

Go with the flow

Tour C'Island Creek

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

Call it a walk through time.

The Coney Island History Project installed some 30 informational panels along the shores of Coney Island Creek to teach locals little-known facts about the waterway's history and ecology. The self-guided tour stretches along Kaiser and Calvert Vaux parks with the goal of motivating locals to discover unseen patches of public land — and to take better care of the long-neglected estuary, said the director of the Coney Island History Project.

"When you learn about the history of the waterway, you care about its future. And once people learn how it got to this state, they're interested in how it can be protected," said Charles Denson. "It's about sharing how it fits into the community and recognizing how interesting it is and its importance."

Denson began mounting the aluminum placards on posts and rails along the shore shortly before Hurricane Sandy in 2012. When the storm struck, it leveled the area, but the signage mirac-

Continued on page 10

FUN SEASON



ORANGE YOU GLAD IT'S NOT 2016?: Dragon dancers will welcome the Lunar New Year at Brooklyn Center on Jan. 22.

Carol Rosegg

Best winter arts events

BY THE COLD COMFORT BUREAU

The weather outside is still frightful, but there is a lot to look forward to between now and the start of spring! So don't just huddle by the fire — buy your tickets now for some of the best events happening this winter in Brooklyn:

'The Tempest'

The Donmar Warehouse returns to St. Ann's Warehouse with the third and final installment of its all-female Shakespeare productions set inside a women's prison. In "The Tempest," captivating actress Harriet Walter will take on the role of Prospero, a wizard exiled to a magical island.

St. Ann's Warehouse
[45 Water St. at Old Dock
Street in Dumbo, (718) 254-

Continued on page 6

It's grow-tesque

BY LAUREN GILL

Gnarly.

A company that grows lettuce on the roof of the Gowanus Whole Foods is selling its bruised and hole-ridden produce at a discount downstairs under the name Ugly Greens. The leaves may not be pretty,

but they taste just as good as the picture-perfect stuff, a company rep claims.

"They are perfectly fresh, perfectly nutritious local greens with some slight cosmetic imperfections," said Julie McMahon, the digital marketing coor-

Continued on page 10



Phil Provencio

FUNNY GIRLS: Emily Winter and Jenn Welch's "What a Joke" festival aims to help people get through Inauguration Day.

Anti-Trump comedy fest

BY LAUREN GILL

Don't let Trump get you down in the dumps, grumps!

A pair of Brooklyn comedians will try to lift liberal spirits during the weekend of the presidential inauguration with a nationwide comedy festival.

Two Williamsburg venues will host local installments of the "What a Joke" festival on Jan. 20–21, with the goal of giving guests a good giggle when they need it most, said one of the event's co-founders.

"On a night like that when a lot of people really

aren't happy with what's happening with our country right now, they need to let go and laugh and to feel somewhat empowered — and that's what we want to achieve," said Park Slope comedian Jenn Welch.

Humorists will take the
Continued on page 2

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Liquid laugh

Bottled-water brand's ad on filthy Gowanus

BY LAUREN GILL

So refreshing!

Coca-Cola is advertising its trendy Smartwater brand of bottled H₂O with a giant billboard above the notoriously filthy Gowanus Canal, and the juxtaposition has neighbors cracking up.

"It's a stupid place for it," said Michael Greisch, who lives in Carroll Gardens and burst out laughing upon noticing the curiously placed ad.

The advertisement for the brand's new sparkling water — featuring an image of a giant bottle and the slogans "up up up" and "bring the bubbly" — went up over the sludgy span across from the Whole Foods Market on Third Avenue and Third Street in November last year.

The location isn't any sort of comment on Brooklyn's Nautical Purgatory — which is riddled with gonorrhea and the carcasses of the dolphins, whales, and goslings who met their untimely demise in its murky depths — according to the beverage company. It selected the spot simply be-



ISN'T IT IRONIC?: This new ad for super filtrated water on the Gowanus Canal has locals laughing about its ironic placement on the heavily polluted waterway. Community News Group / Lauren Gill

cause its target 18-34 demographic resides in Carroll Gardens and nearby Whole Foods is one of its partners, a flack said.

"There isn't a connection between the placement and the 'condition of the canal,'" said a spokeswoman for the soft-drink company.

Still, the brand that boasts its water is so clean that it is "pure and crisp, like from a cloud" probably could have thought things through a little better before promoting their product over the most polluted

waterway in the country, said one local.

"It's kind of ironic, it makes you question the vision" said George Bixby, a Gowanus resident.

Perhaps the multinational company should consider splashing some cash to help clean the environment instead of polluting it with more advertising, suggested one civic-minded citizen.

"We should spend more money on cleaning up the canal than ads for Smartwater," said Cobble Hillian Vicky Vinton.

JOKE TOUR

Continued from page 1

stage at the Annoyance Theater on Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, and at Rough Trade the following night. But participants are not limited to election-themed material — distracting people from current events may be better than dwelling on the flaws of the incoming president.

"Anyone who is going to these shows probably has similar politics to the performers — we don't need to beat a dead horse," said Red Hooker Emily Winter, the other co-founder.

The key to an effective Trump joke is originality, said Welch, rather than rehashing tired gags about

the incoming president's improbable hair or Oompa-Loompa-like complexion.

"Everybody's got a Trump joke and some of them hit and some of them don't," she said. "If you can put your finger on something that everybody has been thinking but hasn't verbalized yet, that's an important piece of an interesting joke that people will respond to. The same old stuff isn't going to work."

The Brooklyn line-up will feature Josh Gondelman, Jo Firestone, and Brett Davis at the Annoyance show, and Dave Hill, Laurie Kilmartin, and Rae Sanni at Rough Trade, along with the organizers and other comedians.

Proceeds from the weekend will go to Ameri-

can Civil Liberties Union, which the organizers feel could use the help during the Trump administration.

The title of the festival comes from the idea that Trump himself is a joke. Welch could not choose any particular action that earned Trump the title, saying that everything about him is ridiculous.

What a Joke Festival at The Annoyance Theater (367 Bedford Ave. at S. Fifth Street in Williamsburg, www.theannoyance-newyork.com). Jan. 20 at 8 pm. \$15.

Rough Trade (64 N. Ninth St. at Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg, www.roughtradenyc.com). Jan. 21 at 8:30 pm. \$20.

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Keeping tabs

A 2017 Brooklyn New Year's accountability project

Last year, some of Brooklyn's movers and shakers made promises to better themselves. Sure, some were just thinly veiled humble-brags, and most were ill-conceived at best, but here at Courier Life, we believe in a little thing called accountability. So, 366 days later (2016 was a leap year) we "circled back" to these local titans to find out if they delivered on the pledges they made before god and Mother Brooklyn herself. (And as always, we added a few new folks that we will hold accountable in 12 months' time).

— Colin Mixson

Alan Maisel

Councilman (D—Marine Park)

Last year's resolution: To resolve numerous long-standing quality-of-life issues affecting Southern Brooklynites before dying.

The follow through: The good news is, he's still kicking. But there's still work to do.

"I accomplished a lot, but not everything," Maisel said. "I want to solve the problem with dollar vans. I would like to resolve the issue of homelessness. There are a lot of things I'd like to get done, but I'm still alive and kicking."

This year's resolution: To stop making New Year's resolutions.

"My resolution is not to make any resolutions," said Maisel. "That's the one resolution I know I can keep."

Theresa Scavo

Chairwoman, CB15

Last year's resolution: The same as the year before — to watch her diet.

The follow through: Scavo reported that she's been doing "excellent."

This year's resolution: Surprise, surprise, it's an extension of last year's resolution — but more specifically to walk more.

"I'm trying to walk 10,000 steps a day," she said.

Dick Zigun

Self-proclaimed Mayor, Coney Island

Last year's resolution: To bring the long-abandoned, landmarked Shore Theater back from the brink.

The follow through: This one's 50-50. New owners Pye Properties shelled out \$20 million to purchase the derelict playhouse and plan to return



SIDESHOW TAKES CENTER STAGE:

Freak show impresario Dick Zigun wants to raise money to renovate the landmarked home of his arts group Coney Island USA. File photo

it to its former glory, but they haven't made any moves, and the iconic theater remains in a sorry state.

"I hope they will take it upon themselves to bring it back," Zigun said.

This year's resolution: To raise awareness for the landmarked Coney Island USA building, which Zigun owns and operates, in an effort to raise support and funding for further renovations there.

"If we bring attention to it, I think people would be surprised if we restored it just how beautiful and worthy it is of the designation," he said.

Justin Brannan

Founder, Bay Ridge Dems

Last year's resolution: To lose weight by bribing locals to prevent him from eating bagels with the promise of free coffee.

The follow through: Brannan lost whopping 30 pounds, Continued on page 4



BUNDLES OF OY!: (Left) Mom Nasma Baloch holds newborn Alayna Baloch — the borough's first baby of 2017 — at Coney Island Hospital. (Right) Phillip Colmar and Diana Espinosa welcomed little Jacob Colmar-Espinosa into the world about an hour later at Methodist Hospital in Park Slope.

Borough's New Year's babies

BY JULIANNE CUBA

Welcome to Brooklyn!

The borough's first newborn of the new year, Alayna Baloch, came screaming into the world at Coney Island Hospital at 1:38 am weighing 7 pounds, 4 ounces, according to the city-run hospital. Parents Nasma Baloch and Mohammed Haris are very happy, said the mother of three.

"My family, my husband, all very happy," the proud mom said.

And just about an hour later at 2:51 am, baby Jacob Colmar-Espinosa was in his parent's arms at Methodist Hospital in Park Slope. Jacob weighed 5 pounds, 7.5 ounces, according to the hospital. Jacob is Queens

couple Diana Espinosa and Phillip Colmar's first child, and they couldn't be happier, said Espinosa.

"We are so thrilled to welcome Jacob into the world," said the first-time mom.

Her husband noted the benefits of having such a festive birthday.

"He'll have an amazing party every year, and we won't even have to pay for it," he said.

And Kings County's third 2017 birth was baby Helen Zhu at Lutheran Medical Center in Sunset Park at 4:10 am. She was born to Sunset Parkers Bin Xing Wang and Daci Zhu, weighing 7 pounds, 13 ounces and is the couple's fourth child, according to the hospital.

The city's first baby of 2017 was born in the Bronx.

Here's 17 stories to watch in 2017

Our crack team of Brooklynologists calculate all the big stories you'll be reading about over the next 12 months.

17. Formula E

International electric-car racing series the Formula E Championship will zoom into Red Hook on July 29 and 30, bringing tens of thousands of spectators to the sleepy waterfront burg. The cars are supposed to be far quieter than their gas-guzzling Formula 1 counterparts and the race will take place off public streets at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal, but we're curious how the onslaught of onlookers will get to the subway-starved location. The B61?

16. Woody in Coney

The controversial cinematographer made his first return to Coney Island since 1977's "Annie Hall" last year, and his new film set in 1950s Sodom By The Sea (and starring Kate Winslet and national treasure Justin Timberlake) is set to debut in 2017.

Expect an operational (albeit



A WOODY BOARDWALK: Controversial director Woody Allen's new movie set for a 2017 release was filmed in Coney Island.

computer-generated) Parachute Jump, lots of replica signs, and a few cameos by local businesses.

15. Luxury NYCHA

The New York City Housing Authority will this year seek community approval for its controversial plan to build market-rate housing on land at Wyckoff Gardens in Boerum Hill — a concept it intends to replicate at other public housing complexes around the city. The cash-strapped agency says it needs to build the 500-unit development — half of which will be market-rate, half below-market — to pull itself back from the brink of bankruptcy and to pay for much-needed

repairs to the run-down structures that have occupied the site since the 1960s. But many tenants are worried they'll lose parking to the new tower and that nearby affordable retail will give way to upscale stores when more moneyed residents arrive, amongst a host of other fears.

14. Toxic Trump land

National Grid will begin scrubbing cyanide, coal tar, and other pollutants from below the Trump Village Shopping Center under a state-mandated clean-up this spring, and we're expecting a lot of push-back. The utility says it is taking all the necessary precautions — including covering the whole work-site with a specially ventilated tent — but the work will still stink to high heaven, and we wouldn't be surprised if Brighton Beachers living nearby raise a stink of their own.

13. Eighth Ave. Center

Builders will file plans for the massive Eighth Avenue Center mixed-use development on a block-sized lot at Eighth Avenue and 62nd

Continued on page 5



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Prospect Park fireworks a blast

Thousands of Kings County revelers rang in the new year by watching the dazzling fireworks display over Prospect Park, which was bigger than ever in honor of the park's 150th anniversary, using a grand total of 930 shells over 10 minutes – eclipsing last year's 809 shells, according to Lucy Gardner, spokeswoman for park steward group the Prospect Park Alliance..

TABS

Continued from page 3

but he wasn't caught eating any bagels, so nobody got coffee.

This year's resolution: To restore New Yorkers' shattered faith in government.

"My resolution for 2017 is to work as hard as I can to restore people's faith in what government can do for them and their families," said Brannan, who is running for his old boss Vincent Gentile's council seat this year.

Eric Adams
Borough President

Last year's resolution: To become a professional athlete and lead a Brooklyn sports franchise to victory on a national scale.

The follow through: Failure on both counts.

This year's resolution: To leverage his own experience overcoming diabetes to keep Brooklyn fit.

"I hope to use the story of how I reversed my Type 2 diabetes as an inspirational force for motivating fellow Brooklynites to make lifestyle choices

that lead to healthier futures."

Jumaane Williams
Councilman (D-Canarsie)

This year's resolution: To overcome his fear of flying.

"I used to fly a lot, but as I got older, I stopped — I don't know what happened, and a lot people ask my why I don't take planes," Williams said.

"I want to fly somewhere — it doesn't matter where."

Adam Diamond
President, Georgetown Civic Association

This year's resolution: To foster growth in the newly revived Georgetown Civic Association, which was reestablished over the summer after years of inaction.

"I want to grow the civic and get a permanent meeting place so we can be more active and established in the community."

Mark Treyger
Councilman (D-Coney Island)

This year's resolution: To convince the city to outfit schools with permanent boilers, replacing the shoddy temporary



THIRSTY FOR CHANGE: Slope comedian Ophira Eisenberg wants to drink smarter, not harder.

water heaters they've used since Sandy.

"People can't regulate the temperature inside the schools, and it's really frustrating that students and staff are subjected to this," Treyger said. "They should be focusing on their studies and not if it's too hot or too cold."

Ophira Eisenberg
Park Slope comedian

This year's resolution: To, in lieu of moderation, avoid the pitfalls of alcohol consumption through clever strategy.

"To drink less," said Eisenberg. "Actually scratch that — to drink smarter, not harder."

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Going temp to perm

'Temporary' hotel-shelters to be permanent under new plan

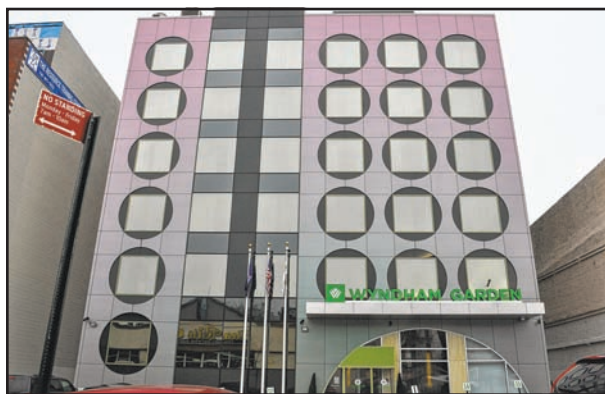
BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

Hundreds of Sunset Park hotel rooms where the city is temporarily housing the homeless could become permanent shelters for up to nine years under a new proposal.

The Department of Homeless Services is asking social-service groups for bids to run full-service shelters out of the hotels where the city has been putting up the indigent on a month-by-month basis — many of which are in Sunset Park.

The plan will increase oversight on the cost of housing the needy — which has skyrocketed this year, according to a report from Comptroller Stringer — and of programs that help homeless find affordable housing and job-training, officials said.

But the proposal also contradicts Mayor DeBl-



PACKED: The city is renting 36 rooms of this 76-room Wyndham Garden hotel on 39th Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues. The mayor has pledged to reduce the city's reliance on hotel-shelters, but he actually plans to open more.

CNG / Caroline Spivack

sio's February pledge to "use hotels less and less and eventually stop using hotels altogether" when lodging the needy.

The Department of Homeless Services hopes to find groups to take responsibility for up to 3,900 rooms

citywide on contracts ranging from three to nine years, according to a press release the agency issued three days before Christmas.

The administration is standing by that claim, even though booking 3,900 rooms would be a new high-

water mark — the city's hotel-homeless population topped out at just under 2,500 in October, meaning the city could actually increase its reliance on hotels by as many as 1,400 rooms.

Department of Homeless Services officials acknowledged the contradiction but said they have little choice.

"There isn't an immediate way to stop using hotels," an agency spokeswoman said. "This is an interim solution until shelters can be opened."

Sunset Park is saturated with inns with at least five in a 17-block radius from 22nd to 39th streets between Second and Fifth avenues. And there are six more under construction that skeptical locals believe are destined to house the homeless that could be contracted into long-term service for the city.



CENTER OF IT ALL: Developers planning the massive Eighth Avenue Center aim to file plans in the next few months.

17 STORIES

Continued from page 3

Street in Sunset Park.

The plan, which includes a mall, a 12-story residential tower with 250 units, and an 11-story, 150-key hotel, needs special approval from the city, and members of Community Board 10 have said they will give the plan extra-special scrutiny because it will likely bolster the population in an area with overcrowded schools and public transportation.

12. Livestreamed civic engagement

No more cramming into poorly-lit community centers and school halls

with crappy acoustics to catch the thrill-a-minute action of your local community board meeting — several panels around the city, including Williamsburg and Greenpoint's Community Board 1, will begin livestreaming their general meetings online this month. But will it encourage locals to stay home and watch from their couch, and will residents freeze up at the microphone when faced with video cameras? You'll have to tune in to find out!

11. Ridge goes Republican?

It's no secret conservative Bay Ridge is getting bluer by the day, but *Continued on page 8*

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Continued from page 1

8779, www.stannswarehouse.org]. Jan. 13–Feb 19 at 7:30 pm. \$26–\$66.

'The Beauty Queen of Leenane'

Start the year with this blistering black comedy about a bickering mother and daughter in a tiny Irish town. The production stars Marie Mullen, who won a Tony for originating the role of daughter Maureen 20 years ago, now taking on the role of mother Mags.

BAM Harvey Theater [651 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636–4100, www.bam.org]. Jan. 11–Feb. 5 at various times. \$25–\$95.

Donut Fest

The city's finest fried dough purveyors present their best crullers, fritters, bear claws, and other creations for your consideration. Taste them all and then vote for your favorite.

The Bell House [149 Seventh St. between Second and Third avenues in Gowanus, (718) 643–6510, www.donutfest.com/nyc] Jan. 21 at 8 am, 10 am, and noon. \$35–\$50

Lunar New Year Celebration

Ring in the Year of the Rooster with the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company's beloved annual Lunar New Year show at Brooklyn College, featuring dancers, acrobats, and traditional music.

Walt Whitman Theater at Brooklyn College [2925 Avenue H at Campus Road in Midwood, (718) 951–4500, www.brooklyncenter.com]. Jan. 22 at 3 pm. \$25.

'Contact!' concert

Musicians from the New York Philharmonic celebrate the works of composers who have lived in the Big Apple, including Elliot Carter, David Lang, and Zosha di Castri.

National Sawdust [80 N. Sixth St. at Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg, (646) 779-8455, www.nationalsawdust.org]. Jan. 23 at 7:30 pm. \$29–\$34.

'Sincerely, L. Cohen'

A stellar lineup of artists celebrate the music of the recently departed folk icon Leonard Cohen, with performances from Sonic Youth's Lee Ranaldo, Okkervil River's Will Sheff, Deer Tick's Ian O'Neil, and Lucy Wainwright Roche, among others.

The Music Hall of Williamsburg [66 N. Sixth St. between Wythe and Kent avenues in Williamsburg, (718) 486–5400, www.musichallofwilliamsburg.com]. Jan. 24 at 8 pm. \$25 (\$22 in advance).

BAM Kids Film Festival

The Brooklyn Academy of Music's annual festival of short films for short humans with short attention spans. The movies are grouped by type, which this year includes individuality, friendship, and family.

BAM Rose Cinemas [30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636–4100, www.bam.org]. Jan. 28–29 at various times. \$14 adults (\$10 kids 13 and under).

Radio Love Fest

Every year, the Brooklyn Academy of Music and WNYC

Brooklyn Museum



Steve Tanner



SO MUCH TO SEE: (Above)

An exhibit on Georgia O'Keeffe's life and work opening at the Brooklyn Museum on March 3 will feature her oil painting "Ram's Head, White Holyhock-Hills." (Left) "The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips," coming to St. Ann's Warehouse on March 16, is a musical about African-American soldiers sent to rehearse the Normandy invasion on the beaches of a small English town.

celebrate the art of radio by... putting on live stage shows. This year's festival includes Ira Glass hosting a contemporary dance performance, the former Obama staffers who host the podcast "Keepin' it 1600," and storytelling shows "Snap Judgement" and "The Moth."

Various Brooklyn Academy of Music locations (www.bam.org), Feb. 8–11 at various times. \$35 per show.

Ladies Night R&B Super Jam

Set phasers to "swoon" — rhythm & blues icons from the '80s through the aughts bring their smooth sounds to Barclays Center, with a lineup including Brian McKnight, Eric Benet, Jagged Edge, Dru Hill, Mario Winans, and Big Daddy Kane.

Barclays Center [620 Atlantic Ave. at Flatbush Avenue in Prospect Heights, (917) 618–6100, www.barclayscenter.com]. Feb. 9 at 8 pm. \$65–\$265.

Patti LaBelle

Let the acclaimed "Lady Marmalade" songstress serenade your sweetheart on Valentine's weekend.

Kings Theatre [1027 Flatbush Ave. between Tilden Avenue and Duryea Place in Flatbush, (718) 856–5464, www.kingstheatre.com]. Feb. 11 at 8 pm. \$105–\$131.

'The Skin of Our Teeth'

Theater for a New Audience is doing the famous Thorn-

ton Wilder play that isn't "Our Town" — yes, it's "The Skin of Our Teeth," the Pulitzer-winning comedy that tells the history of mankind through the lives of one modern family. The play first opened on Broadway in 1942, but hasn't been staged in New York since 1998.

Polonsky Shakespeare Center [262 Ashland Pl. between Fulton Street and Lafayette Avenue in Fort Greene, (212) 229–2819, www.tfana.org]. Feb. 12–March 9. Various times.

'Out of this World' circus

The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus has retired its elephants to a nice farm upstate — but don't worry, this year's space-themed show still has lions, tigers, donkeys, alpacas, llamas, pigs, dogs, and kangaroos.

Barclays Center [620 Atlantic Ave. at Flatbush Avenue in Prospect Heights, (917) 618–6100, www.barclayscenter.com]. Feb. 23–March 2 at various times. \$15–\$80.

Lonnie Smith

The Doctor is coming for an organ operation! Legendary Hammond B3 player Lonnie Smith is bringing his soulful brand of jazz and funk to Long Island University.

Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts at Long Island University [1 University Pl. between DeKalb Avenue and Willoughby Street Downtown, www.kumbletheater.org]. Feb. 25 at 8 pm. \$35.

Georgia O'Keeffe: 'Living Modern'

The Brooklyn Museum salutes the mother of American modernism — whose first-ever exhibit was at the museum in 1927 — with an exhibit of not only her paintings, but also items of her clothing and photos of her homes by artists including Alfred Stieglitz, Ansel Adams, Annie Leibovitz, and Andy Warhol.

Brooklyn Museum [200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights, (718) 638–5000, www.brooklyn-museum.org]. March 3–July 23. \$16 suggested admission.

Green Day, Against Me!

Middle-aged punk band Green Day sings songs about teen angst, supported by the edgier, younger Against Me!

Barclays Center [620 Atlantic Ave. at Flatbush Avenue in Prospect Heights, (917) 618–6100, www.barclayscenter.com]. March 15 at 8 pm. \$45–\$65.

Kneehigh Theatre Co. at St. Ann's

British theater company Kneehigh Theatre uses music, puppetry, and dance to tell the true story of the ill-fated rehearsal of the Normandy invasion that the Allies staged on the shores of a sleepy English seaside town during World War II in "946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips." The real event ended badly, to say the least, but this is supposed to be a rollicking kid-friendly show.

St. Ann's Warehouse [45 Water St. at Old Dock Street in Dumbo, (718) 834–8794, www.stannswarehouse.org]. March 16–April 9 at various times. \$36–\$71.

Coffee and Tea Festival

Get buzzed on coffee and tea from more than 60 vendors at this annual carnival of caffeinated beverages. Don't miss the Latte Art Throwdown, where baristas compete to pour the best fancy milk foam.

Brooklyn Expo Center (72 Noble St. at Franklin Street in Greenpoint, www.coffeeandteafestival.com/nyc). March 18, 10 am–5 pm and March 19, 10 am–4 pm. \$15–\$35.



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COURIER LIFE PUBLICATIONS • BROOKLYN WEEKLY

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By Mail: Courier Life Publications, Inc.
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Brooklyn, NY 11201

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CLASSIFIED
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PUBLISHER: Clifford Luster • V.P. OF ADVERTISING: Ralph D'Onofrio • CLASSIFIED DIRECTOR: Amanda Tarley
EDITOR: Vince DiMiceli • DEPUTY EDITORS: Ruth Brown, Max Jaeger • LAYOUT EDITOR: Courtney Donahue

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Celebrating your special moments here means having the total attention and expertise of the staff focused exclusively on your affair.

But more than this, now is a wondrous time to discover or re-discover this exceptional catering hall. After a stunning re-modeling of their the grand ballroom, management recently spared no expense when they completely re-did the facility's grand lobby as well as the luxuriously appointed bridal suite, now done up with marble and granite accents for a look of timeless elegance.

They match the walls of marble and granite in the ballroom — which itself sports one of the largest chandeliers in all of Brooklyn — giving you just a brief inkling into what they have in store for you and your guests. Come and see the grandeur for yourself.

But this is only one reason to choose Paradise. Here, they accept only a single function at any one time. There's no splitting of the resources between two or three or even more affairs. When you book Paradise, you get the skills and expertise of every person there, on scene and behind the scenes to assure that your event runs flawlessly.

This sort of ultimate personalized attention starts the very minute you discover Paradise. At this facility, you don't deal with some salesman. You deal directly with one of the owners, Hercules, or his son, Mike. And why is this so essential?

Quite simply, they have a vested interest in making you happy, not just in making a sale. They know their business depends on word-of-mouth recommendations and on the special days yet to come in your life and the lives of your family. Thus, they will do everything in their power to be certain that the affair you have imagined is transformed into reality under the skilled hands of themselves and their staff. That's the secret of their

longevity and of their success.

The lavish party room, which can be made intimate enough for parties of 100, or grand enough to host a spectacular of up to 400, is marked by a central chandelier that will take your breath away. It is the focal point for a magnificent space done up in sophisticated pinks and reds, with mirrored accents that lend a touch of infinity to the already expansive area.

The re-done, picture perfect bridal room is large, romantic and very feminine, accommodating up to 15 in easy comfort, with wall-to-wall mirrors.

Ideal photographic locales are assured in this world of environments, which also includes an intimate private garden area, a uniquely designed water fountain, as well as a host of fine, white wrought-iron work.

Can even Paradise become better? Of course it can. And they proved that when they totally renovated the large lobby area, adding a regal touch to this space, as well.

Whether it be the wedding, engagement party or any other affair, plan it at Paradise and the bottom line will put a very big smile on your face.

Our service is top flight, with the uniformed staff a longtime part of the Paradise family. These are full-time professionals who know their business; not weekend teens learning the trade.

And when it comes to the food, the chefs are world class. Whatever you can find in the cookbooks, they can serve at the table. They offer an added expertise in all manner of ethnic cooking. Add to that everything is cooked from scratch right on the premises to assure the highest in quality control.

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.

For the further convenience of your guests, Paradise also can provide free valet parking.

17 STORIES

Continued from page 5

in the 2017 race to replace term-limited Councilman Vincent Gentile, we just can't help but wonder if a conservative could take the seat. Right-leaning heavy hitters Bob Capano, Liam McCabe, and John Quaglione have either formally announced or have indicated strongly that they'll run.

10. J'Ouvert

Come summertime, expect a heated public debate over what Mayor DeBlasio should do about this year's J'Ouvert celebration — the pre-dawn party throughout Crown Heights and Prospect-Lefferts Gardens that precedes the West Indian American Day Carnival on Labor Day and has been plagued by violence in recent years. The city gave organizers their first parade permit last year and doubled the police presence at the event, and Hizzoner promised it would be "safer than ever."

Instead, it was the bloodi-



File Photo

GOING AND COMING: (Left) Kiss the landmarked former 68th Precinct station house goodbye — the city will likely raze it to build a school. (Right) We want Tim Tebow in Brooklyn so bad that we Photo-shopped him into a Cyclones uniform.



est ever — gunmen killed two people and injured four. Critics, including Assemblyman Walter Mosely (D-Crown Heights), have called on the mayor to cancel the 30-year-old event, but DeBlasio insists it will continue.

9. 'Angel' rises

We're still waiting for the Sisters of Mercy slap a "for sale" sign on the Angel Guardian Home, the sprawling block-sized former orphanage in Dyker Heights, and when they do, we're betting it will turn into towers.

The land is zoned for row houses, but developers will want an upzoning to cram in more apartments and

rake in more rent. And that will probably be fine by the DeBlasio administration — builders are now required to include below-market-rate housing when they get an upzoning, and the gain from redeveloping the massive campus would probably go a long way to helping Hizzoner reach his goal of building 80,000 so-called "affordable" units over 10 years.

Local education officials have said the campus would make a heavenly public school in the grossly overcrowded district, but our money is on private development.

8. Landmark axed

The city is considering building a 300-seat school

on the site of the landmarked old 68th Precinct Station House in Sunset Park — the only question on our minds is whether it will demolish the crumbling-but-protected structure or try to fix it up. Our money is on the former.

7. Trolley wars

The city plans to release a route for Mayor DeBlasio's \$2.5-billion Brooklyn-Queens Connector streetcar system this year, and then embark on a tour of community boards along the Sunset Park-to-Queens trolley line, where local residents and merchants will almost certainly fight over every scrap of street space.

Some residents do like the idea — several public housing tenant leaders recently announced their support — but others are worried that it will fast-track gentrification nearby, that they'll lose parking, or simply that the whole scheme is a boondoggle for the developers who came up with the plan in the first place.

6. More ferries

All aboard! Retro transportation will be all the rage in 2017 (see item No. 7), and nowhere will feel the fever more than Brooklyn's waterfront when the city rolls out its new \$55-million ferry system this summer. Officials are extending service to Red Hook, Sunset Park, and Bay Ridge — and promising to peg the price to that of a subway ride (sorry, no free transfers, though).

5. Tebow a Clone

College football phenomenon-turned-failed New York Jet Tim Tebow signed with the Mets organization last September. He played in the Arizona Fall League, and if he does well enough in spring training, the powers that be

might bump him up to the Cyclones for grooming toward full-fledged Met-hood.

Legendary Clones skipper Tom Gamboa said the heartthrob and outspoken Christian doesn't have a prayer of making it to the big leagues, but we're rooting for Timmy anyway.

4. The DA's race

Kings County will choose a new top prosecutor this year after Ken Thompson's untimely death from cancer in October. He anointed Chief Assistant District Attorney Eric Gonzalez as acting district attorney while he was sick, but the position is up for grabs again this fall. Thompson's widow has already endorsed Gonzalez — the borough's first Latino to hold the post — although he hasn't officially announced whether he will run, and other contenders for the powerful position are now emerging.

3. The F Express

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority divided the borough

Continued on page 10

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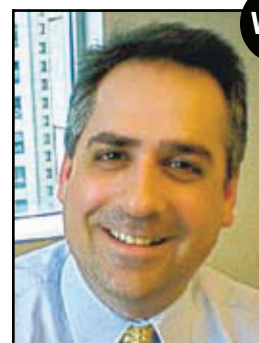
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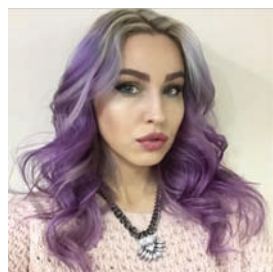
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GREENS

Continued from page 1

dinators for urban greenhouse farmers Gotham Greens. "It's the same taste and it's delicious."

The cosmetically challenged crops are also available at the Park Slope Food Co-op and a few other markets around the borough, as first reported by Edible Brooklyn. Each retailer prices the blighted veggies itself, but typically charge 40 percent less than regular lettuce, McMahon said.

At Whole Foods, a large bag of Ugly Greens costs \$2.99, while a smaller container of the company's standard stuff costs \$3.99.

Gotham Greens—which also has greenhouses in Greenpoint and Queens—used to compost produce marred by pests or harvesting and packaging, but started turning the cast-offs into a brand of their own in summer in a bid to cut down



REARING ITS UGLY HEAD OF LETTUCE: Gotham Greens' Julie McMahon shows off the company's proudly unattractive produce.

Photo by Jordan Rathkopf

on waste, McMahon said.

"We decided to package them up and sell them at discount to tackle issues of food waste while reducing our own waste," she said.

The company isn't alone in pushing produce that was once considered too unsightly for supermarket shelves, McMahon said —

markets around the country have added misfit vegetables to their stock in recent years to cash in on the colossal amount of perfectly-edible produce that ends up in landfill, and even Wal-Mart is now getting in on the action, introducing not-so-rosy apples at some stores in Florida in July.

CONEY

Continued from page 1

ulously endured and gave Denson the idea that the resilient posts are a durable way to preserve the area's history.

"Sandy hit and wiped out everything, but the signs survived all that and I thought, 'This is the way to do it — if they weathered the storm they're more or less permanent,'" he said.

The more-than-two-dozen guideposts are pep-

pered along the waterfront of Kaiser and Calvert Vaux parks and chronicle the history of the green spaces with photos and narratives curated by Denson. A grant from the Partnership for Parks funded the project, which has the Parks Department's blessing, Denson said.

One sign in Calvert Vaux Park sheds light on a shipwrecked submarine named the Questar. The sub was built in 1971 and launched by a Brooklyn Navy Yard welder

who planned to salvage a sunken cruise ship at the creek's bed. But the Questar met the same demise as the ship when it broke loose and ran aground. Now it resides in a watery grave off the park's coast, according to Denson.

Other signs showcase the waterway's varied flora and fauna, such as horseshoe crabs, egrets, and Spartina — more commonly known as cordgrass — that prevents erosion and purifies water by soaking up toxins.

17 STORIES

Continued from page 8

last year when it revealed a proposal to bring the long-lost express F train back to Brooklyn in fall 2017 — and that chasm will only grow wider if the agency decides to push forward with the plan and begins promised community meetings about it. Southern Brooklynites have been demanding the service's return for years, as it will shave around seven minutes off their commutes to Downtown and Manhattan. But Brownstone Brooklynites were aghast

to learn the change would halve orange-bullet service at six of their stops during rush hour.

2. Build It Back

2016 was a bad year for the program. Mayor DeBlasio belly-flopped on his promise to fix all homes by year's end and had to give the program a \$500-million taxpayer bailout. Meantime a house in Gerritsen Beach collapsed because hasty contractors cut safety corners, and Hizzoner threatened to give some applicants the boot for slowing down the program's progress.

We're hoping the pro-

gram gets above water in 2017, but we aren't holding our breath — the Daily News reported on Jan. 2 that only 60 percent of homes in the program are done.

1. Going for bronze

Breed, Brooklyn, breed! The Borough of Kings is *this* close to overtaking Chicago as the country's third-largest city. The Windy City still ranks bronze in the population category with 2.72 million in 2015, compared to Brooklyn's fourth-place 2.64 million, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. So throw away those free New York City condoms and get to work!

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