

The Metro Section

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Metro Briefing

NEW YORK

MANHATTAN: A PROPOSAL FOR RECREATION CENTERS Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum proposed yesterday that corporate sponsorships be sought for six recreation centers in low-income areas of the Bronx, Manhattan and Brooklyn. The proposal is a response to a plan to impose a \$50 or \$75 annual membership fee starting on July 1. Ms. Gotbaum said that while she understood the need for revenue, "to impose membership fees that stifle use of our recreation centers for the sake of a negligible boost in revenue — that's simply unjustifiable." The Parks and Recreation Department said in a statement, "Raising operations money for recreation centers is a very difficult undertaking, but if the public advocate would like to spearhead such an effort, we would be more than willing to look at how private moneys could be used to enhance services." *SEWELL CHAN (NYT)*

BROOKLYN: CITY WILL TRACK EMERGENCY VEHICLES Dispatchers deciding how to deploy equipment in emergencies will be able to use a real-time electronic system to track all of the city's ambulances and Fire Department vehicles by the end of the summer, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta announced yesterday in Brooklyn. The new \$50 million system, introduced in September 2005 in south Brooklyn and on Staten Island, is expected to reduce response times by letting dispatchers see the location and status of emergency vehicles and equipment throughout the city. In the initial program, city officials said, the average response time for emergency medical services was reduced by 33 seconds for the most serious life-threatening emergencies. *DIANE CARDWELL (NYT)*

CORTLANDT: OFFICER SHOTS WIFE AND KILLS HIMSELF A Yonkers detention officer apparently shot his wife and killed himself yesterday morning in what Westchester investigators are calling a probable murder-suicide attempt. The officer, Jerry Moray, 47, was found dead in his house in Cortlandt about 9:15, with two bullets in his chest, the Westchester County police said. His wife, Angela Moray, 37, was also found in the house. She had been shot three times in the arm and chest, the police said. She was taken by helicopter to Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, where she was still listed in critical condition last night. *JENNIFER S. LEE (NYT)*

BRONX: INMATES SUE, CLAIMING BEATINGS A group of 15 Rikers Island inmates sued the city in Federal District Court yesterday, claiming that correction officers beat them after an officer was injured in a fight with an inmate in October. "We are trying to bring attention to excessive force on Rikers Island," said Leo Glickman, a lawyer for the inmates. He said his clients had had nothing to do with the officer's injury and were beaten while handcuffed. Michael Saucier, a Correction Department spokesman, said that the department would not comment until its investigation was complete. *(NYT)*

YONKERS: FORMER TOP DEMOCRAT ADMITS TAX CRIMES A former leader of the Yonkers Democratic Committee pleaded guilty yesterday to obstructing the Internal Revenue Service and failing to file tax returns, said Michael Garcia, the United States attorney in Manhattan.

The official, Ralph Arred, 64, first came under investigation by the I.R.S. in the 1980's, after auditors learned that he had failed to pay \$800,000 in taxes owed by his construction company, Arred Electrical. Instead of paying, investigators said, Mr. Arred spent the next 10 years lying to federal officials and trying to conceal his assets in dummy accounts. He also failed to file income tax returns between 2001 and 2004. Mr. Arred faces up to four years in prison. *ANAHAD O'CONNOR (NYT)*

JEFFERSON VALLEY: TRUMP STATE PARK ANNOUNCED Gov. George E. Pataki and Donald Trump yesterday announced the creation of the Donald J. Trump State Park in two areas along the Taconic State Parkway. Mr. Trump donated the 436 acres of woodland in Putnam and Westchester Counties to the state. State Parks Commissioner Bernadette Castro said the park would open after wildlife was inventoried and trails were cut. *(AP)*

MINEOLA: BANKER'S KILLER SENTENCED A man convicted of fatally shooting a banker last year while posing as a police officer during a fake traffic stop was sentenced yesterday in Nassau County Court to life in prison without parole. The defendant, Reginald Gousse, 32, of Queens, was convicted last month of murder, attempted robbery and criminal impersonation in the January 2005 slaying of James Gottlieb, 49, a bank manager from Garden City South who was shot after being stopped in Franklin Square by an unmarked car with flashing emergency lights. Mr. Gottlieb, a father of three, was shot as he tried to walk to a nearby house. *(AP)*

BROOKLYN: MAN CHARGED IN UNCLE'S SHOOTING A Brooklyn man was arrested yesterday in connection with the fatal shooting of his uncle at the apartment they shared in Crown Heights, the police said. The man, Orangel S. Hill, 27, shot his uncle, David Husband, 69, six times shortly after midnight at their apartment on President Street, the police charged. A pistol was recovered, and Mr. Hill has been charged with murder, the police said. A law enforcement official said it was believed that the men had argued over the mail. *(NYT)*

NEW JERSEY

TRENTON: VOTERS REJECT MANY SCHOOL BUDGETS New Jersey voters rejected nearly half of the state's public school budgets in nonbinding referendums on Tuesday, a reflection of fears over rising property taxes, education experts and lawmakers said yesterday. Municipalities cast ballots for a combined \$10.5 billion worth of spending proposals in 549 districts, of which 293 budgets — or about 53 percent — were approved. The 256 vetoed budgets, virtually all of which will probably be approved on appeals, represent the highest rate of defeat in 12 years. Gov. Jon S. Corzine's \$30.9 billion budget left aid to most schools largely unchanged from last year's figures. In New Jersey, municipalities are responsible for covering education costs but are not allowed to impose additional taxes, like a sales tax, to help pay for them. Critics said the system had led to an overreliance on revenue from property taxes. *RICHARD G. JONES (NYT)*