

STEER CLEAR

Bus driver slapped with stiffer Vision Zero charge for hitting a pedestrian

By Noah Hurowitz
The Brooklyn Paper

Drivers have more reason than ever to look both ways before making a turn.

Cops arrested a bus driver after they say he ran over and severely injured a teen in Williamsburg on Feb. 13, charging him under a new law, passed in August, that increases the penalty for drivers who ignore pedestrians' right of way and hit them. A road-safety advocate hailed the arrest as progress in the Vision Zero campaign, which is backed by the mayor and aimed at reducing traffic fatalities to zero by 2024.

"Prior to Vision Zero, except for certain criminal behaviors, drivers who killed or injured pedestrians never had significant consequences," said Steve Vaccaro, a lawyer who helped get the law passed. "This sends a message that crashes have consequences."

The driver of the Q59 bus hit the girl as he made a left turn from Union Avenue into a Manhattan-bound lane of Grand Street,

crushing her leg, according to a report.

Responding to a call shortly after 8:45 am, paramedics freed the girl from underneath the bus and transported her to Bellevue Hospital Center in Manhattan in stable condition, with severe injuries to her left leg, a police spokeswoman said.

Officers cuffed the driver at the scene and charged him with failure to exercise due care and failure to yield. The new law makes the latter charge a misdemeanor.

The move toward arresting professional drivers who hit pedestrians does not sit well with transit-worker advocates, who argue the new policy puts undue burden on individual drivers when the Metropolitan Transportation Authority should bear some responsibility.

"Arresting drivers won't solve anything," said Jim Gannon, a spokesman for the Transit Workers Union. "The MTA gets a pass and the consequences fall on operators."

Until Friday, the driver arrested



Photo by Paul Martinica

Police cordoned off the scene of crash last week at Grand Street at Union Avenue, where they say a bus driver ran over a teen's leg.

in Williamsburg had a 29-year record of clean driving, and he should not be slapped with criminal charges before an investigation is done, Gannon said.

"It's terrible that the poor kid is in the hospital, but an accident that happens in one instant does not necessarily mean criminality," he said.

Police must have probable cause to arrest people on criminal charges, but not proof be-

yond a reasonable doubt, which is required for convictions.

The new law carries a \$250 fine, and if you ask Vaccaro, it doesn't do nearly enough.

"This is a step forward, but the fine is sort of an insult," he said. "You should be fined thousands, not hundreds, if you kill someone."

Conflict over the new law was



brewing well before the most recent incident. In December, bus drivers refused to leave their depots following the arrest of one

of their colleagues involved in a fatal collision in East Flatbush, according to a New York Post report.

And on Feb. 12, the day before the Williamsburg arrest, two Queens councilmen introduced legislation that would exempt bus drivers from the law criminalizing failure to yield.

The Feb. 13 arrest and the attempt to exempt bus drivers from the law angered road-safety ac-

tivists, and sparked a social media war between union supporters and Vision Zero partisans over the weekend.

Prominent car-critic group Transportation Alternatives launched an online petition blasting the idea that bus drivers should have a "license to kill," which the official Transit Workers Union Local 100 Twitter account dismissed as a "ghoulish" attempt to hijack the conversation.



Andrew and Jennie Drogoszewski are struggling to pack up their belongings and find a new place for them, their two dogs, and their expected child to live.

Sudden moves

City evicts tenants from lofts it long ignored

By Danielle Furfaro
The Brooklyn Paper

City building inspectors kicked the residents of 10 apartments out of the illegally converted warehouse they called home last week in a sudden move that followed years of inaction.

A former resident of 249 Norman Ave. and mother to small children said she has no place to go, and that the eviction came as a total surprise.

"I am lacking the words in my English," said tenant Joanna Lewczuk, who lives with her husband and two toddlers and has been there since 2010. "I am a total mess right now."

City officials confirmed that it kicked the tenants out for their own safety, because the building has no fire escape or second exit. Buildings department spokesman Alexander Schnell said the tenants can move back in once the landlord fixes the issue. But it ap-



Photo by Stefano Giovannini

Murphy Wilkins, a tenant of 249 Norman Ave., loads up her truck. Wilkins was one of more than a dozen tenants who are now homeless after the city vacated the building on the grounds that it is dangerous.

pears that the landlord, United Realty Corporation, has no intention of doing so.

An e-mail purporting to be from a United Realty employee

named Lee Yam, provided by Lewczuk, reads:

"I'm sure you are aware of the notice to vacate issued yesterday by the building department. Un-

MORE INSIDE

B'wick, W'burg are hotspots in building inspector bribery bust

SEE PAGE 6

fortunately, this will be the final decision made and we are unable to override this decision. We sincerely apologize for the unexpected announcement. This has become a major inconvenience and lost on both ends.

"Please be advised to move out everything by today. We will return your security deposit accordingly."

Lewczuk said that the buildings department assured her that tenants have a week to remove their things, not a day.

She added that she had no idea until Feb. 10, the day of the eviction, that the apartments were illegal.

"I called the city years ago to complain about carbon monoxide and rats, and no one ever showed up," said Lewczuk. "You would See **EVICTON** on page 6

Expert: LICH replacement not so bad

Standalone emergency room an increasingly common model nationwide

By Matthew Perlman
The Brooklyn Paper

The new medical facility taking shape where Long Island College Hospital once operated is better than nothing.

So says a healthcare expert who we asked to respond to New York University's plan, obtained exclusively by The Brooklyn Paper, for a freestanding emergency department on the Cobble Hill medical campus, most of which is set to become luxury housing. Still, the proposed emergency facility is no replacement for a full-service hospital, the expert said.

"It sounds like pretty good access to emergency care," said Laura Burke, an emergency-medicine instructor at the Harvard Medical School-affiliated Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. "But obviously the loss of a hospital is never a good thing."

Freestanding emergency departments are increasingly common around the country, especially in Southern cities, said Burke, who has written extensively about the model. A recent study in the Journal of Emergency Medicine found 400 such facilities operating in the United States today. The state



health department said there are three others in New York beside the one in Cobble Hill, though this will be the first in New York City.

The documents obtained by The Brooklyn Paper through a public-records request detail the services that will be offered at the new facility. It is set to be completed in 2017 or 2018, be open 24 hours a day, and accept ambulances for people in need of basic life support. New York University has said it will staff the center with 70 doctors and 330 others.

In the meantime, a limited emergency department is oper-

ating out of the old emergency room on Amity Street. It began accepting ambulances again earlier this winter.

University administrators told the state that 53,000 patients visited the emergency room at Long Island College Hospital in 2012, and that 38,000 patients were treated and released without being admitted in 2011.

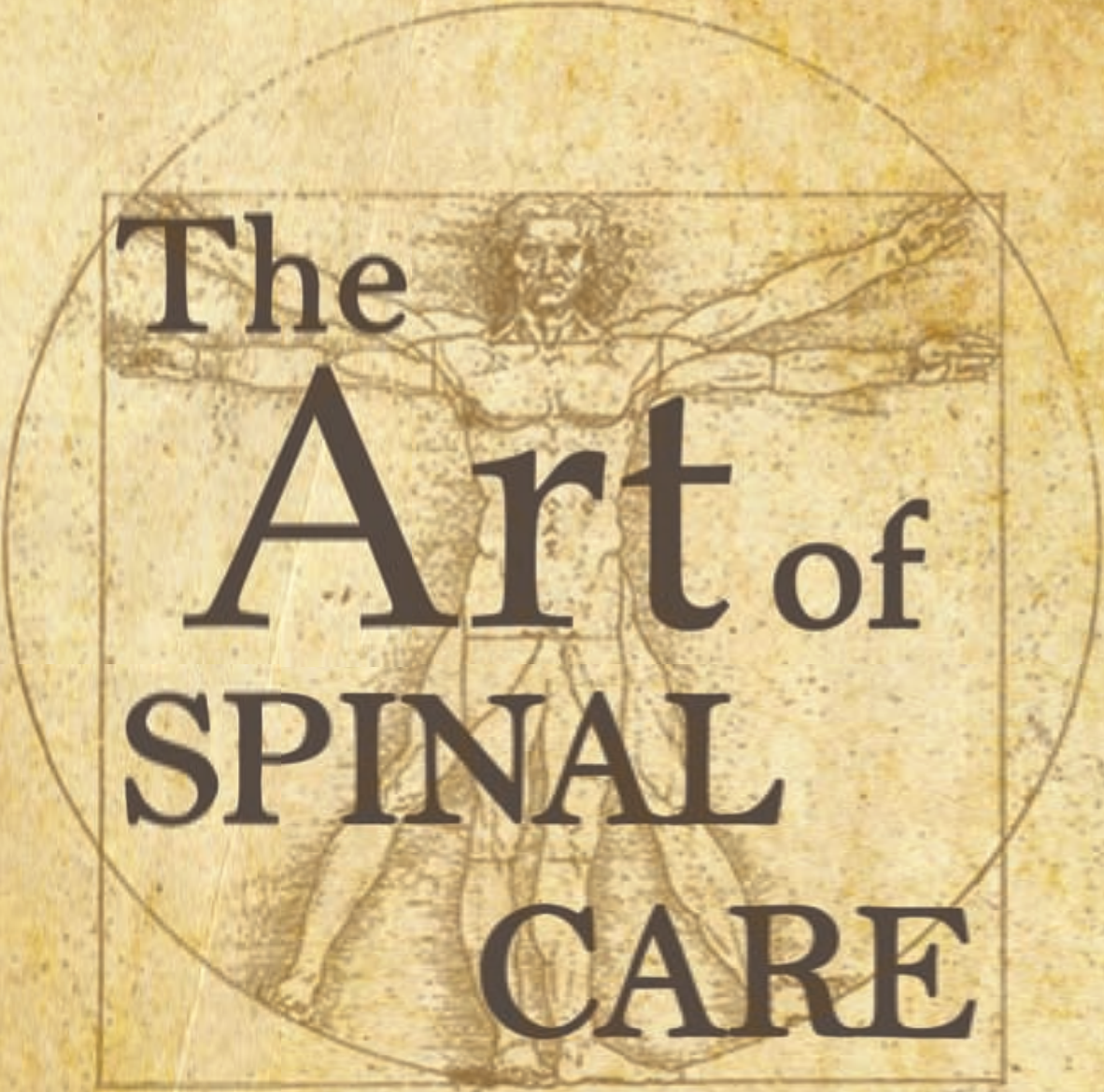
Burke echoed the point that most patients coming to emergency departments do not need a lengthy stay, meaning the new facility will be able to handle a

See **LICH** on page 12



Photo by Jason Speakman

An interim New York University emergency department is operating out of the old Long Island College Hospital one.



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Islands in the stream

City moves to add sidewalks to scary Dumbo streets

By Matthew Perlman
The Brooklyn Paper

Dumbo’s most pedestrian-hostile streets are finally getting sidewalks.

The city plans to add walkways to the stretches of road around the supports of the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges that force pedestrians to walk in the street. Community Board 2 voted unanimously to approve the plan on Feb. 11. Its administrator said the hair-raising road design is one of the last vestiges of the area’s past, before the condos, art galleries, and tech offices came.

“Some of these conditions are left over from when Dumbo was an industrial neighborhood and there weren’t as many people walking around,” district manager Robert Perris said.

The streets’ shift from truck routes to pathways for iPhone-clutching work-



Photo by Elizabeth Graham

The city is planning to bump out the sidewalk at the intersection of Jay and Prospect streets as part of a push to make Dumbo’s streets safer.

ers and residents began in the 1990s, when developer Two Trees Management put the neighborhood on the map by pitching it as a hub for art-

ists, and offering them discounted rent. Since then, luxury apartments and offices have replaced many of the studios. The massive increase in

foot traffic has spurred the city and the local business improvement district to finally add sidewalks where the bridge pillars cut into them.

New and extended sidewalks are planned for the intersections of York and Washington and Pearl and Front streets, which both have stretches where the sidewalks end. The plan also calls for bumping out the sidewalks at Pearl and York and Jay and Prospect streets.

York and Washington is a particularly sketchy stretch, the head of the Dumbo Improvement District said.

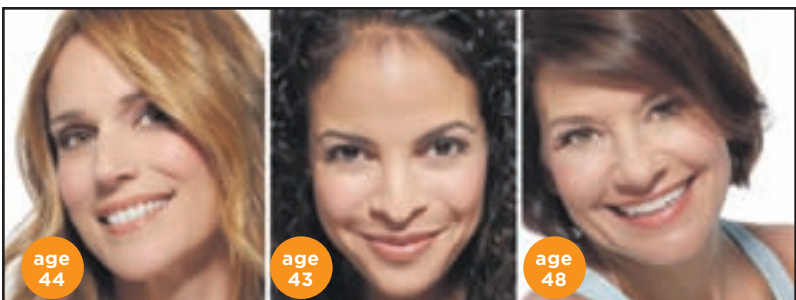
“The sidewalk peters out to nothing over there,” said Kristin LaBuz, director of marketing and events for the Dumbo Improvement District. “It’s a very unsafe pedestrian experience.”

Five pedestrians have been hit at the intersections since 2009, according to city data.

The plan also called for shared bike-route arrows on York Street, and new crosswalks at each of the intersections, including some paved with granite.

A larger redesign is in the works, but these changes can be made quickly, LaBuz said.

“There’s still a lot more work to be done,” she said.



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Parole violated

Crime hits Gowanus office — before it even opens

By Noah Hurowitz
The Brooklyn Paper

A burglar swiped thousands of dollars worth of tools and building materials, including a security camera, from the soon-to-open parole headquarters in Gowanus in January, police said.

A representative of the state corrections department claimed to have no knowledge of the break-in, though the office on Second Avenue between Fifth Street and the Gowanus Canal is set to open in April.

“In January, 2015 I do not believe we had taken control of that property,” Linda Foglia said. “If something happened before we came in, we might not have the same security protocol as is in place right now.”

The theft took place between Jan. 2 and 31, officers said. The culprit or culprits absconded with a \$400 DeWalt drill, a box of door handles, some smoke detectors, and some strobe lights, worth \$1,800 together, and a secu-



Photo by Jason Spalkman

A thief stole \$1,800 worth of loot from the new Gowanus parole headquarters last month.

rity camera valued at \$1,000, according to a report.

Police think it may have been an inside job.

Activists have railed against the facility, saying that it will bring crime to the mixed industrial and residential area. In January, the state agreed to scale down the operation as part of a lawsuit settlement. The new arrangement will have 2,000 parolees reporting to the center, and another 4,000 fanning out to yet-to-be-disclosed satellite offices around Brooklyn.

View-blocking bulkhead bashed

By Matthew Perlman
The Brooklyn Paper

The developers of an apartment and hotel complex lied when they said their building in the heart of Brooklyn Bridge Park would not be more than 100 feet tall, and the new structure is now blocking the views from the Brooklyn Heights Prom-

nade, a prominent preservationist group proclaimed this week.

Members of the Historic Districts Council, which has been helping preserve historic structures and acquire landmark designations throughout the city since 1971, say developer Toll Brothers has already exceeded the height limit —

which was agreed upon before construction of its Pierhouse began — by 30 feet, and park administrators responsible for overseeing development are ignoring the oversight.

The preservationist heavyweights, who say they have been involved in the fights for all 110 of the officially

designated historic districts in the city, are adding to the chorus of concerned residents that include the venerated Brooklyn Heights Association and a group formed for the cause called “Save the View Now.”

Brooklyn Bridge Park honchos insist that neighbors agreed to the added height.

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Mugger strikes at DeKalb stop

84TH PRECINCT

Brooklyn Heights–DUMBO–Boerum Hill–Downtown

A gunman stole a woman's cellphone and purse onboard a D train on Feb. 2, according to police.

The victim said she was asleep on a Brooklyn-bound train at 5:05 am when a man removed her phone from her pocket at the DeKalb Avenue station.

She woke up and the goon asked if she had any money, according to a police report. She said no, and the bandit flashed the piece, took her purse, and took off, the report says. The bag contained a debit card, credit card, and \$500 in cash, cops said.

Hacked

Someone stole a cabbie's bag while he used the bathroom at a Flatbush Avenue gas station on Feb. 2, according to the authorities.

The hack told cops he parked his yellow cab in the parking lot of the gas station, between Johnson and Gold streets, at 11:15 pm. He went inside to use the bathroom and left the car unlocked, police said.

When he got back, the bag — which contained his credit card, license, and \$30 in cash, was gone — a report says.

Cable cart

Someone swiped an electronic tablet from a cable installer's parked work truck on Pacific Street on Feb. 4, cops said.

The worker said he was installing television service in a building between Smith Street and Boerum Place at 3:15 pm, and his truck was parked out front with the doors unlocked. He finished his work 45 minutes later, and returned to the truck to find the device gone, according to the NYPD.

Court crime

A sneak snatched a woman's cellphone and debit card while she talked to a court representative inside the courthouse on Adams Street on Feb. 3, police said.

The victim said she left the items on a counter in the courtroom between Joralemon and Johnson streets at 2 pm, while she talked to a court representative. When she returned to the counter, her items were gone, law enforcement officials said.

Take the tip

Two crooks stole a Livingston Street restaurant patron's purse on Feb. 7 — and fought her when she tried to stop them, according to cops.

The victim said she was eating in the restaurant between Smith and Hoyt streets at 12:30 am when a surly character sauntered over and took her bag, which was on the floor near her feet.

The thief and another woman then tried to leave the restaurant, but the victim confronted them, according to officers.

The terrible twosome fought back, punching her in the face, and took off down Livingston towards Bond Street, a report says.

94TH PRECINCT

Greenpoint–Northside

Dirty laundry

Someone shot a man in a Kingsland Avenue laundromat

POLICE BLOTTER

Find more online every Wednesday at BrooklynPaper.com/blotter

88TH PRECINCT

Fort Greene–Clinton Hill

F-leased

Some fraudsters signed leases for four apartments inside of a luxury Rockwell Place residential building in September and October of last year using bad credit cards, police said.

The leasing agent for the building between Fulton Street and Lafayette Avenue said the hoaxers signed on the dotted line on Sept. 8, Oct. 4, Oct. 5, and Oct. 10.

The credit cards used to secure the leases were charged for multiple payments for each apartment, totalling \$42,100, according to a police report.

The credit-card company later reversed the charges, raising the alarm, law enforcement officials said.

Clinton-gate

A burglar broke into a Clinton Avenue apartment on Feb. 11 and got away just as the resident was coming home, police said.

The victim said she got to her apartment between Gates Avenue and Fulton Street at 5:45 pm, and when she reached her floor she saw the prowler coming out of her apartment.

She asked if he had just been inside of her place, and he said no, according to a police report.

Then he pushed her against the wall and ran down the stairs, the report says.

Neighbors heard her yelling and chased the scalawag down Clinton to Fulton Street, where they lost him heading towards Vanderbilt Avenue, officers said.

The brute dropped a bag containing some of the victim's property but still made off with a laptop, an electronic tablet, a portable music player, and some cash, per the NYPD.

Car stalk

It was a tough week for motorists in the precinct, with three people reporting vehicle thefts.

• First, someone swiped a woman's 2003 Honda Element from Hall Street sometime overnight on Feb. 4, according to the authorities.

The woman parked herride between DeKalb and Wiltoughby avenues at 7:30 pm, police said.

She returned at 9 am on Feb. 8 to find it missing, a report says.

• A thief drove off in another vehicle on Cambridge Place sometime between Feb. 7 and Feb. 12, cops said.

The owner said he parked between Fulton Street and Gates Avenue at 11 am on Feb. 7, and returned at 9 am on Feb. 12 to find it gone.

• Then, a thief stole a motorcycle that was parked on Lafayette Avenue sometime overnight on Feb. 11, police said.

The bike's owner told cops he left it in front of his apartment between Washington and Waverly avenues at 11 pm.

He looked out of his window at 6 the next morning

76TH PRECINCT

Carroll Gardens–Cobble Hill–Red Hook

Weak Kryptonite

A thief made quick work of four locks and stole a bike from Third Place on Feb. 15, cops said.

The victim chained the bike with three Pinhead locks and one heavy-duty Kryptonite lock between Clinton and Henry streets, according to a report.

The rapscallion overcame the security system and swiped the \$500 green Cirrus two-wheeler, splash-guard fenders, water bottle, and all, per the NYPD.

Child's play

A kid roughed up a tween on Hamilton Avenue on Feb. 13, according to the authorities.

The mother of an 11-year-old boy called cops after a 13-year-old boy repeatedly punched her son in the arms and legs at Nelson Street at 3:15 pm, officers said.

Getting dough

A burglar broke into a bakery on Summit Street on Feb. 11 and absconded with a wad of cash, law enforcement officials said.

The crook forced open the rear door of the confectionery at Hamilton Avenue between 2 am and 3 am, damaging the keyhole, and proceeded to loot the cash register and lockbox of \$870, according to a report.

— Noah Hurowitz

68TH PRECINCT

Bay Ridge–Dyker Heights

Shutter-burglar

A thief walked in the front door of a 76th Street apartment on Feb. 1 and made off with camera gear, cops said.

The sneak got into the apartment between Third and Fourth avenues in Bay Ridge through an unlocked door sometime between 11 am and 1 pm, and removed a Canon camera, memory card, and camera bag, valued at \$640 altogether, police said.

Car wash caper

A dirtbag stole a designer purse, sunglasses, and cash from a car at a 65th Street car wash on Feb. 9, according to the authorities.

The theft happened between 6:45 am and 3:45 pm at a car wash between Ninth and 10th avenues in Dyker Heights, police said. The sneak took a Louis Vuitton purse and wallet, Versace sunglasses, credit cards, and \$100 cash, for a total haul valued at \$2,450, a report says.

Body-boosting

Someone stole stuff from lockers at a Fourth Avenue gym on Feb. 5, cops said.

The sneak took a wallet, credit cards, and \$174 from one locker and a wallet, credit cards, an iPhone, and an iPad from another locker at the health club between 92nd and 93rd streets in Bay Ridge sometime between 2:30 pm and 3:15 pm, police said.

— Max Jaeger

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Designer Danielle Trofe made this large hanging pendant lamp using mushroom fibers and discarded plant materials.

Growth industry

Company makes lamps from mushrooms

By Matthew Perlman
The Brooklyn Paper

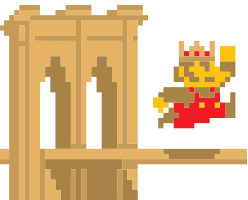
It's made in the shade. Danielle Trofe Design is selling a line of lamps with shades made from mushrooms called the Mush-Lume collection. Trofe, who is getting ready for a move into Sunset Park's Industry City, said her fungal creations fit in perfectly with the ethos of her design studio.

"We're striving to disrupt the norms of interior design products," she said.

The Mush-Lume lights are made from a substance created by the sustainability-minded material science company Ecovative. It consists of agricultural byproducts such as corn stalks, seed husks, and hemp, mulched and mixed with liquid mushroom mycelium, the filament in fungus that furthers reproduction. Trofe packs the stuff into custom molds, adds a little water and flour, and the mushroom stuff bind it all together.

"It's basically like nature's glue," Trofe said.

The shades take between four and seven days to grow, depending on their size. Afterwards she bakes them to stop the fungus from growing, and they take on a texture similar to cement. Trofe then installs



CIRCUIT LORD

Eye on technology and innovation in Brooklyn

the lighting elements and the lamps are ready to go. The process is easy on the environment because it uses plant parts that would otherwise be discarded and takes very little energy to make happen, Trofe said.

"It's using a new material that pretty much grew itself," she said.

When people are done using their once-living lights, they can simply break the shades apart and put them in a compost pile, which keeps most of their waste out of the landfill. But Trofe said there is no need to worry about them disintegrating before that.

"They won't biodegrade in your living room," she said.

The new Industry City space will be about the size of a two-car garage. The tight quarters should not be a problem for Trofe's operation, she said.

"The nice thing about this production process, if you want to call it that, is that it doesn't need a lot of space," she said.

The Mush-Lumes start at \$300 for a small version that hangs from a light fixture. A six-piece chandelier goes for \$1,650. There is also a particularly toadstool-like table lamp that retails for \$500. The lights are only available through the company's online store right now, but Trofe hopes to start hawking them at local retailers soon.

Trofe also makes mushroom-based planters, and designed a self-watering vertical garden made from recyclable plastic and three-dimensionally printed components, one of which is on permanent display at the visitor center in the Botanic Garden.

Her overarching goal is to find new ways to make the things we use every day, she said.

"It's a sustainable material that incorporates new technology in a consumer product," she said.

Dems going to Philly

By Matthew Perlman
The Brooklyn Paper

Well, at least they didn't pick Columbus.

Democrats have gone against all common sense and chosen Philadelphia, referred to by some mainstream publications, wrongly, as the sixth borough, to host their 2016 convention. Borough President Adams said the Dems' decision was bass-ackwards, using more polite language.

"Instead of a cutting-edge choice that would be a nod

to the Democratic Party's future, the pick was made for a safe site that hearkens more to its past," he said in a statement.

The chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Florida), said Philly's status as the cradle of the American Revolution is symbolically important, and called it a "safe" choice.

"In addition to their commitment to a seamless and safe convention, Philadelphia's deep-rooted place in

American history provides a perfect setting for this special gathering," Schultz said in a statement.

The campaign to bring the convention to Brooklyn kicked into gear last year and was a priority of Mayor De Blasio. The mayor's office assembled a 119-member host committee to pitch the borough and raise the \$100 million the convention is expected to cost. That group had already collected \$6.5 million and secured promises for \$13.5 million more.

Public Notice

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has received a Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) application from 175-225 Third Owner LLC for a site known as the 175-225 3rd Street, site ID #C224209. This site is located in Brooklyn, within the County of Kings, and is located at 175-225 3rd Street. Comments regarding this application must be submitted no later than March 27, 2015. Information regarding the site, the application, and how to submit comments can be found at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/60058.html> or send comments to Dana Mecomber, Project Manager, NYSDEC-Region 2, 47-40 21st Street, Long Island City, NY 11101, Dana.Mecomber@dec.ny.gov or at 718-482-7541.

To have information such as this notice sent right to your email, sign up with county email listservs available at www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html.

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Slumlord ‘bribery’ scheme

DA accuses landlords of paying inspectors to evict

By Danielle Furfaro and Nathan Tempey
The Brooklyn Paper

Five building inspectors worked on behalf of slumlords in Williamsburg, Bushwick, and Bedford-Stuyvesant to evict tenants under false pretenses and erase code violations on dozens of properties for tens of thousands of dollars in bribes, prosecutors allege.

The charges came out of the massive bribery bust last week that netted 49 building inspectors, property managers, landlords, and contractors alleged to have participated in an array of schemes to gloss over building infractions, strong-arm renters, and hush up construction accidents in exchange for favors and cold, hard cash. A Brooklyn Legal Services attorney who represents tenants in housing court said the staggering 26 indictments show the need for greater oversight in the borough’s overheated real estate market.

“Corruption in these agencies should be a huge concern for tenants, especially in these times of rapid, rapid development,” Adam Meyers said. “We look at these agencies to apply the brakes on gentrification and make sure developers are respectful of laws we have in place.”

Meyers said his organization, Brooklyn Legal Services, is sorting through the criminal complaints to see if any of the buildings or tenants it represents were affected by the pay-to-play culture that Manhattan prosecutors say pervaded the departments of Buildings and Housing Preservation and Development.

“When you have people on the take, those laws are not going to be enforced and tenants will not be protected,” Meyers said.

Manhattan prosecutors led the investigation, but as it expanded, Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson oversaw the portion on his turf. He said he would keep an eye on slumlords and their abettors in government as this prose-



Photo by Stefano Giovannini

The townhouse at 1249 Jefferson Ave., where prosecutors say a building inspector falsely evicted tenants in exchange for a bribe from a property manager.

cution proceeds.

“I pledge to continue to work closely with our law enforcement partners to root out public corruption caused by those who try to use their money to gain an unfair advantage,” Thompson said in a statement.

The allegations span Brooklyn and Manhattan, but the rapidly gentrifying neighborhood of Bushwick was a hotspot for the sleazy behavior prosecutors describe.

In the most egregious incident outlined in the criminal complaint, a property manager paid two Housing Preservation and Development inspectors to fraudulently evict tenants

from 1249 Jefferson Ave. — prosecutors cited the building at 1249 Jefferson St., but there is no such address — under the guise of a city-issued vacate order, per law enforcement. But first, the suspects delivered the bogus news to the tenants at the wrong building, according to the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office — not that there was a right building. When the manager reiterated the address in a wire-tapped phone conversation, the inspector realized his mistake, prosecutors said.

“I talked to the wrong f--- people then,” he said. “Got to go back.”

The inspectors returned to the first address, told the tenants they could stay, then went to 1249 Jefferson and called the police on the renters there, telling the authorities they were trespassing, according to an indictment. On Feb. 13, the building appeared freshly painted, but its steps were chipped, and its front yard contained rubble and disassembled scaffolding. The area in front of the steps had not been shoveled.

A landlord paid the same pair of purportedly crooked inspectors to give his tenants the boot, the indictment says.

One of the two worked with a third inspector to wipe a total of 778 violations from 24 Brooklyn properties for more than \$41,000 in bribes from May to August of 2014, prosecutors said. The scheme netted this pair \$1,000 to \$2,500 per

property, including \$20,000 from one property manager for 13 buildings in Bushwick, Williamsburg, and Bedford-Stuyvesant, prosecutors said. The erased entries included violations for mice and roach infestations, missing smoke detectors, and a defective hallway ceiling, per the authorities.

The third inspector allegedly worked out a similar deal with landlords at 1122 Wiloughby Ave. and 32 Kossuth Pl., both in Bushwick. In the Kossuth Place incident, the inspector allegedly helped the landlord clear \$270,000 worth of fines.

The building at 1122 Wiloughby has wires sticking out of the wall where a buzzer should be, though with only six apartments, it is not required to have an intercom. A lot with the address 30 Kossuth Pl. — 32 does not appear to exist — is currently vacant with a construction fence around it.

A second property manager paid the inspector more than \$300 to dismiss violations including exposed electrical wiring, a mice infestation, and a water leak in the ceiling at 1406 Putnam Ave. in Bushwick, prosecutors said. The suspect finagled the assignment to go to the house for a scheduled re-inspection, then falsely claimed that the landlord had remedied the problems, according to a court document.

The list goes on.

EVICTION...

Continued from page 1

think they would have noticed if they did that there were no certificates of occupancy here.”

Department of Buildings records show that a caller alerted the city to the illegal conversion in October, 2010, but it is not clear whether inspectors went into the building and investigated at that time. The city issued a stop-work order on construction and is-

sued three violations in 2011, but did not force any tenants to leave.

Lewczuk said she knew her property manager only as “Nigel,” and that tenants sent checks made out to United Realty to Master Kitchen Supplies, a stainless steel business in Manhattan’s Chinatown section.

United Realty did not return calls for comment.

Lewczuk said that a friend

offered to put her and her children up for a few days, and that her husband is staying with his brother. But beyond that, she does not know where she and her family will go.

The eviction came the same day that police arrested 49 of 50 building inspectors, landlords, property managers, and contractors on a slew of bribery charges, including allegations that a Brooklyn building inspector evicted tenants under the false pretenses of a city vacate order, at landlords’ behest.

BUSINESS, BROOKLYN STYLE - ADVERTISEMENT

Marco Polo Ristorante shines with new menu and decor changes

BY CAMILLE SPERRAZZA

Like the great explorer for which the restaurant is named, Marco Polo Ristorante has always been about new discoveries — food and wine you have not yet had the pleasure of experiencing.

There are classic, favorite Italian dishes, of course, but there’s also something out of the ordinary, and now that Chef Marco Chirico, a graduate of Johnson and Wales University, is at the helm, this is even more apparent. Chirico is the son of Joseph Chirico, who established the restaurant in 1983. He started learning the ropes at age 11, and eventually educated himself in all aspects of the business, both hands-on, and by earning a Food Service Management Degree.

Chirico has introduced some new dishes, with an eye towards healthier eating. For example, the Farro e Zucchini Estive is a house-made fettuccine created with faro grain and zucchini, bringing lots of minerals to the plate. It’s cooked table-side, with the server grating the cheese over the pan as the food simmers. When done, this green pasta is served in an oversized white bowl, dotted with a red tomato on top, and a piece of Italian bread angled to the side, bringing to life the colors of the Italian flag.

Continuing the healthier theme is the Barbabietole salad, bursting with yellow and purple beets, cherry tomatoes, watercress and hearts of palm.

Some of the new appetizers include carpaccio di manzo — ultra thin slices of beef are assembled around artichokes and Parmigiano cheese, dressed with a drop of pesto and some Peperonata jam. For veal lovers, there’s the vitello tonnato, with its thinly-sliced meat, tuna sauce, and capers. Another new starter is the carciofi fritti — imported artichokes are fried and pared with aioli sauce and baby arugula. On the lighter side, grilled octopus is served over grilled chick-

peas, red onions, celery, and potato.

But be assured the traditionalists have not been forgotten. Classic shrimp cocktail, baked clams, and oysters Rockefeller continue to appear on the menu, the latter covered with sheets of mouth-watering cheese. You can still order the incredible homemade fettuccini, and watch as it is placed inside a monstrous, slightly hallowed cheese wheel, tossed so that the warm pasta absorbs the flavors of the cheese. There’s nothing like it.

The restaurant has a new look to go with its new cuisine. Perhaps most noticeable are the light fixtures that resemble huge red ribbons. These were made in Italy, carved from bendable wood. The establishment has also added a new wine room that can be seen from the dining area, highlighting wine from destinations that include Tuscany, France, California, Chile, and Argentina. The restaurant’s classic fireplace remains, as does its inviting bar against the opposite side. Large photos of Venice adorn the cream-colored walls.

Two of the newer entrees include shrimp, from Venice, grilled with heads intact, served over a bed of natural black risotto; and sauteed stripe bass over black olives, chickpeas, and sun-dried tomatoes.

There are weekly specials: Hanger steak over a mushroom vermouth sauce on Mondays; and grilled trout with arugula lemon zest and fresh oranges on Tuesdays. Come on a Wednesday for pork chops, mushrooms, and cherry tomatoes cooked in white wine. On Thursdays, buffalo mozzarella is served with peperonata jam on a crostini. Friday night offers stuffed calamari with linguine in marinara. There’s lobster Fra Diavolo on Saturdays, and rigatoni with meatballs on Sundays.

Desserts are homemade. Strawberry ice cream is scooped in a small pie shell, which stays crisp even as the ice cream melts. Cappuccino is served in ultra-modern white cups



(Clockwise from top) Chef and owner Marco Chirico enjoys the cheese platter and a glass of wine. A brand-new wine room can be seen from the dining area. The autum bellini with prosecco, vodka, and apple cider is just as delicious as it is beautiful. The dining room has gotten a makeover, with new lighting fixtures that resemble red bows. Photos by Elizabeth Graham

with unique wrap-around handles.

Happy hour is seven days a week, from 5 to 7 pm. Cocktails, wine, and beer are buy one, get one; and the raw bar serves clams for \$1, oysters for \$1.50, and shrimp for \$2 each piece.

Chirico also owns Enoteca on Court, a wine bar adjacent to Marco Polo that features Italian tapas. Open about six years, it is Michelin rated, earned Best Chef Award in 2013 2014, and 2015, plus a five-star

Sapphire Award for service. This place was jumpin’ on a Friday night, with a vibrant after-work crowd. Many of the menu items are cooked in the huge brick oven, crafted and designed exclusively for the restaurant. A bar surrounds the oven, and patrons can watch as pizza and other dishes are prepared. A back room has a retractable roof, creating a whole new atmosphere when there’s warm weather.

Marco Polo is still well-known

for its parties in its upstairs room, and offers several different menu options.

If you haven’t sailed into Marco Polo in a while, a voyage is overdue. *Marco Polo Ristorante* [345 Court St. between Union and President Streets in Carroll Gardens, (718) 852-5015, www.MarcoPoloRistorante.com]. Open Mondays through Thursdays, 11:30 am–11 pm; Fridays and Saturdays until midnight; Sunday until 10:30 pm.



Playing hard ball

Sex Toy Bingo puts stimulating new spin on old game

By **Danielle Furfaro**
The Brooklyn Paper

This isn't your grandmother's bingo. We sure hope not, anyway.

A Bedford-Stuyvesant entertainment producer is putting a titillating twist on bingo at the Flat in Williamsburg on Feb. 24. In Sex Toy Bingo, players do not win money or bar tabs—they win sex toys. The goal of the game is to encourage players to embrace their sexuality without judgment or fear, said the game's creator.

"We live in a world where sex positivity is frowned upon," said organizer and co-host Bex Cellent. "There is a difference between oversexualization and sex positivity, and I am trying to hone in on that." Also, it is just funny.

"Bingo is the most innocent game in the world. Your grandma plays it," said Cellent, who has hosted two previous Sex Toy Bingo nights. "The juxtaposition between the two is neat."

The game itself is played in the usual way, but Cellent said she has spiced it up with some salacious sayings, including "premature e-bingulation" for those who call "bingo" early but have not won, and unique house rules, including a sudden-death sex trivia playoff in the case of multiple winners of a match.

Cellent and her co-host will lead 10 or 11 rounds of Sex Toy Bingo in one sitting, while a disc jockey spins sexy tunes including Peaches' "F--- the Pain Away," Ginuwine's "Pony," and "Splash



Prized possessions: Bex Cellent and Rama Poola (DJ Cake Patrol), show off some Sex Toy Bingo prizes.

Way" by Ludicrous.

Prizes up for grabs will include nipple clamps, bondage tape, and chocolate body butter, Cellent said. But the rewards aren't

just for the ladies—one of the prizes available is a Fleshlight, famous for being a man's best pal.

Sex Toy Bingo at the Flat [308 Hooper

St. between Broadway and S. Fifth Street in Williamsburg, (718) 599-5151, www.the-flatbkny.com]. Feb. 24 at 8 pm. Free entry, \$5 per bingo card.



The man in the moon: Craig Bacon will co-direct a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in an Park Slope townhouse that once served as a gathering place for the stars.

A midwinter night's dream

Theater in a historic townhouse

By **Matthew Perlman**
The Brooklyn Paper

Talk about a playhouse! A local theater troupe is gearing up for a special run of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at a historic Park Slope townhouse that was once a gathering place for stars of the stage. The performances will take place in the parlor, while the audience sits nearby at dinner tables chowing down and drinking up. But one of the play's directors said the show is not your standard dinner theater.

"With dinner theater, it's usually dark and you sit back and stuff your

face while you're trying to watch," said Craig Bacon, artistic director of the New Place Players and co-director of the production, which will run Feb. 25-March 19. "With the lights on, we're playing, and the audience is playing. You're definitely not sitting in the back of a theater falling asleep."

The Prospect Park West residence, known as Casa Duse, is a character in and of itself. The house was once home to Martin Waldron, who was a godson of the famous Italian actress Eleonora Duse—described by Bacon as "the Meryl Streep of her day."

Waldron was a huge fan of theater and opera, frequently entertaining



A Duse: The Prospect Park West home is littered with portraits of the old owner's godmother, the famous Italian actress Eleonora Duse, as well as signed pictures of other stars.

visiting stars. The house, which was built in 1899, is covered with signed photographs from the likes of Laurence Olivier, Luciano Pavarotti, and Joan Sutherland. The wallpaper, furnished by Duse, is still in place. *See DREAM on page 9*

THEATER

Boxer shorts

These actors aren't just looking to break a leg—they might bust a few lips, too.

A theater troupe will put on three short plays about boxing inside a real boxing gym from Feb.

20-March 8. The Ver-tigo Theater Company is staging the show as part of ongoing series of site-specific productions. The producers said they were looking for a location to host—and play muse to—their latest night of original theater when Gleason's Gym in Dumbo, the oldest active boxing gym in the country, hit them over the head.

"We wanted somewhere where we could be inspired, where stories were oozing out of the walls," said producer Tara Ricasa. "It is one of those places that is singular—we were like kids in a candy store when we walked in."

The "Bareknuckle" show will feature plays that deal with gentrification, marital battles, and fighting your inner demons. The producers asked the three playwrights to draw on the historic training ground for inspiration, Ricasa said.

"We left the door wide open," she said. "We said, 'Here's the deal, we're doing this at a gym, so we encourage you to go to the gym, look at the photos, be inspired.'"

Gleason's will hold an open house before Friday's night opener, so people can meet boxers and take a swing at the heavy bag, the gym's owner Bruce Silverglade said.

"We want to get as many people into the gym as possible that aren't normally in a boxing gym, so they're realize boxing is a better sport than the myth out there," he said.

A portion of the show's proceeds will go to Silverglade's charity Give a Kid a Dream, which provides mentors for disadvantaged youth in boxing, Ricasa said.

And to further enhance the full fisticuffs experience, world champion pugilists Keisher "Fire" McLeod-Wells and Alicia "Slick" Ashley will square off in an exhibition match before the plays, Ricasa said.

"That's unscripted—that's live right there in the ring," she said.

"Bareknuckle" at Gleason's Gym (77 Front St. between Main and Washington streets in Dumbo, www.thelivingroomseries.org). Show runs Feb. 20-22, 27, 28, and March 1 and 6-8. Fridays and Saturday shows at 8 pm, Sundays at 7 pm. \$18. —Max Jaeger

ART

Trash walking

They're putting Brooklyn on the map—and maps on Brooklyn.

A Prospect Heights artist has made a giant map of the borough out of litter she collected on Brooklyn streets. But the creator said she is not trying to trash Kings County—she wants to inspire viewers to take a closer look at Brooklyn's streets, as she did.

"My hopes are that observers find inspiration to explore both the land we share and our relationships to it," said Jennifer Maravillas.

Maravillas's piece will be on display as part of "Mapping Brooklyn," a new exhibition running across Bric House in Fort Greene and the Brooklyn Historical Society in Brooklyn Heights from Feb. 26.

The artist said she spent three years collecting enough trash for her 10-by-10 foot piece. The most common items she picked up were phone cards, shopping lists, religious texts and flyers, metro cards, parking meter slips, menus, and advertisements.

But Maravillas said she avoided collecting too many versions of the same item, searching instead for distinct debris that represented the unique block it was plucked from.

"The very best moments of my process were when I found perfect pieces of trash—something that showed the culture of a place, the vernacular of a neighborhood," she said.

"Mapping Brooklyn" will also feature cartographic creations from 17 other artists displayed alongside actual maps from the Brooklyn Historical Society's archival collection.

Other pieces in the show include a fusion of drawing and cartography that explores the history hidden in the area surrounding Prospect Park, and an exploration of the history of graffiti in Bushwick, said Elizabeth Ferrer, Bric's curator of contemporary art.

"Mapping Brooklyn" at Bric House [647 Fulton St. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 855-7882, www.bricartsmedia.org]. Opening reception Feb. 25 at 7 pm. Free. Through May 3. And at the Brooklyn Historical Society [128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4111, www.brooklynhistory.org]. Feb. 26-Sept. 6. —Sarah Iannone



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EDITORS' PICKS

FRIDAY
Feb. 20

**Crikey, bro?**
The Way Station is bravely hosting a night of music from Australia and New Zealand at a time of fraught relations between the two countries — the Cricket World Cup. “Tasmericana Night” will feature the Antipodean sounds of Ben R. Mackie, City Walls Autumn Falls, the Hookey Brothers, and Stanley John Mitchell, plus hopefully some good-natured smack talk.

8 pm at the Way Station (683 Washington Ave. between St. Marks Avenue and Prospect Place in Prospect Heights, (347) 627-4949, www.waystationbk.com). \$5 suggested.

SATURDAY
Feb. 21

Singing for your supper
It ain't over until the fat lady sings — or at least eats the last slice of grandma pie. Get your pizza with a free side of culture when Brooklyn's own Regina Opera Company gives a one-hour preview of its upcoming performance of “The Barber of Seville” live at Bay Ridge's Vesuvio Restaurant.

3 pm at Vesuvio Restaurant (7503 Third Ave. between 73rd and 74th streets in Bay Ridge, (718) 745-0222, www.reginaopera.org). Free.



SUNDAY
Feb. 22

**Feeling sheepish**
If you can handle the weather, head down to Sunset Park to ring in the Year of the Sheep at the annual Lunar New Year Parade. Bring an umbrella and snow boots (the forecast calls for both), and warm up by watching the lion dances, kids' performances, and firecrackers.

Noon (Starts at Eighth Avenue and 50th Street in Sunset Park). Free.

TUESDAY
Feb. 24

The award goes to...
Didn't win your office Oscars pool? You can still claim awards season glory at Pat Kieran's now-annual Red Carpet Trivia Night. The news anchor will quiz contestants on award-winners from movies, television, Broadway, music, and literature, with themed prizes up for grabs.

7:30 pm at the Bell House (149 Seventh St. between Second and Third avenues in Gowanus, (718) 643-6510, www.thebellhouse-ny.com). \$26.



THURSDAY
Feb. 26

**A D thang**
Dr. Dre just turned 50, and event organizer Good Peoples is saying happy birthday to everyone's favorite rapper turned headphone purveyor with its annual Dre Day celebration at Kinkfolk in Williamsburg. There will be tunes via Nick Hook, Project Matt, and World's Fair plus gin and juice specials all night.

10 pm at Kinkfolk (94 Wythe Ave. between N. 10th and 11th streets in Williamsburg, www.tinyurl.com/dreday2015). Free with RSVP before midnight, \$5 otherwise.

NINE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

FRI, FEB. 20
ART, “STATIONS OF THE CROSS”
OPENING RECEPTION: Fourteen Brooklyn artists exhibit their interpretations of the Christian tradition of the Stations of the Cross. **Free.** 7 pm. The Episcopal Church of St. Luke and St. Matthew (520 Clinton Ave. between Fulton St. and Atlantic Avenue in Prospect Heights, (347) 515-4044).

THEATER, “THE TEMPLE, OR, LEBENSRAUM”: Set in World War II, a German U-boat's mission becomes a journey into terror as its crew is trapped within on the ocean floor. Inspired by H.P. Lovecraft's 1920 story. \$18. 7:30 pm. The Brick (575 Metropolitan Ave. at Lorimer Street in Williamsburg, (718) 907-6189), www.bricktheater.com.

MUSIC, THE BLACK CATS, THE LORD CALVERTS: **Free.** 10 pm. Beast of Bourbon (710 Myrtle Ave. between Spencer and Walworth streets in Bedford-Stuyvesant, (347) 789-9901), www.beastofbourbonbk.com.

KUNST! Susanne Bartsch's monthly dance party featuring live performances, DJs, and wild costumes. \$20. 11 pm. Verboten (54 N. 11th St. between Kent and Wythe avenues in Williamsburg, (347) 223-4732), www.verbotennewyork.com.

SAT, FEB. 21
SUNSET PARK LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION: Featuring Chinese folk performances, martial arts demonstrations, games for children, give-aways, and a lion dance. **Free.** Noon–3 pm. Sunset Park Recreation Center (43rd Street at Seventh Avenue in Sunset Park, (718) 972-0567).

DANCE, CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION: Chinese Theatre Works performs segments from traditional dances, including the fan dance from “The Peony Pavilion” and a double sword dance. **Free.** 1–2 pm. Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch (Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza in Park Slope, (718) 230-2100), www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org.

LUNAR NEW YEAR: Celebrate the Year of the Sheep with the sheep at the zoo, plus activities and a puppet show. **Free** with admission to the

**Clowning around**: Traditional and modern circus stunts come together at Circus Xtreme, at Barclays Center Feb. 19–March 1.

COMING SOON TO BARCLAYS CENTER

FRI, FEB. 20 RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY PRESENTS CIRCUS XTREME: 11 am, 3 pm, 7 pm. See Friday, Feb. 19.	TUE, FEB. 24 RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY PRESENTS CIRCUS XTREME: 7 pm. See Friday, Feb. 19.
SAT, FEB. 21 RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY PRESENTS CIRCUS XTREME: 11 am, 3 pm, 7 pm. See Friday, Feb. 19.	WED, FEB. 25 RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY PRESENTS CIRCUS XTREME: 7 pm. See Friday, Feb. 19.
SUN, FEB. 22 RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY PRESENTS CIRCUS XTREME: 11 am, 3 pm, 7 pm. See Friday, Feb. 19.	THUR, FEB. 26 RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY PRESENTS CIRCUS XTREME: 10:30 am and 7 pm. See Friday, Feb. 19.

620 Atlantic Ave. at Pacific Street in Prospect Heights (917) 618-6100, www.barclayscenter.com.

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Find lots more listings online at BrooklynPaper.com/Events

SUN, FEB. 22
FASTELAVN DANISH MARDI GRAS: Dress in costume, hit the barrel, eat Danish food, and taste special cream buns for dessert in this celebration of the Danish tradition. \$35 for adults; \$15 for children. 2–6 pm. Danish Athletic Club (735 65th St. between Seventh and Eighth avenues in Bay Ridge, (718) 748-5950).

FILM, “BROOKLYN BOHEME”: Screening of a documentary about the black arts movement in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill from the mid-1980s through the 1990s. **Free.** 3 pm. Brooklyn Historical Society (128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4111), www.brooklynhistory.org.

MON, FEB. 23
TALK, TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE PRESENTS VACATION ALL I EVER WANTED: A storytelling event that blends fiction and memoir with duplicity, conceit, and intrigue. \$5. 8 pm. Cameo Gallery (93 N. Sixth St. between Wythe Avenue and Berry Street in Williamsburg, (718) 302-1180), www.cameony.net.

COMEDY, THE MEHRAN SHOW: Comedian Mehran Khaghani hosts a weekly comedy show, with celebrity and comedian guests joining him on stage. \$10 (\$8 in advance). 9 pm. Union Hall (702 Union St. at Fifth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 638-4400), www.unionhallny.com.

See **9 DAYS** on page 10

**The Brooklyn Paper**
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Published weekly at
1 Metrotech Center North, Suite 1001, Brooklyn NY 11201 (718) 260-2500

CEO
Les Goodstein

PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER
Jennifer Goodstein

EDITORIAL STAFF
EDITOR
Vince DiMiceli (718) 260-4508
DEPUTY EDITOR
Nathan Tempey (718) 260-4504
ARTS EDITOR
Ruth Brown (718) 260-8309
STAFF REPORTERS
Danielle Furfaro (718) 260-2511
Noah Hurowitz (718) 260-4505
Matthew Perlman (718) 260-8310

ADVERTISING STAFF
DISPLAY ADVERTISING SALES
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WEB DESIGNER
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PRODUCTION ARTIST
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NEW YORK PRESS ASSOCIATION
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Artist of the portraits of young men

Bklyn Museum celebrates work of Kehinde Wiley

By **Trupti Rami**
for The Brooklyn Paper

He is a modern late Renaissance man. Williamsburg artist Kehinde Wiley has made a name for himself creating large-scale portraiture, particularly those featuring young black men — and, more recently, women — in Harlem, rendered in a vibrant 18th century rococo style. Now, the Brooklyn Museum will celebrate these and other works by the artist with a new exhibition, opening Feb. 20. A museum curator said she first invited Wiley to exhibit at the museum three years ago, and the show — dubbed “A New Republic” — has been in the works ever since.

“You’ll see his response in the exhibition — he went all out,” said curator Eugenie Tsai.

Wiley’s work is characterized by dense patterns, dialed up colors, and a juxtaposition of modern subjects with old world styling. Nearly 60 works will be shown, including a homage to Auguste Clesinger’s 1847 marble sculpture “Femme piquee par un serpent” (or “Woman Bitten by a Snake”), a bronze bust of a man in a hoodie, and six stained-glass windows. The latter pieces are a particular highlight, Tsai said.

“The chapel with the stained glass panels definitely stands out,” she said. “You can spend a long time marveling over the deeply saturated colors and varied patterns and textures.”

Wiley is known for exploring race, power, politics, and stereotypes in his work. Visitors to “A New Republic” can expect to see selections from his ongoing



Photo by Sarah DeSantis

Brooklyn or bust: (Above) Kehinde Wiley mixes contemporary subjects with old-world styling. (Right) One of Wiley’s six stained-glass windows in “A New Republic.”

“World Stage” series, which studies the lives of people in India, Sri Lanka, Israel, Jamaica, Nigeria, and other countries. An entire gallery will also be devoted to his portraits of women in a series titled “An Economy of Grace,” Tsai said.

“The Brooklyn Museum is committed to presenting the work of Brooklyn-based artists, from the under-the-radar to those with name recognition,” said Tsai. “Wiley is an outstanding ex-

ample of a Brooklyn-based artist who has achieved recognition both locally and globally.”

“Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic” at the Brooklyn Museum [200 Eastern Pkwy. between Washington and Flatbush avenues in Prospect Heights, (718) 638–5000, www.brooklynmuseum.org]. Feb. 20–May 24. \$16 suggested contribution (\$10 members and students, free for ages 19 and under).



Photo by Jason Wyche

DREAM...

Continued from page 7

nishings, and light fixtures all seem to be from an era long ago.

During the performance of the Bard’s lively comedy, the actors will move around the tables, leave the room to go “off-stage,” and occasionally interact with the audience. But, mercifully, the play is not audience interactive, Bacon said.

“Bottom will occasionally play with the audience,” he said. “He’ll steal a sip of wine once in a while. There’s no fourth wall, but we don’t abuse that fact.”

Actors will also make use of puppets and elaborate costumes studded with lights. And music will be provided by the fairies, who will sing with an accompanying guitar and recorded electronic music. The songs are based on the famous Felix Mendelssohn compositions for the play, but with a modern twist, the show’s musical director said.

“A lot of the music is Mendelssohn’s original, but all re-arranged,” said Flavio Gaete. “It’s a wilder electronic version.”

The dinner served to the audience depends on the day — half the shows will feature a five-course meal with Shakespearean undertones prepared by chef Zachary O’Neil. The other shows, which cost less, will have a pasta dinner with beer and wine.

Bacon said the cosy setup, which only seats 22 guests, is reminiscent of Shakespeare performing at the Inns of Court, or at the home of a noble.

“We’re creating a contemporary Elizabethan feast in a way, but on a smaller scale,” he said. “For both the actors and the audience, there’s a real intimacy.”

“A Midsummer Night’s Dream” at Casa Duse [16 Prospect Park West between Carroll and President streets in Park Slope, (646) 266–2762, www.newplaceplayersnyc.com]. Feb. 25, March 4, March 11, and March 18 at 6:30 pm. \$75. Feb. 26, March 5, March 12, and March 19 at 6:30 pm. \$125.

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Boerum Hill vet gets acclaim for short story collection

By Noah Hurowitz
The Brooklyn Paper

Not all war stories take place on the battlefield. A Boerum Hill author is bringing his celebrated collection of short stories about the homecoming experiences of veterans to Word Bookstore in Greenpoint on Feb. 24.

Phil Klay earned widespread critical acclaim and won the National Book Award for fiction with his 2014 debut “Redeployment,” and now the author is releasing the book in paperback. A Marine Corps veteran himself, Klay said he penned the tome to show not just the trauma soldiers have to deal with during and after combat, but also the battle of returning to their civilian lives in America.

“Even if someone’s experience was not particularly intense, it takes time to think it through and process it,” he said. “You come back to a country that is not really engaged with what it means to be a country at war.”



Redeployed in paperback: Author Phil Klay will read from his book at Word on Feb. 24.

Klay joined the Marines in 2005 after graduating from Dartmouth College, and spent 13 months in Iraq — much of it in the restive

Anbar Province — from January 2007 to February 2008. Working as a public affairs officer he did not see combat, but he was billeted near a surgical center and said he saw his fair share of injured soldiers. Klay said it was especially surreal watching a fellow marine die shortly before going on leave to New York.

“It was a very strange experience to have gone from that happening to walking down Madison Avenue in the summer,” he said.

Portions of “Redeployment” take place amidst the American occupation and reconstruction in Iraq. But the majority of the book concerns itself with the tension soldiers encounter between their experiences and the welcome — or the lack of one — they receive when they arrive home.

None of Klay’s stories are autobiographical, but two in particular follow soldiers who, like the author, went to college in the Northeast after their deployment. In these stories, he explores the lack of understanding by fellow

students, as well as the feeling of survivor’s guilt when one veteran finds more success than a former comrade. These experiences can be extremely isolating, Klay said.

“I knew a lot of veterans who had the experience of being the only one in their classes,” said Klay, who earned his Master of Fine Arts at Hunter College in 2011. “I’ve had people tell me I was the first veteran they ever met.”

Klay said he did not set out to write stories with a message, but he did strive for honesty and realism. As a result, readers’ impressions of the book may reflect their own opinions about war as much as they will his.

“I think if the book is honest and you’re anti-war, you’ll find things to justify that, and if you’re more hawkish, you’ll also find parts that justify that view,” he said. “I did not write to prove a particular ide-



ological point, because that would be limiting. Reality is not didactic.”

Phil Klay at Word [126 Franklin St. at Milton Street in Greenpoint, (718) 383-0096, www.wordbrooklyn.com]. Feb. 24 at 7 pm. Free.



Not extinct: Indie rock duo the Dodos plays the Music Hall of Williamsburg on Feb. 27.

9 DAYS...

Continued from page 8
TUES, FEB. 24

READING, ROBERT CHRISTGAU: Music critic Robert Christgau talks about his memoir “Going Into the City,” a love letter to rock music and Manhattan. **Free.** 7–9 pm. PowerHouse Arena [37 Main St. at Water Street in Dumbo, (718) 666-3049], www.powerhousearena.com.

COMEDY, “THE FANCY SHOW”: Producers Michael Joyce, Langston Kerman, Lane Pieschel, Simmons McDavid, and Jenny Zigrino share the stage with local talent. **Free.** 8 pm. Bar Reis [375 Fifth Ave. between Fifth and Sixth streets in Park Slope, (718) 974-2412].

WED, FEB. 25

MUSIC, “VOICES OF BROOKLYN”: Hear the stories and sounds of South Williamsburg through local storytellers, Brooklyn musicians, and interactive art. \$15. 6:30 pm. St. Paul’s Church [334 S. Fifth St. between Rodney and Keaps streets in Williamsburg, (718) 387-0404], www.parablesnyc.org.

TALK, TOLD IT FIRST HAND CONVERSATIONS WITH HIP-HOP’S DO-ERS: Brooklyn Bodega’s Wes Jackson sits down with Albert Johnson, author of “K’wan,” and Johnny Temple of Akashic Books to talk about hip-hop in the literary world. \$10. 6:30 pm. Brooklyn Historical Society [128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4111], www.brooklynhistory.org.

THURS, FEB. 26

AFRICAN FASHION SHOW: Long Island University Brooklyn’s African Student Association presents its

annual fashion show, featuring traditional and modern African clothing. \$5 (\$3 with student ID). 7 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University [DeKalb and Flatbush avenues in Downtown, (718) 488-1624], www.brooklyn.liu.edu/kumble-theater.

FRI, FEB. 27

ART, “BOTANICAL REVOLUTION” OPENING RECEPTION: Artist Christina Kaplan constructs her own canvas out of Velcro, then uses man-made recycled materials such as stockings and yarn to combine abstract shapes and colors to capture the essence of herbal remedies. **Free.** 7–9 pm. Remedies Herb Shop [453 Court St. between Fourth Place and Luquer Street in Carroll Gardens, (718) 643-4372], www.remediesherbshop.com.

MUSIC, THE DODOS, SPRINGTIME CARNIVORE: \$22 (\$20 in advance). 8 pm. Music Hall of Williamsburg [66 N. Sixth St. between Kent and Wythe avenues in Williamsburg, (718) 486-5400], www.musicallofwilliamsburg.com.

SAT, FEB. 28

THEATER, TEATRE TRE: Sweden’s oldest clown troupe presents physical comedy created especially for younger audiences. \$12. 10:30 am and 1:30 pm. BAM Fisher [321 Ashland Pl. between Hansen Place and Lafayette Avenue in Fort Greene], www.bam.org.

ART, “I CRIED, POWER!”: The New Negrass Film Society presents an evening of digital media and live sound installation that re-imagines the concept of Afrofuturism. **Free.** 8–11 pm. The Emerson [561 Myrtle Avenue between Emerson Pl. and Classon Avenue in Fort Greene, (347) 763-1310], www.theemersonbar.com.

Recommended new reading

Local booksellers give their picks

Word’s pick
“Curvism” by Will Hubbard: There must be more to poetry than the line break, which is not to argue that the work of poetry is somehow an “essence” rather than a formal — or at least developed — statement, be it musically inflected or not. Or, as Ezra Pound cautioned, “Don’t think any intelligent person is going to be deceived when you try to shirk all the difficulties of the unspeakably difficult art of good prose by chopping your composition into line lengths.” Will Hubbard’s prose forms in “Curvism” could be broken apart 100 different ways and still maintain

their verve and stability. The writing here has the levity of a sixth-story apartment, and all the implicit heft of what could fall out from the window there, like a childhood memory of a frozen shrub, adolescent clippings from a lingerie magazine, or a poisonous lobster from Lorca. There are no singing histrionics in this book; the effect is more of the memory of singing.

— Jaye Bartell, Word [126 Franklin St. at Milton Street in Greenpoint, (718) 383-0096, www.wordbrooklyn.com].

Greenlight’s pick
“First Year Healthy” by Michael DeForge: In Michael De-

forge’s latest graphic novel, our narrator attempts a return to normalcy after a mental episode which left her in the hospital. As the story quickly spins out of control, the characters as lost as the reader, the mythical cat of her dreams moves from haunting the background to being one of the only sources of security and stability. The colors and story combine to be overwhelming — in the best way — and every page deserves to be studied and reread.

— Julian Elman, Greenlight Bookstore [686 Fulton St. between S. Elliott Place and S. Portland Avenue in Fort Greene, (718) 246-0200, www.greenlightbookstore.com].



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/ T H E L G B T E X P O

Nets dunk, minus the slam

“It’s an honor to be in the dunk contest. It’s something you dream about as a little kid.”

“No Net has won since The Doctor. Those are big shoes to fill.”

“Tonight is bigger than just me. It’s about the borough. Creativity is one of the most important things in the dunk contest.”

“I’m looking at this as a competition. I’m not just here to have a good time, I’m here to win.”

Those, folks, were the immortal words of Mason Plumlee on Saturday in the video

package before he made his entrance. From the rafters, I have to admit I felt a thrill up my wing, hoping the hometown kid would stun a crowd that generally expected the much-hyped Zach LaVine to destroy the competition.

But then our boy jogged out of the tunnel like he was a humble member of the Washington Generals, shirt tucked into his pants, with an oblig-



atory wave to the crowd. The plot was already lost. Cheerleaders in sexified Brooklyn uniforms lined his entrance, gyrating awkwardly to the bizarre death march of “Brooklyn.”

Commentator Reggie Miller: “All right Kenny, do you like the entrance here? I

mean, does he look like he’s into it?”

Kenny Smith, trying to help out Young Plums: “He’s ready. He’s definitely ready.”

Reggie: “There’s a lot of pressure here when you have to do it in front of the hometown peeps.”

After his non-entrance, Plumlee then tossed the ball to his former Duke teammate, Kyrie Irving, and removed his sweats. Kyrie bounced the ball off the side of the backboard, and Plumlee jumped ... but failed to catch it. He then completed a glorified reverse layup



off the catch that Reggie called a “squeak dunk.”

Kenny: “Does that count as a dunk right there? Is that actually a dunk or does he get another dunk?”

On the third try, Plumlee put it down with some authority, but any sense of anticipation was gone.

Reggie, on what Mason had shown the judges: “They saw the intent.”

Mind you, at this point I had been getting absolutely wasted in the upper reaches of Barclays for a couple hours now. Sure, the three-point contest was as-advertised, but I needed something to take the edge off.

In my stupor, I was struck by how Young Plums’s dunk contest performance was ba-

Nets center Mason Plumlee can dunk, sure, but not with the flair you’d hope for as the opener of Brooklyn’s first All-Star dunk contest.

sically a grand metaphor for the first couple years of the Brooklyn Nets. Much like trying to build a franchise and fanbase from scratch, Plumlee was put in the unenviable position of trying to rouse the crowd as the first contestant out of the gate, while saying his performance was “about the borough” that he has represented—but not lived in—for about a year-and-a-half.

But where such circumstances might lend a guy a certain underdog status, Plumlee’s lurching 6-foot-10 frame

made his dunking far less impressive than his smaller competitors. Likewise, the Nets’ Russian soon-to-former owner Mikhail Prokhorov’s lavish spending on players upon the team’s arrival in Brooklyn turned the Nets immediately into a pseudo-juggernaut, foregoing any grace period where they could have won over fans as a scrappy upstart.

In other words, Nets fans “have seen the intent” in building a successful franchise in Brooklyn.

LICH...

Continued from page 1

majority of the patients who used to come in through the emergency room.

“Most emergency department patients don’t have to be admitted,” she said. “Those patients are going to be adequately cared for.”

Ambulance dispatchers are currently sending people with more serious illnesses and injuries to Lutheran Medical Center in Sunset Park, not the interim facility at the old Long Island College Hospital site.

A Fire Department spokeswoman remained vague when describing the patients responders are supposed to be taking to the freestanding emergency department.

“We transport adult patients who are ‘general admission,’ meaning are sick or injured, meaning for various injuries or illnesses, to NYU Langone Cobble Hill in Brooklyn,” Elisheva Zakheim said.

Burke helped clarify.

“Providing basic life support means it’s not going to take a cardiac arrest patient or a trauma patient,” she said.

The university has a contract with a private company called TransCare to keep two ambulances on standby in Cobble Hill, ready to transport patients with such life-threatening conditions to New York University Langone Medical Center on the distant island of Manhattan, to Lutheran Medical Center, or to another Brooklyn hospital.

The new facility is slated to occupy a new four-story build-

ing on the campus. It is supposed to include observation beds for patients who are not sick enough to be admitted to a hospital but are too sick to be released, including those suffering from chest pain, fainting, fluid and electrolyte disorders, and abdominal pain, records show. The beds are also supposed to also be used for patients who need to be stabilized before they are transferred. The university expects that most patients will remain in these beds for 17 to 24 hours, but not more than 48.

Doctors are also supposed to have access to radiology and laboratory services in the planned complex, and to other specialists for remote consultation, the university has said.

And if a critically ill patient does show up on the doorstep of the Cobble Hill facility, the university said it will be prepared to stabilize them.

“[The emergency department] will have full resource capability to resuscitate critically ill, comatose, and cardiac arrest patients,” a document on file with the health department says.

During the more-than-year-long battle over the state’s closure and sale of the Long Island College Hospital property, activists charged that a standalone emergency department would be little more than a glorified walk-in clinic, and would lack the resources to save lives. Now that more details have emerged, Burke stopped short of a glowing endorsement of the set-up, but said it will do.

“It’s not an unreasonable way of providing care,” she said.

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Judge kin strikes back

Assisted-living owner to pay \$750K for jurist’s death

By Noah Hurowitz
The Brooklyn Paper

Hi-yah!

The embattled owner of a Park Slope assisted-living facility will pay \$750,000 to the estate of a beloved Brooklyn judge, known for holding a black belt in karate, thanks to a settlement in a wrongful death lawsuit.

The suit claimed that Prospect Park Residence owner Haysha Deitsch was running a sham facility staffed by unlicensed nurses when Judge John Phillips stayed there, and that severe neglect led to his death at 83 in 2008.

The settlement is a grim victory, according to the lawyer representing Phillips’s nephew, Samuel Boykin.

“No one’s cracking open champagne bottles,” said John O’Hara, a close friend of Phillips who delivered a eulogy at the judge’s funeral.

The out-of-court settlement came a week before the scheduled start of a jury trial in which Boykin was seeking \$40 million in damages. In a complaint, Boykin and O’Hara accused the facility of failing to provide Phillips with a diabetic meal plan during his eight-month stay, keeping him in an unheated room in the dead of winter, and preventing friends and family from visiting him by citing a fictional court order, all the while lacking the required license to operate an assisted-living facility.

A 2012 inspection of the facility found that Deitsch was providing services to dependent and memory-impaired patients without the proper license to do so, a crime punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 for every day a facility continues to operate.

According to the lawsuit, Deitsch claimed for years that confining Phillips was justifi-

fied by a court order, but was never able to produce the order. With no assisted-living license and no court order, Deitsch was nothing more than a landlord illegally isolating an elderly, vulnerable man, O’Hara said.

The settlement closes the long, sad saga of the so-called kung-fu judge, a landlord and popular civil-court judge elected without the support of the Brooklyn Democratic machine. Phillips was famed for demonstrating martial-arts moves from the bench, where he served for 17 years. He owned property in Bedford-Stuyvesant at a time when many—including Phillips—were nervous on the neighborhood’s crime-plagued streets, and he turned his Slave Theater into a hotbed of civil-rights activity in the 1980s.

Phillips was an opponent of former District Attorney Charles Hynes, and O’Hara,

another foe of Brooklyn’s erstwhile top lawman, has long accused Hynes of railroading Phillips into state care and allowing court-appointed guardians to loot his estate.

Backing up O’Hara’s claims, a Los Angeles tax firm submitted a letter in court describing the ruinous impact of lost assets and rental revenue from Phillips’s properties, which were auctioned off one by one. According to a preliminary investigation by the firm, the judge’s estate lost between \$20 million and \$30 million from the time Hynes committed Phillips to guardianship in 2001 until his death in 2008.

In 2008, a state panel disbarred Emani Taylor, Phillips’s guardian from 2003 to 2006, for stealing \$328,000 from the judge’s estate.

A lawyer for Deitsch did not return requests for comment.



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“The George Polk Awards recognize outstanding contributions from the most respected communicators of our time,” said Dr. Kimberly R. Cline, president of LIU. “Their standards are reflected in LIU’s journalism teaching and training that emphasize ethics, journalistic inquiry, entrepreneurial skills, and professional practice in a fast-changing news media.”

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- Julia Talanova, associate producer at CNN. As journalism major, Julia received a scholarship to intern at the Moscow bureau of The New York Times.
- Justin Grant, digital content editor at Fidelity Investments. Grant has reported for ABC News’ investigative unit, Good Morning America, National Public Radio, and Reuters as well as The New York Times and Washington Post. He was editor of the campus newspaper Seawanhaka.
- Debra Lewis-Boothman reported and wrote for People magazine where she interviewed celebrities and politicians and covered the music beat. She now teaches a course in entertainment journalism at LIU Brooklyn.
- Curtis Stephen, adjunct professor for news reporting and advisor to the campus newspaper Seawanhaka, is a regular contributor to the urban affairs magazine, City Limits, and has worked for Newsday, Newsweek, CNN in Atlanta, and WNBC-TV in New York.
- Rocco Parascondola, police bureau chief at the New York Daily News, is one of New York City’s top crime reporters.

Educators and communications professionals who are members of LIU’s faculty and alumni comprise the Polk Awards Advisory Committee. Winners are named each year from among hundreds of entries.

The 2014 awards will be conferred at a luncheon held in spring 2015. For more information visit polk.liu.edu

What to do about a fib

My 17-year-old daughter lied to me. And it wasn’t a little “I-finished-my-homework-but-really-didn’t” kind of lie, but a nice big whopper.

When I found out, I immediately started thinking of gruesome penalties, regretting that we don’t have a dungeon. Should I ground her until the end of high school? Give her no allowance for months? Require her to wake up early or stay up late doing chores? The endless options delighted me.

I felt hurt and angry because my first reaction was that she had done something hurtful *to me*.

The way I see it, parenting is personal. I’m her dad, not some random person who hasn’t known her every day of her life. From her side, though, it might be more complicated.

Obviously, she knows I’m

her father, but I’m also the authority and enforcer. It is entirely possible that in that hormone-addled, not-fully-formed adolescent brain of hers, she didn’t even think of me. She wanted to do something and thought that if she asked I might say “No.” Instead, she just did what she wanted, perhaps even creating some excuse in her mind using twisted teenage logic.

When I put it that way, the situation feels more like something out of an old sitcom, like “The Andy Griffith Show” or “My Three Sons” where the kid tells a lie that doesn’t seem like such a big deal in the moment, has humorously unexpected consequences and, of course, gets caught in the end.

Those television dads would wisely and calmly



find a lesson in the situation without feeling betrayed. They would nod knowingly at their child, acknowledging the crazy thinking of youth. The world of the television dads is not the real world, however, where emotions often get the best of us.

A dad is different than a teacher, coach, or boss, yet at moments there are similarities. Imagine a teacher telling a student, “I’m so hurt you didn’t turn your paper in on time — I can’t believe you’d do this to me.”

Ridiculous, right? I guess I need to think about her action and not my reaction. My

feelings may be bruised, but hopefully I have enough perspective to handle them.

I’m trying to think this through, remembering it is not about me. The issues are trust and responsibility — these are the things my daughter needs to face up to. My job is to figure out how to help her learn something from her misguided choice.

I may want to punish her and revenge my injured ego, but that won’t do either of us any good in the end. Just as I need to trust her, she needs to trust me, that I’ll treat her thoughtfully, respectfully, and with love. In this case, that means setting aside my emotions as we talk about what happened.

If she does this to me again, though, watch out.

I’m sure someone has a dungeon I can rent out for a few years.



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