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HARLEM COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS, INC.
"GOOD NEWS YOU CAN USE"

The Harlem Community Newspapers, Inc. Connecting Harlem, Queens, Brooklyn and The Bronx

COMMUNITY BRONX NEWS

"Good News You Can Use"

Vol. 32 No. 37 September 11, 2025 - September 17, 2025 Free

Enduring Legacy of Hubert T. Collins 1941-2025

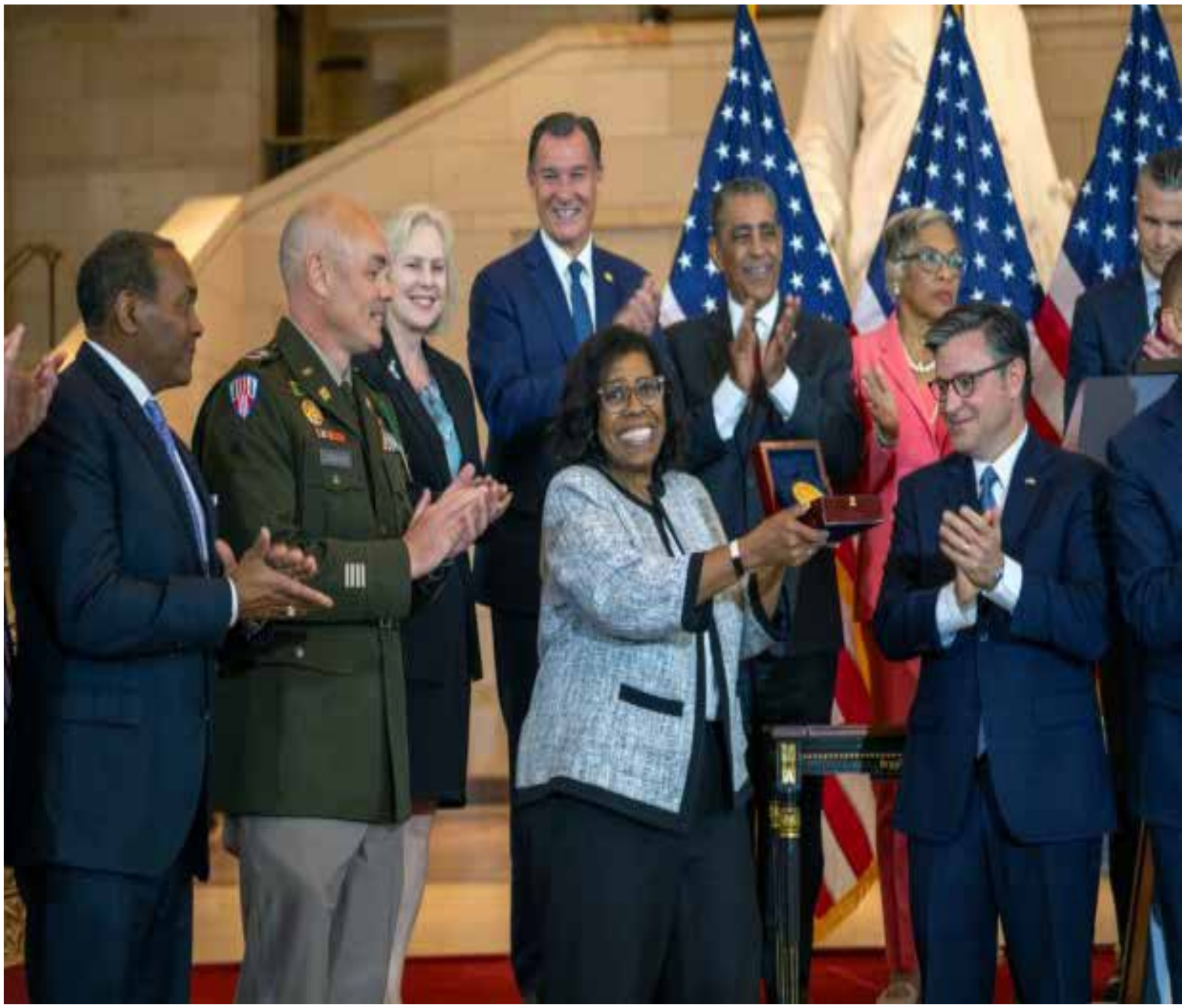
see page 14

Celebrating 73 Years of Life and 32 Years of Legacy publishing Harlem Community News

see page 11

Black Women on Broadway host Fourth Annual event to celebrate their own!

see page 14



Harlem Hellfighters Honored with Congressional Gold Metal: A Century-Overdue Tribute

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Harlem Community Newspapers, Inc. will publish positive news and information. Our mission is to deliver "good" and informative news to our readers focusing on health, education, housing, business and employment opportunities. We look for and publish results, not problems. We promote businesses, opportunities and events happening in the communities we serve. We are dedicated to providing our readers with valuable information they can use to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and our communities.

HARLEM COMMUNITY NEWS
BROOKLYN COMMUNITY NEWS
BRONX COMMUNITY NEWS
QUEENS COMMUNITY NEWS

Free copies distributed in your community weekly

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PAT STEVENSON

Inside this week's issue, we honor the Harlem Hellfighters, whose bravery and sacrifice in World War I has finally been recognized with the Congressional Gold Medal, an accolade long overdue. (see page 10)

We also pay tribute to the life and legacy of my dear friend Hubert T. Collins, who passed on September 4th. For over 30 years, Hubert generously gave his time and heart to Harlem Community News. His presence will be deeply missed. R.I.P, my friend.
(see pages 14-15)

On a personal note, I'm celebrating my 73rd birthday and 32 years of publishing Harlem Community Newspapers. It's a milestone that reminds me why Black newspapers matter now more than ever, just as they did over a century ago, We remain a vital voice in the ongoing struggle for civil rights and justice in America. (see page 11)

Go to our website and subscribe to our daily newsletter that will come direct to your email daily. It is free!.www.harlemcommunitynews.com.

Pat Stevenson
Celebrating
32 years Publishing

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The 2025 - 2026 Season Begins on Friday, September 26th!

FALL CONCERTS

Friday, September 26, 2025 at 7 PM
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Thursday, October 16, 2025 at 6 PM
Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month
The Hispanic Society Museum & Library at 3741 Broadway
Free and open to the public. RSVP required.

Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 7 PM
NYC Composers Concert
Harlem School of the Arts at 645 Saint Nicholas Avenue
Free and open to the public. RSVP required.

Friday, November 21, 2025 at 7 PM
Annual Bach Concert (The Harlem Bach Project)
Broadway Presbyterian Church at 601 West 114th Street
$20 General Admission | $15 Students/Seniors

Visit our website for more info and to get tickets.
Join our email list for concert announcements and other news.

www.HarlemChamberPlayers.org

PONDER THIS! A True Commitment is Not a Burden

By Hazel Rosetta Smith

Keep in mind, a commitment can get renegotiated. A promise may necessitate a change of mind as times change. What is most important to note is that it takes deep thought as to what the commitment entails and whether you are willing but may not be able to fulfil its responsibilities before you step into the fray.

If your word cannot be held as your bond, you are not the one to commit and therefore set yourself up for ridicule and personal guilt after the fact.

A person who can commit to a project or the betterment of someone's situation is to be admired. Too often the commitment starts out strong and steady and after time, it can become a weary position to be in and slowly its frequency of assistance may dwindle.

I invite you to give thought to commitments you may have on your plate as I share a story, I watched on a nature program. The events leading to an epic love story of true commitment began in 1993, when Stjepan Vokić in eastern Croatia, came across an injured female stork whose wing had been severely damaged by a hunter's bullet.

Vokić decided to adopt the helpless bird, who had permanently lost her ability to fly and named her Malena, which means little or small in Croatian. To try to provide the bird with as normal a life as possible, he would build a nest for her on his roof every spring. During winter, when the other storks migrated to warmer locations, Vokić would house Malena inside his warm garage.

In spring 2003, Vokić noticed that Malena had a regular companion, a male stork, whom he named Klepetan. When winter came, the stork flew away to warmer grounds, but to Vokić's astonishment, he returned the following year to spend the spring and summer months with Malena, a routine he has maintained for fourteen years.

Over the years, the stork couple have had sixty-six chicks, have become national and global celebrities, with a children's book and a play dedicated to their undying affection for one another. The storyline is captivating because it focuses on Klepetan's unfailing commitment.

The storks have been the joy of the villagers who gather around the house come springtime, watching the sky for Klepetan's return. Ask yourself, is there anyone or anything that you accepted as a commitment? In time, you will realize that you have been a blessing to someone, and you will be rewarded in return. Love is never a burden.

[Hazel Rosetta Smith is a journalist, playwright, and artistic director for Help Somebody Theatrical Ministries. Contacts: misshazel@twc.com and online at www.hazelrosettasmith.com]

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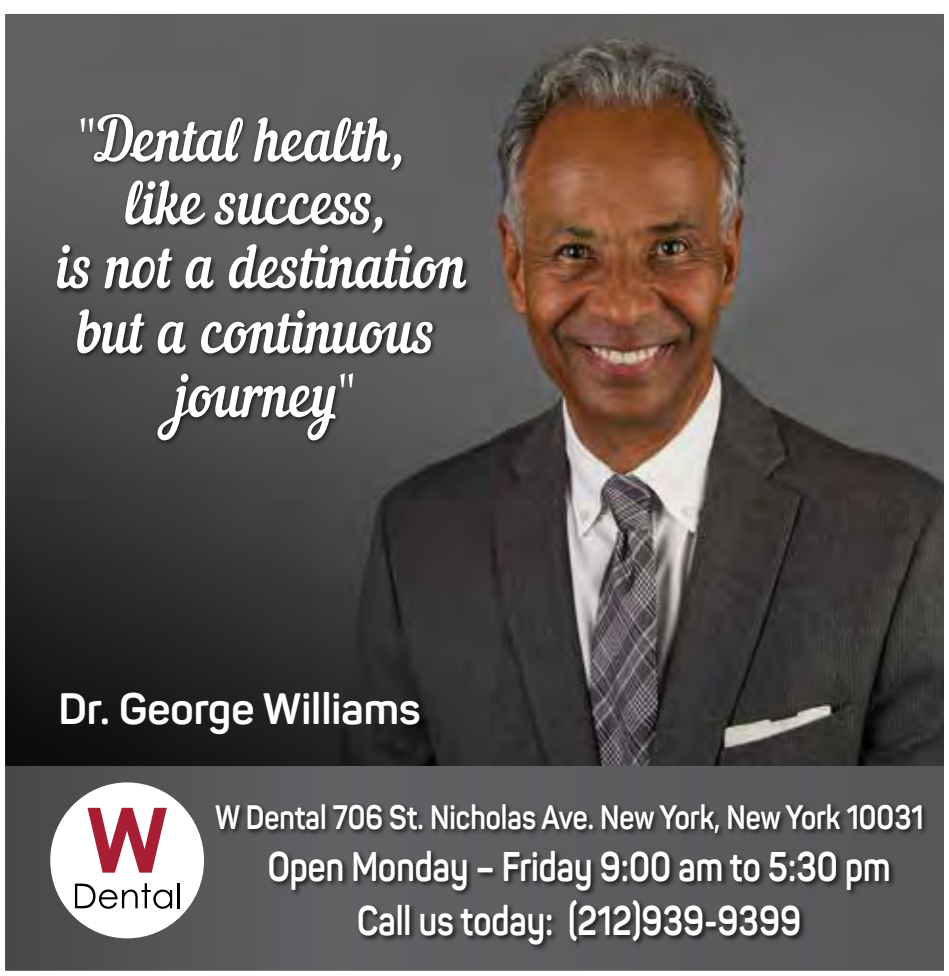

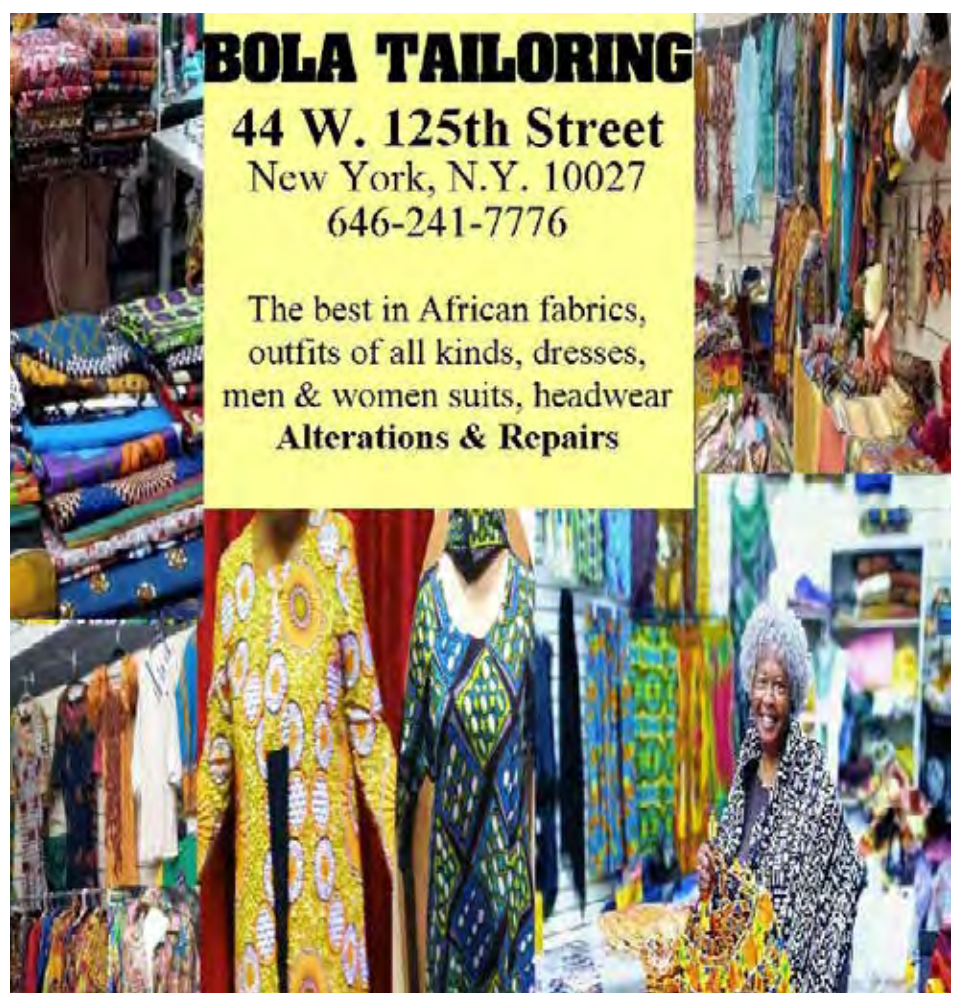

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Bridging the Digital Divide: Providing 350,000 Students with FREE Chromebooks

By Mayor Eric Adams

In today's digital world, access to reliable technology and high-speed internet is a necessity. Unfortunately, far too many New York City students don't have this access, which, in turn, creates barriers to learning and taking advantage of opportunities.

To bridge the digital divide and provide all our students with the technology they need to succeed — no matter their zip code or income — this school year, we are providing 350,000 brand new Chromebooks to New York City public school students with LTE or 5G access. These free devices will be distributed to students at more than 1,700 schools to help bring them on a level playing field for academic success. That's 350,000 opportunities to support future James Baldwins, Shirley Chisholms, or mayors of New York City in the making because 350,000 students will soon possess the essential tools necessary to succeed in today's digital learning environment.

This is a monumental investment in our young people's potential and working-class families of our city, and we are using data to ensure that the Chromebooks are distributed in areas where the need is greatest. These devices come preloaded with 5G internet access and educational programs so students can continue to learn, take advantage of remote opportunities, and apply for jobs and colleges. Our Chromebook initiative also replaces outdated equipment that no longer meets current instructional and security standards and ensures that the nation's largest school district remains ahead of the curve.

And because we know that too many families are still struggling with the cost of living and cannot always afford new, internet-enabled devices, we are providing these devices to students for FREE.

Earlier this year, New York City announced an agreement with T-Mobile to become a major wireless carrier to support city operations. This agreement saved taxpayers millions of dollars on city-issued mobile devices, and ensured we could pay for these Chromebooks and that students have high-speed internet regardless of where they live or how much their parents earn — because access should not be determined by zip code or by your income.

This initiative builds on all the other initiatives our administration has launched to build a better future for our children, including increased reading and math scores for public school children, nation-leading dyslexia screenings for all students, adding 57 Gifted and Talented programs to our public schools, helping nearly 14,000 students complete work-based learning experiences for the 2024-2025 school year through FutureReadyNYC, dramatically increasing early childhood education enrollment to 150,000 children across the city's system, and investing $180 million to implement a comprehensive class size reduction plan that provides more individualized care to students, among other initiatives.

At the end of the day, we want our young people to have all the tools they deserve and the technology they need to go as far as their dreams will take them. Investing in our students is critical as we continue to strive for a stronger, fairer, and more affordable city.

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"GOOD NEWS YOU CAN USE"

Vol. 32 No. 37 September 11, 2025

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Home Buying in Harlem Be Prepared to Buy Now

By Rev. Dr. Charles Butler

Can anyone afford to buy a home in Harlem? Prospective first-time home buyers are facing a crisis. Home values remain extremely high. Monthly rents are now exceeding mortgage payments. Many people are finding it difficult to maintain their monthly living expenses, while becoming 'mortgage ready.' The term 'mortgage ready' means having enough money saved for the down payment (usually 3-5% of the purchase price) and closing costs. Lenders also want to see a solid two-year work history, a clean credit history with 3-4 active lines of credit.

Most lenders are only lending about 3 ½ - 4 ½ times your annual income. This is why it is so difficult to purchase a home in Harlem. Banking regulations will not allow a borrower's debt to income (DTI) ratio to exceed 43% of your monthly gross income.

This means you must have more money for a larger down payment to offset the purchase price and the amount of money you will be qualified to borrow. This point again emphasizes the importance of aggressively saving as much money as possible to successfully buy a home in Harlem.

Start by creating a monthly household budget. This is the primary tool to help you determine how much you can afford to buy. The bank will determine your pre-approval amount based on your gross monthly income, but your budget is based on net income. Your other monthly living expenses will also factor into the equation. This is crucial in the home buying process because you want to make sure you will be able to meet your monthly mortgage obligation and your other living expenses.

The first step in the home buying process is to attend an approved housing counseling program. Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) offers a free monthly virtual seminar series. The program meets on Thursday evenings from 7:00 – 9:30 p.m. To register, go to our website – www.hcci.org – at the top of the homepage click on the tab for programs and services then home buyer education. Once you complete and submit the registration form you will receive an auto response email confirmation and a link for the workshop. We have open enrollment so you can start at any point in the cycle.

The workshop is designed to help you with understanding the steps in the home buying process, how to assemble your home buying team of professionals to assist you through the process and provide you with terminology used in the industry. You will learn to calculate your debt-to-income ratio (DTI), the various mortgage products, FHA, SONYMA, Conventional, and Veterans.

The workshop will provide you with websites to use in conducting research on potential properties. You will learn how to negotiate an offer and the different types of properties from single to multi-family homes, cooperative and condominium units.

For more information on the home buying process contact Rev. Dr. Charles Butler at (212) 281-4887 ext. 231 or email cbutler@hcci.org.

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HARLEM CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Phil Young Experience at Langston Hughes House, 20 W. 127th St
Every Thursday - $20 Suggested Donation

56th Annual African-American Day Parade - Sept 21 2025 Theme "Education is Our #1 Priority"

Recognizing the crucial role of educators is the leading charge for The 56th Annual African American Day Parade, Inc.© (AADP). The parade will feature community-based organizations, performance groups, marching bands, floats, civil servants, fraternities, sororities, and public leaders showcasing the "POWER THROUGH UNITY" as they celebrate culture, heritage, and legacy. This year, the theme: "Education Is Our #1 Priority!" is a call to action to inspire academic excellence and community engagement from our leaders, mentors, educators, parents, and students. The parade highlights the importance of education as a cornerstone for future success and unity, fostering a sense of belonging for African American families across the nation.

The AADP Weekend will be a two-day celebration. Starting on Saturday, September 20th, with the 3rd Annual "Get Involved Literacy, Health, and Culture Celebration", with the 56th Annual African American Day Parade the following day, Sunday, September 21st.

The AADP Weekend Line Up:

Saturday, September 20th ~ 3rd Annual "Get Involved Literacy, Health, and Culture Celebration" at 163 West 125th Street, Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Plaza, from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

The "GET INVOLVED" community event on the plaza will feature live performances, literacy activities, giveaways, prizes, a health panel, and on-site health services. Tai Chi hosted by Malik K. Cadwell - MSKCC Coordinator/Mind-Body Therapist, and special surprise guests, and community resources aiming to spread awareness and provide essential information such as jobs, after school programs, resume assistance, voting rights and more.

The 56th Annual African American Day Parade Schedule:

Sunday, September 21st ~ Dynamic performances will electrify Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard (7th Avenue) from 12:30 PM to 6:00 PM, stretching from 111th Street to 137th Street

Pre-Parade Show

11:00 AM-12:30 PM

Elbert & Darlene Shamsid-deen Reviewing Stand 163 West 125th Street & 7th Ave

This year, we honor educators and community leaders who have made significant contributions to the African American community as our Grand Marshals and Marshals.

Distinguished Grand Marshals for 2025:

Dr. Martin Lemelle, President, Grambling State University

Dr. Tony Allen, President, Delaware State University

Dr. Patricia Ramsey, President, Medgar Evers College

Sandra Bookman, Anchor, Eyewitness News, ABC7/WABC-TV NY

Dr. Bob Lee, Radio Personality & Community Affairs Director, WBLS 107.5FM , Founder & CEO of Make The Grade Foundation

Joy Bivins, Director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Harlem, NY

Distinguished Marshals for 2025:

Dr. Shawn F. Brown, Principal, Uniondale High School, Long Island, NY

Francina Yaw-Costello, Principal, Amber Charter School, Inwood

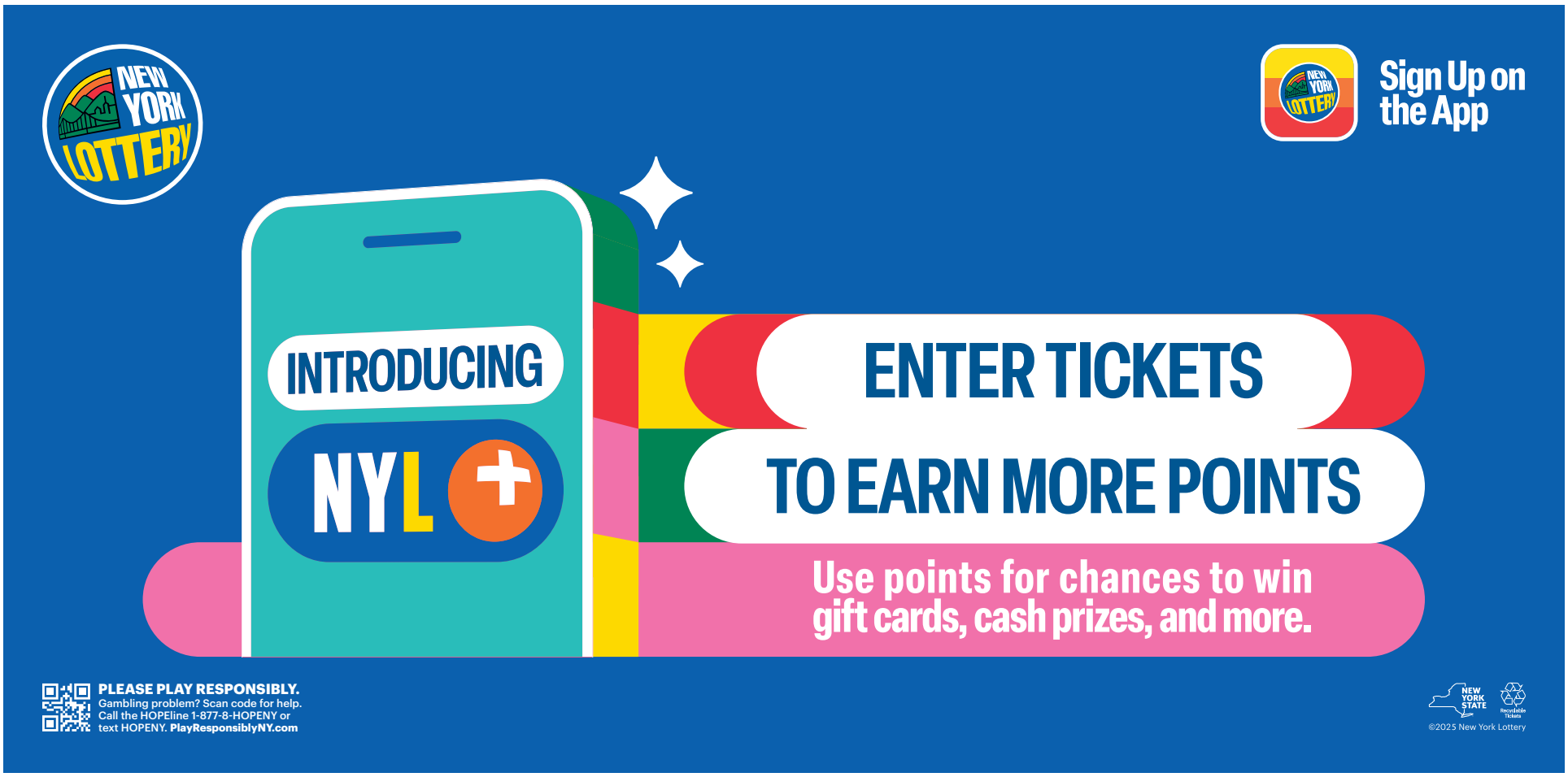
Jean E. Jeanty, Principal, Pugsley Preparatory Academy Middle School, Bronx, NY

Our Honorary Celebrity Guest for 2025:

Karyn White - Two-time Grammy-nominated, Multi-Platinum Recording Artist, Film Producer, and Actress.

This year, the Harlem community has suffered a tremendous loss. "With the passing of Congressman Charles Rangel, Hazel Dukes, President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People New York State Conference, Lloyd Williams, President and CEO of The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce and Co-Founder of Harlem Week, along with Tamara Norman Vice Chairman Emeritus of African American Day Parade, we salute them for their unwavering support for education and commitment to our community. They will be truly missed. One of the goals of the parade is to uplift the spirits of the community, as we move forward," states Yusuf Hasan, Chairman of the African American Day Parade, Inc.

Since 1968, AADP has focused on five core areas to strengthen the community: Business, Education, Health, Politics/Government, and Arts/Culture. The African American Day Parade, Inc. is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization.



Public Hearing

The **Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority** ("TBTA") doing business as MTA Bridges and Tunnels, will hold public hearings pursuant to Vehicle and Traffic Law Sections 385-a and 1180-e on Weigh-in-Motion and Work Zone Speed Enforcement programs. The hearings will review the public uses, benefits, purposes, and location of these legislative initiatives and will give the public an opportunity to comment.

Description of the Projects

TBTA is implementing modern technology recently authorized by New York State to protect the structural integrity of bridges and tunnels operated by TBTA. Specifically, TBTA will use Weigh-in-Motion (WIM) technology for a pilot on the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge (RFK) to impose monetary liability on the owners of overweight trucks. TBTA is also implementing work zone speed enforcement camera technology to improve safety for workers and vehicle passengers by deterring motorist speeding in work zones.

Weigh-in-Motion Pilot on the RFK Bridge

New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law was amended to authorize the use of WIM technology on the RFK Bridge for a pilot project. To protect the RFK Bridge's structural integrity, WIM technology will enable TBTA to safely and efficiently enforce truck weight restrictions and impose fines on violators. The pilot project will deter overweight trucks that cause degradation to the RFK Bridge from traversing the bridge.

WIM technology utilizes roadway sensors to weigh passing vehicles on a bridge in conjunction with adjacent cameras to capture identifying information corresponding with overweight vehicles. The WIM system is required to undergo a daily self-test and a semi-annual calibration check.

Signage will be installed to notify motor vehicle operators that the WIM monitoring system is in use. Owners of overweight trucks that exceed the maximum gross vehicle weight by 10% or more and/or axle weight by 20% or more will be subject to a fine. If a truck is in violation of both gross vehicle weight and axle weight restrictions, the owner is liable for a separate penalty for each such violation.

Work Zone Speed Enforcement Program

The Work Zone Speed Enforcement (WZSE) pilot program, which was signed into law in 2021, was expanded to include TBTA and extended to 2031. The WZSE program is designed to improve safety for workers and vehicular travelers by deterring motorists from speeding in work zones. Speed cameras will be placed at work zone construction and maintenance locations to identify and issue violations to owners of vehicles that exceed the posted speed limit by 10 miles per hour or more.

All of TBTA's bridges and tunnels are eligible to have speed cameras in place. The cameras and violations will be in effect only during the hours that crews are working in a work zone. Work zones with speed cameras will have clear signage leading up to the work zones.

Dates, Times and Place of the Public Hearings

Monday, October 6, 2025, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and
Tuesday, October 7, 2025, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

This public hearing will be held in a hybrid format with options to participate in-person as well as virtually via Zoom's online platform and conference call feature, with a livestream available on the MTA YouTube channel.

Location of the Hearings (In-Person)

New York City Transit, 130 Livingston Street, 1st Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201. The public may join the hearing via Zoom at **https://mta.zoomgov.com/j/1603815727** or by phone at (646) 828-7666. A link will also be provided on the MTA website.

Directions

By Subway: A C F R to Jay Street – MetroTech, R to Court Street, 2 3 to Borough Hall, 4 5 to Borough Hall. A C G train to Hoyt/Schermerhorn. By Bus: B25, B26, B38, B41, B45, B52, B57, B61, B62, B65, B67, B103

Registering for the Public Hearings

Registration to speak can be made in advance by visiting **https://www.mta.info/2025-wim-wzse-hearing** which will remain open through the hearing date. Registration will close at the start of each hearing. The public may join the hearing via Zoom at **https://mta.zoomgov.com/j/1603815727** or by phone at (646) 828-7666. A link will also be provided on the MTA website.

For More Information, to Pre-Register to Speak or to Submit Comments

Those wishing to pre-register to be heard at the Public Hearing must register on the website at **https://www.mta.info/2025-wim-wzse-hearing**. Verbal testimony will be limited to two (2) minutes. You may present verbal testimony or submit written statements in lieu of or to supplement oral testimony concerning the proposed projects.

Written comments will be accepted online at **https://www.mta.info/2025-wim-wzse-hearing**. Comments may also be submitted via postal mail to: MTA Government & Community Relations, Attn: Bridges and Tunnels WIM/WZSE Hearing, 2 Broadway, 16th Floor, D16.94 New York, NY 10004. All written and online comments must be received by 5:30 p.m. on Friday, October 10, 2025. Comments received after this date and time will not be included in the transcript. For questions about the hearing, contact: Rose Pascone, Assistant Director of Government and Community Relations, MTA Bridges and Tunnels, 2 Broadway, New York, N.Y.10004. Tel: 646-252-7634 or Rose.Pascone@mtahq.org.

Accessibility and Language Assistance Services

At the public hearings, American Sign Language and CART Captioning will be available.

People who are blind or have low vision can request accommodation by September 30, 2025, either online or by telephone.

People who are deaf or hard of hearing may use their preferred relay service, or the free 711 relay service and then ask to be connected to the Public Hearing Hotline at (646) 252-6777 to speak with an agent.

For Language Assistance or Other Accommodations

If language assistance or any other accommodation is required, please submit a request at least three (3) business days before the hearing date in one of the following ways:

- **Online** by submitting a request through the registration form at **https://www.mta.info/2025-wim-wzse-hearing**.
- **By telephone** by calling the public hearing hotline on 646-252-6777.
- **By postal mail** by sending a letter to: MTA Government & Community Relations, Attn: Bridges and Tunnels WIM/WZSE Hearing 2 Broadway, 16th Floor, D16.94 New York, NY 10004.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

www.mta.info

Harlem Hellfighters Honored with Congressional Gold Metal: A Century-Overdue Tribute

On September 3, 2025, the United States Congress bestowed one of its highest civilian honors, the Congressional Gold Medal, upon the legendary Harlem Hellfighters, formally known as the 369th Infantry Regiment. This long-awaited recognition celebrated the valor and sacrifice of over 4,000 African American soldiers who served with unmatched distinction during World War I.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., presents Debra Willett, the granddaughter of Harlem Hellfighter Sgt. Leander Willett, with the Congressional Gold Medal on behalf of all of the "Harlem Hellfighters" of World War I during a ceremony on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C

The ceremony, held at Emancipation Hall in Washington, D.C., brought together descendants, military officials, and lawmakers. House Speaker Mike Johnson presented the medal to Debra Willett, granddaughter of Sgt. Leander Willett, a Hellfighter who fought in France. "They sacrificed. And they thought they were making a difference. And today proves that they did," Willett said, echoing the sentiment of many families whose ancestors were part of the regiment.

The Harlem Hellfighters earned their nickname from German forces, who were stunned by their relentless courage. Despite facing racism and segregation at home and within the military, the unit served 191 consecutive days in combat, longer than any other American regiment, and suffered over 1,500 casualties. Denied the opportunity to fight under U.S. command, they were placed under French leadership, where they earned the Croix de Guerre, France's highest military honor.

The history of the Harlem Hellfighters traces back to 1913, when the New York State Legislature authorized the formation of an African American National Guard unit. Initially known as the 15th New York (Colored) Infantry Regiment, it was later redesignated the 369th Infantry Regiment. The unit was composed largely of men from Harlem, Brooklyn, and surrounding areas, many of whom joined out of a sense of pride, adventure, and patriotism.

Beyond the battlefield, the Hellfighters also left a cultural legacy. Their regimental band, led by famed musician James Reese Europe, introduced jazz to European audiences, forever changing the global music landscape.

Despite their heroism, the Hellfighters returned to a country that offered little recognition. Many died in poverty, denied medical care and basic rights. Their story became a symbol of both the struggle and resilience of Black Americans in the face of systemic injustice.

The Congressional Gold Medal ceremony was not just a tribute, it was a reckoning. "These patriots loved America even when America did not show the same love to them," said Rep. Hakeem Jeffries. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth added, "They faced the enemy head-on and at point-blank range. They were exceptional Americans".

More than a century later, the Harlem Hellfighters' legacy is finally etched into the nation's memory. Their bravery, both in combat and in confronting discrimination, stands as a powerful chapter in American history—one that will now be remembered with the honor it deserves.

Celebrating 73 Years of Life and 32 Years of Legacy in Harlem

By Pat Stevenson

This week marks a deeply personal and historic moment for me: I'm celebrating my 73rd birthday and my 32nd anniversary publishing community newspapers in Harlem. These milestones are more than numbers, they represent a lifetime of commitment to truth, culture, and community empowerment.

As the founder and sole owner of Harlem Community Newspapers, Inc., I've spent over three decades amplifying the voices of Harlem and the broader Black community across New York City. What began as a vision to provide local news and uplift our stories has grown into a trusted institution, one that documents our triumphs, challenges, and the vibrant tapestry of Black life.

In today's climate, where the current administration continues efforts to erase or distort Black History, the role of the Black Press is not just relevant, it's essential. Our newspapers are not merely publications; they are archives of resistance, resilience, and remembrance. Harlem News stands firm in its mission to preserve our past, celebrate our present, and shape our future.

Over the years, we've covered everything from cultural celebrations to health initiatives and educational and business opportunities. We've spotlighted Harlem's unsung heroes, chronicled the evolution of our neighborhoods, and provided a platform for dialogue and progress. Through it all, our guiding principle has remained the same: to serve our community with integrity and purpose, as we focus on the "good news and deeds."

This year, as we commemorate 32 years of service, we're inviting our readers, supporters, and partners to join us in celebration. We've launched a GoFundMe campaign to help sustain and expand our work, ensuring that Harlem Community Newspapers continues to thrive in the digital age. Additionally, we're offering Anniversary Advertising Packages that will be featured in our special September 25th issue, a tribute to our journey and a testament to the power of community journalism.

You can learn more and contribute by visiting our website at www.harlemcommunitynews.com. Whether you're a longtime reader or a new supporter, your involvement helps us continue to be a beacon of truth and inspiration.

As I reflect on these milestones, I'm filled with gratitude, for the stories we've told, the lives we've touched, and the community that has embraced us. Harlem is more than a place, it's a spirit, a legacy, and a movement. And Harlem Community Newspapers is proud to be part of that story.

You remembered their books.

You remembered their forms.

You remembered their schedules.

Be sure to remember their vaccines.

Vaccines are required for children to stay in school and day care.

They're safe and reduce the risk of severe preventable illnesses, like measles, polio, and chickenpox. COVID-19 vaccines are now recommended for children 6 months and older. Talk to your child's health care provider or visit nyc.gov/health and search "student vaccines" or call 311 for information on immunization requirements.

Black Women on Broadway host Fourth Annual event to celebrate their own!

by Audrey J. Bernard, Society Editor

Four years ago the Black Women on Broadway Awards (BWOB) were created to celebrate the artistry, leadership, and impact of Black women on Broadway. Now some four years later, the esteemed sisterhood is stronger than ever and celebrating its fourth annual Black Women on Broadway Awards ceremony which were held on June 2, 2025 at Current at Chelsea Piers in New York City. All the beautiful ladies came dressed to impress and armed with their Black is Beautiful fans they waved high with pride as they greeted each other and recognized this year's revered award recipients.

BWOB Co-Founders, Jocelyn Bioh, Danielle Brooks, and Amber Iman kicked off the program welcoming guests to the Fourth Annual Black Women on Broadway Awards. The powerful program began with Danielle Brooks presenting her friend and The Color Purple co-star, Cynthia Erivo, with the organization's first ever special citation, the Lena Horne Luminary Award. The award honors a multi-disciplinary artist who has broken barriers in multiple mediums in theatre. Actor, singer, and dancer Storm Lever presented Khaila Wilcoxon with the Florence Mills Shining Star Award, which recognizes an early-career talent – or a rising artist whose brilliance is just beginning to be widely seen.

Other high moments included Tony award-winner Kecia Lewis' presentation to LaChanze with the Kathy A. Perkins Behind The Curtain Award, which recognizes an artist whose work backstage shines brightest on stage. The incomparable LaTanya Richardson Jackson was presented with the Audra McDonald Legacy Award by actress, vocalist and a classically trained pianist Pauletta Washington. The award recognizes an artist who has a storied career and significant theatre achievements.

"We are so incredibly proud of this organization and the community we are celebrating. There are so many amazing Black women who make these shows possible every week and they more than deserve to be recognized for their contributions" said co-founders Danielle Brooks, Amber Iman, and Jocelyn Bioh. "It was an absolute honor to present LaTanya Richardson Jackson, LaChanze, Khaila Wilcoxon, and Cynthia Erivo today. It's invigorating to see the impact of BWOB come to life with this ceremony each year and we're excited for the powerful future ahead as we continue to uplift and honor Black women on and off the stage."

Black girl magic whelmed the atmosphere defying gravity! Over 200 artists, advocates, and industry leaders brought all their fabulousness to support and celebrate the organization's mission to honor the achievements and amplify the voices of Black women in the theater industry. The celebrated guess list was a who's who on Black Broadway and included: Adrienne C. Moore, Adrienne Warren, Aisha Jackson, Alyah Chanelle Scott, Amber Gray, Anika Noni Rose, Cynthia Erivo, Debra Martin Chase, Dede Ayite, Grace Hodgett Young, Irene Gandy, Jasmine Amy Rogers, Jordan Tyson, Joy Woods, Kara Young, Kelly McCreary, Lynn Nottage, Michelle Williams, Natalie Venetia Belcon, Natasha Yvette Williams, Nikiya Mathis, Nikki Renee Daniels, Rashidra Scott, Renee Elise Goldsberry, Solea Pfeiffer, Susan Kelechi Watson, Qween Jean, and Whitney White. Also other current Broadway cast members, producers, directors, casting directors, set designers, lighting designers, choreographers, hair and makeup artists, stage managers, playwrights, and more. (Photo Credit: Bennett Raglin/ Getty Images for Black Women on Broadway)

(l-r) Melessie Clark, Teshomech Olenja, Imani Rousselle, Arica Jackson, Amber Iman, Quiantae Mapenzi Johnson, Ayana George Jackson, Jasmin Richardson.

Khaila Wilcoxon waves her fan

Cynthia Erivo

(l-r) Kara Young, LaChanze, Alana Arenas

Mental Illness Linked to Higher Heart Risk and Shorter Lives

By Stacy M. Brown,
Black Press USA

A sweeping review published in The Lancet Regional Health—Europe has drawn a direct line between mental health disorders and cardiovascular disease (CVD), showing that individuals living with psychiatric conditions face not only a higher risk of heart problems but also a shorter life expectancy. The paper, authored by researchers from Emory University, the University of Copenhagen, the University of Leeds, and others, concludes that people with depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and anxiety live 10 to 20 years less on average, mainly due to heart disease.

The analysis shows that the connection between mental health and cardiovascular disease is not one-directional. The stress of a heart attack or stroke can trigger psychiatric disorders, while psychiatric conditions themselves set the stage for heart disease. The risks are striking as depression raises cardiovascular risk by 72 percent, schizophrenia by 95 percent, bipolar disorder by 57 percent, PTSD by 61 percent, and anxiety disorders by 41 percent. "It is important to understand that stress, anxiety, and depression can affect your heart, just like other physical factors," the paper noted, offering guidance for how doctors might begin crucial conversations with patients.

One in four people will experience a mental health disorder in their lifetime, yet many go untreated and often receive poor cardiovascular care. "Despite having more interactions with the healthcare system, they undergo fewer physical checkups and screenings and receive fewer diagnoses and treatments for CVD and its risk factors," the authors reported. According to 2023 U.S. survey data cited in the study, more than half of those who met the criteria for a mental health disorder had not received any treatment, with even lower rates among non-White populations.

Researchers identified a cluster of overlapping drivers—poverty, trauma, social disadvantage, substance use, and poor access to health care—that amplify the dual risks of mental illness and cardiovascular disease. Lifestyle behaviors such as smoking, poor diet, physical inactivity, and disrupted sleep patterns are also more common among people with psychiatric conditions. The biological picture is equally troubling. Dysregulation of the stress response system, inflammation, and autonomic nervous system dysfunction are all pathways through which psychiatric disorders may accelerate cardiovascular decline.

The study calls for a fundamental shift in medical practice. "For the best care, an integrated approach is needed to address the complex needs of this vulnerable population," the authors wrote. "Such approach should offer enhanced support and interdisciplinary care encompassing mental, cardiovascular, and behavioral health, as well as consideration of the social needs and barriers to care." Among the interventions reviewed, exercise emerged as one of the most effective treatments, improving both mood and heart health. Evidence shows that physical activity can deliver improvements on par with or greater than medication or psychotherapy for depression. Mind-body practices like yoga and mindfulness, while requiring more evaluation, also show promise for improving outcomes across both mental and cardiovascular health.

The authors stressed that progress depends on healthcare systems breaking down the wall between physical and mental health. For decades, treatment has been siloed, with psychiatrists focusing on the mind and cardiologists on the body. That separation, the study finds, has left millions vulnerable. The authors argue for expanded insurance coverage, investment in housing and employment stability, and the inclusion of psychiatric patients in cardiovascular research. Above all, they call for integrated care models that recognize the tight link between mental and cardiovascular health.

The stakes are enormous. The World Health Organization has set a 2025 target to reduce the global burden of cardiovascular disease. The paper argues that this goal cannot be reached without directly addressing the disparities faced by those with psychiatric disorders.

"Closing the disparity gap for individuals with mental health disorders would be consistent with the World Health Organization 2025 targets of reducing the global burden of CVD," the researchers concluded. "Reducing these disparities would also uphold the rights of people with mental health disorders to achieve the highest possible level of health and to fully participate in society and the workforce."

The Enduring Legacy of Hubert T. Collins: Harlem's Tireless Advocate June 21, 1941 - September 4, 2025

by Pat Stevenson

Hubert T. Collins, a lifelong Harlem resident and community champion, passed away peacefully at Cornell Weill surrounded by friends and family on September 4, 2025. He leaves behind a legacy woven into the very fabric of his neighborhood. Born on June 21, 1941, in Harlem, Collins dedicated his life to uplifting the voices and livelihoods of his fellow New Yorkers, especially those in his beloved uptown community.

As President of the Esplanade Gardens Cooperative, Collins was more than a housing administrator—he was a steward of dignity and equity. Under his leadership, the cooperative flourished as a model of community-driven housing, prioritizing affordability, safety, and resident empowerment. His tenure was marked by tireless advocacy for tenant rights and neighborhood preservation, ensuring Harlem's cultural identity remained intact amid waves of gentrification.

Hubert T. Collins served as the President of TWU Local 100 (Transport Workers Union) in New York City during the early 1990s. He was a prominent figure in the labor movement, representing transit workers including subway and bus operators, station agents, and other MTA employees. TWU Local 100 is one of the largest and most influential transit unions in the country, and Collins' leadership came during a period of significant labor challenges and contract negotiations.

Collins' civic engagement extended beyond boardrooms and union halls. He was a key figure on the committee that oversaw the construction of the iconic Adam Clayton Powell Jr. statue on 125th Street. The statue, now a landmark of Harlem pride, stands as a testament to Collins's commitment to honoring Black leadership and history. His efforts helped ensure that Powell's legacy would be immortalized in the heart of the community he served.

But perhaps most telling of Collins's character was his support for women-owned businesses in Harlem. He championed enterprises like Harlem Office Supply and the Harlem Community News, recognizing that economic empowerment was a cornerstone of social justice. His mentorship and advocacy helped these businesses thrive, creating jobs and fostering local pride. He volunteered each year with the "Uptown Women Business Owners" event, hosting more 200-300 women business owners.

To those who knew him, Collins was more than a leader—he was a neighbor, a mentor, and a friend. His presence at community meetings, his voice at rallies, and his hand in countless grassroots initiatives made him a fixture of Harlem's civic life. He believed in the power of collective action and never hesitated to roll up his sleeves for the betterment of others.

As a community advocate, Collins met with local, national and international leaders such as Rev. Al Sharpton, former mayor Michael Bloomberg, former president Bill Clinton, Nelson Mandela and others.

He was adventurous and traveled to Africa 3 times. On one trip he stayed with the local Maasai tribe in Kenya.

Born on June 21, 1941, to Sadie and Louis Collins. Hubert grew up in a loving home in Manhattan, New York. He was one of six siblings – Lehman, James, Joe, Geraldine, Dennis. Together they built a foundation of resilience, togetherness, and love, which shaped the person he was to become.

Hubert married Ruth Hunter on October 19, 1963. Through this union he fathered four children – Joe, April, Sean, Robert. Later in life he married Pamela Ilene Harrison and fathered another beautiful daughter, Maia. Hubert always puts family first being a man of determination and hard work. His outstanding work ethic, willingness to help others and loyalty will be remembered. His pride, joy and legacy shines bright in his grandchildren – Lionel, Geovon, Andrea, Candice, Chalai, Jaden, Indigo, Robbie, Madison and Mason. Also, his many great grandchildren.

Hubert is survived by his beloved sister Geraldine. He also leaves behind cherished nephews and nieces -Keith, Crystal, Cathy, Van, Barbara and Veronica and a wide extended family of friends whom he deeply loved and cared for.

Music was one of Hubert's greatest joys. In fact, he was a gifted singer and in the 1950's sang with the doo-wop groups on the corners of Manhattan. A soulful voice filled with the spirit of the times. Music was how Hubert shared joy-it connected him to others and left memories that will live on. Though his voice is silent his melody continues in the lives of those who loved him and those he loved.

Hubert's love of the Harlem Community was deep and unwavering. He was respected and admired for his commitment to culture, history and his family and home. His compassion, generosity and fatherly advice touched countless lives. Also, his presence was a source of encouragement and strength to many. His legacy and love will forever echo in Harlem and beyond.

Hubert T. Collins will be remembered not only for the positions he held but for the lives he touched. His legacy lives on in the cooperative buildings he helped sustain, the transit workers he empowered, the monuments he helped erect, and the businesses he nurtured. Harlem has lost one of its brightest lights, but his spirit endures in every corner of the community he loved so deeply. He will truly be missed—but never forgotten.

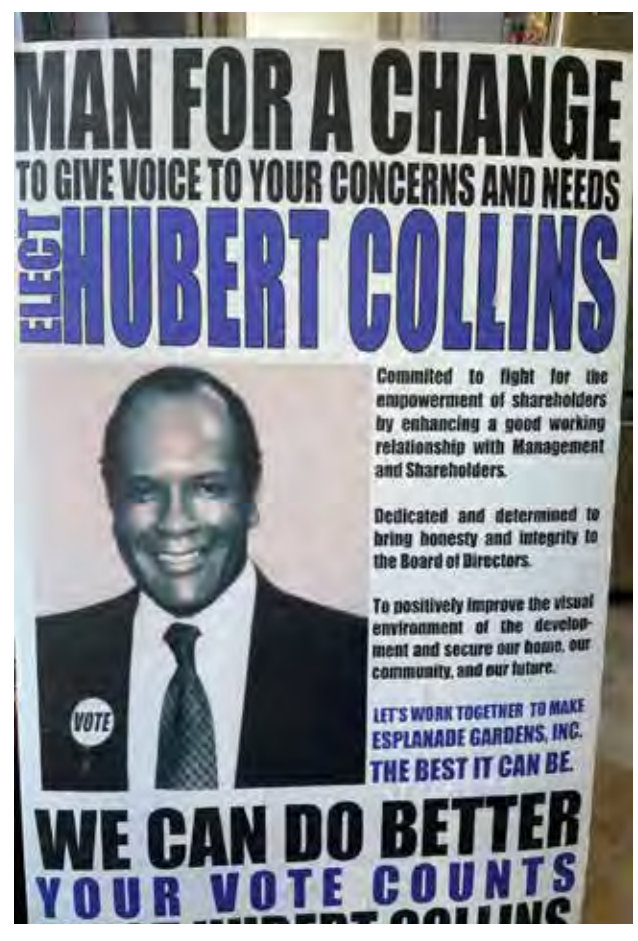
On a personal note: Hubert was my friend for more than 30 years. He was supportive of Harlem Community News and volunteered whenever needed. When I suffered with triple negative breast cancer, Hubert took me to every one of my 16 chemo treatments and many doctor appointments. When I fell and was in a wheelchair and then walker for more than a year Hubert took me wherever I needed to go and assisted with whatever he could do to help me keep Harlem Community News publishing. I was blessed to be able to assist him during his various illnesses this past year and to be there for him until he took his last breath. I will truly miss him.

Family and friends will gather for a celebration of life (tbd).

Hubert Collins' family wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation for the many expressions of love, concern and kindness shown during this time of bereavement. Thank you from the heart to our friends and family for your prayers, cards and your calls.

The Enduring Legacy of Hubert T. Collins: Harlem's Tireless Advocate June 21, 1941 - September 4, 2025 ...cont'd

Hubert with friends for his 84th Birthday Celebration on June 21, 2025



URBANOLOGY: HEALING POWER OF CHRYSTALS

By William A. Rogers

Crystals have been used for healing for centuries. I became aware of the use of crystals as a healing tool while studying to become a certified Ayurvedic practitioner many years ago. I never really used crystals, but I made recommendations during several consultation sessions at the Ki Wellness Center. Here are a few that I remember Bloodstone is a crystal used to clear toxins and can also help purify blood.

Agate is a crystal that can be used to relieve pain caused by strains, bruises and sprains. During the winter months many people wear Pink Fluorite crystals to avoid colds. Blue Lace Agate has been used to strengthen bones. The Carnelian has been known to help build self-esteem and to bring balance and well-being.

All things vibrate each crystal as a different vibrational frequency. The two crystals that I use for my personal development are Amethyst and Carnelian. Carnelian is a crystal I use when writing. It stimulates creativity, improves analytic abilities and sharpens concentration. The Carnelian has been used to accelerate healing in bones and ligaments. Carnelian has also been used to boost fertility and to stimulate sexuality.

Amethyst is a very important tool for wellness practitioners. It is a powerful crystal that can be used to simulate spiritual awareness. Amethyst is often used by practitioners to protect them from negative energy. Amethyst has been used to help fight addictions to alcohol, smoking, drugs and many other addictive behaviors. When I give Ki treatments at festivals and expos, I often wear an Amethyst necklace to enhance my healing abilities and for protection from negative energy.

Amethyst was also known as a sobriety stone in ancient times; it is still used to prevent drunkenness. The word amethyst comes from the Greek word "amethystus" which means not drunk or intoxicated. History tells us that both the Greeks and Romans made their drinking cups from amethyst.

When I give Ki Energy treatments to many people at festivals like HARLEM WEEK, I wear a Amethyst necklace. I wear a Carnelian necklace when writing articles late at night. Many people are not convinced that crystals have healing power, but the mind of the universe has always provided humans with healing tools like herbs and crystals that can address most man-made or natural illnesses.

The Healing power of crystals is very real; you must have an open mind and not let social programming keep you from experiencing the healing energy that comes from crystals. I believe that crystals should not be used alone, there are other things one should do to truly bring balance to mind, body and spirit. I feel crystals should be used as part of an overall wellness strategy.

Do your research, find the crystal that can address an issue that you are experiencing and judge for yourself. I suggest you combine your crystal use with meditation, Ki treatments and training, Yoga or Tai Chi.

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HERBS ARE NATURE'S REMEDY

Mugwort Essential Oil

By Zakiyyah

The health benefits of Mugwort essential oil can be attributed to its properties as an emmenagogue, nervine, and uterine substance. Mugwort essential oil is extracted by steam distillation of leaves, buds, and flowering tops of the Mugwort tree.

It is a very powerful pain reliever when use in a massage oil or applied neat to aching joints, and especially after surgery. Problems associated with menopause and periods, such as fatigue, headache, abdominal pains, and nausea can also be tackled with the help of this oil when applied externally on the stomach and/or lower back.

CAUTION: this essential oil should only be used as an external application, in a diffuser and/or through sustained inhalation, as it is toxic, can cause irritations and miscarriages when taken internally.

Gain the knowledge and tools to Heal Thyself. Your body's ability to heal is greater than anyone has permitted you to believe. Learn how to use the Sacred Gifts from the Earth to heal yourself and your loved ones, using holistic healing modalities that help the body restore balance and vitality. Inquire about our next herb course to learn the healing power of herbs, essential oils and crystal elixirs - send me an email for further information.

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This information is to help balance your body's natural healing energies, and is not intended as diagnosis, treatment or cure. Email: theherbalist1750@gmail.com; phone: 347-407-4312; blog: www.herbsarenaturesmedicine.blogspot.com.

Answers to Crossword on page 17

R	A	S	P			N	A	B			B	O	T	H
A	G	H	A		K	I	L	L		C	R	O	R	E
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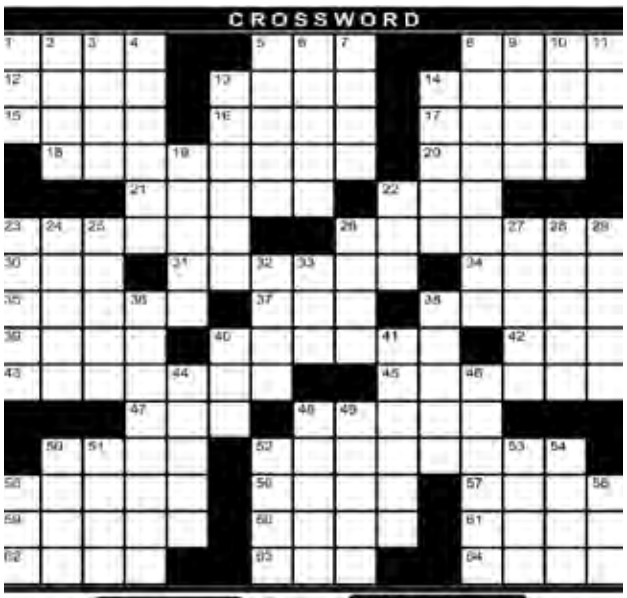
See answers on pages 16

CROSSWORD



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STATEPOINT CROSSWORD
THEME:
COMBO WORDS

ACROSS

1. Wood file
5. Pick up a perpetrator
8. This and that
12. Title for Turkish leader
13. Tarantino's "____ Bill: Vol.1"
14. Ten million, in India
15. Type of word
16. Kent State state
17. Oohed partner
18. *Sleeping in a very fancy tent
20. Board game of diplomacy
21. Canada's favorit e tree?
22. Long time
23. Asian wild sheep
26. Galilei's first name
30. Ever, to a poet
31. Lease giver
34. Hokkaido native
35. Sends unwanted emails
37. Charlotte's creation
38. "Bravo! Bravo!"
39. Roughly (2 words)
40. Common spa treatment
42. Gobbled up
43. *Movie theater snack
45. Infer using data
47. Entrepreneur Mary Ash's middle name
48. Wiser
50. Decomposes
52. *Communication device
55. Veranda, in Honolulu
56. Rum-soaked cake
57. Shades of color
59. Those against
60. Tehran location
61. Small island
62. Violin's Renaissance predecessor
63. Cloud's domain
64. Left after deductions, in U.K.

DOWN

1. Escaped
2. Bug-eyed
3. Synagogue
4. Wide-brimmed straw hat
5. Nothing, in Latin
6. Skirt shape
7. *Online journal
8. *Exceptionally intelligent one
9. Aahs' partners
10. Hiker's journey
11. He had
13. Small hill rising up from veld
14. Classic TV's "lovely lady"
19. Pall ____ and ____ of America
22. ENT's first concern?
23. "The Fox and the Grapes" storyteller
24. Copy, slangily
25. Get the picture
26. Desert in China and Mongolia
27. Jasmine's kin
28. Related on mother's side
29. Revealed
32. Zeus in disguise
33. Not min or hr
36. *Nonalcoholic drink
38. LDS missionary
40. Cook in a skillet
41. Sea in the Mediterranean
44. Desert mirage
46. Prickly marine invertebrate
48. *Scornful remark
49. Keep someone ____ ____, or away from causing harm
50. Indian princess
51. On top of
52. Wading bird
53. Yorkshire river
54. Patty follower
55. Abbreviation on a bathroom door
58. Part of tennis match

SUDOKU

8				1				5
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			9	8	5		1	
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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

See answers on pages 19

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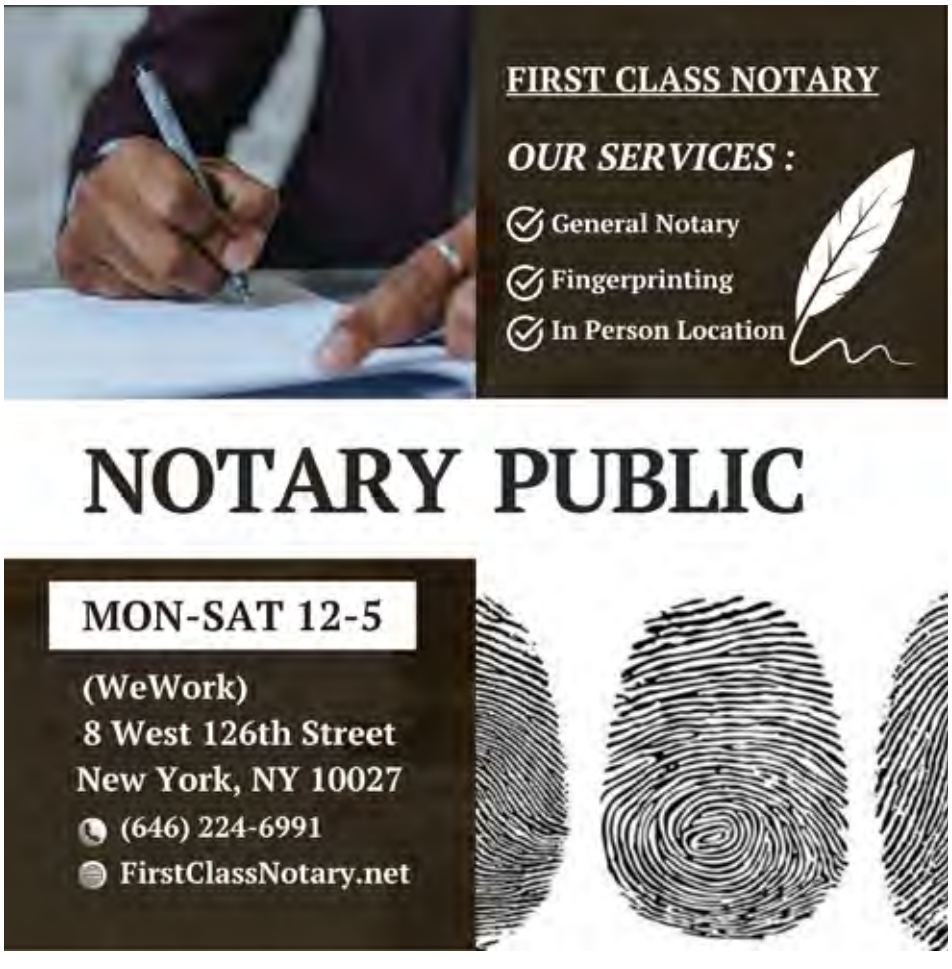

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"American Kings: A Biography of the Quarterback"

by Seth Wickersam

Review by Terri Schlichenmeyer, Harlem News contributor

Snap

And with that, and a catch that's picture-perfect, your team is on their way to another win. The guy that threw the football sure knows his stuff. He's worth every penny he's paid, and in the new book **"American Kings" by Seth Wickersham,** you'll see what it took to get there.

Like so many little boys, Seth Wickersham wanted to play pro football when he was growing up; specifically, he wanted to be a quarterback. Unlike most other boys, though, he took it to an extreme, becoming "obsessed" with throwing a football with the best accuracy, hoping to match the skills of the players he admired.

Alas, despite an entire childhood of near-constant practice and a few wins on the field in high school, he didn't make varsity and ended up playing as a receiver.

He knows now that to be a quarterback is to be a star, but it's also "a way of life."

Here, he writes about Arch Manning, "a legend, a folk hero, a song title… and the beginning of a family franchise…" Wickersham shares the story of Warren Moon, how he stepped up to help his mother when his father died, how domestic violence almost derailed his legacy, and the racism he quarterbacked under for years.

He spent time with Caleb Williams, "the first true professional amateur quarterback" to get money for playing at the college level. He interviewed James Harris, who was prepared to become a teacher "If the league didn't want a Black quarterback…" Wickersham "spent much of 2022 with" Andrew Luck, who "learned quickly that greatness requires an… unlimited selfishness." He writes about how Jack Elway influenced his son's choice of career, what Hollywood had to do with one pro footballer's life, and the post-career of the first player "to throw a consistently beautiful spiral."

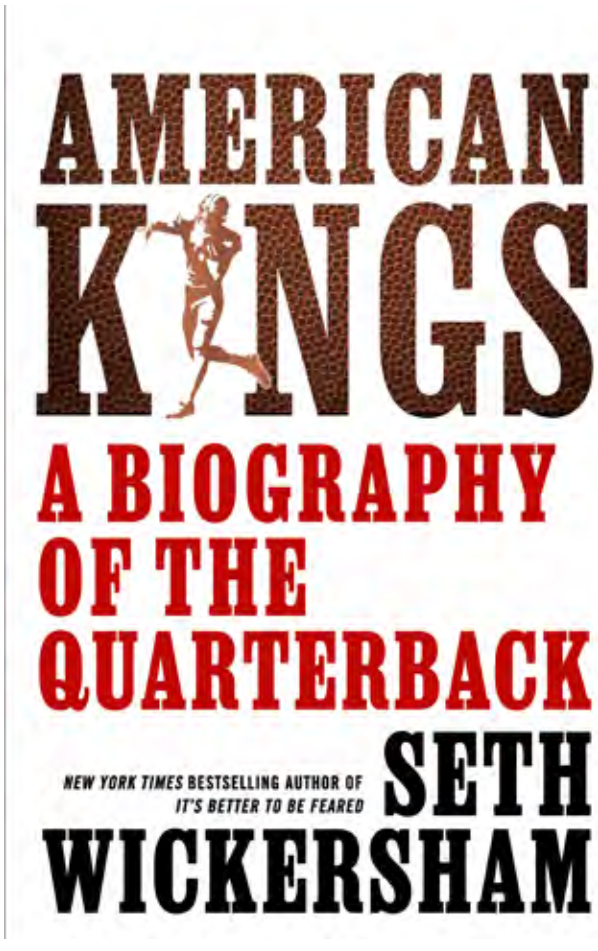
Says Wickersham about his subjects, "Anyone could throw a football. Only a quarterback could make people cheer."

Your favorite chair is oiled for smooth reclining and fast slam-downs. The snacks are laid in for at least a week, and beverages are on ice. You know exactly what you're wearing for the game this weekend. All you need is "American Kings" and you're set.

Author Seth Wickersham calls his book "a biography," but it's just as much a history, since he refers often to the earliest days of the game, as well as the etymology of the word "quarterback." That helps to lay a solid background and it adds color to a reader's knowledge about football itself, while explaining what it takes for men *and women* to stand out and to achieve gridiron greatness. On that, Wickersham is honest, sometimes calling out his subjects for their attitudes toward teammates and others. Blunt words are used that are unprintable in family newspapers, so beware if you're sharing.

Is your team's QB in this book? Maybe, or a past favorite surely is, so check out "American Kings" and see what you find. Football fans and pigskin prognosticators both will love this book in a snap.

"American Kings: A Biography of the Quarterback" by Seth Wickersham
c.2025,
Hyperion Avenue
$29.99
407 pages



Answers to Sudoku on page 17

SUDOKU ANSWERS

8	9	6	2	1	4	3	7	5
4	5	1	7	6	3	9	8	2
3	2	7	9	8	5	4	1	6
7	8	3	4	5	2	1	6	9
2	1	9	8	3	6	5	4	7
6	4	5	1	7	9	2	3	8
5	3	8	6	9	1	7	2	4
9	7	2	3	4	8	6	5	1
1	6	4	5	2	7	8	9	3

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125TH STREET HARLEM BID
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

#HarlemNeatStreets Campaign

#HarlemNeatStreets is a clean streets awareness campaign designed to cultivate the community's love for Harlem. The campaign uses social media, local ambassadors, gamified experiences and strategic partnerships to promote cleanliness and improve the visual appearance in the streetscape.

How does the Harlem Neat Street Challenge work?

Starting the Challenge: The Call to Action

Keeping Harlem clean is something we can all feel good about. When you take the Harlem Neat Streets Pledge, you are showing pride in our neighborhood and inspiring others to do the same. It is simple. Sign up on the Harlem 125th Street BID website, commit to doing your part, and spread the word. Encourage your friends and family to take the pledge too. Share your efforts on social media, tag @125thstreetbid, use the hashtag #HarlemNeatStreets and support local businesses that are part of the campaign. You will feel good knowing you are making a difference, you might win prizes like tote bags, T-shirts, and gift cards, and you could even be recognized as one of Harlem's "Neatest People.

Meet Mia, a teenager who lives in Harlem. Hello Harlem! I'm Mia, and I joined the Harlem Neat Streets Campaign to help keep our neighborhood beautiful. A clean Harlem means a safer, stronger community for all of us. I took the Neat Street Pledge on the Harlem 125th Street BID website, shared why it matters to me, and committed to doing my part. I post my clean-up photos and videos on social media, tag @125thstreetbid, and use #HarlemNeatStreets to inspire friends and family to join in. The pledge also earned me a #HarlemNeatStreets tote bag, a T-shirt, and a chance to win a $100 gift card to a local business. One piece of trash at a time, we can all make Harlem shine. Take the pledge and join us today

Let's work together to keep Harlem clean, safe, and beautiful. Take the pledge today.

Scan the QR Code to begin or go to:
https://harlembid.com/neat-streets/