

NEWS FROM

[MAY]

Gale A. Brewer

MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

1 Centre Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007 | www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov | (212) 669-8300

Save the dates, and eggshells, and all other food scraps.

Two years ago, I worked with parents from eight West Side public schools to test the Food Waste Composting Program in a four-month pilot project. The pilot was a resounding success: 450 pounds of food waste was diverted from landfills per day, and thousands of Styrofoam trays were eliminated from the waste stream—reducing overall garbage volume reduction by 85% across the eight schools. The Department of Education expanded the program into 20 schools the following school year, and subsequently replicated the same model in schools throughout the City.

Last year, a new Local Law established a Residential Composting Program to collect similar organic wastes from big residential buildings located along the pickup routes of the composting schools. The Dept. of Sanitation (DSNY) helps by providing composting bins at no cost to households within the participating buildings.

Two buildings in Manhattan are participating: The Helena, with 597 units at 601 West 57 St., has diverted about 1,000 pounds of organic wastes per week, or preventing 26 tons of compostable waste from going to landfills each year; and Morningside Gardens, a 980-unit complex on the Upper West Side, which has achieved a 60% voluntary participation rate among residents. Early numbers from their first six months of the pilot shows a 35% rate of organic waste diversion, according to GrowNYC, the program's administrator and technical assistance provider.

On West 83rd St. the DSNY and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) have partnered to test a one-block composting program in an effort to reduce the presence of rats. By conducting the social marketing to encourage residents to dispose organic wastes in DSNY-issued compost bins, DOHMH hopes to reduce the amount of food scraps in regular trash bags, cutting off one of the key sources where rodents have access to food. The pilot has expanded to two more blocks, one on the Lower East Side and one in Washington Heights.

In with the old.

We lost a piece of New York's history when the Rizzoli Bookstore closed last month. But I believe we can save other important parts of our city's history; that's why I am working on legislation that will improve the landmarking procedure in New York City to ensure a more transparent and timely process by which the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) considers the potential landmark status of buildings. The New York Times editorialized on my effort April 21st, and it's worth a read here: <http://nyti.ms/1eXGpet>.

Banning the box.

Too many employers include on their basic job applications a "box" which the applicant is asked to check if they have ever been convicted of a crime. The Bloomberg administration eliminated the practice for city employment—as have large private employers like Target. The Fair Chance Act, which I just co-sponsored in the City Council with Councilmember Jumaane Williams—and originally introduced when I served on

the Council—would make it illegal for most employers to include that box on applications or consider an applicant's criminal record until they are actually about to offer them a job. That way, those who have successfully served their time and are searching for work get a fairer shot at available openings.

Committee formed to create a monument to 9/11 responders and survivors.

To this day, people are still suffering—and still dying—from the events and aftermath thirteen years ago. For them, 9/11 is not in the distant past, it's something they have to live with every day. Over 17,000 people were treated last year under the James Zadroga 9/11 Health & Compensation Act, which is due to expire in 2016.

That's why I've formed a committee to create a simple, elegant monument to the actions of those who rushed to the towers or lived or worked in the area and are sick as a result. A monument to their bravery will help remind all New Yorkers, and all Americans, that they deserve support. While there are many monuments to the victims who died on the tragic day of 9-11, but none in New York City that focus our memories and honor those who are sick and living with injuries from their actions or who have already died from their illnesses.

Tax liens to be sold to collection agencies on May 16.

When city property taxes and water bills go unpaid, they become tax liens on your property that may be sold to the highest bidder—even collection agencies or investors! Each year the City Department of Finance sells tax liens in an auction, and this year's sale is scheduled for May 16. So the last day to pay your debt or enter into a payment agreement is May 15, 2014. The list of properties is available for review at www.nyc.gov/finance.

EVENTS

Paid Sick Day Town Halls co-sponsored with Public Advocate Tish James.

Public Advocate Tish James and I are sponsoring Town Halls in every borough to explain the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees under the new expansion of my Paid Sick Leave law. The City's Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), the body which enforces the new law, will make a presentation at each Town Hall and answer your questions. Manhattan's event was held April 30, but the other borough events are: Brooklyn, May 12; Queens, May 13; Staten Island, May 28; Bronx, May 29.

To find locations or information if you can't attend on these dates, visit nyc.gov/PaidSickLeave or call 311 for more information, including who the law applies to, the required Notice of Employee Rights, one-page overviews, FAQs, events and information on filing a complaint. New Yorkers can also follow DCA's handle @NYCDCA on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram using the hashtag #paysickleave, and employers can ask questions online on DCA's Live Chat for Business platform from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Small Business Administration offers bi-monthly entrepreneurship sessions.

The SBA offers start-ups, early growth stage entrepreneurs, and veterans the chance to learn the basics of business startups. The following three events will be held in lower Manhattan, at 290 Broadway, 30th Floor, Room 3. All are free, but you must RSVP for each one by emailing NewYorkDO@sba.gov.

- ELEMENTS OF A BUSINESS PLAN: what goes into it? May 6, 2014 - 9:30 am-11:00 am
- MARKETING STRATEGY BASICS on a shoestring budget. May 20, 2014 - 9:30 am-11:00 am
- THINKING OF STARTING A BUSINESS WORKSHOP: steps to take, what to do, and how to go about it. June 3, 2014 - 9:30 am-11:00 am

1100 Watercolor Society opens its Spring Show at my office gallery Friday, May 9.

"Adventures in Watercolor" is the Spring Show in the office gallery this month with works by Jane Atlas, Brigitte Bentele, Sheila Cappelletti, Alison Cattan, Charles Houghton, Ruth Hurd, Joan E. Lane, Judith Lynn, Sara Markel, Jackie Monforte, Susanne McGinnis, Leonie Newman, Michael Orzechowski, Kyoko Park, and Tony Spano. Please join us on May 9 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM or during regular business hours until May 30. My office is located at 1 Centre Street (South entrance), 19th floor.