



## Two Arrests Made in Car Shooting in City of Peekskill

By Rick Pezzullo

Two arrests were made last week in connection with a car shooting in downtown Peekskill that injured two females.

According to Peekskill Police, on Friday, July 29 at approximately 9:15 p.m. a Honda SUV was traveling east on the 800 block of Main St., occupied by two females. As the vehicle traveled through the traffic light at Main St. and Decatur Ave., a male subject began shooting towards the vehicle with a semi-automatic 9mm handgun, striking the car and its occupants multiple times.

The driver was struck by gunfire in the abdomen, while the passenger was hit by gunfire in both legs. Both victims were transported to Westchester Medical Center with non-fatal injuries.

On Aug. 3, the alleged shooter, a 17-year-old unidentified male, was arrested by Stamford Police on unrelated charges and is in their custody pending extradition to Peekskill.

Meanwhile, on Friday, Aug. 5 at approximately 10:40 a.m., Shaynna Session, 18, of Peekskill, was arrested by Peekskill Police. She was charged with two counts

of attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of attempted assault in the first degree, two counts of assault in the second degree and two counts of criminal

possession of a weapon in the second degree.

Session was arraigned in Peekskill City Court with bail set at \$250,000.

## Planners Discuss Right Study for Underhill Farm Project

By Rick Pezzullo

The Yorktown Planning Board recently discussed several issues connected to a proposed mixed-use project on Underhill Ave. as it considers the type of in-depth study it will require the developer to complete.

Underhill Farm is planned on the former Soundview Preparatory School 13.8-acre site. Unicorn Contracting is proposing 148 residential units (64 one, two and three-bedroom apartments, 52 three and four-bedroom townhouses and 32 one and two-bedroom condominiums), 11,000 square feet of commercial space and an adaptive reuse of the property's historic mansion.

As part of the \$60 million project, the historic Underhill House is slated to be transformed into a community resource and gathering spot. In addition, the pond will be completely restored with a \$150,000 investment and complemented by walking trails, sitting areas and a new pedestrian gateway at the estate's original entrance at the intersection of Rte. 118 and Underhill Ave. Approximately \$1.5 million in traffic improvements are also being offered.

At its July 25 meeting, planners talked about having Unicorn submit an Expanded Full Environmental Assessment Form (EFEAF) instead of a more comprehensive Environmental Impact Study (EIS).

"They did a lot of work to date and we should build on that," said planner Aaron Bock. "Can we accomplish this kind of review without using the positive dec process?"

"Everyone here wants to see what is best for Yorktown," said Planning Board Chairman Richard Fon. "When you get the right plan in place, things work."

The four planners present all agreed

traffic issues had already been adequately addressed by the applicant, but maintained sewer infrastructure, wetlands, historical characteristics and density of the development still needed further review.

Protecting Yorktown's Quality of Life Foundation, Inc recently stated an EIS was the right option for Underhill Farm.

"Because of its potential far reaching impact and complexity, the Underhill Farm development project screams for the Planning Board to declare that a comprehensive, in-depth Environmental Impact Study (EIS) should be undertaken," the organization stated in a submitted letter. "Why? An EIS involves YOU in identifying YOUR critical issues and impacts early in the process, ensuring they are not overlooked or selectively omitted. The EIS option, by law, requires YOU, the public, have an opportunity to comment on the EIS scoping document, the document that determines what must be included in the EIS to ensure that your issues and impacts are considered; unlike the EFEAF, this option also requires that the public have an opportunity to comment on the draft EIS and the potential for a future Public Hearing to discuss the EIS. And importantly, the EIS option requires an examination of all reasonable alternative site plans."

Planning Board legal counsel James Glatthaar cautioned planners about the importance of its deliberations with Underhill Farm.

"This application, unlike most, has issues clashing," Glatthaar remarked. "What you do here is it. It's permanent. It's really important to get this right. A decision here could have impacts that last forever and impacts other people."

The next Planning Board meeting is Aug. 15.

## Ribbon Cutting in Ossining



Ossining Village Trustee Dana White was joined by Town Supervisor Dana Levenberg (right) and others for a ribbon cutting ceremony at the new Little Free Library at the Kiosk at Henry Gourdine Park, which was made possible by funding from the Ossining Library Fund and support from Ossining Public Library, Big Foot Creamery, and Miriam Risko.



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# Yorktown Close to Allowing Hotel Uses in Overlay District

By Rick Pezzullo

The Yorktown Town Board appears close to making a change in the Zoning Code that could pave the way for two proposed boutique-style hotels to move forward in the planning process.

A public hearing was held last week on a proposal to allow hotel uses in the recently established Yorktown Heights Overlay District through a special use permit.

However, most of the public comment centered on a three-floor hotel called Hotel Gardena, which, if approved, would be built on about a third of an acre of land at the corner of Veterans Road and Commerce

Street, adjacent to Albert A. Capellini Community and Culture Center where a real estate office has been located for years.

Project plans, which first surfaced in late 2020, call for a 16-room hotel, with eight rooms, including four suites, on both the second and third floors ranging from 340 square feet to just over 500 square feet. The first floor would see a lobby, lounge and café, which would offer outdoor seating along Veterans Road.

In addition, plans call for a rooftop bar and grill that would allow for both indoor and outdoor seating.

Hotel Gardena attorney and former Yorktown Supervisor Michael Grace

reminded the Town Board the change to the Overlay District “is only providing the framework” for an application to be made.

But Grace, who advocated the revitalization of Yorktown’s downtown during his administration, maintained Yorktown’s Town Code “has been an anchor on this town for years.”

“If we constantly overthink these things, we get stymied,” Grace said. “You have to have the courage of your convictions and have a vision.”

Another former town supervisor, Susan Siegel, noted besides Hotel Gardena, a regional inn was being proposed as part of the Underhill Farm project on Underhill

Ave.

Councilman Sergio Esposito and resident Jay Kopstein spoke in favor of permitting hotel uses.

“I definitely like the concept,” Esposito said. “This potential law could lead to some sort of revival of our downtown district.”

“We need the hotel. I think we should go for it,” Kopstein remarked.

Supervisor Matt Slater suggested holding off on the Town Board making a decision until it could consult with the town’s attorney and planner.

“I want to make sure we are as close to perfect as we can be,” he said.

## Harckham Announces State Grant for Algae Remediation in Mohegan Lake

State Senator Pete Harckham recently announced that he has delivered a \$100,000 grant for the Mohegan Lake Improvement District and Town of Yorktown for the installation of a new aeration system and retrofitting existing aeration systems in the lake to remove phosphorus in the lake that is causing large algae blooms each year.

By themselves, most algae and similar single-cell organisms actually benefit marine ecosystems and pose no risk to humans and wildlife. But the expansive, often smelly surface mats of freshwater algae blooms on ponds and lakes can harbor cyanobacteria, a toxic blue-green algae that can sicken swimmers and animals that ingest the water. Phosphorus leaching into the lake and warmer summer temperatures have only increased the algae blooms in the past few years.

“The extensive phosphorous abatement project being undertaken at Mohegan Lake will help restore this important natural resource and make it safe for recreation,” said Harckham. “I am happy to support both the Mohegan Lake Improvement District and Town of Yorktown in this effort with



Sen. Pete Harckham, Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater and Ken Belfer.

state funding that will reduce costs that would otherwise be shouldered by local taxpayers. I am thankful to Ken Belfer of the Mohegan Lake Improvement District and all the residents for their efforts to address the challenges regarding the algae blooms and their creating models of success for other lake communities.”

Wooded areas and residential neighborhoods surround Mohegan Lake. For a number of years, blue-green algae blooms have interfered with seasonal recreation use

of the 103-acre lake, with the local beaches often closed down for long stretches of the summer. A homemade aeration system and periodic treatments of copper compounds, which settle in the sediment, have not eliminated the blooms, however.

A two-pronged, long-term strategy is now being employed to remediate the algae problem in the lake. A capital project, which will include the new and retrofitted aeration system on the lake, will address phosphorus reduction at the largest stormwater inflow sites and the phosphorus released from the lake bottom sediment during the summer. The rest of the project will be determined by viable strategies to reduce phosphorus entering the lake through stormwater.

The aeration system is expected to cost \$339,000.

“Lake Mohegan has been accumulating phosphorus in the lake bottom for the past two centuries, starting with farming uses, followed by the large hotels and summer bungalow colonies of the early 1900s, to today’s all year round dense residential development,” said Ken Belfer, president of the Mohegan Lake Improvement District,

“Phosphorus is released from the sediment into the water column in the summer when the lake bottom becomes anoxic, and feeds blue-green algae blooms which sometimes make the lake unsuitable for use. When out of control, harmful algal blooms not only impact the lake aesthetics and property values, but also negatively impact the entire lake ecosystem, and can produce toxins that can affect people and pets. An effective aeration system will be an important tool to help lessen these blooms. The \$100,000 of state support for this secured by Senator Harckham will allow us to proceed with this long planned project, and is an important step forward in a partnership to improve the lake environment.”

The awarded grant funding was secured within the State and Municipal Facilities Program (SAM), which is among the grant programs administered by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) to support community and economic development. Harckham has delivered more than \$5,000,000 of state grant funding to municipalities and nonprofits in SD40 over the past year.

## National Night Out Marked Locally



The Peekskill (right) and Yorktown police departments were among those that celebrated National Night Out on Aug. 2 by hosting community events.





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# Monkeypox on Slow Rise, COVID Steady in Westchester

By Martin Wilbur

Westchester reported 50 cases of the monkey virus on Monday as the number of those who are currently positive with COVID-19 remains in a narrow range.

County Executive George Latimer addressed the two viruses during his weekly briefing Monday afternoon, urging vaccinations for those who are at risk for monkeypox and anyone who hasn't been inoculated against COVID-19.

So far, 941 people have received the monkeypox vaccine at the county's clinics.

The good news regarding monkeypox has been the lack of fatalities in the county and New York State, despite the number of cases slowly inching up each week, Latimer said. However, community members who are in the at-risk groups should protect themselves.

"None of (the monkeypox cases) have been fatal situations so we're hopeful that the disease will continue to have no fatalities," Latimer said. "It can be a painful disease; it is not to be treated as trivial."

Vaccinations continue twice a week at

the county's clinic at 134 Court St. and on Thursdays at The LOFT in White Plains. Reservations must be made in advance at the county clinic by calling 914-995-8500.

Monkeypox vaccinations are also available at Westchester Medical Center's drive-through clinic in Valhalla Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Appointments can be scheduled there by calling 914-326-2060.

## COVID-19 Update

As of Sunday, Westchester had 3,072 active cases, Latimer reported. That is down 176 cases from the previous week

and 103 from the total on July 3.

In between, the number of active cases has been pinballing between the high 2000s and about 3,600. Those numbers do not include home testing, since people who test positively at home do not have to report the results.

There were 146 COVID-19-related hospitalizations on Sunday, down five from a week earlier. On July 3, there were 132 hospitalizations.

Westchester was at 9.5 percent and Putnam registered 11.2 percent on Aug. 7. On the state level, there was a 9 percent positivity rate.

## #VaxUp Westchester Brings Valuable Info to the Public

By Martin Wilbur

If you don't know where to get information COVID-19 or monkeypox vaccinations, now there's one place to get that information.

Last week, the website #VaxUp Westchester debuted with a wealth of information about the vaccines in English and in Spanish. The site is [www.vaxupwestchester.org](http://www.vaxupwestchester.org).

A Town of Greenburgh initiative, the site is an outgrowth of the town's COVID Angels volunteer effort, said Kenny Herzog, #VaxUp Westchester's executive director.

With the vast majority of the county vaccinated against COVID-19, Herzog said the same intensive volunteering was no longer needed but he still wanted to

dispense vital information to residents who may be looking for it. Herzog said he settled on "an information delivery service" that could be of value to the public at someone's fingertips, which could also be sustainable financially.

Partial funding for the site is through grants from UJA-Federation of New York and the Westchester Community Foundation.

"I also realize this could be easily adaptable so that if there is another endemic or pandemic situation, or another infectious disease crisis, or another virus of concern, we can easily adapt our whole methodology, our language to meet that need, and unfortunately, it came up sooner rather than later," Herzog said.

The site, contains a list of COVID-19

vaccination info, including special events and clinics where it is administered. It also includes other tabs that list information about youth vaccines, why it's important to vaccinate and news and resources.

"The idea is to get the information out there concisely and constructively because there's a need, and I do plan on continuing to add to it," Herzog said.

Getting information out to the public and discussing it, may also help those who are stigmatized after testing positive, particularly monkeypox.

"I think we have to think about anyone who is impacted by the virus may find it painful and hurtful, it comes with stigma and takes weeks to recover from," he said.

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# Infectious Disease Specialist Discusses the Basics of Monkeypox

By Martin Wilbur

An infectious disease specialist urged the public to educate themselves on issues related to the human monkeypox virus last week as cases steadily climb in New York State and across the country.

Dr. Jason Zucker, who practices at NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center and is an assistant professor of medicine at Columbia Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, cautioned community members that despite the virus currently affecting the gay population disproportionately, anyone can contract monkeypox.

"Most of the cases that we're seeing are in these groups...a range of individuals can contact this disease," Zucker said during a Zoom presentation last Thursday for media members. "As cases increase, it increases the likelihood of occurring in different groups of people. Anybody can contract and transmit human monkeypox virus, so we all have to be informed and remain diligent."

It is likely presenting in those who self-identify as gay or bisexual men or men who have had sexual relations with other males because of shared sexual networks. According to the state Department of Health, as of last Wednesday there had been 108 cases of monkeypox outside of

New York City and 97 percent of those people are male and 97 percent are gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Another misconception, he said, is that it is not a serious disease. While the fatality rate is miniscule and the hospitalization rate is also small, the symptoms are often painful and can last up to four weeks to clear. As of Aug. 4, there had been 10 deaths globally from this outbreak out of about 27,000 cases.

Symptoms can include fever, chills, fatigue, muscle aches and swollen lymph nodes, but many people who get monkeypox get an itchy, burning rash that resembles blisters or pimples. Zucker said many of those with the virus have the rash on the genitals or in perirectal area.

Monkeypox has a five- to 21-day incubation period. Once vaccinated, it can take up to two weeks to be protected, he said.

It is overwhelmingly contracted through skin-to-skin contact and sometimes if linen or clothing used by an infected person is touched.

"While we're still learning more about human monkeypox virus, it's important to know that it does not spread like COVID and you will likely not get it just by being in the same room as someone," Zucker said.

The medication tecovirimat, which has



Dr. Jason Zucker of NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center reviewed key details last week about monkeypox and how people can protect themselves and others.

been used to treat smallpox, is being used in some severe cases, but most people are convalescing at home, he said. Otherwise, it's mostly about pain management. Clinical trials of tecovirimat have yet to be conducted, he added.

People can protect themselves and others by testing if they suspect they've been exposed, Zucker said. Anyone that

has symptoms should get tested, and if they test positive, self-isolate.

"Our primary goal is to keep patients out of the hospital and out of the Emergency Department unless the severity of these symptoms make admission necessary," Zucker said.

For Zucker, the most surprising aspect of monkeypox, thus far, has been the stigmatization of those who have contracted the virus. Even those who have only mild symptoms have been taking it hard because the isolation period is as long as four weeks.

He said monkeypox is challenging not only from a medical perspective but from a mental health standpoint. Zucker called on everyone to destigmatize the virus.

"We'll overcome this public health challenge, but we need everyone's help to do so," Zucker said.

In order to overcome the challenge, society needs to vaccinate as many members of the at-risk population as possible, increase testing capability, isolate infected people, including providing temporary quarters for those who live in congregate settings, and ramp up clinical trials, he said.

"It is only by using all of these methods that we can manage the current surge in human monkeypox virus," Zucker said.

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# Foundation Eyes Decaying Mansion as Climate Action Center Retreat

By Martin Wilbur

A foundation dedicated to the conservation of natural resources has submitted a concept plan to the Town of New Castle to redevelop a deteriorating stone mansion to serve as a climate change retreat for scientists.

The Volgenau Foundation is hoping to convert the empty 95-year-old Elda Castle into a climate action center. It was built by Abercrombie & Fitch founder David Abercrombie and his wife and for a time served as their family home.

Under the preliminary plans, the structure on the 50-acre property at 249 Croton Dam Rd. would attract up to 25 renown scientists and other experts at one time for three- to five-day conferences to study, discuss and address issues related to climate change.

Volgenau Foundation Executive Director Andi Pearl said the rationale for selecting the site is to assemble scientists, policymakers and others in a bucolic environment that would help to encourage deeper study, appreciation and attention on the issue as well as have results.

“Our concept here is that there is growing evidence that gathering in thoughtful retreat, in special places like this can foster a deeper connection among its participants,” said Pearl, who noted the foundation mainly operates to provide grants to organizations.

During a virtual New Castle Planning

Board meeting last month, the applicant’s attorney, David Steinmetz, said the Volgenau Foundation needs a special permit to allow what is considered an institutional use in a two-acre residential zone.

The foundation’s representatives and professionals met with town staff in June to review their initial plans and gauge officials’ reaction.

“This is a very unique, interesting, and I must tell you, a really cutting-edge and fun application that we are all really proud of – and I should say, anticipated application,” Steinmetz said.

Plans would restore the Elda Castle so it maintains its 1920s character while it would be fitted with renewable energy features, said Matthew Krissel, the project architect. It would contain meetings rooms and a dining facility, he said.

To help make the site conducive for the use, the applicant plans to build about 25 “micro cabins,” small units of no more than about 300 square feet each that would serve as lodging for the center’s visitors, he said. Each cabin would contain a bed, a desk and a bathroom.

The landscape will be maintained and the cabins will be designed and built to standards that are consistent with sustainability, all part of the center’s mission, Krissel said. It would be part of a stewardship plan to maintain a mature ecosystem, reducing impervious surfaces and protecting natural resources, he said.

“This is about a big, quiet, reflective



The deteriorated Elda Castle, built by Abercrombie & Fitch founder David Abercrombie in 1927, on Croton Dam Road in New Castle is being eyed for rehabilitation and to be turned into a retreat for climate scientists.

space and maintaining an atmosphere is a big part of that design,” Krissel said.

Irene Krarups, executive director of the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation, an organization that advocates for bolstering environmental research, told the Planning Board that it is envisioned that the site would host about 40 of the multi-day retreats a year, nearly all on weekdays. There would be another 15 to 25 one-day conferences and other events that involve local or regional conservation groups, she said.

There would be minimal additional traffic on Croton Dam Road and Allapartus Road along the eastern side of the parcel, Krarups said, because it is anticipated that once on-site, retreat attendees would remain on

the property most of the time. There could be a trip for a dinner at an area restaurant during their stay but there wouldn’t be daily ingress and egress by the participants, she said.

Krarups added that many hotels and conference centers generally don’t book for gatherings of this size.

“We’re trying to get people to this place to really focus, and there aren’t many hotels that will fit this group and what they need to accomplish, this kind of deep dive in a quiet and quaint setting, and where there’s nobody else there,” Krarups said.

While the Planning Board didn’t address specific details about the proposal, members expressed that it would be an outstanding use of the site. Board Chairman Robert Kirkwood called it an “extraordinarily exciting project.” A multitude of planning-related questions will be posed should a formal application be submitted.

“I think it’s a superb use of the property,” said Kirkwood. “I don’t anticipate, especially with the sensitivity that you have used with your design teams, I don’t anticipate any kind of issues and problems.”

A key issue to be resolved are the options for water and sanitary sewer service for the property, including exploration of entering a town water district or searching for private wells and an on-site wastewater treatment facility.

Steinmetz said the Volgenau Foundation would submit an application to the town and return to the board.






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# Westchester Swears in 37 New Correction Officers

After completing a rigorous 12-week academy, 37 new correction officers took their oaths of office last week and embarked on careers at the Westchester County Department of Correction (WCDOC).

The ceremony commenced with a call to order, opening prayer and a presentation of the colors by the department's Honor Guard, which entered the Westchester Community College Hankin Academic Arts Center accompanied by bagpipers and drummers of the Westchester County Emerald Society.

Deputy Commissioner Michael Gerald welcomed attending dignitaries and graduating class family members. "To support our new correction officers the department has taken steps to enhance training curriculum and expanded the



The graduating class of 37 new correction officers during their ceremony last week.

academy period from 10 to 12 weeks," Gerald said.

Formal training enhancements included scenario-based instruction to simulate officer/resident interaction more on-the-

job training to familiarize recruits with a jail environment, debriefing modules and enhanced report writing, he said. A special thanks to the academy staff and instructors for a job well done and to the academy class for the tremendous effort they put forward to complete WCDOC training requirements."

In addressing the recruits, Correction Commissioner Joseph K. Spano reinforced that the new career they have chosen is one of the most challenging in all of law enforcement.

"Correction officers have one of the most important roles in criminal justice," Spano said. "Along with providing custody and supervision for incarcerated individuals you have a significant role in their rehabilitation process. The extensive training you received

over the last 12 weeks combined with our continuing support will help you adjust to your new profession and safely carry out your daily responsibilities in a complex environment."

Part of those responsibilities include adhering to the core mission and values of the department, he added. In addition to consistently applying best-in-class standards and policies, the officers care by being agents for positive change, Spano mentioned.

Spano noted that the Westchester Department of Correction is considered a national leader in the space, recognized for its robust rehabilitation program system and accreditation certifications through the American Correctional Association, the National Commission on Correctional Healthcare and the Prison Rape Elimination Act.

At the ceremony, Captain Patti Bhola of the department's Training Academy, detailed some of the unique correction officer training curriculum including implicit bias, secondary trauma, de-escalation of incidents, defensive tactics, crisis intervention and interaction with seriously mentally ill people.

Prior to the close of the ceremony, Bhola was joined by Training Unit Sergeants Kevin Johnson and Paul Lindert. They presented awards to members of the graduating class who distinguished themselves during the academy, including the best student, the best conditioned recruit and for leadership.

## Ossining Deli Owner Sentenced to Prison for Sexually Abusing Employee

By Rick Pezzullo

An Ossining deli owner was sentenced Monday to five years in state prison after being found guilty in May of sexually abusing an employee.

Patrick Patierno, 54, of Yorktown, was convicted by a jury on May 9 following a two-week trial of first-degree sexual abuse, a felony, and second-degree unlawful imprisonment, a misdemeanor. He will be required to register as a sex offender after completing his prison sentence.

"Sexual abuse will not be tolerated

especially when perpetrated by abusers in a position of authority who exploit their power," said Westchester District Attorney Mimi Rocah. "Today's sentence should send a clear message that perpetrators of sexual abuse will be brought to justice and held accountable. My office is committed to assisting victims who come forward."

On Jan. 14, 2021, at about 9:30 a.m., Patierno entered the home of the victim, who was one of his employees, restrained her and forcibly subjected her to sexual contact, according to the district attorney's office. He was arrested the next day by the Ossining

Police Department following an investigation.

In a statement submitted to the court, the victim said, "My life is no longer the same... as much as I try to find myself to be who I was before, I can't...I feel that every person who approaches me, all they want is to hurt me and come to me with bad intentions...I'm tormented day by day by those thoughts. I wouldn't want anyone to go through what I went through because it's horrible, especially when you're afraid to speak up."

Westchester County Court Judge Susan Cacace also sentenced Patierno to 10 years of post-release supervision.

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# Obituaries

## Don Quinn

Don Quinn, a Shrub Oak resident and husband of Support Connection Executive Director Kathy Quinn, died peacefully on Aug. 4 after a courageous two-year journey living with cancer. He was 67.

Born in the Bronx, he is survived by his loving wife of 45 years, Kathy, and his children, Lauren Hocker (Dan), Jackie Piccirillo (Rick), Diane Mintz (Jason) and Michael Quinn (David). He was Poppy to his seven adoring grandchildren, Caroline, Owen, Charlotte, Joseph, Michael, James and Aiden, with two more on the way. He is also survived by his sister, Patricia Raymond (Peter), along with many beloved brothers- and sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews and friends. He was predeceased by his parents, Tom and Peggy Quinn, and his brother, Greg.

He will be remembered as a calming force to all who were blessed to know him. His greatest joy came from being surrounded by his loving family and friends. He truly enjoyed the simple pleasures in life that always included starting the day with a good cup of coffee. During COVID-19 and his cancer journey, he made time every day for a coffee date with his wife, finding new and exciting places to relax, including the parking lot of the Jefferson Valley Mall. During quiet times, he enjoyed reading, listening to many genres of music and playing



Don Quinn

his guitar.

He completely immersed himself in being a great husband, father and grandfather, whether it was reading books to his children every night, making hairy-arm pizza for his kids and their friends, being the resident fun dad at the pool or being the ultimate camera man on family vacations, never seen but always heard – “Are you having a good time?”

Don extended his love to his four sons-in-law and was often found sharing wisdom about how to be a good husband, infusing his own brand of Bronx humor. He had no greater joy than spending time with his grandkids, always

asking “What’s the new dirt today?” and playing bingo and other games. Poppy was the king of cuddling and could put any grandchild to sleep.

To know Don was to love him, as was evidenced by his lifelong friendships along with the many new friends he made throughout the years. He was also very proud of his long career in IT, retiring as a technical services manager for the Empire State Development Corporation. For more than 25 years, he

volunteered for Support Connection as a way to support his wife. He enjoyed being the lugger of supplies for the annual Support-A-Walk. Even during his illness, he found ways to make an impact, doing technical projects for the organization.

Contributions may be made in Don’s memory to Support Connection, 40 Triangle Center, Suite 100, Yorktown Heights, N.Y. 10598 or at [www.supportconnection.org](http://www.supportconnection.org).

## Police Blotter

### Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

**July 26:** A caller reported at 4:47 p.m. that a plaque on her father’s gravestone at Bethel Cemetery was missing. Patrols responded and took a report. An investigation will follow.

**July 28:** A caller reported at 12:43 a.m. that his friend works at a store on Croton Point Avenue and that she did not want a male subject to return to the store. Patrols responded and located the subject, who was heading to the train station to return to Manhattan. No further police action was required.

**Aug. 1:** Report of a broken rear window of a vehicle in the parking lot of a South Riverside Avenue business at 3:43 p.m. Patrols responded and took a report. An investigation will follow.

### North Castle Police Department

**July 29:** Report of an injured bird of prey on the baseball field on Community Park Drive at 11:47 a.m. The animal control officer responded and located the injured animal but is unable to assist it due to its large size.

**July 29:** A caller reported a car-bicycle accident on Route 22 at 4:52 p.m. with possible injuries. The call was transferred to county Fire Control and EMS was dispatched. The injured party was subsequently transported to Westchester Medical Center. The bicycle was turned over to the injured party’s parents.

**July 30:** A party arrived at headquarters at 3:48 p.m. to report running over rock and/or stone debris on Creemer Road the previous morning causing damage to her wheel and tire and that the vehicle needed to be towed away. The party reported the damage cost \$515. She stated that the debris is no longer

in the roadway. The report was filed as a matter of record.

**July 30:** A caller reported at 6:04 p.m. that the previously reported bird of prey (an osprey) is deceased behind the backstop of Field 2. Officers responded and removed the large bird. Condition corrected.

**July 30:** The Mount Pleasant Police Department reported at 8:36 p.m. that about 10 minutes in the past, four male youths smashed a window at a Chinese food store in their jurisdiction. Mount Pleasant police reported that the youths were walking south toward Kensico Dam. The male parties are described to be each wearing a backpack. Two males were wearing a white shirt, one was wearing an orange shirt and the other a black shirt. Westchester County police is canvassing Kensico Dam. The responding North Castle officer canvassed North Broadway and was unable to locate the individuals.

### Pleasantville Police Department

**Aug. 2:** Report of damaged property on Foxwood Drive at 4:42 p.m. The matter was an open case and no further information was made available.

**Aug. 2:** Report of a larceny on Center Street at 10:05 p.m. The case remains open and police did not provide additional details.

**Aug. 5:** A 60-year-old man was arrested on Broadway at 1:42 p.m. following a traffic stop for driving with a suspended license.

### State Police/Cortlandt

**July 16:** State police are investigating the theft of more than \$3,244 worth of merchandise from Walmart in Mohegan Lake at about 2 p.m. Two suspects left the store in a dark-colored, two-door sedan.

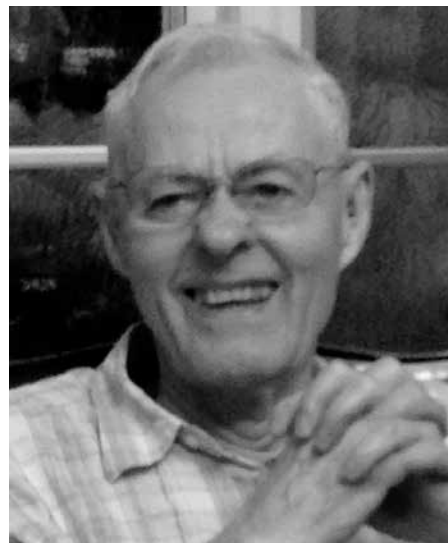
## John Bates

John K. Bates Jr., 98, of Briarcliff Manor, died on July 26.

He was born in Scranton, Pa. on Sept. 8, 1923, and graduated from Tunkhannock (Pa.) High School. He served in World War II and then earned a bachelor’s in electrical engineering from Penn State and a master’s degree from Stevens Institute of Technology. He went on to work for ITT, HRB-Singer and IBM, then spent the rest of his career as an entrepreneur.

John is survived by Marilyn, his wife of 37 years, two daughters, two stepchildren, 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He was predeceased in 1982 by his first wife, Jean.

A memorial gathering will be held on Saturday, Aug. 13 at 10 a.m. at Beecher Flocks Funeral Home, located at 418 Bedford Rd. in Pleasantville. Gifts in lieu of flowers



John Bates

can be made in John’s name to the American Diabetes Association.



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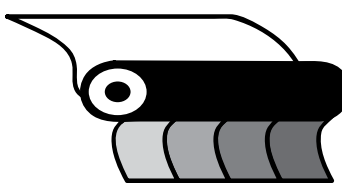
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# Obituary

## Cortlandt Town Assessor Thomas Waitkins Dies at 62

By Rick Pezzullo

Thomas John Waitkins, who served as the Town of Cortlandt's assessor since December 2010, died July 31. He was 62.

Waitkins, a Peekskill resident, was born Oct. 28, 1959, and grew up in Croton-on-Hudson with his parents, Ruth and Frank

Waitkins, and his siblings, Mark, Melanie and Matt.

He graduated from SUNY Plattsburgh and started his career working as a substitute teacher. He then worked as a commercial real estate appraiser in New York City. In addition to Cortlandt, he was an assessor for the City of Peekskill and

the Village of Croton-on-Hudson.

Waitkins was an active member of the Catholic Kolping Society and took on the challenge of serving on the Board of Directors. He proved himself to be a tremendous asset, making the society stronger. He was also a volunteer at Farm to Fork cycling club, a lectern at Holy Name of Mary Church, had previously served as a lectern at Assumption Church and was a passionate athlete who participated in numerous triathlons.

He had a deep love for biking and hiking and was a master swimmer. He was an avid lover and supporter of the arts. He would frequently visit museums, jazz and classical music concerts, the New York City Ballet and the New York Botanical Garden.

Thomas touched the lives of so many people. Besides his love for nature, arts and culture, bicycling and music, his top priority was always being a truly dedicated loving father. There's nothing Tom wouldn't do for his daughters and dog. He was a dedicated and trustworthy friend and will be deeply missed by so many."

He is survived by two daughters, Theresa and Nadine Waitkins, ex-wife and friend Adrianna Waitkins and the beloved family dog, Jack.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Mark.

Visitation was held on Aug. 5 at Holy



Thomas Waitkins

Name of Mary Church in Croton-on-Hudson. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 6 at the church. Cremation services will be private.

In lieu of flowers, the family asked that gifts be made to the New York Botanical Garden in his name. Gifts can be made online at [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org) or by sending a check to the New York Botanical Garden, Attn. Lisa Sifre, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, N.Y. 10458.

## Carmel Man Arrested for Menacing in P'ville Road Rage Incident

A Carmel man was arrested and charged with menacing after pulling out a gun following a tailgating incident last week in downtown Pleasantville.

Police said shortly after 8:30 p.m. on Aug. 1, Peter Rubino, 27, became angered that a vehicle pulled out in front of him while exiting the 7-11 parking lot. As traffic proceeded to make the right turn onto Bedford Road, Rubino began tailgating the car in front of him, said Police Chief Erik Grutzner.

At the intersection with Cooley Street and Bedford Road, the driver of the lead car then stopped to confront the driver behind him.

"The person in the front car, the victim, ends up getting out of his car to make sure that the person in the rear car gives

a little bit more room to maintain safety, and as he's approaching the car, that's when the person we arrested displayed a firearm, and he informed the person to get back inside their car," Grutzner said.

The driver of the car that was in front returned to his vehicle and called police while Rubino pulls around and makes a right onto Marble Avenue.

Grutzner said that there was an officer in the area who catches up with Rubino's car after the driver turns onto Paulding Street off of Marble Avenue and places him under arrest.

Rubino was charged with one count of menacing, a misdemeanor, and was released on his own recognizance.

— Martin Wilbur

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# Letters to the Editor

## Democratic Assembly Candidate is Very Much in the Mainstream

I was puzzled by the letter to the editor characterizing Assembly candidate Kathleen Valetta as a “radical ideologue” because she supports reproductive rights and universal healthcare (“Assembly Hopeful Would Be Wrong for New York,” August 1-7).

First a definition of terms: According to Merriam Webster, radical is “very different from the usual or traditional” and “advocating extreme measures to retain or restore a political state of affairs”; ideologue is “an often blindly partisan advocate or adherent of a particular ideology.” Generally, a radical ideologue is one who differs from the majority view.

At least two recent polls indicate that most Americans support reproductive rights: a poll conducted by CNN in May found that 66 percent of Americans said they did not want the high court to overturn the Roe decision. Only 17 percent of those questioned in the CNN poll said they’d like to see Roe v. Wade overturned, with 12 percent saying they’d be “satisfied,” 21 percent saying they’d be “dissatisfied,” 36 percent saying they’d be “angry” and 14 percent saying they would not care.

Other data offers a similar window into how Americans perceive this issue, with a Gallup poll conducted in May showing that 58 percent of American voters thought Roe should not be overturned. Data from the Pew Research Center has found that just 8 percent of U.S. adults believe abortion should be outlawed in all cases. Locally, a community weekly newspaper showed a similar trend with 60 percent of those answering survey questions disapproving of the Supreme Court overturning Roe.

Given these findings and the above definitions it is the letter writer and the majority of the U.S. Supreme Court who are woefully out of touch with most Americans; hence, they are radical ideologues as they wish to impose their morals on others and take away women’s control over their own bodies.

I do thank the letter writer for reminding those who are disillusioned and demoralized that there are important elections this year, which may fundamentally threaten our democracy and individual rights. Elections for statewide office must be more than personal popularity contests. I certainly hope that the Assembly candidates for Yorktown and Putnam, including Matthew Slater, transparently reveal where they stand on the critical issues of reproductive rights, marriage equality, gun control, healthcare reform, voting reform and immigrants’ rights.

Vote your beliefs while you still can!

**Melvyn R. Tanzman**  
Mohegan Lake

## Putnam Legislator Sets the Record Straight on ‘Share the Growth’ Initiative

It would be unfortunate for the incoming county executive to upend such a historical initiative and disrespect the goodwill and partnership between the leaders of county government and the towns and villages.

The “Share the Growth” resolution includes language that memorializes protection to the county revenues that are needed to offset increased New York State mandates, which represent 70 percent of county spending. It will also allow the county to continue to meet our labor contractual obligations and protect us from any unforeseen challenges that we have come to expect all too well.

I do not recognize this as a diversion; instead, I would suggest that the county’s very solid fiscal position, as stated by our independent auditors at the July Audit Committee meeting, allows us to assist our local colleagues in government to put in place projects that they are unable to fund. Many of these projects reflect the importance of road improvements, mental health, substance abuse, food insecurity and the implementation of school safety programs, which have been identified by this agreement to enhance the quality of life for our families and mitigate the fiscal impact. Working together will benefit all the taxpayers and promote goodwill and partnership.

Charter government has been in place in Putnam County since 1979; as such, it requires a mutual agreement between the county executive and the legislature to make the responsible decisions that will affect all budgetary and administrative decisions.

I respectfully suggest that Assemblyman Byrne work with the legislature in 2023, all elected officials, as well as the many very experienced and knowledgeable county department heads and understand why this very groundbreaking resolution was passed unanimously by the legislature.

My recommendation as a two-term member of the legislature, local business owner and a volunteer in many local organizations, is to work within the 2023 budget year as it will be adopted by the Putnam County Legislature.

Then, and only then, will Assemblyman Byrne see firsthand why Share the Growth is clearly the right thing to do.

**Neal Sullivan**  
Putnam County Legislator, District 9  
Carmel

## Slater’s Ability to Work With Officials in Both Parties is Refreshing

I enthusiastically support Matt Slater’s candidacy for the New York State Assembly even though he is a Republican and I am a registered Democrat.

In Matt’s time as Yorktown Town Supervisor, he has been energetic, hardworking and successful in energizing the town to embark on new initiatives with business and recreation while showing proper concerns for environmental and climate issues. More importantly, he has shown respect and gratitude for all officials, Democrat and Republican, who have aided Yorktown in any way, giving equal praise to Republican Assemblyman Kevin Byrne and Democratic governors Cuomo and Hochul, state Sen. Pete Harchuk and Westchester County Executive George Latimer.

His approach to politics in our terribly polarized society gives me hope that New York State could return to the days when Pat Moynihan and Jacob Javits could work together for the benefit of the state while being able to separate policy differences from personality. I feel that Matt can help lead us to a return to civility.

**John F. McMullen**  
43-year resident, Jefferson Valley

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**Laura Markowski**  
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[lmarkowski@theexaminernews.com](mailto:lmarkowski@theexaminernews.com)

**Peter Stone**  
C.F.O.  
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#### Print Team:

**Martin Wilbur**  
Editor-in-Chief  
[mwilbur@theexaminernews.com](mailto:mwilbur@theexaminernews.com)

**Rick Pezzullo**  
Editor  
[rpezzullo@theexaminernews.com](mailto:rpezzullo@theexaminernews.com)

**Ray Gallagher**  
Sports Editor  
[rgallagher@theexaminernews.com](mailto:rgallagher@theexaminernews.com)

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Sports Editor  
[ajacobs@theexaminernews.com](mailto:ajacobs@theexaminernews.com)

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**Paul Cardi**  
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[pcardi@theexaminernews.com](mailto:pcardi@theexaminernews.com)

**Jeff Ohlbaum**  
Senior Account Executive  
[johlbaum@theexaminernews.com](mailto:johlbaum@theexaminernews.com)

**Ken Gulmi**  
Senior Account Executive  
[kgulmi@theexaminernews.com](mailto:kgulmi@theexaminernews.com)

**Nick Antonaccio**  
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Distribution

#### Digital Team:

**Robert Schork**  
Digital Editorial Director  
[rschork@theexaminernews.com](mailto:rschork@theexaminernews.com)

**Dean Pacchiana**  
Webmaster  
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# Column

## Rotary Club of Lake Mahopac Puts Service Above Self

From Westchester and Putnam counties to Ukraine and Africa, the Rotary Club of Lake Mahopac is putting its international motto into action – “Service Above Self,” a refreshing antidote to the individualist ethos often on display on Facebook or Instagram.

The club funds programs to help provide food, shelter, educational opportunities and protection for women and children, and other projects.

For example, the club provides grants to the Putnam/Northern Westchester Women’s Resource Center (PNWWRC), for women who need to escape their homes, said Lillian Jones, a past president of the Lake Mahopac Rotary. The PNWWRC works to “create a safe, supportive environment that eliminates violence against women and children and promotes gender equality,” the resource center website states.

Also, the Rotary Club offers an annual scholarship program for one graduating Mahopac High School student going to college. The winning student receives \$1,250 per year for each year of school, totaling \$5,000. The club also gives funds to one student graduating from a vocational program.

“We participate in food and coat drives and clean up drives,” Jones explained. “We provide senior citizens an annual hot dog



By Michael Gold

lunch and we’ve done Easter Egg hunts with the Carmel Recreation Department.

We planted a tree each year at Airport Park, Chamber Park and Sycamore Park. We helped provide the funds for the Putnam County Historical Society to clean and restore their historical markers.”

The markers highlight Revolutionary War and historical figures and sites in the area, including Eleazer Hamblin, the first settler in the area, in what is now Carmel,

John Crane, the first town clerk of Carmel, and Canopus Island, a sacred site of the Wappinger tribe.

Nationally, Rotary also provides money for vocational training for adults with developmental disabilities and installing solar lights for remote homes on the Navajo Nation reservation in the American Southwest.

Internationally, 46,000 Rotary Clubs around the world contributed more than \$15 million in humanitarian aid to help Ukraine.

“We funded shipping of medical supplies and food,” Jones explained.

Rotary International also contributed money for supplies of water, clothing, shelter and transportation to the Ukrainian people as well.

Rotary sends funds to ShelterBox, a nonprofit that provides emergency shelter and essential supplies, including cooking sets, tools and soap for families that have lost their homes due to natural disasters or war.

Rotary is helping to build wells in Ethiopia, reduce malaria in Zambia, vaccinate people against COVID-19 in Italy, provide housing for Syrian refugees and working to end polio worldwide.

“We’re interested in helping people. People are people no matter where they are,” said Jones, who has been involved with Rotary for 12 years.

She’s quick to point out that there are many others who have been with the club for much longer. The Lake Mahopac club, which was founded in 1932, has 50 members and “we continue to grow,” she said.

Rotary International states on its website that, “we work together to champion peace, fight illiteracy and poverty, help people to access clean water and sanitation, and fight disease. Our newest cause is to protect our planet and its resources.”

“Internationally, we contribute to these goals and have helped to eradicate polio. Locally, we work together to help with causes that are bigger than each of us,” Jones wrote in an e-mail.

The club provides its members with a sense of belonging, too.

“As a Rotarian, when you travel, you’re welcome at any Rotary around the world,” Jones explained. “I went to Germany and met Rotary people there. The things they’re doing are similar to us. They’re helping people, from kids to seniors. You find these people throughout the world.”

The club has staged annual Doo Wop rock n’ roll oldies shows, with entertainers from

the 1950s and ‘60s, including Joey Dee, who sang “The Peppermint Twist,” The Skyliners and The Elegants. Additionally, Rotary hosts Election Eve dinners at the Mahopac Fire Department for the entire community.

Rotary, started in 1905, has historically included a diverse array of members, from Charles Mayo, the founder of the Mayo Clinic, and Adm. Richard Byrd, who made the first flight over the South Pole and explored Antarctica extensively, to Guglielmo Marconi, the Italian inventor of the wireless radio, and American astronaut Frank Borman, who as part of the Apollo 8 mission, comprised the first manned crew to orbit the moon.

“We continue to be active and take on new projects,” Jones said. “People get involved in areas most interesting to them, either local or internationally. It’s an organization that does a lot in the community.”

Rotary clubs can be found throughout Westchester and Putnam counties, including Pleasantville, Mount Kisco, Carmel, Brewster and Pawling.

Lake Mahopac Club members meet every

Wednesday at Four Brothers Pizza Restaurant at 654 Route 6 in Mahopac. For more information or to donate, visit [www.lakemahopacrotary.org](http://www.lakemahopacrotary.org).

*Pleasantville resident Michael Gold has had articles published in the New York Daily News, the Albany Times Union, The Virginian-Pilot, The Palm Beach Post, other newspapers and The Hardy Society Journal, a British literary journal.*

## On the Street

## Letter to the Editor

### Mt. Pleasant Rec & Parks Thanks Community for Great Summer Camp

The Mount Pleasant Recreation & Parks Department would like to say thank you to some of the people who made the 2022 Mount Pleasant Camp year special. Mount Pleasant had over 1,000 kids in our camps and hundreds of counselors and employees. It took a lot of work and coordination from some dedicated people.

We would like to thank the Mount Pleasant School District for hosting our camps, specifically Superintendent Peter Giarrizzo and Director of Facilities Eric Strack. We also need to thank the Westlake High School/Middle School and the Hawthorne custodial staff for their great work throughout the summer. Camp would not be a success without our great camp directors, so a HUGE thank you to them as well.

Finally, to all the campers and families, thanks for attending and we hope you had a blast.

See you next summer!

**Doug Scott,**  
Superintendent of Recreation and the full-time Recreation & Parks team

By Richard Cirulli

*“I can show you, that when it starts to rain, everything’s the same, I can show you”*

*The Beatles*

It’s fair to say that our life is the song we sing, though we need to ask ourselves is it our own unique song? Or am I just singing along in the choir of the generic song of the herd mindset?

We are well aware life is a lottery whose first drawing is our birth with an unknown expiration date. With this said, we have little choice but to grow into ourselves. This is not to imply to take a fatalistic or nihilistic life philosophy. But rather to have the courage to score our life project on our terms to secure our peace and essence in life. Our life’s song should not be a lottery but rather a chosen melody.

As we score our life’s song, we should remember to set realistic expectations and outcomes –and avoid chasing moonbeams of illusions. To help us secure this we can reflect on the ancient Greek aphorism “know thyself.” That means to know, first and foremost, one’s own character. And to be aware of one’s limitations and avoid likening oneself to the gods.

What this aphorism is telling us is to write

## Who Scores Your Soundtrack of Life?

and implement our true song of life song. Of note, I love listening to the blues, though elect not to live the blues. For sure we will have our rainy days, though we should not just stand in the rain to lament our life.

To make a point, I will quote the Beatles from their song “Rain.”

*“When the rain comes  
They run and hide their heads  
They might as well be dead  
If the rain comes”*

As a former academic and philosopher, I encourage people to follow a practical philosophy to score their life’s song – and avoid the school of philosophy that gets fixated on the question of why the world exists. This is the domain of metaphysicians who contemplate theory over practical living.

For many, this question can be solved with theology. To place this in simple terms I will quote Descartes: “I think; therefore, I exist.”

So, I think I will spend my time thinking on how I can improve my life by bringing peace, happiness and essence into my beingness; it’s basically applied existentialism. We need to ask ourselves how pleasant can our life’s song be if it’s merely filled with the verses of others instead of notes and lyrics that harmonize our



By Richard Cirulli

life for the better? We need to be reminded we should live our lives on our terms, and not that of others, in the hope of avoiding becoming part of the hive mind and having to live out our lives asking this question: But what if?

We all know of friends and acquaintances who are always singing their songs of anger and sorrow, who are dauntless in bringing negativity into their life, blind and oblivious to all that is good in life. Just existing to

sing and live the blues. For these folks, life is merely a continuum of rainy days.

I will end with another quote from the Beatles:

*“Can you hear me?  
That when it rains and shines  
It’s just a state of mind  
Can you hear me?”*

Be well. Be safe. Be happy. Be nice. Amor fati!

*Dr. Richard Cirulli is a published author, playwright and retired professor. His body of works can be viewed at [www.demitasseplayers.com](http://www.demitasseplayers.com). He looks forward to your comments and can be reached at [profcirulli@optonline.net](mailto:profcirulli@optonline.net).*

## Existentially Speaking



## Putnam Valley HS Principal Named to Lead Chappaqua's Horace Greeley

The Chappaqua School District announced last week that Dr. Sandra Sepe will be the next Horace Greeley High School principal.

Sepe takes over effective Aug. 30, replacing Andrew Corsilia, who is the new assistant superintendent for human resources and leadership development.

Sepe has been the principal of Putnam Valley High School for the last seven years. Parents, students and faculty there provided numerous examples of how Sepe helped provide a positive school culture, strengthened the academic program and mobilized the various stakeholder groups around a unified vision.

Before Putnam Valley, Sepe served as principal of Millbrook High School and as the assistant principal of Dobbs Ferry High School, earning tenure in both positions. Prior to her more than 12 years in high school administration, she taught social studies for 18 years, including teaching advanced placement courses.

"I am absolutely thrilled to be working with Sandy again and look forward to welcoming her to Greeley," Chappaqua Superintendent of Schools Dr. Christine Ackerman said in a statement. "She has the skills, experience, expertise and knowledge, which make her the right choice for this important position."

Her selection came after a rigorous search, small committee interviews with central administration, large committee



Dr. Sandra Sepe will be moving from Putnam Valley to Horace Greeley High School just before the end of the month.

interviews with parents, students, Board of Education members and staff, a writing sample and a site visit to Putnam Valley High School.

Sepe holds an undergraduate degree from Marist College, a master's in education from SUNY New Paltz and a doctorate in educational leadership from Manhattanville College.

## New Hours Announced for CAREERS Support Solutions Thrift Shop

CAREERS Support Solutions Thrift Shop in Carmel is now open from 12 to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

The shop, staffed by dedicated volunteers, will also open at other times for special sales. All proceeds fund CAREERS' programs of job training and placement for individuals with learning, intellectual, developmental, psychiatric and/or physical disabilities.

Tina Cornish-Lauria, executive director of CAREERS, said the new shop is in convenient walking distance from ShopRite on Route 52.

"Buying from our Thrift Shop is a significant way to repurpose items you no longer need, buy things at great prices and help people with disabilities get, and keep, a job," she said. "It's also great way to help the environment by recycling items and keeping them out of landfills."

Thanks to the generosity of supporters, the shop is not taking donations of men's and women's clothing at this time, but shoes, jewelry, handbags, knick-knacks, pet supplies and other gently-used items are gladly accepted, providing unique and affordable treasures to community members.

All purchases and donations fund CAREERS-supported work programs for people with disabilities and are tax deductible as allowed by law.



Volunteers helping out at CAREERS Thrift Shop in Carmel. The store recently adjusted its hours to be open afternoons on Tuesday through Saturday.

Since 1987, CAREERS Support Solutions has provided services to hundreds of students and adults annually throughout Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess counties. CAREERS mission is to empower people with disabilities by teaching workforce readiness skills and providing job placement, on-the-job training and ongoing support to assure long-term success at no cost to the individual or employer. CAREERS Support Solutions Thrift Shop is located at 208 Route 52 in Carmel. For more information call 845-225-8007 or visit [www.careersupportsolutions.org](http://www.careersupportsolutions.org).



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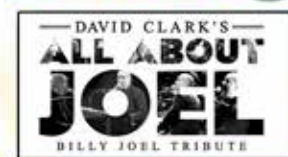
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# P'ville Receives \$200G State Grant From Harckham for Flooding Issue

State Sen. Peter Harckham (D-Lewisboro) announced last week a \$200,000 state grant to the Village of Pleasantville for road reconditioning on Hopper Street, which has long been plagued with flooding from the nearby Saw Mill River.

Located between Marble Avenue and the Saw Mill River Parkway, Hopper Street is a cul-de-sac prone to flooding because of its elevation and location.

In an effort to remediate flooding issues, the village will initiate a major project to mill, repave and regrade Hopper Street so that stormwater runoff in the area is diverted to drainage infrastructure that will be constructed at the end of the roadway.

Harckham said he was pleased to support Pleasantville and lend a hand toward helping to solve a persistent flooding problem.

"Alleviating a good portion of the project's costs, which would otherwise be shouldered by local taxpayers, is a shared benefit, too, especially in tough economic times," Harckham said.

Currently, Hopper Street does not have the appropriate drainage nor the proper pitch to prevent flooding or remove storm water from the area efficiently and quickly.

To help alleviate the flooding, stormwater will be sent to two new catch basins on the street. The work included in the project will require site prep, some utility demolition and tree removal, milling

and paving, construction of a new curb and landscaping.

"Communities like Pleasantville are experiencing first-hand the problems brought on by climate change and related extreme weather events, including increased flooding, so making our infrastructure – roadways, bridges and drainage systems – more resilient makes perfect sense," Scherer said. "This state grant will help ensure that we are better prepared for the flooding issues we face today, and will face in the future."

The awarded grant funding was secured within the State and Municipal Facilities Program (SAM), which is among the grant programs administered by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) to support community and economic development.

Harckham has delivered more than \$5 million in state grant funding to municipalities and nonprofits in his district over the past year, including \$200,000 for a new civic space in Pleasantville and \$50,000 for the Pleasantville Fire Department to purchase a utility task vehicle.

"A capital project like the repaving of Hopper Street in Pleasantville is not only important for maintaining the infrastructure of the village," said County Legislator Margaret Cunzio (C-Mount Pleasant). "But in this case, it will also improve the quality of life for these residents and help with the constant



PETER HARCKHAM OFFICE PHOTO

Pleasantville Mayor Peter Scherer, left, with state Sen. Peter Harckham on Hopper Street. Harckham delivered a \$200,000 state grant to be used to help alleviate a flooding issue for residents on the street.

flooding issues that have arisen. Senator Harckham has advocated for Pleasantville, and working with him on this issue, along with many others, is rewarding. This is an example of working together to make government more effective and responsive to our residents and small business owners."



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## DEI and CRT in LCSD, Part Two

*How an alphabet soup of academic terms has been politicized to bring Lakeland Central School District (LCSD) – like so many in America – to the boiling point*



By Bailey Hosfelt

You are reading this week's print excerpt of an article from our Examiner+ newsmagazine-style email newsletter. To read the entire article and others like it, subscribe at [www.examiner-plus.com](http://www.examiner-plus.com) to receive all of our bonus content.

Last week, in part one of our story, we looked at the efforts to bring Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) education into the classroom. These efforts have sometimes been conflated with Critical Race Theory (CRT), which itself has become a hot-button issue mired in conflicting understandings of its meaning and premise. This week, in part two, we look at how the Lakeland School Board has become a local battleground for the national CRT political debate.

Miguel Feliciano, a recent Walter Panas

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graduate, sees Lakeland as a perfect example of what's happening in school districts across the country.

"We're seeing a small percentage of parents coming into these board meetings and being the voice that our trustees are hearing," Feliciano says. "They're not representative of the entire community — because I would say a vast majority of parents do support DEI initiatives — but the minority is the loud voice."

While Feliciano says it was hard for him and his fellow classmates to tune out the district's contentious school board meetings, particularly the offensive language some parents used, it inspired him to start Equity Club in November 2020.

"I saw what was happening around us, and I said, 'We need a place where we can share our feelings, beliefs, and do something about it,'" Feliciano explains. "Right away, it proved a huge success, and it still is."

At Walter Panas, Feliciano says an in-school committee of teachers and administrators working on DEI initiatives frequently collaborated with club leaders and student advocates on different efforts, such as making a gender-neutral restroom accessible in the school.

"The adults [in the school] listen to the students a lot in this, and that's something we all appreciated," Feliciano notes.

Equity Club advisor Terri Bauer-Lamport says the club provides students with "a safe place to grapple with the tough conversations that are common in today's society while inviting students of all beliefs and backgrounds to share their perspectives."

After a particularly heated school board meeting in February, multiple members of the Equity Club chose to speak on behalf of the club and all students at Walter Panas at a subsequent meeting.

"After tensions flared earlier this year, the students brainstormed ways to take action to ensure that people in the Walter Panas and Lakeland communities understand that students deserve to have a voice in any and all conversations regarding their schools," Bauer-Lamport said over email. "In preparing for this board meeting, Equity Club members met and practiced their speeches. They reassured one another that no matter what the response to their speeches, they were doing the right thing. They



GETTY IMAGES

live by the mantra 'what is right is not always easy.'"

In September, flags from all countries, the LGBTQ+ community, and all branches of the military will be on display in the main school hallway to show that the school is a welcoming environment for all — another of Equity Club's projects.

As president of the UNICEF ...

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# A Story of Tuscany Love By Brewster Author

By Mia Levine

Brewster resident Tom Bisogno may have started writing his novel "Siena My Love" in 2020, but the story had been brewing in Bisogno's consciousness for three-quarters of a century.

The story follows American teen singing sensation Michael Ventura, whose life has been a rollercoaster, but when his grandfather needed him, he returned to help at his family's vineyard near Siena, Italy. As a 10-year-old he had met feisty Sophia. The two would become fast friends during his summer visits until an awkward adolescent moment during the Palio di Siena.

Readers experience Michael and Sophia's lives through hardships and successes. They are on two different relationship paths until Michael is called back to Tuscany.

Bisogno, 86, a longtime Brewster resident, grew up in Brooklyn and loved listening to the old standards genre, similar to what Ventura's character sings. He spent several summers near Siena, and grew to love Tuscany.

And, of course, he loved writing. Seemingly never timid about taking on a personal and professional challenge, Bisogno wrote his first book, "Leave Six Inches, a self-published work about growing up in Brooklyn.

Additionally, he and his wife, Louisa, were professionally accredited with a movie on the Lifetime starring Marlee Matlin called "Bridge to Silence."

But it was reaching back to his 10-year-old self that helped him write "Siena My Love."

"Everyone, including young people, should shift gears and start in a new direction," Bisogno said. "If they do not like the path they are on, people should find challenges and not steer away from them."

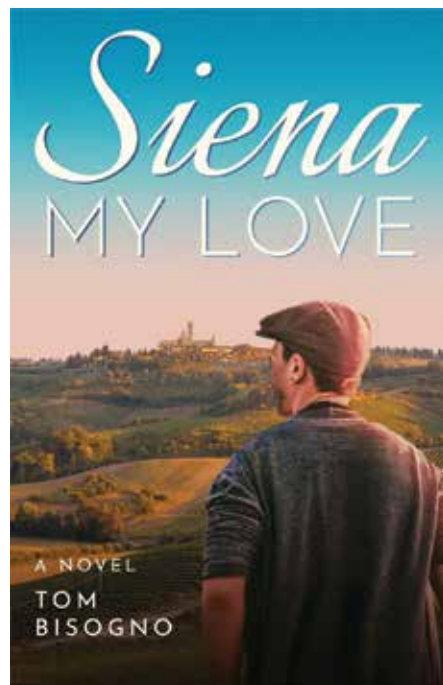
Bisogno certainly has followed his own advice. After earning a bachelor's degree in English from St. John's University and an MBA in marketing from Pace, a 25-year-old Bisogno oversaw more than 40 employees at a large corporation's accounting department, managing about \$2.5 billion.

His next position was in the company's marketing group product management and development, which required extensive traveling. He resigned when the organization wanted him to transfer to Chicago for a second time.

Because his wife was teaching at Brewster High School and his five children were happy in Putnam County, he became a real estate broker and taught communication and life skills at Western Connecticut State University, Iona, Marist and Dominican colleges.

"I went into local real estate with partners, and we founded Spectra Realty and had our office on Route 22 in Southeast," recalled Bisogno who then turned to teaching.

Bisogno has been an active community member, having served on the Brewster Board of Education and as president of the Southeast Museum. He has also been on various civic groups from the late 1960s to



Brewster resident Tom Bisogno wrote his first novel, "Siena My Love," based on a real-life experience.

the early 1990s.

In 1993, Bisogno helped Southeast acquire its town park. After serving on the school board, he became a speaker at the National Science Foundation hearings on toxic sludge, publishing magazine articles,

coordinating public relations, researching material and acting as a media spokesman.

By the end of 2020, Bisogno decided to leave teaching during the pandemic. He had thought about writing a novel for a while.

Bisogno's affection for Tuscany and love songs helped him come up with the idea for "Siena My Love."

The first draft of the novel was done in three months. The hard part came after the novel's manuscript was finished – finding a publisher. He was able to hook up with Atmosphere Press, a collaborative publisher. Edits and marketing took several months and is now available on Amazon.

Accompanying the book is a playlist on YouTube Bisogno compiled to be listened while reading the book.

"(I) wanted to have actual lyrics because the main character is a singer, and it is his dialogue when he sings to his fans and in his romantic relationship," Bisogno said. "However, the copyright laws and securing permission became impossible within a reasonable time frame to publish. The songs came out of both the story requirements and my personal preferences for the singer, and a YouTube playlist was my way of getting the experience to my readers under the circumstances."

He is still writing and transitioning a screenplay for the book.

"Siena My Love" is available on Amazon in either paperback or Kindle version.



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# Knowing How to Keep Your Home Cool, Despite the Temperature

Have you been feeling as oppressed by the heat as I have during this exceptionally hot summer?

Whether you have central air or window units, the unusually high temperatures reached during a heat wave are often a challenge for many air conditioning systems. Your AC unit may never turn off on extremely hot days and the temperature inside your home can start to creep up beyond where you set your thermostat. This can be a normal occurrence.

But the air conditioner will eventually catch up overnight – or maybe toward the morning hours when it's cooler outside.

Below are some tips to help cool a home more efficiently during a heat wave.

First, make sure your air conditioner is functioning properly. Certain issues or problems can often prevent your air conditioning unit from properly cooling your home on extremely hot days. These issues or problems may include:

1. A dirty air filter (good maintenance is always key).
2. A slow refrigerant leak (sometimes an easy fix).
3. A blocked condensing unit (a frequent issue).
4. Ducts leaking inside the home (efficiency loss is possible).
5. An undersized or older air conditioning



By Bill Primavera

unit (time for replacement).

But there is also a possibility nothing is actually “wrong” with your air conditioning unit. Properly cooling a home starts with the outside temperature.

How cool should one expect a home to get during a heat wave?

The greatest air conditioner in the world is only going to cool a home about 20 degrees from the outside temperature. Maybe a little more if you take the time to implement a few of these helpful tips for cooling your space on extremely hot days like we’ve been experiencing with temperatures frequently exceeding 90 degrees.

Anything you can do to keep your home a little bit cooler on these very hot days will mean your air conditioning system does not need to be running as long for each cooling cycle, which will save you money as well as conserve energy.

Here are tips to cool your home better during a heat wave:

1. Set the thermostat higher. In extreme temperatures it's best not to turn “up” the AC to save a few dollars because it puts your AC unit in an uphill fight trying to cool down your home. Set your thermostat on 75 to 78 degrees (or higher) and learn to live with just a little heat. It won't kill you.
2. Turn the fan switch to the “on” position



instead of leaving it on “auto,” which will help circulate the air in a home and also help rooms that are too hot or cool.

3. Keep shades closed on extremely hot days.
4. Close off unused rooms to conserve energy.
5. Consider using ceiling fans to keep you cool.
6. Don't use some other appliances on extremely hot days. Not using the stove, dishwasher or dryer during a heat wave will help keep your home cooler by simply not introducing heat into an already warm environment.
7. Properly maintain your air conditioning unit for maximum efficiency.

8. Consider upgrading your air conditioning system.

If your AC unit is older than 10 years old, you should think about replacing it. Although an air conditioner can last up to 20 years in a normal environment, it loses about 40 percent of its efficiency after 10 years. The newer technology can also save you up to 20 percent on cooling costs when upgrading.

Consider these points and keep it cool!

Bill Primavera is a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc., the longest-running public relations agency in Westchester ([www.PrimaveraPR.com](http://www.PrimaveraPR.com)). To engage the services of The Home Guru and his team to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.

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# Our Family Adventure in Tuscany: The Grapes



By Nick Antonaccio

In this, the third installment of my family adventure in Tuscany, I present to you a backdrop on the wines offered at restaurants. Stay tuned next week for our adventures at our two favorite restaurants (in Tuscany, it's difficult

to rate any wine, food or restaurant as a singular favorite).

Oh, and did I mention: After we departed the villa, my wife and I took the high-speed train to the Amalfi Coast for a few add-on days of food and wine exploration. More to follow on this excursion.

Many of you are familiar with the influences that gave birth to the unique culture of this region. These include the role of the Catholic Church in the skyline-dominating duomos in many localities, the fortifications constructed during medieval times to protect citizenry from marauding invaders, the rise of the Renaissance and its inspiration for the birth of a new era of art, sculpture and architecture.

Through all these eras and evolutions, a constant has been the wine. The early

Romans began planting vines and crafting wines in Tuscany over 2,500 years ago. Today's winemakers carry this influence in their DNA, as they ply their trade with a modern sensibility.

## The White Wines

The ubiquitous Vernaccia, produced in the hills surrounding our villa, were in every restaurant wine cellar. And they were stocked in our villa wine cellar, produced by the villa property owners and ready to be pulled from the ages-old shelves. We certainly availed ourselves of this convenience (at eight Euros). This wine has a distinct aroma of flowers, a hint of citrus and minerality that pairs well with a number of dishes.

The wines of Campania were quite popular. The holy trinity of Falanghina, Fiano and Greco di Tufo proliferated on nearly all of the wine lists at local restaurants. Why? Perhaps the price-quality combination? Perhaps they are ready to enjoy while young? Perhaps the winemakers of Campania are still feeling the effects of prior recessions and maintain lower prices to ensure a viable cash flow?

Whatever the reason(s), we were the beneficiaries for pairing at each of our meals. Each of these wines had distinct characteristics that, when considered as a group, please most palates and pair well with lighter dishes, with profiles that run from



soft and dry to bold and fruit-forward.

When we returned to New York, we found excellent representations of all four of these wines, at affordable prices. This is not typically the case; many readers complain that the wines they enjoyed in Italy are difficult to find in New York, and furthermore, the aromas and flavor were not the same as the local versions in Italy. It is no longer as difficult to replicate the Italian experience back home.

## The Red Wines

Chianti Classico dominated every wine list with which we were presented. Our villa was located just outside the Town of Greve, one of the centers of the Tuscan geographic area where the Sangiovese grape is cultivated.

As we ventured through the narrow, winding roads each day, we passed winery signs for wines that invariably were included in the restaurant wine list later that evening. In this area, the vineyards present picture-perfect landscape photos suitable for enlarging and framing. Yet, as close as the wineries are to one another and as similar the terroir of each, we appreciated the fine distinction of each bottle we consumed. The subtleties were in the balance of fruit and acid. One wine was redolent with black cherry aromas, which influenced, but did not dominate, the wine's tannins. Another wine captured the essence of plums, which was sublimated by an elevated acidity.

We found ourselves seeking advice from the family that owned the restaurant so that we could best pair a wine with the dish selected. The family's generations-old familiarity with the generations-old wineries made for a perfect match every time.

The wines of Chianti Classico have risen in esteem – and popularity – in recent years. I encourage you to seek them out for your culinary pairings.

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](mailto:nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com) or on Twitter @sharingwine.

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# Back to School!

## Shop Smart and Spend Less This Back-to-School Season

As summer nights shorten and the school year approaches, you may be looking for ways to reduce the stress and costs of back-to-school preparations and ease into a new routine.

Thankfully, there are those at Dollar General who know about the important topic and are offering families suggestions for an easy and affordable return to classes.

### School Supplies

Start by separating and categorizing students' supplies lists and compare to items that may be left over from the previous school year. To pick up needs in one easy stop, visit a local Dollar General to purchase school supplies that are colorful and cost-effective, with more than 100 back-to-school items priced at \$1 or less.

School and classroom essentials may include notebooks, coloring supplies, backpacks, a reusable water bottle and more. Additionally, a variety of hand sanitizers starting at \$1 can be easily placed into lunchboxes, desks, pencil cases or given to school staff to help stop the spread of germs.

For teachers who want to save big in 2022, sign up for a DG account and get verified for 30 percent off qualified items



LIUDMYLA YAREMENKO/ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS PHOTO

on up to four shopping trips through Sept. 9. Additionally, customers can save \$3 on qualifying \$15 or more supply purchases in the stationery, cleaning and paper and houseware categories through Sept. 9. All offers are available through DG Digital Coupons online and in the DG App, where customers can load coupons and rewards on an easy-to-use platform and redeem them at checkout.

### Healthier Eating

Heading back to school also means afterschool activities such as clubs and athletics. While juggling practices, rehearsals and club meetings, consider packing healthier snacks to support a busy schedule.

Meal prep can also be helpful on busy days, and Dollar General's DG Easy Meals provides access to simple recipes with affordable ingredients to make breakfast, lunch, snacks and dinner easy and

stress-free. Entrees like pecan-crusted salmon or Buffalo chicken pizza can be made ahead and stored in the fridge or freezer until ready to eat. Dollar General also offers Better for You recipes that provide healthier meal options featuring ingredients available at DG stores.

### Organization Necessities

As the school year begins and schedules fill up, some find it harder to stay organized. Use a customizable planner or calendar to remind you of pick-up times, parent-teacher conferences and other important appointments. These tools are also great for high school or college students managing a new class schedule.

Write out chores on a dry erase board, which can be secured to the side of the fridge, to keep track of daily duties. Finally, if your surfaces tend to collect clutter, a large canvas storage container can be a great way to keep items together for a quick cleanup.

With these back-to-school tips and tricks, you can send students of all ages to their classes prepared with everything on the list, all while saving time and money in the process.

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# Back to School!

## New School Year Tips From a Foot and Ankle Surgeon

Kids' feet grow and change quickly, which means you'll likely be shoe shopping this back-to-school season.

As you head to the store, consider these tips and insights from the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS).

- Find the right fit. "Your child's feet can grow up to two sizes in six months, so you need to account for rapid growth when buying shoes," said Dr. Michael Coyer, a foot and ankle surgeon and fellow member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (AFACS)

Coyer cautions against the temptation to buy oversized shoes, though, as they can cause the foot to slide forward, putting excessive pressure on the toes.

"A good fit is about a finger's width from the end of the shoe to the tip of the big toe," he said.

On the other hand, don't wait too long to replace tight shoes. Tight shoes can cause blisters, corns and calluses on toes, blisters on the back of the heels and ingrown nails, which can become infected. If you notice signs of infection such as pain, redness or fluid draining from the area, schedule an appointment with a foot and ankle surgeon, who can perform a simple, safe in-office procedure to remove the

affected area of the nail.

- Replace worn-out shoes. Because shoes lose shock absorption over time, wearing worn-out shoes can elevate the risk for heel pain, Achilles tendonitis and even ankle sprains and stress fractures.

"Inspect old shoes and replace any that lack sufficient cushioning and arch support, or have excessive wear to the bottom or around the edges of the sole," Coyer said. "When shopping, don't assume a new pair will offer proper support. Check to see that the toe box is wide enough and the shoe doesn't bend in the middle of the sole."

- Protect young athletes. "Every new season, we see an increase in ankle injuries among young athletes," Coyer said.

- Help prevent sports-related injuries by equipping your child with proper footwear this fall. Start each sports season with new shoes and always buy the right shoe for the sport. You can also protect young athletes by never allowing them to play through foot pain. Foot pain isn't normal and if it lasts for more than a few days and interferes with normal activities, seek medical attention.

- Consider other factors. Children with flat feet need shoes with a wide toe



ALLESIMA/ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS PHOTO

box, maximum arch support and shock absorption. The best shoes for flat feet are stiff-soled, lace-up shoes that have enough depth for an orthotic insert, if necessary.

"A common persisting myth is that children will 'grow out of' foot problems. But foot problems developed in childhood can become more serious if left unaddressed," Coyer cautioned.

"One of the most important steps you can take to prevent pediatric foot issues is by taking time during the back-to-school season to buy footwear that fits well and

offers good support. Further, having your child evaluated by a foot and ankle surgeon member of ACFAS at the first sign of trouble can help reduce the likelihood of worsening problems and help keep your child active."

For more back-to-school tips, information on foot and ankle health and to find a foot and ankle surgeon near you, visit [www.FootHealthFacts.org](http://www.FootHealthFacts.org), the patient education website for the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons.

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# Even During Baseball Season, Very Little Bunting(s)

By Brian Kluepfel

We're in the death throes of an overly-hot start to August, but sometimes one just needs to get outside.

Even in the fiercest of heat, birds are out there, going on with their un-airconditioned lives. So I took to the trails and grasslands of Mariandale on Sunday morning.

I did have a bird in mind. My neighbors have lately spotted an Indigo Bunting in the area, and I know where it may be. However, recent walks have yielded no sightings.

This is one of the more striking birds you might see in the New York area, a small splash of expressive cobalt hidden among some shrubbery or atop a telephone wire; if there's a bustle in your hedgerow, it may indeed be the lovely bunting. (I speak only for the brightly-hued male buntings; the females are a plainer brown shade.)

I attempted to stay in the shade on an oppressively hot morning, and

mostly succeeded. Being a bit tired during a birding expedition is actually a good thing –you stop, you look, you listen. Taking in all the sights and sounds of a wooded pathway can be quite the cure-all; I should ditch my headphones more often, to be honest.

It's not only the birdsong which pricks my senses. I've been startled by deer, foxes, rabbits, squirrels, hedgehogs and all manner of other creatures on my walks. This hot, sticky weather seems to be prime butterfly season, too, and I've counted at least four species this week.

The forest's small movement yields common local birds: the mewling of an immature grey catbird; the plaintive teakettle of an animated Carolina wren, sassy upturned tail flicking up and down in the morning sunlight; the ever-present yet noble American robin flashing a bit of orange chest as it crosses the path; the underappreciated beauty of a female northern cardinal, lacking the crimson robe of its male counterpart but with a "warm, red-tinged brown"

(according to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology) that's irresistible in its own fashion.

In the sunny skies above there is some action: the broad wingspan of nature's cleanup crew, a pair of black vultures. Some view these carrion eaters with revulsion, but I find beauty in their unhurried, circular flight and circumspect bearing, nobility and efficiency in eating dead animals before they rot, stink and carry potential disease to other beings.

Out on the majestic river that runs two ways is a huge freighter, perhaps bound for Albany or another Hudson port. Near its side flaps the telltale black-and-white "M" flapping of an osprey. No matter how many times I see one – often with a fish in its talons – I'm brought back to teenage sojourns to the Gulf Coast of Florida and my discovery of this magnificent fishing machine (Common name: fish hawk).

Later in the day, because the vultures haven't stopped by our place yet, we bring our own compost up to Cedar Lane Park and walk around the pond. A quick survey of the area yields movement in the tallest treetops and a memorable three-note song; it's a couple of eastern wood pewees flycatching on this buggy, humid night.

No ducks on the pond, nor herons. Not an indigo bunting in sight, either. But a day is what you make of it, and today was a good day for birds in Ossining.

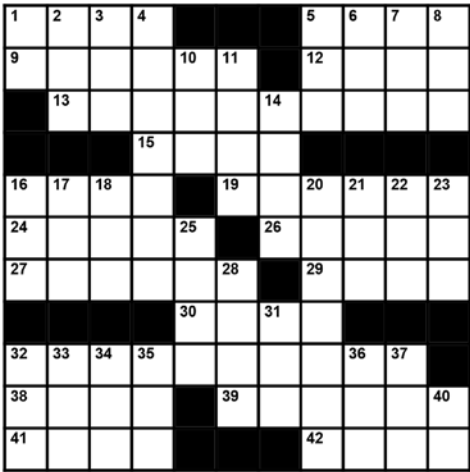
*Brian Kluepfel is a member of the Saw Mill River Audubon and encourages you to join their activities and come to their annual dinner at Crabtree's Kittle House on Sept. 9. Local author Scott Craven will be discussing his new book, "Croton Point Park: Westchester's Jewel on the Hudson."*

## For The Birds

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## Crossword

- Across**
- 1. Brain child
  - 5. Sean Connery, for one
  - 9. Ideologies
  - 12. Through (abbr.)
  - 13. Covering the news
  - 15. Polish's partner
  - 16. Game of Thrones character
  - 19. The place for chicken "royalty" in Yorktown, Rob's Poultry \_\_\_\_\_
  - 24. Hawthorne dental facility, \_\_\_\_\_
  - 26. Challenges
  - 27. Acceptances
  - 29. Cut
  - 30. Arrow groove
  - 32. Perturb
  - 38. Strike callers
  - 39. Most cunning
  - 41. "Mountain" mammal
  - 42. Soaks (up)
- Down**
- 1. Driver's license, e.g.
  - 2. Justice Department, for short
  - 3. Arrogance
  - 4. Comedy entertainers
  - 5. Cardinal letters
  - 6. Windy city, for short
  - 7. Surgery ctrs., abbr.
  - 8. Short for stomach
  - 10. French sculptor, Jean
  - 11. Salon sound



- 14. Just barely
- 16. It's often sloppy
- 17. Soil loosener
- 18. Vienna's land, abbr.
- 20. Yes-men
- 21. Flightboard abbr.
- 22. Top exec, abbr.
- 23. Parapsychologist's study
- 25. Vintner's prefix
- 28. Some offspring
- 31. 250, Roman-style
- 32. Shoveled
- 33. Chat-room qualifier
- 34. Hot spring
- 35. Austin time, abbr.
- 36. Auto created by Olds
- 37. Cooking abbr.
- 40. Poet Eliot's initials

Answers on page 25

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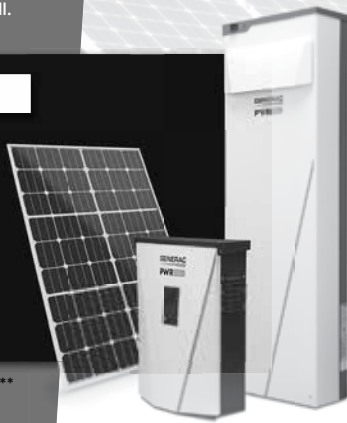
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# The Puck Fair: An August Revel Not to Be Missed

We welcome August, normally my favorite month of the year, though perhaps not so much this year, as I chalk up another decade milestone, the numerical value of which I shall not divulge.

Suffice it to say I am determined to make this next decade the best of them all, as I celebrate retirement and the prospect of greater travel opportunities for my wife Joanie and I.

A short while down the road, a trip to Ireland with good friends beckons, catching up on a journey stolen by COVID-19. Spanning late September into early October, the trip combines places already seen, as well as new vistas to explore.

With Ireland, there's no such thing as "been there, done that." Each sight always brings something new and refreshing to the mind, no matter how many times one has strolled down Dublin's streets or seen the Shannon's waves. A promise to my readers: A "virtual visit" awaits in future articles, as I attempt to rekindle for you the magic of Ireland and perhaps sway the adventurer in you to follow my lead.

But it is a prior trip that inspires my words today, and an event I missed then,

and will miss once more, but promise to get to at some point before this next decade concludes. That event is the Puck Fair, in the Town of Killorglin, in County Kerry.

Though my surname hails from County Leitrim, I have Kerry roots as well. An ancestor four generations back was born in Killorglin itself, before he sailed off for the backwoods of Canada. Thus, I lay claim to being "a Kerryman," a sobriquet fiercely defended against all comers as defining the quintessential Irishman, which claim, of course, any of Ireland's 32 counties can make, but few defend as well as a son or daughter of County Kerry.

Now, back to the fair. The Puck Fair is firmly rooted in pre-Christian practices, and follows closely upon the heels of the premier Celtic festival of Lughnasadh, which we have written of more than a few times in this column.

The tie-in with Lughnasadh, which commences the harvest season, is clear. A "puc" is a male goat, traditionally a Celtic symbol of fertility. The Irish name of the three-day festival,

which occurs each year from the 10th to the 12th of August, is "Aonach an Phoic," or "Fair of the He-Goat." And on these three days, Killorglin, normally your typical small Irish town, comes alive with more than 80,000 revelers from all over Ireland and beyond.

The fair is whatever one wishes to make of it, depending upon the behavior of the revelers. For many it is a family event, with relatives and friends fondly renewing bonds of kinship and amity. For others it is an excuse to throw off all inhibitions. For all, it is a unique event.

The event begins with the capture in the MacGillycuddy Reeks, mountains around Killorglin, of a wild male goat. No harm is done to the beast, who becomes the center of affection for the next three days and is crowned as "King Puck" by a local schoolgirl, who has been chosen to be the "Queen of Puck" for the duration of the fair.

There are markets galore, traditionally including a horse fair and a cattle fair, reflective of Ireland's eons-long fascination with both species of animals. Vendors, musicians,



By Brian McGowan

storytellers, all court the crowds with great gusto. When the fair has run its course, the goat is reverently returned to the wilds from whence it was snatched, no doubt wondering are not his human cohabitants a passel of strange folk? Happier, no doubt, than his predecessors thousands of years earlier, who would have been sacrificed to the

Celtic gods at the end of the fair.

The fair suffered a COVID-19 shutdown in 2020 and 2021, but is expected to be back in full force this month. And while it is probably too late to book travel for this year's event, it's always a good idea to plan early for the next one!

*Longtime Pleasantville resident Brian McGowan was born and raised in the Bronx and is a second-, third- and fifth-generation Irish-American/Canadian, as his immigrant ancestors followed several paths to the New World. Reach him at [brian.m.mcgowan1952@gmail.com](mailto:brian.m.mcgowan1952@gmail.com). He is the author of two books, "Thunder at Noon," about the Battle of Waterloo, and "Love, Son John," about World War II. Both are available at Amazon.com.*



King Puck – Killorglin, County Kerry

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# What to Do if You Have Shoulder Pain When Reaching Overhead

Pain with moving your shoulder behind your head to grab your seatbelt or behind your back? Pain while you are getting dressed?

If you are experiencing symptoms in your shoulder with these activities, you might have frozen shoulder.

Frozen shoulder (adhesive capsulitis) causes pain and stiffness of the shoulder. The shoulder becomes very painful in certain ranges of motion and limits the ability of the shoulder to move. More commonly, frozen shoulder affects individuals between the ages of 40 and 60 years old and affects women more than men.

Those with diabetes, thyroid disease, an autoimmune disease or prolonged immobilization following an injury are also at a higher risk for developing frozen shoulder. Frozen shoulder can also occur after a trauma or repetitive injury to the area.

Adhesive capsulitis is a condition in which your glenohumeral joint (the ball in the shoulder's socket joint) thickens and becomes stiff and tight. Fibrous bands of tissue within the shoulder become very thick and form adhesions. Within the ball and socket joint of the shoulder, there is less synovial fluid, which is what

assists the joint in moving and gliding. The combination of lack of synovial fluid and the adhesions creates the stiffness and painful sensation when moving the shoulder.

Symptoms include pain and stiffness when reaching overhead, across your body or and behind your back. Typically, only one shoulder is affected, but both shoulders could experience symptoms.

Adhesive capsulitis typically presents in four stages. The estimated time in each stage depends on the severity of the injury, among other factors.

Stage 1 (1-3 months): Shoulder pain, often worse at night, which causes you to limit your arm movement.

Stage 2 (4-9 months): The "freezing" stage of progressive stiffness, where pain continues (although it may lessen) but you experience decreased ability to move your shoulder properly.

Stage 3 (10-14 months): The "frozen" stage, where the shoulder is stiff but no longer hurts when you are not moving it.

Stage 4 (15-24 months): The "thawing"



By Dr. Danny Jacobs

stage, where your ability to move your shoulder gradually returns.

With shoulder pain, it is important to distinguish between frozen shoulder and other shoulder injuries and pathologies. If you are experiencing shoulder pain, make an appointment to see one of our providers or your doctor. They will perform a medical history, have you describe your symptoms and perform an evaluation, including your range of motion and

current symptoms. The stiffness and pain associated with frozen shoulder can make this difficult, depending on the stage of the condition.

Further imaging, including x-ray and MRI, may be needed to confirm the diagnosis. Often, underlying conditions could cause similar shoulder pain including arthritis, rotator cuff tears and strains and shoulder tendinitis.

Physical therapy can assist with recovering from a frozen shoulder by decreasing the time it takes to heal. Physical therapists perform various techniques of hands-on manual therapy,

passive range of motion and stretching and strengthening the shoulder joint and muscles to prevent atrophy or further injury.

Together, we can work with you to improve your shoulder range of motion, decrease your pain and help you return to your recreational activities without any limitations.

Dr. Danny Jacobs is one of the physical therapists at ProClinix Sports Physical Therapy & Chiropractic. He treats patients out of the Ardsley location (within House of Sports). For more information or questions about this article, Jacobs can be reached at 914-801-8811 or at [djacobs@proclinix.com](mailto:djacobs@proclinix.com).

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' continued from page 22

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# Examiner Sports

# 'Pac to 'Pac to 'Pac to 'Pac!

## 16U Mahopac Indians 4-Peat as GHVBL Champs



A dynasty is brewing in Mahopac where the 16U Indians won their fourth consecutive Greater Hudson Valley Baseball League title last Sunday at Rogers Park in Danbury, CT, where seventh-seeded Mahopac crushed No.4 Newburgh Storm, 13-1, and sent the team home with a D-III championship, including L-R Chris Sapienza, Nevan Nystrom, Owen Ryan, Phil Scuderi, Tyler Castrataro, Quentin Bally, Robert Dusovic, Joe Defeo, Kevin Dwyer, Casey Brandstetter, Joey Luczkowski, Ryan Tissier and coaches Jim Castrataro, Dan Brandstetter and Reid Nystrom. The unit outscored their four playoff opponents by a combined 44-8 count and served notice for years to come... see Direct Rays

by Ray Gallagher

## Ship Comes in for Sailors!



## Hen Hud Snags GHVBL D-II High School Baseball Title

After allowing just four runs in three Greater Hudson Valley Baseball League D-II playoff games, the Hendrick Hudson Sailors pose with their championship banner last Saturday at Rogers Park in Danbury, CT, where they capped a terrific playoff run with a 4-2 championship victory over the CT Blue Devils, who could not solve Sailors pitchers Connor Harbolic.(3 IP, no runs) and winning chucker Mike Gagliardi (4 IP, 1 ER, 4 K's). Tyler Muranaka was the offensive hero with a huge 2-RBI base hit to take the lead for good.

Back left coach - Scott Tangredi -- and front left coach - Dave Muranaka -- teamed with varsity coach Van Vourliotis to lead the team of (L-R) Billy Moretti, Mike Gagliardi, Tyler Muranaka, Connor Harbolic, PJ Kocheck, Andrew Arellano, Derek DeResh, Kieran Plunkett, Aydan Gabari, Max Lipton, Matt Bronner and Alec Tangredi to the title.



# Sports

## focus on GHVBL



Briarcliff's Antonio Diaz fires a pitch to the plate in last week's 10U playoff game vs. host Pleasantville.



Right fielder Ari Gerstein makes a running catch during Briarcliff's 4-2 playoff loss to host Pleasantville in the opening round of the GHVBL playoffs.



Putnam Valley's Dylan Morales heads for 2B in Tigers' 12-2 GHVBL 13U playoff win before being eliminated by eventual D-3 champion HV Renegades.



Bradley Masucci of the 10U Bears awaits a pitch during the opening round of the GHVBL playoffs.



Rohan Mitta of the Briarcliff 10U D4 team slides safely into second base just ahead of the tag by Pleasantville's Fede Verminski in last week's GHVBL playoff game.



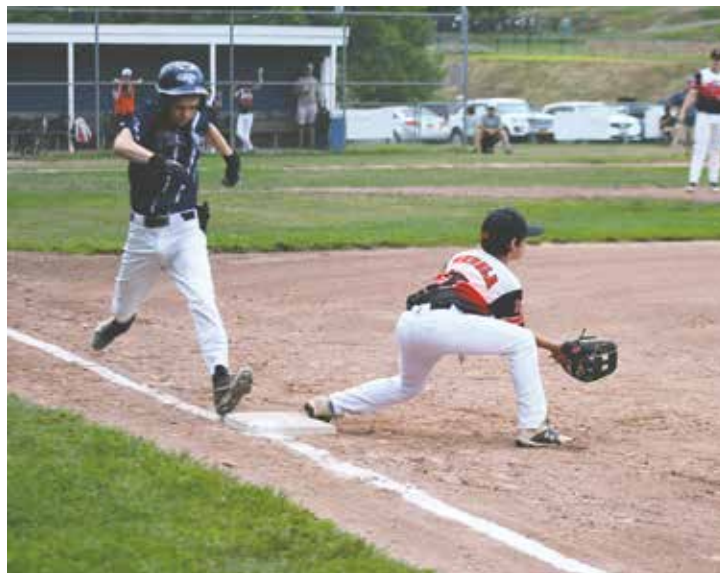
Erick Rosario of the Briarcliff 10U Bears sends a pitch toward left field in last week's first-round playoff game at Pleasantville's Soldiers and Sailors Field.



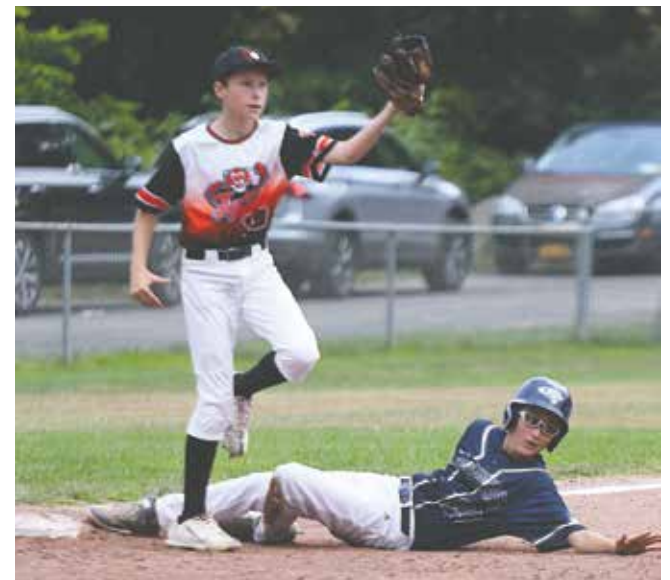
Briarcliff second baseman Frank Sansevera ranges to his right trying to field a grounder up the middle in the Bears' 4-2 playoff loss to Pleasantville.



Putnam Valley's Drew Peverini safely reaches 3B in Tigers' 12-2 GHVBL 13U playoff win over Larchmont-Mamaroneck at Union Field in PV.



Putnam Valley's Evan Smyth leggs out a base hit before scoring run in Tigers' 12-2 GHVBL playoff win over Larchmont-Mamaroneck last week.



Putnam Valley's Eli Pierce awaits a safe call at 3B in 13U Tigers' 12-2 GHVBL win over Larchmont-Mamaroneck at Union Field in PV.



# Sports

## 4-Time GHVBL Champ Mahopac 16U Coming Down the Pike



By Ray Gallagher  
Examiner Sports  
Editor @Directrays

I love to know in advance what's coming down the pike, so to speak. I love to follow the ambitions of young athletes as they take aim at championships before they reach high school, so, naturally, this group of 16U baseball players from Mahopac have caught my attention after four-peating as Greater Hudson Valley Baseball League (GHVBL)

champions last Sunday at Rogers Park in Danbury.

Since their 12U championship days (pre-COVID), Mahopac coaches Reid Nystrom, Dan Brandstetter and Jim Castrataro deserve a public pat on the back after leading the 16U Mahopac Indians toward a GHVBL dynasty, because winning four titles in any sport or competition is exactly that, a dynasty.

They barbequed the night away at Coach Brandstetter's place into the wee hours of Sunday after winning their sixth GHVBL title overall in beat-down fashion, 13-1.

"This team is really special," Nystrom said. "We have been together since 9U and watched each player develop individually, but more importantly, develop as a team. The future of Mahopac baseball is in good hands with these boys."

So, yeah, the pipeline looks pretty loaded at Mahopac, where baseball was once king under former five-time sectional champion Coach Frank Miele (circa late '80s to mid '90s), but hasn't flourished in recent years. Pressure increases under performance and the unit of Casey Brandstetter, Joey Defeo, Tyler Castrataro, Chris Sapienza, Quentin

Bally, Owen Ryan, Phil Scuderi, Robert Dusovic, Kevin Dwyer, Joey Luczkowski, Ryan Tissier and Nevan Nystrom is on the clock, which is ticking as we speak, boys, so keep on keepin' on!

"We are super proud of these guys," Coach Brandstetter said. "We're a small-town team playing together for the last eight years and we all live within a five-mile radius and just continue to beat everybody. It's really cool."

And after winning a Section 1 Class A baseball title at Somers High School this past spring, I'm betting that newly-minted Mahopac High Coach Anthony Nappi is frothing at the mouth over the prospects within the pipeline, much like I am looking forward to seeing the 9U Yorktown Huskers,

who were also crowned D-II champions after the No. 5 seed ripped up Bethel Newtown and the second-seeded Danbury Hatters in their own backyard. Kudos, boys!

The 10U Yorktown Patriots, the No. 3 seed in D-II, will provide some additional support after they suffered a 2-1 championship setback in a crowded 16-team field.

In an insanely hot week of action, many of the locals pulled through and were crowned champions as I lay upon the white sandy beaches of LBI, so hats off to all, including the D-II High School Division II champs from Hen Hud High, who we expect big things from in the spring of 2023.

I can take a break from almost everything on my annual LBI vacation, except Major League Baseball, especially my beloved Mets. Honestly, I don't know what I would do without MLB throughout the dog

# Direct Rays



The 9U Yorktown Huskers were crowned GHVBL champs and are coming down the pike, including top row, from left, Coach Mike Bloch, Coach Mike DePaola, Coach Ryan Koenitzer and Coach Anthony Marcello; middle row, from left, Austin Koenitzer, Alex Kurth, Brandon Woolard, Ethan Gomez and Ryan Bloch; and bottom row, from left, Luke DePaola, AJ Marcello, Christian Johnson, Drew Bjerke, AJ Casalino, Mason Paul and Jackson Paland.

days of summer, considering the bond it brings between my son and I, which makes it undeniably special during the Mets' 70-39 season (through Sunday) under Manager

Buck Showalter, the perfect guy to lead this club. The high fives and hugs we share on a daily basis, whether it's the Mets or Yankees, is the stuff that will build lifelong bonds between fathers and sons. The dog days of summer are bearable because of baseball #IMO. And there's nothing more special, more important, than family bonds, so I thank MLB for the shared passion between father and son.

We can't compare Mets closer Edwin Diaz to Yankees great Mariano Rivera because there's only one Mariano, but let me be clear: Diaz's 2022 regular season – to this point – is as good as any reliever we've ever seen, bar none! And the trumpets are spectacular upon his entrance.



Mahopac 16U coaches – Jim Castrataro, Dan Brandstetter and Reid Nystrom – celebrate their fourth straight GHVBL title Sunday at Rogers Park in Danbury.



Mahopac's 16U catcher Chris Sapienza readies for potential play at plate in recent GHVBL playoff action.



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