



Brooklyn Kids Perform With Placido

Acclaimed tenor Placido Domingo meets with children from the Harmony Program before conducting the youth orchestra in a performance of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" at Gotham Hall in New York on Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2012. The program features children from Brooklyn and Harlem, who participate in the free but rigorous after-school program committed to improving society through music. AP Photo

Beautifying Fourth Avenue: Task Force Formed

It's One of the Busiest Thoroughfares in B'klyn

By Paula Katinas
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

SUNSET PARK — When Sunset Park High School was in its planning stages, Community Board 7 formed a task force composed of civic and business leaders to work with the New York City Department of Education to ensure that the school met the needs of neighborhood students.

The task force, led by Julie Stein-Brockway, executive director of the Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, was widely hailed as a model of community involvement in education. The task force had a hand in designing the building, made suggestions on curricula and pushed for Corrine Vinal to be selected as the principal. The school, located on Fourth Avenue and 35th Street, opened in September 2009.

Board 7 is hoping to repeat the success of the task force in the fields of transportation and neighborhood beautification.

The board has formed a task force to explore
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BROOKLYN TODAY

FRIDAY,
JANUARY 20, 2012



Good morning. Today is the 20th day of the year. It is the birth anniversary (1896) of comedian George Burns, who was most famous as part of the duo Burns and Allen, with his wife Gracie Allen. The two had a long career in radio, in film and on television. Later he played the roles of God and the Devil in the Oh! God movies. He died at age 100 in 1996.

Well-known people who were born today include comedian-actor Arte Johnson ("Rowan & Martin's Laugh In"), director David Lynch, ("Twin Peaks," "Blue Velvet"), TV host Bill Maher ("Politically Incorrect") and country singer Slim Whitman.

★ ★ ★

Tomorrow from 6 to 9 p.m., the Veteran Corps of the Artillery Mess Dinner at Army Garrison Fort Harrison will celebrate the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans. During this battle, the final battle of the War of 1812, American forces under Major Gen. Andrew Jackson defeated a British force that was intent on capturing New Orleans. The event will take place at the Fort Hamilton Community Club. ... Tomorrow at 11:45 a.m. at Congregation Beth Elohim, 274 Garfield Place, several elected officials will sponsor a forum about Neighborhood Slow Zones. This program reduces speed limits from 30 to 20 mph within a select area and adds safety measures.

Today's News

POLICE ARE SEARCHING FOR THREE people wanted for two Brooklyn robberies. In the first robbery, on Nov. 29, the suspects entered the Dermer Pharmacy at 2064 Flatbush Ave., displayed guns and removed money and prescription medications from the location. In the second robbery, on Dec. 12 at Harrico Pharmacy, 214 Stanhope St., the suspects pulled out their guns and gave a list of medications to an employee. After getting the medication, they removed money from the register and fled. The suspects are described as three black men about 6 feet tall, ages 30 to 40, all wearing dark-colored jackets. One was wearing a Sacramento Kings baseball cap.

ON MONDAY, JAN. 16, A HISPANIC MAN
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Grimm To Protest Customs Move at Red Hook Terminal

Today at 2 p.m., Rep. Michael G. Grimm (R-Bay Ridge/Staten Island) will visit the Red Hook Container Terminal to discuss efforts to overturn a decision by U.S. Customs to cease inspections at the Red Hook Container Terminal. The policy change, he says, could put 700 local jobs at risk, put an estimated 3,700 uninspected trucks on our roads, increase road maintenance costs by more than \$1 million a year, and increase operating fees by more than \$2 million.

Kevin Spacey Is Richard III in BAM Production

'Part Groucho Marx, Part Moammar Gadhafi'

By Marc Kennedy
Associated Press

FORT GREENE — After more than three hours of *Richard III* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, after all the death and bloodshed has finally given way to peace, one thought quickly comes to mind: Will someone please cut Kevin Spacey down?

As the victorious Richmond speaks the play's final lines, Spacey's Richard is behind him, hanging from his ankles over the stage like a side of beef. It's yet another sign of how far Spacey and director Sam Mendes have gone to bring this very current-sounding Shakespeare history play to life.

Spacey's Richard is overblown and cartoonish and yet impossible to stop watching. He is part Groucho Marx and part Moammar Gadhafi — a sarcastic, snarling tornado of resentment whose reign of terror somehow is funny. Not often does Richard's line, "I wish the bastards dead," get laughs.

If Sir Ian McKellen's Richard was a smooth, icy plotter, Spacey's is an over-the-top, manic serial killer. It's almost sad to see him strung up at the end like Mussolini. Producers should really stock popcorn at the concession stands.

This *Richard III*, which opened Wednesday, is the final production of the Bridge Project, which
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In this image provided by PBS, two young raccoon "kits" explore their surroundings. Photo courtesy of WNET/Channel 13

Raccoons Are Getting Bolder, PBS Nature Episode Reveals

Some Brooklyn Areas Are Overrun With the Pests

By Raanan Geberer
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

BROOKLYN — In the last few years, raccoons in such Brooklyn neighborhoods as Park Slope, Greenwood Heights, Prospect Heights and Sunset Park have become increasingly bold. In one well-publicized incident, a Park Slope homeowner opened her kitchen drawer only to find a raccoon. Their numbers have increased twenty-fold in

the past 70 years in the U.S.

Obviously, the raccoon problem isn't only found in Brooklyn, or even Queens. "Raccoon Nation," an episode of PBS' "Nature" program, which will air here on Wednesday, Feb. 8, examines the critters in Toronto, Chicago, and even Japan and Germany.

And what they've learned is that no matter what methods people try, raccoons have the ability to learn new things and outwit them. This is clear when, in one part of the episode, pest control experts installed fixtures to block the route of drainpipes — perhaps the favorite access routes for raccoons. This worked — but only until they figured out how to get around the fixtures.

Aside from the annoyance factor, especially to people who happen to be growing crops in their back yard, raccoons can be a health hazard. They often consume garbage that contains roundworms. They're immune to the worms, but they then excrete them in their feces, which can then contaminate pets and other animals.

The episode mainly follows a family of raccoons in Toronto, using electronic tools. It finds that every group of raccoons has its own territory, often only a few blocks wide. When people go to
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In this theater image released by Boneau/Bryan-Brown, Chandler Williams, left, and Kevin Spacey are shown in a scene from *Richard III*, performing at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York. AP Photo

Gowanus Residents Warned of Dangers From Canal Cleanup

On Monday at 6:30 p.m. at P.S. 58, 330 Smith St., the Gowanus Canal Community Development Corp. is hosting a public information meeting to alert area residents of impending health risks once National Grid begins the cleanup of the Public Place site in February. When coal tar is exposed to the atmosphere during excavation, potentially harmful vapors can result.

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