

our Local Beat

news items written and collected by the Star-Review editorial staff

Youth softball league to open on schedule.

After much close consultation with the Parks Department, the Youth Softball League coordinated by the Red Hook Justice Center will have their season as scheduled despite the temporary closing of four fields due to lead contamination. There will be practice on Saturday the 21st. The season will officially begin on Saturday, April 28th with opening ceremonies at 9 am at Field #9. For more information or to sign up, contact Viviana Gordon at 718 923-8274 or vgor-don@courts.state.ny.us

Love Your Library book sale

The Carroll Gardens Library will be hosting their second annual book sale on May 19th. At this time they are looking for volunteers to help on the day of the sale, as well as to bake for the bake sale and help sort the books.

For more information and to volunteer, contact Nina Guralnick at NGuralnick@gmail.com or 917-951-8194.

Local Post Office to reopen as a private postal center

For 17 years, Rita Faraone operated a satellite post office station at 257 Columbia Street. On March 30th she was forced to close as postal union issues demanded that stations like hers cease operating. She has now reopened as a private postal facility, where packages can be mailed and stamps can be purchased. A USPS truck will still stop by on a daily basis to collect mail. However, since this is now a private facility, an extra fee will be tacked on to each purchase because it no longer has an official affiliation with the post office. Rita is now operating as a private business. In the future she will add services including making copies and selling money orders.

The hours have been extended, Monday to Friday from 10 am - 4 pm, and Saturday noon to 4 pm.

Youth Summit

State Senator Velmanette Montgomery will be holding a Youth Summit early next month at the Polytechnic Institute of New York University in Metrotech. The event, scheduled for May 3rd, will feature special guest speaker Hon. H. Carl McCall, who serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees at State University of New York, (SUNY). The Youth Summit will take place between 4-6 pm in the Pfizer Auditorium at 5 Metrotech Center in Brooklyn. For more information, contact the Senator's office at (718) 643-6140.

RHI celebrates 10th birthday

On Thursday, April 26th, the Red Hook Initiative, (RHI), will be celebrating their 10th anniversary providing services for Red Hook youth with a gala party at 797 Hicks Street on the corner of West 9th Street. The party begins at 6 pm and will include a tour of the building as well as genuine community fellowship. Saturday the 28th, from 11 am - 3 pm is the annual RHI Health Fair. There will be free health

screenings as well as prizes, music and entertainment.

Opening Day of the Red Hook Youth Baseball League

Opening Day Ceremonies will be held on Saturday, April 28th at 9 am at Field #9, (at the corner of Bay and Henry Streets.) The Red Hook Youth Baseball League is a collaboration between the Red Hook Community Justice Center, Kings County District Attorney's Office, local businesses, and community volunteers. The league is about more than balls and strikes; everyone involved works to instill in the young ballplayers the highest standards of sportsmanship, leadership and respect. The philosophy of the league is to provide Red Hook youth with structured, competitive baseball, while at the same time encouraging their continued success in school by supporting them in becoming contributing members of the community. This league is for boys and girls aged 10-12. There is still time to sign up. Call Viviana at 718-923-8274 for more information.

CB 6 on Barclay's Center

On Wednesday, April 11th, CB 6 board members met to vote on committee recommendation, including liquor licenses. Of interest was discussion of the previous night's presentation by Barclays Center regarding the State Liquor Authority application. They are bound by something called a "500 foot rule," which refers to the already existing three establishments selling alcohol within 500 feet. Several board members pointed out that the approval was no doubt a foregone conclusion. However, Gary Reilly, committee head, explained that this gives the community a chance to add stipulations to the recommendation, seeking concessions from Barclay's such as sound amelioration and such.

Brad Lander and Joan Millman both attended the session, as did Dan Wiley from Nydia Velazquez's office, who spoke a bit about the recent post office satellite station closing, as well as the results of the recent redistricting, in which Nydia was given more of Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights in her district.

Ralph F. Amendola (August 22, 1934 - March 30th, 2012)

The Red Hook community laments the passing of Ralph F. Amendola, who died late last month at the age of 77. Nicknamed "Dock" because he always carried band aids, Amendola grew up in Red Hook and worked on the piers before opening his own deli on Van Brunt Street. He attended services at Visitation Church and frequented the VFW Post, where in recent years he could usually be found sitting at a table near the front window.

Important justice workshop

A speaker from the New York Civil Liberties Union will be a special guest at the Red Hook Community Justice Center's April Community Education Workshop Series event. The workshop will be held at PS 15 on April 25th at 7:00 p.m. The Justice Center

partnered with the Red Hook Civic Association to create the workshop, which will address the NYPD's stop and frisk policy, as well as provide information on citizens' rights in police encounters and advice on what to do when subjected to a stop. The learning process is dual purpose: Red Hook residents should look at the workshop as a chance to educate their local police officers, community leaders and court staff on what they are experiencing in the street.

Hicks Street Tragedy

On Saturday, April 12th, a deaf couple visiting from Washington DC suffered a terrible tragedy when their five-year-old son was hit by a cab as he darted into the street. The son, also deaf, suffered brain damage and at press time was fighting for his life at University Hospital of Brooklyn -SUNY Downstate Medical Center, after being transferred there from LICH, where his parents brought him.

Joseph and Eva Keith, and their son Timothy, were staying at the Comfort Inn on Seabring Street in Red Hook. They were walking towards the Brooklyn Bridge along Hicks Street when the accident occurred around 5 pm. The driver told police that he could not stop in time and was not charged.

Working Moms Support Group

A support group for working moms will be starting on April 17th at Madison Rose, 313 Court Street. The group will meet for seven consecutive Thursdays from 7:30 - 8:30 pm. There is a fee of \$175 for the sessions.

The purpose of these sessions is to bring together mothers who are trying to balance new motherhood with their career and meet others in the same situation.

Madison Rose is a maternity and children's resale boutique. They host support groups and classes for mothers and expectant mothers. For information call (347) 689-3365.

PortSide takes an office

PortSide is the organization that operates the Mary A. Whalen. The ship doubles as a museum and sits off the Red Hook Container Terminal. This month they moved their corporate office off of the ship to a donated space at 145 Columbia Street.

According to a poster seen on Van Brunt Street, the reason for the move is "so we can more easily meet with the community and work with volunteers... and because we have a large collection of maritime artifacts and art to sell."

PortSide has been constrained by its location in a high security area. They wish to berth the ship in a location more accessible to the public. For more information call Carolina Salguero at (917) 414-0565.

New tree guards on Van Brunt

Gary Baum, of City Beautiful Carpentry, was part of a team that built 40 wooden tree guards across a one mile stretch of Van Brunt Street. The guards were part of a beautification project Baum's company was contracted for by SBIDC and RHED.

Installation was completed near the end of March. The tree guards have a durable exterior and are sealed with timber oil. They will require very little maintenance and can be resealed as needed. Baum says they should last for years as they are and add a sense of history and artistry to the neighborhood.

City Beautiful Carpentry is a Brooklyn company specializing in unique projects throughout the city. "We do high end carpentry for rooftop gardens and we like to give back to the community by doing projects like this," Baum says.

Garden carpentry and is known for their unique work throughout the area. The reclaimed timbers used to make the guards were from the Coney Island board walk, NYC water towers and cooling towers from just outside of the city. The grove Redwood Timbers from the 1930s not only enhance the appearance of the streets, but also serve to protect the trees.



Added Value holds a Harvest Festival every October at their Red Hook farm where this photo was taken (Star-Review photo)

Added Value to move

Added Value, the non-profit organization that promotes a sustainable Red Hook, is looking for a new office space after receiving notice of an unaffordable rent increase at the current location on the corner of Van Brunt and Wolcott Street. According to Executive Director Ian Marvy, they are looking for a new space by September.

Added Value runs the community farm across from Ikea, providing educational and work opportunities for local teenagers. They provide fresh vegetables and produce to local restaurants, operate a farmer's market and host community events throughout the growing season.