

AT A GLANCE

CITYWIDE — Resorts World New York has launched a new website that will help people browse and apply for the more than 2,000 jobs that the Aqueduct racino is expected to generate. In addition to job listings, www.RWNNewYork.com will alert its visitors about employment events and job fairs leading up to the opening of Resorts World New York, which is slated for spring.

EAST BRONX — City Councilman James Vacca (photo) will host three visits from the MetroCard van within his district on Monday.

Local residents who do not frequent subway stations or other authorized MetroCard sellers will be able to purchase or add money to their Unlimited Ride, Pay-Per-Ride or Reduced-Fare MetroCards.

From 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., the van will be stationed at the Key Food Supermarket at 751 Lydig Ave., at Holland Ave. From 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., it will be stationed at the Morris Park Library at 985 Morris Park Ave., between Radcliff and Colden Aves. From 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m., the final stop will be at Associated Supermarket at 2476 Williamsbridge Road, between Waring and Mace Aves.

Call (718) 931-1721 for more information.

FORDHAM — Monroe College and Per Scholas have inked a deal giving graduates of the Per Scholas computer training course nine college credits if they continue their education at Monroe's School of Information Technology.

The course prepares students for certification to become computer hardware technicians.

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DOIN' SAFETY DANCE

BY **ABBY LUBY**
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

A NEW REPORT showing Yonkers as the second safest major city in the nation last year is being disputed by the head of its police union.

The report issued by the Yonkers Police Department, using statistics from the annual FBI crime report, showed the state's fourth largest city only second to Irvine, Calif., among 125 major cities. New York City came in seventh.

But Yonkers police union President Keith Olson disputed the reliability of the report.

"I just don't buy it. Safety can't be judged by a statistic," he said. "Talk to the people living in the east and west side of Yonkers and they will tell you they don't feel safe."

Yonkers' ranking stirs feud

Mayor Phil Amicone, however, praised the police department for maintaining public safety.

"Our police officers are among the finest in the country, and these numbers bear that out," the mayor said. "The people of Yonkers should be proud of the YPD and confident in their ability to keep us all safe."

While he appreciated the mayor's kind words, Olson called the statistics misleading.

"Municipalities like Yonkers are responsible for collecting the data. In our case, we have no computerized system to do that, it's still an archaic system where someone physically looks

through the reports," said Olson, whose union is in contract talks with the city.

Olson suggested that some crimes may be misinterpreted.

Crime is still prevalent in the third and fourth police precincts, where fewer police walk the streets since Yonkers' budget cuts more than a year ago.

"These areas are under the threat of violence every day, where we don't have regular foot patrols and only an occasional car patrol," said Yonkers City Councilwoman Joan Gronowski, whose district includes those precincts.

The YPD crime report was released just one week after state

Controller Thomas DiNapoli condemned Yonkers officials for lax oversight of the department's excessive use of overtime.

In 2008, \$35.2 million went for police overtime. Last year, the city downsized the department to 587 cops, a level not seen since 1989, said Olson, who argued the city has had to make up for the loss with increased overtime.

"We really need about 800 cops to handle the 190,000 calls we get each year. That's how many they have in Rochester, a town compared to Yonkers in the crime rate report," said Olson.

Amicone said the city plans to hire more police in the beginning of the year.

"I'm confident that the new officers will only add to what is already a terrific department," he said.



Joel Berg, executive director of NYC Coalition against Hunger, discusses increased demand at city food pantries and kitchens. Photo by Viorel Florescu

Boost in food stamps helps ease boro's hunger pains

BY **CORINNE LESTCH**
DAILY NEWS WRITER

IT'S NO SURPRISE city food pantries and soup kitchens are in high demand this holiday season.

In the Bronx, with the highest number of hungry people in the nation, demand for food has increased by 74% over last year.

But most hungry New Yorkers are able to get by, thanks to federal stimulus funding for emergency food and boosts to the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Food Stamps Program.

The program will provide more than \$3.2 billion for food purchases just in NYC, up \$458 million last year, according to a newly released report by the New York City Coalition Against Hunger.

The report was discussed at various emergency food locations across the city yesterday, including the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corp. in the Bronx.

"I think in times of high demand, we still need to continue to provide the information for people eligible for food stamps to sign up for the program," said Councilwoman Annabel Palma (D-Soundview), who was at the event.

The Coalition's report, dubbed "Hungry New Yorkers Barely Hang On," comes on the heels of a new health initiative spearheaded by City Council Speaker Christine Quinn called FoodWorks, which proposes 59 ways to combat pressing food policy issues — including hunger.

"It is unacceptable that more than half of the city's food pantries and soup kitchens do not have enough food and money to meet the growing demand," said Joel Berg, executive director of the coalition.

The report explains how pantries and kitchens were better able to meet demand this year. With the help of stimulus spending in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, a household of three would receive \$63 more per month in benefits.

There has been a recent influx of people looking for food help at her district office, Palma said.

"I don't think a day goes by where someone doesn't come in asking for help," she said. "As soon as we get an emergency food box, it's gone. You could just imagine the needs that are out there."