

AT A GLANCE

BOROWIDE — Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. said yesterday he is “disturbed by media reports indicating that only 2% of Bronx residents have returned the 2010 census questionnaire.”

He noted an undercount of Bronxites will mean less funding for government programs.

The basic census contains only 10 questions, and takes only 10 minutes, he pointed out, urging Bronxites to fill out the form and send it back before the April 1 deadline.

HUNTS POINT — The Point CDC will hold a free screening and panel discussion tonight of the documentary “Flyin’ Cut Sleeves,” about street gangs in the South Bronx during the 1980s.

The event is from 6 to 9 p.m. in the Living Edge Theater at the Point, 940 Garrison Ave. Panel members include co-producers Henry Chalfant and Rita Fecher, a former South Bronx teacher who became intimately involved with the gangs, as well as former gang members. For more information, call (718) 542-4139 or visit www.thepoint.org.

WHITE PLAINS — A 21-year-old Yorktown man admitted in court that he killed his ex-girlfriend’s dog by snapping its spine.

Westchester County district attorney Janet DiFiore said Jonathan King pleaded guilty Wednesday to aggravated animal cruelty and faces up to two years in prison when sentenced May 19.

MOTT HAVEN — The Bronx Council on the Arts and Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture will present a “Prima Divas” free concert on April 7, featuring BRIO winner Alkebulan/Tea-na Rodriguez, The Rebel Songstress and BxIndie artists Melissa Diaz and Sleeping Phoenix.

The 7 p.m. show at the Hostos Repertory Theater is in conjunction with that evening’s Bronx Culture Trolley tour. Although free, show tickets must be picked up at the box office. For more information, call (718) 518-4455. **Bureau Staff**

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VICTORY FOR PARKING

BY DANIEL BEEKMAN
DAILY NEWS WRITER

THE EAST BRONX won another battle yesterday in its war against overdevelopment.

The City Council approved a zoning change to close loopholes that allowed developers of mid-rise buildings to waive parking requirements, a trick many neighbors despised.

“We don’t need more housing,” said resident Andrew Chirico. “We need more parking.”

When the city downzoned much of the area in 2004, it prohibited developers from building rowhouses where one- and two-family houses are the norm.

Council closes loophole for developers

But the downzone, which also included suburban-style parking regulations, skipped some blocks in Pelham Bay and Zerega, where taller buildings are permitted.

On those blocks, some developers subdivided lots to escape the parking regulations. Developers who crammed apartment houses onto tiny lots were also allowed to slash parking spots.

East Bronx resident Mary Jane Musano called the loopholes “ridiculous,” saying park-

ing blues “pit neighbor against neighbor” in the area.

“I can’t tell you how often I see neighbors fight over parking,” Musano said.

The change, sponsored by local City Councilman James Vacca, holds developers to local parking regulations — no matter what.

“It puts more teeth into our downzone efforts,” Vacca said.

The change should cramp development at some construction sites, such as 1701 Parkview Ave., said Vacca, noting that

parking regulations could push the Pelham Bay building’s developer to add more parking spots and scrap several apartments.

“The neighborhood is congested already,” Vacca said. “Another apartment house will strain the infrastructure.”

Chirico applauded the change because he considers overdevelopment the cause of most problems in the East Bronx, from empty storefronts to crowded classrooms.

When Pelham Bay and Zerega residents park on the street, there are no spots for shoppers, he said. Many residents drive to work in Westchester County.

Commission nukes company spin-off

BY ABBY LUBY
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

THE PUBLIC Service Commission yesterday turned down Indian Point nuclear plant owner Entergy’s bid to spin off six nuclear power plants into a new company.

The PSC said the Entergy spin-off “was not in the public interest” because the new company, Enexus, would start operating the power plant with a long-term debt of \$4.5 billion.

The commission called the debt excessive and the financial risks significant.

Westchester County has long been against the spin-off. Documents filed by the county claim the new company wouldn’t “assume responsibility for unfunded liabilities” and ratepayers would be affected.

As a limited liability, if there was an accident at Indian Point, there is no guarantee Entergy would help Enexus pay for any cleanup, passing the cost instead to millions of ratepayers, according to the documents.

Mike Burns, spokesperson for New Orleans-based Entergy Corporation, said the company was disappointed with the PSC decision. “Our petition met the New York legal standards. The spin-off was in the best interest of the stakeholders.”

Although Entergy can appeal the decision, Burns said he was unable to comment on the utility company’s next step. PSC approval is necessary for the Entergy spin-off.

Meanwhile, Attorney General Andrew Cuomo said last week if

there was a severe accident at Indian Point, Entergy wouldn’t have enough funds to clean up radioactive contamination spreading to New York City, 27 miles to the south.

Cuomo, who opposes continued operation of the 40-year-old plant, said in a filing with the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that in the aftermath of an accident there, 17 million people in a 50-mile radius would be dangerously exposed to contamination.

The board and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission are reviewing Entergy’s license renewal application to run Indian Point for another 20 years. Fifteen additional contentions have been filed by other governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

Cuomo, who is expected to run for governor, claimed Entergy’s calculations on numbers of people affected by a possible accident was based on outdated information. He also believes that a new nuclear power plant would never be built where Indian Point is today because of its proximity to New York City. Earlier this month, the NRC gave Indian Point top safety ratings despite several accidental shutdowns and faulty tests for emergency sirens. The good rating does not include plant security. Because of unplanned shutdowns last year, the NRC is stepping up inspections at Indian Point, starting April 19.

Indian Point, located in Buchanan, Westchester County, supplies between 15% and 20% of electricity to the regional grid.



A worker steadies the ladder for a peer yesterday as he fixes the clock outside Macy’s in Herald Square. Photo by Robert Sabo/Daily News