



Murray Hill

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

News for Murray Hill...February 13, 2023

This information is provided by The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association. We are sharing it as a service to our members. If this notice does not interest you, please disregard it.

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Join The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association

Murray Hill is the Heart at the Center of Manhattan

Be a part of it!

[Join the MHNA here](#)

February observances and celebrations

February 14—Valentine's Day in Murray Hill

The AKC Museum of the Dog gift shop has dog-themed Valentine gifts

Stuffed animals, 6-pack of standard sized tennis balls for dogs covered in hearts, Love Paw and Socksmith Socks, Ted & Co's Valentine's Day Bows and Bowties, and more. Check out their online shop museumofthedogstore.org or see the shop in person.

AKC Museum of the Dog

101 Park Avenue (at 40th Street on the Plaza)

212-696-8360

museumofthedog.org

February 13 & 14

Benjamin Steakhouse & Benjamin Prime are offering a Valentine's Day special prix fixe menu

Benjamin Steakhouse

52 East 41st Street (between Madison & Park)
212-297-9177
Benjamin Prime
23 East 40th Street (between Madison & Park)
212-338-0818
benjaminsteakhouse.com

February 11 -14

Docks Oyster Bar & Seafood Grill

Special Valentine's appetizers, entrees and desserts. Reservations at sevenrooms.com/reservations/docksoysterbarseafoodgrill/ig.
Docks Oyster Bar & Seafood Grill
633 3rd Avenue
212-986-8080
docksoysterbar.com
info@docksoysterbar.com

February 14 5:30 - 7:30pm

Björk Cafe & Bistro's special "Feast for Two" Valentine's Tasting Menu

All-Day Princess Cake & Sparkling Rose Hard Cider (\$15)

"Feast for Two" Dinner Special 5:30 - 7:30 PM (\$170)

This Valentine's Day, give your loved one a special Scandinavian Experience on a culinary journey through the Nordic countries with cold-water Nordic shrimp, Icelandic cod, Norwegian salmon, Finnish caviar, Danish smørrebrød, and Swedish meatballs, followed by the world-famous Princess Cake. The "Feast for Two" special is \$170 and includes a glass of rose hard cider for each dinner. Reservations through open table at bjorkcafe.com/open-table. Or call 212-779-3587.

info@bjorkcafe.com

58 Park Avenue (between 37th & 38th Street)

February 14 (after 4pm)

Hill & Bay

Two meals + a bottle of wine for \$60 (cannot be combined with other promotions, dine-in only, 21+ for alcohol purchases). Reserve a table at hillandbay.com/reservation.

581 2nd Avenue (32nd Street)

Cornelius

Valentine's Day prix-fixe Five Course Tasting Menu by Chef Zach Bondy at Cornelius: Peconic Bay oysters & key lime pearls, crispy langoustine with English pea risotto and poached egg, Hudson Valley duck breast with lentils du puy and poached apricot bordelaise, crab imperial soufflé, and

Baked Alaska. \$130. Reservations at resy.com/cities/ny/cornelius-restaurant-grand-central?date=2023-02-14&seats=2

in Grand Central Terminal
Shuttle Passage at 42nd Street
332-264-1234
grandcentralterminal.com/shop/cornelius

February 14 7pm (2-hour time limit)

The Campbell

A selection of classic and modern cocktails, chocolate covered strawberries, a live jazz performance, and poetry. Learn more at resy.com/cities/ny/venues/the-campbell/events/campbell-vday-2023-02-14?date=2023-02-09&seats=2.

in Grand Central Terminal
15 Vanderbilt Avenue
917-209-3440
thecampbellnyc.com

February 14

Fine & Rare's special Valentine's Day Dinner

A romantic evening of live music and a special 3-course prix-fixe dinner. Reservations are available at 4pm, 6:30pm and 9pm. \$160 per person. Reservations at fineandrare.nyc/valentines-day.

Fine & Rare
9 East 37th Street (between 5th & Madison)

Grand Central Oyster Bar & Restaurant

Including fresh seafood favorites and a special Valentine's Day dessert menu featuring Sweetheart's Chocolate Cake and more. [Reservations through Open Table](#).
Grand Central Terminal – lower level

Avoid Romance Scams!

[New FTC Data Reveals Top Lies Told by Romance Scammers](#)

February 9, 2023, , FTC press release

The Federal Trade Commission sheds new light on the lies that romance scammers use to take advantage of people—lies that reports to the FTC show cost nearly 70,000 consumers \$1.3 billion in 2022...Topping the list was scammers telling consumers that they needed money because a friend or relative was sick, hurt or in jail...a growing tactic used by romance scammers: sextortion, when a romance scammer convinces a consumer to share explicit photos and then threatens to share those photos with the consumer's social media contacts. The spotlight notes these reports have increased more than eightfold in the past three years, with consumers ages 18-29 six times more likely than older consumers to report this form of romance scam.

February events for black history month

February 13 4:30 - 5:30pm

(in person) [Live Trivia Hour \(Black History Month - Grammys Edition\)](#)

Learn more and registration required at the link above.

at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library

455 Fifth Avenue (40th Street)

February 15 2 – 4pm (end time is approximate)

February 15 6pm

(in person) ***Black Panther (2018)***

(free) T'Challa, heir to the hidden but advanced kingdom of Wakanda, must step forward to lead his people into a new future and must confront a challenger from his country's past. PG-13 | 135 minutes. About Reel to Read: The page meets the screen at Reel to Read, a curated series of independent and classic cinema. These free screenings, hand-picked by librarians, local authors, and film experts, include a Recommended Reads list based on the movie. Fully accessible.

Registration required at nypl.org/events/programs/2023/02/15/reel-read-movies-black-panther-2018.

at Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL)

Room 303

February 16, 21, 23, 28 (ongoing)

United Nations Black History Tour

The Black history-themed tour of the United Nations will grant you a unique look at the Ark of Return, a permanent memorial in honor of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, located on the United Nations Visitors Plaza. You will learn about the contributions of people of African descent to the work of the United Nations in fields such as peace and security and human rights, with a special emphasis on decolonization. Come explore the United Nations through an African lens! The tour will also include access to the Security Council Chamber, the Trusteeship Council Chamber and the General Assembly Hall.*

*Access to these Chambers is contingent upon the schedule of official meetings at the United Nations. [Learn more and purchase tickets.](#)

un.org/en/visit

at the United Nations

46th Street & 1st Avenue

February 19 12:15pm

(hybrid) Marble Collegiate Church Homage to Black Trailblazers of Theater & Performance

(free) In celebration of Black History Month, Broadway luminaries Natasha Yvette Williams (*Some Like It Hot*), Q. Smith (*Come From Away*) and Will Mann (*Hadestown* National Touring Company) will take part in *Making Space on the Great White Way: An Homage to Black Trailblazers of Theater & Performance*. The latest installment of Marble's Racial Justice Series will pay tribute to the Black actors, composers and playwrights who have made countless contributions to Broadway's signature style and aesthetic. The event is free, welcome to all and will be streamed live at marblechurch.org. About Marble Church: Marble Collegiate Church has stood on the corner of Fifth Avenue and 29th Street since 1854, with its ministry dating back to 1628.
at Marble Collegiate Church
1 West 29th Street (at Fifth Avenue)

February 25 4 - 5:30pm

(hybrid) Church of the Incarnation musical evening: *Common Roots: An Evening of Spirituals, Ballads & Soul*

Incarnation is proud to host SUNY Plattsburgh Gospel Choir's presentation of *Common Roots: An Evening of Spirituals, Ballads & Soul*. The evening will be an historical musical reenactment of Negro Spirituals and inspirational ballads, presented by the SUNY Plattsburgh Gospel Choir and Friends. Tickets are \$20 for in-person or virtual attendance. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more and purchase tickets.
at Church of the Incarnation
209 Madison Avenue (at 35th Street)

February 26 2:30pm

(in person) Marble Collegiate Church Gospel concert: *All of My Help: Songs of Encouragement for Unpredictable Times*

Marble Community Gospel Choir will perform live in concert. Directed by Rev. Rashad McPherson, Marble's Associate in ministry and music, this highly-anticipated Winter Gospel Celebration is certain to warm hearts and lift spirits. This concert will feature a varied, soul-stirring repertoire of Gospel music, ranging from classic Negro Spirituals, to high-energy, feel-good anthems. Our theme weaves a thread of love and encouragement through the entire event. Tickets for this in-person event are \$20, \$15 if purchased by February 24. Senior and student tickets (with ID) at the door are \$15. Purchase tickets at marblechurch.org. About Marble Church: Marble Collegiate Church has stood on the corner of Fifth Avenue and 29th Street since 1854, with its ministry dating back to 1628.
at Marble Collegiate Church Sanctuary
1 West 29th Street (at Fifth Avenue)

Help keep our neighborhood clean and green!



Greening & Cleaning volunteers are needed for:

- Weekly cleanups
- Pruning (Citizens Pruning License) will be holding FREE spring pruning classes this spring
- Greening street tree beds and St. Vartan Park
- Watering trees

Send an email to greenandclean@murrayhillnyc.org if you are interested in joining the group.

Earth Day is April 22. Stay tuned for Earth Day details!

Transportation and traffic advisories

Please visit www.murrayhillnyc.org Traffic Change Updates section to see the work notices for public projects in the neighborhood: the 2nd Avenue (and surrounding areas) infrastructure replacement project, Pershing Square East, street closure notices, and more.

News from neighborhood businesses & nonprofits

February 13 - March 5
NYC Off-Broadway Week

2-for-1 tickets to 23 different Off-Broadway productions. For more information, visit the Off-Broadway week page on NYC & Company's website at nycgo.com/off-broadway-week.

February 20 & 27 7pm

The Laugh in Peace Comedy Show

A Rabbi, a Muslim, and a Baptist minister walk into a comedy club? You heard it here! Rev. Susan Sparks (senior pastor of the historic Madison Avenue Baptist Church in Murray Hill) takes the stage with her multi-faith comedy partners for a fun-filled night of laughter demonstrating the power of humor to dissolve differences and highlight our commonalities. Tickets are \$20 (Students \$15) and there is a two-drink minimum. Learn more at mabcnyc.org/event/laugh-in-peace-comedy-tour-with-susan-sparks-2/. Details and tickets (including Livestream options) can be purchased on the Triad Theater website triadnyc.com/shows.cfm.

at the Triad Theater
158 West 72nd Street

February 21 5:30 - 7:30pm

(in person) Church of the Incarnation Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Before Lent begins, Church of the Incarnation hosts their customary Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. Join them for this beloved tradition after a three-year hiatus! All are welcome for pancakes, bacon, mimosas and more. Suggested donation of \$10 for adults; no cost for children.

at Church of the Incarnation
Parish House
209 Madison Avenue (between 35th & 36th Street)

February 21 7pm

A Croatian Winemaker Dinner at Villa Berulia

Experience an intimate 4-course tasting menu with wine pairings led by special guest Marko Fakin, owner and winemaker of Fakin Winery, in Istria, Croatia. Delight in the opportunity to discover the different wines made by Marko and experience the delectable tastes of Croatian food.

First Course:

Fresh Burrata with Arugula, Tomatoes & Balsamic reduction paired with Malvazija Istarska

Second Course:

Spinach Stuffed Gnocchi a la Quattro Formaggio paired with Malvazija La Prima

Third Course (choice of):

Braised Beef Short Ribs with Polenta - Or - Halibut Livornese paired with Teran

Dessert:

Chocolate Hazelnut Torta paired with Teran Il Primo

Seating is limited. Tickets are \$125 per person (excluding tax & gratuity)

at Villa Berulia
107 East 34th Street (between Park & Lexington Avenue)
212-689-1970
villaberulia.com

February 22 8:15am, 12:15pm & 6:15pm

(hybrid) Ash Wednesday Services at Church of the Incarnation

Begin your observance of a Holy Lent with the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist. The 12:15pm Ash Wednesday service includes organ music and a soloist from the Incarnation Choir. It will be livestreamed on [Incarnation's Youtube](#) channel.

at Church of the Incarnation
209 Madison Avenue (between 35th & 36th Street)

February 22 12 - 2pm

Ash Wednesday Services at Madison Avenue Baptist Church

Mark the start of Lent at Madison Avenue Baptist Church where ashes will be offered along with beautiful live piano selections by world-renowned concert pianist and Minister of Music, [Aza Sydykov](#).

Fine & Rare spirit classes

February 24 6:30pm Armagnac & Chocolate Pairing Class

Tickets \$95 per person. The perfect combination of French sophistication and delicious indulgence. Learn more and purchase tickets at giftbox.theflatironroom.com/product/armagnac-chocolate-pairing-class-friday-february-24th-2023-at-fine-rare.

March 10 6:30pm Luxury Agave Class

Tickets \$165 per person. The ultimate agave experience. Learn more and purchase tickets at giftbox.theflatironroom.com/product/luxury-agave-class-friday-march-10th-at-fine-rare.

at Fine & Rare
9 East 37th Street
fineandrare.nyc

Bed Bath & Beyond sells more than \$1 billion in equity to save itself from bankruptcy.

Source: Wall Street Journal What's News email (wsj.com), February 7, 2023

Hudson Bay Capital Management is behind most of it, people familiar with the matter said. (The hedge fund isn't related to Hudson's Bay Co., which owns Saks Fifth Avenue and other retail chains.)

The [financing deal](#) enables investors to convert their securities into Bed Bath & Beyond shares at a discounted price, so they enjoy quick gains regardless of how the business performs. Shares of the

company closed at \$3.01, down 48.63%. The retailer, which had missed interest payments to bondholders after having its credit lines frozen, will go ahead with plans for store closures and job cuts.

Public service announcement

Mayor Adams and Sanitation Commissioner Tisch announced the rollout of citywide residential composting pickups, with staggered start dates by

borough: October 7, 2024: Manhattan service begins. But you don't have to wait. Be a trailblazer and sign up to get a free brown bin and added to a pickup route at dsny.force.com/curbsidecomposting/s/.

Water supply change

In preparation for a multi-month shutdown of New York City's Delaware Aqueduct planned for later this year, the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has begun slowly introducing water from the Croton system into the city's supply of tap water. Water sourced from each system, and each reservoir within each system (our water in New York City comes from three supply systems), may taste slightly different to some people. However, DEP scientists test the City's tap water approximately 2,000 times every single day of the year to ensure it remains safe and of the highest quality. Any New Yorkers with concerns about their tap water should report it to 311 so DEP water quality scientists can investigate. More information on the City's water distribution system and source water can be found at nyc.gov/site/dep/water/current-water-distribution.page. Additional information on the complex repair of the City's Delaware Aqueduct, which conveys approximately half of the water consumed in the city each day, can be found at nyc.gov/site/dep/news/21-006/600-feet-below-hudson-river-final-concrete-lining-completed-1-billion-water-tunnel#/0.

COVID-19 updates

MOST OF THE COVID-19 MANDATES HAVE BEEN LIFTED. WE ARE IN A STAGE OF THE PANDEMIC/ENDEMIC WHERE YOU MUST USE YOUR OWN JUDGEMENT ON WHICH PRECAUTIONS ARE RIGHT FOR YOU.

Data taken on **2/11/23** from the COVID-19 page on the NYC Department of Health website www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page.

Commissioner's Advisory on Prevention

COVID-19, RSV and flu are spreading in NYC this winter season. The Health Commissioner strongly recommends everyone to wear masks in all indoor public settings to reduce the spread of these viruses.

- Stay up-to-date on [vaccinations](#) for Covid-19 and flu. Vaccine Finder app vaccinefinder.nyc.gov.
Get the updated COVID-19 bivalent booster.
If you have recently been infected with Covid-19, the CDC recommends waiting until three months after your infection to receive a booster.
- Wear a high-quality mask, such as a KN95 or KF94, in public settings.
- [Test](#) before and after travel or gatherings, or if you were recently exposed to someone who has COVID-19.
- [Stay home if sick](#).
[CDC recommends: If you have COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Test
 - Talk—talk to a healthcare professional if you are eligible for treatment
 - Treat—start treatment within 5 days of developing symptoms]
- Wash [or sanitize] your hands frequently.
- Consider additional precautions if you are at [increased risk of severe illness](#).

NOTE: CDC also recommends: Good [ventilation](#)

Proof of vaccination and masks may be required by employers, businesses and nonprofits.

CDC continues to [recommend](#) that people wear masks in indoor public transportation settings at this time.

CDC's travel risk assessment tools cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html.

Trends

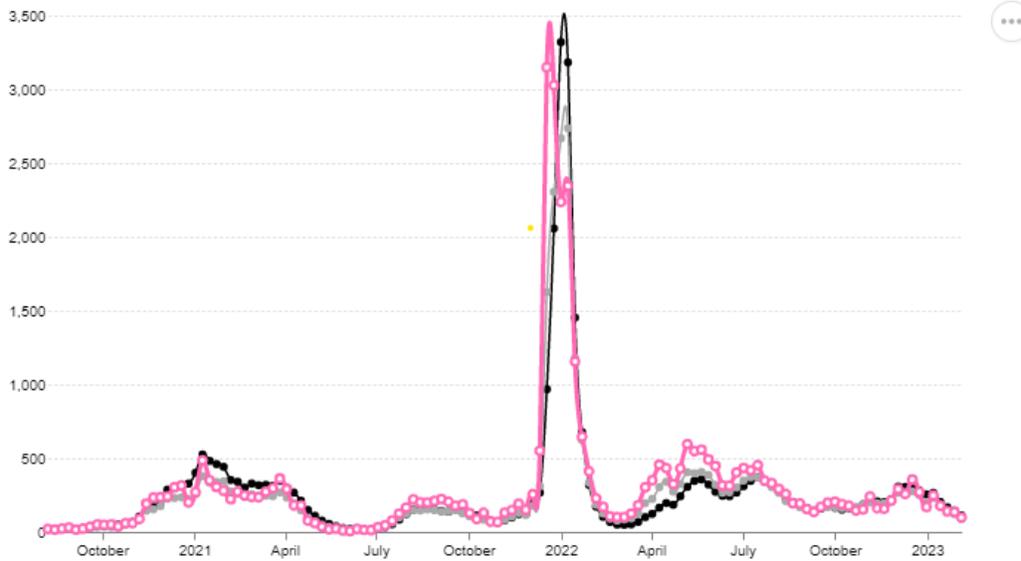
Data taken on 2/11/23 from NYC Department of Health Covid Data page www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data-neighborhoods.page compares case rates for zip code 10016, Manhattan and NYC.

Trends

These charts compare data for your selected ZIP code to your borough and the city. They show whether the pandemic is getting better, getting worse or staying stable. The virus is considered controlled when neighborhoods have a high test rate, low percent positivity and low case rate.

Case rate Test rate Percent positive

Case rate (per 100,000 people) in 10016, Manhattan, and all of NYC



[COVID Vaccines Added to 2023 Child, Adult Immunization Schedules](#)

February 10, 2023, *medpagetoday.com*, by Ingrid Hein

Other notable changes include new guidance on polio, MMR, hepatitis B, and pneumococcal vaccines...COVID-19 vaccines have been added to the U.S. 2023 immunization schedules for adults and children, and while routine poliovirus vaccination in adults is not recommended, there are "special situations" where those at increased exposure risk may be indicated for an additional dose.

[With Over 96 Percent of City Workers Fully Vaccinated, Mayor Adams Announces COVID-19 Vaccination Will Become Optional for City Workers](#)

February 6, 2023, Mayor's office press release

Effective **February 10, 2023**:

- City will make vaccination optional for current and prospective city workers, following the expected ratification at the next Board of Health meeting.
- The city will make the COVID-19 vaccination requirement optional for city employees, in addition to New York City Department of Education (DOE) employees. As part of this change, beginning February 10, 2023, visitors to Department of Education (DOE) school buildings will no longer be required to provide proof of at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- The city will also end the vaccination requirements for nonpublic school, early child care, and daycare staff.

While the approximately 1,780 former employees terminated for failing to submit proof of vaccination will not be able to automatically return to their previous positions, they will be able to apply for positions with their former agencies through existing city rules and regulations and hiring processes.

We can adjust our guidance but continue to strongly encourage every New Yorker to take the steps that we know help keep us and our loved ones safe and healthy – getting vaccinated, getting boosted, wearing a mask when appropriate, getting tested when appropriate, staying home if sick, and maintaining good hand hygiene.”

[New York to drop masking requirements in hospitals, health care facilities](#)

February 9, 2023, politico.com, by Maya Kaufman

State officials will allow an emergency Covid rule requiring masks in health care facilities to lapse on Feb. 12...individual hospitals and facilities could enact their own masking rules...the Health Department will advise facilities to follow CDC guidance and come up with their own plans for when they will require personnel to wear face coverings based on community case levels, not on vaccination status.

Evusheld is no longer authorized for pre-exposure preventative treatment for COVID-19

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, email of February 10, 2023

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic almost three years ago, we have known that some people who are immunocompromised (have a weakened immune system) are more likely to get sick with COVID-19 or be sick for a longer period. Evusheld, a pre-exposure preventative treatment, gave people with weakened immune systems extra protection against severe outcomes from COVID-19. However, on January 26, 2023, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced that Evusheld is not currently authorized for emergency use in the United States because it is unlikely to be active against the majority of circulating SARS-CoV-2 variants at this time. Vaccination is the first line of protection to prevent serious illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. If you have a weakened immune system and test positive for SARS-COV-2 or have a known exposure, talk to a doctor to get antiviral treatment as soon as possible. You should also consider prevention measures such as wearing a comfortable, well-fitting respirator or mask, maintaining physical

distance (more than 6 feet) from others, improving indoor ventilation, and washing your hands often.

Variant Roundup

Source: Centers for Disease Control email, February 3, 2023, [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

The virus that causes COVID-19 is constantly changing...new lineages of the Omicron variant, such as XBB.1.5, emerge and spread in the United States.

- XBB.1.5 is a sublineage of the XBB lineage, which is a combination of two earlier Omicron lineages: BM.1.1 and BJ. As Nowcast projected, XBB.1.5 has risen to be the predominant Omicron lineage in the United States, accounting for an estimated 66.4% of all new cases. It is the only major lineage currently increasing in proportion in the country. Learn more about XBB.1.5 in A Closer Look below.
- BQ.1 and BQ.1.1 are sublineages of the BA.5 lineage of the Omicron variant. BA.5 and its sublineages are continuing to decrease in proportion nationally. According to Nowcast projections, BQ.1 and BQ.1.1 together represent about 27% of all weekly cases.
- CH.1.1 is a sublineage of BA.2.75. CH.1.1 is predicted to make up an estimated 1.6% of circulating viruses nationally, according to Nowcast projections. These percentages represent a steady decline.

CDC will continue to watch the Omicron variant and its lineages closely and monitor how well vaccines and other treatments perform.

[Do Rapid Tests Still Work?](#)

January 25, 2023, [nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com), by Dana G. Smith

They can result in false negatives, but they remain a valuable tool in stopping the spread of Covid-19. Here's how to use them most effectively... You're testing too early. The most likely reason a rapid test would produce a false negative is that there isn't enough virus circulating in your body... Rapid tests are best used as an indicator of when you're contagious with Covid-19 rather than when you're infected with it...to prevent the spread of the virus, contagiousness is what really matters... You need to test again...the accuracy of rapid tests improves a few days into an infection...doing a second test 48 hours later improved rapid test accuracy...If you're still negative, take one more test in another two days...If you're positive, you can feel pretty confident that you're positive. If you're negative, that repeat test is really important...You're testing incorrectly...Pulling out those instructions and really making sure you go through it step by step is the best thing to do because each test is a little bit different...Another tip is to blow your nose beforehand. Tests for Covid-19 detect the virus in the cells that line the inside of your nose, not in your mucus...The tests aren't losing accuracy over time...Accuracy doesn't appear to be changing with each new variant...If you think you have Covid-19 but test negative, Dr. Hafer recommended waiting 48 hours and testing again. However, if you are over the age of 50 or have a pre-existing condition, Dr. Drain advised getting a PCR test as soon as possible so you can begin taking the antiviral drug Paxlovid if you are

positive...the medication needs to be started within the first five days of an infection...If you feel awful but you've tested negative on three rapid tests in five days (or if you have a negative PCR test), you could be infected with another virus, like influenza or R.S.V. Regardless of what's making you sick, it's important that you stay home until you feel better.

Miracle Mineral Solution can be deadly

Source: Bloomberg Prognosis email, February 1, 2023, [bloombergbusiness.com](https://www.bloombergbusiness.com)

The drug in question was Miracle Mineral Solution, or MMS, a potion marketed as a cure-all that during the pandemic went viral for both treating and preventing Covid. It comes in two parts: one part sodium chloride, and one part acid. When combined, the mixture becomes chlorine dioxide. Chlorine dioxide is bleach. And bleach is toxic and sometimes deadly...For over a decade, the Food and Drug Administration has warned consumers about Miracle Mineral Solution...some of the biggest sellers of MMS were arrested— a man named Mark Grenon and his three sons, who started a church in an attempt to sell the stuff without attracting regulatory scrutiny. The rise and fall of the Genesis II Church of Health and Healing is the subject of [Smoke Screen: Deadly Cure](#), a new podcast by Bloomberg, Neon Hum Media and Sony Music Entertainment that is hosted by [Kristen V. Brown].

Free at-home rapid COVID tests from the Federal government are available.

Order them at [covid.gov/tests](https://www.covid.gov/tests).

Also check with your pharmacist if your health plan covers the rapid at-home COVID-19 test kits (8 per month).

Kudos! Grand Central turns 110!



Source: Grand Central Terminal (grandcentralterminal.com) email, February 2, 2023
110 Years of History, Culture, Art, and Transit!

Grand Central marks a new chapter as a central point of regional transportation, connecting Metro-North Railroad, the Long Island Rail Road, and New York City Transit.

GCT first opened its doors on February 2, 1913, before becoming the home to Metro-North Railroad in 1983 and undergoing a complete renovation under the MTA between 1994 and 1998. One hundred and ten years after opening, 44 years after being saved from demolition by the United States Supreme Court, 24 years after its rededication by the MTA, and 16 months after the MTA completed a historic upgrade to expand the capacity of the New York City Subway's 42nd Street Shuttle, Grand Central has begun a new chapter as the expanded house of the two busiest commuter railroads in the country.

Grand Central's renowned clock still sits in the middle of the terminal's main concourse, and now a new facility the length of the Chrysler Building on its side sits more than a hundred feet below the Terminal's lower level.

View [historic photos](#) of Grand Central Terminal over the years.

Make your views known

New York State Independent Redistricting Commission Hearing Schedule for 2023: State Assembly Lines

Virtual and in-person testimony is available for all hearings. Choose the hearing time or location that is most convenient for you and give your input on the future of the State Assembly lines. The Manhattan hearing has taken place, but you can still submit comments.

[Draft Assembly Lines plan.](#)

[Submit comments or sign up to testify.](#)

Learn more at the IRC website nyirc.gov/home.

February 24 10am

(hybrid) NYC Council [joint oversight hearing on the City's Access-A-Ride service](#)

NYC Council Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction, and Aging have called this hearing. If you'd like to testify in person or via video conferencing, please register in advance of the hearing here. Written testimony may be submitted without registration by emailing it to testimony@council.nyc.gov or via the Council's website council.nyc.gov/testify up to 72 hours after the close of the hearing. To request additional accommodation to attend in person, please contact Nicole Benjamin (NBenjamin@council.nyc.gov or 212-482-5176) at least 72 hours before the hearing. All other questions about the hearing can be directed to Kevin Kotowski at kkotowski@council.nyc.gov. For background: [MTA Says Paratransit Improving – Despite Dept. of Justice Findings](#) (TheCity.nyc).

NYC City Hall

March 7 (comment-by date)

[See Walls: Army Corps' Citywide Coastal Storm Plan Takes Shape, Steals Views](#)

A series of renderings offer a glimpse at a proposal that could be what a resiliency expert called “the largest transformation of our waterfront since the Robert Moses era.”

January 27, 2023, *thecity.nyc*, by Samantha Maldonado and Stephon Johnson

Comment writing template rebuildbydesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Comment-Writing-Template.pdf. Instructions: Fill out this template and submit to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by March 7, 2023 via email to NYNJHarbor.TribStudy@usace.army.mil or by mail to NYNJHAT Study Team, Planning Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at 26 Federal Plaza, 17th Floor New York, NY 10279-0090. All mail postmarked by March 7, 2023 will be included in the public record. For more information about the project, visit NY & NJ Harbor & Tributaries Focus Area Feasibility Study (HATS) (army.mil) at nan.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Projects-in-New-York/New-York-New-Jersey-Harbor-Tributaries-Focus-Area-Feasibility-Study.

How you can help

Join a MHNA committee

The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association is an all-volunteer organization. We need your help to keep the Association’s work going. Volunteering can be for individual events, such as the Street Festival, and also for ongoing activities, such as Membership. Many administrative activities can be done remotely. [Learn about the different committees](#). If you are interested in joining a committee, please email info@murrayhillnyc.org.

[The U.S. State Department has launched a program, “Welcome Corps”](#)

The program allows private citizens, permanent residents, and organizations to sponsor refugees seeking resettlement in the United States. Sponsor groups of at least five people who can raise a minimum of \$2,275 per refugee to cover the costs of resettlement and draw up a support plan that provides employment, housing, and school enrollment assistance for refugees during their first 90 days in the U.S. Initially, the program will apply to refugees who have already been approved for resettlement; by mid-2023, prospective sponsors will be allowed to support those not yet in the country. See State’s fact sheet at the link above; here’s coverage: [State Department Launches Private Sponsorship Program for Refugees](#) (*Boundless.com*) and [Biden administration invites ordinary citizens to help resettle refugees](#) (*NPR.org*).

Ukraine aid

[New York State website with information about resources and aid for Ukrainians](#)

State Department program Uniting for Ukraine

To help fulfill President Biden's promise to temporarily resettle 100,000 Ukrainian refugees, the State Department has established Uniting for Ukraine, in which legal residents of the United States can apply to be sponsors of migrants under a process called Humanitarian Parole. Learn more at uscis.gov/forms/explore-my-options/humanitarian-parole. Welcome.US, a humanitarian group for refugee resettlement, has created a [guide to the process](#) (and offers a [mailing list](#)) for people interested in becoming a sponsor. "Sponsors may apply as individuals, as a group, or as a representative of a non-governmental agency. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) lists the [eligibility requirements](#) and the [instructions](#) for completing [Form I-134](#) (the Declaration of Financial Support).

[Source: Council Member Gale Brewer's Update email of 4/28/2022]

Ukrainians in the U.S. since March 1, 2022 are eligible for Temporary Protective Status (TPS) for an 18 month period. CUNY's Citizenship Now project is ready to help the Ukrainian community apply for this benefit. Call 646-664-6400.

Look out for scams



The graphic features the Federal Trade Commission logo in the top left corner. The main text reads: "Donating to help people in Ukraine? Check out the group or person before sending money — by cryptocurrency or any other payment method." Below this text is a button that says "Start here: ftc.gov/charity". To the right of the text is an illustration of a hand holding two gold coins.

Congestion pricing updates

[Examining Midtown Traffic, Former NYC Transportation Commissioner Calls for New For-Hire Vehicle Regulations](#)

February 9, 2023, *gothamgazette.com*, by Samar Khurshid

As the MTA and partners prepare to implement congestion pricing in New York City to raise needed funds for transit infrastructure and reduce traffic, a former New York City transportation commissioner proposes that the state and city should primarily target for-hire vehicles that he assesses as the true culprits behind Midtown's congestion woes...The MTA is attempting to tackle the larger issue with congestion pricing, which was approved by the state in 2019 and is set to be implemented on a delayed timeline sometime later this year or next. The program will impose tolls of between \$9 and \$23 for vehicles entering Manhattan's Central Business District, below 61st Street. Different types of vehicles, including for-hire vehicles, will likely be subject to different fees, which are being determined by the Traffic Mobility Review Board...The number of for-hire vehicles skyrocketed in New York City in the last ten years...there are about three times as many for-hire vehicles in the city as traditional cabs, and while cab drivers spent millions on taxi medallions (before the industry crashed and sent many drivers deep into debt), for-hire vehicle operators only pay about \$275 for an annual vehicle license fee...[Lucius Riccio, a former MTA board member and DOT commissioner] recommends a reset and new permit fee bidding system under which the city can bid out 100,000 one-year permits for for-hire vehicles in the first year, setting a price of about \$5,000 each, and raising \$500 million in the process...In the second year, the city could bid 80,000 permits and raise the price to \$6,500, raising another half-billion dollars, and so on...Riccio proposes a Community District-based residential parking permit program, which would protect neighborhoods around the planned congestion zone from having to absorb commuters searching for parking...Riccio also argues that yellow and green cab operators should be immune from new congestion charges – since they have already paid into the system for their medallions – while the fees for cab licenses should either be reduced or dedicated to a fund for drivers. (Both taxi drivers and app-based for-hire vehicles currently pay a smaller congestion surcharge for rides south of 96th Street, which went into effect in 2019 and raises about \$400 million annually for the MTA)...The MTA's developing congestion pricing scheme, also called the Central Business District Tolling program, continues to be controversial...opponents have said it will impose undue costs on drivers...and push vehicles to other neighborhoods already choked with traffic...The New York City Department of Transportation and the MTA, a state-run authority, had little to say about Riccio's proposals. The MTA's Traffic Mobility Review Board, meanwhile, is in charge of creating the rates and regulations of the congestion pricing program, which is awaiting approval by the federal government...Riccio does note that his study is not comprehensive.

Join The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association

Murray Hill is the Heart at the Center of Manhattan

Be a part of it!

[Join the MHNA here](#)

For businesses & nonprofits

February 13 (application deadline)

Apply to be on a community or citywide education council

Learn more at schools.nyc.gov/get-involved/families/Community-and-citywide-education-councils-cecs/elections-2023-community-and-citywide-education-councils/run.

Applications to run for NYC's Community Education Councils open for 2023

January 9, 2023, *ny.chalkbeat.org*, by Michael Elsen-Rooney

Election season has begun for New York City's Community Education Councils, the advisory bodies that represent the best chance for most public school parents to get directly involved in district and citywide education policy. Each of the city's 32 geographic districts has a 10-member elected parent council responsible for holding monthly public meetings, approving education department rezoning plans, passing resolutions, and working with district superintendents. There are also citywide councils representing high school students, multilingual learners, special education students, and kids with significant disabilities in specialized District 75 programs...In order to run, parents must have a child currently enrolled in a city public school and an active New York City Schools Account (NYCSA). Parents can run for multiple councils, but only serve on one. Education department employees are not eligible to serve on councils while employed by the agency...The education department will sponsor candidate forums from Feb. 27 to April 20. Voting takes place April 21 to May 9...Because Community Education Councils are controlled by state law, the rules governing the bodies are often tweaked when the law granting mayoral control over city schools comes up for renewal. That was the case again last year, during a particularly hard-fought battle to extend mayoral control...In a guide for aspiring council members, the education department warned candidates not to "solicit or accept endorsements from political parties and party officials, or from elected officials, including current Community or Citywide Education Council members."

February 13 12 - 1:30pm

(virtual) How Entrepreneurs Generate 7-Figure Sales for Their Tiny Businesses

Elaine Pofeldt, journalist and bestselling author of *The Million-Dollar, One-Person Business* and *Tiny Business, Big Money*, will interview some of the entrepreneurs featured in her books to share how they created small business models that are not just tremendously profitable but also –very important– that can withstand any challenge. All of the participating entrepreneurs have reached and surpassed 7 figures and they will be answering the question: How do you generate 7-figure

sales for your tiny business? Register at nypl.org/events/programs/2023/02/13/how-entrepreneurs-generate-7-figure-sales-their-tiny-businesses. Presented by the New York Public Library.

February 22 10 – 11:30am

(mostly virtual) Tourism Ready 101 workshop

A new 12-week program from NYC&Company (NYC's official tourism office) that will serve NYC's direct-to-consumer, tourism-driven businesses such as accommodations, dining, tours and attractions. This first session begins with a tourism update and an overview of the program; future sessions will discuss specific tactics for working with travel resellers worldwide. Learn more and register at tourismready101-session12023.splashthat.com.

February 21 (application deadline)

NOTICE FROM COUNCIL MEMBER KEITH POWERS' OFFICE

City Council Discretionary Funding Applications Open

Every year, the City Council allocates funding to non-profit organizations serving the city and our neighborhood. The City Council Discretionary Funding Application for FY24 is now available for any non-profit organization seeking expense funding. A group must fill out the application in order to be eligible for funding. Any interested organization can fill out the application by clicking here. Please complete the application by February 21st, 2023. If you would like to set up a time to discuss any budget related questions, please feel free to email me at kpowers@council.nyc.gov or call CM Powers' office at 212-818-0580.

[Governor Kathy Hochul announced \\$7.6 million to support improvements to animal shelters](#)

February 10, Press Release

These funds are to make critical upgrades at New York's animal shelters. This is the fifth round of funding for New York State's Companion Animal Capital Fund, the first state-funded program in the nation to provide for shelter improvement projects. Governor Hochul included the Companion Animal Capital Fund in her proposed Executive Budget, a first for the program. Administered by the Department of Agriculture and Markets, the Companion Animal Capital Fund provides matching grants to shelters and humane societies to offset the costs associated with capital projects, such as renovating dog kennels, improving medical facilities, or building more efficient shelters to reduce overall operational costs. Funds are also used to construct, renovate, rehabilitate, or acquire buildings or equipment needed to house, treat, and care for sheltered dogs and cats. The Department selects grant recipients based on a need assessment, detailed project description, and reasonableness of cost.

Two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) have been released through Round 5 of this program:

RFP 0289: \$6.6 million is available to award grants between \$50,000 and \$500,000 to municipal and incorporated not-for-profit pounds, shelters, and humane societies. Entities that have been awarded

funds during previous Companion Animal Capital Fund opportunities are eligible to apply for an award under this RFP. Previously funded projects must be complete before an entity can apply for an award.

RFP 0290: \$1 million is available to award grants between \$50,000 and \$200,000 to pounds, shelters or humane societies that are not operated by or under contract with a municipality but that are registered with the Department.

Host interns with The Industry Scholars Program

CTE in partnership with the NYC Department of Education, provides NYC public high school students with work-based learning opportunities—a.k.a. internships—with companies/organizations citywide. They're particularly in need of hosts in the engineering, healthcare, and IT industries. Companies or nonprofits who'd like to host an intern can learn more and apply at cteisp.com.

Upcoming events

February 13 6:30pm

(virtual) Community Board 6 Budget & Governmental Affairs Meeting

Agenda: discuss New York State Senate Bill S619, relating to the exercise of powers and duties of the Board of Elections of the City of New York and its executive management. Register at us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gqjsSNICTRuZxc4zUelj3A.

February 13 6:30pm

Unity Event at the Moise Safra Center

NYC Council Member Keith Powers, in partnership with the Moise Safra Center, will be co-hosting a "Unity Event" to combat anti-Semitism in light of recent attacks against the Jewish community. Co-sponsoring the event are Congressmember Jerry Nadler, Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, State Senator Liz Krueger, Assembly Member Alex Bores, Council Member Julie Menin, and the 19th Precinct. Speakers will discuss the work they are doing to combat anti-Semitism in their communities, and what initiatives they're working on in 2023. We want to remind New Yorkers that hate has no place here, and support the Jewish community during this difficult time. [RSVP using this link](#).

at the Moise Safra Center

130 E. 82nd Street (between Park and Lexington Avenue).

February 14 12 –1pm

(virtual) Regional Plan Association Lunch & Learn—*Lots to Love about RPA’s 2023 priorities across the tri-state region*

Key staff will share updates on Energy & Environment, Housing, & Transportation; RPA State Directors will highlight priorities across the tri-state region, and you can join in the Q&A! Register at us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gP-2Xcb2RvST7ELDBzO8zA.

February 15 5 - 8pm

(in person) NYC Office of the taxpayer advocate session on your property taxes

Learn about your property’s market and assessed values, how your taxes are calculated, how to change your property’s description, how to save with property tax abatements and exemptions. at David Dinkins Municipal Building
1 Centre Street Mezzanine

February 15 5:30pm

(virtual) Panel & QA: *New York City’s Housing Crisis*

(free) NYC Council Member Erik Bottcher is hosting an online conversation and Q&A with Dan Garodnick, Chair of the NYC Planning Commission and Director of the Department of City Planning, and Jessica Katz, Chief Housing Officer for New York City. Register at https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAsduCspz4rEtWbkp1n0hqIHG-7_sC-w1JY. After registering, you will be sent a form to submit your own questions for the panelists.

February 15 7pm

(in person) Scandinavia House’s New Nordic Cinema series: *Nothing to Laugh About / Ingenting å le av* (dir. Petter Næss, Norway, 2021)

Successful stand-up comedian Kasper Berntsen has everything a man could ask for: a regular gig at the city’s top comedy club, a beautiful girlfriend and a fabulous life as a public figure. Until suddenly everything crashes down around him. Written by and starring Norwegian comedian Odd-Magnus Williamson (Kon Tiki), this heartwarming story explores how to gain newfound self-belief and find laughter again. Tickets \$13 (\$8 ASF Members). Learn more and purchase tickets at scandinaviahouse.org/events/nothing-to-laugh-about
at Scandinavia House
Victor Borge Hall
58 Park Avenue
scandinaviahouse.org

February 16 10am - 2:30pm (Thursdays)

(in person) AARP Tax Preparation at 58th St Library (closest location to Murray Hill)

Registration required: call 1-914-363-8510. Masks are required. Also available on (Thursdays from 10am – 2:30pm): February 23, ask if there will be additional sessions). To participate you need to: have a valid email address, bring all necessary documents and information, meet the requirements for NYC tax assistance programs or IRS VITA programs, meet the requirements for any of the following tax assistance providers: Ariva, AARP, Food Bank, Single Stop. Masks are required. Learn more about eligibility and what to bring, and register at

nypl.org/events/programs/2023/02/02/aarp-tax-preperation-58th-st-library.

at 58th Street Library

Community Meeting Room (not wheelchair accessible)

127 East 58th Street

212-759-7358

February 17 6 - 8pm

AKC Museum of the Dog Furry Friday: Celebrate Mardi Paws!

Here's your chance to visit the AKC MoD with your favorite furry friends! Roam the galleries with fellow dog owners and lovers during the museum's pet friendly hours. Free for Members; Non-Members \$20 Humans, \$5 Dogs. *If you will be attending with your dog(s), you will be required to sign a waiver upon entry. Activities include: bead necklace art and mask making. Learn more and purchase tickets at museumofthedog.org/calendar/month#popup1-furry-fridayFeb17.

at American Kennel Club Museum of the Dog

101 Park Avenue (at 40th Street—on the plaza)

212-696-8360

museumofthedog.org



February 17 7pm

(in person) Japan Society Film's monthly anime: Studio Ghibli's *Whisper of the Heart*

Japan Society Film celebrates both Valentine's Day (Feb 14) and Japan's National Cat Day (Feb 22) with the purrfect romantic flick – Studio Ghibli's *Whisper of the Heart*. Fall in love with this tale of teenage friendship, long-distance love and anthropomorphic cats! This tale based on a screenplay from Hayao Miyazaki will delight and amaze audiences of all ages! (GKIDS).

Dir. Yoshifumi Kondo, 1995, 111 min., 35mm, color, in Japanese with English subtitles. With Yoko Honna, Issei Takahashi, Shigeru Tsuyuguchi. Tickets \$5 - \$15. Purchase tickets at

japansociety.org/events/whisper-of-the-heart.

at Japan Society

333 East 47th Street (between 1st & 2nd Avenue)

February 18 11am

StoryTime with Erin Lee

(free, family friendly) Cali Co Cat and Erin Lee get you jumpin' and leapin' with fun games and stories. Super fun and free storytime for kids. Recommended for ages 2-9, but all ages welcomed.

Produced in partnership with Penguin Random House.

at Bryant Park Overlook

Between 40th & 42nd Street and between 5th & 6th Avenue (behind the New York Public Library)

February 18 2:30pm

Book talk with Margaret Willson on her book *Woman, Captain, Rebel: The Extraordinary True Story of a Daring Icelandic Sea Captain*

(free) A historical narrative nonfiction account of Iceland's most famous female sea captain who boldly defended men and women alike against injustice. Captain Thurídur, born in Iceland in 1777, lived a life that was both controversial and unconventional. Her first time fishing, on the open unprotected rowboats of her time, was at age 11. Soon after, she audaciously began wearing trousers. She later became an acclaimed fishing captain brilliant at weather-reading and sea craft and consistently brought in the largest catches. In the Arctic seas where drownings occurred with terrifying regularity, she never lost a single crew member. Learn more and register at

scandinaviahouse.org/events/woman-captain-rebel-extraordinary-true-story-daring-icelandic-sea-captain.

at Scandinavia House

58 Park Avenue

scandinaviahouse.org

through February 19

New York Public Library exhibit: *Fortune and Folly in 1720*

In 1720, everyday citizens converged on the banking streets of Paris, London, and Amsterdam to speculate in New World trading companies and other maritime ventures. By the end of the year, an unprecedented bull market would culminate in the world's first international financial crash. Explore

caricatures, prints, and other works that tell the story of the Mississippi and South Sea Bubbles in this exhibition, which draws on the New York Public Library collections to lift the curtain on the actions of bankers and statesmen of the period. Learn more at nypl.org/events/exhibitions/fortune-and-folly.

at the NYPL Stephen A. Schwarzman Building
Rayner Special Collections Wing
Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street
nypl.org/locations/schwarzman

through February 19

[*She Who Wrote: Enheduanna and Women of Mesopotamia, ca. 3400–2000 B.C.*](#)

A comprehensive selection of artworks that capture rich and shifting expressions of women's lives in ancient Mesopotamia during the 3rd millennium B.C. These works bear testament to women's roles in religious contexts as goddesses, priestesses, and worshippers as well as in social, economic and political spheres as mothers, workers, and rulers. One particularly remarkable woman who wielded considerable religious and political power was the high priestess and poet Enheduanna (ca. 2300 B.C.), the earliest-named author in world literature. Bringing together her texts and images, this exhibition celebrates her timeless poetry and abiding legacy as an author, priestess, and woman.

The event will take place in the Morgan's Gilder Lehrman Hall. By entering the museum, you agree to our updated Visitor Guidelines and Policies. Masks are required for attending all public programs.

February 19 & 25

(in person) Open House Week at Manhattan's Recreation Centers



NYC Parks

Enjoy FREE fitness classes and activities at our recreation centers during Manhattan's Open House Week!

Sunday, Feb. 19–Saturday, Feb. 25, 2023

Take a dip in our pools, try out our fitness equipment, drop in on a sports program, visit our media labs, give our indoor tracks a go, or join one of our dance and fitness classes. You'll get to experience Manhattan's 12 recreation centers amenities and offerings.

Attendees must wear exercise clothing, bring a lock, and sign a waiver to participate.

Recreation Center Locations:

Alfred E. Smith Recreation Center (S) (P)
Lower East Side, 80 Catherine St.

Asser Levy Recreation Center (S) (P) (I)
Kips Bay, 392 Asser Levy Place

Chelsea Recreation Center (S) (P) (I)
Chelsea, 430 W. 25th St.

Gertrude Ederle Recreation Center (S) (P) (I)
Upper West Side, 232 W. 60th St.

Hamilton Fish Recreation Center (LA)
Lower East Side, 128 Pitt St.

Hansborough Recreation Center (S)
Harlem, 35 W. 134th St.
(on Lenox Terrace Place)

Highbridge Recreation Center (S)
Washington Heights, 2301 Amsterdam Ave.

Jackie Robinson Recreation Center (S)
Hamilton Heights, 85 Bradhurst Ave.

J. Hood Wright Recreation Center (S)
Washington Heights, 351 Fort
Washington Ave.

Pelham Fritz Recreation Center (S)
Harlem, 18 Mount Morris Park W.

**Constance Baker Motley
Recreation Center** (S) (P)
Turtle Bay, 348 E. 54th St.

Thomas Jefferson Recreation Center (S)
East Harlem, 2180 First Ave.

For more information visit nyc.gov/parks or call 311. Contact accessibility@parks.nyc.gov or (212) 360-1430 for more information regarding accessibility.

(LA) Limited access facilities // (S) Accessible facilities // (P) Location with an indoor pool

February 21 2pm

(virtual) Panel discussion: Cryptocurrencies: Computing Foundations, Risks and Socioeconomic Impacts

Presented by Henry George School of Social Science. The panel will present: the foundational technology allowing for cryptocurrencies to exist, the security and data privacy risks of this technology, the rise of cryptocurrencies in the context of monetary systems, regulation, and the role of established versus speculative currency models within society including a highlight on the Georgist perspective on the downstream social effects. Panelists: Gabi Zodik, Director of Blockchain and Web3 at IBM Research, Prof. Eerke Boiten, Professor of Cyber Security & Head of the School of Computer Science and Informatics, De Montfort University, Leicester UK, Dr. Raphaële Chappe, Defi Economist and Director of R&D and Strategy at DeVol Network, Ed Dodson, Lecturer at HGSSS. Learn more and register at hgsss.org/cryptocurrency-panel.

February 21 6pm

(hybrid) Book talk *Irving Berlin: From Penniless Immigrant to America's Songwriter* with author Paul Kaplan and live musical accompaniment

The talk based on Paul Kaplan's just published book, *Irving Berlin: From Penniless Immigrant to America's Songwriter* summarizes Irving Berlin's (originally Israel Baline) life and unlikely rise to become one of America's most prolific, popular and acclaimed songwriters. Mr. Kaplan will provide clips from a variety of songs, shows, and films that Berlin composed, sharing original recordings and historic photos. In addition there will be a live musical accompaniment of a few renowned Irving Berlin songs. The lecture will be followed by a Book-Signing. General Admission: \$10. All registrants will receive a link to the recording approximately one week after the lecture.

[Register for in person attendance.](#)

[Register for online attendance.](#)

at The General Society of Mechanics & Tradesmen of the City of New York
238 Years of Education and Service to the People of New York City
20 West 44th Street

Changes in the neighborhood

[Eastlight Wraps Up Construction At 200 East 34th Street \[3rd Avenue\] In Kips Bay, Manhattan](#)

February 4, 2023, *newyorkyimby.com*, by Michael Young and Matt Pruznick

<https://newyorkyimby.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/image00179-scaled.jpg>

Eastlight. Photo by Michael Young

Construction is complete on Eastlight, a 34-story residential tower at 200 East 34th Street in Kips Bay. Designed by CetraRuddy Architecture and developed by 200 East 34th LLC, the 388-foot-tall structure yields 135,094 square feet with 144 condominium units in studio to two-bedroom layouts and 2,992 square feet of commercial space on the lower levels. Noble Construction Group was the general contractor for the property, which is located at the southeastern corner of Third Avenue and East 34th Street. Exterior work has concluded...and all of the scaffolding has been dismantled. Some minor finishing touches are still ongoing at the base of the ground floor and on the new sidewalk surrounding the property, but should conclude shortly...Eastlight arrives among a wave of

new residential construction projects around Kips Bay and the adjacent neighborhood of Murray Hill, including 509 Third Avenue, which stands directly across East 34th Street from the property.

534-536-538 Third Avenue (SW corner of 36th Street) (former site of Hudson's)

Notice from ACRIS (NYC's property document registration system) that a document for consolidation of the mortgage had been filed by THIRD AVENUE PAVILION RESIDENCES, LLC. The mortgage is with SAFRA NATIONAL BANK OF NEW YORK. (ACRIS Block and lot reference: Manhattan Block 891 Lot: 44, 45, 46)

Schools, students & children

(for graduate students) BetaNYC is searching for a Civic Service Designer

graduate student with UX/UI interest, urban planning/policy students, or others who are looking to develop their user research and design skills, and work with Community Boards, Borough President and City Council staff, students, and the general public. Work with BetaNYC to understand and design applications, data visualizations, and workflows to meet the needs of civic stakeholders and identify opportunities for improving public services and increasing community engagement. Learn more and apply at betanyc.forms.fm/civic-innovation-associate-civic-service-designer/forms/9507.

April 1 (application deadline)

First Tech Fund is recruiting high school students for their virtual fellowship program

Fellows will participate in weekly virtual workshops on careers and foundational digital skills, are eligible to receive free laptop and/or WiFi hotspot, and can opt into mentorship with a young professional. Learn more and apply at firsttechfund.com/apply.

[Adams creates new City Hall office for child care, early childhood education](#)

Feb 10, 2023, *ny.chalkbeat.org*, by Reema Amin

The new office, which will be housed within City Hall, was months in the making. It's charged with overseeing strategy and planning with city agencies that touch early childhood education, including the education department and the Administration for Children's Services, officials said. The office's creation comes as the education department's own early childhood office has faced intense scrutiny over the past several months...The city has failed to pay preschool providers on time, leading some to shutter, while Adams has shelved plans to further expand preschool for 3-year-olds as some programs have gone unfilled while others are oversubscribed...At the same time, the city recently announced an ambitious effort to provide preschool seats for every student with a disability...The plan to create this new office was nestled into Adams' "blueprint" for early childhood education published in June.

[Charter School Expansion Faces Tough Fight in New York](#)

February 2, 2023, *nytimes.com*, by Troy Closson

Gov. Kathy Hochul wants to allow more charter schools to open in New York City. But as the public school system loses students, the effort faces strong political headwinds...Gov. Kathy Hochul presented a state budget that included proposals that would increase the number of charter schools, along with the funding they received.

[NYC schools want to boost enrollment. It might prove a major challenge](#)

February 9, 2023, *ny.chalkbeat.org*, by Amy Zimmer

The nation's largest school district has hemorrhaged students since the start of the pandemic, with enrollment down about 11% to 813,000 students in grades K-12 since then...Across 21 states, about 230,000 of the students who left the public school rolls from 2019 to 2021 cannot be explained by rising private school or homeschool enrollment or population changes...Besides a declining birth rate, immigration to New York City has slowed, and families are leaving New York...New York City school enrollment has been declining every year since 2016, due in part to declining birth rates...Where did they go? The picture is not entirely clear...City officials said they have accounted for students who left the system, sharing a breakdown earlier this school year detailing the numbers of children who went to different parts of the state, the country, or left the U.S., as well as those who dropped out or transferred to charter or private schools...The enrollment drop has real world consequences for schools. As students leave the system, the city is bracing for a dramatically smaller budget once COVID relief dollars dry up since schools funds are based on enrollment.

NYC Public School applications

Need a School for Your Child Now? Learn what to do on the [New Students](#) page.

Learn more at the NYC Board of Education website schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade, including how to apply if you need a school for your child now, and the *Admissions Guide*. Get help with enrollment at schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help.

For students entering in Fall 2023

- [Kindergarten](#) Beginning this year, you can add kindergarten G&T programs to your kindergarten application.
 - [Head Start](#). For qualifying families: Head Start provides safe, positive learning environments for children ages 3-4.
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- [3-K](#). Apply when your child turns three.
 - [Pre-K](#). Apply when your child turns four.
 - [Gifted & talented](#). Eligible children entering kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3 can participate in G&T admissions.
 - [High school](#).
 - [Middle school](#).
 - [Specialized High Schools](#).
-

Policing

29th St. Neighborhood Association thanks the NYPD and DA Bragg for improvements in public safety

Source: 29 St. Neighborhood Association Jan-Feb Newsletter (29streetassociation.org), February 3, 2023

The overall situation with the mentally ill people on our streets, after the new measures enacted by the city and Albany, is slowly improving. The visible presence of the police in the streets is contributing to the reduction of the number of drug-dealers and narcotic activity on our streets. This is also aided by the work of the office of the district attorney who is cracking down on repeat offenders. We are not out of crisis and more work needs to be done but we can notice a little improvement. Our heartfelt thank you to all.

Manhattan District Attorney Bragg and Mayor Adams announced a crackdown on shops selling unlicensed cannabis

Source: Council Member Gale Brewer's weekly email, February 9, 2023

The DA is starting first with 400 landlords in Manhattan, warning them that if the landlord doesn't start eviction within five days of the written notice, then the DA will bring its own eviction proceeding against the tenant. He's using the [Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law § 715](#).

Council Member Gale Brewer has been sounding the alarm over these stores—many of which also sell unlicensed tobacco and vapes, often to minors. We needed a creative, effective solution to shutter stores quickly without bringing criminal charges and DA Bragg may have found it. It seems like it would be easy for the City to close stores that are illegally selling cannabis, but under current laws it really isn't.

Weekly crime reports

17th precinct

www1.nyc.gov/assets/nypd/downloads/pdf/crime_statistics/cs-en-us-017pct.pdf

13th Precinct

www1.nyc.gov/assets/nypd/downloads/pdf/crime_statistics/cs-en-us-013pct.pdf

Housing, zoning, planning, preservation & affordability

[Federal court upholds NY rent stabilization laws, setting up possible Supreme Court showdown](#)

February 6, 2023, *gothamist.com*, by David Brand

New York City's rent stabilization system is safe for now, after a federal appeals court on Monday upheld laws capping rent increases and limiting evictions on roughly a million apartments citywide. The Second Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the decades-old rent stabilization laws in response to two related court challenges from landlord trade groups and a collection of property owners seeking to dismantle the tenant protections.

[NYC to open new migrant relief center at Holiday Inn in the Financial District](#)

February 7, 2023, *gothamist.com*, by Arya Sundaram

A new migrant relief center will open at a Holiday Inn in the Financial District, Mayor Eric Adams said Tuesday. The 492-room facility will temporarily house adult families and single women and provide a range of other services offered at other migrant relief centers. More than 44,000 newly arrived migrants have arrived in the city since the spring, according to city estimates. The announcement of the sixth migrant relief center follows Adams' visit last month to the U.S. Southern border, where he renewed calls for federal intervention to help solve the crisis. It also follows a heated, multi-day standoff over conditions in a recently opened migrant relief center at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal.

Related: Mayor Adams' statement about the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal

"I'd never ask anyone in this city to do something I wouldn't do myself. This Friday, advocate Shams DaBaron, Assemblymember Eddie Gibbs and I spent the coldest night of the year with our brothers seeking asylum at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal. I can say from firsthand experience that they are being kept warm and safe...This is a national crisis. It needs a national solution."

Source: Mayor Eric Adams' email of February 6, 2023.

[How Hochul Plans to Build Hundreds of Thousands Of Homes Near Train Stations](#)

February 2, 2023, *nysfocus.com*, by Sam Mellins

The governor's proposal for "transit-oriented development" has so far gotten a mixed reception from suburban legislators, who killed a similar plan last year...Governor Kathy Hochul put New York's housing stock under the microscope. Her diagnosis: there isn't enough of it, particularly in New York City's outer boroughs and suburbs..."The whole objective is so families can stay in New York, kids can raise their own families where they grew up, employers don't have to worry about whether or not there's going to be employees in a community."...Her two most far-reaching proposals would require every area in the state to commit to a certain amount of growth in the overall housing supply every three years, and require areas in and near New York City to allow more housing near train stations. "We have invested in the MTA's world class commuter lines, we've connected more people to jobs, we've created thriving downtowns, and that's why it makes all the sense in the world to build more housing in those areas," she said on Wednesday. Hochul's budget proposal did not include two longtime progressive housing priorities: a law known as "good cause eviction" to entitle most renters to renew their leases with only modest rent increases, and rental vouchers to help homeless New Yorkers afford permanent housing. Many housing policy experts cheered the supply proposals, as did some environmentalists. Climate activists tend to support "transit-oriented development," the name planners use for housing clustered around mass transit stations, because it can limit sprawl and reduce people's dependence on cars.

Related: [Officials, Advocates Analyze Implications of Hochul's 'Housing Compact' on New York City](#)

February 9, 2023, *gothamgazette.com*, by Samar Khurshid

Related: [Lawmakers Hail Governor's Housing Push — Except On Developer Tax Breaks](#)

February 8, 2023, *patch.com*, by Greg David, THE CITY

State legislature housing committee chairs Linda Rosenthal and Brian Kavanagh say they're ready to embrace the governor's pro-growth agenda...The two veteran legislators who head the housing committees of the state Assembly and Senate say they agree with the governor and the mayor that only building more units will solve the housing crisis gripping New York. Both Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal (D-Manhattan) and Sen. Brian Kavanagh (D-Manhattan) support Gov. Kathy Hochul's proposals to set state housing development targets and penalize localities that don't increase housing production by 3%, especially near transit hubs. The penalty would limit localities' power to reject projects. Kavanagh and Rosenthal also back Mayor Eric Adams' proposal to find a way to legalize thousands of basement and other "accessory dwelling units" as they are called. Kavanagh supports the Adams proposal to increase the allowed density in residential buildings; Rosenthal says she is looking at it. But when it comes to the tax breaks both the governor and the mayor want, the response is, in effect, either "convince me" or "there is no support for such steps in the legislature." And, they both said in interviews with THE CITY, if there is to be a major housing reform package, it will have to include a new, state-funded voucher program and additional tenant protections for lease renewals in market-rate apartments...Their positions drew a sharp retort from the head of the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY)... By any measure, New York City is up against a dire housing crisis...Both agree with the mayor's effort to legalize an estimated 50,000 basement units...when it comes to real estate tax breaks. The mayor and governor support four: a new tax abatement for offices being converted to residential space when including some affordable

units; a replacement for the expired J-51 incentive to renovate older apartment buildings; an extension of a construction deadline qualifying projects for the 421-a property tax break that expired last June; and a yet-to-be-determined replacement for 421-a... a new lobbying group called New York Neighbors, primarily spearheaded by the Regional Plan Association, has recruited a diverse group of more than 40 organizations to push the governor's and mayor's housing agenda. But the group is not taking a position on the tax breaks.

Related: Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, paper: [Housing Manhattanites: A Report on Where and How to Build the Housing We Need](#)

We have identified opportunities at 171 sites... We have focused here mostly on locations where some form of public action is needed to bring projects to fruition. This includes City-owned sites and areas that require a zoning change or other accommodation to make them feasible.

Updating Zoning to Create Housing: Kips Bay (page 18)

Proposed C2-8 District [Second Avenue between 23rd & 34th Street]

A rezoning on the west side of 2nd Avenue between East 23rd and East 34th Streets could add up to 942 residential units to the Kips Bay neighborhood. This rezoning has the potential to incentivize residential construction in a part of Manhattan where four- and five-story walk-up buildings sit across the street from residential high rises... 2nd Avenue... is home to mixed commercial and residential uses. The west side of the avenue is currently zoned C1-8A, which allows up to 2.0 FAR for commercial uses and 7.52 for residential uses. The district also allows Use Groups 1 through 6, which include residential uses, community facilities, hotels, and local retail establishments... the buildings on the west side of 2nd Avenue are much older than on the east side, with an average year built of 1850, compared to the east side's 1956 average... These older, lower-density buildings could be redeveloped to contribute significantly more housing while offering a building typology that is consistent with the east side... By focusing on the west side of the avenue between East 23rd and East 34th Streets and allowing a commercial district with a maximum allowable residential FAR of 12.0, equivalent to other nearby avenues, 942 units of housing—including 235 affordable units—could be created... The proposed rezoning area includes a methadone clinic on 429 2nd Avenue that may need to relocate if residential development occurs on that site... Additionally, a rezoning of the area could... present a risk of displacement for current residents in the area.

Updating Zoning to Create Housing: Midtown Manufacturing Area (page 20)

This proposal will rezone the area south of Bryant Park and add a zoning text amendment to the Special Garment Center District. A significant portion of the area is currently zoned for manufacturing and contains commercial and office uses. The new proposal intends to incentivize the conversion of underutilized commercial and manufacturing space to residential use, creating new housing, including affordable units. These actions could generate between 2,688 and 3,225 residential units in the next 10 years, and between 5,376 and 6,720 residential units in the next 25 years... Approximately 34 lots (15%) in the Special Garment Center District are underbuilt given current zoning and residential FAR. Only three lots (1%) are vacant. Furthermore, within the proposed rezoning area, many buildings exceed their maximum allowable FAR, due to their time of construction. For example, many buildings within the rezoning area have an FAR of 19.0 or more... **Area South of Bryant Park.** The area south of Bryant Park between 5th and 6th Avenues and 35th and 39th Streets is also mapped M1-6 and adheres to many of the same regulations as the M1-6 area within the Special Garment Center District. This area is not within the Special Garment Center District but is within the Garment District Alliance's (GDA) service area. This area's land uses

include high- and medium rise commercial office spaces, hotels, and retail buildings, and a few small residential buildings. M1-6 districts do not allow any new residential development. Proposed Rezoning In 2022, the Garment District Alliance commissioned BFJ Planning to explore the potential for a rezoning in this part of the Midtown Manufacturing Area. The report, which was produced in collaboration with Urbanomics and Perkins Eastman, looked at data within GDA's service area. The report recommends incentives to facilitate residential growth in order to make the district more "competitive, livable and attractive," and transform it into a 24-hour neighborhood...

1. In the short-term, an Article 12, Chapter 1 zoning text amendment to allow residential uses within the entire Special Garment Center District, which would allow residential conversions as-of-right or by certification;
2. In the long-term, a zoning change for the M1-6 district between 5th and 6th Avenues and 35th and 39th Streets from M1-6 to a commercial zone like C6-4.5, which better reflects current uses in the area and is equivalent to adjacent zoning in neighboring areas; and
3. Allow residential uses on different floors of a building, waiving the zoning requirement that mixed-use buildings keep all residential uses above commercial uses.

Considerations

Although not included in the Garment District Alliance rezoning proposal, additional legislative changes, including lifting the residential FAR cap that is currently written into New York State's Multiple Dwelling Law, would create significant opportunities for new residential development within the district. Again, the presence of overbuilt buildings throughout the district presents an opportunity: Additional housing potential could be unlocked and brought online without expanding the size of any existing structures. The GDA's report also includes a recommendation that property owners receive tax incentives to facilitate residential conversions. The allowances and requirements of such a program would have to be thoroughly discussed and structured in a way that would minimize lost revenue for the City while also ensuring the financial feasibility of these conversions. Such a program may affect the amount of affordable housing made available through conversions.

(opinion) [New York's Plan for Mentally Ill Homeless People Is Not the Solution, Expert Says](#)

February 8, 2023, *medpagetoday.com*, by Emily Hutto, Associate Video Producer

— "It's not that the hospitals aren't trying ... the resources aren't there," says Kim Hopper, PhD...I'm not sure I know what it would really take from the inside of the bureaucracy at the city and state level to mount what would be a durable, long-term commitment to addressing not just the emerging needs or the emergent needs on the street, but the long-term need for supportive and affordable housing. That's what has been missing from the equation ever since the start...seriously mentally ill people, often with long-standing substance use problems...said, "I really could use a place of my own." ...The key has always been that once people had a place of their own that was affordable, secure, and regularly visited by case managers...It was just remarkable what a difference it made. You actually see it in the shelter statistics in the early 90s in New York City, you actually see a decline in the numbers of people there...Bringing those up to scale is not something any public authority has taken on in a serious way, and that's what we need. It probably can't be done at a city level alone, even at a state level alone...pretending to be able to do it on a local level is a real disservice...It's not that the hospitals aren't trying hard or the social workers aren't putting the effort in, it's just that the resources aren't there...The stock of housing isn't there, and unless we tackle that really fundamental issue of resource scarcity, we're just tinkering around the edges.

(opinion) [This doctor wants to prescribe a cure for homelessness](#)

February 7, 2023, *npr.org*, by Greg Rosalsky

[Andrew Boozary, a primary care physician in Toronto] and his hospital have been doing innovative work to help people experiencing homelessness, including the launch of an exciting new project to build and provide permanent housing for the most vulnerable. It's part of a broader movement of hospitals, both in Canada and the United States, to improve health outcomes for homeless patients by providing them with what might be considered the ultimate in preventive care: the stability and dignity that comes with having a permanent home...The policy, obviously, benefits those struggling on the streets, but it also helps hospitals cut the massive costs of caring for homeless patients who frequent their emergency rooms...study after study finds a central factor behind the growing crisis is pretty simple: a lack of affordable housing... Housing...is a necessary first step, providing people with the stability needed to solve other problems that may have resulted in them becoming homeless in the first place...Boozary and his hospital partnered with their city government and the United Way of Greater Toronto to build a new, four-story building on hospital land to provide permanent housing to those grappling with homelessness. This multimillion-dollar project...is essentially a form of public housing where doctors are triaging and identifying who most needs a home...this new program...will provide people with their own bathroom, kitchen, and bed..."It could cost about \$30,000 or more to have a patient on a hospital ward for a month, or nearly \$7,000 to be in a sheltering system for the month versus \$2,500 to \$2,800 per month for supportive housing," he says."...In addition to the program aimed at providing permanent housing to homeless people, Boozary's hospital also funded a program that provided food boxes to them during the depths of the pandemic economic downturn...Boozary says, only political will and large public investments in housing and community social work will end the homeless crisis.

[Millionaire Ritzy Renters Triple In NYC, Study Finds](#)

February 3, 2023, *patch.com*, by Matt Troutman

RentCafe study: [Millionaires Who Rent Triple, While High-Income Renters Earning \\$150,000 or More Reach 2.6 Million](#)

January 30, 2023, *rentcafe.com*, by Andrea Neculae

The American household is changing as homeownership is not a priority for everyone, especially not for Millennials and Gen Zs. With 43 million families living in apartments, the highest level in half a century, renting is popular even among high-earners who are able to buy but prefer to rent their home instead.

Sustainability & resilience

[An Overlooked Climate Solution? Greener Playgrounds](#)

January 27, 2023, *citylimits.org*, by Marianne Dhenin.

Across the country, cities are transforming asphalt schoolyards into spongy, shady community centers. The new playground at PS 184M Shuang Wen School in Manhattan's Chinatown, for

example, has a porous turf field that can capture an estimated 1.3 million gallons of stormwater runoff. This article originally appeared in Nexus Media News and Next City.

Budget, finances & taxes

STATE

[Governor Hochul Presents \\$227 Billion Executive Budget for Next Fiscal Year](#)

February 2, 2023, *gothamgazette.com*, by Samar Khurshid

Governor Kathy Hochul on Wednesday released a \$227 billion Executive Budget, her proposal for the 2024 fiscal year, which begins April 1, including major initiatives on mental health, affordable housing, public safety, and investments in “the New York Dream” to support seniors, young adults, parents, veterans, entrepreneurs, and others...[The plan] furthers our progressive values and our priorities as New Yorkers, but also ensures fiscal responsibility,” said Hochul...“Our \$227 billion budget will include unprecedented investments in areas that will make a positive impact in people's lives, that'll make the New York Dream real...make it safer, more affordable. more livable.”

[Transcript of Gov. Hochul's presentation](#)

[Transcript: Acting Budget Director Beattie Holds FY 2024 Executive Budget Technical Briefing](#)

Transcript: [Governor Hochul Announces Details of \\$1 Billion Plan to Overhaul New York State's Continuum of Mental Health Care](#)

STATE

Budget Hearing Schedule

Throughout February the NYS Senate will hold a series of thirteen hearings examining the details of the Governor’s executive budget. Negotiations will follow between the Governor and the legislature, leading to passage by April 1. [Budget hearing calendar](#).

STATE

[Some NY lawmakers draw line in the sand on taxing the wealthy](#)

February 10, 2023, *cityandstateny.com*, by Shantel Destra

Multiple bills would take different approaches to taxing the rich...In recent legislative sessions, there have been increased calls to tax the wealthiest New Yorkers. This legislative session, advocates and lawmakers have already started gaining enthusiasm behind the [Invest In Our New York Act](#) ahead of budget negotiations...Back in 2021, the Democratic-controlled Legislature passed legislation to add corporate taxes to businesses making more than \$5 million in annual revenue. That measure is set to expire this year, and Gov. Kathy Hochul has proposed extending the corporate tax for another three years in her 2024 executive budget proposal. Advocates say that’s not enough and are calling for the taxes to be permanently implemented with the bill sponsored by

state Sen. Brad Hoylman-Sigal [also introduced by Sen. Liz Krueger] and Assembly Member Anna Kelles.

[Kathy Hochul Bets Half a Billion on Horse Racing. Will the Industry Pay Her Back?](#)

February 7, 2023, *nysfocus.com*, by Sam Mellins

New York's biggest racetracks have been declining for decades. They'll likely need more state subsidies to cover their debts. Gov. Kathy Hochul's proposed budget would guarantee a nearly half billion dollar windfall of public money to New York's troubled horse racing industry. She says New York taxpayers will be reimbursed in full: Over 20 years, race track operators would pay off the \$455 million loan to renovate the Belmont Park race track on Long Island, plus interest. But the industry is losing tens of millions of dollars every year. How will it pay the state back? With money the state gives it. The horse racing industry has received an average of nearly \$200 million a year in tax breaks and other subsidies since 2008, totaling over \$2.9 billion, despite consistently losing money, according to the Albany Times Union. The lion's share of the subsidies comes from gamblers' spending on digital lottery machines near the race tracks. State law gives the racing association a cut of the machines' earnings.

January 12, 2023, [Mayor Adams released NYC Preliminary Budget for FY2024](#)

CITY

Source: Council Member Keith Powers email January 2023 Update (kpowers@council.nyc.gov), January 31, 2023

Council Member Keith Powers (Council District 4) highlights items in Mayor Adams' budget that are relevant for our district:

- The Science Park and Research Center (SPARC) Kips Bay project in our district at the current site of the CUNY Brookdale Campus will help bring new jobs to the 4th District and boost our economic recovery.
 - Converting unused office space in Midtown to much-needed new housing will both bolster the availability of apartments while making Midtown more vibrant. Council Member Bottcher, my counterpart on the West Side who represents the rest of Midtown, and I are excited to help add more housing.
 - Creating a citywide composting program has been a priority of mine in the City Council and is part of the Zero Waste package of legislation I introduced last year with my colleagues, Council Members Hanif & Nurse. I look forward to working with the Sanitation Department to restore composting throughout our district.
 - Reforming the way sidewalk construction sheds, commonly known as scaffolding, look and operate will have an enormous impact on dozens of blocks in our district. I hope to introduce legislation on this subject soon as well.
 - Requiring the for-hire vehicle fleet to become zero emission by 2030 will help reduce our carbon footprint. I have introduced legislation requiring all vehicles owned by the City do the same by 2030 or 2035.
-

- Continuing to focus on public safety issues, while bolstering much needed services to help New Yorkers in need. I am also encouraged by shifting resources to address quality of life issues, like noise, property crimes, and ghost license plates.

CITY

[Mayor Adams Promised 20,000 Trees a Year. But Budget Cuts Threaten Progress](#)

February 1, 2023, *citylimits.org*, Mariana Simões.

A staff of just 302 people tend to a crop of over 865,000 trees across the city. Adams' preliminary budget aims to slash \$46 million from the Parks Department, which environmentalists fear signals a step back in the mayor's promise to keep New York City's canopy alive and growing.

CITY

[New York City Comptroller Brad Lander issued the Annual Summary Contracts Report for the City of New York](#), Fiscal Year 2022, January 30, 2023

New York City remains one of the largest contracting jurisdictions in the country, procuring \$43.23 billion worth of goods, services, and construction, while also entering into revenue agreements worth \$112.82 million in FY 2022...[Comptroller Lander's] office, along with our partners in the Adams administration, is committed to fostering a contracting ecosystem that generates the best value for NYC residents and reflects our ideals of fairness, integrity, and equity. Through our Joint Task Force to Get Nonprofits Paid on Time comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/a-better-contract-for-new-york and the [Capital Process Reform Task Force](#) we have already taken the first steps on an unprecedented collaborative effort to advance substantial reforms to the procurement system. These reforms will address outdated and lengthy procurement processes and aim to deliver faster, more cost-effective, high-quality goods and services to New Yorkers...The City's procurement system encompasses tens of thousands of transactions each year.

Government, executive orders, legislation, rules, policies (including pending)

STATE

The State Senate and Assembly passed for the second time a proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the State Constitution

[S.108/A.1283](#), sponsored by Sen. Liz Krueger with Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, will extend current constitutional protections against discrimination to several new protected classes, as well as protecting access to contraception and abortion. The New York State Constitution's Equal Protection Clause already prohibits discrimination based on race, color, creed, and religion.

The Equal Rights Amendment will add new anti-discrimination protections to the Constitution, including explicit guarantees for reproductive rights and marriage equality. The amendment adds new protected classes, specifically prohibiting discrimination on account of a person's age, disability, ethnicity, national origin, or sex including sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, and reproductive healthcare choices. The Legislature first passed the measure in June 2022 after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Following last month's second passage, the amendment will now go to voters for ratification in the November 2024 general election.

STATE

Proposed legislation by Sen. Liz Krueger and AM Harvey Epstein is described as a model piece of legislation.

Source: NYC Council Member Gale Brewer's weekly newsletter email of February 4, 2023 (opinion) [Protected States Can Expand Access to Abortion Training](#) (MedPageToday)

January 31, 2023, *medpagetoday.com*, by Sarah McNeilly

State Sen. Liz Krueger and Assembly Member Harvey Epstein have introduced a bill to earmark funds for medical trainees to complete two to six weeks of abortion training, as is mandated by current Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education standards. Grants could cover a range of costs for new or expansion of existing training programs, and covers trainee-related expenses like travel and housing.

STATE

(moved through Committee) [S2422 \(Rosenthal\) – Sammy's Law](#). This bill would allow New York City to adjust its speed limit below 25 MPH, to as low as 5 MPH in school zones.

Pursuant to the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) passed in 2019, the **New York State Climate Action Council released their Final Scoping Plan**. The Scoping Plan serves as the framework for how the State will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve net-zero emissions, increase renewable energy usage, and ensure climate justice, in line with the mandates of the CLCPA. The Plan affects all sectors of the State's economy and society, and as such will have significant budgetary and legislative implications.

State Sen. Liz Krueger's Op Ed in the Daily News

(opinion) [A humane approach to sex work: Lawmakers from three states call for action](#)

January 31, 2023, *nydailynews.com*, by Liz Krueger, Mary S. Keefe and Lois Galgay Reckitt

January is Human Trafficking Month, and accounts of survivors...paint a grim picture of a trafficking pipeline operating throughout the Northeast, feeding an insatiable demand from sex buyers and the billion-dollar industry that profits by serving up vulnerable people to meet that

demand...victims face a litany of barriers that make it extremely difficult for them to escape the sex trade, and there is limited support or services available to help them...People in prostitution are treated as criminals rather than as traumatized victims in need of critical support and services...As state legislators representing districts in Maine, Massachusetts, and New York, we believe it is the job of government to aid and protect vulnerable and marginalized people against the systems of exploitation that seek to harm and take advantage of them. That is why we support a policy of partial decriminalization, also known as the Equality Model or the Nordic Model. The Equality Model decriminalizes people in prostitution and related offenses, while continuing to hold exploiters – sex buyers, pimps, and traffickers – accountable for the harms they cause. It focuses on supporting ...survivors of prostitution by ensuring access to trauma-informed services, empowering them to exit the sex trade and opening the door to a life free from sexual exploitation and commodification. At the same time, by maintaining penalties for exploiters, it decreases demand for sexual services, leads to reduction in trafficking of minors and adults, and shrinks the sex trade...There are some advocates who call for a policy of full decriminalization and de-regulation of the sex trade, which would include decriminalization of sex buyers, pimps, and brothel owners. This model has been found to cause increased demand for sexual services and the human trafficking that feeds that demand, as well as growth of the sex trade...It is a sad and preventable reality that some individuals face such limited options in our society that entering the sex trade seems their only means of survival. This is a policy failure that must be addressed – but the answer is not to offer the sex trade as an alternative social safety net. We unequivocally reject that model. Fundamentally, commodification, the selling, buying, renting, and exploiting of people in prostitution – primarily cis-gendered and trans women and girls – is antithetical to gender equality and a just society...Krueger is a New York State senator; Keefe is a Massachusetts state representative; Reckitt is a Maine state representative.

CITY RULES - ADOPTED

[Registration and Requirements for Short-Term Rentals](#)

Effective date: March 5, 2023

Adopted rule summary:

The Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement is adopting a rule to implement Local Law 18 for the year 2022, which requires short-term rental hosts to register with the City and prohibits booking services from processing transactions for unregistered listings.

CITY

[At NYC Council, Progressive Caucus shrinks as members redefine mission](#)

February 8, 2023, *gothamist.com*, by Elizabeth Kim

The New York City Council is undergoing a dramatic rebalance of power as a growing cadre of Democrats refuses to sign on to an effort by progressive members to redefine the priorities of their powerful political caucus, which includes a renewed call to decrease police funding. Over the last week, the Progressive Caucus has lost nine of its original 35 members, according to Emily Mayer, the caucus's political director...councilmembers – Justin Brannan of Brooklyn, Keith Powers and Shaun Abreu of Manhattan, and Lynn Schulman of Queens – told Politico they will not sign the new mission statement.

Report: [2022 Year In Review, Office of the Attorney General](#)

Office of the New York State Attorney General Letitia James

Stories we are following

Casino Proposal Offers Public Soccer Field

Source: St. Vartan Park Conservancy newsletter, February 3, 2023

In an effort to land a coveted state license to operate a casino four blocks north of St. Vartan Park, Stefan Soloviev – chair of land owner Soloviev Group – says that he will place a public soccer field on the 6.5-acre site. Soloviev Group CEO Michael Hershman separately reported that to attract community support, the site would include "a four-acre park with sports fields."

St. Vartan Park Conservancy remains wary about the proposal. Conservancy founder Kevin O'Keefe addressed the casino plan in this [amNYmetro story](#) published February 2. [The Soloviev proposal](#).

Related: [Wild Card! Manhattanites split on Midtown East casino proposal](#)

February 2, 2023, *amny.com*, by Dean Moses

Questions rise after MTA blocks nature access near St. Vartan Park

This week, MTA chair Janno Lieber said no to a call by elected officials and St. Vartan Park Conservancy to open green space adjacent to the park that has locked out the general public for decades. Lieber's January 30 response...[to] the January 9 letter to Lieber from Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine and New York City Council Member Keith Powers – raises more questions about why the public can't access the parcel of nature. The space is on First Avenue across the street from the northeast corner of the park. Lieber notes that some of the space may be used at times and needs to be protected.

Among the questions raised: Can fencing protect any sensitive areas? Can the green space simply be closed if there is any emergency or active MTA work happening there?

The Conservancy, which can help provide funding for public use of the green space, remains at the ready to provide daily litter clean up and further stewardship of the grounds. We are now engaging with state representation outside the MTA regarding the request for accessibility. [Lieber's January 30 response letter \[and\] the January 9 letter to Lieber](#)

State Board Failed to Consider Costs Before Approving Penn Station Project

Source: 29 St. Neighborhood Association Jan-Feb Newsletter, 29streetassociation.org, February 3, 2023

For years the 29th Street Neighborhood Association has been an active member of the Empire Station Coalition opposed to the demolition of historic buildings, affordable housing and viable businesses in a giveaway to Vornado Realty Trust, which proposes ten supertall glass towers of empty commercial office space known as the Penn District. Now, after years of contending that projected revenues from these empty towers will pay to renovate the reviled Penn Station, New York State's Empire State Development Commission Board admits that they never saw much less studied the underlying economics of the specious proposal. [Crain's New York Business January 9, 2023, article](#) on the topic. The current state of the redevelopment plan remains in flux. Vornado announced plans in November to delay constructing towers around Penn Station this year in an effort to protect itself from the current economic headwinds and cited weak demand for commercial space in the area. ESD responded by reaffirming its support for the project and its ability to pay for rebuilding the dilapidated rail station.

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene declared an end to the mpox, otherwise known as monkeypox, outbreak that caused thousands of cases but has been receding in recent months, the [Staten Island Advance reports](#).

[First Housing Development Under SoHo Rezoning Proposed for 277 Canal](#)

February 6, 2023, *commercialobserver.com*, by Mark Hallum

SoHo may soon be getting its first batch of housing under the controversial neighborhood rezoning passed in December 2021...United American Land is filing plans with the New York City Department of Buildings Monday for a 13-story, 100-unit, mixed-use building at 277 Canal Street, site of the first movie theater in the area. The developer intends for 25 percent of the building to be affordable under the city's mandatory inclusionary housing laws, and has lined up architect Morris Adjmi to design the structure out of textured brick, metal and terracotta. United American Land plans to preserve the first three floors of the existing building, which is protected by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), while going through hearings with the city agency.

Proposed Link 5G Expansion on the Upper East Side Historic District

In November, the Mayor's Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) announced their plan for a new program to expand the city's 5G infrastructure, called "Link 5G". This program is an extension of the existing LinkNYC kiosk program. Sen. Liz Krueger has heard some concerns from several constituents that the new towers, which are 32 feet tall, are out of context with residential neighborhoods and historic districts. In January, Sen. Liz Krueger co-signed a letter along with Council Member Keith Powers and other East Side elected officials to the Landmarks Preservation Commission, urging the Commission to consider whether there are not more appropriate sites or designs for implementing this technology. Read the letter. council.nyc.gov/keith-powers/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2023/01/LPC-Link-5G-Letter.pdf

Related: 5G Update from the New York Landmarks Conservancy

Source: The New York Landmarks Conservancy 5G Tower Update email of February 2, 2023 (nylandmarks.org)

In our Monday newsletter, we [shared a letter](#) from the Conservancy and colleague groups to City Hall asking for a detailed public explanation of the “chaotic and opaque” review process for siting 32-foot tall 5G towers throughout the City. We addressed our letter to two Deputy Mayors. But we have now received a [response from New York City Chief Technology Officer](#) Matthew C. Fraser...It is as opaque as the review process. This response is totally unacceptable. The City should pause further 5G installations until there is adequate public information and all the questions the installations and proposed locations have raised are answered.

Report: Center for an Urban Future has published [Keeping Pace with an Aging New York State](#), by Jonathan Bowles, Eli Dvorkin, and Charles Shaviro.

New York State’s older adult population is booming, with more residents ages 65 and above—nearly 3.5 million—than the entire population of 21 other states. An expanding share of the state’s older adults are immigrants and people of color. But alarmingly, older New Yorkers living below the poverty line increased by 37% over the past decade. (Congratulations to CUF for publishing their report as a webpage and saving a few trees! See it at the link.)

The MHNA Discount Program

Please be prepared to show proof of membership when you ask for a discount. Full list of discounts at the links below.

[Restaurant and Food Discounts](#)

[General Discounts](#)

Our government representatives

When contacting your representative, be sure to state your address so that they know that you are a constituent. You can see the District maps and sign up for their emails on their websites.

Manhattan Community Board 5: www.cb5.org, 212-465-0907, office@cb5.org

Manhattan Community Board 6: cbsix.org, 212-319-3750, office@cbsix.org

NYC Councilwoman Carlina Rivera, Council District 2: council.nyc.gov/carlina-rivera, 212-677-1077, District2@council.nyc.gov

NYC Council Member Erik Bottcher, Council District 3: council.nyc.gov/district-3, 212-564-7757, District3@council.nyc.gov.

NYC Council Member Keith Powers, Council District 4: council.nyc.gov/keith-powers, 212-818-0580, KPowers@council.nyc.gov

NYC Council Member Julie Menin, Council District 5: council.nyc.gov/julie-menin, 212-788-6865, District5@council.nyc.gov.

NYC Council Speaker Adrienne E. Adams (speaker) SpeakerAdams@council.nyc.gov, 718-206-2068 council.nyc.gov/district-28.

Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine: manhattanbp.nyc.gov, 212-669-8300, info@manhattanbp.nyc.gov

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, #GetHelp, The Office of the Public Advocate assists with complaints and inquiries involving government-related services and regulations. Telephone Hotline: 212-669-7250, email: GetHelp@advocate.nyc.gov

Mayor Eric Adams: www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor, 311, online message: <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/mayor-contact.page>.

Dan Garodnick, Director, Department of City Planning, 120 Broadway, 31st Floor, New York, NY 10271, Tel. 212-720-3480, Fax. 212-720-3488, Email via website at www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/about/email-the-director.page

Landmarks Preservation Commission: www1.nyc.gov/site/lpc/about/contact-us.page

Schedule of hearings, sign-up forms to attend and more.

New York Senate website nysenate.gov.

New York State Assembly website nyassembly.gov.

NY State Senator Brad Hoylman, 27th Senate District: nysenate.gov/senators/brad-hoylman, 212-633-8052, hoylman@nysenate.gov

NY State Senator Liz Krueger, 28th Senate District: nysenate.gov/senators/liz-krueger, 212-490-9535, lkrueger@nysenate.gov

NY State Senator Kristen Gonzalez, 59th Senate District: nysenate.gov/senators/kristen-gonzalez, [online contact form](#), 718-765-6674, gonzalez@nysenate.gov

NY State Assembly Member Alex Bores, Assembly District 73, 212-605-0937, boresa@nyassembly.gov, nyassembly.gov/mem/Alex-Bores/contact.

NY State Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, Assembly District 74, nyassembly.gov/mem/Harvey-Epstein, 212-979-9696, epsteinh@nyassembly.gov

NY Assembly Member Tony Simone , Assembly District 75, SimoneT@nyassembly.gov, 212-807-7900.

New York Assembly Upcoming Public hearings [And archived videos can also be accessed on this page.] nyassembly.gov/av/upcoming

New York Assembly Upcoming Public hearings calendar
<https://www.nyassembly.gov/leg/?sh=hear>

Governor Kathy Hochul, New York State, governor.ny.gov, contact page on website governor.ny.gov/content/governor-contact-form

U.S. Representative Jerrold Nadler, New York's (redrawn) 12th Congressional District. Manhattan Office: 201 Varick Street, Suite 669, New York, NY 10014, Phone: 212-367-7350, website contact form nadler.house.gov/contact.

U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer: schumer.senate.gov, 212-486-4430, website contact form: schumer.senate.gov/contact/email-chuck

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand: gillibrand.senate.gov, 212-688-6262, website contact form: gillibrand.senate.gov/contact/email-me

U.S. President Joseph Biden: website contact form: whitehouse.gov/contact
The White House site whitehouse.gov is once more a trusted source for news on legislation, press releases, White House press briefings, and more. Presidential actions whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions.

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