



NEWS FROM COMMUNITY BOARD 8

MARCH 2021

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DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

Did you know that all WebEx Virtual meetings organized by Community Board 8 during the Covid Pause are recorded and available on our website and our YouTube Channel? Most meetings are also live-streamed to YouTube in case you are unable to join via WebEx at the time of the meeting. To search YouTube, just search for Brooklyn Community Board 8. For easier access, visit the videos page of our website at <http://www.brooklyncb8.org/downloads/videos/>.

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### ***COVID-19 DAY OF REMBERENCE***

It is hard to believe that it's been a year since all of our lives were turned upside down. A year after first encountering Covid-19, honor the thousands of beloved New Yorkers lost during the pandemic over the last year. The City of New York will host an official Day of Remembrance on Sunday, March 14, 2021 at 7:45 p.m, and you are invited to join the program online to honor the family, friends, frontline and essential workers, and above all else our fellow New Yorkers. All New Yorkers are invited to tune in and share the name and photograph of a person they lost. The photograph may be featured as part of the City's ceremony.

The photo should be a clear image of your loved one pictured alone (not in a group or a family photo); showing them from their chest up to the top of their head; in the highest resolution possible; if taken on a mobile phone, just export or share in its "original" or "full size" format.

Visit <https://airtable.com/shroiWwj4LzlT7kap> to submit the name and picture of a New Yorker you would like to honor. You may submit multiple names and photos.

Watch the program live on multiple platforms including Twitter (Twitter.com/NYCMayor), Facebook (Facebook.com/NYCMayor), YouTube (YouTube.com/NYCMayorsOffice). Call 408-

418-9388 for live interpretation services (for Spanish, enter code: 129 793 9134; for Cantonese, enter code: 129 883 8862; for Mandarin, enter code: 129 508 6308).

Information and graphics are available in Spanish, Simplified Chinese, and Traditional Chinese at [www.nyc.gov/covidmemorial](http://www.nyc.gov/covidmemorial).

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FREE COMMUNITY REFRIGERATORS

Community Board 8 has a Free Community Refrigerator located at 1144 Bergen Street at New York Avenue.

What is a Community Refrigerator?

At community refrigerators, anyone is welcome to take whatever they want and leave behind food they don't need, like extra produce free of charge. There are many volunteers who clean and stock the refrigerators daily some even ask local restaurants and stores to donate unused or unsold food items instead of throwing them away.

The goals are simple: Reduce food waste and feed the community.

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### ***FREE FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS***

Councilman Robert Cornegy is hosting Wellness Wednesdays, a free food distribution event every Wednesday at varying locations starting at 11 AM until supplies last.

March 17<sup>th</sup>: Weeksville Heritage Center, 158 Buffalo Avenue

March 24<sup>th</sup>: Crown Heights North Association in conjunction with St. Gregory's Church, 991 St. John's Place

March 31<sup>st</sup>: Grant Square Senior Center, 19 Rogers Avenue

For more information, contact Raul Rothblatt at Councilman Cornegy's office at 718-919-0742.

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INDOOR DINING RETURNS AT 50%!

After an extended break, indoor dining has returned to New York City restaurants with 50% capacity. While there are still restrictions in place on capacity, it is a step in the right direction for dining "normalcy." Furthermore, more and more recreational locations and venues are opening for use, including movie theaters, billiards and comedy halls, and even smaller live music venues. Sports fans have greater reason to rejoice as larger capacity venues are allowing in greater numbers of fans.

As always, we ask that should you desire to participate in live events, do so mindfully and safely, adhering to common sense notions such as staying home if you are feeling unwell, keeping your mask on, and continuing to socially distance.

Testing saves lives and reduces unnecessary risks. If you desire to partake in the re-opening world, get Covid tested often at any of New York City's Health and Hospitals locations, which include every government funded hospital, all Dept. of Health medical clinics, and even pop up sites throughout the city. Most urgent care centers also offer testing, but you may be required to pay a copay.

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### ***COVID-19 VACCINATIONS***

Covid-19 vaccines are available to all New Yorkers age 65 and older. Please call (877) 829-4692 (877-VAX-4NYC) and give your zip code for a location and date for your vaccination shot. This service is provided by NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation.

Additionally, pharmacies are also beginning to receive the vaccine for distribution to the public. Walgreens is now offering the Covid-19 vaccine locally and you can search for an appointment directly on their website. You will need to first create a Walgreens account and then search for Covid-19 vaccine and follow prompts.

Residents aged 65+ unable to travel for their vaccine are eligible for free vaccine transportation services to and from City vaccination sites with Curb-powered taxi services.

Call (877) 829-4692 (877-VAX-4NYC) to make an appointment at a City-operated vaccination site. After making an appointment to get vaccinated, participants will be screened and directed to Curb's 24/7 call center to book their trips, Access-a-Ride, or ambulette services as appropriate.

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FREE PPP & FORGIVABLE LOANS PROGRAM ENDS MARCH 31ST!

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) provides loans to help businesses keep their workforce employed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Borrowers may be eligible for PPP loan forgiveness. The Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce (BCC) announced that the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) no longer requires businesses to have employees in order to qualify for their loan program. The loans are forgivable, but the program will close March 31st. Further, the BCC will provide legal help to form merchant associations.

Contact Vladimir Sterlin, Sr. Director, Policy & Government Affairs at Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce via email at vsterlin@brooklynchamber.com for more information. Additionally, you can contact Deshaun Mars, Senior Director, Business Recovery via email at dmars@brooklynchamber.com.

For one-on-one support to connect merchants to financing support, marketing help, legal assistance, technology services and business strategy consultations, visit NYC Small Business Resource Network website at <https://www.nycsmallbusinessresourcenetwork.org/>.

Please email Deshaun to connect with your individual boards/committees: dmars@brooklynchamber.com.

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### ***LOW-COST WIFI***

ConnectHomeUSA is a movement to bridge the digital divide for HUD-assisted housing residents in the United States under the leadership of national nonprofit EveryoneOn. By helping residents in participating communities to get connected at home and providing access to digital literacy and educational content, they aim to make public housing a platform for change. ConnectHomeUSA creates a platform for community leaders, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private industry to join together and produce locally-tailored solutions for narrowing the digital divide. Through these stakeholders' specific commitments to provide free or low-cost broadband access, devices, and digital literacy training, ConnectHomeUSA extends affordable access to low-income families, ensuring that high-speed internet follows our children from their classrooms back to their homes.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has illustrated just how important reliable and fast internet connectivity is. From those working from home, students studying at home, families forced in the house for all entertainment purposes, fast, reliable internet connections and WiFi are extremely necessary for the day to day functioning. For more information on how to get low-cost WiFi for your home and for eligibility, visit <https://connecthomeusa.org/resident-resources>.

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ACCESSIBLE DISPATCH TAXI SERVICES

Accessible Dispatch is helping NYC residents and visitors with disabilities access the city like never before. Accessible Dispatch gives individuals with disabilities the ability to request a wheelchair accessible taxi from anywhere in New York City. Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week in all five boroughs. There is never an additional fee for passengers to use this service as passengers pay only the standard metered fare set by the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC).

If anyone wants more information on the program, please call 646-599-9999 representatives are available 24 hours a day. You can also email accessibledispatch@mtm-inc.net, or visit www.accessibledispatch.com for additional information.

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## ***NYC FREE TAX PREP***

If you earned \$68,000 or less in 2020, you can file your taxes for free with the help of an IRS certified VITA/TCE volunteer preparer. Preparers can help you file your taxes safely now and transmit the returns to the IRS when they open the tax season on Friday, February 12, 2021. You can file safely from the comfort of your home or in person.

Services are available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, and Russian. Additional languages are available through phone interpretation.

Learn more at [www.nyc.gov/taxprep](http://www.nyc.gov/taxprep) or call 311 and ask for tax preparation assistance. Services are offered by the NYC Dept. of Consumers and Worker Protection (former Dept. of Consumer Affairs).

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PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

It is now easier than ever to apply for property tax exemptions! The City of New York offers property tax exemptions for seniors, veterans, clergy members, people with disabilities, and other select homeowners. These benefits can reduce property taxes by up to 50% and save homeowners thousands of dollars each year.

Income limits for seniors and persons with disabilities (SCHE and DHE) is \$58,399. Additionally, the STAR program is available to homeowners with annual salaries less than \$500,000 (must apply with the state), and Enhanced STAR is available for seniors 65 and older with annual incomes of \$90,550 or less.

Those that serves in the US military during designated periods of conflict, their un-remarried surviving spouses, and Gold Star parents are eligible for tax exemptions. Additionally, active and retired members of the clergy or their un-remarried surviving spouses can receive tax exemptions.

For more information or to apply, call 311 or visit www.nyc.gov/contactdof. The deadline to apply is March 15, 2021, and if approved, your tax exemptions will begin on July 1st. You can also apply online directly, or renew if you currently receive the tax exemptions, at www.nyc.gov/dofsmartfile.

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## ***FREE BIKE CAMP***

Ride Up Grades has partnered with Trek to offer a free bike camp for kids ages 12-18 at Trek weekdays from July 12-23. They provide the bikes for kids, light breakfast, and train the kids on how to ride safely in groups, how to use and maintain their machine, and how to get physically fit for an event. Parents are welcome to join, but need to bring their own bikes.

More information can be found here, as well as online signup. Applications can be obtained by emailing [staff@rideupgrades.org](mailto:staff@rideupgrades.org).

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VACCINE FOR ALL CORPS JOBS

In his recent State of the City address, Mayor de Blasio announced the Vaccine for All Corps, an effort to bring good jobs to 2,000 New Yorkers supporting vaccination efforts across the five boroughs. Hiring for the first of these positions is now live at www.nyc.gov/vaccinejobs.

Recruitment for Vaccine for All Corps jobs is led by the Workforce1 Career Center System operated by the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS), targeting candidates from the communities hit hardest by COVID-19. No healthcare experience is required for many of these positions, which include roles in site management, operations, and client services, in addition to clinical roles. Interested jobseekers should visit www.nyc.gov/vaccinejobs to fill out an interest form to begin the screening process with SBS Workforce1 staff.

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### ***PARKS DEPARTMENT FULL-TIME AND SEASONAL POSITIONS***

NYC Parks offers both full-time and seasonal opportunities. Seasonal positions vary in length, and seasonal employees may not be eligible for the same variety of benefits as full-time employees.

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/opportunities/jobs>

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MTA MASK FORCE

One day every month hundreds of volunteers put on bright yellow t-shirts (and masks!) and work together to distribute free masks where our customers need them most: on subways and buses. Yes, the MTA is giving away free masks as masks are key to stopping the spread of the coronavirus. A mask or face covering is also required at all times while you travel on public transportation. As such, Mask Force volunteers want to make sure you always have access to one when you need it.

Anyone over 18 years old is welcome to join the Mask Force. Shifts are about 2.5 hours long all across the city. If you would like to volunteer, sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/mask-force>.

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We wish the happiest of birthdays to Mr. Wayne Bailey, Mr. Drew Gabriel, Ms. Xeerxeema Jordan, Mr. Adam Sachs, Mr. Meredith Staton, and Ms. Sharon Wedderburn, who will all celebrate birthdays in the month of March.

Get well wishes to former Community Board 8 member Marlene Saunders

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ACROSS THE BOARD is a monthly publication:

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