

# Neighborhood UPDATE



**MHACY**  
Municipal Housing Authority  
for the City of Yonkers

**JUNE 2022**

## THE MUNICIPAL HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR THE CITY OF YONKERS

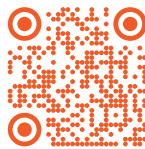
### A Letter from Wilson Kimball



I am heartbroken. Nearly every day there is another mass murder in America. As I write this, we are all reeling from the May 14th murder of 10 African Americans at the Tops grocery store in Buffalo, New York, the murder of 19 elementary School students in Uvalde, Texas, and the shooting of 4 people at the hospital campus in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

### June is gun violence awareness month.

Here are some disturbing facts I learned that I thought you should also know so that you can reach out to your elected representatives and help stop gun violence:



1. Each day 12 children die from gun violence in America. Another 32 are shot and injured.



Each day 12 children die from gun violence in America. Another 32 are shot and injured.

2. Guns are the leading cause of death among American children and teens. 1 out of 10 gun deaths are age 19 or younger.
3. In fact, firearm deaths occur at a rate more than 5 times higher than drownings.

(Continued on page 2)



### Help is on the way for MHACY residents affected by Climate Change

On June 8, City and State officials, community leaders and officials from Bezos Earth Fund and The Bank of America were at Loehr Court to announce the kick-off of a project that will bring relief to Yolanda Lee and the other residents of the senior housing complex in Southwest Yonkers.

Thanks to Climate Safe Neighborhoods Partnership coordinated by the nonprofit Groundwork Hudson Valley, work is scheduled to begin on a number of environmental improvements at MHACY operated housing that will reduce flooding and provide residents shelter from the sweltering urban heat.

Together, Bezos Earth Fund, The Bank of America and the State of New York contributed \$1.8 million to pay for native trees and shrubs to create natural shade and bioswales to capture water to improve stormwater management. Work will be

(Continued on page 3)



@mhacyonkers

mhacy.org

# A Letter from Wilson Kimball

(Continued from page 1)

4. The U.S. has had 2,032 school shootings since 1970 and these numbers are increasing. Alarming, 948 school shootings have taken place since the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in December 2012.
5. School shootings have returned to pre-COVID levels and by some accounts have even increased. However, U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security research shows that if we “know the signs” of gun violence, we can prevent it and reverse the trend.
6. Since the historic attack at Columbine High School in 1999, nearly 300,000 students have been on campus during a school shooting. There is help for victims and survivors of gun violence.

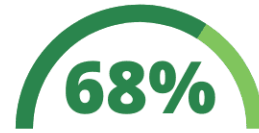
## Facts About How to Stop School Shootings and Other Violence

7. An estimated 4.6 million American children live in a home where at least one gun is kept loaded and unlocked. These improperly stored weapons have contributed to school shootings, suicides and the deaths of family members, including infants and toddlers.

**4.6 million** 

An estimated 4.6 million American children live in a home where at least one gun is kept loaded and unlocked.

8. Nearly half of all parents with a weapon in the home wrongly believe their children don't know where a gun is stored. Safe storage of firearms prevents tragedies.



Guns used in about 68% of gun-related incidents at schools were taken from the home, a friend or a relative.

9. In 4 out of 5 school shootings, at least one other person had knowledge of the attacker's plan but failed to report it.
10. In a comprehensive school shooting study, the Secret Service and Department of Education found that 93% of school shooters planned the attack in advance. When people see the signs and get help, we can end school shootings.



of school shooters planned the attack in advance.

11. Almost all mass school shooters shared threatening or concerning messages or images. More than 75% raised concern from others prior to the attacks. Bystanders saw warning signs in most documented active shooter cases. Truly, you can prevent school shootings when you know the signs.



In almost every documented case of active shooters, **warning signs** were shown.

## Help is on the way for MHACY residents affected by Climate Change

(Continued from page 1)

done at the Dr. James O'Rourke Townhouses, Francis Reagan Townhouses, William A. Walsh Homes, Joseph F. Loehr Court, Kris Kristensen Homes, and Msgr. Cajetan J. Troy Manor in Yonkers.

Local youth from the Green Team — a youth conservation employment program at Groundwork Hudson Valley that hires 30 Yonkers Public High School students each year — will do the work. The goal is to create a green oasis in these urban areas and improve the quality of life for MHACY residents while significantly reducing stormwater pollution.

The work can't come soon enough for Yolanda Lee who says that she and her friends at Loehr Court cannot even sit outside during the summer. "I was only out there for a few minutes today," she said. "It was just too hot. There is not even a tree to sit under."

Wilson Kimball, President and CEO of MHACY is very grateful to New York State, Bank of America and the Bezos Earth Fund for their vision and commitment to environmental justice. She expressed that, "it is leadership like theirs and at Groundwork Hudson Valley that will help our communities achieve climate resiliency and ensure a more sustainable future."

## Facts about How Gun Violence Impacts America's Most Vulnerable

Disparately and disproportionately impacted children and adults face higher risk of being victimized by gun violence. Despite economic factors, gender, racial, mental health conditions or sexual orientation, everyone has the right to be safe in their classrooms and communities.

- 12. Children living in poverty – urban and rural – are more likely to die due to gun violence than their more affluent peers.
- 13. About 1 out of 5 gay and lesbian youth have been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.



Gay and lesbian youth have been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.

- 14. Black youth are four times more likely to be killed with guns than their white peers.
- 15. The majority of individuals with diagnosed mental illness do not engage in violence against others.
- 16. Lastly, it must be remembered that 90% of teenagers killed in an act of dating violence were girls.

**Wilson Kimball**  
President & CEO  
Municipal Housing Authority for  
the City of Yonkers



## Yonkers Arts Weekend Continues at Yonkers Arts Gallery

In case you missed Yonkers Arts Weekend, our own Lakisha Collins Bellamy recently hosted a tour of the Yonkers Arts Gallery at 216 Lake Avenue. Ray Wilcox, Executive Director of Yonkers Arts, said the Yonkers Artist Showcase would be up through summer. To see the tour, check it out on our Facebook page at [facebook.com/mhacyonkers/videos](https://facebook.com/mhacyonkers/videos)





## Meet our New Police Commissioner Chris Sapienza

MHACY said a fond farewell to Police Commissioner John Mueller who retired last month after 28 years with the Yonkers Police Department. Mueller was a great friend to MHACY, helping to push forward safety improvements for our properties.

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano has appointed Deputy Chief Chris Sapienza to replace Mueller.

“Chris has been a shining star in the Department for years, and epitomizes the meaning of true leadership, demonstrating his in-depth knowledge, training, and dedication to the men and women of our police force,” Spano said. “We look forward to advancing the progress we have made thus

far to foster stronger community relationships and continuing to keep our residents safe.”

Sapienza served in the United States Marine Corps for eight years, including a tour during the Gulf War. Sapienza began his career with the Yonkers Police Department in 1995 as an officer in the 3rd Precinct and then the Emergency Service Unit. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2006, Lieutenant in 2015, and Captain in 2019, serving as the president of the Captain's, Lieutenant's, and Sergeant's Association from 2015 through 2019. He becomes the city's 23rd police commissioner.

We welcome him and look forward to working together.

## Celebrate Juneteenth at Enslaved Rain Garden Opening

Kicking off the City's Juneteenth celebration weekend, Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano along with sculptor Vinnie Bagwell, local artists and community leaders will unveil The Enslaved Africans' Rain Garden along the Yonkers waterfront at 20 Water Grant Street, on Friday, June 17 at 11:30AM. The urban-heritage sculpture garden honors the legacy of enslaved Africans who resided and worked at Philipse Manor Hall in Yonkers. The garden's opening will feature the presentation of five life-size bronze sculptures of the enslaved Africans who were freed decades before the Emancipation Proclamation.



The Enslaved Africans' Rain Garden is funded by the City of Yonkers, the County of Westchester, the State of New York Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, ArtsWestchester, Con Edison, and Entergy.

For more information, visit [enslavedafricansraingarden.org](https://enslavedafricansraingarden.org).