

VAN CORTLANDT PARK

Spring-Summer 2008



Added Room to Fetch and Frolic

Neighborhood pups and pooches are howling with joy over the improvements taking shape at Canine Court. This past fall, a run for small dogs was added, as were new agility equipment, benches, and landscaping amenities.

Canine Court Dog Run and Playground is a 15,000 square-foot, fenced in area on Van Cortlandt Park's Parade Ground. The facility comprises two distinct areas. In one area, dogs can utilize colorful play equipment, including a tire jump, a frame jump, and three crawl tunnels that strengthen coordination. In the other area is an open field for dogs to run and frolic. Built in 1998, this dog playground was the first of its kind in a New York City park.

Canine Court's popularity with local pooches has led to a lot of wear-and-tear on the area over the years. Rain-soaked turf and seasonal flooding created mud patches and bald spots in the dog run. The grass suffered from overuse, and portions of the fence were in need of repair.

Thanks to the dedication and fundraising efforts of Bashkim Dibra, dog trainer and owner of Fieldston Pets on Bailey Avenue,

Canine Court's makeover has begun. Last fall, a generous donation enabled Parks to purchase and install attractive black chain-link fencing, expanding the run northward to alleviate the flooding situation at the south end. The new fenced-in area creates a separate space for smaller dogs that were sometimes overwhelmed by the exuberance of their much-larger brethren. In addition, the small fence that separated the dog run from the playground was removed to provide more "leg room" for the bigger dogs.

Mr. Dibra is working closely with Parks to determine how work will continue to progress. The old fence still requires repairs and replacements, and bulletin boards and shade trees are also needed.

In addition to the renovation of Canine Court, Parks is constructing a new, smaller dog run off Gun Hill

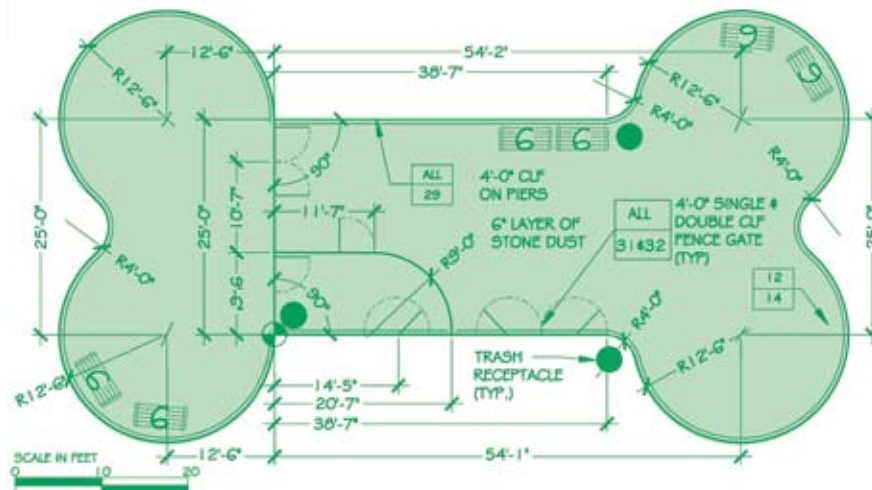
Road. The project is being funded by the Croton Water Filtration Plant mitigation funds. This dog run will be shaped like a dog bone, and thus named "Dog Bone Run."

In 2000, Mr. Dibra and his fellow neighborhood dog owners founded the Friends of Canine Court. In 2003, they secured donations to purchase a nifty water fountain that serves both pets and people. Currently, they are encouraging Van Cortlandt Park dog owners to pool resources and adopt a bench at Canine Court. (See article, page 6.)

"Not only do the Friends focus attention on the upkeep of Canine Court, but we persistently engage fellow owners to become stewards of the park and responsible pet owners," says Mr. Dibra. Working closely with Parks staff, the Friends of Canine Court continually informs people to

keep dogs on-leash, keep up to date with vaccinations, promote good dog behavior, and pick up after their pets.

Besides being encouraged to be responsible, pet owners are encouraged to be dependable park patrons. Many dog walkers are the Parks Department's eyes and ears. They



Plans for new bone-shaped dog run off Gun Hill Road.

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Spring-Summer Calendar

May

Learn to Ride

Saturday, May 17, 10 am - 1 pm

Bring a bike, a helmet and a child who wants to learn!

Meet at Southwest Playground.

CityParks Seniors Fitness

Through June 20

For ages 60+

Pre-registration required

Meet at Indian Field Tennis Courts
Jerome Avenue &
East 233rd Street

Tennis

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10 am

Yoga

Mondays & Wednesdays, 9 am

Walking

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9 am

All equipment provided.

For more information,
call 718-760-6999.

CityParks
Foundation
creating programs for NYC parks

Volunteer: It's My Park! Day

Saturday, May 17, 10 am - 1 pm

Garden, clean up, or work on the trails with the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park.

Meet at the Riding Stables.

Enter park at Broadway & Mosholu Avenue.

Memorial Day Concert

Sunday, May 25, 2 pm

Delight in patriotic music and Broadway show tunes with the Bronx Arts Ensemble.

Meet behind the Nature Center.

June

Birding Club

Saturday, June 7, 9 am

Bring your own binoculars and field guide or the Rangers will loan theirs.

Meet at the Nature Center.

Geology Walk: Stonehenge in the Bronx

Sunday, June 8, 10 am

Walk through the valley of Tibbets Brook to the watershed's lake, and the abandoned railroad right-of-way with geologist Sidney Horenstein. Along the route, view enigmatic stone monuments, and 1.1 billion year-old Fordham Gneiss – the oldest rock in New York City at historic Vault Hill.

Meet at West 242nd Street & Broadway.

Wildflower Walk

Saturday, June 14, 11 am

Feast your eyes on the beauties that bloom naturally in our woods.

Meet at the Nature Center.

Canoes on the Lake

Sunday, June 15, 11 am

Take Dad for a boat ride this Father's Day.

Meet at the Lake.

Enter park at Bailey Avenue & Van Cortlandt Park South.

Barefoot Dancing

**Select Wednesdays
6:30-8pm**

July 23, July 30, August 6

Live music with dance instruction from Mexico, Ivory Coast & the Middle East.

Meet at Van Cortlandt House Museum Lawn.

Call 718-430-1890.

Volunteer Day: Dig, Pull, Plant

Saturday, June 21, 10 am - 1 pm

Dig that soil, pull those weeds, haul a wheelbarrow to plant new trees in the Southeast Forest with Friends of Van Cortlandt Park.

Meet at southwest corner of Shandler Recreation Area parking lot. Enter park at Jerome Avenue, south of East 233rd Street.



2008



All events are FREE unless otherwise noted.

July

Independence Day Concert

Friday, July 4, 2 pm

Enjoy America's own jazz and Dixieland music with the Bronx Arts Ensemble.

Meet at Howell Grove.

Enter park at Broadway & Mosholu Avenue and walk uphill on the paved path.

Birding Club

Saturday, July 5, 9 am

See June 7.



New York Philharmonic

Friday, July 11, 8 pm

Spread your blanket and listen to classical music followed by fireworks on the Parade Ground.

Enter park at Broadway & West 246th Street.

August

Birding Club

Saturday, August 2, 9 am

See June 7.

Vintage Train Tour

Presented by NYC Transit Museum

Saturday, August 2, 10 am - 5 pm

Commemorate the 100th Anniversary of service to 242nd Street by riding in a colorful, vintage IRT S MEE car.



Ride from Grand Central Station in Manhattan to Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn and then north to Van Cortland Park in the Bronx. Enjoy the park or stay on the train for an express run to 103rd Street. Return trip leaves at 3 pm.

Call 718-694-1794 for reservations.

\$30 General Admission;
\$25 Transit Museum Members;
\$10 Children

Volunteer Day: On the Running Path

Saturday August 9th, 10am - 1pm

Help fill ruts, clear swales and repair the cross country running trail in preparation for fall competitions.

Meet at the Riding Stables. Enter park at Broadway & Mosholu Avenue.

Pool Hours

June 27 – September 1

11 am - 3 pm, 4 - 7 pm

Closed 3 - 4 pm

Bring a bathing suit, towel and a lock.

Enter the Park at Manhattan College Parkway & Broadway.

Bronx Arts Ensemble

Sunday Concerts 2-3pm

July 13, 20, 27

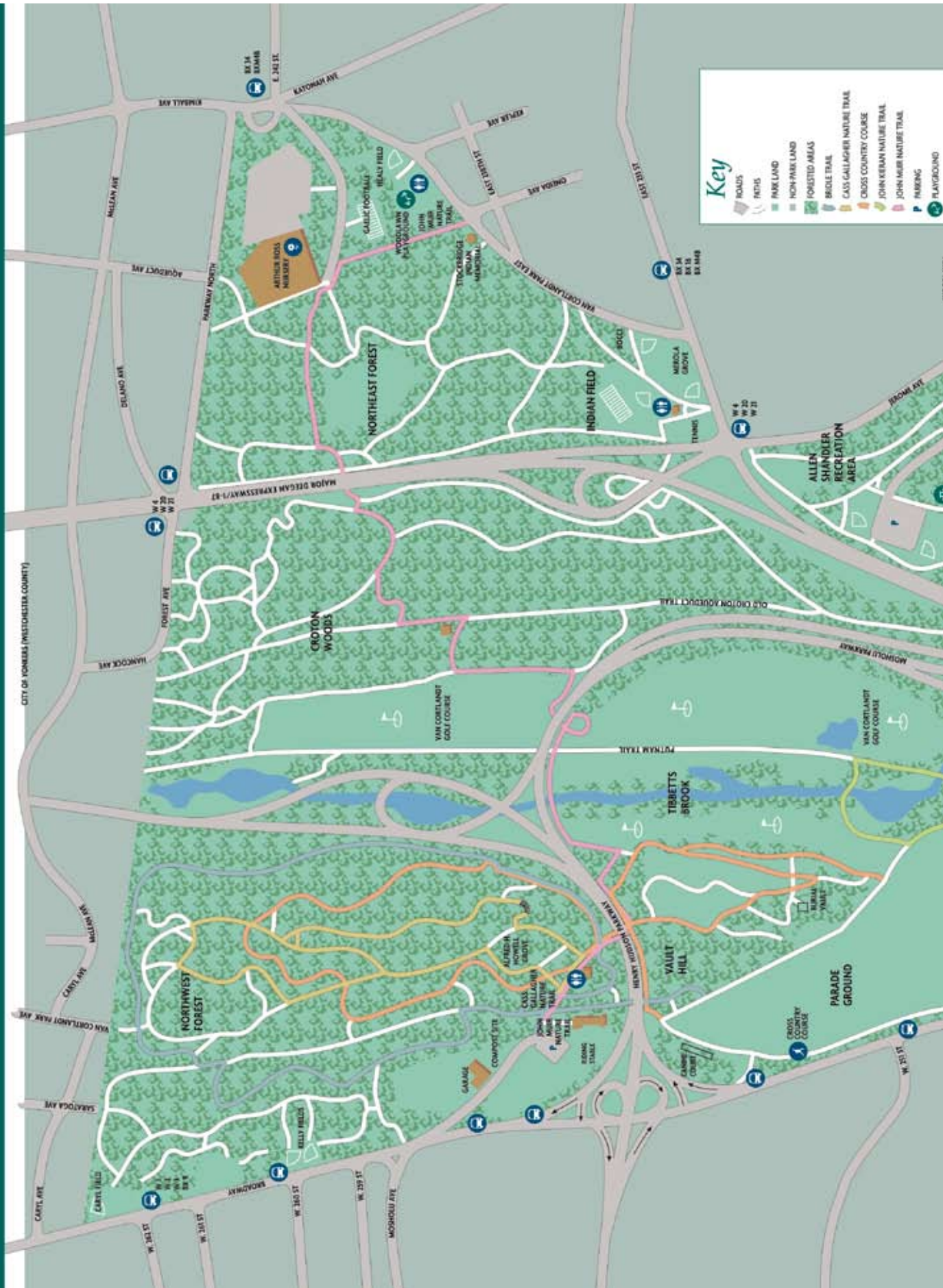
and August 3, 10

Howell Grove

Enter park at Broadway & Mosholu Avenue.

Photos: p. 2 – C. White (water at top); Sue Tranter (American Robin)
p. 3 – M. Perron (pool); Daniel T. Yara (fireworks);
Transit Museum Collection (vintage train)

Van Cortlandt Park





Directions

By Car: The Major Deegan Expressway has two park exits: Van Cortlandt Park South, which serves the south and west portions of the park and East 233rd Street, which serves the north and east. The Henry Hudson Parkway's Broadway exits also serve the park. Moshulu Parkway links Van Cortlandt Park with the Bronx River and Pelham Parkways. Broadway runs along the park's western perimeter; Jerome Avenue and Van Cortlandt Park East border the park on the east side.

By Bus: The Bx9 travels along Broadway on the western edge of Van Cortlandt Park. The BxM3, an express line serving Manhattan, offers access to the park's western border. The park's east side is served by the Bx16, Bx 31 and Bx34. Westchester bus lines – numbers 1,2,3,4,20 and 21 also serve the park.

By Subway: The northern terminus of the IRT #1 train at W. 242nd Street is near the Parade Ground.

The IRT #4 train's last stop at Woodlawn serves the park's southeastern area.

Phone Numbers

Administrator's Office

718.430.1890

Friends of Van Cortlandt Park

718.601.1460

Moshulu Golf Center and Driving Range

718.655.9164

Park Enforcement Patrol

718.430.1815

Riverdale Equestrian Center

718.548.4848

Urban Park Rangers

718.548.0912

Van Cortlandt Golf Course

718.543.4595

Van Cortlandt House Museum

718.543.3344

Van Cortlandt Nature Center

718.548.0912

Van Cortlandt Pool

718.548.2415

Events and General Information

311

Bronx Recreation

General Information

718.430.1825

Permits—Special Events

718.430.1848

Permits—Sports

718.430.1840



**City of New York
Parks & Recreation**
www.nyc.gov/parks/vancortlandt

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor

Adrian Benepe, Commissioner

Hector M. Aponte, Bronx Borough Commissioner

Margot Perron, Van Cortlandt Park Administrator

Stephanie Ehrlich, Editor

Marianne Anderson, Writer

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Adopt-a-Bench: Support Your Park

In recent months, something special has been sprouting up around Van Cortlandt Park and it's not just spring flowers! Beautiful World's Fair park benches have been installed along Van Cortlandt Park East, and soon others will dot the rest of the park's picturesque landscape. These inviting benches provide respite for park goers and create a comfortable spot for folks to gather and enjoy one of New York City's largest parks!

To keep the benches in pristine condition, the Van Cortlandt Park Administrator's Office is seeking donations through the Adopt-a-Park Program. For \$2,500, donors can "adopt" a bench and help fund their cost, installation, and yearly maintenance. Donor funds help cover the cost of a World's Fair style bench, labor, and installation—which includes setting the concrete foundation and posts, and in some cases, providing for wheelchair access. In addition, the funds would enable the annual upkeep for the bench and cover periodic repairs such as stemming erosion around the foundation, replacing slats, or cleaning graffiti.

"Our aim is to begin a fund that will help us keep the new benches in Van Cortlandt Park both functional and presentable," said Margot Perron, the park's Administrator. "Adopting a bench is a wonderful way to remember a loved one or important community member, or to commemorate a significant event."

Donors who choose a bench through the Adopt-a-Park program can elect to have a personal inscription of their choice (and approved by the Parks Department) installed on their bench. Parks will maintain the bench for the duration of its lifespan, which is approxi-

mately 30 years. Current park sites where benches can be adopted include Van Cortlandt Park East, Sachkerah Woods, Kingsbridge Green, Indian Field Tennis Courts, and Canine Court.

The Adopt-a-Park Program has proven very successful for the Parks Department. For more than 20 years, Central Park has fostered a bench endowment program, now available for "adoption" at \$7,500 per bench. But it doesn't stop with benches! Adopt-a-Park provides various funding opportunities citywide—an innovative way for businesses, community groups, and individuals to provide financial support for the care and maintenance of their local greenspaces.

Multiple sponsorship opportunities exist in Van Cortlandt Park, and many community groups have generously offered financial support. Last summer, Mosholu Preservation Corporation and Friends of Van Cortlandt Park funded the salary of a Parks employee who monitored Sachkerah Woods Playground and engaged children in fun, educational activities.

This spring, Fieldston School sponsored *Birdland: Cool Birds...Hot Jazz* event, held at Southwest Playground.

The Administrator's Office is currently developing levels of support and sponsorship for the care of Van Cortlandt Park's greenery and infrastructure.

"So many people care for the park and want to make a donation," said Perron. "We want to have a variety of ways for folks to get involved, whether by volunteering at a special event, helping to plant a tree, or adopting a bench. It's about providing for Van Cortlandt Park's future."

If you are interested in learning more about Adopt-a-Park, please visit our website, www.nyc.gov/parks. You can fill out a request

form or learn about recent "Featured Adoptions" that are happening throughout the City. To speak with a Van Cortlandt Park Adopt-a-Park representative, please call 718-430-1890.



Look Who's Working!



Above: The Van Cortlandt Track Club teams up with Park Manager Ray Acosta (back row, 3rd from left) and the park's field staff to fix the cross country trail. Volunteer with them in August or find other dates to pitch in. (See calendar)

Left: Have you noticed the "tremendous" difference a \$200,000 federal Community Development Block Grant makes in our woods? Don't get too close to these experts felling dead trees – just wave to tell them what a great job they're doing!

Added Room to Fetch and Frolic

continued from p. 1

are some of the park's most frequent users, and are tuned into the life of the park in which they walk their dog. By being open and aware to park happenings, dog walkers help keep Van Cortlandt Park safe, clean, and green.

There are numerous opportunities to enjoy the outdoors with your dog. Just remember to be safe, obey the

rules, and respect the park and others. If you would like to join the Friends of Canine Court or hear about what they do, please call them at 718-796-4541.

To learn more about specific rules and regulations regarding dogs in city parks, visit our website at www.nyc.gov/parks/dogs.

Van Cortlandt KIDS

Spring-Summer 2008 All programs are FREE unless otherwise noted.



Pony Rides

Sundays 1-4pm, through October

Enter park at Broadway & Mosholu Avenue.

Call 718-548-4848 for FEES and REGISTRATION.



Learn to Swim

Van Cortlandt Pool

Weekdays July - August

Enter park at Manhattan College Parkway & Broadway.

Call Citywide Aquatics at 718-760-6970 for **Learn to Swim** and **Swim Team** registration dates, class schedules and times.

Adventures in Time History Camp

Van Cortlandt House Museum

Week 1: August 13 through 17

Week 2: August 20 through 24

9 am - 3 pm

Call 718-543-3344 for FEES and information.

For children who have completed 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade.

Ranger Programs

May - August

Join the Rangers on easy, interactive hikes in the woods and discover the wonderful wildflowers and birds that thrive there.

Birding Club

First Saturday of the month 9 am

Wildflower Walks

Select Saturdays 11 am

Canoe on the Lake

Select Sundays 11 am

Rangers Around

Meet at Southwest Playground

July 1 - August 15

Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays
11 am & 2 pm

Call for specific dates and more information:
718-548-0912

Adults and children welcome.



Learn to Play Tennis

For Kids Ages 5-16 ■ All equipment provided
Monday, June 30 - Friday, August 15



Monday - Thursday
9 am - noon

Paul Hecht Tennis Courts

West 246th Street, east of the Nature Center

Monday and Wednesday
1 - 4 pm

Indian Field Tennis Courts

East 233rd Street & Jerome Avenue

No pre-registration required. Call 718-760-6999 to schedule according to level of skill.

CityParks Kids Performances

Woodlawn Playground

Thursdays 10:30 am

Van Cortlandt Park East & Kepler Avenue
Rain Site: Van Cortlandt House Museum

July 17 Cinderella Samba ■

Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre

★ Puppet-making workshop after the show!

July 24 Wanna Dance? ■ Jody Kruskal & Friends

July 31 The Great and Amazing Jeske ■

Joel Jeske, Clown Extraordinaire

Southwest Playground

Tuesdays 10:30 am

Broadway & Van Cortlandt Park South
Rain Site: Van Cortlandt House Museum

August 5 The Circus Circus Show ■ Sloppy and Monday

August 12 The Three Pigs/Los Tres Cerditos ■ Teatro SEA

Classic Playground

Thursday 10:30 am

Van Cortlandt Park South & Orloff Avenue
Rain Site: Vladeck Hall, 74 Van Cortlandt Park South at Hillman Avenue

July 10 City That Drinks the Mountain Sky ■

Arm of the Sea Theatre

Sachkerah Woods Playground

Tuesdays 10:30 am

Gun Hill Road & Jerome Avenue
Rain Site: Van Cortlandt House Museum

July 15 Carnival of the World/Carnaval del Mundo ■

Dan Butterworth Marionettes

July 22 Concert Party ■ Joe Salins Duo

July 29 Imagination in Motion ■ Mime X Two

EcoCrafts

Mondays 1-4 pm

July Classic Playground

August Sachkerah Woods Playground

Make birdfeeders, flowerpots, picture frames, collages, animal crafts and more.

Children under 12 must have an accompanying adult.

Call 718-601-1553 for more information.

