Peekskill Appoints Seymour First Full-Time Fire Dept. Chief

By Rick Pezzullo

The Peekskill Common Council appointed James E. Seymour IV as the city’s first paid full-time Fire Department Chief Monday night.

Seymour, who began his fire service career as a volunteer with the City of Peekskill Fire Department in 1995 at the age of 18, will earn an annual salary of $183,000 to oversee 24 paid staff and 54 volunteers, starting on Jan. 1.

Since transferring to the Village of Scarsdale Fire Department in 2004, Seymour has served as firefighter, captain, municipal training officer and chief, the latter a position he has held since 2016.

“It is with tremendous pride and enthusiasm that I have accepted the position of Fire Chief of the City of Peekskill Fire Department,” Seymour said. “There is no greater honor for me than to serve in this capacity and continue the proud history and traditions of the department where I began my career as a volunteer 25 years ago with Washington Engine Company.”

The Peekskill Fire Department has always been managed by elected volunteer chiefs, but in recent times the bulk of daily fire incident responses has been provided by paid staff with dedicated volunteers providing essential support, especially at large blazes.

The Common Council commissioned an independent study of the city fire department structure by retired Chief Ed Rush, who recommended adding a paid full-time chief. Several public meetings and hearings were held on amending the City Code and Charter to make a full-time chief position, which was adopted by the council on Nov. 22.

“As the mayor of this great city, I am thrilled to welcome Chief Seymour back to Peekskill as our first full-time fire chief,” said Mayor Andre Rainey. “As my term concludes, I’m very thankful our city manager, staff and council understand the needs of our community and have all agreed to invest in our fire department. This is the beginning of a very necessary, positive and encouraging change.”

“Chief Seymour’s experience as both a volunteer and paid firefighter, as well as leading a combination department in Scarsdale, makes him uniquely suited to lead the City of Peekskill firefighters, both volunteer and paid, as the department grows to meet the needs of a dynamic small city,” said City Manager Andy Stewart.

Seymour’s appointment was also praised by some of his peers.

“I have known Jim since his childhood and am very excited to see him rejoining the Peekskill Fire Department as our first paid chief,” said Lenny Varella, a former fire chief and current President of the Peekskill Volunteer Fire Association. “I support the creation of a paid chief position in Peekskill, though I understand this change is felt by some of our members as a disruption of our traditional form of leadership.”

“I have known Jimmy for many years, he has put in his time and advanced through the ranks, and I wish him all the best in his leadership of the department,” said Chief John Rose.

State Lawmakers Condemn NRC for Weakening Indian Pt. Safety Rules

By Rick Pezzullo

State Senator Pete Harckham and State Assemblywoman Sandy Galef condemned the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in a letter for downgrading safety standards at the closed Indian Point nuclear power plant in Buchanan.

The NRC recently announced it had approved a proposed rule to amend agency regulations for nuclear power plants transitioning from operations to decommissioning, such as Indian Pt. Current NRC regulations establish safety requirements for the commercial operation of nuclear plants. However, the regulations do not reflect, according to the NRC, lower safety hazard following removal of fuel from the reactor during decommissioning.

As a result, the NRC has allowed incremental changes to various requirements, including emergency preparedness, through exemptions and license amendments. The proposed rule would implement specific regulatory requirements for those steps.

“This regulation incorporates lessons learned from plants that have already transitioned to decommissioning and will establish clear and transparent requirements for the future,” NRC Chairman Christopher Hanson stated. “I am convinced that the proposed approach will provide adequate protection while improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the decommissioning regulatory framework.”

Harckham and Galef renewed their calls for continued vigilance by on-site NRC safety inspectors, who the agency plans to withdraw soon. Harckham and Galef said the NRC is ignoring the fact that nuclear spent fuel will continue to be handled during the decade-long decommissioning process and stored on-site for the near future.

“As the legislators representing the Indian Point community, we are deeply disappointed...continued on page 2

Cortlandt Goes to the Dogs

A ribbon cutting ceremony was recently held for the Dog Haus Biergarten at the Cortlandt Town Center. A Haagen Dazs also opened around the corner at the space formerly housed by Payless Shoes.

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Peekskill to Hold New Year’s Eve Ball Drop; Yorktown Cancels Over COVID

By Rick Pezzullo

The City of Peekskill is proceeding with plans to usher in 2022 with a downtown New Year’s Eve Ball Drop, while the Town of Yorktown has cancelled festivities over rising COVID-19 cases.

The free Peekskill celebration kicks off at 10 p.m. in the area of South Division St. and Central Ave., hosted by Kenny Lewis.

Live music will be performed throughout the evening by the band What It Is and fireworks will light up the skies after the midnight countdown.

Sponsors of the event are the City of Peekskill, the Peekskill Business Improvement District, Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce, Brian Fassett, Sepp Spenlinhauer, Inn on the Hudson, Steve Laker, JK Fence and Highland Welding.

Peekskill’s first New Year’s Eve Ball Drop was held in 2014. Meanwhile, in neighboring Yorktown, Yorktown Chamber of Commerce President Sergio Esposito announced last week the decision was made to pull the plug on this year’s New Year’s Eve bash in the downtown because of health and safety concerns with COVID-19.

Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater said it was the prudent thing to do not to put anyone in unnecessary danger.

Yorktown’s first New Year’s Eve Ball Drop was held in 2015.

Yorktown Receives $5.8 Million for Pump Station Upgrades

By Rick Pezzullo

The Town of Yorktown has been awarded a $5,760,000 grant from the State Department of Environmental Conservation for upgrades to four pump stations that will minimize sewage overflows.

The town will use the grant for improvements to the Crystal Lake, Salem, Mohansic, and Hanover East pump stations. The project will reduce the amount of phosphorous entering the Hallocks Mill Brook that feeds into the Croton Reservoir resulting from the overflows.

“These improvements will enhance the water quality and the overall environment in the Croton Watershed,” said Supervisor Matt Slater. “We are pleased that state officials recognized this project’s importance to the millions of people who rely on safe drinking water.”

According to the town’s engineering consultant, the total estimated cost to update the four pump stations is $7.2 million.

With the state grant secured, town officials will prepare construction bid documents. Work on the pumps is expected to begin in mid-2022. The DEC awarded the grant through its Water Quality Improvement Project program.

Yorktown built the pump stations between the late 1960s and early 1980s and they all discharge to gravity sewers that deliver wastewater to treatment plants. The four pump stations have mechanical equipment that has reached the end of its design life. The aging machinery has placed increased maintenance burdens on the town’s operations staff.

Recently, Yorktown completed updates on the Jefferson Park, Walden Woods and Jefferson Valley pump stations.

Walter Panas High Students Collecting Socks for the Homeless

A politics class at Walter Panas High School is holding a Warm for Winter fundraiser to contribute to the current deprivation of socks among the homeless. The collection of new socks will run through Jan. 5, and all the proceeds will go to the Jan Peek House, a homeless shelter in Peekskill.

To spread awareness and increase participation, drop-off locations can be found at four locations: the main entrance of Walter Panas High School, Cortlandt Town Hall, Inn on the Hudson, Steve Laker, JK Fence and Highland Welding.

“While Indian Point is no longer in operation, the nuclear materials stored there continue to pose a significant danger for all the same reasons as when the plant was operational,” Galef said. “In fact, the existing hazards are exacerbated by the heavy demolition work that will occur on the site.”

Harckham and Galef said the top concern of residents living near Indian Point is that the heavy decommissioning work will be conducted while multiple high-pressure gas pipelines continue to operate on the site. The legislators called on the NRC and other federal agencies to assess the catastrophic consequences of a gas line rupture and explosion while also devising the necessary precautions to prevent any such horrific incidents.

Once staff has revised the proposed rule as directed by the NRC, it will be published in the Federal Register, which triggers a 75-day public comment period.
WINE OF THE YEAR
2020 Anne Pichon Grenache Noir

Take what you think you know about Grenache and throw it out the window. As this wine opens, initial dark berry flavors meld into a true jam flavor with floral notes and bitter cranberry. It has such a divine, full mouthfeel that tricks you into not initially noticing that it’s more ‘dry’ than not. While there a lot of wines that showcase the best flavors of their region, Anne Pichon Grenache Noir did it best this year. Cheers!

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Dan’s Wine of the Year
2014 Casa Santos Lima Reserva

The nose on this wine bursts through the seems with dark fruit notes of ripe blackberry and jam and dried fruit, prune and fig. The addition of the Syrah in this blend is what separates this wine from anything ordinary.

$11.97

Jason’s Wine of the Year
2019 Oak Farm Tievoli Cabernet Sauvignon

Deep garnet in color, this Cabernet Sauvignon is composed of complex aromas of black currant, blueberry, cedar, and floral characteristics. The wine is full bodied with echoing aromas on the palate. The finish is abundant in textured tannins, yet smooth and velvety.

$14.97

Suburban’s Sparkling Wine of the Year
NV Isotta Manzoni Prosecco Rose

Subtle and fresh aromas with hints of small red berries, rose, mint and citrus. Delicate and elegant flavors of strawberry and crushed violets. Finishing with well-balanced minerality. You will have no problem finishing the bottle once it’s opened. This is crushable!

$13.97

Tom’s Wine of the Year
2018 Laurent Comber Crozes Hermitage

Mesmerizing deep dark ruby with dark pink shimmers along the rim of the wine. This Syrah emits a nose of black cherry jam, fists of black currants, and subtle notes of bacon fat, cured meat, and violet. The palate is rich with bright and juicy blackberries, blueberries, and currants. Black peppercorns, dried thyme, and subtle notes of river rocks breakthrough the berry medley. A lingering finish of dried blueberries and cacao finalize this wine.

$19.97

— EVERYDAY LOW PRICES —

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Mt. Pleasant Schools to Convene Public Forum as COVID-19 Fears Persist

By Martin Wilbur

Mount Pleasant school officials are arranging a community forum with elected officials at every level of government after several parents recently expressed concern that COVID-19 vaccines might be mandated for children to attend school.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Peter Giarizzo said the district, possibly in partnership with the Valhalla School District, is hoping to hold a public session sometime in January on education-related matters.

Harckham Calls for COVID-19 Testing Site at FDR Park in Yorktown

State Sen. Peter Harckham (D-Lewisboro) has sent a letter to Gov. Kathy Hochul calling on the state to open a mobile testing site at Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park in Yorktown Heights to help fight the latest spike in COVID-19 cases.

Harckham’s letter comes after Hochul announced that the state plans to open more state-run testing sites to combat the surge. However, as of Sunday there were still no state-run testing sites in the lower Hudson Valley.

“As we continue to fight this pandemic, we need to utilize all of the resources and tools available to us, and we know that testing is a crucial component in stopping the spread,” Harckham said. “I urge the governor to promptly open a site in the Hudson Valley region and recommend utilizing FDR State Park as a testing site. It’s large enough to easily accommodate a drive-thru testing site, and it’s easily accessible off the Taconic State Parkway and Route 202.”

Last week Westchester County Executive George Latimer announced that he planned to request the state use FDR State Park in Yorktown Heights to help fight the latest spike in COVID-19.

“I have talked about it for a long time,” Harckham said of the request. “We have many state parks and state run programs in Westchester County. FDR State Park is just a 20 minute drive for many people. We should be able to use state parks as resources for this pandemic.”

Giarizzo said Mount Pleasant will steer its testing efforts toward vaccinating students.

“I urge the governor to open a state run testing site at Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park in Yorktown Heights. We have an urgent need to test and vaccinate more students as we head into the new year,” Giarizzo said.

Giarizzo said he is working with officials at the Valhalla School District to cooperate on a testing site.

“We can talk about but it’s not the only issue we face as a school system, so we would want that session to be about lots of different things,” Giarizzo said.

One parent pointed to legislation introduced in October by Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (D-Bronx), whose bill would require every student to be immunized against COVID-19, adding it to the list of other vaccines mandated by the state for children to attend school, and vowed to fight any mandate.

Two parents who spoke on the issue during the Mount Pleasant Board of Education’s last meeting on Dec. 15 said they were looking for the government to continue to allow them to make the choice for what is best for their children and family.

“If we can get them here as soon as possible and we can get all of their support and no matter which way you choose, but that’s what we’re looking for, a choice,” said resident Carlo Valente. “That’s all we’re asking for.”

Giarizzo said Mount Pleasant will steer clear of any vaccine mandate for the school community.

“There is no mandate and we do not intend to impose one for either our staff or our students,” he said. “We will not. As (Board of Education) President Horan has stated, parents can make these informed decisions with their pediatricians and health care professionals.”

Another parent, Lauren Stancio, said she fears that with the recent surge in COVID-19 cases, the situation could result in a switch back to remote learning, which has occurred in several districts before the holiday break in the region.

“It’s such a concern for these kids. They’ve lived through this,” Stancio said. “I feel like it’s March again, two years ago. How much of this can we avoid shutting down again.”

One step that the district has taken is its “test to stay” program, which started the week of Dec. 13 and has saved 647 student school days across the district, Giarizzo said. The program provides a rapid test before the start of the school day to unvaccinated students who have been exposed to COVID-19.

Each exposed student must be tested for a seven-day period. If they test negative, they can stay in school, if not they are sent home.

Parents must fill out a consent form in advance to allow their children to be tested, which is found on the district’s website.

The purpose of program is to keep schools open, the superintendent said, and with the cooperation of parents and the hard work of staff, it’s been going well.

“My job is to keep kids in school,” Giarizzo said. “Our principals and administrators and the board (are) very committed to make sure that happens. We have not discussed any kind of extended closure. Honestly, that is like the last resort for me.”

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Westchester Increases Testing as COVID-19 Cases Explode

By Martin Wilbur

As active COVID-19 cases soar to pandemic highs, Westchester County is increasing its testing for residents who show symptoms or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for the virus.

County Executive George Latimer said Monday that Westchester is partnering with Quadrant Biosciences to make free PCR tests available at the County Center in White Plains for those who most urgently need to learn whether they are positive. Testing will begin this Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and continue on Thursday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Testing will then resume on weekdays starting next Monday, Jan. 3 from 12 to 4 p.m. then continue from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each weekday through at least Jan. 11.

Appointments are mandatory and can be made up to three days in advance at www.westchestergov.com/health.

“The demand for testing will exceed the amount of tests that we have available, but the tests that we’re giving will give them to everybody that we can up to the satisfaction of the amount that we have available,” Latimer said.

The county could not immediately provide how many tests may be available each day. Over the past couple of weeks there have been long lines outside testing sites, with some residents unable to get the PCR test or forced to wait days for an appointment.

Latimer stressed that what the County Center will offer is meant to help those who are in the most need of a test – only those who have symptoms or were exposed to a person who is a confirmed positive.

“What we are witnessing is a nationwide explosion in the incidents of active cases as well as a nationwide explosion...in demand for testing,” he said. “No matter what system you’re looking at the demand has far exceeded the supply of tests nationwide.”

The announcement came after Latimer, who along with Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins returned to work after their own bouts with COVID-19, presented the explosive rate at which the virus is spreading. As of Sunday, Westchester had 16,819 active cases, easily eclipsing the high of more than 12,000 in the early stages of the pandemic in spring 2020. Last winter’s surge, which peaked on Jan. 18, saw more than 11,500 active cases.

On Nov. 26, there were 2,078 cases. On that same day, the infection rate was 2 percent; on Sunday it reached 13.7 percent in Westchester while New York State saw a 16 percent positivity rate. Within the last week infections in the county more than doubled.

While hospitalizations and fatalities are not rising at the same rate as active cases, they have still quadrupled during the past month. On Nov. 24, the day before Thanksgiving, there were 50 COVID-19-related hospitalizations, while on Christmas Eve that number stood at 214.

There were seven deaths from COVID-19 in the month ending with Thanksgiving. Between Thanksgiving and Christmas there were 30 fatalities in the county.

Latimer did not have the latest statistics on how many unvaccinated people accounted for the latest deaths and hospitalizations, but up until the latest surge about two-thirds of those totals consisted of the unvaccinated, he said. Some of the vaccinated in those situations also have had other health issues or may not have received at least two shots.

“What we do seem to see is that those people that have been vaccinated properly, either at the two-(shot) level or at the booster level, still may get the disease but don’t suffer seriously, do not wind up being hospitalized because of the disease;” Latimer said. “So to that extent we’re somewhat encouraged, but to go up from 50 hospitalizations to 214, that number has been rising each day this week. That is of great concern to us.”

In the early weeks of the pandemic, there were about 600 hospitalizations. Last winter that number rose to more than 500.

There have been 94 percent of adults 18 years old and up in Westchester who have received at least one dose. The rate of those with two doses is at 84 percent.

The county did not have the numbers on the percentage or residents who received boosters or pediatric vaccinations.

Latimer urged residents to remain vigilant, wear masks in indoor public spaces and get vaccinated or boosted.

“We have the opportunity, if we show proper discipline, if we show proper perseverance to get through this,” Latimer said. “We can have our kids in class and get the proper learning. We can continue to function without shutting down the government, without shutting down the business community, which has happened.”
Rivera Toyota Approved to Upgrade Dealership, Build New Service Shop

By Martin Wilbur

Approvals were granted earlier this month to Rivera Toyota to renovate the existing dealership and build a new service and repair shop at the site of a former burger restaurant in Mount Kisco. The village’s Planning Board voted in favor of site plan approval and to issue a special use permit to upgrade the existing dealership building at 325 N. Bedford Rd. to allow continued car sales and create 12 service area

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The existing Rivera Toyota dealership at 325 N. Bedford Rd. in Mount Kisco.

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Shimsky to Challenge Fellow Democrat Abinanti for Assembly Seat

By Martin Wilbur

Five-term Westchester County Legislator MaryJane Shimsky plans to challenge veteran Assemblyman Tom Abinanti in a Democratic primary next year after announcing her candidacy last Tuesday for the 92nd Assembly District seat.

Shimsky, the Board of Legislators’ current majority leader, said she enjoys being a legislator and hopes to carry that to the state level. The Dobbs Ferry resident was unopposed for a sixth two-year term last month but cannot serve beyond that because of Westchester’s law that limits county legislators to 12 years in office.

“Oh, I have two years to find new employment, but I think being a legislator is far and away the most rewarding thing I’ve ever done,” Shimsky said. “You get to help people as individuals who call your office, you get to affect policy by doing legislative oversight on the executive branch and, as needed, you get to pass laws that improve your jurisdiction, whether it’s your county or your state.”

Her candidacy sets up a primary in June against Abinanti. The district has been a Democratic stronghold for decades.

Before Abinanti took over in 2011, Richard Brodsky represented the area for nearly three decades.

Prior to her Board of Legislators service, Shimsky worked as community relations director for Brodsky. A Yale graduate, she went to NYU School of Law and worked as an assistant district attorney in Manhattan before teaching history at Marymount College.

Shimsky said she was motivated to run, in part, because Abinanti has “sat on the sidelines” on pandemic-related issues and has failed to help Westchester obtain critical state resources to mitigate serious flooding over the past decade. The shortcomings were once again apparent after Hurricane Ida struck the region on Sept. 1, she said.

“I feel that members of the Assembly need to take a more active role in making sure that everything is as it should be and getting out and being proactive with information to help the community know where the resources are to make the right decisions,” said Shimsky, who followed Abinanti in the same Board of Legislators seat, which serves Greenburgh and Mount Pleasant.

She criticized Abinanti’s opposition to extend the eviction moratorium, which was approved in his final days of office.

Meanwhile, she and other county lawmakers never followed up with a plan to deal with stormwater, Abinanti said.

“I would be happy to fight on behalf of Greenburgh to get money to fix that problem, but somebody’s got to do the plan,” Abinanti said. “She’s attempting to fabricate issues, which just don’t exist. I did what needed to be done on that and it’s now a county issue.”

The assemblyman, who has been a leading advocate for providing special education resources in public schools and for the disabled population, said he supported the rent moratorium twice, but by the second extension it was hurting small landlords who weren’t receiving help from the state. The small landlord owns most rentals in Mount Pleasant and Greenburgh, he said.

“I could not tell our one-, two- and three-family landlords that they had to continue supporting tenants and never see the possibility of state money,” Abinanti said.

He also chided Shimsky for announcing her candidacy for a district that may be altered significantly once redistricting is complete.

“We don’t even know what the districts are,” said Abinanti, a Pleasantville resident. “She’s running for a district that hasn’t even been designed yet.”

Petitioning is scheduled to begin around Mar. 1.

Neither candidate has heard yet of other potential hopefuls from either major party who might consider a run.

For Abinanti, this would be the second consecutive election cycle where he would have to fend off a challenge within his own party. In 2020, he outlasted little-known Jennifer Williams in the Democratic primary before winning a fifth Assembly term in November without opposition.

Abinanti countered that he was the county legislator who drafted Westchester Master Plan to address flooding issues, which was approved in his final days in office in 2010 before leaving for the Assembly. He said former county executive and current majority leader, said she enjoys being a legislator and hopes to carry that to the state level. The Dobbs Ferry resident was unopposed for a sixth two-year term last month but cannot serve beyond that because of Westchester’s law that limits county legislators to 12 years in office.

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County Police/Mount Kisco

Dec. 22: A man arrived at the Green Street precinct at 6:23 p.m. to report that he had found a dog running in the middle of Lexington Avenue. The man coaxed the dog into his truck and wanted to turn it over to police. As officers prepared to take the dog inside, another man drove up to report that his dog had gotten loose and was missing. The dog and owner were reunited on the spot.

Dec. 23: Police responded to Terrace Place at 12:09 p.m. on a report of a domestic dispute outside a residence. A man reported that a relative was blocking his driveway and refusing to move his car. The matter was resolved and officers left the scene.

Dec. 23: Report of a malfunctioning traffic light at the intersection of Preston Way and North Bedford Road at 12:36 p.m. An electrical contractor was notified and officers directed traffic until the necessary repair was completed several hours later.

Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

Dec. 16: A civilian arrived at police headquarters at 4:36 p.m. reporting that his cell phone was stolen from his vehicle. The reporting party stated he parked his vehicle, which was unlocked, at about 11 a.m. in the rear parking lot of the Grand Street firehouse. The phone was left on the passenger seat when he went inside. He returned to the vehicle and drove off and later realized the phone was missing. The cell phone was a black Apple iPhone 12 with a case.

Dec. 18: Staff at Croton Colonial Restaurant & Diner on South Riverside Avenue reported at 5:46 p.m. that an unknown party stole used cooking oil from the restaurant’s tank. Patrols conducted a preliminary investigation and filed a case report.

North Castle Police Department

Dec. 17: Report of a past larceny at 10:43 a.m. from a complainant’s mailbox on Route 120 involving personal checks. The responding officers reported that information was gathered as a matter of record only at this time as per request of the complainant. A report to follow.

Dec. 19: A Wrights Mill Road resident reported at 7:55 a.m. that a large bobcat just walked thorough her backyard and into her neighbor’s yard. The responding officer reported that the bobcat was gone upon his arrival.

Dec. 20: A caller reported a minor dispute with the Gulf station clerk on North Broadway at 3:47 p.m. He stated that he gave the clerk four $20 dollar bills, then went out to pump his gas. He pumped $49 in gas and went inside to retrieve his change and was only given back $11 instead of $31. The responding officer spoke with all parties involved, including the owner, and reported that the owner agreed to check the register totals at midnight when the shift ends and parties will make contact tomorrow to discuss the findings. Matter adjusted at this time.

Pleasantville Police Department

Dec. 22: A security video showing a vehicle being looted by a group of youngsters was reported to police from a Hobby Street resident. The vehicle, a 2013 Toyota, was unlocked. The larceny is under investigation.

Dec. 23: A complainant arrived at police headquarters to report that fraudulent checks were being deposited in their name. The case is under investigation.

State Police/Cortlandt

Dec. 21: Police are seeking the public’s assistance with an identity theft and grand larceny investigation. Earlier this month a victim reported having lost a wallet in Walmart on East Main Street in Mohegan Lake, and shortly afterward received several fraudulent credit card charges. Investigators were able to obtain security images of a subject believed to have used the victim’s identity to make fraudulent purchases at stores in Cortlandt and Ossining. Anyone with information regarding the possible identity or location of the individual is asked to contact state police at 914-769-2600.

Yorktown Police Department

Dec. 20: Alexander Cardenas, 53, of Ossining, was charged with driving with a suspended license and without insurance at 4:45 p.m. following a two-car accident on Route 100 near Seven Bridges Road.

Dec. 22: Shaina Quinones, 34, of Yorktown, was charged with unsafe passing and aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle at 9:28 a.m. following a crash on Route 6. A routine driver’s license check revealed she was driving with a suspended license.

Dec. 22: A 16-year-old male was charged with juvenile delinquency at 10:13 a.m. after allegedly entering a Crompond Road residence without approval.

Stepinac Alum Donates $1M to Alma Mater; Largest Gift Ever for School

Daniel P. Mahoney, a distinguished 1967 graduate and longtime supporter of Stepinac High School, recently returned with his wife, Susan, to donate to his alma mater that he credits for shaping his success as well as many other students.

This time, his commitment to Stepinac came as a $1 million gift, the single largest donation in the 73-year history of the renowned all-boys Catholic high school.

In recognition of the significance that the contribution will make in supporting the school’s mission to provide students with the skills they’ll need to be globally competitive, the groundbreaking Honors Academy will be renamed the Susan and Daniel P. Mahoney Honors Academy. Launched four years ago, the Honors Academy, which Mahoney praised for its curriculum innovation, is a small learning program for academically top performing students that provides college-level applications in four disciplines – engineering, finance, health sciences and law – leading to potential careers.

The Mahoneys, who now live in Jupiter, Fla., were longtime Rye residents where they became pillars of that community. Susan Mahoney served on the Board of Trustees of Rye Country Day School for 14 years and was responsible for leading three major fundraising campaigns.

“On behalf of our truly grateful Stepinac family, especially the students, I extend deep appreciation for your very generous gift,” said Stepinac President Fr. Thomas Collins while recently accepting the couple’s gift. “It truly reflects your abiding faith in the school’s tradition of shaping tomorrow’s leaders. Thanks to your investment, you will help assure that Stepinac remains strong as a preeminent leader in secondary education.”

After graduating in 1971 from Boston College where he majored in finance, Dan Mahoney pursued a successful career spanning more than 30 years on Wall Street as a New York Stock Exchange specialist. He served as a senior partner at CMJ Partners, a leading New York Stock Exchange member firm.
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- Widow Jane Bourbon 750 ML $59.99

**Wines & Spirits**

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<th>Type</th>
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<td>Cavit Pinot Grigio 1.5L</td>
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Editorial

Time to Polish the Crystal Ball and See What’s in Store for 2022

It’s hard to believe that it’s time to turn the page on another year. After the upheaval of 2020, it’s likely most of us were looking for a better outlook in 2021. There were some hopeful signs, but it was still a difficult year for so many.

For everyone to once again feel comfortable going to wherever store, restaurant or venue you choose to visit.

That all those who continue to stubbornly refuse to get vaccinated against the deadly COVID-19 virus come to their senses.

For health care professionals, whose mission is to help others, receive the thanks they deserve.

That teachers and school personnel are recognized for their dedication in educating children in the midst of some of the most challenging times.

A wonderful retirement for Cortlandt Supervisor Linda Puglisi after 34 years of impeccable public service, including the last 30 as supervisor.

That Yorktown Councilman Vishnu Patel, a selfless public servant, continues to find a way to make his community better.

For Putnam Valley Supervisor Sam Oliverio, Carmel Supervisor Ken Schmitt, Somers Supervisor Rick Morrissey, Kent Supervisor Maureen Fleming, Peekskill Mayor Andre Raineye and all others leaving office, nothing but success in the next chapter of their lives. Thank you to all of you for your public service.

Letters to the Editor

Fighting Mask Mandate is Divisive and Helps No One

I read with interest your article last week “Gubernatorial Hopeful Slams Mask Mandate ButReaction is Varied.” It would be nice for the politicians to get on the same page regarding COVID-19, a benefit to us all.

The governor's directive to businesses requiring proof of vaccination OR wearing a mask is not unreasonable in this recent spike of COVID-19 cases. Maybe you should speak with the Emergency Department nurses who have been dealing with COVID-19 every day for the past two years as I have. These health professionals are stressed out and worry daily about the consequences of bringing COVID-19 home to their families. Their wishes are simply to shop in Putnam. In fact, BJ’s shares the same shopping plaza as All Seasons Wine & Spirits mentioned in your article. I am sure the same mask-wearing shoppers at BJ’s are patronizing nearby All Seasons Wine & Spirits without incident.

People are scared of the new COVID-19 variant. We can all get through this COVID-19 together, including our local businesses. The statement by Mr. Zeldin “...that there are people who are going to take their business to Putnam” is divisive and serves no one. Personally, as a senior citizen, I am going to be even more cautious when I have to go out, double mask and continue to shop in Yorktown.

Odell’s Refusal to Enforce Mask Mandate is Political Grandstanding

The NFL, NBA and NHL players have been hit with COVID-19, causing them to postpone or cancel games because they don’t have enough players. Cornell University moved all final exams online and canceled university events due to the rapid spread of COVID. And here, in our own county, the Carmel Central School District decided to close the high school and go to remote learning for the rest of 2021. COVID figures are rising in all states.

MaryEllen Odell, our county executive, has chosen this time to announce that Putnam County will not enforce the mask mandate that Gov. Hochul recently put in place. Not that it matters that much that Odell and the county legislature passed the resolution. Everywhere I go people are masked up. They don’t want to take a chance they will get COVID-19. Odell announced that the Health Department is arranging a private-public partnership to create a COVID testing site in Carmel that will be open six days a week.

They understand the gravity of the situation. Why, then, pass a resolution that opposes their own state government, does not help county residents deal with this deadly crisis and will obviously be ignored? The legislature argues that the government does not have the right to order people to wear masks. This is empty political grandstanding. This does not save lives!

Steve Epstein
Yorktown Heights

Phyllis Hoenig
Mahopac

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Puglisi Looks Back on 34 Years in Cortlandt Government

By Rick Pezzullo

As she sauntered into the conference room at Cortlandt Town Hall, a building that played a pivotal role in the beginning of her historic 30-year run as town supervisor, Linda Puglisi described the personal touches she made on decorating the space, along with the many scenic locations in town, some that were on display in photographs on the wall. It was two weeks before Puglisi, 72, would be exiting Town Hall as the longest serving chief executive in Cortlandt history and only the second woman to lead the town after deciding a year ago to retire after 15 terms.

“I would love to be supervisor the rest of my life. In my mind it’s my identity. It’s who I am,” Puglisi said during a wide-ranging and sentimental interview. “I wanted to go out on my own terms. I have been blessed and fortunate to have had the trust of residents all these years. It makes me feel satisfied that I made a difference. That was my goal from the beginning.”

Born in Canton, Ohio, Puglisi moved with her family to Rockland County when she was two years old. Her father, Ralph C. Braden, was a World War II veteran who would later serve 25 years as town historian in Orange County. He knew John F. Kennedy; someone Puglisi would grow up to admire.

She and her ex-husband, who she met as a freshman at Pearl River High School, bought a house in the Cropton section of Cortlandt to be closer to his job. Their twin children, Ali and Jeff, who grew up to be an attorney and a doctor, respectively.

Puglisi first became involved with issues in the Lakeland School District, who left him chairman of the Mohegan Colony Homeowners Association and director of the Mohegan Colony Nursery School.

Puglisi also joined Cortlandt Watch, a homeowners’ group that promoted environmental protection and controlled development. That caught the eye of veteran town official Jack Gaffney, who was running for supervisor in 1987. Gaffney lost to his longtime nemesis, Charles DiGiacomo, but Puglisi and Thomas Carulli, his two running mates, defeated two prominent Republican candidates for Town Board seats.

“It was the right time for me to run for town council,” Puglisi said. “The community was going in a different direction. They wanted less development. I thought the whole team would win. Tom and I came out of that grassroots community.”

Two years later, Gaffney ousted DiGiacomo. Puglisi had toyed with running a Democratic primary against Gaffney, but decided to back off. But in 1991, she secured the Democratic line and prevailed in a four-way race by 83 votes, outlasting DiGiacomo, Gaffney and Alfred Donahue to win her first two-year term as supervisor.

“From Day One I wanted to be in charge. I didn’t like some of the decisions that were made. I felt I could do a better job,” Puglisi said. “I knew it was an uphill battle.”

During the campaign, Gaffney openly questioned Puglisi’s credentials, remarking, “Linda Puglisi is a nice lady who can serve milk and cookies and sing nursery rhymes, but she can’t run a business.”

“I think it backfired,” Puglisi said of Gaffney’s comments, which were echoed by others. “Sure, that was an outrageous thing to say. I wanted an opportunity. I went and marketed myself. I was pleased that people got my message, believed in me and supported me.”

Puglisi also benefited from a backlash against Gaffney from Croton-on-Hudson residents, who were bitter that Cortlandt was moving its offices from the Croton Municipal Building, where the town paid about $100,000 annually in rent, to the former Van Cortlandville Elementary School Building, which the town purchased for $1.1 million in 1991 following a referendum. Ironically, it was Puglisi’s idea to pursue the building and she was part of a negotiating team that secured it.

The town spent another $500,000 to make necessary improvements that Puglisi played an integral role in redesigning.

“In the long run it would be beneficial to the village,” Puglisi said. “I always knew that this former elementary school recycled into a Town Hall would serve our community well and it has done just that for 29 years.”

Other economic-led decisions Puglisi spearheaded were eliminating the town police department in 1999, consolidating town operating departments and other shared services.

Of course, the hallmark of her career has been the town’s average annual tax increase of 1 percent. During the same time, Cortlandt has completed more than $160 million in major improvements and capital projects, while only utilizing 1.2 percent of its bonding capacity.

“It’s a record that we are very proud of which has benefited our community, residents and local businesses during this administration,” Puglisi said.

Puglisi also led the charge to retain veterans’ services at the Montrose VA and helped add 3,000 acres of open space that have been used for recreational purposes or environmental preservation.

“Politics can be difficult, but I had a plan. I had a mission,” she said. “All the innovative ideas were what were best for the community. I don’t regret anything.”

Along the way, Puglisi faced many challenges, from hurricanes and tornados to the sudden announcement that the Indian Point nuclear power plants, the largest employer in the town, would be closing. She said Indian Point “kind of took over my life from the beginning.”

However, she emphasized that nothing compared to the obstacles created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, none of the town’s 200 employees have died from the virus.

Puglisi suffered a personal misstep in 2006 when she stepped in a pothole wearing high heels on her way to a function at Colonial Terrace where she was scheduled to introduce President Bill Clinton. She wound up getting five plates with screws in her ankle and had to use a cane ever since.

“It changed my life. It was a stupid accident,” she said. “I’ve always been a very athletic person.”

Puglisi said she has extreme confidence that supervisor-elect Dr. Richard Becker will lead Cortlandt in the right direction.

“I know Richard will do a good job and carry forward a lot of our projects. I wanted to make sure someone would carry on the legacy,” Puglisi said. “I have confidence in Richard and the team that they will do the right thing.”

Puglisi said she has no plans to leave Cortlandt and hopes to catch up on some reading and do some traveling. She is fond of New England and enjoys being at the ocean. And, of course, she will spend more time with her children and two grandchildren, Oliver and Jeremy.

“They are amazing and the light of my life,” Puglisi said. “I’m also just so proud of my kids. They’ve achieved a great deal. The most important thing is they are such good people.”

Don’t expect to see her speaking out at meetings, though. After leading more than 1,700 of them during her tenure, she’s been there, done that.

“I’ve had my turn. I’ve had my time,” Puglisi said. “I’ve worked to the best of my ability. It’s been exciting. It’s been interesting. Where can you have a profession where every day is different? I’ve met so many people that I wouldn’t have met before. Cortlandt has a bright future.”
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Art, Music is the Heart and Soul of ‘Joshua2’

By Abby Luby

Maybe it’s how he soulfully sings the blues or deftly paints his large canvases or molds his uniquely shaped vessels.

Each creation by artist and musician Joshua Brittingham seems to emanate directly from his soul, from an inner space informing him of a plethora of emotions unfolding from social inequities and worldwide painful discrimination to a transformative place of where negative vibes become positive. Brittingham’s art and music stays with you.

A tall, bespectacled man with a hearty laugh, Brittingham, 60, professionally goes by the name Joshua2, a name he gave himself after a traumatic, life-threatening experience prompted him to forgive his parents for naming him after his father.

Brittingham and his wife, Holly, have two adult children. The couple moved to Somers five years ago after living in Harlem because he “needed to get closer to nature.”

Brittingham’s art and music stays with you.

Brittingham’s original paintings sell from $12,000 to $18,000 and giclee prints are priced at $750 to $4,500. Among his use of rich symbolism are thick encumbered nooses and wide-eyed crowned figures of Jesus and crosses. Many surfaces on the canvas are layered with pages of scripture.

“It’s my way of denouncing the scriptures,” Brittingham explained. “If people really read the Bible, well, it’s not a happy book. My use of scripture pages means to warn people to really study and understand Christianity.”

Brittingham sees religion as a movement taking advantage of disparity.

“You see big stone cathedrals all over the world in poor places, like in South Africa, a church that offers sanctuary to the poor,” he said. “But that big church is what keeps people poor.”

Not limiting his creativity to just two dimensions, Brittingham creates large, organically-shaped vessels, delicately leaning vases or lotus bowls, which all radiate a living presence, especially when you stand next to or hold one. Using recycled and repurposed glass bottles, he recreates the shape using reconstituted, hand-made paper made into a thick, textured pulp applied to the bottle, layered and painted.

As an accomplished performing musician Brittingham regularly sings with his band. They have performed in Harlem, Delaware and abroad in New Zealand, Germany and Amsterdam. Locally, he performs outside his Somers studio twice a year. His last concert in September welcomed visitors into his gallery.

Brittingham’s rock ‘n’ roll and blues songs may sound familiar but he often rewrites the lyrics to “tell the history of our people and credit those who actually wrote the words and composed the blues but died penniless in a little shack while others took credit and became famous.”

Brittingham has his own version of the song “Strange Fruit,” composed by Abel Meeropol and recorded by Billie Holiday in 1939 about lynchings. The song compares victims to fruit hanging from trees.

Whatever mode of expression Brittingham chooses, each is a commentary on religion, the current state of racial inequality and healing. As a leader of the Black student union while attending the University of Delaware, he recalled countless protests, being arrested, beaten and going to jail repeatedly. His take on the current Black Lives Matter movement is that it doesn’t go far enough.

“I appreciate what BLM is trying to do but it’s on the surface,” he said. “I want to change the laws still on the books that say discrimination is legal. There are still Jim Crow laws that say if you are 15 percent Black, then you are a Black person. We also need to change the laws that legally allow a person from lynching Black people,” he said, referring to the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, a Black man murdered by two white men in Georgia last year.

Currently Brittingham is embracing Taoism, incorporating symbols of the Eastern philosophy in his visual work.

“The Tao tells us about peace and love, and that’s what is missing in the scriptures,” he said. “My family were all healers and I create from the heart.”

To learn more about Joshua Brittingham and his art and music, visit https://joshua2studios.com.

Ask the Doctor
Ranjana Chaterji, DO
Breast Surgeon
Northwell Health Breast Care Center
Northern Westchester Hospital

The care and safety of our community during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is our top priority. We have put maximum safety measures in place to prevent exposure to the coronavirus by anyone who comes to the Hospital for emergency or scheduled care. Don’t delay care. Please continue to wash your hands, wear a mask, and practice social distancing.

Northern Westchester Hospital
Northwell Health

5 Questions Women Should Ask About Breast Cancer Surgery

Q: What stage is my cancer?
A: Breast cancer stages are represented on a scale of 0 to 4, with 4 being the most serious. Stage 0, also called ductal carcinoma in situ, means that your cancer is contained in a milk duct and has a low risk of spreading. Stage 4 breast cancer means the cancer has spread to other parts of your body. If your cancer is stage 4, seeking treatment immediately may improve your outcome and ultimate quality of life.

Q: How do I decide whether a lumpectomy or mastectomy is the best option?
A: More often than not, you will choose the type of surgery you feel most comfortable with. The survival data of lumpectomy with radiation is equivalent to that of a mastectomy, so we’ve learned that more surgery is not necessarily better.

Q: How soon does surgery need to be done?
A: Typically, we try to operate within a month of a diagnosis – you don’t have to decide immediately. You can learn about breast cancer, understand your options, and then make a decision you’re comfortable with. A woman’s gut feeling is most important. My patients often ask me, “What would you do?” But it’s not about me — it’s what the woman wants and what makes sense for her, her family, and her life.

Q: How do I choose a surgeon?
A: Seek a fellowship-trained breast surgeon. These are surgeons who, after their residency, do a fellowship specific to oncologic breast surgery. At Northern Westchester Hospital, we work as a team to care for you through surgery, medical oncology, radiation oncology, genetics and plastic surgery.

Q: How can I find support during this difficult time?
A: Northern Westchester Hospital’s Bruce and Andrea Yablon Cancer Health and Wellness Program provides supportive care and holistic treatments that complement medical treatment. You can choose free integrative medicine services, including reiki, acupuncture, massage, nutrition planning, fitness and exercise plans, mindful wellness and emotional support, and a survivorship program.

We also partner with Support Connection, a group that offers free emotional, social and educational support services to women and their families and friends affected by breast and ovarian cancer. I encourage my patients to take part in these programs, which are currently virtual. The support enables women to help each other and empowers them to become their own health care advocates.

Learn more about Dr. Chaterji, visit nwh.northwell.edu/Chaterji

About Breast Cancer Surgery

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Q: How can I find support during this difficult time?
A: Northern Westchester Hospital’s Bruce and Andrea Yablon Cancer Health and Wellness Program provides supportive care and holistic treatments that complement medical treatment. You can choose free integrative medicine services, including reiki, acupuncture, massage, nutrition planning, fitness and exercise plans, mindful wellness and emotional support, and a survivorship program.

We also partner with Support Connection, a group that offers free emotional, social and educational support services to women and their families and friends affected by breast and ovarian cancer. I encourage my patients to take part in these programs, which are currently virtual. The support enables women to help each other and empowers them to become their own health care advocates.

Learn more about Dr. Chaterji, visit nwh.northwell.edu/Chaterji
By Adam Stone

You are reading this week’s print edition excerpt of Examiner+, a digital newsmagazine serving Westchester, Putnam, and the surrounding Hudson Valley. Need to subscribe — or upgrade your Examiner+ subscription to enjoy full access to all of our premium digital content? Visit www.examiner-plus.com

For every million Joe Schmo creators, for every dreamer whose art vanishes unheralded in the ceaseless passing of time, there’s one whose work captures the world’s attention and maintains that grip across a broad span of history. Their contributions endure in our minds, in our collective consciousness, burning a flame in our imaginations while art of equal or superior (and lesser) technical quality or artistic ambition evaporates into ash. It isn’t preordained, the select few who win the rare place. It is the byproduct of not just hard work and talent but also coincidence and serendipity. Timing and chance. Artists who possess greater ability descend into anonymity. But there’s that rarity, the one who bends history with the strum of a guitar, or the turn of a phrase, or the stroke of a paintbrush. They might have elite skill but it’s their penchant and passion for storytelling, in the right historic moment, with the right megaphone, that sets them apart and elevates their legend, mixed with elements of luck and happenstance — right person, right place, right time. In 20th century American writing, think Hemingway. In music, think early Dylan.

In modern American life, no painter/illustrator fits that description better than Norman Rockwell, a Mamaroneck High School dropout who delivered America, especially suburban, middle-class America, a new national identity. And examining Rockwell’s influence over our identity has never been more relevant than it is today.

Just think, heading into last year’s presidential election, a whopping 80 percent of voters on both the Republican and Democratic sides proclaimed that contrasts with the opposing party are about core American values. But what are those values? And who helped shape them? No figure of the 20th century did more than Rockwell to create a visual vocabulary for us around those values, creating both American myths and real aspirations.

Roadtrip

All sober ruminating aside, and with just a fun getaway in mind, my wife Alyson and I recently visited the Berkshires for a weekend and included a pitstop at the Norman Rockwell Museum in his adopted adult life hometown of Stockbridge, Massachusetts. But I came away from the experience inspired by Rockwell’s legacy, with a wider understanding of the impact he had on how we look at ourselves as Americans...

To read the rest of this article, and others like it, visit examiner-plus.com and click subscribe. We hope you’ve enjoyed this week’s excerpt from Examiner+. We love honest feedback. Tell us what you think: examinerplus@theexaminernews.com
December 28, 2021 - January 3, 2022

Yorktown Fitness Center Partners With Nonprofit to Bring Holiday Joy

By Martin Wilbur

For most, the day before Christmas is a time to fetch any last-minute gifts or bring home food items from the store and prepare for the holiday.

Last Friday, Robert Tomasulo and Junior Susca were hard at work completing hundreds of "burpees," a strenuous exercise that combines a jump, squat and pushup.

The nearly herculean efforts of Tomasulo, the owner of Level Up Strength & Conditioning in Yorktown Heights, and Susca, one of his coaches, helped raise more than $1,400 for Love Holds Life Children’s Cancer Foundation, a lower Hudson Valley-based nonprofit organization.

“It was definitely challenging but doing it for the kids kind of helps you mentally to keep pushing through, and then the community that we have here at the gym helps us even more," said Tomasulo, who completed 600 burpees while Susca did 520. “So to have support of my gym and all the coaches and everything makes it that much easier.”

After their grueling hour-long activity, two of the families that Love Holds Life helped this holiday season arrived at the gym as part of a brief presentation. Amanda Dumont, who recently moved from Cortlandt to Newburgh and whose nine-year-old daughter Zoe is recovering from cancer, was presented with a $1,000 check.

Then Jaya Karnani of Edgewater, N.J. came with her seven-year-old daughter Kiah and older son Zehn and received $2,500 and a gift for each child. For more than a year, Kiah has battled a rare bone cancer in her jaw, which has required doctors at Sloan Kettering’s pediatric unit to take bone from her leg. Her treatments can take up to 12 hours per visit.

“All this means the world to us, first getting to see Santa,” Karnani said. “She’s almost lost her childhood. I would wake her up at seven in the morning and I'll say, ‘Kiah, do you want to wake up and see Santa?’ She’ll say yes because she doesn’t know what tomorrow will be. She knows that maybe tomorrow she’ll be stuck in the hospital.”

Richard Senato, who founded Love Holds Life nearly 10 years ago, said there was a third family that was helped this Christmas but they were unable to come because their son was completing treatment.

Aside from bringing joy during the holidays, Love Holds Life helps families throughout Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, northern New Jersey and Tampa, Fla. the rest of the year, he said.

“It’s all monetary assistance that we provide families during their time of treatment, and each family we’ll help for two years,” Senato said.

Dumont, a single mother, was overcome with emotion when she learned that she would be a holiday recipient. Someone on Cortlandt Manor Moms had contacted Love Holds Life to let them know of the challenges faced by Dumont and her daughter.

After the pandemic and Zoe’s battle, it was important to have an enjoyable Christmas this year.

“They got a hold of me,” Dumont said. “I was thinking this can’t be real.”

For Tomasulo and Susca, they had agreed to do one burpee for every dollar raised at the fitness center from members who would put donations in their stockings. Then Tomasulo’s father, Joe, matched those donations through his company Madison Environmental & Tank Services in Somers.

That required Susca to do 520 burpees and 584 for Tomasulo, who decided to round it up to 600. It was tough but they each hit their number. A third coach raised additional money but wasn’t there to participate.

“I’ve never gone over 160 before,” Susca said. “At the end of the day, I kept reminding myself what I’m doing it for; for a good cause, especially when I saw these young ladies. I said, alright, I’ve got to keep going.”

To learn more about Love Holds Life Children’s Cancer Foundation, visit www.loveholdslife.org.
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Is Wine By the Glass Worthwhile When You’re Away From Home?

By Nick Antonaccio

“May I offer you a drink?”
“Yes, I’d like a glass of (white, red, sparkling) wine.”

This seemingly innocuous interchange with a waiter or bartender can be fraught with indecision, or worse, a hurried choice that has a mediocre result.

Today’s COVID-induced dining environment seems to change seasonally, sometimes monthly, even weekly. In this column, my focus is on those occasions when you are feeling relatively safe to enter an establishment for a meal or a drink. Recently, many of us have gravitated to watching our wallets as much as our waistlines (they seem to be heading in opposite directions). Restaurants, bars and wine bars understand this inflation awareness. Offerings of wines by the glass at reasonable prices have increased multifold around the world. But, “I’ll have the house wine” is still the typical response when ordering a glass.

Let’s change that behavior pattern. Be adventurous. Order wine by the glass with the goal of finding a “new favorite” wine. Better yet, why order a bottle when you can pick and choose multiple wines from the by-the-glass list?

As with most adventures, caution is paramount. Be aware of the pitfalls that lurk as you navigate through this process. Here are my guidelines for how and when to order a glass of wine, whether seated at your restaurant table or waiting to be seated while at the restaurant’s bar; whether meeting friends at your local watering hole or social-distancing at a wine bar.

First, the benefits.

1. When dining with the special person in our life, we tend to order one bottle for the evening, trying to find a middle ground to satisfy differing food preferences as well as the competing flavors of our first and second courses. We rarely succeed. This situation cries out for a glass or glasses of wine perfectly paired with individual dishes.

2. When socializing with friends at a local bar, it’s too easy to order generically. Be inquisitive. “Which red (white) wines are you offering this evening?” Ask the server to describe the country of origin and the style of wine. “The Chilean Cabernet tastes innocuous. May I sample it?” Your server has been trained to lower the barriers of selection; multiple choices usually lead to multiple glasses.

3. If you’re like me, you have a life-list of wines to enjoy before you kick the (ice) bucket. Today many restaurants and wine bars offer high-end wines by the glass. Are they expensive? Yes. Would you otherwise have the opportunity to check them off your life list? Probably not. Besides, $25 for one glass is an extravagance I can better psychologically rationalize than $200 for a bottle. Now, the pitfalls.

1. Financially, wines by the glass yield a low return on investment for you and an extraordinarily high return for restaurants and bars. Here’s the math: the typical restaurant or bar pour is four ounces, which equates to five glasses per bottle. The average price to you for a glass of wine has been climbing to a current level of $10 to $13. The average cost of that bottle, at wholesale, is $17 to $26. The math: the restaurant or bar may need to sell just one glass to recover all or most of their cost of the bottle (not including overhead). The remaining pours from the bottle are nearly all profit.

2. “I’ll have a glass of the house wine.” My advice: Never order the house wine. It may be convenient to do so in the midst of conversation, but by spending a few minutes being more selective, you will most likely experience a new wine and expand your knowledge and palate – for only $2 to $3 more than the house wine.

3. Be sure the wine being poured into your glass is the wine you ordered. Reputable establishments will always present the bottle as they are pouring. This helps you prevent any bait-and-switch tactic. By the glass or buy the bottle? Do the simple math. Follow your personal logic. Find the right balance and you’ve created a win-win experience.

Nick Antonaccio is a 45-year Pleasantville resident. For over 25 years, he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. Nick is a member and program director of the Wine Media Guild of wine journalists. He also offers personalized wine tastings and wine travel services. Nick’s credo: continuous experimenting results in instinctive behavior. You can reach him at nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com or on Twitter @sharingwine.
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Six Movies Worth Checking Out This Holiday Season

As we hit the holidays and head into Oscars season, here are some takes on a few movies that you might have missed or have been meaning to check out.

Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings
In one of Marvel’s best films since “Avengers: Endgame,” “Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings,” brings the first Asian superhero to the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU).

The story revolves around Shaun whose complicated family history involves a traumatizing childhood under the supervision of his father, Xu Wenwu. Wenwu is the leader of a powerful, merciless organization known as the Ten Rings and rules using the mystical power of the artifacts with the same name. Shaun, his sister, Xialing, and his friend, Katy, fight to stop Wenwu from destroying a mystical village, known as Ta Lo.

Simu Liu and Awkwafina have undeniable chemistry and make the film a fun and action-packed adventure. The movie has some visually stunning scenes and the choreography of the fight scenes are some of the best Marvel has ever produced. The story is compelling, original and not overly complicated and does its best to honor Chinese culture without going over the top.

Rating: 9.25/10
Where to watch: Disney+

The Last Duel
This historical drama, directed by Ridley Scott, stars Jodie Comer, Matt Damon and Adam Driver and tells the story of a broken friendship amidst accusations of a heinous crime.

Set in 14th century France, the film highlights the primitive nature of this time as unresolved conflicts in the courts are resolved in a duel to the death. The film is sequenced in three different parts, according to Lady Marguerite (Comer).

The film showcases how women have undeniable chemistry and make the film a fun and action-packed adventure. The movie has some visually stunning scenes and the choreography of the fight scenes are some of the best Marvel has ever produced. The story is compelling, original and not overly complicated and does its best to honor Chinese culture without going over the top.

Rating: 9.25/10
Where to watch: Disney+

Dune
Based on the iconic 1965 novel written by Frank Herbert, “Dune” is a sci-fi film that centers around Paul Atreides who is in line to become Duke. House Atreides is in constant conflict with House Harkonnen and is sent to rule over the desert planet of Arrakis.

Devoid of abundant water supply, Arrakis is vital to the galaxy’s economy due to its abundance of “spice,” which provide heightened awareness and consciousness, but also makes the inhabitants dependent on its use. It is also valuable for navigation and interstellar travel.

Complex political intricacies become apparent, and House Atreides tries to broker a diplomatic relationship with the indigenous people, known as the Fremen. Atreides (Timothée Chalamet) discovers he has heightened abilities along with his mother, Lady Jessica (Rebecca Ferguson).

Keep in mind that this movie covers half of the novel and is only Part 1. That said, it’s long but visually stunning. Much of the film is laying the foundation and character development in preparation for the epic Part 2.

The movie is certainly intriguing, but does feel very slow at times. The acting is top-notch as one would expect and Comer does feel very slow at times. The acting is aware and ignorance is evident from both male leads, even though they have different personalities and characteristics.

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This film had everything a superhero fan could ask for — action, suspense, tragedy and a few twists to boot. It was everything I’ve ever wanted in a Spiderman film and I could not have enjoyed myself more. A must-see and will certainly be the talk of the town this holiday season.

Rating: 10/10
Where to watch: In theaters

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Catch the Planets in Nighttime Sky Before They Leave the Stage

If you’ve had a few minutes and looked to the southwest over the last few months, maybe you’ve noticed and stared at the long line of bright planets that have stretched across that part of the sky since the summer and fall.

There’s some uncertainty, but it’s thought that our word planet came to us from the Greek word planetes, a reference to how these few objects appeared to wander among the other stars. Other than their strange movement, the ancients had no way of knowing that these wanderers were anything different than the other lights in the night, let alone other nearby worlds orbiting the sun.

As with most things, these wandering planets come and go. After all these months with us, it’s time for our neighbors to leave the night sky. This gives us another chance to see them the way the ancients did. It’s tough to be together these days, but we can still enjoy the nights and draw a line back through time all the way to when the first people looked up and wondered.

So, let’s head out after sundown. As this year turns into next, we can watch the bright planets sink lower into the dusk than the night before. This is both because our view on them is changing, but also because our daylight hours are starting to stretch out, little by little, now that we’ve past the winter solstice.

First leaving the stage is Venus. As the year starts, our solar system’s second planet will move too close to the sun and be tough to spot. On Jan. 9, it crosses into the morning sky, where it will join Mars, which has been waiting there for the last few months. Venus won’t be back into the evenings until next December.

Speedy Mercury rises higher into the night for a few days at the start of the year. Mercury is always a fun challenge because it moves fast and never gets very far from the sun in our sky. It’ll be alongside Saturn, which will look dusty and stubborn through the twilight. While we’re here, let’s try to catch the beautiful sight of a young crescent moon as it sweeps through from Jan. 4-6.

Mercury drops from the evenings until April on the 23rd. Saturn follows behind it and slips out of the nights around the 31st. By the end of the month, Jupiter is the only planet left in our nights. It follows the others and leaves the evenings by mid-February. With a snap, we’re without any planets in the night sky until the warm months return, other than Mercury’s brief April visit.

It’s always a bit sad when the planets leave the night, but it’s amazing to see them parade away. These times let us watch the solar system do its thing, just like people have for millennia, and hopefully will for millennia more. If there’s one thing we can be sure about, it’s that the planets will be back soon.

Thanks for reading this year, and thanks to my friend Bob Kelly for his help with the dates in this article. Be safe, be well and happy new year!

Scott Levine (astroscott@yahoo.com) is an astronomy writer and speaker from Croton-on-Hudson. He is also a member of the Westchester Amateur Astronomers, who are dedicated to astronomy outreach in our area. For information about the club including membership, newsletters, upcoming meetings and lectures at Pace University and star parties at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, visit westchesterastronomers.org.

Clear Skies

New Moon January 2
First Quarter January 9
Full Moon January 17
Last Quarter January 25

The phases of the moon chart for January.

Answers on page 27
continued from page 20

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December 28, 2021 - January 3, 2022
Moccia, Fox Lane Crush Mount Vernon, 61-33

Fox Lane senior G Ibby Moccia takes a strong run at the rim in the Foxes’ 61-33 win over visiting Mount Vernon last Wednesday when Fox Lane chalked up its first win of the season... see Girls Hoops Notebook
Christmas arrived a few days early for the Fox Lane girls’ basketball team.

Desperately in search of a win after starting the 2021-22 season with five consecutive losses, the Foxes got a visit last Wednesday afternoon from Mount Vernon, a team struggling even more and that had lost each of its first six games by at least 25 points.

With freshman guard Cara Drapala pouring in 21 points and senior Quoya Schnell adding 16, the Foxes added to the Knights’ woes with a lopsided 61-33 home victory. Scoring the game’s first nine points, a streak that began with a 3-point shot by Schnell and ended with a 3-pointer from Drapala two minutes after the opening jump, Fox Lane never trailed and built a lead as large as 32 points midway through the final quarter.

Drapala, who also finished with six rebounds, five assists and four steals, connected on her second 3-pointer of the game with just under three minutes to go in the first quarter, giving the Foxes a 12-3 lead. In the last minute of the period, Drapala drove into the lane for a one-hander that rolled in and Schnell dribbled left for a 12-foot jumper just outside the lane that enabled Fox Lane to build its advantage to 16-5.

Mount Vernon misfired on its first five shots from the field in the first quarter and began the second with four straight misses. Just 20 seconds into the quarter, Fox sophomore Lauren Antolino tossed in a shot after dribbling to the right baseline. The Foxes’ lead grew to 21-5 when Ibby Moccia drained a lefty 3-point shot near the top of the key. A pair of free throws from Antolino with 4:50 left in the half capped the extended 12-0 Fox run and left the Knights behind by 19 points.

Moccia drove the left baseline for a bucket with 2:24 remaining and Schnell, who also recorded seven rebounds and seven steals, followed with a trey from the right elbow 45 seconds later, stretching the Fox lead to 21 points. A basket by Antolino with 11 seconds on the clock sent the Foxes to the locker room with a 33-12 halftime cushion.

The second half began with Drapala driving into the lane for an easy layup and after that Mount Vernon never got any closer than 21 points. A couple of free throws by Moccia with exactly a minute left in the third quarter extended the Foxes’ lead to 49-20 and they took a 27-point advantage into the fourth quarter.

Just as she did to start the third quarter, Drapala opened the fourth with another drive through the lane for a layup. When she swished a 3-point shot from the right elbow with 5:56 left in the game, Fox Lane’s lead grew to 30 points. Two consecutive baskets by sophomore Lily Moore, the first one a short pop in the lane and the second a toss high off glass on a drive, gave the Foxes their largest lead of the afternoon, 60-28.

For the Foxes, Moccia wound up with seven points and eight rebounds. Nicole Picinich, one of Fox Lane’s senior captains, added five points, eight rebounds and six steals. Senior Susannah Kimsal grabbed 11 rebounds, while eighth-grader Morgan Clinton chipped in with seven boards.

-Andy Jacobs

ART NELSON PHOTOS
No.1 PANAS – Oh, man, praying that the COVID ghouls are silent as we come out of the break with this Panas vs. Lakeland tilt set for a league tip off on Jan. 4. Eight days later, Coach Auerbach’s Class A Panthers (5-2) welcome Poughkeepsie (5-2) for what should be another League I-D dozy.

No.2 LAKELAND – Coach Follo’s Class A Hornets have a little something-something cooking over there in Shrub Oak, despite the puzzling season-opening loss to John Jay CR, and they’ll have that first crack at Panas on their home court out of the break. #HiveWillBeBuzzing.

No.3 YORKTOWN – There is a mild level of concern about Coach Pavella’s Huskies given the two blowout losses to Panas and Hastings and the 44.3 points per game scored over the last three games. John Jay CR, Somers and Mahopac out of the break, so getting back on course won’t be easy with these three league foes on tap, so the Huskies best bring it out of the break.

No.4 Haldane – Coach V’s Blue Devils take on Croton, North Salem and Put Valley out of the break and we smell a sweep and a never-to-be-relinquished grip on the League III-D title.

No.4A OSSINING – 80-71 double overtime loss to a quality Clarkstown South club sets up what is a rough stretch for Coach Casey’s Pride (4-2) with Fox Lane (4-1), White Plains (2-6) out-bettered by Scarsdale (6-2) after the 79-76 Year, Jaeden Carr (26 points) and Dominique Bautista (18) pulled up strong vs. South, the highest scoring team in the section to date.

HM MAHOPAC – Indians are just 2-3 but the three losses were nip-and-tuck affairs with Lakeland, Byram Hills and Poughkeepsie (a combined 15-5), so we suspect this athletic unit poses additional problems out of the break.

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Fox Lane Grapplers Picking Up Where They Left Off

By Tony Pinciaro

Following a year in which FOX LANE did not have a 2020-21 season, because of Covid, the Foxes faced another daunting task. Fox Lane graduated 10 seniors in June, and would open the 2021-22 season without senior captain Jaime Jarquin Duarte. Duarte, a two-time all-section wrestler, tore his anterior cruciate ligament during football season.

How would Fox Lane respond to the graduation departures and not having Duarte? Easy, the Foxes simply continued their winning tradition and excellence.

Fox Lane opened the season by sweeping the Michael Nardone (Ossining) Tournament title. The Foxes did one better, winning their fourth consecutive Section 1 Division I (large school) Dual-Meet Championship by beating R.C. Ketcham (semifinal) and Arlington (final).

“Kett Feet really good to win it for the fourth consecutive year,” Duarte said. “We felt we had a big target on our back because we graduated a lot of seniors and teams used that to their advantage that we might not be that good.”

One major reason for Fox Lane’s success, according to Fox Lane Coach Anthony Rodrigues, is Duarte’s leadership. Rodrigues calls Duarte one of the greatest leaders he has ever coached.

Duarte said he and his teammates stick to the basics, including the newcomers who have been up to speed.

“The key for our success is leadership and the hard work on and off the mat,” said Duarte, who will attend Alfred State next fall where he will major in Electrical Construction and Maintenance, and also wrestle. “We push the guys to get to clubs and also do extra workout. We do that every single year and it leads to success. The news guys have impressed me. A lot either did not wrestle or were in middle school wrestling last year. They have stepped onto varsity and won their matches which is helping our team a lot.”

Even though Duarte credits his teammates for their hard work, he has set the example despite his injury by coming to practice every day and serving as an unofficial assistant coach. This has also helped him with his mental approach as he looks ahead to a possible return for sectionals.

“The injury took a toll on me, but going to every single practice and participating has kept me going,” Duarte said. “Being there has made me happy because I still feel like part of the team.

“When coach made me a captain, I knew I had to be a leader even though I was not physically wrestling. I still had to give 100 percent effort in everything and everything I do and help out. I help supervise drills along with coach. When it comes to some easy things we do in the gym, I do that.

Fox Lane plans on carrying this momentum into the new calendar year while building on it.

“With the success we had just in the first month, I’m pumped to see how we can do in the state dual-meet tournament and how much the guys can do on the sectional and state level,” Duarte said.

Once again, PLEASANTVILLE has established itself as a Section 1 Division II (small school) powerhouse. The Panthers, under the guidance of veteran/legendary Coach Bob Bernarducci, are currently 8-1 going into January.

Pleasantville swept its way to the Yorktown Tournament title with victories over Yorktown, Glen Cove (L.I.), Rye and Lakeland/Panas.

“I really didn’t know what to expect with this team, but they have been a pleasant surprise,” said Bernarducci, who recently became a grandfather for the second time Dec. 19th. “Eighth-graders Ciaran Egan and Jesse Straus have been a pleasant surprise at 102 and 112, respectively. Luke LaMagna has been grinding out wins at 126 and sophomore Asa Nurnberg has improved every time he steps on the mat.

“We have big matches with Putnam Valley and Edgemont, coming up, which will determine the league championship. Our overall goal is to be in contention for a sectional championship in February.”

Christian Perlesli, Nick Paternostro and Carl Herzner have pinned all of their respective opponents. Perlesli, LaMagna and Egan are all 8-0 this season.

OSSINING and Coach Tom Larm had a good December with an 8-4 record and top-six places in two dual-meet tournaments. The Pride hosted its annual Michael Nardone Tournament and went 2-3 to finish fifth. The victories were against Hen Hud (42-27) and Yorktown (42-33).


“I’m proud of our team for our 8-4 start,” Larm said. “We didn’t have a full season last year so coming in and getting off to a hot start has encouraged everyone. Each day our kids are coming in and actively working to improve. It shows each match as each wrestler has improved daily. I’m excited to watch them continue to improve and peak for the postseason.”

Larm cited senior Kwaben Boattang, juniors Tristan Robinson-July and Devon Almodovar, and eighth-grader Colin Libertz with establishing themselves as among the top wrestlers in their respective weight classes.

Former YORKTOWN All-Section and Springfield College All-American wrestler Jimmy Kashian has the Cornhuskers improving daily on their way to becoming a sectional contender.

“Our guys did great at our tournament and showed great strides from the Ossining tournament which made our wrestlers feel good,” said Kashian, who recently received his doctorate in Teaching and Administration.

“You can feel the momentum in our room. Wrestlers have bought in and there’s a whole new enthusiasm for wrestling in Yorktown. I’m excited to see what this team can do by year’s end.”

Yorktown is 6-5 overall, but 3-0 in dual matches. Luca Stanford was the highlight at the Yorktown Tournament, with three pins which earned him the most outstanding wrestler award.

“Luca winning Most Outstanding Wrestler was huge for him,” Kaishian said. “He is having 3-1 and 4-0 days. He’s stepping up and buying in a big way.”

Sophomore Joe Tornambe, son of former Yorktown Coach John Tornambe, is currently undefeated and ranked No. 2 in the state at 110 pounds. John Tornambe was Kaishian’s coach. Senior Dillon Carter is 10-1, with his only loss to Mahopac’s Angelo Centrone and Jason Glicksman is 8-2.

SOMERS’ coach Ron DiSanto, Jr., has built the program for the future and he is beginning to reap the benefits. Even though the young Tuskers are not a senior, they are 8-8 and showing tremendous potential, including a second-place finish at the Conklin (Nanuet) Tournament.

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It’s one thing to be a skilled, gifted player on the court. It’s another thing to be an even better person off the court, the best student athlete one can be; both on and off the court. That means delivering in the clutch, when your teammates need you most, but more than anything, it’s about good grades and showing out in the classroom. Brewster senior Grace Galgano has mastered the craft of student athlete, delivering the goods on the hardwood for Coach Mike Castaldo since he called her up to varsity as an eighth-grader while maintaining spectacular academic standards.

“Grace has all the accolades; All-Section, team MVP, but nobody sees how hard she works on and off the court, how much she cares for this program and what a great teammate she is,” Castaldo said of the Roberts Wesleyan-bound Galgano, who secured a full scholarship behind a 99.4 overall GPA and nearly 1,000 career points and rebounds.

Galgano, who, God willing, will reach those career milestones before the 2022 season concludes, has been the backbone of the Brewster program since 2019 and her recent Con Ed Award nod only amplifies her scholastic prowess.

“Grace is the most dominant player we’ve had on the court in my 10 years here, and she’s the most complete student athlete I’ve ever coached,” Castaldo admitted. “Emily Tapia (2010) was an unbelievable player for Brewster and went on to have a great career at Fordham. Grace is right behind her in my opinion as the second best girls’ basketball player in school history. It has been an absolute privilege to coach her and we’re lucky to have her.”

WALTER PANAS wasn’t quite as lucky last Tuesday when Galgano in-bounded a perfect dime to junior teammate Madison Dakin, who took Galgano’s drop-dead pass for the game-winning bucket with 1.7 seconds left in the Bears’ 44-42 win over the previously undefeated host Panthers (8-1). Galgano was hard on the youthful Panthers, scoring 16 points, snaring 16 boards and swatting eight shots while senior teammate Sophia Alzugaray made it rain behind the arc, hitting five treys and finishing with 17 points. To date, Galgano, who hit the game-tying shot with 15 seconds left, has led the Bears (6-1) by averaging 22 PPG, 12 RPG and 4.5 BPG.

Freshman G Cadence Nicholas had a game-high 26 points for the Panthers and continued to show out like few freshmen in the region have in recent memory.

The run of excellent student athletes does not end at Brewster, though.

LAKELAND senior G/F Tyler Hormazabal is another in the form of quintessential. After defeating host Pleasantville, 55-32, last Tuesday, the senior G/F Hormazabal has taken her game to the next level while serving notice that Lakeland is a strong postseason challenger this year. Hormazabal’s double-double (23 points, 11 rebounds) was just short of a triple-double (8 steals) for the Hornets (8-0), who are currently setting the pace in Class A.

“Tyler is truly the hardest working player I’ve ever had on this team,” Castaldo said of the 6-foot-3 senior. “She’s a student-athlete in every sense of the word. She’s hard to keep off the floor and loves to play. She’s the ultimate competitor. Tyler will do whatever it takes to help her team win.”

Mahopac G Kristina Rush dropped a game-high 13 points in Indians’ 49-23 win over Briarcliff.

Brewer G Sophia Alzugaray splits Panas defenders Julia Gallinger (L) and Katie Hoffman (R) in Bears’ 44-42 non-league win over host Panthers Tuesday.
I have ever coached and she is extremely determined and coachable,” Lakeland Coach Miranda Mangan said. “She understands the game, has a tremendous work ethic and has not reached her full potential as a player. My favorite attribute of Tyler’s is that she makes everyone else around her better. She is an incredible student athlete and role model. The dedication and contributions she has made for this program will continue to serve as an inspiration for all of the future Hornet basketball players to come.”

Ava Lugo added 12 points and three steals for the Hornets while Megan Raefski led P’Ville with 14 points and Gianna Doto added 11.

MAHOPAC G Kristina Rush led the Indians (3-3) with 13 points in their 49-23 win over Briarcliff. The Indians, who need to identify as a better defensive team if things are going to pan out as hoped in Class A, held the Bears (4-2) to a season-low. Nine points and solid defense from junior F Lauren Beberman aided the Indians’ cause. Slow starts and sub-par defense (by their standards) have been a bit of an issue for Mahopac, which, given what the Indians have lost to graduation (defensive stalwarts Mia Klammer, Caitlyn O’Boyle), was predictable. “We have had a rough offensive start but we’ve definitely been stepping up on defense,” said Beberman, who leads the team in boards and blocks. “We are constantly training and working to gel and will continue to take our best shots. We think 2022 will bring a lot for Mahopac. We definitely have it in us to be a really good defensive team, I know it. This is what we are working toward.”

Kayla McCarthy led HEN HUD (2-5) with 17 points in the Sailors’ 80-25 opening-round win over Yonkers in the Hen Hud tourney last Tuesday. Kaitlyn Raguso added 12 points and while Alex Figueroa (11) and Hailey Pearson (11) all reached double digits. Unfortunately, the finals were cancelled due to COVID-related issues.

PEEKSKILL improved to 3-1 after its 47-39 win over a feisty Class C HALDANE club, who had no answer for Red Devils F Bethany Overby (19 points, 11 boards, 5 steals). Takyla Cowan-Hongosh (14 points) and Kiki Mercado (9 points) also contributed for first-year Red Dev Coach Tyrone Searight. Haldane was led by Madison Chiera’s 10 points.

CLASS AA OSSINING will head into the break at 5-1 after the Pride’s 64-55 win over visiting Kennedy Wednesday. Pride G Ella Schneckler had a career-high 25 points and tacked on five boards. Point guard Michelle Mercado orchestrated the flow with 20 points and 10 assists to go with four steals. Karen Perriott (10 points, 15 rebounds) notched a double-double while Isabella Flores (3 points, 10 rebounds) and Angela Rios (2 points, 5 boards) also contributed.

“we have a young lineup, but, as a whole, the team is adjusting to high school wrestling and gradually improving,” DiSanto said. “The team is coming together and taking pride in the team aspect. The team’s energy multiplies when they feed off each individual success. When they see someone wrestle tough and come from behind, it builds confidence and makes them believe they can do it, too.”

DiSanto credits his captains, juniors, Anthony Tucci and Luca D’Orazio, for leading the team by example and with their work ethic.

Sophomore Dalton Balloy leads the team with a 13-3 record. Sophomores Liam Dwyer, Justin Daniyan and Ethan Burns each have 10 wins and eighth-grader Ryan Ball (102 pounds) is 10-0.
Brewster senior F Grace Galgano, a recent Con Ed Award winner for scholastic/athletic excellence, has averaged 22 points, 12 boards and 4.5 blocks through seven games while leading Coach Mike Castaldo’s Bears to a 6-1 start, which included last Tuesday’s 44-42 win over Katie Hoffman (23), Julia Gallinger (22) and previously undefeated host Walter Panas. Galgano went for 16 points, 16 rebounds and eight blocks while serving up the biggest assist of the game, which led to Madison Dakin’s game-winning hoop with 1.7 seconds left... see Girls’ Hoops Notebook