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BROOKLYN Weekly

LOCAL CLASSIFIEDS
PAGES 14-15

July 12, 2015

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UPDATED EVERY DAY AT BROOKLYNDAILY.COM **CNG**

Double D may shut for 9 years

BY ALLEGRA HOBBS

No tank you!

The feds must reject plans to close the beloved Double-D pool in Gowanus for up to nine years to make way for a giant underground sewage container, say local residents.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency is forcing the city to build two giant underground cisterns near the Gowanus Canal, which will store water during storms so that less raw sewage flows into the Gowanus Canal, as part of the so-called Superfund cleanup of the fetid waterway. The city's Department of Environmental Protection on June 30 revealed the final site

Continued on page 6



Funk yeah

The legendary George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic will blow away audiences at MetroTech Commons during a free lunchtime performance on July 16 at noon.

Associated Press / Laurent Gillieron

CANINE LIVES

Save a robot dog at game fest

BY MAX JAEGER

Don't screw the pooch!

A dog is on his last legs, but you can save the ailing ankle-biter during the street game festival Come Out and Play in Dumbo on July 17. The game — called “Veterinarian’s Hospital: Ruff Day” — asks players to perform a series of life-saving techniques on what is arguably the cutest video game controller around.

“We took a stuffed animal dog, ripped it open, and stuck a bunch of sensors in it,” said designer Edward Melcer, a Brooklyn Heights resident.

An overhead projector prompts players to check the toy hound’s pulse, administer chest compressions, and perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Follow the directions in the allotted

Continued on page 6

String theory

BY JOSEPH ALTOBELLI

This band isn't just stringing its audience along.

The indie string band Bellehouse, which delivers its first EP at Littlefield on July 16, hopes that its music can create a connection between the Brooklyn music scene and classic Americana.

“I see us as a lowly bridge,” said Jess Clinton, the band’s guitarist and one of its three female vocalists. “I kind of hope it is a bit of a journey and that everyone can find something to relate to.”

The only instruments
Continued on page 6



PARCHED: Marine Park Golf Course has been waiting two years for the city to sign off to bring in well water.

City stalls golf course water

BY ERIC FAYNBERG

The operators of the Marine Park Golf Course are just trying to keep their head above water, but it's getting the water that's the problem.

The course's caretakers, facing rising bills from their reliance on the city's water supply, have spent

more than four years working with engineering firms to find an alternate way to bring water to the city's largest public golf course.

Now they have found a solution, but they're stuck treading water waiting on the Parks Department bureaucracy — for the past two years running — leaving

them shaking their heads.

“We’ve invested so much time, energy and capital,” said Michael Giordano, who operates the course with his son, Adam. “We’re all stakeholders in this. Myself, the city, and the community. It would be

Continued on page 8

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Stoop shrimp

Seafood on doorstep confuses, worries Dyker Heights neighbors

BY MAX JAEGER
 Talk about al fresco dining! An ingenious Brooklynite cooked shrimp on a 72nd Street stoop — literally, on the concrete — during a hot June afternoon, neighbors say. Seeing the dozens of *decapoda* roasting on the doorstep between 11th and 12th streets was too much for one Dyker denizen to stomach.

"I thought, 'Man, that's dirty if somebody's gonna eat that,'" said Vinny V., who lives nearby on 74th Street and asked that his last name not be published for personal reasons. "What if a dog comes by and pees on it?"

Vinny wasn't convinced residents were actually cooking the shellfish — rather than just defrosting them — until he returned to the block later that day.

"We came back and the shrimp were on the sidewalk," he said. "They were following the sun with the shrimp."

A woman who answered the door at the residence on July 7 said she did not know anything, and did not speak English.

Another neighbor speculated that sun-drying might be a traditional rural cook-



GET YA STOOP SHRIMP HERE! A Dyker resident knows better than to light a grill on the sidewalk — which is against fire codes — so the clever Heightsian used the sun and the searing sidewalk to roast this plethora of prawn in late June.

"cook." Spanish ceviche is made with shrimp and other seafood cured in citrus juices — no heat required.

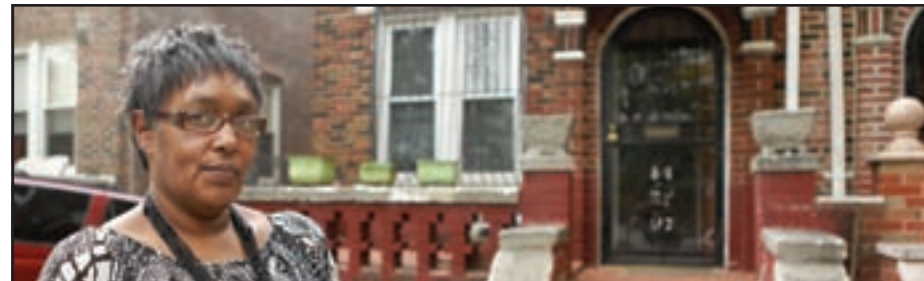
The fire code bars grilling with an open flame on within 10 feet of a building, and residents can report their neighbors for blocking sidewalks with barbecues, according information from the city.

Neighbors logged a complaint on June 13 for a "condition attracting rodents" at the location, according

ing to 311 data.

Health department inspectors are due to investigate by July 13, city data shows. But the shrimp are already long gone.

"We saw the woman come out and put them into a basket," Vinny V. said. "That's hopefully the first and last time I see someone try to cook shrimp on a sidewalk."



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Spies like us: Show casts audience as secret agents

BY ERIC FAYNBERG
 For this show, the audience takes the stage.

In "The Institute," a new multi-media show that opened on July 10, the audience becomes part of the cast, playing special agents breaking into the mind of a kidnapped spy. The "Inception"-like show is part of the Brick Theater's annual Game Play Festival,

and the creators say they want to push the boundaries of how audiences experience the theater.

"We're trying to further the art of storytelling using interactive design and technology," said Sharang Biswas, who wrote and directed the play with his friend Clio Davis. "I don't think there are many groups doing things with this format."

The show has 12 cast members — not counting the audience, who must separate the kidnapped spy's real memories from the fake. They do this by watching video clips, questioning cast members, and solving puzzles, some of which involve custom-made physical objects. In one challenge, for instance, participants

Continued on page 11



ON THE WAY: Artanker Convoy drummer Arthur Owens (left, with bassist Cezhan Ambrose) plays at the Way Station on July 15.

Photo by Stefano Giovannini

The Height stuff

Music fest floods P'Heights

BY ALLEGRA HOBBS

They are taking this music scene to new Heights!

More than 75 local bands will join forces next week to blow the roofs off of Prospect Heights. The second annual Prospect Heights Music and Arts Festival is designed to lure music-lovers to a neighborhood that is teeming with talent, and the festival's headliner says that he hopes those flocking to the five-day event will discover some fringe gems.

"You may not be hearing all these acts on NPR or WFUV or reading about them in Pitchfork," said Niall Connolly, an indie folk singer living in Windsor Terrace. "But they are amongst countless Brooklyn acts as good and better than anything you will find in the mainstream."

The festival's founder said his love for the neighborhood and local artistry is at the core of the event.

"The goal is to create awareness about Prospect Heights and everything it has to offer and make it a destination for more people," said Andy Heidel, the owner of the Way Station, a major hub of the festival. The bar will join nearby venues like the Branded Saloon, Soda Bar, and the St. Catherine (among others) in hosting acts from a diverse range of genres, ranging from indie folk and hip-hop to traditional Japanese mu-

sic with a jazz tinge.

The festival is also an opportunity for musicians to form a stronger and more intertwined community, says one participant.

"In order to develop a sense of community you have to get together and play in the same place — the same room or within a few blocks of each other," said Arthur Owens of Artanker Convoy, a band that fuses Brazilian dance music and rock. "Setting up a show or a festival is really the best way to do it."

This year's festival has grown significantly since its first year. It has also introduced visual artists into the mix, adding a walking mural tour and an interactive outdoor art project that stretches along the Eastern Parkway promenade. Borough President Eric Adams will even stop by the Way Station to join a discussion with business owners and artists about keeping local culture alive in the face of rising rent. Heidel hopes a coalition of locals will help artistic events such as the festival flourish in the evolving neighborhood.

Organizers and artists hope the festival will continue to grow in order to bring deserved attention to this corner of the city's musical landscape, which Owens says can

Continued on page 8

A new take on Ridge

Dark comedy skewers assumptions about Muslim life

BY MAX JAEGER

They're filming the neighborhood from a different angle.

Bay Ridge is the backdrop for a darkly comic web series — "The Ridge" — about life as a Muslim in the neighborhood.

The protagonists acquire super powers in a freak accident and have to deal with their tough-to-control abilities while juggling real-world concerns like police surveillance and conservative parents.

The conflict doesn't sound particularly "Muslim-y" (a term the show embraces) because young American Muslims are often more concerned about landing a good job or finding a date for the weekend than they are about hijab politics or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, according to the show's creator — something he thinks the media often misses.

"I wanted to write roles that tell the real story of our community," said creator and actor Ali Abbas, a first-generation American of Lebanese descent. "When we're talking about Muslim shows, I want to talk about our actual problems. There are coming-of-age stories, and love stories, but we never get to those stories. I look at [television shows] "Tyrant" or "Homeland" — I don't recognize those people, and I feel like that should be a red flag."

The show is tinged with the supernatural, but the writing focuses on real character development rather than fetishizing an ethnicity — something that attracted the show's producer.

"It's not what you typically see in the media," said producer Monte Bezell, a born-and-raised Park Sloper with Egyptian parentage who also plays an undercover cop on the show. "That was one thing that attracted me — that they do show these characters in a different light."

Still, the protagonists aren't perfect — they're



FEELS LIKE HOME: Writer, actor, and "The Ridge" creator Ali Abbas knew he had to set his show about Muslim Americans in Bay Ridge because the neighborhood's tight-knit Muslim community reminded him of others in Dearborn, Mich., and his native Chicago.

Photo by Georgine Benvenuto

reminiscent of characters from "Seinfeld" or "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia" in their occasionally over-the-top egotism. But these aren't foibles typically associated with particular races or creeds, Abbas said.

Abbas, a Chicagoland native raised in a tight-knit Muslim community, discovered Bay Ridge while reporting for the British Broadcasting Corporation, he said. He found many analogues there to his own Illinois Muslim community and realized the people and stories he encountered in his youth were common in Muslim-American experience, he said.

"When I went and did the story, I was like 'Oh my god — there are archetypes and constants in our community no matter where

you are,'" he said.

Abbas transitioned from journalism to screenwriting and came up with his concept for "The Ridge" while studying with improvisational comedy group Upright Citizens Brigade, he said.

The production crew split shooting time between the streets of Bay Ridge and a Middle Eastern restaurant in Park Slope where interior scenes are set, he said.

In one scene, the protagonists accidentally kill an undercover cop who is spying on them and scramble to bury the evidence in Owl's Head Park — though producers did have to use Prospect Park as a double for Owl's Head when snow threatened the scene's continuity, Abbas said.

Abbas and crew didn't have to apply for permits to film the cop burial in Owl's Head and Prospect parks — or other scenes near the Gowanus Canal — late last year, because police were too busy feuding with the mayor to care about film shoots, he said.

"Remember when the police took a break from writing tickets?" Abbas said. "It worked out so magically for shooting."

Abbas has already planned two more seasons for the web series and said he aims to start shooting again in the fall. Bezell is shopping the show around to friends in the television industry, he said.

The first two episodes of "The Ridge" are available at muzz.nyc.



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EARLY DAYS: Char No. 4's then-chef Matt Greco and owner Sean Josephs toast the venue shortly after it opened in 2008.
File photo by Elyssa Pachico

WHISKEY BUSINESS

Cobble Hill's Char No. 4 is closing

BY RUTH BROWN

Talk about low spirits!

Popular Smith Street whiskey joint Char No. 4 announced last Thursday that it will mix its last Manhattan this weekend, leaving many locals mourning their favorite neighborhood hangout.

"I'll miss this place. I'm going to miss the people — the bartenders, the manager. That's what makes this place awesome," said Claudine Z., one of many Char-flies who gathered at the Cobble Hill tavern last Thursday night to pay their respects. "This is my people. This is where we come. I don't know where we're going to go now."

Owner Sean Josephs sent out an e-mail on July 2 announcing the restaurant's impending closure on Sunday, July 12 and thanking patrons for

their support since the bar opened in 2008.

"We have had an amazing seven years in business during which time we have made so many great friends and served our share of bourbon and smoked meat, which I'd like to think has made for a lot of happy people," Josephs said.

Josephs did not say why the bar was closing, and was not available for comment by our print deadline, but regulars said it did not seem like the venue was struggling for business.

"This place is always packed," said Richard Chamblin of Prospect Lefferts Gardens, who added that the meatery is his favorite place in Brooklyn. "My wife and I come here for brunch and for date night."

The saloon is best known for its extensive menus of

American whiskeys and smoked meat dishes. This paper famously reported in 2012 on a 24-year-old bottle of Martin Mills bourbon that the bar was serving for \$100 a sip. At the time, no one had ever ordered a drop, but the bottle is almost certainly empty now — the venue was selling all its old and rare whiskeys for \$6 an ounce on Thursday night, and by 9 pm, patrons had drunk the top-shelf tipples almost completely dry.

The drop-and-chop-house will serve a limited bill of fare for its final days in business, featuring long-time favorites and some of its most successful specials.

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Becoming un-Thai-d!

Whiskey Soda Lounge shuts, celebrity eatery opening

BY NOAH HUROWITZ

It is out with the cold Singha beer and in with “The Chew.”

The owner of trendy Columbia Street Thai eatery Pok Pok closed the restaurant's adjacent bar Whiskey Soda Lounge last Friday, and is signing the venue over to celebrity chef Carla Hall, a co-host of the popular network television talk-show, who will turn it into a comfort-food restaurant.

Hall, who also competed on two seasons of reality television show “Top Chef,” plans to open a joint called Carla Hall's Southern Kitchen in the cozy space at the corner of Columbia and Kane streets.

“We're heading to Brooklyn baby!” Hall wrote on Friday on her Kickstarter page, where she raised \$264,703 for the prospective



HOOTIE HOO: Celebrity chef Carla Hall will open a comfort food joint in the Whiskey Soda Lounge space.

Associated Press / Jason Decrow

eatery late last year. “More specifically Cobble Hook, between Red Hook and Cobble Hill.”

Cobble Hook is not an actual place, but Whis-

key Soda Lounge owner Andy Ricker confirms he recently handed the corner space in the Columbia Waterfront District over to Hall.

Ricker said the erstwhile Thai tavern, which was best-known for serving beer slushies and Pok Pok's signature fish-sauce chicken wings, simply wasn't making enough money to stay open in the space. He created the watering-hole-in-the-wall two years ago to accommodate the hordes of foodies lining up for a coveted seat in his much-hyped restaurant. But he said business dwindled during the recent brutal winter, and when Pok Pok started taking reservations earlier this year, the bar didn't have enough customers of

its own to stay profitable.

“No one's happy to see it go, but what can you do? The public has spoken and that's the deal,” said Ricker, who also owns a second store on the strip, noodle shop Pok Pok Phat Thai — which he relocated from Manhattan to Columbia Street last year — as well as a swathe of Pok Pok spin-offs in Portland, Ore. and one in Los Angeles.

Hall will also try to make her fortune slinging poultry at the site — her eatery will specialize in Nashville hot chicken, a style of spicy fried fowl served with white bread and pickles, according to its website.

Ricker said he welcomes the clucky competitor to the block, and hopes Hall's new outfit will bring more attention and hungry visitors to the sleepy nabe, which has no subway stop and is ser-



CLOSED FOR BUSINESS: Thai tavern Whiskey Soda Lounge, on Columbia and Kane streets, is closed for good.

Photo by Jason Speakman

viced only by the notoriously flaky B61 bus.

“Having another option down there will drive more traffic to the area,” he said. “The more interesting things you have the more

the neighborhood becomes vital.”

The 12-block Columbia Waterfront District, which is flanked by Red Hook and Brooklyn Heights and

Continued on page 8

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6 **DOUBLE D***Continued from page 1*

proposals it has made to the agency — all of which involve putting one tank beneath or near the pool, which it says could put the watering hole out of action for almost a decade, as first reported by DNA Info.

Local activists say they will fight any plan that includes shutting down their cherished pool.

“We are actively protesting the fact that they’re even thinking about that,” said Sue Wolfe, president of Friends of Thomas Greene Park, an advocacy group for the park that houses the pool, which is bounded by Douglass and Degraw streets, and Nevins Street and Third Avenue.

The city authority says it has presented its environmental overlords with two main plans for the site (see them for yourself here). One is to build the tank underneath the park, and place all the equipment that filters junk and gross smells out of the water on either part of the parkland or the other side of Douglass Street. It says it could also scrap the extra equipment, but the area would then be plagued by (more) foul odors.

The city claims it would have to shut the pool for up to nine years for construction and cleanup, and the whole project would cost between \$534 million and \$650 million. The federal agency in the past favored building the tank on this site.

But the department says it would rather buy an adjacent lot across



WATER FIGHT: (Above) The city claims putting a sewage tank under the Double D pool would force the facility to close for up to nine years. (Below) But it says sticking the tank next to the canal would save time and money.

NYC Environmental Protection



Nevins Street, on the banks of the canal, and build the tank and equipment there. It claims the project would be cheaper, costing \$490

million — including the land purchase — and would be easier to build, as the site is closer to the canal’s existing waste treatment system.

But the second plan won’t necessarily save the neighborhood natural area from jackhammers — the city says the federal environmental agency will still likely use the opportunity to close the recreation

cess would take up to four years, the city says.

The Environmental Protection Agency says it hasn’t had a lot of time to look over the city’s proposals, but it is skeptical that buying private land for the tanks would be cheaper than using city-owned parkland, and doubts that it would take nine years to build the tank under the pool, said the agency’s canal-cleanup project supervisor Joel Singerman.

Pool advocates say they support the plan to put the tank over the road, but not the four-year clean-up. The community facility, which offers free meals to kids and hosts sports programs and summer camps, is the only swimming spot and green space within walking distance for many locals — including two nearby public housing facilities — and neighborhood residents simply can’t go several summer seasons without it, said Wolfe.

“There is just no other park in the area and there is no other pool,” she said.

STRING

Continued from page 1

the Brooklyn band uses are a banjo, guitar, viola, and upright bass — and some tight harmonies. But the band’s influences include more than the string band bluegrass listeners might expect, says Clinton. They hope the band’s blend of classic rock, soul, Motown, and folk-rock will appeal even to fans of Brooklyn’s fast and loud electronic dance music scene.

“We are trying to resurrect music from our generation,” said Clinton. “We want to take people out of the EDM comfort zone and into something a little more loose.”

Bellehouse has been



RING THE BELLES: The ladies of string band Bellehouse release their first album on July 16 at Littlefield. *Kate Dedlow*

refining its natural acoustic sound over the last two years, and Clinton said that she and the band members are excited to finally get their record out and perform it live.

“I think what we are about is putting on an energetic, entertaining show re-

volving around Americana long-form music,” she said.

Bellehouse record release party at Littlefield [622 Degraw St. between Fourth and Third Avenues in Gowanus, (718) 855-3388, www.littlefieldnyc.com]. July 16 at 9 pm. \$10.



SICK AS A DOG: Game designer Nolan Filter fears Bark Obama may be done in, but fellow game creator Eddie Melcer is about to work his magic on the ailing stuffed pup. *Photo by Sara Hylton*

GAME FEST

Continued from page 1

time, and Bark Obama may just pull through — but no hot-dogging, because this plush pooch’s life is on the line, another programmer said.

“If you mess up then the dog dies — no pressure,” said Nolan Filter.

Melcer, Filter, and third partner Ken Amari made the game as part of a New York University School of Polytechnic Engineering class called “Beyond the Joystick” that explored non-traditional game controllers, they said.

“It was almost like [television’s] ‘Project Runway’ where every week we’d have a different challenge,” Filter said.

When they got an assignment to make a controller with materials from a thrift store, they saw an opportunity they could really sink their teeth into, Melcer said.

“We thought ‘What kind of morbid weird thing can we do that would be fun?’”

he said.

And then they found stuffed animal Bark Obama (no relation to the 44th president of the United States) on a thrift store shelf.

“We saw a dog and we’re like ‘Welp, that’s it,’” Filter said. “It’s this droopy little dog that looks like it might need some saving.”

Other highlights of the outside game festival include “Abba Babba,” in which players try to negotiate the border to a fictional country while speaking in a made-up language; “Bocce Drift,” a variation on the classic ball-tossing game that lets players use obstacles in the surrounding streets; and “RainboDisko,” a dexterity-based game that uses a spinning record player as a board.

“*Veterinarian’s Hospital: Ruff Day*” at the *Come Out and Play Festival* (at the Manhattan Bridge archway plaza off Anchorage Place between Pearl and Plymouth streets in Dumbo, www.comeoutand-play.org). 7–10:30 pm on July 17. Free.



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PUBLISHER: Clifford Luster • **V.P. OF ADVERTISING:** Ralph D’Onofrio • **CLASSIFIED DIRECTOR:** Amanda Tarley
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Anyone wishing to learn more about this new FDA approved solution to back pain or to set up an appointment for a free consultation call Dr. Keller's office at 718-234-6207 or visit **Brooklyn Spine Center**, 5911 16th Ave., Brooklyn, New York 11204. Brooklynspinecenter.com.



GOLF

Continued from page 1

beneficial for all parties involved to have a successful conclusion.”

The public golf course is the only one in the city that relies on metered city water to keep its greens green. Others have wells on site to draw free groundwater for most of their needs, but positioned so close to the briny ocean, that’s not an option for Marine Park Golf Course.

Finding another water source is the only way the course, which “Crain’s 5boros” magazine recently rated the second-best public links in the city, is the only way to make the course sustainable, according to Giordano.

So they hired engineers who spent four years and thousands of dollars drilling test wells further inland, and then sending water out for evaluation to make sure the salt content was low enough for irrigation. The engineering firm eventually found a water source which passed the test, but delivering the water to the course will be a costly proposition.

“The good news is we found the quality water,” Giordano said. “The bad news is it’s a mile away.”

The engineers de-

signed a pump configuration and a way to route the water back to the course, and now funding is the hold up.

The project, which Giordano said will cost about \$2.5 million, is supposed to be a joint venture between the Giordanos and the city. But the Parks Department has been keeping Giordano waiting for two years as it reviews the contracts.

The entire process is frustrating Giordano, continuing to cost him money in water bills, and delaying his plans for improving the course.

“We were hoping to get this done this year,” he said. “But even if we start tomorrow that is not realistic. We have to do this off-season. We can’t really do it during golf season, because the city is still going to want their rent. We have to pay our rent every month.”

The Parks Department has not returned repeated calls for comment.

Giordano claims that based on 2010 numbers, he paid more for water than the rest of the city’s 11 golf courses combined, and he doubts that has changed five years later.

The course’s previous operators dealt with the water expense issue by using less water and allowing the course to deteriorate, he said. That’s

why the course was more brown than green when the Giordanos took over more than six years ago. They have nursed the course back to health ever since.

The Giordanos have a “master plan” to beautify the course, including a renovation of each hole. But pursuing the plan would require even more water than the course is using now, so it is all on hold until the water sourcing project is completed — a process that Giordano estimates will take two years worth of off-season work to complete — and that work can’t even begin until the city signs off.

Giordano said his management team has made a priority of engaging the community — offering classes for kids and women, giving tours of the course, and promoting their on-site restaurant in an effort to make the course more inclusive to folks beyond the golfing set — because he takes the public nature of the course seriously. He’s just hoping the city does too.

“It’s a feather in the cap of the community,” Giordano said. “Previous owners did not want to invest the money into this because it is a gamble. But we’ve invested the money. We’re just looking for a little help.”

WHISKEY

Continued from page 5

cut off from Cobble Hill by the Brooklyn Queens Expressway, may be quiet but it punches well above its weight as a dining destination. The area is also home to rooftop Mexican restaurant Alma, eco-conscious cafe Orchard, artisanal

coffee roaster Kings Coffee Roaster, and new craft beer bar the Hop Shop, among many others.

Brooklyn is also a popular destination for former “Top Chef” contestants. Season four’s Mark Simmons runs New Zealand-themed restaurant Kiwiana in Park Slope. Andrew D’Ambrosi, also from season four, cooks

at Carroll Gardens cocktails and seafood joint Bergen Hill. And Dale Talde, who competed on both seasons four and eight, serves upscale pub-grub at Thistle Hill Tavern, various pig parts at Pork Slope, and Asian fusion dishes at Talde, all in Park Slope.

Hall did not respond to requests for comment.

MUSIC

Continued from page 3

be easy to overlook in the sprawl.

“Any time I’ve ever thought I had a grasp on the New York music scene,

I’m always surprised that I only know a little corner of it,” he said.

The Prospect Heights Music and Arts Festival takes place at various venues across the neighborhood from July 15–19.

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July 15 at 10 pm, and Niall Connolly plays July 18 at 10 pm at the Way Station [683 Washington Ave. between St. Marks Avenue and Prospect Place in Prospect Heights, (347) 627-4949, www.waystationbk.com/. Free.

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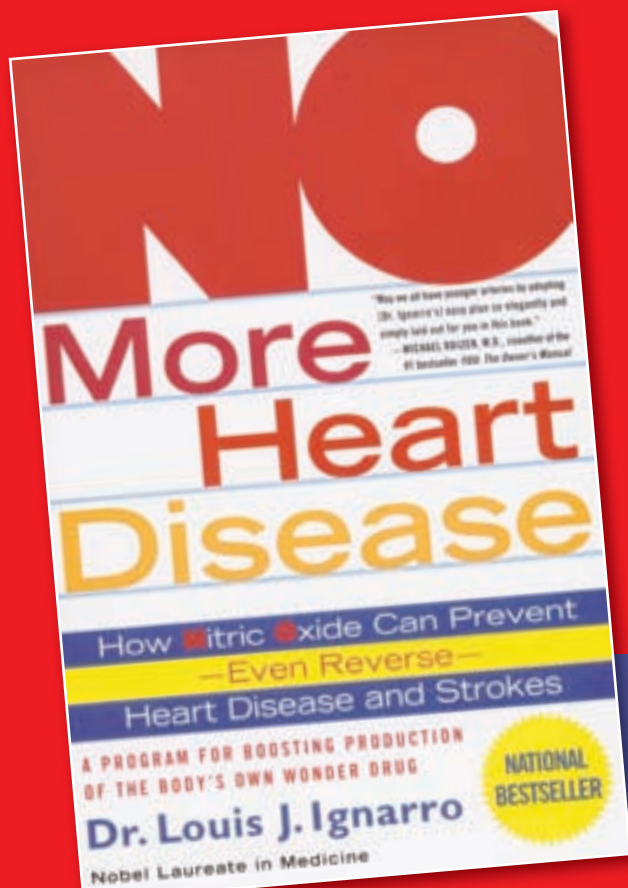
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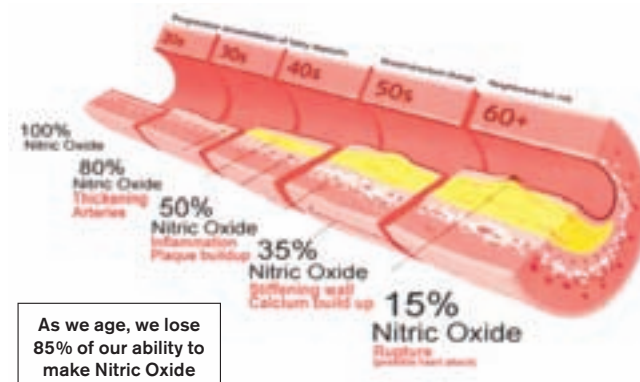
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Branding Bushwick

Ads invade famed neighborhood murals

BY DANIELLE FURFARO

Corporate America is destroying Bushwick's famed street murals by offering neighborhood building owners big bucks to cover up artists' masterpieces with pictures of Coors cans and Sprite bottles, say local artists.

"They are greedy savages who are destroying something special and beautiful in the international art community," said Joe Ficalora, who is the founder of the Bushwick Collective, the group of street artists that have painted dozens of elaborate murals in the blocks around the Jefferson and DeKalb L stops in recent years.

The al fresco artworks have turned the sleepy industrial area into a magnet for tourists, Ficalora says, and now advertisers are trying to cash in on their success.

"Now that I have attracted thousands of tour

groups and children and there are people coming in left and right to see the murals, they are coming in to capitalize on that," he said.

Several building owners in the area say advertising agencies have offered them hundreds of thousands of dollars to cover artworks with painted advertisements or vinyl billboards.

The owner of a building on the corner of Troutman Street and Wyckoff Avenue says a media company offered him \$120,000 to host an advertisement on his building for the next five years. The wall it wanted, which is right off the Jefferson stop of the L train, already features a mural by well-known street artists Chris Stain and Billy Mode of two girls smiling and hugging with the words "It's just begun" behind them. The building owner says he kicked the agency

to the curb.

"I told them, 'There is already something there. Why would you want to destroy that?'" said Frank Mattarella, who handled the calls for the company on behalf of his elderly mother.

But other property owners in the nabe have surrendered their exterior wall space to big business. Advertisers recently erected an ad for sneaker company Converse on the side of House of Yes, an aerial arts venue that opened on the corner of Wyckoff Avenue and Jefferson Street last month. Ficalora said the circus folk agreed a year ago to let an artist paint a mural on their building wall once they had moved into their new digs, but when he returned a few weeks ago, they told him they needed to rent out the wall to supplement the venue's income.



REFRESHING?: Bushwick artists say advertising – like this four-story Coors Light ad on the corner of Jefferson Street and St. Nicholas Avenue – is covering up and cashing in on the street murals that have made the area famous.

Photo by Jason Speakman

Advertising impresarios say they have as much right as the artists to ask a building owner to use a wall, and if the painters want to keep their work uncovered, they should make better art.

"This is America and I have the right to offer money to put advertising on a wall," said Philip Kafka, president of Manhattan's Prince Media Company, which has erected ads for

Modelo beer, Skyy Vodka, and mCig vaporizers in the neighborhood. "The artist has a right to make a mural so compelling that the building owner would never think to cover it up."

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Seaside Summer Concerts are back – for three days

BY ERIC FAYNBERG

The sound of music will return to the seaside this summer, but the free concerts will be rocking a different venue this year, and just for one weekend.

MCU Park will host the 2015 Seaside Summer Concert Festival later this month, bringing the free concerts back to Coney Island after a hiatus last year when its founder and patron former Borough President Marty Markowitz left office. But as the new name suggests, the event will be a three-day music festival, rather than the month-long series of weekly concerts it had been for 35 years.

Borough President Adams said he is excited to play host for the concerts' rebirth.

"These shows are emblematic of the commitment to bringing our communities together in a celebration of the spirit that makes us One Brooklyn," the beep said.

The three-day extravaganza, running July 22–24, will feature JT "The Voice" Taylor, formerly of Kool and the Gang, as well as Starship featuring Mickey Thomas, Latino Music by the Sea with Eddie Santiago, and Puerto Rican Salsa group N'Klabe.

The concert series was cancelled in 2014 awaiting construction of the planned amphitheater at the historic Childs Restaurant — the venue expected to host the shows in the future. That project is still

yet to be completed, so the event's organizers needed to find a new, if temporary, home that made economic sense.

"MCU Park was available while the Cyclones were traveling," said Debra Garcia, the series' executive producer. "Because of the existing infrastructure, it made a lot of sense to utilize the venue this year as it cut our costs in producing the shows."

The truncated schedule this year was mostly due to the limited availability of the Cyclones' home field.

Garcia worked with Adams and members of the Council, who were ready and willing to help bring the concerts back.

"I am thrilled to have helped bring free sum-

mer concerts back to Coney Island on behalf of the thousands of residents who look forward to this great Southern Brooklyn tradition," said Council Member Mark Treyger.

The Council provided \$83,000 in funding, according to Treyger's office.

The concerts were originally held at Asser Levy Park, but in 2010 nearby Brighton Beach residents successfully sued the private, tax-exempt organization which ran the series to force the event to move. The lawsuit prevailed on the grounds that the concerts broke city laws by featuring amplified music within 500 feet of a house of worship — in this case, two synagogues.



THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COUCH: In "The Institute" audiences must decide whether Agent Anderson (Corey Roberts, left) can trust his fellow agents.

SPIES

Continued from page 2

must correctly sort geometric shapes in order to hear a musical clue. How the audience reacts will determine how the plot progresses and which clip of recorded footage will roll next.

This fluidity means that each audience will experience a different show, say the creators.

"When you get an audience that is shy or reticent it can be a challenge," said Vincent Cooper, who plays Agent Phillips, one of the primary con-

duits of interaction for the audience. "Sometimes you can hit full throttle and they'll come along for the ride. Other times you have to ease them into the water."

But the creators say that despite the unpredictable nature of the audience, they don't worry too much about the story going off the rails.

"The Institute" at the Brick Theater [579 Metropolitan Avenue between Lorimer Street and Union Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 285-3863, www.bricktheater.com]. July 17, 23, and 25 at 9 pm. \$18.



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Golden makes an un-wise crack

State senator slammed for posting homophobic joke to Facebook page

BY MAX JAEGER

The joke wasn't golden, but the jokester was.

State Sen. Martin Golden (R-Bay Ridge) took heat for posting a homophobic joke to his personal Facebook account — and then quickly deleting it — last weekend.

The crack — re-posted from a men's lifestyle website that ran the gag two years ago — made light of a biblical passage that encourages the murder of homosexuals by stoning. Golden removed the post after it ignited backlash on social media.

The senator's comedic timing was as poor as the content, one of Golden's gay fellow state legislators said.

"The meme he posted was about as outdated as opposition to marriage equality," said openly gay

state Sen. Brad Hoylman (D-Manhattan). "I'm glad Marty removed the lame joke about gay marriage from his Facebook page."

The local Democratic club took a harder stance on the less-than-commendable comment.

"To make a crass joke involving the stoning of gay people is beneath the dignity of his office," said Bay Ridge Democratic Club spokesman Chris McCreight. "It's 2015 and there's no place for bigotry in our society. Senator Golden should immediately apologize and start recognizing that all his constituents are equal."

Golden removed the post but has not publicly apologized and did not return a request for comment.

The longtime state senator, who voted against gay marriage in 2011, re-posted the 2013 "joke" from Manda-



FELL FLAT: State Sen. Marty Golden posted a two-year-old, homophobic joke to his personal Facebook page — and then quickly removed it after it ignited a backlash.
File photo by Elizabeth Graham

tory.com, a lifestyle site billing itself as "the greatest men's site on the Internet." The gag-inducing gag refers to medical marijuana's acceptance in various states and the Supreme Court's

June 2013 striking down of the Defense of Marriage Act — the unconstitutional 1996 law that limited marriage to unions between a man and a woman.

"It all makes sense now,"

the re-posted joke states. "Gay Marriage and marijuana being legalized on the same day. Leviticus 20:13 — 'if a man lays with another man he should be stoned.' We've just been interpreting it wrong all these years."

It is not the first time Golden has offended modern sensitivities. In 2012, he caught major flack after he proposed using money from his campaign account to host a 1950s-finish-school-style seminar that promised to

teach Ridge lasses to "walk up the stairs elegantly" and "sit, stand, and walk like a model."

Now a Brooklyn gay advocacy group is offering to host a seminar for the senator.

"In response to this supposed joke, we have contacted Senator Golden's office and requested a meeting to share information about LGBT people in Bay Ridge, as well as some of the important services we provide to his constituents," said Brooklyn Community Pride Center interim director Dolph Goldenburg.

The center hosts "Some Like it Hot," an educational program for straight adults in Bay Ridge senior centers, and queer kids from the neighborhood come Downtown for the center's youth programming, he said.

The tasteless post was first reported by the New York Observer.

Golden has not directly responded to the pride center, but a scheduler in the state senator's office did take down his information, Goldenburg said.

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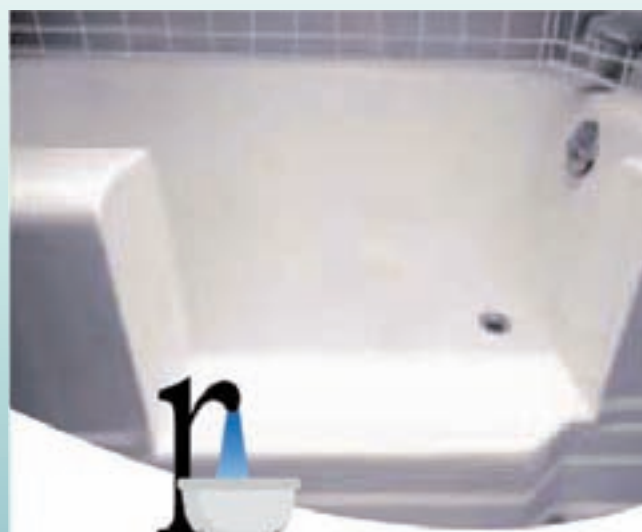
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