



## Weight Limit on Peekskill Hollow Road May Be Lifted

By Holly Crocco

Putnam County Highway Commissioner Fred Pena told legislators and residents at the county's Dec. 18 Physical Services Committee meeting that his proposal to consider rescinding the weight restriction on Peekskill Hollow Road in Putnam Valley is in the interest of public safety.

Residents, however, disagree.

The temporary 12-ton weight restriction was placed on Peekskill Hollow Road about a decade ago in response to concerns from residents and travelers that 18-wheelers

using the road to get from Route 301 301 in Kent to Route 6 in Cortlandt were creating a hazard – and tearing up the road.

"We are continuing to examine every possible alternative," Pena said last week.

"You have two major ridges that go through (town) and the only routes that you have are Oscawana (Lake Road) and Peekskill Hollow, so that's something that's going to have to be worked out and that's something I can't do on my own," he said.

Putnam Valley Town Supervisor Sam Oliverio asked if a truck route is required

*continued on page 2*

## New Carmel Senior Center Opens

The grand opening of the fully renovated and expanded senior citizens' center in Carmel was recently celebrated by elected officials, county employees and residents.

The Carmel Friendship Center, housed in the Donald B. Smith Government Campus on Old Route 6, opened Dec. 19 after an 18-month renovation.

"This facility was once a school and now it's a senior center – the circle of life," said Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell to the dozens of seniors who attended the opening.

She said the challenges of the structure caused the project take a little longer than

*continued on page 2*



PROVIDED PHOTO

Area lawmakers are joined by seniors at the grand opening of the fully renovated Carmel Friendship center.

## Cardinal Dolan Celebrates Advent Mass With Putnam Inmates



PUTNAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT PHOTOS

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan, archbishop of New York, visited the Putnam County Correctional Facility the day before Christmas eve to celebrate an Advent Mass for inmates in anticipation of Christmas. Dolan was joined by County Sheriff Robert Langley Jr., Acting Undersheriff Kevin Cheverko, captains, department staff, and elected officials from across the county.



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# Weight Limit on Peekskill Hollow Road May be Lifted

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within a municipality.

"Route 6 is all of, literally, 1 mile separated from Peekskill Hollow Road," he said. "Can't we direct the traffic through there and spare the one thing the Town of Putnam Valley has, which is its rural nature, from being abused by these 18-wheelers?"

According to Andrew Negro of the county law department, while the county can impose weight restrictions on county roads, the ability to enact truck routes in town is under the purview of the town board.

Oliverio further stated that while Route 6 is a "major thoroughfare," Peekskill Hollow Road is "barely a two-lane road" and not a proper route for any truck over the 12-ton limit.

"It's one of the most rural and historic roads in the entire county," he said. "That's the only thing Putnam Valley has – we're not a business area, we don't have box stores... What we have is one of the most rural configurations than any other town and we want to protect that."

However, Pena noted that Peekskill Hollow Road is still a better option for trucks than the back roads that blanket the town.

"When you look at what roads really need to have truck restrictions, you'll find the smaller, local roads are the ones that are going to need those restrictions, and your Peekskill Hollow and Oscawana roads are you ways in and ways out," he said.

Resident Victor Tishop, who has long advocated for truck restrictions on Peekskill Hollow Road, said trucks are already allowed on that road, as well as some others, for local deliveries. Designating Peekskill Hollow as an official truck route to allow through-traffic of 18-wheelers is irresponsible, he said.

"What the public demanded, and the weight restriction that was placed on Peekskill Hollow, was because of public safety and the physical nature of Peekskill Hollow Road," he said. "It is not a designed truck route – the lanes are narrower than standard, there's curves, limited sight distance, ups and downs..."

Pena, however, said the law that allows for weight restrictions was not written as a public safety law, but to prevent a roadway from being "materially injured."

But Oliverio said that's exactly what these trucks are doing.

"Eighteen-wheelers, as we know, they are the equivalent of 9,000 passenger cars going over," he said. "That statistic came from the state. I didn't create that. So that is going to kill our road and that's why the curbing on the road is collapsing; the guardrails are bending over."

Tishop accused Pena of "pushing" to make Peekskill Hollow Road a through-truck route.

"I'm pushing for a logical solution that doesn't allow trucks to get lost on local

*continued on page 13*

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anticipated.

"As a school, the building had narrow hallways and small classrooms," she explained. "We knew that you guys wanted some space. You wanted to walk in comfort and be able to enjoy each other's company while doing yoga, tai chi, or shooting some pool – whatever you really want to do. Now you have the space to do it."

The bright and airy 6,000-square-foot center now includes a restaurant-sized dining room where more than 100 seniors can be served; an exercise room for yoga, tai chi and Zumba dancing; a game room with a billiard table; and a cozy sitting area where seniors can relax around a gas fireplace.

A nutrition office, Medicare counselor and case worker will also be on site.

Before the renovation, the building housed a smaller senior center and several administrative offices. During the renovation, the center was housed at the Knights of Columbus in Carmel.

"This was very high on my priority list when I took office and I know that my fellow legislators feel the same way," said Odell.

"We recognize and appreciate our seniors. They are our teachers, they're our mentors, they're our grandparents and they're our neighbors."

"You guys are important to this county for everything that you've done and everything you continue to do with your volunteering," she continued. "It was very important that we build you a space you could appreciate and that you wanted to come to."

Michael Cunningham, director of the Office for Senior Resources, noted that this was a big year for the office.

"We celebrated our 50th anniversary this year," he said. "We also opened up – just before the year began – our Friendship Center in Philipstown. And now we are here to celebrate the opening of the Carmel Friendship Center."

"One of the worst things for seniors is isolation or loneliness," continued Cunningham. "What we are trying to do is make sure that by offering these services, with good nutrition and a lot of activities, we prevent that. If you look at the name of this facility, we call it the Carmel Friendship Center – and that's what we're all about."



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# Kent Police Dept. Receives Grant to Support K-9 Unit



PROVIDED PHOTO

Radar, pictured above celebrating his eighth birthday, and Maverick make up the Kent Police Department's K-9 Unit.

The Kent Police Department will be receiving a grant from the Ben Roethlisberger Foundation at The Giving Back Fund to purchase safety and training equipment for its two-dog K-9 team.

During the 2019 NFL season, the Ben Roethlisberger Foundation is distributing grants to K-9 units of police and fire departments in the cities and surrounding communities of each regular season away game for the Steelers, and invited police and fire departments across the country to submit proposals detailing their needs.

The foundation will also distribute several grants to the Pittsburgh area.

The grant award to KPD was announced following the Steelers' Dec. 22 matchup against the New York Jets.

This is the 13th season Roethlisberger has distributed the grants, fulfilling his mission to

support K-9 units of police and fire departments throughout the United States, with a particular emphasis on support for working dogs in Pittsburgh.

"The Town of Kent Police K-9 Unit is humbled by the generous grant for equipment from the Ben Roethlisberger Foundation," said Sgt. Alex VanderWoude. "We are a small department and are consistently looking for ways to better serve our community without placing a larger tax burden on our residents."

He said the department's two dogs are a vital part of KPD.

"In the last several years they have tracked both endangered persons and criminal suspects, located evidence, conducted countless demos for community and school programs, and have assisted our officers and surrounding departments with taking dangerous narcotics off the street," said VanderWoude. "This grant will allow the unit to train more efficiently

and also create a safer operational environment for our two K-9s and their handlers."

According to KPD, the grant will cover two pieces of equipment for the K-9 unit – one will assist with narcotics detection training and the other will help to create a safer operational environment for the dogs and their handlers while they are searching for missing persons or fleeing suspects.

The Ben Roethlisberger Foundation distributed more than \$145,000 in grants to K-9 units around the country during the 2018 NFL season, including \$70,000 in Pittsburgh and surrounding areas. It has distributed in excess of \$2.1 million since 2007 – \$1.7 million of which has specifically benefited K-9 programs domestically.

For more information about the foundation, or The Giving Back Fund, visit [www.givingback.org](http://www.givingback.org).

## Become a Library Trustee

Mahopac Public Library will host three informational sessions for Mahopac residents who might be interested in serving on the library's Board of Trustees. Meet current board members, get to know library Executive Director Michele Capozzella, and enjoy a light meal while you discover the

important aspects of board membership.

The one-hour sessions will be held Monday, Jan. 13 at 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 8 at 10 a.m.; and Monday, March 9 at 6:30 p.m. Interested individuals are asked to register at [www.mahopaclibrary.org](http://www.mahopaclibrary.org) or by calling 845-628-2009, ext. 100.

## New Year's Day Concert for Peace in Brewster

Start your new year at a gathering featuring music, poetry readings, camaraderie, and a collection of canned or dry food items to assist those in need, as the Cultural Arts Coalition presents a New Year's Day "Concert for Peace" on Wednesday, Jan. 1 at 2 p.m. at Studio Around the Corner, 67 Main St., Brewster.

Three of the featured performers met and became fast friends in "the pit" as part of the Broadway orchestra for "A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder," which was the winner of the 2014 Tony Award for best musical.

Musical Director Paul Staroba on piano, Robert Zubrycki on violin and Shelagh Abate on French horn will be joined by vocalist and violinist Erica Spryes. Musical selections will include "Trio for Violin, French Horn and Piano" by Johannes Brahms, and "Journey" by L. Subramaniam.

In addition, selections from J. S. Bach's "Goldberg" variations will be played in memory of Stefani Gosselink, there will be works by Ralph Vaughan Williams, and some Broadway favorites and a sing-along of "Auld Lang Syne" will be performed.

Works by the poet Demetrios Trifiatis, a retired professor from Duke University, will be read by Judy Marano, Phyllis Polonkay and Alyson Denny.

Staroba is currently associate conductor of "A Christmas Carol" on Broadway. Other Broadway credits include "My Fair Lady," "War Paint," "Next to Normal," "A Little Night Music" and "Grey Gardens." Off-Broadway credits include "The Mad Ones," "Dear Evan Hansen," "Far From Heaven" and "Carrie."

Spryes is an actor, singer and violinist who made her Broadway debut in Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Carousel." For nearly two years, she toured the U.S., Canada and Japan with the Once First National Tour. For her work on stage, Spryes has received an Elliot Norton Award for "Tribes" and IRNE Awards for "Camelot," "Avenue Q" and "The Light in the Piazza."

Abate is one of New York's most sought-after musicians. Known for her simultaneously warm and assertive sound, her versatility and musical intuition has earned her a place in the lexicon of NYC's busiest performers. She has opened more than one dozen Broadway productions, including "Mary Poppins," "South Pacific," "Honeymoon in Vegas," "Evita," "Fiddler on the Roof," "Anastasia" and – most currently – "Disney's Frozen."

Zubrycki is director of the Concerts Around the Corner series in Southeast. He is currently concertmaster for the New York City Chamber Orchestra and a member of the American Symphony Orchestra and Stamford Symphony. He has recently performed as concertmaster for the New York Choral Society at Carnegie Hall, Encores! at City Center and Opera Orchestra of New York, and is acting concertmaster for the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic.

A veteran of dozens of Broadway shows, Zubrycki was recently a member of the orchestras for "Kiss Me, Kate," "Carousel" and "She Loves Me."

There is a suggested donation of \$10 for the New Year's Day "Concert for Peace," and reservations are encouraged. For reservations, visit [www.CulturalArtsCo.com](http://www.CulturalArtsCo.com), email [info@culturalartsco.com](mailto:info@culturalartsco.com) or call 845-363-8330.

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# Carmel Attorney Pleads Guilty to Tax Evasion

A Carmel attorney has pleaded guilty to failure to pay over payroll taxes, and tax evasion, amounting to more than half a million dollars.

Francis O'Reilly, 61, of Danbury, has been practicing law as a self-employed attorney in Putnam County since 1989. As a sole proprietorship, the O'Reilly Law Practice specialized in, among other things, bankruptcy, foreclosure defense, and criminal defense.

According to U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Geoffrey Berman, in 2015, O'Reilly had between approximately three and eight paid employees, and was responsible under federal law for collecting, truthfully accounting for, and paying over payroll taxes to the IRS.

In 2015, O'Reilly withheld payroll taxes from the salaries of some employees and filed his employer's quarterly federal tax returns, reporting substantial amounts of payroll taxes due and owing to the IRS. However, he failed to pay over the payroll taxes for employees to the IRS as required by law, said Berman.

Instead, O'Reilly spent the withheld payroll taxes, which he was required to hold in trust for the U.S. government, on personal and business expenses, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Berman said this was part of a long-running course of conduct; between 1997

and 2018, O'Reilly failed to pay over a total of approximately \$155,700 in payroll taxes, resulting in a liability of approximately \$232,300 after interest and penalties.

O'Reilly also committed personal tax evasion, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. In 2015, he withdrew approximately \$119,400 from his attorney trust account for personal use and did not report the income he realized from the account on his 2015 income tax return. Instead, O'Reilly declared only about \$58,200 in business income and a corresponding tax liability of about \$14,400, which he did not pay, said Berman.

O'Reilly's conduct with respect to his personal income taxes in 2015 was also part of a long-running tax evasion scheme, continued Berman. He said that from 2013 to 2017, O'Reilly withdrew about \$481,000 from his attorney trust account for personal use, which he did not pay taxes on and did not report on his tax returns.

In addition, O'Reilly failed to pay most of the taxes he reported on his tax returns for 2007 through 2015, and 2018, according to Berman. In total, from 2007 through 2018, O'Reilly evaded the payment of about \$566,000 in personal federal income taxes, including interest and penalties, he said.

In late 2016, in an effort to settle his outstanding tax liabilities, O'Reilly submitted an offer in compromise to the IRS proposing

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## Six Injured in Garrison Crash



PROVIDED PHOTO

The Garrison Volunteer Ambulance Corps and Garrison Volunteer Fire Department were dispatched Dec. 18 at about 6:20 p.m. to an automobile accident on Route 9 south of Indian Brook Road involving six vehicles. Upon arrival, first-responders call for extrication and additional ambulance resources. Five ambulances transported six patients to area trauma centers. Also responding were the North Highlands and Continental Village fire departments; Peekskill, Putnam Valley and Philipstown volunteer ambulances; and the Putnam County Sheriff's Department.

## Carmel Senior Honored by BOCES

Carmel senior Zoe Miller recently received the Student of Distinction medal for her outstanding performance in the Hospitality Academy at the Career & Technical Education Center at Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES.

According to baking and pastry arts teacher Jenn Guiffre, in addition to being an industrious student, Zoe is also helpful in the classroom.

"Zoe has such a pleasing and amiable disposition," said Guiffre. "She is a strong team player and works incredibly well with her classmates. Not only is she well-liked by her peers, but she is very helpful and respectful toward her teachers, as well."

These attributes are sure to serve her

well, as she plans to continue her education next year at a college or university studying business management, with a concentration in human resources.

Zoe is a member of the New York State Restaurant Association's ProStart management team and will be competing in March with fellow students at the association's Prostart Invitational, the premier high school competition for restaurant management.

"Zoe is not only a creative student, but she is truly passionate about working on her projects in class," said Guiffre. "She devotes a lot of time and energy into getting things done right. She embodies all the traits deserving of a student of distinction."



PROVIDED PHOTO

Carmel senior Zoe Miller with BOCES Board President Richard Kreps, left, and Carmel Schools Superintendent Andy Irvin after receiving the Student of Distinction medal for her outstanding performance at the Career & Technical Education Center.

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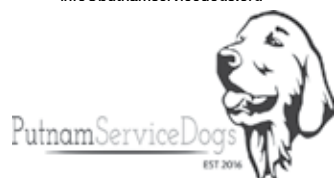
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# Milk Squared Mahopac

By Holly Crocco

There's a new way to enjoy ice cream in town.

At the renovated Lake Plaza Shopping Center in Mahopac, Traffic Moffa can be found serving up rolls of ice cream to satisfy each patron's sweet tooth.

After injuring his back and neck while working as a manager for a medical waste business in Florida, Moffa – a Mahopac native – knew he was going to have to get creative. “When I hurt myself, I was out of work for the first time since I was 12 years old,” he said.

Seeing the rising popularity in food trucks, Moffa had plans to begin operating a cookie and ice cream truck in the region, but said the time and money it takes to obtain provisional licenses and permits with each municipality from Dutchess County to Manhattan didn't seem worth the investment.

“I kind of stalled out,” he said. “It's not easy doing a truck, and in the end I'm glad I didn't.”

However, Moffa had already done his research on the ice cream industry, attending numerous trade shows and compiling market research. “At that point I was set up,” he said. “All the work I had put into doing the truck was applicable.”

Moffa said he saw the revitalization of the



HOLLY CROCCO PHOTO

Travis Moffa rolls peanut butter and banana ice cream at Milk Squared in Mahopac.

former Key Food and Kmart plaza on Route 6 as the perfect opportunity to open up shop.

“Had this space not been available, there would not be a rolled ice cream store in Mahopac,” he said, adding, “I lived right around the corner from here from about age

2 to 21.”

While Moffa and his wife, Kat, had hoped to open sooner, Milk Squared opened its doors Oct. 8... and 20 days later the couple welcomed a baby boy into the world.

At Milk Squared, the ice cream is made

right before your eyes.

The customer first picks out a liquid base.

In doing market research, Moffa saw a significant shift in health-conscious consumers, and therefore, in addition to the traditional milk and yogurt bases, he also offers almond and coconut – and soon, pistachio – bases.

“We've been doing really, exceptionally well with the vegan crowd,” he said

Next, the customer picks one of more than 40 flavors, all of which are naturally vegan, and sugar and gluten free.

Then, the customer picks a combination of toppings. From sprinkles and cookie crumbles, to nuts and syrups, and even cereal and toasted marshmallows, the choice is not an easy one.

For those who are not so creative, there are a number of suggested creations to choose from, as well as various cereal-blended shakes. Milk Squared also boasts a cereal bar, where patrons can mix and match their preferred flavors of cereal to go.

The style of rolled ice cream comes from Thailand, and the market for the machinery is very limited, according to Moffa. Therefore, he taught himself how to get the right texture, volume, and timing to make the perfect ice cream.

“I bought a machine and put it in my living

*continued on page 7*



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# Putnam Celebrates Chanukah



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

(TOP) Chabad of Putnam County led a number of menorah lightings across the county to celebrate Chanukah, including along the shore of Lake Gleneida in Carmel, and on Main Street in Brewster.

(LEFT) Carmel Town Supervisor Ken Schmitt helps Rabbi Avi Korer light the menorah.



# Work on Route 6 Bridge Underway

Construction is underway on a \$10.9 million state Department of Transportation project to replace the Route 6 bridge over the Metro-North Railroad's Harlem River Line in Brewster.

The project is expected to enhance safety and improve travel conditions on the heavily traveled roadway. The new bridge will be constructed 75 feet to the south of the existing structure, creating a direct intersection with Michael Neuner Drive and fulfilling a goal of the village's Master Plan to improve downtown access and provide better connectivity to Brewster's western neighborhoods.

"We are so glad the state has started working to replace the Route 6 bridge over the Metro-North tracks in Brewster," said County Executive MaryEllen Odell back in October, when construction began. "A village that relies on foot traffic really needs safe pedestrian walkways, and straightening out the intersection with Michael Neuner Drive will help improve the traffic flow."

As part of the project, the existing three-span bridge carrying Route 6 over the Metro-North Railroad will be replaced with a modern, single-span, steel girder bridge with a concrete deck that will reduce maintenance costs. The new bridge will also have enhanced safety features, including wider shoulders, and

pedestrian walkways with protective fencing on both sides.

New traffic signals and crosswalks are planned at the intersection of Route 6 and Michael Neuner Drive. Also, sections of Route 6 and North Main Street will be resurfaced as part of the project.

Traffic will be maintained on the existing bridge and Route 6 while the new bridge and road realignment are constructed. All work is expected to be complete by the fall.

"The Route 6 bridge replacement in Brewster is finally getting underway and will ultimately improve safety and traffic flow into the village and the Brewster Metro-North station," said State Sen. Pete Harcham, D-Peekskill. "This project will complement the Village of Brewster's downtown revitalization plan, making the town's businesses more accessible and providing an economic boost to the area."

As a member of the New York State Assembly Transportation Committee, Assemblyman Kevin Byrne, R-Mahopac, said he's always advocating for upgrades to the state's infrastructure.

"This project will make our transportation system safer and lead to easier access for Metro-North users," he said. "I look forward to seeing this project progress over the next year."

# Three Kings Day Celebrated Jan. 5 in Carmel

Putnam County's Three Kings Day celebration will offer something for everyone.

The Drew United Methodist Church in Carmel will be the location of the sixth annual Majesty's Celebration on Sunday, Jan. 5 from 4 to 7 p.m. at 28 Gleneida Ave., Carmel. The event will welcome guests of all ages and from all walks of life and all religious backgrounds to celebrate the return of Santa to the North Pole.

For thousands of Latin-American children, the gift-giving and receiving doesn't officially end until the 12th day of Christmas, known as the "Feast of the Epiphany" or "Three Kings' Day."

Festival organizer Norma Pereira

explained that the festival is being held to "celebrate the queen and king in all of us. Each person has his or her own majesty and we hope to acknowledge that everyone has a gift to give," she said. "A visit from the Three Wise Men themselves will make the event memorable."

The will be handing out Aguinaldos – small treats – to each child attending, and attendees will also enjoy the traditional Three Kings cake, known as Torta de Reyes.

The event is being sponsored by Hudson Valley Regional Community Health Centers in conjunction with other local community organizations. A "Parranda," along with folk dancing performed by local artists, is also scheduled.

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# Mahopac Educator Inducted into NYS Master Teacher Program

Mahopac High School living environment teacher Tricia Fuller-Johnson joins 228 other educators from across the state in joining the New York State Master Teacher Program, in partnership with the State University of New York and Math for America.

Fuller-Johnson has been a teacher with MHS for more than a decade, and a science educator for more than two decades.

In an effort to strengthen the state's kindergarten through 12th-grade science, technology, engineering and mathematics education, the state program honors the work of the highest-performing STEM teachers by establishing an expert community dedicated to developing expertise in teaching science, technology, computer science, robotics, coding, engineering and math courses across all grades, including advanced placement, honors, Regents and International Baccalaureate levels.

These educators will join the network of Master Teachers created in 2013, bringing



Tricia Fuller-Johnson

PROVIDED PHOTO

the total number of master teachers across New York State to 1,200.

"I salute these brilliant and dedicated teachers who have made an incredible, lasting impact on New York's future leaders," said Gov. Andrew Cuomo. "These 228 new members of the Master Teacher Program will join the ranks of the state's top educators – a group who strive every day to enrich and expand the horizons of countless students in every corner of the Empire State."

Throughout their four-year participation in the program, master teachers receive a \$15,000 stipend annually, engage in peer mentoring and intensive content-oriented professional development opportunities throughout the academic year, work closely with pre-service and early career teachers to foster a supportive environment for the next generation of STEM teachers, and attend required regional cohort meetings and participate in and lead several professional development sessions each year.

## BOW: Milk Squared Brings Rolled Ice Cream to Putnam

*continued from page 5*

room and made ice cream for six months," he said. "I had to figure out what temperature to roll the ice cream on, and that didn't happen easy."

Because there is no air in the rolled ice cream, it is very dense and rich, explained Moffa.

However, rolled ice cream has its challenges. Because it is much more labor intensive than the traditional scoop-and-serve ice cream, it is more expensive and takes longer to produce.

"So it's really important that people are getting their money's worth," said Moffa, who's got the process down to about 2

minutes per order (maybe a little longer if there is an order with extra toppings).

And these days, Moffa knows it's important that the customer's creation is Instagram and Facebook worthy.

"It's important that when you hand the ice cream over, it looks like it's supposed to look," he said, noting that people like to snap

a pic and share it on social media. "It's fun stuff."

Moffa said all his hard work is paying off. "I definitely took a risk, but the feedback has been amazing," he said.

*Milk Squared is located at 997 Route 6, Mahopac, near the new Stop & Shop in the Lake Plaza Shopping Center.*

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## Obituaries

### Adeline Angelo

Adeline Angelo of Carmel passed away Dec. 26 at the age of 86. She was born in the Bronx on April 21, 1933, the daughter of Julius and Helen (Ripatranzone) Gabriele.

Adeline retired from Misericordia Hospital in the Bronx where she worked as a secretary.

On Sept. 28, 1957 she married Eugene Angelo, who predeceased her in 2011. She is survived by her sons and their spouses, Eugene and Celeste of Carmel, Steven and Anna of Brookfield, Conn., and Michael and Janine of Carmel; brother Guy Gabriele and sister-in-law Ann Marie Gabriele of Massapequa; sister Joanne Sirbella of Harrison; sister-in-law Joan Scambia of Rye; grandchildren Steven, Victoria, Jessica, Francesca, Paolo, Johnny and Matthew; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by brother Nicholas Scambia.

Visitation was Dec. 27 at Joseph J. Smith Funeral Home in Mahopac. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Dec. 28 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Mahopac, with interment at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Putnam Valley.

### Gerald Basso

Gerald (Jerry) Basso died Dec. 22 after a short illness.

Born in Port Chester Hospital to the late Savino and Marie Basso, he lived most of his life in Harrison before moving to Holmes. Educated in Harrison, he served in the National Guard from 1965 to 1971.

Jerry was married to his teenage sweetheart, Cheryl, for 53 years. In addition to his wife, he leaves behind two sons, Michael and wife Elena of Belle Mead, N.J., and Brian of Westchester; and grandson Andrew. He also leaves behind three sisters and a brother, as well as a brother-in-law who was like a brother to him, several nieces and nephews, and cousins.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his younger brother David.

Visitation was Dec. 26 at the Horn & Thomes, Inc. Funeral Home in Pawling. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Dec. 27 at St. John's Church in Pawling. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

### Jeffrey Paul Beauchamp

Jeffrey Paul Beauchamp, a resident of Cold Spring since 1992 and formerly of

Manhattan, passed away Dec. 26 at New York-Presbyterian/ Hudson Valley Hospital after a long illness. He was 64.

Jeff was born March 29, 1955 in Staten Island to the late Edward Earl Beauchamp Sr. and Marion Benson.

Jeff worked for many years at Sam's Camera in Mount Kisco as a lab technician, and most recently at Foodtown in Cold Spring.

Jeff is survived by his companion of 35 years Janet Vitkavage; sibling Edward Beauchamp Jr. and his wife Cathy Giordano, and James Beauchamp and Barbara Linden; and numerous nieces and nephews.

As Jeff requested, private funeral services were arranged by Clinton Funeral Home in Cold Spring.

### John Conklin Sr.

John Conklin Sr. died Dec. 27 at the age of 78.

John was born in Peekskill on July 9, 1941 to Agnes Travis and George R. Conklin. Mutual friends introduced John to Alice Diack at the Paramount Theater in Peekskill in the spring of 1957. They were married a year later, April 3, 1958. They soon welcomed their children, starting with John Jr. in the fall of 1958, followed by Cheryl, Robert, Jo-Anne and, a few years later, Gary.

John was a member of the Teamsters Union Local 456, and spent 15 years in bugle and drum corps – first with the Criterion's bugle corps based in Newburgh and then with the New York Skyliners Drum and Bugle Corps.

John and Alice bought their home in Brewster in July 1973. John expanded his skills as an oil burner mechanic to become a heating and air conditioning contractor, and he and Alice owned and operated Quality Heating from 1983 to 2000, when they sold the business and "retired."

John spent his childhood with his brother George and sister Agnes "Dotty" Turner, and is survived by sisters Lillian Rose and Myrtle Meissner. He is also survived by children Cheryl Dannucci and her husband Anthony Dannucci, Jo-Anne May and her husband Sanford May, and Gary Conklin and his wife Debra Conklin.

He is predeceased by sons John Jr. and Robert (Julia Carlo).

All of John's grandchildren – Christopher May (1981-2018) (Teresa May), Jennifer Bongiovanni (Tim Bongiovanni), Steven May (Caetlin May), Erica Dannucci (Jared Nelson), Alicia Dannucci-Venables, Toni-

Anne Dannucci (Timothy Peterson), Anthony John "AJ" Dannucci, Alexis Conklin, John Conklin (Brittany Santelmo), Ashley Conklin and Robert Conklin – received unconditional love and support from their Poppy and Mema.

The family continues with John and Alice's great grandchildren Abigail May, Eliza May, Hayden Bongiovanni, Astrid May, Orren Christopher May, Jacob Venables, Carter Venables, Elizabeth Nelson, Ella-Reese Nelson, and baby Conklin to arrive in spring 2020.

A funeral service will be held Tuesday, Dec. 31 at 10:30 a.m. at Beecher Funeral Home, 1 Putnam Ave., Brewster. Interment will follow at Old Southeast Cemetery on Route 22 in Brewster. Visitation was held Monday, Dec. 30 at the funeral home.

### Lisa Sheil-Tafari

Lisa Sheil-Tafari of Mahopac passed away Dec. 22 at the age of 59. She was born in Levittown on July 29, 1960, the daughter of John E. Sheil and Patricia Ann Lobo (Denon).

Lisa volunteered many times with Guiding Eyes for the Blind, helping to socialize and train guide dogs for those in need.

On Nov. 27, 1987, Lisa married John Tafari at St. Bernard's Church in Levittown. In addition to John, she is survived by son Joey (Leanna Marsar), and daughter Katie and her newborn granddaughter Riley.

She was predeceased by her parents.

Visitation was held Dec. 27 at Joseph J. Smith Funeral Home in Mahopac. A funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 28 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Mahopac, followed by cremation services.

### Anna B. Torino

Anna B. Torino, 92, of Mahopac, passed away Dec. 24.

Anna was born Oct. 7, 1927 to Dominic and Carmelaa (Dell' Aquila) Angiello in the Bronx. She married Joseph Torino on April 26, 1952 in the Bronx and they were blessed with three children.

Anna worked as the mail room supervisor at A.I.C.P.A. in the Bronx until she retired, and an active member of St. John the Evangelist Church in Mahopac for more than 27 years.

She is survived by daughter Joanne and son-in-law Michael Ferro of West Babylon, son Joseph Torino of Mahopac, and daughter Mary and son-in-law Bob Daniele of New Fairfield, Conn.; as well as grandchildren Thomas, Marlana, Michelle, Robert, Anthony, Gina and Stephanie; and great-grandchildren Kayla, Tyson, Kyra, Anna and Robert. She also leaves behind a brother, Gabriel Angiello of Scarsdale.

Anna is predeceased by her husband of 54 years Joseph Torino, who passed away in 2006; great-grandson Ryan; and siblings Joseph Angiello, Magnifica Reina, Mary Goldstein, Assuata Slowey, Ferdinand Angiello and Concetta Torino.

Visitation was held Dec. 28 at Cargain Funeral Homes, Inc., in Mahopac, with a Mass of Christian burial the same day at St. John the Evangelist Church in Mahopac. She was brought to her final resting place beside Joseph at Raymond Hill Cemetery in Carmel.

## Police Blotter

### New York State Police

**Dec. 20:** Sean Ferguson, 31, of Cold Spring, was arrested by NYSP from East Fishkill and charged with driving while intoxicated after being stopped on Interstate 84 in Southeast.

**Dec. 20:** Michael Verella, 44, of Somers, was arrested by NYSP from Brewster and charged with DWI after being stopped on I-684 in Southeast.

**Dec. 21:** Keara Lauro-Conn, 24, of Patterson, was arrested by NYSP from Brewster and charged with DWI after being

stopped on Route 22 in Southeast.

**Dec. 21:** Pasqualina Petrucco, 60, of Southeast, was arrested by NYSP from Brewster and charged with DWI after being stopped on Route 22 in Southeast.

**Dec. 22:** Christopher Marino, 48, of Salem, was arrested by NYSP from Brewster and charged with DWI after being stopped on Danbury Road in Southeast.

**Dec. 22:** Katherine Haviland, 27, of Patterson, was arrested by NYSP from Brewster and charged with DWI after she was found behind the wheel of a vehicle that was stuck off Lake Shore Drive in Patterson.



# Do You Have a Power of Attorney In Place?

Have you ever packed for an early fall trip and the weather forecast for your destination was uncertain? What did your suitcase look like? Raincoats and winter jackets, bathing suits, shorts and jeans, T-shirts and sweaters all packed together like subway commuters during rush hour?

No question, you were prepared for whatever Mother Nature unleashed. You also had a very heavy suitcase.

Long-term estate and health care planning operates in a similar fashion.

I hesitate to compare a Power of Attorney to anything related to vacation

preparation, but not having a Power of Attorney is like missing a warm jacket when the temperature drops. A Power of Attorney allows a trusted person to handle your financial affairs.

The importance of this form becomes apparent following an illness; an individual lacking the physical or mental well-being to pay bills, transfer funds or communicate with financial institutions cannot adequately protect their savings.

For the agent under of Power of Attorney, the form provides a simplified way to accomplish tasks. The Power of

Attorney is filed with the institutions, utilities and other entities that have relationships with the ill person. The agent can then pay bills, receive statements and protect resources – especially if Medicaid is necessary to pay for long-term care.

There is a New York statutory form that has two parts. One is a traditional listing of the duties and responsibilities of the agent under a Power of Attorney, including banking and real estate transactions, among others.

The second part has a Statutory Gift Rider that controls the amounts and types of financial transfers, and the ability to change beneficiaries, create trusts, and a host of other planning duties. Both parts of this New York Power of Attorney should be executed to avoid future difficulties during the Medicaid planning process.

Banks and financial institutions have their own Power of Attorney forms. Some financial institutions insist on using their forms and make it difficult for agents to file the New York form, so find out if your banks or brokerages accept the New York



Alan D. Feller, Esq.

form.

Not having a Power of Attorney means the ill person must be present in person or on the phone to handle basic tasks. This may prove impossible as an illness progresses. In cases like this, when an individual's capacity is compromised, a legal proceeding known as an Article 81 Guardianship is necessary to appoint someone to handle their property.

Court proceedings can be expensive and complex, and a few minutes of proper planning may avoid days and weeks of aggravation.

When the temperature drops and every part of

you is freezing, you appreciate the warm jacket and the smart packing job. Pulling out the completed Power of Attorney during a health crisis offers a similar sense of security. Contact the professionals at Sloan and Feller today to discuss the Power of Attorney and its role in protecting your family's assets.

Alan D. Feller, Esq., is managing partner of Sloan and Feller Attorneys at Law, located at 625 Route 6, Mahopac. He can be reached at [alandfeller@sloanandfeller.com](mailto:alandfeller@sloanandfeller.com).

## Veterans Honored by Putnam Civil Air Patrol

By Major Peter Milano, New York Wing

Members of the Putnam County Composite Squadron joined more than 400 Civil Air Patrol squadrons across the U.S. and overseas to honor the nation's fallen Dec. 14 in observance of Wreaths Across America Day.

Civil Air Patrol officers and cadets, with local volunteers, placed 130 balsam remembrance wreaths on the gravesites of U.S. military veterans interred in the Raymond Hill Cemetery in Carmel in tribute to their service and sacrifice. Volunteers placing wreaths included State Sen. Peter Harchuk and CAP's South Eastern Group Deputy Commander Maj. Mike Gasparini.

In opening remarks, Maj. Elena MacDermant, squadron commander, expressed gratitude to the veterans in attendance for keeping the country safe.

"Many of you here today have answered that call and served your country well," she said. "We are here today to say thank you and we are honored to know you."

The ceremony was part of National Wreaths Across America Day – when citizens join together to remember the fallen, honor those who serve, and teach younger generations the value of freedom. Wreaths are placed at more than 1,600 locations, with more than 2 million volunteers participating nationwide.

Nearly 1.8 million veterans' wreaths were placed last year.

"Remember, we are not here today to decorate graves," said MacDermant. "We are here to remember not their deaths, but their lives. Each wreath is a gift of appreciation from a grateful America."

*The Putnam County Composite Squadron meets Fridays from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the Paladin Center, 39 Seminary Hill Road, Carmel. For more information, contact MacDermant at 845-216-5433 or [elenamac@aol.com](mailto:elenamac@aol.com), or visit [ny033.cap.gov](http://ny033.cap.gov).*



MAJOR PETER MILANO, NEW YORK WING PHOTO  
Putnam County Composite Squadron member 2d Lt. Sharath Babu places the U.S. Marine honorary wreath during the Wreaths Across America opening ceremony.

## Environmental Health Aide

The Putnam County Department of Health is seeking a highly motivated person to work part time in our **Environmental Health Division (\$17.71/hour, 25 hours per week).**

Typical work will include engineering field inspections, sample collection, data management, complaint investigations and other related inspections in environmental health.

Driver's license required. Use of personal car may be required for field work with mileage reimbursement at the applicable IRS rate.

Send application/resume to the Putnam County Personnel

Department, Attn: Jan Miller 110 Old Rt. 6, Bldg. 3,

Carmel, NY 10512 or via e-mail to

[jan.miller@putnamcountyny.gov](mailto:jan.miller@putnamcountyny.gov) by January 10, 2020. EEO/AA.

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click on **NYPA** click on **Internships**



# Brewster Girl Scout Cadettes Earn Silver Award

There was much to celebrate at Peekskill's Paramount Theatre when nearly 200 Girl Scout Heart of the Hudson Cadettes earned their Silver Award – the second-highest award a Girl Scout can earn – during a November ceremony.

The Putnam County contingent included four Brewster Service Unit Girl Scouts from Ann Marie Kovaleski's Troop 2769, under the mentoring of AnnMarie Verrino.

This commitment to community was celebrated by family and friends, along with Girl Scout Heart of the Hudson CEO Marie Reger, Board President Fay Casatuta, Senior Program Manager Michele Diamani, and Assemblyman Kevin Byrne of Mahopac.

Best wishes were also sent from State Senators Peter Harkham of Peekskill and Sue Serino of Hyde Park.

Good friends Isabella Boissonnault and Kaitlyn McCarvill teamed up with Bands for Books and raised more than \$1,300 through the sale of fun and funky handmade hair bands, a car wash and bake sale, among other fundraisers to benefit the Brewster Public Library's new Teen Room.



PROVIDED PHOTO

From left are Scouts Ellen Cassidy and Kristen Mulvihill, Assemblyman Kevin Byrne, and Scouts Kaitlyn McCarvill and Isabella Boissonnault.

Funds will help the library design a hip, teen-friendly décor with furnishings for an upbeat atmosphere where teens can be themselves.

Kristen Mulvihill was prompted to make a difference in the lives of U.S. servicemembers in honor of her uncle who serves in the U.S. Marine Corps. Her project, "Summer Salute: United for the Troops," raised approximately \$1,000 in cash and food donations through bake sales and activities to benefit this program dedicated to making life at war a little more comfortable for men and women serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas of the world affected by war.

In "Communication Community," Ellen Cassidy recruited friends and others, including former H.H. Wells teacher Sra. Ann Marie Poole, and Dr. Andrew Ecker of Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES, to translate exhibits in the Southeast Museum so that "English as a new language" families can enjoy local history.

Exhibits include the history of the Tilly Foster Mine, Borden Condensed Milk Factory and the railroad.

## Youth Forum Planning Committee Seeks Members

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County is preparing for the 24th annual Putnam County Youth Forum, scheduled Friday, April 24.

This day-long event hosts approximately 150 students in grades nine through 12, representing every high school in Putnam County. Transportation to the Youth Forum will be provided by each participating school district.

The forum is a "youth driven" event, planned by youth for youth, and a Youth Planning Committee is being formed to help organize and facilitate this event. After discussion and consensus, the committee will choose workshops it thinks will be of interest to peers, and then propose names of facilitators that members believe would be appropriate for that class.

Topics in previous years have included "If You Really Knew Me," "The Law & You," "Don't Stress – It's Only College!" and "Healthy Relationships," and among others.

Committee members will also take an active role during the Youth Forum itself.

Committee meetings will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Cornell Cooperative Extension office in Brewster weekly from Jan. 14 to April 23.

All high school students who are interested in being part of the Youth Planning Committee should register at [Putnam.cce.cornell.edu/events](http://Putnam.cce.cornell.edu/events) or by calling CCE at 845-278-6738.



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# Will La Befana Be Visiting You?



PROVIDED PHOTOS

Seventh- and eighth-grade Italian students at Brewster Middle School have been learning about La Befana, the Italian gift giver who brings toys and sweets to Italian children on the overnight of Jan. 5 to 6. Here, they make decorations to celebrate the occasion.



## Mahopac Schools Teach 'Life' Beyond Academia

### *New Life Skills Curriculum for 6th Graders & Freshmen*

A well-rounded student is often considered to have an overall understanding of the world, along with the ability to write well and calculate. But students who haven't grasped basic life skills – such as managing their time, being organized or knowing how to care for their social and emotional well-being – may face challenges with entering adulthood.

This is largely why the Mahopac Central School District has created a required course for middle school sixth-graders and high school freshman that focuses on helping students build and master skills for holistic success in and outside the classroom.

The sixth-grade and freshman classes were selected to participate in this credited course because they are in transition to a higher level of learning with a new (larger) school and culture. The goal of this "skills" course is to prepare each student for college and career readiness, and to educate all students to be responsible and productive members of the community.

The need for preparing students beyond academics is not unique to Mahopac. Recently, the Pew Research Center released an analysis of Census Bureau data revealing findings that most Americans say parents are doing too much for their young adult children.

"We believe incorporating real-life learning for our middle school sixth-graders and high school freshmen will help set them up for success and overall independence in school and beyond," said Anthony DiCarlo, superintendent of Mahopac Schools.

#### **Mahopac High School Life**

Led by Assistant Principal April Ljunic, the Mahopac High School Life curriculum



PROVIDED PHOTO

Michael Mahoney leads students in a mindfulness activity.

creation was a collaborative effort of the High School Climate Committee, in addition to feedback from a consortium of stakeholders including students, teachers, teacher leaders, clinicians, counselors and administrators. It is rooted in the high school's core values (risk-taking, compassion, resilience and problem-solving) and the STRIVE initiative, which stands for Be Safe, Take Responsibility, Be Respectful, Act with Integrity and Value Excellence.

"This is designed to be a high-impact, low-stress class," said Ljunic.

The goal is to introduce freshmen to the expectations and rigor of high school life and beyond, including activities and conversations centered on boosting social, emotional, non-cognitive, executive functioning and academic skills growth.

With tactics such as social media education, digital citizenship, meditation, practicing a growth mindset, and civic responsibility, the class structure varies forms of introspection work, small groups activities, guest speakers

and project-based learning.

"The organization of MHS Life provides the opportunity for high school resources that are important for freshmen to get to know, such as counselors, clinicians, and our SRO (school resource officer), to give instruction in a small student setting," said Principal Dr. Matthew Lawrence.

Perhaps the most poignant component to the class is the student self-reflection and teacher-student check-in/check-out. Students complete an individual self-reflection, which allows their MHS LIFE teachers to get a pulse on how students are doing socially, emotionally and academically.

"We've been blown away by the honesty and openness of the students' self-reflections, and it has really made a positive effect on how we can effectively support them to meet their individual goals and the MHS LIFE curriculum therein," said Ljunic.

On any given school day, you'll find no two MHS Life lessons are alike. For instance, algebra teacher Kelley Posch begins her

class with a guided meditation that leads to a discussion about the growth mindset principle. The class does an exercise of matching famous people who have learned from failures and risen to success.

Some of her examples include Walt Disney, who was fired from a newspaper for "lacking imagination," and "Harry Potter" author JK Rowling, who was rejected by 12 publishers for her first book. The students then share their learnings via a shared virtual Google classroom with fifth-graders at Austin Road Elementary School.

Down the hall, history teacher Christine Honohan leads a discussion about effective study techniques. Upstairs, English teacher Amy Mahoney and physical education teacher Dominic DeMatteo have combined classes and are discussing paradigm shifts.

#### **Mahopac Middle School Success**

Like MHS Life, the middle school curriculum, MMS Success, emphasizes

*continued on page 12*



# Thoughts on Pursuing New Lifestyle Paths in the New Year



By Nick Antonaccio

We've become polarized in many aspects of our social, political and even dietary viewpoints. In the new year, I recommend – and have personally resolved – to seek a more centrist viewpoint and conduct in your inward and outward lifestyle, all with the goal of seeking a more balanced perspective on life.

I encourage you to join me to experiment with changing select aspects of your personal life, whether you conduct yourself at either end of the social/political spectrum or closer to the center. It's always beneficial to hit the reset button, on occasion.

A few recommendations:

1. Are you viewing and reading every news bulletin, e-mail, text and tweet as soon as they appear on your home screen banner? Experiment by spending one day a week with your smartphone at least 10 feet from your reach. Maybe begin with one hour a day.

2. Have you experimented with a "meatless Monday?" Try a meatless week. Over the past two years, I've witnessed an undercurrent of dietary change in our country. The western diet of the Baby Boomer generation (high levels of fat, sugar, processed foods) has slowly been rejected by

younger generations. The Millennial and Generation Z population are shifting their diets to more plant protein, grounded in natural foods.

Anecdotal evidence of this is the growing number of restaurant menus and food markets featuring prominently identified vegetarian and/or vegan dishes or shelf items.

3. Enjoying a glass of wine with meals most evenings? Try consistently abstaining from any alcohol for several days or a week. Or join the growing ranks of consumers experimenting with the concept of a "dry January" (and/or March, or any months you select). Wine in moderation has always been my hallmark. For me, abstention for any prolonged period diminishes the joy and enhancement that a glass of wine brings to a meal. But I've noticed the growing trend of dry January across multiple generations of adults.

This phenomenon began in Great Britain nearly 10 years ago and has gained popularity in the United States over the last two years. Health conscious adults are abstaining from alcohol during this month in an effort to curb their alcohol consumption and seek a healthier diet.

Anecdotal results I've gleaned are all positive. In Britain, the University of Sussex has been tracking the results of those who practice dry January. During and after the month-long abstention, they report a

## You Heard It Through the Grapevine

"host of health benefits, like improved sleep, more energy and weight loss."

How do you measure the effect of short-term abstinence? Do you have more energy, and feel more productive and healthier? Do you feel inclined to

continue to follow this regime again?

How do you cope with the temptation of alcohol during the month? I recommend multiple glasses of sparkling water, in place of sparkling wine, in a stemmed wine glass. And be sure to not engage in an excessively "wet February."

I believe alcoholic consumption (of any type) is intrinsically dangerous and unhealthy. I also espouse the volumes of medical evidence that, drunk in moderation, wine has long-term health benefits that seem to outweigh the obvious risks.

I endorse the U.S. Department of Agriculture's guidelines that moderate consumption is acceptable. Men should consume no more than two glasses per day; women one glass. But is the USDA's acceptable consumption definition valid for your physiological make-up? Try the dry January experiment and measure the effects.

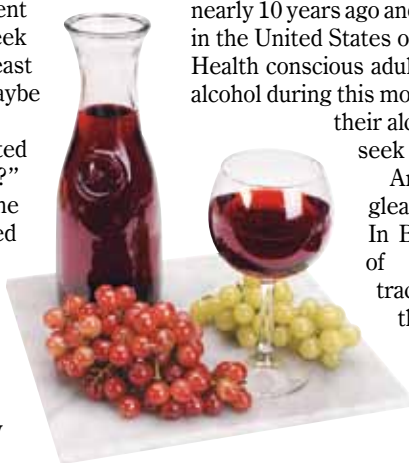
The bottom line for me has always been three principles: moderation in consumption, drinking responsibly, and consulting your medical professional before consuming alcohol. Somewhere in those maxims lies a reasonable approach.

But now I find myself getting caught

*'all with the goal of seeking a more balanced perspective on life'*

up in the growing appeal of temporary abstinence. As I'm at my desk penning this week's column, I've convinced myself it is appropriate that I, too, join the ranks of teetotalers for the month of January. And perhaps even cut back on my animal protein and my social media consumption.

Nick Antonaccio is a 40-year Pleasantville resident. For more than 25 years he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. He is a member of the Wine Media Guild of wine writers and offers personalized wine tastings and wine travel services. Antonaccio's credo: Continuous experimenting results in instinctive behavior. Reach him at [nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com](mailto:nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com) or on Twitter @sharingwine.



## Mahopac Schools Teach 'Life' Beyond Academia

continued from page 11

strategies for personal growth and development to help sixth-graders figure out their place as good citizens in their community, and the world. The half-credit MMS Success classes are comprised of four components – technology, organization, character building/social and emotional wellness, and middle school logistics/safety.

"Middle school is a big change for sixth-grade students, no matter where they are academically," said Principal Tom Cuzzocrea. "Some students are adept in coursework but lacking the skills of navigating life as a new middle-schooler."

With full class discussions, small groups and individual reflections submitted via Google Classroom, teachers work with students on learning and understanding different learning styles. From there, students can self-identify what type of learner they are and establish the study habits and time management techniques that

work best for them.

Teachers then weave in strategies for students to explore, such as note-taking methods, establishing a study routine to accommodate their busy schedules, and how to access help for emotional self-care.

Digital citizenship is another major focus for MMS Success.

"We see a big disparity among sixth-graders on this issue," said Cuzzocrea. "Some sixth-grade students have had a cellphone for a while and are very adept with social media, and others do not yet have a phone. Our goal is for MMS Success to help build a foundation for our students with responsible digital citizenship for years to come."

As these freshmen and sixth-graders continue their education at Mahopac, it will be interesting to follow their progress.

"Something magical is going on here," said Ljubic.



PROVIDED PHOTO

## Brewster Students Commit to Playing College Sports

Six more Brewster High School students have signed letters of intent to play college sports: Madison Chiodina has committed to play softball at Eastern Florida State, Nicole Cusanelli will play lacrosse at Utica, Gianna DeRose has signed on to play soccer at UMASS Lowell, Danielle Heintz will play lacrosse at the University of Colorado, Malcolm Nordquist has committed to play lacrosse for Post University, and Danielle Regan (pictured) will play lacrosse at Keene State.

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# Neutralizing a Home for Sale is No Longer Automatic

It's been just over 17 years that I've been an active real estate agent. It's always easy for me to remember how long I've been involved in the buying and selling of houses and commercial properties because it was during my first office Christmas party that my grandson Richard was born, and he just celebrated his 17th birthday.

A lot has changed in the real estate industry during that time and a lot has changed in my own head about how I conduct my affairs within it. Sometimes I reverse myself about real estate matters. For instance, for many years I advised my sellers – as I was taught in the real estate courses I took – to “neutralize” their homes for sale so that buyers can more easily project their own taste into what they see. Nothing was to be too overstated.

Maybe I received an early lesson in that philosophy, if somewhat outdated today. When I was about 15 years old, I decided that my bedroom needed to better express who I was. Against the wishes of my parents, I painted the walls a bright blood red. I loved



By Bill Primavera

the results, which made me feel encompassed simultaneously by warmth and excitement.

But when it came time to sell that house, my mother reported to me that one couple, upon entering that room, exclaimed “Wow!” My mother was convinced that the bold statement in my room turned off the prospective buyers. If my memory serves correctly, I believe my parents repainted that room a neutral beige.

During the many intervening years, I bought my own homes (two of them), both historic structures, one in Brooklyn Heights and the other in upper Westchester. In both cases, I wallpapered most of the rooms in

highly personalized wallpaper patterns, and against realtors' advice at the time, I didn't bother to remove the wallpaper before I put the homes on the market.

I don't think that decision deterred the sale of either home. Today, HGTV has educated the prospective homebuyer to look beyond the personalized taste of the current homeowners and to project in their

imagination their own tastes in any property they toured.

To me, “neutralize” is equivalent to dull and I would never recommend it to my sellers. Why not present bold statements to the buyer that can present a more dynamic design for living? Over the past weekend, the real estate section of the New York Times coincidentally echoed the same sentiment.

That said, there are certain staging essentials I would recommend. Chief among them is to de-clutter. Remove large pieces of furniture that tend to diminish the size of a room by placing them in storage, and clear table surfaces of unnecessary items. If there are heavy draperies, remove them to lighten up the room. Arrange furniture in a way that looks most welcoming when standing at the entrance to the room, as a prospective buyer would first see it.

One caveat: remove photographs of family members. This tends to personalize the house and shares with the prospective buyer information that should be private to the seller.

Remember to appeal to other senses

– not only sight, but smell. One thing that is difficult to discuss with sellers is that sometimes there is a certain odor associated with a home that is unpleasant, whether associated with animals or spicy cooking. It is necessary to discreetly approach the subject and to suggest an air freshener.

While some advisers may suggest that a home for sale be neutralized to the point of eliminating all distinction and personality, I would strongly advise against it. Don't strive to make it too “stagey,” as though it's ready for a photo shoot for a magazine feature. The family life you show may not be the same as the buyer's, but for lands' sake, show them that the house was a true home, both lived in and enjoyed!

*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) specializing in lifestyles, real estate and development. To engage the services of Primavera and his promotional talents to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.*

## Weight Limit on Peekskill Hollow Road May be Lifted

*continued from page 2*

roads and create more of a hazard, as you have as a result on Tinker Hill (Road),” responded Pena.

In August, a tanker-truck carrying 3,300 gallons of liquid asphalt crashed at the corner of Peekskill Hollow Road and Tinker Hill Road. According to the police report, the driver said he was headed to a job site located off Barger Street when the “lost his brakes.”

Pena speculated that when the driver of that tanker-truck came to Peekskill Hollow Road and was met with a weight restriction, GPS re-directed him onto Tinker Hill Road.

“So the weight restriction that was recommended – and is illegal and unauthorized and poorly thought-out – pushed and is going to continue to push truck traffic onto town roads that are more dangerous than Peekskill Hollow,” he said.

“I don't have the solution to how to get

trucks off Peekskill Hollow, but an arbitrary and poorly thought-out route for trucks... If it doesn't push them back to Route 6, you're going to end up having them go up Oscawana... they're going to end up into tributaries farther north up to the Taconic.”

Tishop, however, said the incident on Tinker Hill Road was caused by the “illegal actions of one truck trying to evade weight restrictions.” To say that the weight restrictions on Peekskill Hollow Road caused that crash is “absurd,” he said.

Regardless of what caused the crash at Tinker Hill and Peekskill Hollow Road, Pena said the county – and the town – need to continue to study the road and come up with a solution.

“Where do you expect the trucks to go,” asked Pena. “You're going to have to create a logical truck route to safely move trucks around Peekskill Hollow.”

No action was taken on the matter.

## Carmel Attorney Pleads Guilty to Tax Evasion

*continued from page 4*

to settle at least approximately \$691,500 in outstanding tax liabilities for merely \$12,400, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. However, in the offer, O'Reilly made several material misstatements and omissions regarding his income and assets, said Berman.

Among other things, his offer in compromise failed to disclose: the existence of his attorney trust account, from which he drew substantial income; real property and

land he owned in New Mexico; and a 2010 Lincoln vehicle he had recently purchased for about \$16,000, said Berman.

O'Reilly pleaded guilty to one count of failing to pay over payroll taxes and one count of tax evasion for the calendar year 2015, each of which carries up to five years in prison. As part of the plea agreement, he has agreed to pay restitution to the IRS of at least \$801,969. Sentencing is scheduled in April.

## Two Life Members Recognized by Mahopac Falls Fire Dept.

At the annual installation dinner of the Mahopac Falls Volunteer Fire Department held last month at Villa Barone in Mahopac, two life members reaching 50 years of active service were acknowledged and celebrated.

Firefighters Walt Jackel and Jack Casey were introduced by Past Director John Mulvaney, to whom this year's dinner was dedicated. Bringing to light that Jackel was instrumental in organizing and making the Mahopac Falls Dive Team a reality, it was said that he “hung up his fins” after being an original member of the team and serving 50 years.

A member of the Board of Directors, Jackel still turns out for ambulance calls and fire police duties at fires and car accidents.

Casey was involved in emergency services before the department had an ambulance, by riding with the neighboring Mahopac Fire Department for 32 years (28 as an emergency medical technician).

Working for the school district for 36 years, a daytime presence from “the school guys” was a blessing for the Town of Carmel and surrounding departments.

Still responding to calls as fire police or public information officer, the public gets a firsthand look at what their fire department does when the siren goes off when Casey submits photos to local newspapers.



PROVIDED PHOTO

Walt Jackel, left, and Jack Casey accept accolades from their brothers and sisters in the fire service.



Happenings

We're happy to help spread the word about your community event. Please submit your information at least three weeks prior to your event and include the words "Happenings Calendar Submission" in your email subject line. Entries should be sent to Nikki Gallagher at nikki@theexaminernews.com

**Tuesday, Dec. 31**

**New Year's Eve:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. at Lake Carmel Community Center, 10 Huguenot Road. Appetizers and dinner buffet (BYOB), DJ and dancing. \$25/pp. Open to ages 21 and older. For info/tickets email lcpdclerk@townofkentny.gov or call at 845 306-5602.

**Noon Years' Eve:** 11 a.m. at Patterson Library. Get dressed up and enjoy dancing and tasty treats with games and more as you ring in the "noon" year! For ages 5 years and older. To register, call 845-878-6121, ext. 10, or go to [www.pattersonlibrary.org](http://www.pattersonlibrary.org).

**Thursday, Jan. 2**

**Watercolor:** 10 a.m. to noon at Reed Memorial Library in Carmel. Class repeats Thursdays through Jan. 30. Register at [carmellibrary.org/calendar](http://carmellibrary.org/calendar).

**Reading Puppies:** 10:30 a.m. at Patterson Library. Read to a Putnam Service Dog, which is a rescue dog in training to help a person with a disability other than blindness. Schedule your 15-minute reading spot with Miss Jenn by calling 845-878-6121, ext. 10, or at [www.pattersonlibrary.org](http://www.pattersonlibrary.org). For kindergarten through grade five.

**Friday, Jan. 3**

**Flo Brandon Book Group:** 11 a.m. at Mahopac Public Library. Enjoy a discussion

of Manhattan Beach by Jennifer Egan. Drop-in group; no registration needed, and new members are welcome.

**Mahjong:** 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Patterson Library. Repeats Fridays, Jan. 10, 17, 24 and 31. A drop-in program in which participants split themselves into tables of new players and experienced players. To register, call 845-878-6121, ext. 10, or go to [www.pattersonlibrary.org](http://www.pattersonlibrary.org).

**"Move Every Day:"** 2 p.m. at Reed Memorial Library in Carmel. Class repeats Fridays through Feb. 7. Register at [carmellibrary.org/calendar](http://carmellibrary.org/calendar).

**Saturday, Jan. 4**

**Oil Painting:** 10:30 a.m. at Reed Memorial Library in Carmel. Class repeats Saturdays, Jan. 18, and Feb. 1, 22 and 29. Register at [carmellibrary.org/calendar](http://carmellibrary.org/calendar).

**Monday, Jan. 6**

**Chair Yoga:** 10:30 a.m. at Reed Memorial Library in Carmel. Class repeats Mondays through Feb. 24. Register at [carmellibrary.org/calendar](http://carmellibrary.org/calendar).

**Horror Film:** 6:30 p.m. at Mahopac Public Library. Watch "Shaun of the Dead," rated R, running time 99 minutes. Drop-in program; no registration needed.

**Musical Munchkins:** 10:30 a.m. at Patterson Library. Also Monday, Jan. 13.

Children will have a blast while they sing and dance with Miss Tara. They'll be encouraging muscle development and strength while enhancing their love of music. For ages 2 and 3 years. Caregiver must remain in the program. To register, call 845-878-6121, ext. 10, or go to [www.pattersonlibrary.org](http://www.pattersonlibrary.org).

**Tuesday, Jan. 7**

**Book Club:** 7 p.m. at Reed Memorial Library in Carmel. The Reads at Reed Book Club will discuss "Before We Were Yours" by Lisa Wingate.

**Wednesday, Jan. 8**

**Pre-K Yoga:** 10 a.m. at Patterson Library. Class repeats Wednesday, Jan. 22. Get your little ones stretching and moving in this relaxing yoga class for preschoolers with Yoga in the Trees. For age 3 to 5 years. To register, call 845-878-6121, ext. 10, or go to [www.pattersonlibrary.org](http://www.pattersonlibrary.org).

**Thursday, Jan. 9**

**School Board:** The Putnam Valley Central School District Board of Education will hold a work session/business meeting Jan. 9 at 7 p.m. in the high school library, 146 Peekskill Hollow Road; and business meetings Jan. 23 and Feb. 13.

**Friday, Jan. 10**

**Open Mic:** 6 p.m. at Patterson Library. Libraries across Putnam County and beyond will get together to see what kind of talent exists in the community. For age 8 to 19 years. To register, call 845-878-6121, ext. 10, or go to [www.pattersonlibrary.org](http://www.pattersonlibrary.org).

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Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9
10				11				12		
13				14				15		
16				17						
18				19						
20								21	22	23
				25	26	27	28			
	29	30							31	
32									33	
34				35					36	
37				38					39	

Across

1. You can't get angry when visiting this White Plains pastry shop, \_\_\_\_ Donuts

4. Sounds of hesitation

7. Sack

10. Bass, e.g.

11. Trim branches

12. "All Over the World" band

13. R.N.'s forte

14. Community chorus in Carmel, Putnam \_\_\_\_

16. Cable channel

17. Reputed Archimedes exclamation

18. Political change maker

20. DIY handicrafts site

21. Came down

25. TV teen detective Mars

29. Summits

31. Bordeaux perhaps

32. "Don't move!"

33. Electrocardiograph, abbr.

34. Music genre

35. Compass direction

36. The works

37. Unit of electric current

38. Sign of summer

39. Pipe joint

Down

1. Turn red, perhaps

2. Good to go

3. Unleaded coffees

4. Possible stress result

5. Blah

6. It may be blowing in the wind

7. Bill

8. Queen of scat

9. Anonymous litigant

15. Put on again

19. Words of dismay

22. Occupy

23. Roof hanger in cold weather

24. Snarl

26. Breathe out

27. Apply anew

28. Prefix meaning "bone"

29. Bit of physics

30. Founder of New York's Public Theater

32. It might make you sweat

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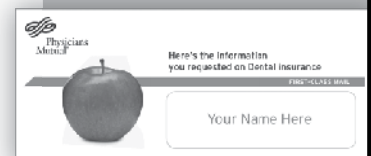
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## SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

## Crossword Answers

1	M	2	A	3	D		4	U	5	H	6	S		7	B	8	E	9	D	
10	A	L	E				11	L	O	P				12	E	L	O			
13	T	L	C				14	C	H	O	15	R	A	L	E					
16	U	S	A				17	E	U	R	E	K	A							
18	R	E	F	19	O	R	M	E	R											
20	E	T	S	Y									21	A	22	L	23	I	24	T
					25	V	26	E	27	R	28	O	N	I	C	A				
			29	A	30	P	E	X	E	S				31	V	I	N			
32	S	T	A	Y	P	U	T							33	E	C	G			
34	P	O	P					35	E	S	E			36	A	L	L			
37	A	M	P					38	L	E	O			39	T	E	E			



# The Putnam Examiner Sports

Covering Putnam County and Northern Westchester Sports

## Thanks to all for 3 Decades of Effort, Best of Luck in 2020



By Ray Gallagher  
Examiner Sports  
Editor @Directrays

I've just spent the last 30 years juggling the local sports circuit, working with and against BOE's/administrators (holding certain folks accountable when need be), while developing relationships with coaches and covering some of the finest student athletes in the nation. It's been both an honor and privilege to do so,

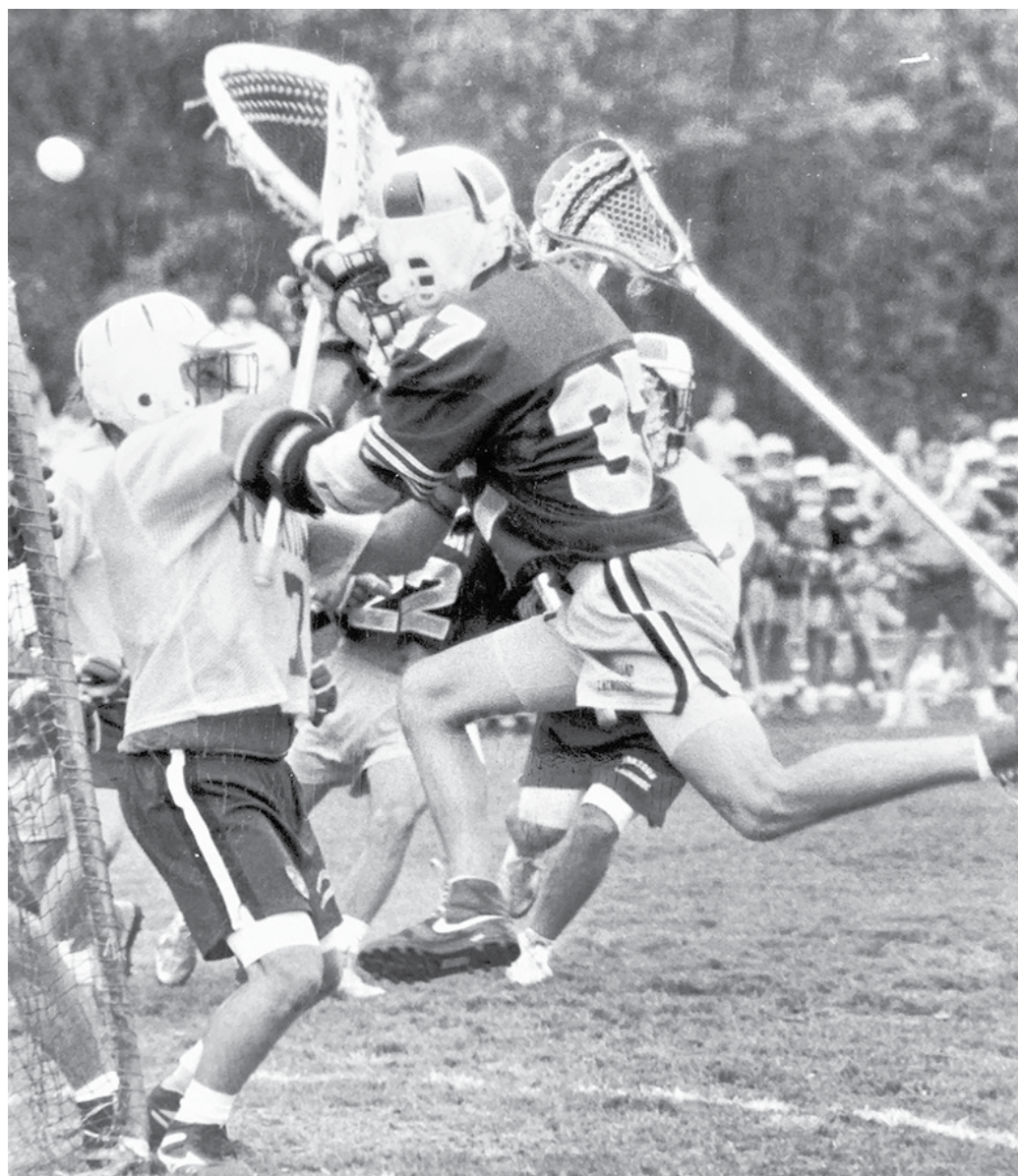
starting with 17 years at the now-defunct North County News and transitioning to the Northern Westchester and Putnam Examiners.

I once stamped my former hometown of Putnam Valley as "A Town Without Clue" for its 1992 budget cuts that slashed sports in more than half, and while that headline was regrettable, it had to be done: Point is, we've called it like it is; no matter who it helped or hurt, so long as the welfare of student athletes -- all students for that matter -- was atop the agenda.

It all started back in November of 1989 with a kid named Anthony Alberti, a two-time NYS wrestling champion out of Hen Hud who first impressed me when I initially joined the local sports beat, and it circled all the way back to Lakeland field hockey Coach Sharon Sarsen and her 11 consecutive Section 1 titles and 10 state titles in the last 11 years (14 overall), including another in November of 2019. When you work as hard as 'Sars' does, you can only wish more of the same for her in 2020. Sarsen may be the only person who was coaching in this region (N.West/Putnam) when I started and is still killing it now, so Happy New Year, girl! And Happy New Year to all!

In between Alberti -- one of Hen Hud's premier athletes -- and Sarsen, there have been so many mind-blowing athletes, too many, in fact, to recall, but that's what these end-of-year/decade-pieces are about. (Remember, my brain cells aren't what they once were, so folks may have inadvertently slipped through the cracks.)

Some schools have that clear-cut #STUD athlete that just about everyone who's been with me the last 30 years can agree with; the Ric Beardsleys (Lakeland), the Elton Brands (Peekskill), the Donnie McGraths (Kennedy) and the Ryan Mahoneys (Carmel). These were some of the finest athletes in NYS history, let alone Northern Westches-



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

Golden era of Section 1 lax (circa 1991) when Lakeland's Anthony DiMarzo went right at Yoktown's Rocco D'Andraia in the rivalry game of the decade.

ter/Putnam.

Beardsley, a two-time Hornets lax All-American and football stud, who talked as much smack (but backed it up) as any athlete I've ever covered, went on to become a four-time lacrosse All-American at Syracuse and a two-time DI national champion, and is still giving back to the game as a high school coach at the Christian Brothers Academy (Syracuse). I'd put him up against any pole from our area over the last 30 years. He was that freakin' dirty.

Brand, the greatest basketball player in Red Devil history (NYS Mr. Basketball in 1997) and now the GM for the Philadelphia 76ers, went on to become an NBA All-Star after being the first Duke freshman in school history to leave the Blue Devils' nest after a bally-hooed year that led to him being the Chicago Bulls' No.1 overall pick in the NBA draft (he was also the most humble kid you'd ever meet despite his greatness). We've not seen anyone quite like the 'Big E', nor may we ever.

McGrath (or D-Mac) led Kennedy to the NYSPHSAA basketball finals in 2002, went on to have a long and prosperous career in Europe (which is still ongoing) and was one of the smoothest dudes I had the pleasure of covering. He's still killing it, by the way.

Mahoney, now the baseball coach at Iona Prep, was the best damn Ram ever: Dominant in baseball as a catcher, ran like an antelope on the grid, and could have dominated in hoops had he not decided to stand down and concentrate on baseball where he was drafted by the MLB Diamondbacks. My moles in Carmel suggest there is very little argument here, and I wish we could have seen more of him but the old North County News only covered Mahopac and Put Valley in those days, so we missed out on some incredible opportunities at Carmel, Haldane and the great run by Brewster in the NYS football tournament (more on that below).

Everywhere else within the region I've covered, it's not quite as crystal clear; not that it was straightforward between those four schools, and one could argue that till the cows come home.

Mahopac might have been the toughest to pick, though Yorktown was every bit as mind-boggling. Let's be clear: Mahopac's Dave Fleming predated my time on the beat by like one or two years, or the former MLB stud and basketball sniper would be the call. That said, I was doing a five-year penance on SUCO Island

in Oneonta when the Georgia-bound Fleming was twirling gems on the diamond and crippling scoring records without the benefit of a three-point line, which brings me to Ryan McClay (lax, football, hoops), Brendan Hynes (lax, football, hoops) and Joe Mazurco (among the finest wrestlers in NYS history). I pressed some pretty impressive minds within the Mahopac system and this is

*continued on next page*



# Sports

continued from previous page

what they come back with, and the separation in terms of athleticism is razor thin between the trio (and there's at least five others in the all-time discussion).

Man, Yorktown is chock-full-of-choices, including its two most recent two-sport studs Brett Makar and Keith Boyer (lax All-Americans, football), plus throwbacks like Robbie Doerr (as great a coach now as he was a two-time high school and Hopkins collegiate All-American player in the wee 90's), to as far back as when I first hopped aboard the scene and spotted two-time Cornhusker and four-time Syracuse All-American Roy Colsey, the fair-haired wonder boy. But the kid that really stole my heart is no longer with us: Pound for pound, Don Weese (5'8" 165 pounds) was probably the best three-sport athlete from this neck of the woods: All-NYS in football, All-Section lacrosse, All-Section skier. His epic, three-TD performance in the 1994 NYS football championship at the Carrier Dome was unlike anything I've ever seen in person, and he seemed to be the best player on every field or mountain he conquered #RIPbro.

Yorktown might have the top overall family, too: Few gene pools can match the excellence of the Fusco family when it comes to lacrosse. Four All-Americans under one roof, including dad (Frank) and three siblings (Rilea, Frankie Jr. & Austin). That's just insane.

Yorktown might also have produced my favorite dad of all time, the late Tony D'Andraia #YorktownRoyalty #RIP. That cat had a silent command of situations and kept the whole place in check as he strolled the sidelines with mass respect



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCGRATH'S FACEBOOK

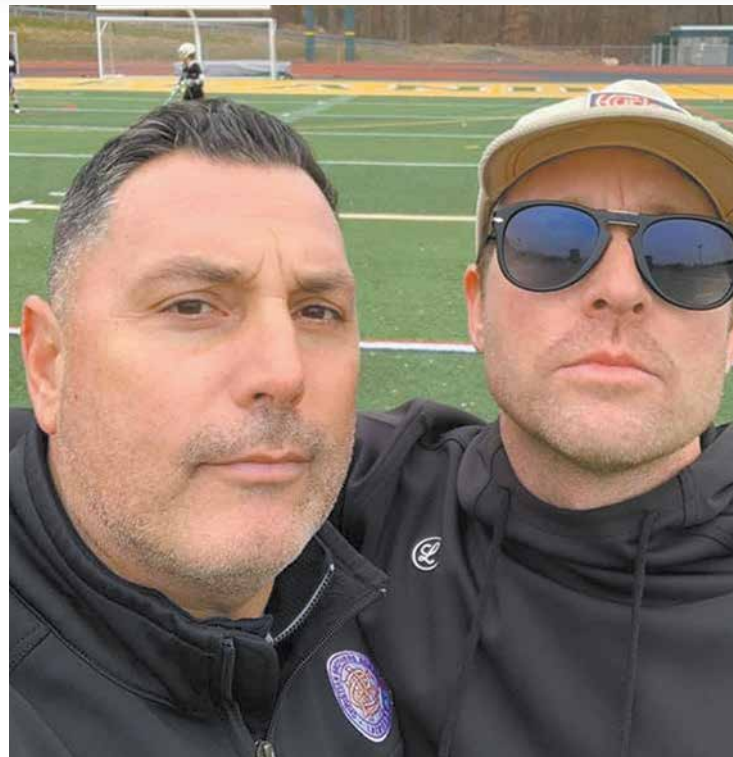
Former Kennedy and Providence standout Donnie McGrath is still hooping it up between Europe and Mexico.

for all.

Matt Pires of Somers quickly comes to mind because of his three-sport (football, hoops, baseball) prowess, but the Tuskers have been loaded with a litany of female and male soccer stars, not to mention the likes



Since the wee '90s Lakeland Field Hockey Coach Sharon Sarsen has built a dynasty while becoming the foremost field hockey coach in NYS.



Former Lakeland standout Ric Beardsley and Panas star Sean Lindsay -- both S.U. All-Americans-- mug it up as they 'Pay it Forward' last Saturday at Lakeland.

of Rob Smith (football, lax), Tom Wereny (soccer, lax) and Jordan Rabidou (football, lax), who pretty much put Somers sports back on the map after a slight skid before the turn of the century. Pound for pound, I loved Loyola-bound Rabidou (#JRab), and the Georgetown-bound Smith was a complete monster. Yeah, Somers has had some studs.

Panas might have the best set of twins; Tom and Tracy Cottrell, and they could easily be the best athletes hailing from Putnam Valley, but I'm not sure any Panther can hold a candle to Panas' Sean Lindsay, who, back in 2000, was a two-time lax All-American and All-Section signal caller before an All-American lax career at Syracuse. That said, Yvette Burcescu is right there with Lindsay, having secured first team All-State honors as a freshman, sophomore and junior before being named the NYS Gatorade Volleyball Player of the Year during her 2016 NYS championship season. The Tulane-bound swatter hit with more ferocity than any volleyballer I've seen and her five-year varsity career speaks for itself.

Brewster had some fierce competitors before and after we started covering the Bears. the Jack Guidas, Zack Badaluccos, Will Santis, Perry Salvios and Harry Ericksons. But Dave Snyder was probably the most dynamic athlete in Bears history. The kid was a four-year starter at QB (1996-99) and led Brewster to three Section 1 championships, the only sectional football championships in school history (1996-97-99). He also has three Region 1 championships and two NYS finals in the Carrier Dome ('97 Class B; '99 Class A) on his resume, which shows a two-time All-NYS player, and football wasn't even his main sport. Snyder was a freak on the lax field, too, a five-year var-

sity starter, three-time All-Section player and two time All-American before accepting a full lacrosse scholarship to Syracuse. He was also a three-year varsity starter in hoops, so you'd have very little argument from anyone in Brewster if you called Snyder Brewster's all-time great.

I can go on and on with the Darnel Shillingfords and Zach Colemans, Kristi Dinis and Kim Kastuks (Putnam Valley) the Sam Giachintas and Brittany Shields' (Haldane), the Kurt Thomas' (Hen Hud), the Obi Toppins, Saniya Chongs, Aubrey Griffins and Scott Rows (Ossining), and so many others, including the many terrific coaches -- too many to mention -- I've encountered over three decades.

But time and space are cutting this trip down memory lane short. Find me on Twitter @Directrays to let me know where I went wrong or who I left out, because, like I said earlier, 'all-time' lists and reflections like this are subjective and always open for discussion...

**PS. It wouldn't be right** for me to simply dismiss the regular contributions we get in this sports section from volunteers like Bob Castner (of Yorktown fame), Bill Kennedy ('The Man' in Mahopac) and the indelible Rick Kuperberg, who goes above and beyond the call of duty. I'm just one guy, overseeing a fairly young family of four, so I can't get out to as many games as I used to with my own kids' activities taking place, but these three guys provide photo coverage for scores of local athletes from nothing more than the good in their heart. I know the amount of time it takes to attend games, then choose and edit photos before hitting send. I know I speak for the countless athletes and families this trio touches on a weekly basis when I say Happy New Year, my friends, you deserve that and so much more.

Without their weekly contributions, this Northern Westchester/Putnam Examiner sports section is half the actual beast it is.



# Sports

## Girls' Hoops Notebook

# Brewster Opens up 7-0, Tougher Tests Ahead for Young Bears

By Tony Pinciario

As preseason drew closer, **BREWSTER** was preparing to commence practice without all-everything players Maggie DePaoli and Meagan Beal.

The two graduated seniors were instrumental in the program's success during their careers. Coach Mike Castaldo would be welcoming back a young core, led by the trio of Alexis Mark, Carly DeLanoy and Grace Galgano.

"Losing our two key starters, Meagan and Maggie, left us with a young team so I was nervous to see how the team would gel on the court," Mark said.

Brewster came together quickly and went into the holiday break a perfect 7-0.

"After losing Maggie and Meagan, our captains, it was difficult to see where the team would be without their leadership," Galgano said. "I knew that it wouldn't be easy without them. We would need people to step up and everyone on the team definitely rose to the challenge."

Preparation began in preseason as the Bears used it to their advantage, acclimating themselves to playing without DePaoli and Beal and with their new teammates.

"As the preseason went on our team began to find a rhythm, especially as our new teammates gained confidence in themselves," Galgano said. "Our team is young, but everyone is contributing. I see this as a good sign of progression."

The returning trio of Mark, Galgano and DeLanoy also had to adjust their games as they became Brewster's go-to players. They were joined in the starting lineup by Madison Dakin and Sophia Alzuguray.

"This is my third year on varsity, but my role this year is much bigger," Mark said. "With Meagan not being here, I have big shoes to fill. Every game I work my hardest and play with aggression."

"Also, this year, as a junior and three-year returner, I encourage our team to stay positive and always keep the energy high even when things don't go our way."

Brewster began the season winning early and often. As a result, the Bears began to believe in themselves and what they were capable of.

"Our confidence grew with each win and it solidified that we are starting to come together as a team," Mark said. "We still knew we had a lot of work to do and things to improve on. None of our wins were easy. But being 7-0 sure feels good."

Galgano pointed to the Pleasantville game as the launching point for Brewster.

"The team has had a great energy and everyone has gotten along so well that we really have fun together," Galgano said. "I think that I really noticed it after our game against Pleasantville. Our team collectively started to play as one. Everyone contributes on this team -- on and off the court."

Castaldo agrees with Galgano, but also knows the rigors of League II-C lie ahead.

"We are not a team that relies on one or two girls," said the eighth-year coach. "We

are a team that shares the ball and recognizes who has the hot hand. On any given night, we feel any one of our starters can go off for 20-plus points."

Brewster, like many other teams, has enjoyed the lengthy holiday break. The Bears return to action, Friday, at Class B heavy Putnam Valley, which is 5-2, before beginning league play with Yorktown (Jan. 7) and Somers (Jan. 9). All three are road games.

While Brewster is very pleased with its record, the Bears are still concentrating on improving daily.

"One of our team's main goals was to be a tough and aggressive defensive team," Galgano said. "I could not be more excited about how well our team is playing. I never dreamed we would come out this strong and I'm so happy to see the chemistry in our team. Every player is working hard to work on our weaknesses and build on our strengths."

**MAHOPAC** owns a 4-2 record going into the new year as the Indians resume play Friday, hosting New Rochelle. Mahopac opens league play against Arlington (Jan. 7) then Roy C. Ketcham (Jan. 9).

"I was hoping to be at least 3-3, so being 4-2 exceeded my expectations," Mahopac Coach Chuck Scozzafava said. "But, looking back, we could easily be 5-1, but I am happy with our play. I'm really happy with how we keep working hard no matter the score and we had some nice comebacks. I think it gave us a little confidence, but we need to learn how to play with a lead and use the clock better."

Mahopac's major win of the season came against Panas, in overtime, of the Jack McGuire (Hen Hud) Tournament, but the loss to Hen Hud in the finals signals there's still work to do.

**PUTNAM VALLEY** won five of its first seven games even with some injury issues. The Tigers' losses were to powerhouses Irvington and Dobbs Ferry.

One Putnam Valley constant through its first seven game has been its ability to shut down teams.

"Even when our offense isn't going our way, which it hasn't been recently, our defense is always our strong point," Arianna Stockinger said.

Despite the two losses, Putnam Valley has used the break to refocus and prepare itself for the new year.

"We learned from these two losses that every play counts and that we can't take any possessions off," Stockinger said. "We have to execute well and just play ball. This week has definitely benefitted us. We got time to rest and recuperate, think about our losses and mentally prepare ourselves for the upcoming games."

**SOMERS**, a Class A finalist last year, was one of the few teams to play during the holiday break as the Tuskers traveled to Amsterdam (Section 2) for its tournament.

Somers split two games, losing to Section 2 Class AA power, Shenendehowa, but bounced back to beat Curtis (NYC-Public School Athletic League), 62-49.



RICK KUPERBERG PHOTOS

Grace Galgano and the Brewster Bears are off to a solid 7-0 start.

Taylor Penzo led Somers with 17 points against Curtis and Jordan May added 12 points and 10 rebounds.

"Shen was really good," Somers Coach Marc Hattem said. "Maybe the best team I've seen in my four years here, outside of the Ossining teams. They had a lot of D1 and D2 talent. We competed, though, at a high level and the effort was great."

"I thought we could play well against Curtis and we did," he added. "Taylor had her best game of the year. Jordan and Pooja (Rao) controlled the boards, and Amy Lasher and Emily Arena were everywhere defensively."

Somers returns to the court against John Jay-Cross River (Jan. 7) then faces Brewster

(Jan. 9), both league games.

"I always thought this team would hit its stride by mid to late January," Hattem said. "And if we continue to stay healthy, I think we will. The first month was tough so hopefully its behind us."





# EXTRA! EXTRA!

## 30 Years Down Memory Lane

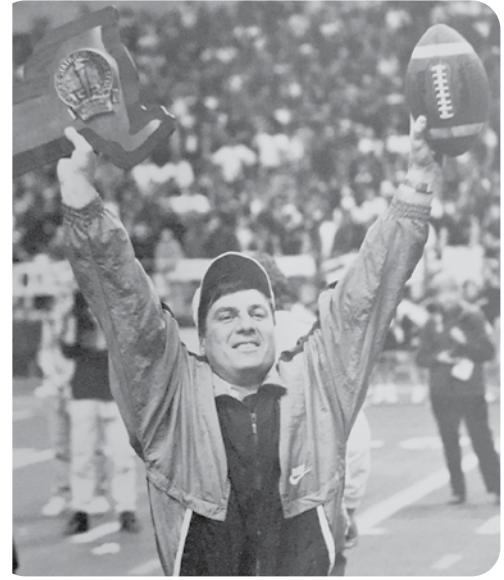
### Three Decades of Fun, Friendship & Fierce Competition

From era to era to era, beginning in the winter of 1989, it has been my privilege to cover the local sports circuit, which has produced scores of Section 1 and NYSPHSAA championships coming from all over the Northern Westchester/Putnam County region, but equally important were the countless relationships formed with players, parents, coaches and school administrators who have provided 30 years of entertainment to a life blessed with competitive fun, a handful of feuds and many acquaintances enshrined in my heart

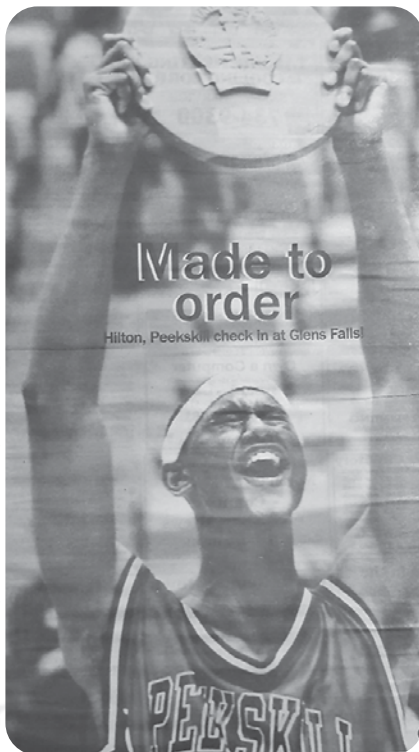
- Sports Editor Ray Gallagher  
.. see Direct Rays



Ossining girls' basketball Coach Dan Ricci has built an empire that has been the envy of all the last 10 years.



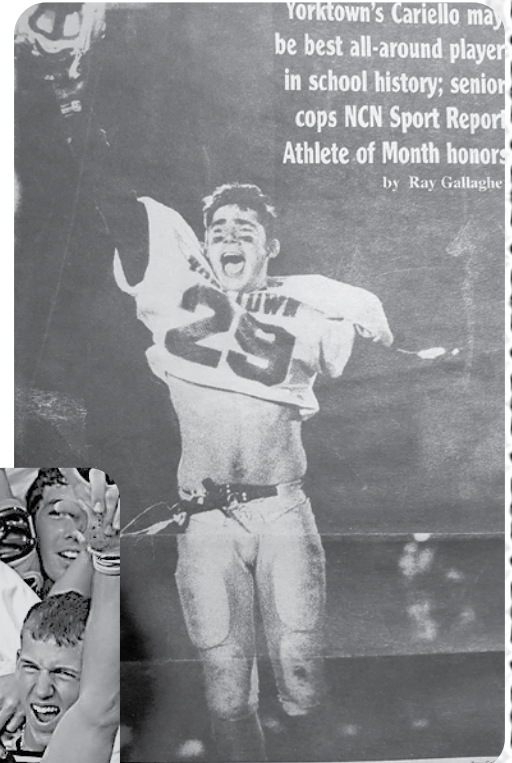
Yorktown football Coach Ron Santavicca put the program on the state map with consecutive titles in 1993-94.



Peekskill's Hilton Armstrong was second only to Elton Brand in terms of Red Devils hoops history.



Pound for pound, Yorktown's Don Weese is in the conversation of best athletes ever in this neck of the woods.



Yorktown's Pete Cariello was among the finest football players in Section 1 history.



Putnam Valley won the last of its four Section 1 lax titles in 2010.

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS