legalize medical marijuana in New York state.

Savino told an upstate paper that she is counting heads before introducing a piece of pot legislation early in 2013.

"I believe there is sufficient support in both parties in all three conferences in the Senate," she said.

Keep watch to see if she can make it happen.

#8 The Alliance for Coney Island

If Coney Island ever becomes a glitzy, year-round entertainment destination, these are the folks who will



Photo by Steve Solomonson



Associated Press / Seth Weng

make it happen.

The Alliance for Coney Island united the biggest names in People's Playground amusements in 2012, forming an advocacy group that could help shape the future of the borough's seaside escape.

The organization got to work helping Coney recover following Hurricane Sandy — expect its members to keep at it in 2013, and pay close attention to the other initiative launched by the group, which boasts big names including Deno's Wonder Wheel Park (pictured above), the Brooklyn Cyclones, Luna Park, and Gargiulo's Restaurant.

#9 Rep. Hakeem Jeffries

Mr. Jeffries is going to Washington.

The former Prospect Heights assemblyman has replaced retired Rep. Ed Towns in the House — and the borough is watching closely to see what the first-term congressman will do once he hits the nation's capital.

He already snagged a spot on the House Judiciary Committee, and if his recent tweets are any indication, gun control is one of his big targets.

#10 New coach of the Nets

Nets owner Mikhail



Photo by Arthur De Gaeta



Photo by Elizabeth Graham

Prokhorov has high expectations of Brooklyn's new home team.

"Only championship, no more, we're only human," he told the press last week.

That win-or-get-fired attitude means the coach of the Nets has the hardest job in the borough, and, potentially, the hardest job in sports.

As of press time, P.J. Carlesimo was leading the squad as an interim coach after November "Coach of the Month" Avery Johnson got canned for a poor December and a .500 record.

No one can be sure exactly who will be drawing the Xs and Os for the Nets at the end of this season, but one thing is certain: that person will have to win the approval of star guard Deron Williams (pictured above), who's disenchantment with Johnson's strategy may have led to his firing.

#11 Chris Olechowski

This year, Williamsburgers will be following the leader.

North Brooklyn is pay-



Photo by Bess Adler

ing close attention to new Democratic district leader Chris Olechowski after he defeated incumbent Lincoln Restler (a member of our "11 to watch in 2011") for the obscure party position.

During the 2012 race, both Restler and Olechowski, who is the chairman of Community Board 1, framed the wonky party post as a position that would allow them to have a real impact on the lives of Brooklynites — not just on internal Dem business.

Keep an eye on Olechowski in 2013 to see how he treats the new gig.

#12 Third Avenue's restaurant row

Move over Fifth Avenue — Brownstone Brooklyn has a new dining strip!

Third Avenue emerged as a culinary destination in 2012, with the Littleneck drawing crowds, the Pines garnering praise from high up in food media, relatively recent additions such as Four & 20 Blackbirds and Bar Tano (pictured above) dem-

onstrating staying power, and the legendary Two Toms continuing to do what it does best (yes, pork chop).

In 2013, look for Runner and Stone — a new bakery and all-day restaurant opened by alums of Blue Ribbon and Per Se in late December — to continue the culinary push, reinventing Third Avenue one meticulously crafted sandwich at time.

#13 The waterfront

Hurricane Sandy devastated the borough when it hit Brooklyn's shores, with waterfront communities suffering the worst damage.

Families lost their homes, entrepreneurs lost their livelihoods, and Brooklyn lost some of its landmarks.

The borough banded together in recovery efforts in late 2012, but so much work must still be done. Restoring, repairing, and redeveloping the waterfront will be the story of 2013 — and likely of many more years to come.

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