



CHECKING THEM OFF: Jennifer Mattson will share hot tips for how to stick with those New Year's goals at the Brooklyn Brainery on Jan. 3 and Jan. 6.

Photo by Caleb Caldwell

RESOLUTION REVOLUTION

Brooklyn writer's guide to keeping 2017 goals

BY JULIANNE CUBA

Your 2017 New Years resolution: Keep your 2017 New Years resolution.

Trade in that long list of long shots for a shorter and more manageable one — and learn what it takes to actually check off an item or two — during “New Year’s Resolutions: How to make and keep them” at the Brooklyn Brainery on Jan. 3 and 6. Brooklyn journalist Jennifer Mattson will share her secrets for maintaining those Jan. 1 goals past Jan. 2. Her biggest tip: Trade quantifiable goals for broader objectives, she said.

“Instead of setting a resolution, try to set an intention to get better results. Losing weight is the common, so instead of saying ‘I want to lose 10 pounds,’ your intention could be, ‘I want to be healthier’ or ‘I want to have a healthier relationship with my

weight,’” said Mattson, who lives in Boerum Hill. “The reason that works is the first approach is about sacrifice, will power, and control. And the second way of looking at it is based on acceptance, and it puts you in a different place mentally — an approach that’s more to your pleasure and an easier way to lose weight.”

Research shows that 88 percent of people fail to fulfill their resolutions because they set such strict and lofty goals instead of caring about what it actually means to achieve them, the scribe said.

Some get discouraged if they lapse on their plan for even a day, but the secret is not giving up after you stumble, said Mattson.

“People who usually are unable to meet their resolutions or

goals get really overwhelmed and they miss that day, and that day usually spirals into multiple days. The problem is they have an all-or-nothing approach,” she said.

One of Mattson’s own resolutions is to meditate more, but instead of setting unreachable expectations to do so for an hour every day, she sets aside just 10 minutes a day to take deep breaths, she said.

It’s all about “breaking it down into doable, smaller parts and not trying to take on too much,” said Mattson.

Resolutions don’t only need to be made around the holidays, but a new year is always a great time to start, said Mattson, who also teaches classes in how to get unstuck while writing.

“People really want to

Continued on page 6

Towers of glower

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

Officials must extend the deadline to apply for an apartment in the Towers of Bay Ridge, because they sent out paperwork too late for people to actually fill out and return by the Dec. 23 deadline, locals are demanding.

Anyone interested in

living in the co-ops had to request a sign-up form by Nov. 18 and had until Dec. 23 to mail the paperwork to the company running the twin monoliths’ housing lottery. But many did not receive their applications until just before the deadline, leaving them little

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A GOOD TIME: One creative visitor put this watch back together with just some string. Kate McIntosh

Breaking into the art world

BY LAUREN GILL

This show is crushing it!

People can smash household items in the name of “art” as part of an interactive work at Boerum Hill’s Invisible Dog gallery on Jan. 5–8. You can also take your time to meticulously dissect the objects, but pul-

verizing stuff with a hammer is definitely allowed, according to the artist.

“Some people spend a lot of time very carefully taking apart, other people are extremely violent and smash it,” said Belgian creative Kate McIntosh, who has also staged her piece

“Worktable” in Japan and Colombia.

To begin the piece, participants select one of the objects — it could be a wristwatch, a typewriter, or a tennis racket — then take it to their own workspace, where they disman-

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LIQUID COURAGE: Tattoo artists and brothers Roberto and Ricardo Rivera opened the Forever Ink Bar beside their tattoo parlor in Flatbush so patrons can catch a buzz before suffering for their art.

Photo by Jason Speakman

Ink and a drink

Ditmas Park tattoo parlor opens bar

BY COLIN MIXSON

What could possibly go wrong?

Flatbush Avenue tattoo parlor Forever Ink has opened an adjoining bar, which the owners say is a way to cash in on customers' desire to grab a shot of liquid courage before they go under the needle.

"They come and are all nervous and they always ask for a liquor store to get a shot to calm themselves, so we thought it would be a good idea for them to have one here," said Ricardo Rivera, who owns the ink store and bar with brother Roberto.

The brothers-in-ink opened the doors of the Forever Ink Bar at Duryea Place around the end of November, filling the new watering hole with tattoo paraphernalia and art that gives patrons a preview of what awaits around the corner at their parlor, according to Roberto Rivera.

"The idea is if they like the artwork they see at the bar, they can purchase it," he said.

The bar also sports a tattoo-themed drinks

menu, which includes one called "Yes it F----- Hurts", and a girly drink dubbed the "Tramp Stamp" — a combination of Pinot Grigio, lemon juice, Cointreau, and apricot liqueur that the owners say the ladies love.

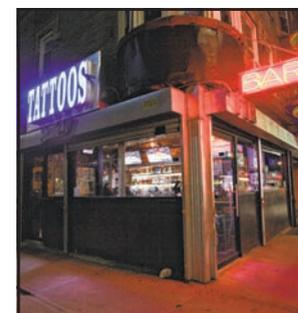
"It's a fruity drink, but the girls love it and they love the name," Ricardo Rivera said.

The brothers insist their bar is no scheme to sell tattoos to drunken bros, and that they will turn away anyone that they feel is too wasted.

The pair say they learned their lesson when they invested in the Tattoo Shot Lounge in Coney Island, which shared an entrance to one of their old tattoo parlors. All that bought them was a studio filled with drunks, who made working next to impossible, Ricardo Rivera said.

"You can't work when your customer has 10 friends rooting for him at the counter," he said. "You couldn't concentrate. It was uncomfortable."

As it is, the bar's 5 pm



INK IT UP: The new tattoo-themed watering hole sits next to the Forever Ink tattoo parlor, giving patrons a place to relax before they go under the needle.

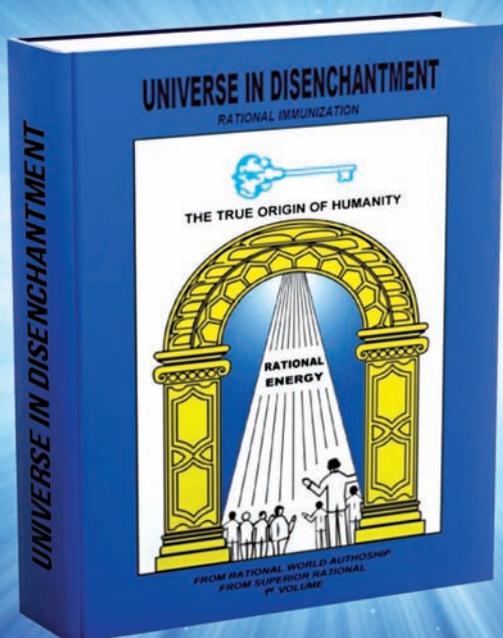
Photo by Jason Speakman

opening coupled with the tattoo parlor's 7 pm closing time means prospective customers only have a maximum of two hours to drink up before they get inked, which is how the brothers like it.

"We're serious about the tattooing part. We'll give them a shot or two, but that's it," Ricardo Rivera said. "It's not about getting drunk, it's about relaxing."

Forever Ink Bar [1051 Flatbush Ave. between Duryea Place and Beverly Road in Ditmas Park, (718) 284-4029].

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BIG BROOKLYN STORIES OF 2016

It's fashionable to talk about 2016 as an absolute disaster of a year, but it wasn't all doom and gloom in the Borough of Kings. Sure, beloved businesses closed, the L-pocalypse began, and the outcome of the presidential election wasn't exactly what many Brooklynites would have preferred, but we also had lawn-mowing goats, nude Shakespeare, and happy endings to several pesky lawsuits. Here is our annual look back at the highs and lows of the past 12 months:

January

Yo, baby: Brooklyn did it again! The new year got off to a lively start as adorable Zayden Noel made his world debut at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Day at Coney Island Hospital, making him the city's first baby of 2016, and the borough's second such bragging right in as many years. The strapping sweetie — born to Coney Islanders Stephanie Diaz and Paul Staley — weighed in at 7 pounds 1 ounce.

A black and white issue: Local leaders voted to go ahead with a controversial plan to rezone Vinegar Hill's PS 307 — which has long served kids at a neighboring public housing project — to include all youngsters living in Dumbo, one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in the city. The move was intended to ease overcrowding at the well-to-do PS 8 in Brooklyn Heights, but turned into a city-wide discussion about school desegregation as PS 307 parents feared an influx of white yuppies taking over their school, and the white yuppies griped that their kids could no longer attend the higher-achieving PS 8.

L no: Someone leaked news that the Metropolitan Transit Authority is planning a years-long closure of the Hurricane Sandy-battered L-train tunnel to Manhattan — sparking six months of panic in Kings County's northern nabes as residents, business owners, and real-estate agents clamored for information from the tight-lipped transit agency. The authority eventually announced that it will close the tube for 18 months starting in 2019, by which point all the hipsters say they'll have moved to Crown Heights.

Shore thing: Coney Island's long-neglected Shore Theater is ready to return to the spotlight. A developer plans to restore the 90-year-old landmark to its former

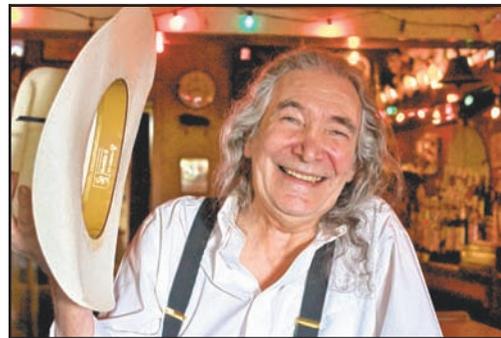


Photo by Georgine Benvenuto



Photo by Paul Martinka

WHO COULD FORGET?: (Clockwise from above) Sen. Bernie Sanders brought thousands to a rally in Prospect Park. Red Hook bar owner Sunny Balzano passed away. Prospect Park hired a crew of goats to mow the lawn.



File photo by Tom Callan

glory as a vaudeville hall for live entertainers. The proposed rebirth bodes well for the People's Playground, which area businesses and political leaders have been pushing to become a year-round destination for sports and entertainment.

February

He swears it's Brooklyn's only choice: Mayor DeBlasio unveiled his plan to bring trolley-dodging back to the Borough of Kings by building a \$2.5-billion streetcar line from Sunset Park to Queens. The early planning process of the so-called Brooklyn-Queens Connector rattled along throughout the year but kicked up plenty of controversy — not least of all because the whole plan was created and backed by developers and businesses

along the route, many of whom gave large sums of money to the mayor's contentious Campaign for One New York fund. Still, it was fantastic news for legendary Flatbush transit geek Bob Diamond, who has been trying to build a streetcar system between Red Hook and Downtown since 1989.

Plot twist: City preservation bigs buried a controversial proposal to landmark all of Green-Wood Cemetery, instead opting to keep just three structures on the site alive and well for the designation. That was fine with historic-building buffs, who said the famed burial ground would be hellish to maintain under the full protective shroud.

March

RIP Sunny: Iconoclastic Red Hook dive-bar owner

and artist Antonio "Sunny" Balzano died of a stroke at age 81. The beloved local bon vivant grew up in an apartment right next to the Conover Street speakeasy that would eventually bear his nickname.

Revamped roller: Thrill-seekers cruised the Cyclone at Luna Park's opening day on a newly rehabilitated icon. The wooden roller coaster sported a fresh coat of red and white paint in preparation for the summer and looked better than ever, according to the mayor of the People's Playground.

"In my 37 years in Coney I've never seen it looking this good," said entertainment impresario Dick Zigu. "I'm thrilled about it."

April

Vote early, vote often:

The borough came down with an acute case of election fever when the New York primaries brought Democratic hopefuls Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton to town, with locals hawking Bernie Sanders-themed hot sauce and designer Hillary duds. Sanders stumped with celebrities outside his childhood home in Midwood and brought record crowds to Prospect Park, while Clinton held more sedate events in black churches and colleges alongside husband Bill. The whole circus culminated in a debate at the Navy Yard, which ultimately disappointed many Brooklynites by not mentioning Brooklyn enough. Eventual presidential winner Republican Donald Trump did not set foot in Brooklyn during the primaries.

Banj-noooo: The borough's annual competition to see who can hurl a banjo farthest into the Gowanus Canal turned into banj-demonium when the instrument broke free from its tether and floated off into Brooklyn's Nautical Purgatory. Organizers of the athletic Americana carnival, part of the Brooklyn Folk Festival, promised to tie a stronger knot next year.

Justice?: Protestors and supporters faced off in the streets outside the Brooklyn Supreme Court after a judge spared former police officer Peter Liang from the slammer, despite a jury finding him guilty of shooting and killing unarmed Red Hook man Akai Gurley in 2014. The sentence, which came at the behest of District Attorney Ken Thompson, angered activists who said the justice system was once again putting police above the lives of black residents, but pleased members of local Asian communities, who argued the Chinese-American only fired his gun by accident and had been thrown under the bus because he is also a person of color.

May

New kids on the block: Prospect Park rented eight goats to rid the green space of weeds and poison ivy. The living lawn-mowers quickly became a popular tourist attraction, but had to be taken to their farm upstate at the end of summer.

Foutta here: The Metropolitan Transportation Authority divided the borough when it announced plans to bring back the old F express service between Church Avenue and Jay Street — great news for Southern strap-hangers, who will shave seven minutes off their commutes, but a bummer for Brownstone Brooklynites, as service will be halved at six of their stops. Even pols got in on the feud, with Councilmen Brad Lander (D-Park Slope) fuming that the change will "screw" his constituents and Councilman David Greenfield (D-Borough Park) accusing him of being petty. "It's not fair to say, 'My constituents are in a wealthy, transit-rich area, but you poor schlubs who live in Southern Brooklyn shouldn't get it,'" said Greenfield at a May 17 hearing.

Missin' Miss Susie: Supercentenarian Susanah "Miss Susie" Mushatt Jones, the world's oldest living person, passed away at the Vandalia Senior Center in East New York, at the age of 116. Jones swore off alcohol and smoking, makeup, and never dyed her hair, but she indulged in bacon and grits every morning right up until the end. She ascribed her longevity to splitting with her underwhelming ex-husband and forgoing children.

He rests his case: Unpretentious Bay Ridge New York State Supreme Court Justice Arthur M. Schack — a national champion of the little guy in foreclosure cases and a grassroots hero of kids who knew him as Artie the local scout leader

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WIZARD WAR: Fans of the Harry Potter film franchise will face off against book-loving purists in a debate at Nitehawk Cinema.

Battle of Hogwarts

Harry Potter fans debate films vs. books

BY ALEXANDRA SIMON

It's a defense against the dark arts of film adaptations!

Fans of the Harry Potter books and lovers of the movies will battle it out in a debate over which medium is better at Williamsburg's Nitehawk Cinema next month that the organizer expects to have all the competitiveness of the Quidditch World Cup without the high risk of serious injury.

"It's going to be battle royale but it will light-hearted," said Caryn Coleman, senior film programmer at the theater.

To celebrate the 20th

anniversary of the first Potter tome's release, Nitehawk will screen all eight films across weekends starting Jan. 7, and serve themed snacks and drinks including both alcoholic or booze-free versions of butterbeer.

Then on Jan. 12, it will be wands at 20 paces when book lovers comedian Alise Morales and fan convention impresario Aliza Weinberger face off against film fans Matthew Jacobs, an entertainment reporter at the Huffington Post, and movie critic Matt Zoller Seitz.

Each side will have 15 minutes to make their case

across four different categories — casting, story line changes and omissions, film to book consistency, and visualization — and can use short clips from the movies to support their arguments, said Coleman.

"They're going to be discussing if casting exceeded their expectations on the film side, or if the books lived up what they imagined in their heads," she said. "We're going to talk about all the pros and cons."

Coleman herself is already torn between her loyalties as a cinema employee

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BREAKING

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tle it using tools including a saw, screwdriver, and hammer.

The process typically triggers mixed emotions from participants, McIntosh said — some are eager to take out their anger on the trinket while others find the destruction distressing.

"Some react with a lot of pleasure and catharsis and sometimes they are a bit upset about this," she said.

And some just get weird — a woman once selected a

pack of playing cards and then used sandpaper to erase all the hearts, she said.

"It was very beautiful and careful," she said.

After destroying their knickknack, guests then attempt to reassemble the parts in any way they want — a process than can take anywhere from 15 minutes to five hours, McIntosh said.

At the end, participants can stick around to chat about how they came up with their new object, she said — and the stories get surprisingly deep.

Really, the work is about so much more than destroy-

ing things, McIntosh said — it's designed to make people think about what it means to wipe the slate clean and start all over again.

"This piece is really about the journey, the emotions that people go through," she said. "There's a big question of change, what that means, and what rearrangement means."

"Worktable" at the Invisible Dog (51 Bergen St. between Smith Street and Boerum Place in Boerum Hill, www.theinvisible-dog.org). Jan. 5-7 and 9 at noon-8 pm. Jan. 8 at 11 am-7 pm. \$20.

The building blocks of faith

Shorefront Y builds a Lego menorah for Hanukkah

BY JULIANNE CUBA

This Hanukkah party came together in a snap!

Kids and parents built a 13-foot-tall menorah from Lego bricks at the Shorefront Y on Dec. 25. The event was a first for the Brighton Beach community center, and it was a great way to combine kids' love of building with holiday tradition, according to a leader at the center.

"It was a new perspective — taking something that the kids love to do and connecting it to the Jewish tradition of celebrating Hanukkah," said Anna Bronfman. "Every kid got to build a piece of that menorah, and it was lit in front of everyone. They were a part of the process of building it."

The holiday celebrates the miracle where an oil-burning menorah stayed lit for eight days on just one day's fuel.

Twenty modern-day families got to see the fruits of their labor after the menorah — made entirely of geometric plastic pieces — was complete and lit, said organizer

Stephen Schwartz, the head of Building Blocks Workshops, which educates kids about religious and historical events through Lego.

"To get young kids excited about the holiday, that's the whole idea of this, because when you're a youngster, three-and-a-half feet tall, this thing looks like it's about 100 feet tall," he said.

But the project was as much for children as it was for parents — kids-at-heart sent their own progeny to retrieve pieces for them as they erected the candelabra, said Schwartz.

"Most of the time, the parents love it more than the kids," he said. "Somebody has to be building back at the table, and parents were telling the kids 'I need more red, I need more white,' because the parents can't believe how much fun this is."

Schwartz schlepped more than



Photo by Erica Price

WORKING TOGETHER: Kids help build the menorah.

100,000 pieces of the brightly colored blocks to the Shorefront Y so that participants could sift through them for their favorite colors to build the menorah. And the result of everyone working together is always a unique masterpiece, he said.

"I think this program is one of the greatest examples of teamwork, because you contribute a little piece to make something much bigger than you could do on your own," he said.



LEARNING THE STORY: Shmueli Perkel of Jewish Drum Tales shares the story of Hanukkah through music during the Shorefront Y's celebration on Dec. 18.

Photo by Joshua Winata

Brightend Beach!

Hanukkah fest lights up Shorefront Y

BY JULIANNE CUBA

It was a latke fun!

Youngsters learned the history of Hanukkah during the Shorefront Y's Dec. 18 festival celebrating the eight-day holiday. Kids joined in on a rhythmic drum circle during which they were taken on a journey through ancient Jerusalem and the story of the Maccabees's triumph in a relatable and kid-friendly way. The

drumming was fun, but the tale still may have gone over one little boy's head, said one Bay Ridgite, whose 2-year-old son participated in the circle.

"He loved learning the drums, he's a very musical-type kid," said Demian Cacciolo. "I don't know how much really soaked in but I like to think it did."

The holiday celebrates *Continued on page 8*

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STORIES

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— died of a blood disorder in a Manhattan hospital, surrounded by his family. He was 71 years old. The former Bay Ridge High School teacher and Troop 20 leader was born in Bensonhurst and enjoyed an illustrious career on the bench, beginning with his 1999 election to the Kings County Criminal Court.

June

We're gonna need a bigger boat: Sharks are getting closer than ever to Brooklyn's beaches, experts said after anglers plucked 17 of the beasts from Sheepshead Bay during a fishing tournament in June. A bumper crop of bunker fish along the coast was apparently responsible for drawing the razor-toothed predators near our shores.

Finally: The owner of Park Slope old folks' home Prospect Park Residence agreed to pay his elderly tenants \$3.35 million to leave the pricey property, ending an ugly and high-profile two-year court battle between the two parties. The nonagenarians had been fighting eviction since landlord Haysha Deitsch abruptly gave them three months to scam in March 2014 so he could unload the tony building to an investment firm. He sold for \$84 million in October.

July

'Jaws' chews his way back: Champion hot-dog-chomper Joey Chestnut gobbled his way to the Nathan's Hot-Dog Eating Contest title on July 4 — regaining the coveted Mustard Belt he lost to Matt "Megatoad" Stonie last year by wolfing down a world-record 70 wieners in 10 minutes. Women's champ Miki Sudo downed



Photo by Paul Marinka



Community News Group / Caroline Sprack

38-and-a-half dogs to retain her title for the third year in a row.

Spu-mourni Gardens: The co-owner of famed Gravesend pizzeria L&B Spumoni Gardens was shot dead in front of his Dyker Heights home on July 30. A hooded gunman pumped five rounds into 61-year-old Louis Barbati at the corner of 12th Avenue and 76th Street and then fled. Police later arrested 41-year-old Andres Fernandez for the crime, which they say was a botched robbery, although some speculate it may have been mob-related.

Flaming bus: Talk about firing on all cylinders! A shuttle bus burst into flames in Bay Ridge, as scorching temps soared to 96 degrees. The coach's engine flared up on Bay Ridge Avenue near Sixth Avenue as the mercury neared its peak at 1:40 pm. The driver, who has been a bus operator for more than 20 years, said he had never seen anything like it. Luckily no one was hurt.

WHAT A YEAR: (Above) Joey Chestnut and Miki Sudo bask in the glory of victory at the annual Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest in July. (Left) Schnitzel Haus owner Fred Urban poses with the most controversial photo of Donald Trump in the entire borough.

August

Art of the veal: The owners of Schnitzel Haus took down a signed photo of Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump that graced the Bay Ridge German joint for nearly a decade, because online reviewers called the eatery racist for appearing to support the divisive White House hopeful who proposed a ban on Muslims entering the U.S. Sausage-slingers said the link was half-baked, but they begrudgingly removed the picture anyway — because the move made capitalistic sense.

Model marriage: A deceased Bay Ridgite's labor of love was kept alive by his widow, who woke up every morning at 6 am hoping to preserve her husband's creation — a miniature replica of his homeland, the Mediterranean island of Crete, out of thousands of pebbles, shells, and plastic figurines outside his home on the corner of Ridge Boulevard and 79th Street.

September

Tebow time: Brooklyn Cyclones officials said a 2017 roster including Heisman Trophy winner, former Denver Broncos star quarterback, and failed New York Jet Tim Tebow would be the biggest news for Brooklyn sports since professional baseball returned to the borough in 2001.

Bloody J'Ouvert: Gunmen shot four people, killing two, and stabbed a man during the early-morning J'Ouvert parade that precedes the West Indian American Day Carnival — despite a heavy police presence that Mayor DeBlasio had promised would ensure this year's event would be "safer than ever." Many called for the city to cancel the long-running Caribbean carnival following the bloodshed, though no decisions have been announced yet.

October

RIP: Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson died of cancer at age 50, just a week after notifying the public he was sick. Rumor had it that several others were hoping Gov. Cuomo would anoint them as a replacement — including Public Advocate Tish James, former prosecutor Ann Swern, and former Commissioner on Human Rights Patricia Gatling — but he ultimately left Thompson's chosen replacement, Chief Assistant District Attorney Eric Gonzales, in place until next year's election.

Pizza wars: Locals were divided over news that artisanal pizza mini-chain Artichoke Basille's was cooking up a storefront on the corner of 91st Street and Fourth Avenue. Foodies gave the eatery's



SNOW WONDER: Esoteric artist Sxip Shirey will launch his latest album with a release party at National Sawdust on Jan. 9. Krys Fox

Sxip shape!

Electro artist launches album

BY BILL KOPP

He's more than just a brain!

Electro-acoustic composer Sxip Shirey may be best known for the cerebral and experimental side of his music, but most of his tunes have both a melody and a groove. The Brooklyn musician, who will launch his latest album at avant-garde music spot National Sawdust in Williamsburg on Jan. 9, says that while he values the intellectual approach to music, his goal is something much more visceral.

"I'm not writing music

to be smart," Shirey insists. "I'm a smart f---, and I definitely use conceptual techniques for my music, but I'm actually just interested in, 'Can you write a f--- good song?'"

The best music communicates with people, said Shirey, and he wants to reach a wide audience. He says that he would welcome a situation in which he's told, "Hey, Sxip, there's a bunch of plumbers out there, and you have to sell this to them."

Shirey's latest effort to

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NEW YEAR'S

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achieve their goals, and they just don't know how, so I love being able to help them, and I love being able to help people figure out things like productivity, and resolutions, and goals," she said. "And I love New

Years for that reason — because it's a great time to start fresh."

"New Year's Resolutions: How to make and keep them" at Brooklyn Brainery [190 Underhill Ave. between Sterling and St. Johns places in Prospect Heights, (347) 292-7246, www.brooklynbrainery.com]. Jan. 3 at 6:30 pm, Jan. 6 at 5 pm. \$22.



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Farrah Rubani, Hopeton Care, C.E.O.

Hopeton Care, a 24/7 licensed home care services agency approved by the New York State Department of Health, provides quality home health aides, personal care aides, nursing and rehabilitative services within the New York metro area. When you choose Hopeton Care, you are matched with a caregiver who is experienced with your specific needs and will always put you or your loved one's safety first.

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STORIES

Continued from page 6

butter-and-cream-laden, artichoke-topped pies a thumb's up, but crusty purists were cheesed off that cooks were trying to pass anything with vegetables off as pizza.

November

The presidential election...: Our reporters watched Hillary's election-night party go downhill fast, while Dems in Park Slope and Carroll Gardens collectively boo-hoed over Trump's upset win. When the results came in, it was clear Kings County was "with her" — except for sections of Southern Brooklyn where Russian electors in Sheepshead Bay and Brighton Beach who are fond of the pro-Israel businessman turned swaths of the map red for The Donald.

...And the ensuing backlash: The borough's political tensions hit fever pitch in the days following Trump's election. First a guy socked a woman at Cobble Hill's Bar Tabac be-

cause she was criticizing Trump. Then immigrant students in Sunset Park reported that school staffers were telling them to "pack their bags" in the wake of the election. And if that wasn't enough, someone spray-painted swastikas and the words "Go Trump" on a jungle gym in Adam Yauch Park in Brooklyn Heights.

Pledge of a grievance: Local veterans turned their back on Councilman Brad Lander (D-Park Slope) during a Veterans Day ceremony at Carroll Park, because the lawmaker refused to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance during an earlier Council meeting — a move Lander insisted was to show solidarity with oppressed people and not a criticism of the armed services.

LICH talks flatline: The developers of the old Long Island Hospital in Cobble Hill officially pulled the plug on negotiations with local residents and pols to rezone the site for more housing in exchange for building a school and some below-

market housing there. Instead, Fortis Property Group says it will just plow ahead with a plan to build high rises next to the neighborhood historic district, which is equally unpopular but doesn't require city approval.

December

Closing the book: The owners of Cobble Hill institution BookCourt announced they were closing the Court Street shop after 35 years.

Bearing suit: A staffer for Councilman Vincent Gentile (D-Bay Ridge) dropped a bombshell lawsuit on the pol, alleging Gentile made fun of his Asperger's Syndrome and that a fellow Gentile aide festooned his desk with mutilated Teddy bears because he said stuffed animals made him feel comfortable.

Bigly deal: Donald Trump's son-in-law and right-hand man Jared Kushner bought a city-block-sized vacant Dumbo lot for \$345 million, adding to his already substantial portfolio of property in the nabe.

HANUKKAH

Continued from page 5

when Jewish rebels regained control of Jerusalem and the Temple there from an occupying force — as well as a miracle in which they kept an oil-burning menorah lit for eight days on one day's fuel. Celebrants eat foods fried in oil — such as laktes — as a result.

Kids at the Shorefront Y even got to craft menorahs and candles of their own. And the organization's b-boys even wowed the



ON THE BEAT: Kids participate in a storytelling drum circle.

Photo by Joshua Winata

crowd with some non-traditional dance moves, said dad Alex Kleyman, who attended with his 8-year-old son.

"He was really interested in the break dance. He looked at it with excitement," he said. "My son loved it."

POTTER

Continued from page 4

and a devotee of the source material.

"I feel predisposed to say the film will win, however a lot of books don't come across the same in a movie," she said. "I don't really know who will win — I feel it will be the books but

it should be interesting."

As for the rest of the screening series, Coleman expects super fans of the franchise to come out in costume to relive the magic, but she also hopes to attract some newcomers to experience it for the first time.

"It will be like binge-watching a new television show," she said. "You could have never seen Harry Pot-

ter, but it's a good opportunity for new and diehard fans."

"Harry Potter 20" at Nitehawk Cinemas [136 Metropolitan Ave. between Berry Street and Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 782-8370, www.nitehawkcinema.com]. Weekends Jan. 7-Mar. 26. \$14 adults, \$9 kids. Debate is on Jan. 12 at 7 pm. \$16.

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Don't you want to celebrate those once-in-a-lifetime days in Paradise?

The catering office is open Tuesday through Sunday, 1 – 9 p.m. Note that the facilities are also available during the weekdays for all types of social meetings and functions.

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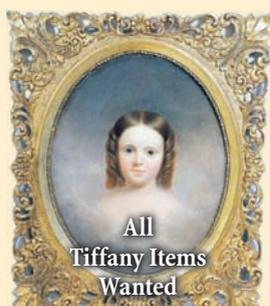
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TOWERS

Continued from page 1

time to sign on the dotted line and mail the forms back. The deadline was extended to Jan. 3, but that is not enough time for people traveling for the holidays, one applicant griped.

"They absolutely need to extend the deadline. What do they expect they gave almost no information and I can't get a hold of anyone to figure out what's going on," said Bay Ridgite Jennifer Weisbrich, who received an application on Dec. 21 and had just two days to fill it out and mail it back. "I mean the fact that I'm contacting a newspaper to learn more information about a state process is ridiculous. They should have more information available. A place to go to learn more. Someone available to speak to. Something. Anything."

The Towers of Bay Ridge are part of the state-supervised Mitchell-Lama program, which provides below-market-rate rental and cooperative housing to middle-income families, but the agency that oversees the program — the office of Homes and Community Renewal — does not facilitate wait-list lotteries and instead has individual co-ops farm out lottery duties to third-party companies.

Long Island-based Election Services United Corporation is running the Towers' lotto, and offi-



RETURN TO SENDER: Jennifer Weisbrich and dozens of others got their applications for Towers of Bay Ridge co-ops just days before the deadline because of a mailing snafu. Photos by Vera Goodeye

cialists there did not return requests for comment.

But a rep from the company told state Sen. Diane Savino's (D-Bay Ridge) office that workers mailed the applications in mid-November, according to a Savino rep who said her office has received complaints about the delays from across the city.

It's unclear who bungled the process, a spokeswoman for the lawmaker said.

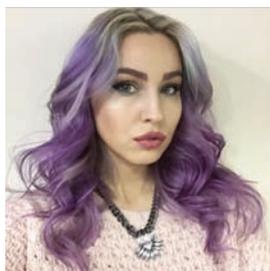
A honcho at Election Services United Corporation told Savino's office that the company mailed the papers with ample time for applicants to return them, and claimed the postal service is to blame, but a supervisor at

the Garden City post office where the applications were mailed from claimed it was not the branch's fault.

Savino's office continues to field complaints about the application process, and workers there are at their wits' end, because neither the state nor Election Services United is making it easy to get to the bottom of things, one staffer said.

"At this point, I just want people to have the correct information, and I'm going to be honest with you, I don't know if that's possible because no one seems to know for sure what happened," said Savino rep Shannon Watkins.

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SXIP

Continued from page 6

communicate is the album "A Bottle of Whiskey and a Handful of Bees," set for release on Jan. 13. For the album's premiere at National Sawdust, Shirey says he is "pulling out the stops."

The release show will feature singers Rhiannon Giddens and Xavier, both of whom provided guest vocals for the album. Minneapolis-poet-rapper Dessa will join Shirey for the song "I Live in New York City," and the show will

also feature the 20-piece Brooklyn vocal ensemble Choral Chameleon.

Shirey met R&B vocalist Xavier through a mutual friend, and found that chatting with the openly gay singer inspired him to complete several new songs for the album.

"I wrote from a gay perspective on Xavier's songs," said Shirey. "I had these partially-finished songs, and I had been talking to Xavier a lot about situations he was in. It was really easy to write the rest of the lyrics."

The evening will also include a controversial

piece Shirey debuted at a 2008 TED talk, for which he put a microphone inside his mouth while pushing air in and out of another person's lungs. Not everyone appreciated that bit of art, but Shirey said that reaction is typical for his work.

"Some of you will get what I am doing," he said, "and some of you will still think I'm full of s---! And that's fine!"

Sxip Shirey at National Sawdust (80 N. Sixth St. at Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg, nationalsawdust.org). Jan. 9 at 7 pm. \$34 (\$29 in advance).

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