

**New Supermarket
in Yorktown?
....page 11**

Putnam COVID-19 Cases Breakdown:

**Countywide: 1,819
(active 32)
Carmel: 616
Southeast: 400
Kent: 281
Putnam Valley: 211
Patterson: 178
Philipstown: 133
Deaths: 63**

The PUTNAM Examiner



FREE

October 6 - October 12, 2020

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 602

Odell 2021 Budget Proposal Includes No Layoffs in Putnam

By Rick Pezzullo

Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell delivered her 2021 budget proposal to the Putnam County Legislature on October 1.

The \$164.2 million proposal, which is within the New York State tax cap, represents a spending increase of \$477,000, or less than 1% over this year's budget, and does not include any layoffs. The average Putnam County homeowner, whose property is assessed at \$357,000, would pay about \$1,182 in county taxes under the plan, an increase of \$25.

The budget, the ninth that Odell has prepared since she became County Executive in 2011, represents Odell's fiscally conservative approach, and is contingent upon Governor Andrew Cuomo providing the anticipated state aid.

"Despite the coronavirus pandemic creating a difficult year that resulted in an estimated 9.5% decrease in sales tax revenue, we



Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell (third from right) delivered her 2021 budget on October 1.

have managed to present a budget that avoids employee layoffs and preserves the services that our county residents rely upon and deserve," Odell said. "If the governor goes through with his threat to withhold 20% of our state aid, however, then we, along with every

other county in the state, will have no choice but to reassess."

Other budget highlights include the consolidation of dispatching services into the Bureau of Emergency Services and the addition of an EMS Education Coordinator, funded mostly through

fee revenue. Odell noted that her administration continues to meet the need of strengthening the Bureau of Emergency Services.

"We are in the midst of a pandemic, combined with the continued major storms that affect Putnam County, the need to

strengthen our Bureau of Emergency Services and our incident command center has never been greater," Odell said.

Odell maintained the budget process was challenging due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "Despite increases in mandated employee benefit costs such as health insurance and retirement, we eliminated some vacant positions, allowed very few equipment purchases and decreased overtime funding in this budget," she explained.

"We recognize the difficult times that are upon us and have responded accordingly. I can only hope the governor does the same when it comes to distributing state aid," she added.

This year, Odell will give her annual budget summary presentation to the Legislature on Tuesday, October 6 at 7 p.m., via telephone, without the usual public hearing at the Putnam County Golf Course, in order to comply with Covid-19 restrictions. The Legislature is expected to revise and adopt the 2021 budget by November 1.

New Trial Likely in High Profile 1994 Putnam Murder Case

By Rick Pezzullo

A new trial in the case of a 12-year-old Carmel girl who was raped and murdered in 1994 is likely following a recent court decision that upheld the dismissal of the conviction of one of the two alleged suspects who has been in jail for the last 24 years.

The Appellate Division Second Department sided with a ruling made by New York State Supreme Court Judge David Zuckerman in May 2019 that tossed out the conviction of Andrew Krivak in the killing of Josette Wright and granted a new trial.

In one of the most gruesome crimes in Putnam County's history, Krivak and Anthony DiPippo were convicted in 1997 of the rape and murder of Wright, who disappeared from her home in Carmel October 4, 1994. Krivak and DiPippo were both 14 at the time. Wright's remains were found in the woods in Patterson more than a year later.

A girlfriend of DiPippo at the time testified to witness the pair attack Wright in a van before disposing of her body. No physical evidence connected Krivak or DiPippo to the victim or the crime scene.

Krivak was tried separately from DiP-

ippo, convicted, and sentenced to 25 years to life on June 11, 1997. DiPippo was tried immediately afterwards, convicted, and sentenced to 25 years to life on July 11, 1997. On appeal, Krivak's conviction was affirmed, but DiPippo's conviction was reversed, due to a conflict of interest. DiPippo was then tried again and convicted. His second conviction was also reversed, this time because evidence had been kept from the jury that Howard Gombert, serving a prison sentence Connecticut for abusing a nine-year-old girl, had also confessed to the murder of Wright and was suspected of the

crime by Carmel Police.

After DiPippo was acquitted in 2016, Putnam County was exposed to liability for federal civil rights violations, including wrongful conviction and due process claims. In August, the Putnam County Legislature approved a \$12 million settlement of a federal lawsuit filed against the county by DiPippo.

Attorneys for Krivak are reportedly seeking to have him released on bail from prison. According to reports, the Putnam County District Attorney's Office is considering bringing Krivak's case to the Court of Appeals.



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Keegan Claims Against Assemblyman Byrne Deemed Unfair

By Rick Pezzullo

Two complaints made by State Assemblyman Kevin Byrne against his Democratic challenger in connection with a racial justice rally were deemed valid recently by the Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee.

The committee met via Zoom on September 30 to consider Byrne's complaint that Stephanie Keegan shared a Facebook post created by the Putnam Valley Young Democrats on August 25

that included the sentence "Kevin Byrne refused to condemn racist attack in his district" following an August 22 rally at which an individual interrupted a rally with a sign on his truck that read "F*** Black Lives."

Byrne maintained Keegan engaged in an unfair campaign practice by creating a false and misleading impression, and the committee agreed, ruling, "The word 'refused' implies that there was a request to condemn that Mr. Byrne rejected. There was no evidence that Mr. Byrne 're-

fused' to condemn a racist incident in his district. On August 23, 2020, Mr. Byrne condemned the incident on a resident's Facebook page, and on August 25, 2020, Mr. Byrne posted a condemnation on his own Facebook page."

"The Committee does recognize that social media creates significant challenges and layers of complexities for candidates," the committee added. "Ms. Keegan's post violates the following FCPC Guidance: 'A candidate is urged to exercise great care when characterizing his/her opponent's po-

sitions. In the absence of a specifically publicly stated position on an issue, a candidate should avoid attributing a position on this issue to her/his opponent."

In addition, the committee also ruled in Byrne's favor in his complaint that Keegan engaged in an unfair campaign practice by promoting an image featuring Byrne next to an image of a truck with a "F*** Black Lives" sign affixed to it, thereby creating the false and misleading impression that Byrne is somehow associated with racist behavior.

The committee stated. "The juxtaposition of Mr. Byrne's picture next to a truck with the words 'F*** Black Lives' violates the following FCPC Principle: 'The candidate will not use or condone any campaign material...that misleads the public.'" There was no evidence provided that Mr. Byrne was in any way associated with the truck pictured."

Byrne represents the 94th Assembly District, which includes Putnam County and Yorktown, and is seeking a third two-year term on November 3.

Carmel Man Faces Child Porn Charges in Dual Agency Probe

By Anna Young

A Carmel man was arrested last week after sending lewd material over a social media application to a minor in Texas.

Brian Lockhart was charged with four counts of promoting an obscene sexual performance by a child less than 17, a class D felony, according to the Putnam County

Sheriff's Office. The 44-year-old faces additional charges with deputies still investigating and examining items seized during a search.

The Sheriff's Office received a referral from law enforcement in Texas about a Carmel resident who was sharing child sexual abuse material through a chat program. After a joint investigation began between both

entities, with assistance from the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, they were able to identify the subject was Lockhart.

A search warrant was executed at Lockhart's home on September 17, where deputies and the department's electronic detection dog seized over a dozen electronic devices, officials said. Investigators

conducted interviews and began reviewing the digital evidence, where Lockhart was subsequently arrested and charged.

With multiple devices seized in the search, the digital forensics examination process is still ongoing, officials said. Investigators believe there may be more charges or investigations initiated at the conclusion of the examination.

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Cuomo Cautions Religious Leaders, Local Officials to Adhere to Guidelines

By Martin Wilbur

Gov. Andrew Cuomo warned religious institutions and local municipalities Monday that they must adhere to and enforce COVID-19 safety protocols if New York State is going to stave off a serious outbreak this fall and winter.

Cuomo pointed to coronavirus clusters that have emerged in Rockland and Orange counties and Brooklyn and Queens in New York City, many a result of recent religious gatherings.

He said he was scheduled to meet Tuesday with Orthodox Jewish leaders in those communities along with religious leaders in other faiths where flouting of the COVID-19 safety guidelines has been documented.

There had been multiple reports of mass gatherings in heavily populated Jewish communities during the recently concluded High Holy Days. The governor also blasted municipalities, particularly New York City, for failing to enforce the guidelines for bars and restaurants in some areas.

Cuomo said the last thing he wants to do is crack down on the Orthodox Jewish community or any other religious group, but everyone is going to have to do their part to avoid large infection spikes as the weather gets colder and more people spend greater amounts of time indoors.

"This cannot happen again. If you do not agree to enforce the rules, then we'll close the institution down. I am prepared to do that," Cuomo said.

The strong words from the governor come as Rockland County's infection rate on Sunday stood at 6.2 percent, while Orange County was at 4.7 percent. Rockland County's seven-day rolling average registered 6.1 percent on Sunday, but has seen one-day rates of 12.8 percent on Sept. 27 and 8.6 percent on Sept. 30.

Despite the clusters in those two counties, areas of New York City, an outbreak in Broome County linked to a restaurant and bar and a spike in Western New York, the daily statewide average has remained between 1 and 1.6 percent over the past two weeks, according to the New York State website New York Forward, which tracks daily data from every county and region. On Sunday, it was 1.22 percent statewide.

While there has been an increase in the number of cases in Westchester, the percentage of positive results has remained in a fairly narrow range despite the reopening of many schools, gyms and other facilities, County Executive George Latimer said Monday. On Saturday, there were 44 positive cases reported from 5,443 test results and 40 positives from 4,438 tests administered on Sunday, for percentages of 0.8 and 0.9 percent, respectively.

Hospitalizations as of last weekend were at 26 and there was one death on Saturday, the only COVID-19 fatality in Westchester over a 10-day period, Latimer said.

The flip side is as of last Saturday, there were 636 active cases in the county, an increase from a low of 420 during the middle of the summer.

"I don't want to minimize even a single death, but if we're looking for trends, are we spiking up? That's the biggest question I hear. What is happening in Westchester? Are we spiking up?" Latimer said. "The answer is no

because we have low hospitalization numbers, we have low infection numbers as it relates to a percentage of all people tested, and we have a low number of fatalities."

The highest infection rate in Westchester since the end of the summer was the four-day period from Sept. 27 to Sept. 30, where the daily positivity rate ranged from 1.2 to 1.4 percent, according to the state's coronavirus dashboard. The seven-day rolling average stood at 1.1 percent through Sunday.

Latimer said he is in regular contact with Rockland County Executive Ed Day and Orange County Executive Steven Neuhaus to discuss virus-related issues in hopes of warding off an outbreak locally.

Meanwhile, Putnam County's numbers

remain in check as well. On Sunday, there were only two positives from 396 tests, although Putnam's seven-day rolling average is 1.6 percent.

Cuomo said that schools in the 20 zip codes with the highest infection rates in the state would close to in-person learning Tuesday.

He said local governments must remain vigilant and enforce protocols. The state is now in charge of oversight of restaurants and bars while assisted by local authorities, Cuomo said.

"Enforcement is kind," he said. "You know why? Because enforcement saves lives. That's what enforcement does. Lack of enforcement is not kind."

Westchester Airport Resuming Limited

Flights

Later reported Monday that Westchester County Airport restarted limited commercial flights to Florida last Thursday and will resume flights to North Carolina on Wednesday. American Airlines and JetBlue are the two carriers that are operating, he said.

There will be nowhere near regular service, probably just a couple of flights a day, Latimer said.

"This is a sign that things are better today than they were," the county executive said. "It's not a sign that we've finally come out of all of this."

The airport had not had any commercial air traffic since March.

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Cuomo Launches COVID-19 Alert App to Halt Further Exposure

By Anna Young

Gov. Andrew Cuomo last Thursday announced the launch of a new COVID-19 mobile application to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The COVID Alert NY app, which will also be used in Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania Delaware, will serve as a tool to supplement the effort to trace and contact individuals subject to exposure, officials said on Thursday. The app will notify users of potential exposure while maintaining user privacy and security.

"We have a very exciting announcement that has taken a lot of work and it's really creative and smart and I think it can make

a big difference," Cuomo said. "Testing is to identify a person, so you can isolate and quarantine that person and then find the connections from that person, and that's contact tracing. We have about 15,000 people statewide who do contact tracing. But we've been looking for a technology-based solution."

The app will use Exposure Notification System technology developed by Google and Apple to strengthen New York and New Jersey's contact tracing programs statewide. The COVID Alert apps will notify users if they have been in close contact – within six feet for at least 10 minutes – with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Officials stressed that knowing about

a potential exposure can help individuals quickly make a plan to stay safe, including contacting their physician or state health department to get more information about quarantining and testing to prevent community spread.

"This is another critical tool in our toolbox to help our state keep the spread of COVID-19 at bay," Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont said. "With our states using similar technology it recognizes, yet again, that the virus does not recognize boundaries, and that we must continue to work together to take all of the steps necessary to keep our residents safe."

COVID Alert NY and COVID Alert NJ maintain users' anonymity and do not track or collect any location data or personal data from a user's phone, officials said. The Exposure Notification System will use Bluetooth Low Energy technology to detect when another phone with the same app is within six feet for more than 10 minutes.

COVID Alert app users must explicitly choose to turn on exposure notifications and can turn it off at any time.

When the app senses a close contact, a user's phone will exchange a secure random code with that person's phone, while keeping personally identifiable data disclosed. If anyone tests positive for COVID-19, a public health representative from the local health department will call as part of the states' contact tracing programs and ask if the person is willing to anonymously notify your "close contacts" by uploading your app's

anonymous code.

Each day the app will compare the list of close contact codes to the list of codes associated with positive COVID-19 app users. If there's a match, the person will get an Exposure Alert, along with appropriate next steps to stay safe and prevent community spread such as self-quarantining and getting tested.

COVID Alert apps never reveal the identity of the COVID-19 positive individual, officials said.

The COVID Alert NY app will work in conjunction with similar apps in the other states, allowing New Yorkers to continue to receive exposure notifications when exposed to residents of those states. If a New York State resident travels to one of the four others states and is exposed to someone with COVID-19 who has an equivalent app, the resident will receive a notification.

The app will also provide users with the latest information about COVID-19 in their states, including publicly reported testing data. In addition, the app features a health log where users can anonymously record daily symptoms.

The free mobile app can be downloaded from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store and is available to anyone 18 or older who lives, works or attends college in New York or New Jersey. COVID Alert NY is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Bengali, Korean, Russian and Haitian Creole.

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School Supers Implore Federal Government to Provide COVID-19 Aid

By Martin Wilbur

School superintendents across Westchester urged Washington to approve federal aid for education as districts across New York face potentially crippling cuts due to a \$14.6 billion state deficit caused largely by the coronavirus.

Gathered outside Ossining's Roosevelt Elementary School last Wednesday afternoon, the group of school chiefs representing mostly diverse districts throughout the county called on the U.S. Senate to pass the House of Representatives' revised \$2.2 trillion Heroes Act. The version approved by the House includes \$182 billion in fiscal relief for K-12 public schools throughout the United States.

It is unclear when or if the Senate will take up the legislation.

"New Yorkers should be furious. This is not a handout. This is not a bailout. New Yorkers, just like the other 49 states, are looking for the federal government to intercede in a disaster," said White Plains Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Ricca, who also serves as president of the Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents.

"We're trying to protect the programming that we built in our communities for our children so that we can protect the future of our

communities and the great state of New York," he added.

Superintendents at last week's press conference pointed to the potential 20 percent cut in state aid as part of possible across-the-board reductions Gov. Andrew Cuomo has repeatedly mentioned unless Congress approves funding for state and local governments. The measures passed by Congress in the spring included no money to help municipal and state governments.

Districts have also incurred reopening expenses for personal protection equipment, Plexiglas partitions, testing, cleaning and extra staff. White Plains schools reported spending more than \$2 million, Ossining \$400,000 and Yonkers about \$10 million.

Unless there is help from Washington soon, there is the likelihood that districts will have to begin cutting programs and/or laying off staff. Districts in less affluent areas would be particularly hurt because those school systems rely more heavily on state aid.

If cutbacks occur, public education would be diminished, said Public Schools of the Tarrytowns Superintendent Christopher Borsari.

"What's motivated me, and I know everybody here, is the promise of American public



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

White Plains Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Ricca, at podium, leads a group of his colleagues along with County Executive George Latimer, state Sen. Peter Harckham and other elected officials in calling for Congress to approve funding to help schools cope with the threat of lost state aid and additional expenses to keep their students and staff safe.

education," Borsari said. "Our country is built on the promise of American public education. It still serves as a beacon to the world."

Ricca said White Plains stands to lose about \$6 million if the 20 percent state aid cut is realized while Yonkers Public Schools would lose \$69 million. Yonkers Superintendent of Schools Dr. Edwin Quezada said his district has already eliminated nine pre-k classes.

"For us, it's complete devastation," Quezada said of a 20

percent reduction.

Peekskill Superintendent of Schools Dr. David Mauricio said the threatened cuts would cause the deterioration of services.

"I'm here to advocate because millions of dollars in cuts in the Peekskill City School District and other districts of my colleagues here today will definitely impact our programming, our social-emotional learning, supports for our students and our family engagement opportunities, which we know is critical to have our students have

success," Mauricio said.

Now that New York is in need of help, having been hit hard last spring by COVID-19, Pleasantville Superintendent of Schools Mary Fox-Alter said the state is looking to Washington for assistance. She pointed out that New York is the top donor state in the nation, having paid \$26 billion more in taxes in 2018 than it received.

"We need this now," Fox-Alter said. "Friends who we have helped out year after year, decade after decade to the tune of billions of dollars, and it is a moral imperative that we not allow COVID-19 and the pandemic set us back and limit the exceptional learning opportunities for New York students while we keep our staff, our students and our communities safe."

The superintendents were joined by state Sen. Peter Harckham and County Executive George Latimer who supported the calls for federal funding. They were adamant that Congress make sure the next generation isn't shortchanged.

"These should not be partisan issues," Harckham said. "These people – teachers, administrators – are putting their lives at risk to educate our children. We can't ask them to do that and not provide resources that are necessary to do that."

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No. Castle Weighs Reducing Affordable Housing for Lumberyard Plan

By Martin Wilbur

North Castle is considering reducing the number of affordable residences for a developer's yet-to-be-built project at the old lumberyard on Bedford Road in Armonk in exchange for scaling back the number of units at the site.

The Town Board is entertaining lowering the percentage of affordable housing units for the stalled project from 20 percent to 10 percent if developer Michael Fareri cuts back from 36 to 22 units. Fareri received approval for 36 condominium units at 162 Bedford Rd. about five years ago, but has since balked at building with the six affordable unit requirement because it would not be financially feasible.

Officials imposed a 20 percent threshold, rather than the 10 percent outlined in the town's affordable housing ordinance, in large part because of allowing extra density at the site. Fareri had also asked the town to transfer the affordable units to another project of his at 470 Main St. in Armonk, but was unsuccessful.

Under a revised plan, Fareri would need to supply two affordable residences along with 20 market-rate units.

Any agreement to make the change would occur only if Fareri builds the project by June 30, 2022, and receives the necessary town and county approvals, said Town Attorney Roland Baroni. The matter has been referred to the county Planning Board, and it would need Board

of Legislators approval because of the reduction in the number of affordable units, he said.

"The initial reaction of the county is that there should not be a problem approving that amended declaration because the six units were never counted toward the 750-unit (affordable housing) quota, which was news to me, but that seems to be the reality," Baroni said.

Westchester County exceeded having 750 units of new affordable housing built in mostly white communities by the end of 2016 to comply with the housing settlement with the federal government.

Fareri said he is optimistic that he will be able to receive the necessary approvals by the end of the winter and begin construction in the spring. There shouldn't be major obstacles to receiving Planning Board approval because traffic, water consumption and sewer capacity will be reduced, he said.

Instead of a building with common hallways and an elevator, the project will be a townhouse style.

"I think the town s come to the conclusion that it's better to see that job get built than not, and I agree," Fareri said.

If the board elects to move forward, there is a relatively tight timeframe for Fareri to comply with the June 30, 2022, deadline. In addition to the action by the county, which would come first, he would have to request a zoning text amendment to reduce the affordable housing percentage in the R-MF-



Armonk developer Michael Fareri has asked the North Castle Town Board to reduce the percentage of affordable housing units for his project at the old lumberyard on Bedford Road if he lowers density at the site.

SS zone, Baroni said. That would require inclusion of a short-form Environmental Assessment Form, which would then allow the Town Board to declare its intent to be lead agency, he said.

A public hearing would be required, and if the zoning text change is approved, Fareri would have to return to the town Planning Board to re-subdivide the parcel from one lot into two.

"There's a process here, but it can all happen, we think, by early next March, which would then allow the applicant to break ground on the project," Baroni said.

The majority of the Town Board

recently agreed to receive the request for consideration. Councilman Barry Reiter said he'd like to see the property developed so the town has more housing stock within walking distance of downtown.

"I think he's done a nice job on a previous project," Reiter said of Fareri, "and I'm excited to see some movement here."

Supervisor Michael Schiliro said he also would like to see Fareri build the project and would "strongly consider" the change.

"But there's a lot more work before we get to that point," Schiliro said. "The piece that I do like, the zoning is the same. The only change that comes into play is if the building is built and the CO's (Certificate of Occupancy) are issued and there's two (units), or 10 percent, affordable in the building."

The dissenting view on the board on accepting the request was Councilman Jose Berra. Berra said that Fareri has failed to follow through on plans to build in recent years after a series of disputes between the developer and the town. He was hesitant to move ahead with the request.

"I don't know that this is something that is the appropriate incentive to provide him with," he said. "It might just line his pockets more, either because the economics are so good from recent changes due to COVID in the (housing) market, or related to that he might just go ahead and sell the property."

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P'ville Middle School Closes for Two Weeks After COVID-19 Exposure

By Anna Young

Pleasantville Middle School will close for two weeks after someone tested positive for COVID-19.

In a letter to the community on Saturday, Superintendent of Schools Mary Fox-Alter said the Westchester County Department of Health confirmed late Friday that the building has one positive coronavirus case and one presumed case. The individuals are currently in quarantine, she said.

While not required to close, Fox-Alter said the middle school will move to all remote learning for the next two weeks with the regional positive transmission

rate on the rise. The building is expected to reopen on Monday, Oct. 19.

"As the regional positive case rate is increasing, a conservative, precautionary approach is the best way to maintain a safe school environment for our students and staff," Fox-Alter said. "Eight live in-person days will convert to eight live remote days."

Those who were exposed to the sick individual were to be notified by a contact tracer within 24 hours. Those who do not receive a notice are not believed to be at risk of exposure, Fox-Alter said.

The identity of those exposed will remain confidential and they be required

to quarantine for 14 days from the last exposure date. Additionally, it is recommended that those exposed be tested for COVID-19, though not until five days after a person's last date of exposure.

Fox-Alter stressed the importance in monitoring symptoms with the fall season underway. While a fever is a potential symptom of coronavirus, she said temperature checks aren't enough to capture pre-symptomatic signs and symptoms. District health forms will also be updated to reflect anyone at home who is awaiting test results.

Furthermore, she said anyone who answers "yes" on a health form should

remain at home in the best interests of the community. Masks are also required in-school and on school grounds, she said.

"Please know that we are doing everything in our ability to maintain a safe school environment and are working closely with the Department of Health to manage this specific situation," Fox-Alter said.

The district's two other schools, the K-4 Bedford Road School and Pleasantville High School, are not affected and will continue with their hybrid schedules.

Two Westchester Sisters Convicted for Collecting Dead Mother's Pension

Two Westchester sisters were convicted for collecting their mother's state pension for two years after her death.

State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli and Westchester County District Attorney Anthony A. Scarpino, Jr. announced last week that Annette Bigelow, 60, and Mary Nash, 59, hid their mother's death to collect nearly \$22,000 in her state pension payments from 2013 to 2015.

Bigelow and Nash pleaded guilty to one count of fourth-degree grand

larceny, a felony.

"This was a deliberate act to abuse the system," DiNapoli said in a statement. "Bigelow and Nash covered up their mother's death for two years to steal from the New York State and Local Employees Retirement System. They now have judgments against them to repay the stolen funds. Those who try to scam the retirement system will be held accountable."

The district attorney's office prosecuted the thefts.

"This is another instance where

people trying to scam the system have gotten caught taking money from the people of New York," Scarpino said. "We continue to work with state Comptroller DiNapoli to stop this kind of fraud. We hope this sends a message to others who might think they could get away with it."

Bigelow and Nash appeared before Westchester County Court Judge David Zuckerman. Bigelow and Nash are due back in court Jan. 6 for sentencing.

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Letters to the Editor

It's Wrong to Characterize Solar Arrays and Cell Towers as Power Plants

Recently two letters have appeared in The Examiner that are anti-solar panel/cell tower missives. The first used the description “power plant” for the solar array while the second used “potentially carcinogenic.”

I can certainly understand property owners concerned that their property values may be affected by new construction, but to label a solar array a “power plant” is a bit of a stretch, as is using the cancer scare tactic. If these characterizations were true, why aren't neighbors suing their neighbors when they install panels on their homes' roofs right next door to them? Why aren't neighbors suing neighbors over the “possible carcinogenic” exposure that their

children are subject to? Even the description “dominating the Mount Kisco skyline” is a bit of a stretch.

I live within a few hundred yards of the cell tower built next to I-684 and Byram Lake and one hardly notices it anymore. As a matter of fact, it has become the yearly nesting place for a family of ospreys that return every spring to hatch their chicks. I have also spent time in Vermont, a state that enjoys the lowest electrical rates in the U.S. There are solar arrays there that cover acres of land, not industrial land, but former farmland. These installations do not emit fumes, the grass grows right up to their bases and livestock can be seen grazing

close by.

I can understand people being concerned over their property values when progress comes. But to dismiss the installations using language as a scare tactic is not right. Cell phones were said to cause brain cancer. Has that stopped the letter writers from using them?

This area where the tower is proposed is a “dead zone” for cell service. I, for one, would rest easier knowing that police, fire and medical responders would have consistent service throughout the area.

Robert Cappio
Armonk

Astorino, Byrne Would Be Superior Choices to Hold Taxes in Check

I know Mary Jane Kilian is a well-established political operative of the Yorktown Democratic Committee. However, when she attempted to suggest that her far-left candidates were better positioned to lower our property taxes, I couldn't help but chuckle. (“Support Candidates Who Will Fight to Lower Taxes,” September 29) It's probably one of the more absurd propositions I've read recently. So let's lay out the facts.

It was our ultra-left state Sen. Peter Harchham who she so admires that voted for a budget that threatens to slash upwards of 20 percent of all state aid to our schools (S7503C). He also voted to discontinue and end the property tax relief program (S7503C). (Remember when we used to get that extra check in the mail when districts stayed within the cap?) He voted to siphon away sales tax money from county governments to fill state budget gaps (S7506B). It was he,

who in the middle of a pandemic, supported a budget that cut \$17 million in state aid to county health departments (A9503C). He also introduced a bill to cut all state aid to any school district that has a mascot that has a race- or ethnic-based name (S8708).

He is a co-sponsor of the Single Payer Health Bill (A5248/S3577) that would make private health plans illegal. It would strip existing public and private health plans from people who like their insurance (including seniors on Medicare and union workers who gave up raises to secure their health benefits) and force them on a new, untested, costly government-managed and taxpayer-funded plan. This proposal would cost more than the entire \$180 billion state budget. It's so bad that even Gov. Cuomo is on record opposing it during his gubernatorial debate against Cynthia Nixon. Peter Harchham supports this radical proposal so much he

even co-sponsored the bill!

Former county executive Rob Astorino held the line on property taxes, delivering on his promises when others failed. State Assemblyman Kevin Byrne has also consistently championed policies to lower state and local property taxes, returning our money to either go directly into our pockets or serve as property tax relief through assisting our schools and other local infrastructure needs – while keeping the names of mascots that have been around for many years.

This is why we will most assuredly support Rob Astorino and Kevin Byrne this November.

Daryl Lindholm
Jefferson Village
Yorktown

Those Who Attended Putnam's Back the Blue Rally Are Patriots

To letter writer Zach Disador, you lack respect (“Putnam Isn't Overrun By Mobs, it Has an Engaged Electorate, September, 22-28).

I am one of the Putnam County residents who attended the Back the Blue rally on the courthouse steps. Only a radical liberal would make up a fantasy story that you describe.

The woman who was attacked was there and verified she was attacked.

There was no ridicule of a mentally challenged person. It is a fact the person walks around with a machete. I guess in these times, for a liberal, being threatened by a machete is inconsequential.

There is no such thing as a “Trump Militia.”

I resent being called a fear-mongering person because I am not. I deal in facts, not

emotion.

The only people who are radical are the liberal Democrats who have infiltrated our schools and brainwashed our innocent children who come back to us as criminally violent troublemakers. Those are the children you are describing in your letter as “getting involved.” Aren't they the rich, white kids beating people on the streets? Putnam County will “head it off at the pass” if insurrection occurs.

If you think that BLM and Antifa are peaceful, you are delusional. Turn on the screens of your TV and computer to view the burning, looting and mayhem on the streets of America. This is not acceptable to the mothers of Putnam County who want their children to be safe. That is why they will vote

for Trump. Even if they don't like Trump's personality, they will vote for Trump to keep their children safe.

Beware Putnam County. The National Education Association, its teachers and activists are pushing to change the curriculum in our public schools to promote Black Lives Matter and Antifa. They are also introducing textbooks for elementary school that will teach that your parents are racists. The only racists in this country are in the Democrat Party.

The participants in the Back the Blue rally are patriots who love our country and everything it stands for, now and forever.

Kathlyn Messina
Mahopac

Update on Tropical Storm Responses From Utilities in Cortlandt

I have submitted reports outlining our many complaints on the slow power restoration by utility companies (Con Edison, Altice, etc.) in our town to county and state elected officials after the recent Tropical Storm Isaias.

I co-signed a letter with Mayor Brian Pugh of Croton-on-Hudson once again stating our many complaints and concerns. This letter was sent to the New York governor and

other state officials, as well as to the utility companies. I thank Mayor Pugh for his partnership and leadership.

One-third of our town was without power for up to eight days. (I was among them for six days.) It's a frightening experience and we are all subject to the seasonal elements – the heat in the hot summer months and the cold in the winter months, as well as losing our perishables during these storms. They

MUST plan better for all of us.

I will continue to lobby with other municipal mayors and supervisors in Westchester County demanding better response times and immediate attention to our complaints.

Linda D. Puglisi
Cortlandt Town Supervisor

Guest Column

The Best Ways to Make Masks Massively Magnificent

By Michael Gold

Any effort to persuade vast masses of Americans to wear masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19 has clearly failed.

Just in Pleasantville, on any given day, I can see a dozen people walking on the streets with no masks. So, imagine what it's like everywhere else.

Centers for Disease Control Director Robert Redfield tells us the most important thing we can do to prevent getting COVID-19 is to wear a mask, even above getting a vaccine that does not yet exist.

President Trump has not wanted us to wear masks because it makes the country appear as if everything is not normal, that something has gone wrong.

I'm speculating, of course, but bear with me on this, because what else do I have to go on? Using tarot cards and consulting with trees won't work. I've tried.

So, we're going to have to work around our collective failure by marketing masks in a new and different way.

I've seen a commercial that states you should wear a mask to prevent other people from getting the virus. This appeal to charity and citizenship has obviously not worked.

But what has not yet been tried is a massive, public effort to make masks cool, hip and fashionable.

Here is where the private sector should step up, not out of any sense of charity (God forbid!), but to make money. Appealing to the aspirational sensibilities of American consumers rarely fails.

Clothing manufacturers can hire advertising agencies to come up with gripping TV and internet commercials that grab viewers by the collar and pull them off their couches for a few brief moments, long enough to get them to click on some buttons and buy ultra-hot masks from Urban Outfitters, Uniqlo, Athleta and others.

Once they start selling high-end masks, the consumer masses may well come along.

Where should they start?

Always go for the kids first. Disney and DC are already selling masks, but we need their heroes on TV!

Imagine Ryan Reynolds as Deadpool or Robert Downey Jr. as Iron Man making funny, sarcastic comments about wearing a mask. Another good candidate to film memorable commercials includes Peter Quill (Star Lord, from "Guardians of the Galaxy"), but only if he's with Baby Groot, the cute little tree alien.

Very importantly, we need super villain masks advertised all over. Wearing a Joker, Scarecrow, Riddler, Loki or Red Skull mask is the perfect passive-aggressive way to mock everyone else wearing a mask.

For men with fashion sense (I do not include myself in this group), somebody should consider making masks with Art Deco-style patterns from the 1930s, with ties to match. We need Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein and Giorgio Armani on the case here. Tom Hanks, Denzel Washington, Lin Manuel-Miranda, Leonardo DiCaprio and George Clooney should be out there wearing these masks on TV.

For men who have no use for them, how about face masks with Rush Limbaugh's and Tucker Carlson's faces on them? They get to promote anti-mask wearing rants while wearing a face mask. It's perfect for confusing everybody, including the person wearing the mask!

Concerning women, we need to call in the heavy hitters to design hot face masks, like Stella McCartney, Vera Wang, Donna Karan and Michael Kors, and other luxe people of whom I have absolutely no knowledge.

Get famous actresses to wear the masks on TV, from Jennifer Lawrence and Alison Brie to Charlize Theron and Halle Berry.

They should be seen in commercials showing fabulously wealthy people all wearing fabulous masks at fabulous parties with glittering chandeliers in mansions the size of football fields. We need to watch amazingly rich men wearing tuxedos, and women in ball gowns, all with face masks, dancing elegantly on yachts as big as

aircraft carriers.

Aspirational marketing is the key here, so no one will be allowed to design an orange and purple plaid mask.

Hip-hop stars, from Jay Z, Kendrick Lamar and Cardi B to Nicki Minaj and Donald Glover, need to get involved and make commercials about masks, too.

On the country music side of things, Blake Shelton, Carrie Underwood, Miranda Lambert and company must be included in the campaign.

If Kim Kardashian, Jennifer Lopez, Tyra Banks, Will Smith, Patrick Mahomes, Channing Tatum, LeBron James and about a thousand more people I can't think of right now went out there on TV every night wearing masks, we've got a fighting chance, baby!

We may be able to start a movement. And who knows where that could go?

Maybe we'll start eating spinach leaves instead of French Fries and burgers. Maybe we'll get rid of those giant purple tube men who wave to us from car dealer lots. Maybe we'll finally make dogs learn to read.

A man can dream.

Michael Gold has published articles in The Washington Post, The New York Daily News, The Albany Times-Union and other newspapers. Miriam Gold provided research assistance for this article.

Letters to the Editor

Keegan's Compassion Toward Vets, Health Issues Merits a Turn in Albany

Recently there has been much media coverage of politicians' attitudes toward the military, especially those fallen, captured, wounded or ill, physically or emotionally, as a result of their service. So far, that news coverage has been on the national level, but it's important to note that veterans and active duty military affairs are also of concern to a candidate running for New York State's legislature.

Voters in the 94th Assembly District, which includes Yorktown and Somers, have a choice between the Republican

incumbent, Kevin Byrne, and his Democratic opponent, Stephanie Keegan.

Although not elected to political office, Stephanie is no stranger to working with Congress, especially on veterans' affairs, and was recently endorsed by Chuck Schumer. Her involvement began tragically with the loss of her eldest son, Daniel, 28, a highly-decorated veteran of two tours in Afghanistan. After discharge, Daniel suffered greatly from PTSD and resulting addiction problems, to which he succumbed while waiting over 16 months

for a medical appointment with the VA.

A former educator, Ms. Keegan then quit her job four years ago to spend half her time in Washington, working with Congress on veterans' concerns. She is also supporting every New Yorker's access to affordable health care, including mental health addiction issues. Her interest in health extends to environmental matters, especially the safe decommissioning of Indian Point, so close to the Montrose VA nursing home.

Along with health and the environment,

safety of all kinds is a concern for Stephanie. In contrast, Byrne has voted against prohibiting domestic abusers from purchasing firearms, establishing a firearms buy-back program, increasing penalties for improper gun storage, tightening background checks and prohibiting guns on school grounds. Unsurprisingly, for this ally of the NRA and Trump, Byrne recently was voted among the three most conservative members of the state Assembly.

In contrast, Ms. Keegan, is sensitive to current needs, respecting peaceful protests by the Black Lives Matter movement and its insistence on criminal justice. On the other hand, Byrne voted "No" on disclosure of law enforcement disciplinary actions and on officers reporting weapons discharge to their superiors. During this COVID-19 pandemic, he also voted against funds to help its indirect victims, whether unemployed, lacking utilities or evicted.

I strongly urge you to vote to replace far-right incumbent Assemblyman Kevin Byrne with his compassionate and courageous Democratic opponent, Stephanie Keegan.

Harckham Has Hurt 40th Senate District Taxpayers With His Decisions

Sen. Peter Harckham has repeatedly boasted that he voted against raising taxes and passed legislation that helped the Mahopac School District with forgiveness for a costly filing error made years ago. Simply put, it's not accurate. He raised taxes at record speed, which directly affected many of our neighbors. If his point is that he could have raised taxes even more, that's not exactly comforting.

Harckham intentionally omits that in the same budget he lauds granting the governor authority to cut all our school aid and aid to local municipalities by 20 percent, which would directly result in a

property tax hike; siphoned away sales tax dollars from county governments to fill state budget gaps which results in a property tax hike; cut state program funding to county health departments, which again either cuts services or further increases property taxes; and he allowed the property tax relief program that was tied to the property tax cap to expire.

Anyone remember when some of us used to get a check from the state if our local governments complied with the tax cap? Wonder why that didn't happen again? Yep, that's because Pete Harckham ended it. Again, another tax hike from our

illustrious state senator.

As if the above wasn't bad enough, Pete Harckham then introduced a ridiculous bill that threatened to cut all state funding to the Mahopac School District if the district didn't change its name and mascot.

This Election Day, let's replace Pete Harckham with Rob Astorino – a proven tax fighter and public servant – as our next state senator.

**Christopher Provenzano
Mahopac**

**Anne S. Kupersmith
Yorktown Heights**

Obituaries

Jesse White Jr.

On Aug. 5, Jesse David White Jr., loving husband and father and former Ossining and Yorktown Heights resident, was called from labor to reward. He was 81.

White was born on Feb. 20, 1939, in Ossining to Jesse D. White Sr. and Hezzie White. He was a graduate of Ossining High School, Class of '57. From there, he went on to serve in the United States Navy as a corpsman from 1957 to 1961 during the Cuban missile crisis.

Following his honorable military service, White would go on to become the first African American foreman for the Consolidated Edison Energy Co. in Buchanan. He retired after 30 years of employment there.

On June 15, Jesse celebrated 57 years of marriage to his bride, Willa Dean White. They were blessed with three sons, Steven, Frederick and Brian.

White was baptized and raised in the Star of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Ossining under the pastorship of the late Rev. Junius W. Cofield. In 1975, he was ordained a deacon at Star of Bethlehem, where he served dutifully

until 2002, at which time he and his wife, Willa, relocated to Brundidge, Ala. They became faithful and active members of County Line Baptist Church in Brundidge.

White was known for his quick wit, infectious smile and his kind and compassionate spirit. Nobody was a stranger to him for very long. He loved his family dearly and enjoyed spending time with them. Jesse had a passion for drawing, motorcycles, automobiles and anything mechanical. He also enjoyed traveling and meeting new people.

Jesse was preceded in death by his father, Jesse, his mother, Hezzie, and five of his siblings, William, Leon, Warren, Leatrice and Herbert. He is survived by his loving wife, Willa; his three adoring children, Steven, and his wife, Priscilla, Frederick and his wife, Diahann, and Brian and his wife, Denise; his brother, Robert, of Ossining; 11 grandchildren; and several cousins, nieces, nephews and many friends.

A graveside service was held on Aug. 11 at Lakeview Cemetery in Brundidge, Ala.

James Campion

James Joseph Campion, a Putnam Valley resident, died Sept. 25 at his home. He was 65.

Campion was born Feb. 4, 1955, in Yonkers to James and Olga Campion. He was a devoted son and loving father and grandfather. He is survived by his mother,

Olga, of Yonkers; his daughter, Jessica, of Los Angeles and her husband, Edgar; and their daughter, Eden.

Campion was an ever-giving, selfless man who was loved by many and will be greatly missed.

Walter Lipman

Walter L. Lipman, a Somers resident, died peacefully at his home in the company of his family on Oct. 1. He was 99.

Lipman was born Oct. 30, 1920, in New York City to Walter Sr. and Florence Albert Lipman. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1941 with a bachelor's degree in economics. He enlisted in the United States Army, rising to the rank of captain, and ultimately serving under Gen. MacArthur during the post-war period in Tokyo.

Lipman worked for The New York Times, where he met his wife, Doris Donn. They were married in 1954 and lived in Rye Brook for 33 years, where they raised two sons before moving to Somers in 1992.

Doris passed away on Dec. 18, 2019.

Lipman subsequently worked in the real estate division of Bear Sterns. Eventually he started his own real estate company in South Orange, N.J., and successfully retired in the late 1990s. He served for many years on the Rye Town Planning Board and the condominium association in Somers. He was a competitive swimmer, a skier, a runner and a great cook, inspiring his children in the art of home cuisine.

Lipman is survived by his son, Andrew, and his partner, Kate Daddona; son John; and grandson Aaron P. Lipman and his wife, Kiana B. Lipman. He was predeceased by his sister, Anne Blancheri.

Joseph Linder

Joseph Richard Linder, a Buchanan resident, died Sept. 27. He was 86.

Linder was born July 26, 1934, in Valhalla. He was predeceased by his parents, Joseph Linder and Ruth Luke, and brothers Russell and Robert.

Linder graduated in 1952 from Hendrick Hudson High School. Known as Buster, he worked at General Motors as a fire chief.

He served in the U.S. Army in Korea from 1954 to 1958. He was Buchanan fire chief in 1981 and 1982.

He is survived by his sisters, Lois Rossier, Carole Hughes, Nancy Bessent, Gay Stocker and Merrie Jane Tompkins. "Uncle Buster" is also survived by many nieces and nephews and his dear friend, Sabrina Johnson.

Bedford Hills Man Sentenced for Sexually Abusing Child

A Bedford Hills man will spend the next 12 years in prison after sexually abusing a young girl.

Julio Cortez, 41, appeared before state Supreme Court Justice Barry Warhit on Friday where he was sentenced to state prison and 15 years' post-release supervision. Cortez will also have to register as a sex offender, according to the Westchester County District Attorney's office.

Last October, Cortez pleaded guilty to first-degree sexual conduct against a child, a Class B felony.

On Oct. 7, 2018, Bedford police received a call from a teen-age girl who said her classmate was being sexually abused. The teen had been FaceTiming with her friend and saw an adult, who was not part of her family, in the room with her friend, officials said.

When the teen pressed her friend about who the man was, the victim said he was a neighbor who had been sexually abusing her for years when her parents weren't home. The victim was interviewed at the Child Advocacy Center, officials said, with Cortez later admitting to police his sexual



Julio Cortez

relationship with the child.

Special Prosecutions Division Assistant District Attorney Amit Parab prosecuted the case.

—Anna Young



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Mount Pleasant Closes North 60 Public Hearing on DEIS

By Martin Wilbur

The Mount Pleasant Planning Board closed the low-key public hearing last Thursday on the North 60 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) after just several residents offered comments on the 3,000,000-square-foot mixed-use and biotech proposal.

A couple of the comments centered on concern over the potential impact on local traffic in the vicinity of the 80-acre Grasslands parcel near Westchester Medical Center, while others spoke about how much they like the proposal. About 60 acres is being leased by the county for 99 years to the developer, Fareri Associates.

Phase I of the project will comprise the first half-million square feet of space: 220,000 square feet of biotech offices, 80,000 square feet of retail, 100,000 square feet of medical offices and a 100,000-square-foot hotel. When fully built out, which is expected to take more than a decade, North 60 would be home to about 2.1 million square feet of biotech and research space, a science museum, 400,000 square feet of medical offices and 214,000 square feet of retail.

Valhalla resident Glenn Accocella said he's concerned about the traffic on the surrounding streets, particularly on local roads, nearby Route 9A and Bradhurst Avenue. Congestion is already difficult to navigate, he said.

Accocella suggested the town ask the

state to consider allowing trucks on the Sprain Parkway between I- to 287 and Route 100.

"I think if there's a way for them to utilize a section of the Sprain for a lot of the trucks going in and out of there because everybody's going to be jumping off of 287 to Knollwood Road to Bradhurst," he said. "(Route) 9A is going to be too congested."

Resident Ricard Wisniewski said there needs to be consistent communication and coordination between the Town of Mount Pleasant, the county and the state because

there are roads near the site that all three levels of government are responsible for.

Another resident, Bill Losapio, called the proposal "a wonderful thing" for the town and the area.

"I think it's a tremendous asset this project, North 60, to the community and the surrounding areas, and with anything new there are a lot of questions in reference to traffic as was stated before," Losapio said. "Somehow or other, with the proper due diligence, as I'm sure they're doing, I'm sure it will work out."

Last Thursday's hearing was the second part of the hearing on the DEIS. Representatives for Fareri Associates must now take the comments from both sessions and written comments and address the issues raised as part of the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Residents have until Nov. 1 to send written comments to the Mount Pleasant Planning and Zoning Department, Town Hall, 1 Town Hall Plaza, Valhalla, N.Y. 10595 or via e-mail to csaracino@mountpleasantny.com.

Speculation Grows for 'Specialty Grocer' at Yorktown's Lowe's Plaza

By Anna Young

A new grocery store could be built in the new Lowe's shopping complex in Yorktown, but developers are remaining mum on the details.

Plans submitted by Breslin Realty Development Corp. call for the construction of a 12,500-square-foot specialty grocery store and an expanded parking lot on the western side of the plaza that opened last year. Updated renderings for the project were expected to be presented to the Yorktown Planning Board on Monday.

The original site plan that went before planners last year called for a 7,600-square-foot building and parking lot for unknown tenants, Yorktown Planner Robyn Steinberg said. However, when developers requested an expansion to accommodate a grocer,

Breslin Realty, which owns the land, was asked to submit revised plans for what's deemed Pad Site A.

The shopping center, located at 3200 Crompond Rd. and is off the Route 202 exit on the Taconic Parkway, is currently split into four parcels for potential tenants.

While Lowe's occupies the parcel furthest from Crompond Road, construction is currently underway for a Starbucks and a AAA office on Pad Site B, which is directly parallel to Route 202. Pad Site C, which sits alongside the Taconic Parkway's southbound ramp, is sought to house a 2,908-square-foot drive-thru, according to the site plan.

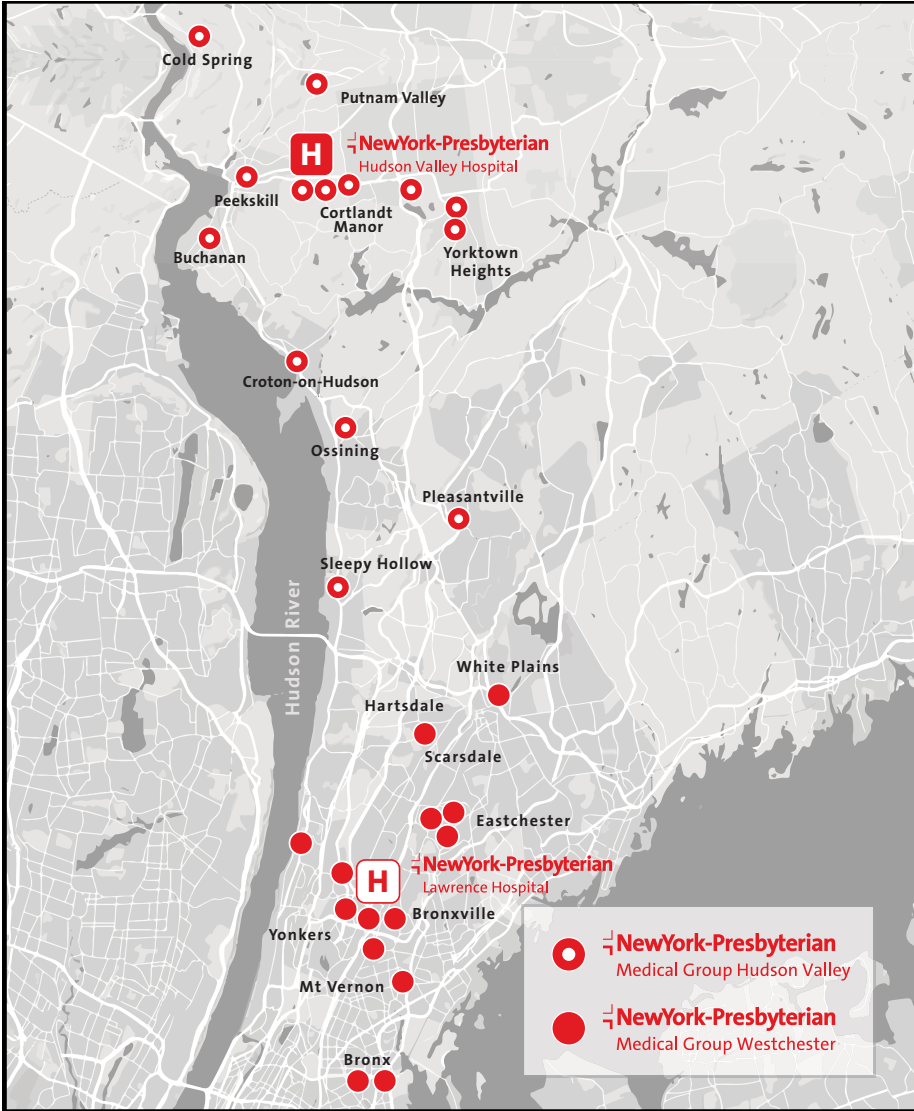
While Breslin Realty has yet to confirm which grocer will occupy the vacant space, speculation has been brewing in recent months. However, according to its website, the realty group has represented and



An aerial photo of the proposed development at Lowe's Plaza.

constructed three popular grocers – Trader Joe's, Walmart and Stop & Shop.

Steinberg said developers on Monday should be presenting updated renderings that offer a more appealing architectural design.



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Chappaqua-Millwood Chamber Initiates Grant Program for Town Businesses

By Martin Wilbur

The Chappaqua-Millwood Chamber of Commerce has launched a grant program to provide relief to small businesses in New Castle that have been hurt financially by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The chamber has kicked off the New Castle ReStart initiative that hopes to help owners of brick-and-mortar businesses located within the town's boundaries and businesses that have been deemed as non-essential under Gov. Andrew Cuomo's executive orders.

Applications for the first round of grants are due by Saturday night at midnight at www.newcastlerestart.com.

Chamber President Dawn Dankner-Rosen said that businesses can use any grant money that is received toward reopening expenses,

new equipment or to comply with state-mandated safety protocols.

"It costs a lot of money to stay open and reopen, and people just need a little bit of a lifeline," Dankner-Rosen said.

She estimated that grants would likely be up to the equivalent of one month of expenses.

Much of the initial funding for the effort, which was originally devised over the summer but needed to be postponed after the town was hard hit by Tropical Storm Isaias, was provided after local photographer Randi Childs donated \$11,000 that she collected from her participation in the Front Porch Project, Dankner-Rosen said. The project saw Childs take portrait photos of homebound families on their property during the pandemic and donate the money that she collected from local residents.



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

The Millwood-Chappaqua Chamber of Commerce has started a program to help businesses in downtown Chappaqua and throughout New Castle who have been hit hard by the pandemic.

Dankner-Rosen said the first round of grants will be awarded from the applications received through Oct. 10 from businesses that are most in need. Businesses must present proof of need, whether they have received financial assistance from other sources, including grants, loans and unemployment insurance, and outline how they would use the money.

Donations from the community and

applications will continue to be accepted for future rounds of funding, she said.

The program was modeled after a similar initiative was started in Larchmont earlier this year, according to Dankner-Rosen. She said it has been highly successful in that community and the chamber hoped to launch and tailor its effort to fit New Castle's needs.

While many observers look at restaurants and hotels as the hardest hit industries, many others have suffered during the past seven months.

"We really need to keep businesses open, and that's not just restaurants," Dankner-Rosen said. "I'm talking about small businesses. The restaurants aren't the only ones that are important to our community. It's other small businesses as well."

The amount to be disbursed and the number of grants provided will depend on the level of donations along with any money that's raised through other activities. Donations are tax-deductible and will provide direct assistance to those most in need.

Dankner-Rosen hopes that there can be ongoing community involvement.

"Quite frankly, it's to everyone's benefit," she said. "Everyone's real estate values will be maintained or go up if few have a thriving town and if we have thriving businesses. If we all let that go, the consequences could affect all of us."

To learn more about New Castle ReStart, apply for a grant or to donate, visit www.newcastlerestart.com.

Annual Photo Exhibit Opens in Mount Kisco

The third annual Mount Kisco photography exhibition, "The Nature, Culture and People of Mount Kisco," is being shown this month at the Mount Kisco Public Library, located at 100 E. Main St. A selection of more than 60 unique views of the town, events and people captured by residents and visitors

are on display through the end of October.

Due to pandemic restrictions, viewing is from 4 p.m. to the library's closing on weekdays (5 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays and 6 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays) and during library hours on weekends. A mask or face covering is required.



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Westchester Seeks Nominations for County’s Senior Hall of Fame

Do you know a senior who is making a positive difference in Westchester County through his or her professional life, volunteer work or both?

If so, Westchester County Executive George Latimer asks for nominations to the Westchester Senior Citizens Hall of Fame, now in its 38th year.

“The Senior Hall of Fame is a special tradition honoring seniors who give their time and energy to improve the quality of life in our communities,” Latimer said. “While we may not be able to celebrate our seniors in person this year, it is still important for us to shine a light on our peers who merit special recognition for their contributions.”

Nominations are due by Friday, Oct. 16. Applications may be obtained online at westchestergov.com/seniors.

To be nominated, a person must be at least 60 years old and live in Westchester County; have made significant contributions to improve life in the county; be an outstanding leader or advocate; and have professional achievements that reflect innovative solutions to fulfill unmet community needs if the nomination is based on paid professional work. All nominations will be reviewed by a judging committee.

Those selected will be inducted during a multiplatform virtual event on Friday, Dec. 4. The public will be invited to view the event for free from the county website, Facebook and YouTube and other platforms. DSPS, Westchester County Parks and the Westchester Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services are hosting the gala.

Nominations may be submitted online at westchestergov.com/seniors. If you prefer to mail in your nomination, contact Rose Cappa at rose@theeventdepartmentny.com or call 914-747-0519. Cappa is also the contact to learn how to become a Senior Hall of Fame sponsor or to sponsor a particular honoree.

Past Hall of Fame inductees are not eligible. See the list of former inductees at westchestergov.com/seniors.

For additional information, call 914-813-6400 or visit the website.

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Deadline to Register to Vote for General Election is This Friday

The New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) reminds New Yorkers that the deadline to register to vote in this November's election is approaching.

New Yorkers have until Friday, Oct. 9 to apply in person at the DMV when they complete a driver license, learner permit or non-driver ID transaction. They must have a reservation to visit a DMV office.

Those who already have a license, permit or non-driver ID can visit the DMV website at <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application> to apply to register or update the information they have on file with the Board of Elections. Applications and/or changes to enrollment

information must be submitted online no later than Oct. 9.

To apply by mail, applications must be postmarked no later than Oct. 9 and received by a Board of Elections no later than Oct. 14 to be eligible to vote in the general election. New Yorkers can also register in person at their county's Board of Elections office. Those who were honorably discharged from the U.S. military or have become a naturalized U.S. citizen after Oct. 9, may register in person at the Board of Elections up until Oct. 24.

"We are pleased to give New Yorkers a convenient way to apply to register to vote through our online application service," said

DMV Commissioner Mark J.F. Schroeder. "It is important that New Yorkers participate in our democracy, and we encourage everyone who is eligible to register."

Almost 2.2 million people have applied to register to vote online since 2012. More than 900,000 were first-time voters.

To apply to register using the DMV website, customers must enter information from their New York State driver license, permit or non-driver ID, their date of birth, current zip code, last four digits of their Social Security number and their e-mail address. The information provided is validated to ensure accuracy and security.

The DMV does not approve or deny voter registration applications. Upon completion, DMV sends the voter registration applications to the county Board of Elections for review and action. Once processed, the county will notify the applicants either that

they are registered to vote or that additional information is needed to complete the application. Additionally, New Yorkers can use the New York State Board of Elections' website to check their voter registration status.

To be eligible to vote in New York, you must be a United States citizen; be 18 years old (you may pre-register at 16 or 17 but cannot vote until you are 18); be a resident of the state and the county, city or village for at least 30 days before the election; not be in prison or on parole for a felony conviction (unless parolee pardoned or restored rights of citizenship); not be adjudged mentally incompetent by a court; and not claim the right to vote elsewhere.

Read more about the process for registering to vote at www.dmv.ny.gov.

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NYSERDA

Former Bedford Teacher Pursues Gender Equity in the Classroom

By Samantha Schnupp

"It's never too early for children to feel equal and accepted in everything they do," Dorothy Venditto writes in her new book "Gender Equity in Elementary Schools: A Road Map for Learning and Positive Change."

Venditto taught at West Patent Elementary for most of her 15 years in the Bedford Central School District. Throughout her time at the school, she, along with several colleagues, created workshops and worked as a Tiered Support Teacher to help guide students through assignments such as coding and 3D design.

Her career in the classroom was a catalyst for her recently released book. Venditto, who worked in publishing as a production supervisor on a wide range of magazines including Psychology Today and PC Magazine before becoming a teacher, began publishing articles about increasing gender equity in schools for the

website Edutopia.org.

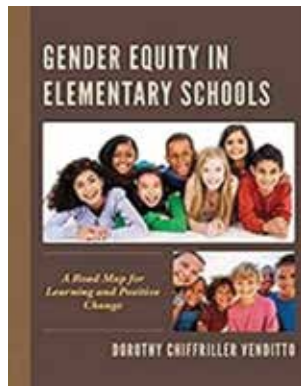
Her personal journey of exploring and researching gender issues began when she watched a film of one of her classroom lessons that she was teaching. Venditto said "something as small as the placement of students' seats, which students she called on or even how they spoke, captivated me to explore the unconscious thoughts she had about gender."

Venditto's book is designed to make the classroom a safe space for boys and girls without gender limitations. She found much of the education system undermines gender equity.

"My main goal is for children to accept themselves as who they are and feel confident in whatever they decide in the

classroom," said Venditto, currently the director of Enlightened Schools, a company that provides professional development on gender as a critical component in social-emotional development.

She said the development and



Dorothy Venditto, who taught in the Bedford School District for 15 years, explores gender roles and equity in her new book.

are told how they are supposed to act, Venditto said. Children, especially during their early elementary school years, absorb everything being told to them by their educators.

For example, acting tougher can indicate how boys should behave or coloring with brighter colors tends to be more for girls. Schools and educators play an influential role in messages about gender are healthy and positively spread.

Her book provides goals and resources to help educators, classroom lessons and professional development on teaching gender-healthy concepts to elementary school students and teachers. It allows educators to learn more about gender equity and helps them identify implicit bias, report imbalances and direct positive messages to all students, she said.

"The classroom is designed to be a safe space where children can be free to be whoever they want to be and have equal opportunity, no matter what gender," Venditto said.

"Gender Equity in Elementary Schools" is published by Rowman & Littlefield. For more information or to order the book, visit www.rowman.com.

awareness of gender roles and bias begin to present themselves before children reach elementary school. Girls and boys

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Defaced Sign in Support of Police Draws Praise, Ire in Community

By Martin Wilbur

Early on a Sunday morning in late August, John Carminucci received a call that his sign at his Thornwood car repair shop had been vandalized.

When Carminucci, owner of JC Automotive on Broadway across the street from the Thornwood Town Center, arrived at his business, he saw that BLM had been spray painted in black on his sign that reads "We Support Our Local Police Department" attached to an old pickup truck.

At first, he thought of taking it down and putting up a fresh sign. But Carminucci quickly came up with another idea – he would leave it up to show that his property was damaged.

Since then, Carminucci, who has owned the business or 32 years, said he has received overwhelming support for his decision.

"The whole reason why I leave it up is I've gotten such a positive response out of something that was negative," Carminucci said. "I really feel, what I'm finding, is people, regardless of how you feel about certain things, most people look at that and say defacing private property and trying to silence somebody else's message is wrong, and that's what most people seem to be conveying to me."

But not everyone is pleased. Mount Pleasant officials paid Carminucci a visit recently to ask him to remove the damaged sign because there had been multiple



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

John Carminucci's vandalized sign at his Thornwood auto shop. He said community members have overwhelmingly supported his decision to keep the sign up, but Mount Pleasant has reported a stream of complaints from people who want it to come down.

complaints lodged with the town, said Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi.

Fulgenzi mentioned that town Building Department personnel paid the shop owner a visit. While the town cannot force him to remove the sign, Fulgenzi said they were relaying to him the sentiments and hoped they could appeal to him.

"He thought we were putting pressure on him to take it down," he said. "We weren't putting pressure. We just advised him that we had complaints from people

saying that they don't like the fact that it was vandalized (and still on display)."

Complicating the situation is that Carminucci and the town have been in litigation for years over noncompliance with the town code over previous signs, and unrelated to this issue, the condition of the property, the supervisor said.

But Carminucci said he will leave the defaced sign up until people in the community and passersby stop commenting on it to him.

"I'll leave it up or awhile, and when the positive response dies out, I'll take it down," he said. But you know what? I've chosen to keep it up almost as a counter piece, and adding my support for America and the police and firefighters and everything else around it. I'm not going to let it stop me."

He dismissed some local residents' observations trying to link the vandalism to a protest later that day held by Pace University students in support of the Black Lives Matter movement and D.J. Henry, a Black Pace student killed by police at the Town Center in 2010. Carminucci said the damage was done overnight the night before the protest and does not believe there is a link.

The shop owner also said he is unconcerned about losing business, mentioning that he has confidence in his own reputation for good work and his customers.

Carminucci has had a long history of using the truck to prop up signs in support of various candidates and issues. He said the most divisive blowback he received was a local bond issue that he opposed.

But there have been probably a few dozen people who commented positively to him about his decision to keep this sign up.

"It if motivates somebody to go out and make a change where they feel change is needed, then the sign is doing its job, I think," Carminucci said.



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Neighbors of Proposed Mt. Kisco Solar Farm File Lawsuit Against Village

By Martin Wilbur

A group of Mount Kisco residents and the Marsh Sanctuary has filed litigation against the village charging the municipality engaged in spot zoning to allow a solar farm to be considered on a 25-acre parcel.

The suit, filed on behalf of six individual residents, the Mount Kisco Chase Homeowners Association and the sanctuary on Sept. 24 in state Supreme Court, also contends that there is a conflict of interest and there was a failure to properly notice the public hearing connected with the village's solar law that was adopted by the Village Board in November 2018.

Robert Howard, one of three attorneys listed for the plaintiffs, said the key issue is that the village has allowed a site-specific use at the parcel located in the Conservation District at 180 S. Bedford Rd. for the benefit of one property owner, Skull Island Partners.

The use is inconsistent with Mount Kisco's Comprehensive Plan, is incompatible with surrounding uses and would cause harm to surrounding property owners, it also charged.

Another solar farm installed at Oakwood Cemetery is not in the conservation zone, Howard said.

"The real objection here, and the real issue here, is this is the only property within any Conservation District where

this degree of solar farm is permitted," he said.

According to the litigation, spot zoning "is the process of singling out a small parcel of land for a use classification totally different from that of the surrounding area for the benefit of the owner."

Although Planning Board Chairman Douglas Hertz has recused himself from any board discussions on the solar farm application, there is still conflict of interest because he is still involved in the project through his company Sunrise Community Solar, Howard said.

Furthermore, the vice chairman, John Bainlardi who leads the board in discussion regarding the parcel, was the previous land owner who sold the property to Skull Island Partners, he said.

"He may be innocent of any actual conflict," Howard said. "We don't know that, but the issue is a public official needs to stay clear of even the appearance of a conflict."

Regarding inadequate notice, the litigation mentions that the legal notice failed to advise the public that the proposed solar energy law would result in a change of zoning for the parcel at 180 S. Bedford Rd., making it "fatally defective and the entire solar law should be stricken based on this fatal defect."

Village Attorney Whitney Singleton, when reached last Friday, said he was

preparing his response to the suit, which should be completed sometime this week.

In addition to the solar farm, there is also a separate application for a 140-foot monopole, that if approved, would allow several cell phone carriers to use the structure to enhance cell service in the area.

That issue is not addressed in the recently filed litigation.

In addition to the municipality, the village, planning and zoning boards are all named as defendants along with Skull Island Partners and Sunrise Community Solar.



Music to Our Ears

Fox Lane High School senior Alexandra De Palma has been selected to participate in the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All-State Mixed Chorus. De Palma received the honor as a result of her exemplary performance at the Spring 2019 solo festival. A well-rounded musician, Alexandra performs as a soprano in the chamber choir and plays violin in the chamber orchestra. NYSSMA will be organizing a virtual All-State Concert in the coming months with selected students from across New York State.

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Keeping Up With Maintenance in the Home

Last week, I got really ticked when my heating and air conditioning system suddenly went on the fritz after only five years of service.

I'm always impressed when I learn about how homeowners get long-term service from equipment that's well-maintained. In my case, I live in an upscale condo where everything is supposed to be maintenance free.

Further exacerbating my dismay was finding out that my unit could not be repaired, only replaced – and at a hefty cost.

With some maintenance discipline, our homes can also get great mileage.

For most of my married life and prior to living in my current residence, my wife and I lived in an antique home that was over 275 years old. It had stood through the American Revolution, the Civil War, two World Wars, the Great Depression, presidential assassinations and terrorist attacks, along with the invention of electricity, indoor plumbing, technological wonders and normal wear and tear to the structure itself.

Just since I have owned the house, there has been a roof leak, flooded basement, the last gasp of a hot water heater, then the boiler, and the most spectacular occurrence, when the transformer on my corner exploded and blew my electrical panel off the basement wall.

But on the positive side, I can see that the



By Bill Primavera

previous guardians of the house had taken steps to upgrade and maintain it through the years, and I have tried my best to continue that tradition. However, sometimes life gets in the way.

I was spoiled by my first home. It had been completely renovated just before I bought it and I never had to do anything to keep it going for my five years of ownership. I wasn't going to get away with a free pass forever. But embarrassed as I am to admit, I've usually waited until something has malfunctioned before attending to it, rather than taking preventative measures.

That's probably natural for most of us. Realistically, when was the last time you cleaned your chimney or, better yet, drained your hot water tank?

For those of you who want to join me in making a New Year's resolution to gift your home with proper maintenance, here is a checklist of the basic "to do's."

Outside

Roof: If you're agile and fearless enough to mount your own roof, check for loose or damaged shingles, as well as the condition of flashing at dormers, plumbing stacks and valleys. The rest of us can call a reliable roofer to check anything close-up that may look suspicious from ground level.

Gutters and downspouts: Check for blockage, leakage and areas requiring re-sloping. Gutters should be cleaned in spring and fall.

Eaves: Monitor the condition of soffits and fascia, looking for the onset of rot.

Foundation walls: Check for deteriorated brick, block, mortar and for cracking due to settlement.

Grading: The grading immediately adjacent to the house should be sloped away from the structure, at least one inch per foot for at least six feet.

Doors and windows: Caulking and weather stripping should be checked for better insulation.

Porches and decks: Check wooden components for rot and insect infestation. Steps and railings should be secure.

Driveways and sidewalks: Check for cracks and deterioration, especially if there is a possibility of someone tripping.

Inside

Attic: Should be examined annually for signs of water stains on the underside of the roof sheathing. Also, determine if attic vents are obstructed.

Basement: Check the walls and floor for dampness and consider a dehumidifier if needed. While down there, make sure the sump pump is operating properly.

Plumbing: For supply plumbing, precautions should be taken to assure that pipes in crawl spaces do not freeze during the winter. Outdoor faucets should be shut off from the interior and drained for the winter. And remember to remove any hoses from the outside faucets. Check all indoor faucets for leaks and replace washers as necessary.

Electricity: The main panel should

be examined at least once a year for rust. Periodically check for frayed or damaged wiring in extension cords, appliances cords and plugs.

Heating system: For forced air systems, conventional or electronic filters should be checked monthly and cleaned or replaced as needed. With hot water systems, radiators and convectors should be inspected annually for leakage, particularly at the valves. Radiators should be bled of air annually. Electric, oil and gas furnaces and boilers should be checked by a qualified technician on an annual basis.

Smoke detectors: At least one should be placed on each floor, and one in each bedroom.

Carbon monoxide detectors: Install one on each level.

Hot water heater: Drain to remove sediment from the bottom of the tank.

Fireplaces and chimneys: Have them inspected and cleaned once a year.

Does this basic list seem overwhelming? Does it have you wondering whether you should become a renter, rather than owning, and have a friendly landlord who does the maintenance work for you?

There is an alternative. Get yourself the best darned handyman you can find.

Bill Primavera, while a writer and public relations practitioner (PrimaveraPR.com), is also a licensed realtor (PrimaveraHomes.com) affiliated with William Raveis in Yorktown. Anyone considering selling or buying a home can reach him directly at 914-522-2076.

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SPCA of Westchester Breaks Ground on Expansion Project

The SPCA of Westchester has broken ground on its \$9.1 million expansion and modernization project at its Briarcliff Manor campus.

A small group of socially distanced supporters participated in a ceremony for the new 27,000-square-foot building constructed with a series of upgraded features at the organization's North State Road site. More than \$8.2 million has been raised toward the SPCA's goal of raising the entire sum for the project.

"While this wasn't the groundbreaking ceremony we'd envisioned prior to COVID-19, we wanted to celebrate our progress and share this incredible milestone in the SPCA's rich history," said Executive Director Shannon Laukhuf. "Many wonderful contributors have so generously given to this lifesaving project, and while we could only have a small group attend, we're very excited to share our virtual groundbreaking online in the

weeks ahead."

The SPCA of Westchester revealed its plan last year to build a larger, modernized campus. The new building will include indoor dog habitats for increased comfort and outdoor day pens; luxury four-story condos and multiple cage-free cattery areas; a state-of-the-art veterinary hospital; a large indoor space to serve as a training and enrichment center for dogs; and a classroom for humane education presentations to local school children, youth groups and the popular Camp Critter day camp.

The old shelter, which hadn't been updated since the 1960s, was deteriorating and many of the dog kennels were not fully protected from the elements.

To take a virtual tour and learn more about the SPCA's capital campaign, visit SPCA914.ORG. To discuss gift and naming opportunities, call 914-941-2896 ext. 12 or e-mail Shannon@spca914.org.



SPCA of Westchester Executive Director Shannon Laukhuf and Board of Directors member Deborah Klugman at last weekend's ceremonial groundbreaking for its \$9.1 million expansion project along with an artist's rendering of the new building.

Pace to Hold Inaugural Virtual 5K to Benefit Students and Programs

Pace University is kicking off its first-ever Race for Pace virtual run to benefit student emergency relief, scholarships and programs throughout the campus.

Students, staff, alumni and members of the community are invited to take part virtually between Friday, Oct. 16 and Sunday, Oct. 25 as we practice social distancing and keeping each other safe, healthy and inspired during

the pandemic.

Participants can run, walk or cruise in the Setter 5K (3.1 miles) or the Setter 1-miler or they may pick a distance of their own skill level. People can participate on their favorite scenic route, on a treadmill or discover a new path on race day.

Registration is \$40 for adults and \$15 for Pace

students. Participants will receive a special edition Pace face covering and a Pace digital bib and be eligible for prizes and divisional competitions.

To learn more about the Race for Pace or to register, visit <https://www.givecampus.com/campaigns/15398/donations/new>.



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Students Pursue American Dream With Invention That Helps Teach Math

For Santiago Alzate, helping students with their math homework could be a challenge prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic, however, presented the Southern Westchester BOCES student with an opportunity.

Alzate was a bilingual STEAM teacher in the after-school program at the White Plains Youth Bureau. He saw firsthand where students and teachers like himself struggled and where they excelled.

The experience inspired an innovation. During the time at home that the COVID-19 shutdown afforded him and his partner and fellow SWBOCES student, Cinthia Chinchin, they developed the Bigop Learn and Play double-sided dry erase board.

"We spent a lot of time to make something brand new, something good for the kids and also for schools," Alzate said.

The colorful tablets are designed to help elementary school-age students learn and practice addition, subtraction and, on the back, multiplication. With a website (www.bigop.us), a presence on Facebook and Instagram and a YouTube channel, as well as a patent pending, Alzate and Chinchin feel like they are pursuing the American dream.

That's fitting for two immigrants. Alzate is from Columbia by way of Spain and Chinchin is from Ecuador.

The White Plains residents are grateful to Southern Westchester BOCES for the adult education programs that have given them skills and opened opportunities that make their dream possible. Both attend

citizenship exam preparation classes offered by Southern Westchester BOCES' Adult Literacy Center.

Chinchin, who was an attorney in Ecuador, attends the center's English as a Second Language classes. Meanwhile, Alzate, who studied humanities and philosophy, quickly completed the ESL program along with high school equivalency exam preparation. They'll complete the citizenship class in the spring.

"The opportunity that Southern Westchester BOCES has given me has helped me to improve myself professionally," Chinchin said. "It has opened a new door for my future."

Alzate agreed, crediting both his partner and BOCES instructor Jose Bohorquez with encouraging him.

"She said, 'Santiago, this is amazing. Don't give up,'" he recalled, adding that Bohorquez "just gave me the power to believe and to be focused."

Bohorquez recalled meeting Alzate after Southern Westchester BOCES began offering ESL and HSE classes at the White Plains Library. Alzate's strong math and chemistry skills prompted Bohorquez to put him with an advanced group of students.

"I encouraged Santiago because I knew he was a very smart guy," Bohorquez said.

Like Alzate, Bohorquez also taught students math in a local after-school program. He immediately recognized the instructional value of the Bigop board. The moment was one of many examples of the



Cinthia Chinchin and Santiago Alzate from Southern Westchester BOCES invented a learning tool to help children with math. The patent on their product, Bigop Learn and Play, a double-sided dry erase board, is pending.

value of Southern Westchester BOCES' community programs.

"The years that I've been teaching with Southern Westchester BOCES, I'm very grateful for the opportunity to help people to a better quality of life," he said. "We make a huge difference in peoples' lives."

"It's heartening for us whenever any of our students goes on to achieve great success,"

said Tracy Racicot, director of Adult & Community Services. "Inventing a tool to help children learn is a fantastic example of the kinds of contributions we often see our ESL, HSE and citizenship graduates make within their communities and in the world at large. Southern Westchester BOCES graduates accomplish great things."

Bigop was Alzate's and Chinchin's first attempt at an invention. It was important to them, they said, to create something to help children learn. Where he brought a teacher's perspective to the project, she assisted with her legal expertise as well as a focus on design and marketing.

What they have created, is a useful, comfortable learning tool that is environmentally friendly since it is reusable. Its design makes it convenient to stuff in a backpack or school desk as easily as a notebook. They didn't see anything exactly like it on the market.

Their website features many photos and videos from their social media feeds, all of actual students demonstrating the Bigop board. There's also an online store where boards may be purchased.

Alzate and Chinchin have high hopes for the product's success. Alzate recalled when they first came up with the idea, how Chinchin envisioned how popular it could become.

"She said, 'You know Santiago, we have to be focused on this because nobody has this tool,'" Alzate said. "It will be amazing for kids."

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The Benefits of Acupuncture During Post-Operative Care

Surgery is serious, painful business, even when successful, and managing your recovery can be as delicate and important as the procedure itself.

Currently, the use of opioids is the most broadly accepted way to treat post-operative pain, but the benefits of these drugs come with a host of side effects that range from the unpleasantness of nausea and itchiness, to the danger of addiction.

Luckily, acupuncture is steadily emerging as an alternative and supplementary treatment to post-operative pain, minimizing opioid side effects and jumpstarting the body's natural mechanisms for recovery.

When your body is in pain, your nerves transmit this information to your spinal cord and brain by releasing neurotransmitters. Opioids work by binding to these neurotransmitter receptors, preventing your nervous system from sending and receiving these chemical messages. The trouble is, popular opioids like morphine, codeine, hydrocodone, oxycodone and

fentanyl often have side effects. These commonly include nausea and vomiting, drowsiness, itchiness and constipation.

In addition, opioid use over time can lead to increased tolerance, which requires people who have a long recovery ahead of them to take larger and larger doses for effective pain management. In certain cases, this can lead to dependence, not to mention the additional medley of drugs that often need to be taken to treat the side effects of the pain medication itself.

And pain is not the sole concern. Often in the aftermath of surgery, lingering pain, prolonged hospitalization, immobility and other types of bodily discomfort can undermine sleep patterns, immunity and other elements of your body's efforts to heal and return to its normal rhythms.

How can acupuncture help you? With its long history as an effective painkiller, muscle relaxant and nausea-reducer, acupuncture is a logical replacement or accompaniment to more traditional post-operative treatment

plans. Not only has it been consistently observed in clinical trials and medical literature to reduce pain directly, but when used in concert with opioids, it's been shown to decrease patients' reliance on them overall, lowering required dosages and time spent taking the drugs after surgery.

Beyond pain reduction, acupuncture's benefits for post-operative patients are often cited as holistic and cumulative, from decreasing stress pre- and post-surgery (many practitioners recommend asking for ear seeds to prolong the positive effects of a pre-surgery acupuncture session), boosting your immune system during long hospital stays, minimizing drug side effects and even reducing internal and external scarring.

Consistently cited as having little to no negative side effects, many doctors are embracing acupuncture's benefits and recommending its inclusion in post-operative care – even if researchers are still studying how the science supports



By Andrea Gurciullo

acupuncture's results.

So why wait? If you are suffering from post-operative pain or discomfort and looking to decrease your reliance on opioid painkillers, get in touch to see how acupuncture can help.

Andrea Gurciullo, LAc, MTOM, is an acupuncturist at ProClinix Sports

Physical Therapy & Chiropractic who treats patients at the Pleasantville and Armonk locations. Gurciullo has more than 20 years' experience in clinical practice and has successfully treated thousands of patients. Her expertise includes acupuncture and sports medicine as well as post-operative pain and rehabilitation. For more information, call 914-202-0700 or e-mail agurciullo@proclinux.com.

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Am I Responsible for Paying My Parent's Nursing Home Bills?

By Alan D. Feller, Esq.

There is a wonderful symmetry associated with filling out forms. Parents perform the task countless times for their young children. Every sport and after-school activity has a permission slip, waiver, medical report and emergency contact list.

College admissions forms may include financial aid packages, tuition agreements and housing authorizations. First apartments and even first home loans may require a parent co-signor or guarantor.

With a little luck, parents and children may get a few decades of filling out their own forms. Then, when an illness or age-related issue impacts a parent, the children grab the pen.

An adult child signing documents on behalf of a parent should be acting under a health care proxy for health care purposes or power of attorney for most everything else. Created and signed in front of witnesses and a notary, the New York Statutory Short Form Power of Attorney with a Statutory Gifts Rider grants an agent significant authority to handle all types of financial matters, estate and Medicaid planning and gift transfers.

An ill parent will be navigated through many layers of health care management including hospitals, rehabilitative facilities, home care options or assisted living, and even possibly nursing home admission. The health care proxy, which is signed by the creator and witnessed, allows the chosen health care representative to make care decisions for a parent who is having difficulty advocating for



themselves.

Decisions made under a health care proxy with regards to medical procedures, discharge from a facility and overall care are usually understood to carry serious consequences. Serious financial consequences related to nursing home admissions are less understood at the outset of a parent's residence in a nursing facility. There will be plenty of financial documents that need signing and mistakes can be costly.

Should a parent require long-term institutional care, then a nursing home admissions agreement will be presented to an adult child for review and signing. But be careful. Financial responsibility lies at the heart of this admissions agreement. Signing your name without an agent designation or as POA may lead to some unnecessary aggravation. The

nursing home has the right to seek payment from a financially responsible party. This means that even if Medicaid is approved there may be a private pay balance or back-income owed, which potentially could assign liability to an unsuspecting child.

Signing a nursing home admissions agreement "As Agent" or as "POA" limits your financial responsibility to the assets belonging to your parent under your control as power of attorney. Asset gift transfers to a child under a power of attorney may also be in play for nursing home collections, but signing "As Agent" with a valid power of attorney affords the best protection.

Upon a parent's passing, a child's status as agent under a power of attorney is extinguished. If a child signed the nursing home admissions agreement "As Agent" and no asset transfers were made, then a nursing home would have to look to the parent's estate for a balance collection.

Nursing home bills can be large and scary. It easy to sign forms. Knowing what you are signing and trying to avoid bad results is the key to happiness.

For more information, contact the professionals at Sloan & Feller to review your rights and obligations when a parent requires nursing home care.

Alan D. Feller, Esq. is managing partner of Sloan & Feller Attorneys at Law, located at 625 Route 6 in Mahopac. He can be reached at alandfeller@sloanandfeller.com.

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A Virtual Trek Through Italy: Campania's Unknown Grapes



By Nick Antonaccio

Italians have been lauded and derided for their affinity for a unique sensibility concerning life and their pursuit of a philosophical, religious and hedonistic lifestyle.

Throughout Italian history, this approach to life, this engrained pursuit of all things expressive of La Dolce Vita, has influenced the Western World in lasting ways. From the literary works of Dante, Boccaccio and Machiavelli, to the artistic brilliance and innovation of Michelangelo, Bernini and Raphael, to the centuries of Papal rule over the Roman Catholic church, to the countless contributions to high fashion, architectural design, gastronomy and all things sensory, Italians have indelibly etched their imprint on today's society.

Years ago, I came upon a term that encapsulated the underlying theme that runs through these contributions – Sprezzatura, the art of effortless mastery.

How ironic, in the 21st century, that a significant source of Italy's new-age influence comes not from the cultural city centers but from those areas not generally known for their historic influence – wine regions. Not from the famous wine regions, but from the agricultural underbelly that has been feeding Italians for centuries, including Campania, Veneto and Puglia.

This week, in my multi-art series on relatively unknown grapes grown in Italian wine regions, I'm focusing on Campania, the region just south of Rome, incorporating Naples, the Amalfi Coast and Pompeii.

Even before the Italian Renaissance, there were wines produced here. Revered wines from Campania date back two millennia to Greek and Roman settlements. Then came a long period of neglect and the near extinction of grapevines planted as early as 1,000 B.C. The exodus of farmers to urban areas after the devastation wrought by World War II contributed to this demise.

But things began to improve in the early 1990s. Winemakers from the north rediscovered the coveted volcanic soil and temperate climate of the Campania region. They began to experiment in applying modern techniques and technology to the production of wines from these ancient grapes. The result: a Southern Renaissance in winemaking that is just now available in the United States.

This is the meaning of Sprezzatura. The new winemakers of Campania, plying their trade, their craft, but with a distinct elegance and aplomb that sets them apart from previous generations.

What are they planting? What grapes from this forgotten agricultural paradise are creating a stir?

There are three white grapes and one red from Campania that have surged in popularity in the last 10 years.

You Heard It Through the Grapevine



Greco de Tufo. It is the oldest cultivated grape in Campania. Its mild aroma and flavor profile make it perfect as a quaffing wine but, paired with a light seafood dish or a simple vegetable recipe, it seduces you with almond and pear aromas, followed by a subtle flavor. This is the wine the Greeks cherished for its ideal balance between fruit and acid.

Falaghina. If you like Pinot Grigio for its light, middle-of-the-road bouquet but you're looking for a suitable substitute, try this crowd pleaser. Crisp and highly aromatic, it pairs well with Mediterranean white fish and light chicken and pork dishes.

Fiano. This is the most interesting of the Holy Trinity of Campanian whites. It has an intensity not found in its brethren and is redolent of nutty and spicy aromas. Try it with shellfish; you may never go back to (entry-level) white Burgundies.

Aglianico. This is the red grape that is ascending to stardom next to its esteemed

brothers, Nebbiolo and Brunello di Montalcino. An intense wine, rich in red fruit aromas, high in acid and tannins in its youth, this wine is made for aging. I rarely drink an Aglianico that is less than five years old. This is a wine I will place in my wine cellar, next to my Nebbiolos and Brunellos, to enjoy with my young grandchildren on their 21st birthdays.

Campania's winemakers are practicing their craft with Sprezzatura – it's in their heritage and defines their destiny.

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

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Examiner Sports Time Has Come Today!



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTO

Tears Have Come and Gone, All Things to Realize

American psychedelic soul group, The Chambers Brothers, said it best in November of 1967 when they released the single "Time Has Come Today", and nothing could be further from the truth after a seven-month hiatus from varsity athletics throughout New York State due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which put varsity prep sports on hold since last March. The vast majority of Section 1 schools have put the necessary protocols and mandates in place to give our student athletes -- like the Somers girls' soccer team above -- the chance to "Let the Games Begin" again starting October 10th at a field near you... **see Sports**

Sports

Several Big Section 1 Games Kick off Week 1 Action

Greeley vs. Byram Boys' Soccer, Greeley vs. Lakeland Field Hockey on Tap

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor@Directrays

Time has come today! With the release of this week's Examiner today, seven months of prep sports banishment -- due to the COVID-19 breakout last March -- comes to a screeching halt with preparation and practices beginning last Tuesday for an October 10th start-up. Of course, the rain came down in droves last Tuesday on the first day of legal, team-initiated practices and has forced several opening-day postponements due to the lack of wiggle room regarding the number of practices a team must have to be eligible for game play.

So, when places like Somers and Lakeland decided to shut down practices on that given day, they were also forced, like many other districts, to push their season openers in boys' and girls' soccer and field hockey back to Oct. 12th and beyond. Those Oct. 10 cancellations will be rescheduled for another day of clustered game action later in this abbreviated season. Follow?

When the New York State Public High School Athletic Association announced that football, volleyball and cheerleading will be postponed due to the complications stem-



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS (OTHERS SUBMITTED)

Greeley's returning All-NYS players (L-R) Natalie Laskowski, Lily Schoonmaker and Caroline Flannery will put those merits to the test against Lakeland.

off without a hiccup. But Section 1 insiders are very worried about indoor sports taking place this winter, given the slight uptick in coronavirus cases across the country, including NYS.

Somers boys' soccer Coach Brian Lazetta's 2019 Section 1 Class A runner-ups, which were already stacked with a plethora of talent, have added several football players to its roster, making the 2019 Class A sectional runner-up Tuskers all the more formidable. So, yeah, give me some Somers soccer this season. Somers opens up Wednesday at Walter Panas (6 p.m.).

Chances are good that by 11 a.m. this Saturday, there will be a varsity game in or near your neighborhood as Section 1 has scheduled 20 games in that particular hour (28 originally), including some juicy matchups: Carmel field hockey will host NYS Class A runner-up Horace Greeley; Mahopac girls' soccer, the 2019 sectional runner-up, will host Carmel; and Horace Greeley boys' soccer will host Bryam Hills in the game of the day between two of the sections premier programs. Later Saturday, Hen Hud girls' soccer will host Yorktown (1 p.m.), and the action will end with Byram Hills girls' soccer hosting Ardsley (2 p.m.).

On Oct. 12, we get a shot to see what might be the two best field hockey teams in the section -- if not the state -- go punch for punch when reigning NYS Class B champion Lakeland hosts NYS Class A runner-up Horace Greeley at 4:30 p.m.

With everything Greeley returns this year, one could make an argument that the Quakers are the top team in the section this season. Conversely, one could argue to never bet against a Sharon Sarsen-coached Hornet club. It'll be Greeley's top returning players, including Lily Schoonmaker, Natalie Laskowski, Caroline Flannery, Emma Terjesen, Stephanie Kasulka and Grace Arrese challenging Hornets Emma Fon, Keirra Ettere and a banged-up Lakeland defense without its hub, Kristen O'Shea.



Mahopac players go through stick skills Saturday morning at field hockey practice.



Mahopac field hockey players and coaches practice the new normal Saturday morning.



Somers soccer players prep last Saturday morning for an Oct. 13 season opener against rival Yorktown.

Sports

Embracing the “New Normal” Without Actually Embracing



By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports
Editor@Directrays

The Section 1 fall sports campaign, which is set to open up on Oct. 10, is going to be a chilly 33- to 34-day run for the initial league titles before climaxing with a frosty two-week run for the sectional roses, which are expected to conclude on or about Dec. 5.

Did I mention it's going to be cold? Wool socks, gloves and long johns will be as necessary as the mandatory face coverings that fans, players and coaches will be forced to wear as we wade through the COVID-19 pandemic with fingers crossed.

It's all slated to start this Saturday, but it could end as early as Sunday should we not conform to the new normal, which, I'm told – if challenged – will find folks on the outside looking in.

This isn't going to be a summer school fling, it's the real thing, folks: Not like it was this summer when copious masses ignored the protocols set about by travel club organizations that did the best they could to get us back to some semblance of normalcy while providing our kids with an excellent opportunity to be kids again #PraiseTheLord.

Section 1 administrators, including your faithful athletic directors, assure me that strict COVID-19 mandates and protocols will be adhered to as we embark upon this highly anticipated 2020 fall season, or the few fans permitted on campus will be set to jet, exit stage left.

“The last week has been so gratifying,”

Hendrick Hudson Athletic Director Tom Baker said. “It felt so good seeing the student athletes back on the fields. At Hen Hud, we are trying to get the message home that we have one chance to get this right. With that, the protocols we must follow are critical. A lot of stakeholders put an enormous amount of time and energy into the return to sports plan. Let's take the opportunity afforded to us and get it right.”

There's nothing that will be easy about this, not only because wool socks itch and stink, and my fragile, old bones despise the cold, but because we unwittingly lose an element of care and regard that is essential for student athletes as we practice the established protocols.

Perhaps the worst part of this social distancing between our student athletes and our coaches is the unintended lack of love and, oftentimes, tough love, required during teachable moments. Rather than wrap an arm around their players and pull them in for a hug, coaches are now required to distance themselves during one-on-one exchanges in what makes for an unintentional, cold-shoulder moment rather than a loving exchange of tutelage.

Good coaches know it's all about pushing the right buttons when we're working with student athletes. Some athletes need that in-your-face challenge to bring out the best in them, while others require an in-your-face hug, an arm wrapped around their neck coupled with words of encouragement. COVID-19 restrictions will strip our athletes of these precious moments on many occasions.

Direct Rays

My recent assessment of this situation saddened me as I poked about local camps last weekend.

“Like anything else, we have to learn how to adapt, I suppose,” Byram Hills boys' soccer Coach Matty Allen said. “We need to figure out how to show affection with our eyes, a little wink, a little thumbs up or a little verbal compliment in front of others.”

Still, nurturing, motivating and inspiring is part of the deal of coaching. Distancing makes that difficult. Heck, every kid I've interviewed over the last 32 years of my career was met with a handshake or a bro-hug, so I got some adjusting to do, too #AirHugs. Parents, too, will need to adjust when Junior's love tank is empty on the ride home. Be there to fill 'er up.

“Sure, the physical nature of a touch of the shoulders or a hug isn't there, but a simple ‘You did that so incredibly well,’ or a ‘Hey, how's your family doing’ goes a long way,” Allen said.

Until we put this pandemic down, it'll have to make due for now, but understand this student athletes: Your coaches care for you.

Yeah, #2020Rots: I think I can say this with unequivocal conviction: 2020 will not only be the worst year in New York State history, but it'll be, without question, the worst combined season for the winless Giants and Jets, who are currently battling one



Members of the Hen Hud soccer program receive their marching orders regarding COVID-19 rules and regs.

another for the No.1 pick in the NFL draft and season-long ineptitude, though the Giants have had a puncher's chance in each loss. In a year that's seen New York City dry up and crumble amidst reckless leadership, I reckon it's only fitting the Jets and Giants go down with the ship. As currently constructed, both teams are the cure for what ails any NFL team. Thank God for the Yankees, and P.S., I'm all in on the undefeated Buffalo Bills!

Several Big Section 1 Games Kick off Week 1 Action

continued from previous page

Winners of the last 11 Section 1 Class B titles (20 overall) and owners of 13 NYSPHSAA championships, Sarsen's Hornets (20-1-1) have become the envy of New York State field hockey programs, but a measuring stick the Quakers are ready, willing and able to gauge themselves against.

“My top goal this year is to play field hockey and do it safely,” Greeley boss Sukhwinder Sandhu said. “Only with my top priority being safety can we have a successful season. I'm so lucky to have so many returning seniors and that we were able to have a season. I'm excited to see the success of this team.”



There will be hygiene and social distance reminders everywhere on campuses across Section 1 for all to heed.



White Plains is stoked to unveil its refurbished digs, among the prettiest venues in all of Section 1 this week.

Same day, Briarcliff will host rival Pleasantville (at noon) on the girls' soccer pitch in what figures to be a typical Bears/Panthers situation.

Later next week, folks might want to get on over to Ossining on Oct. 14 when the defending Section 1 Class AA champion Pride

hosts league rival White Plains in a boys' soccer doozy between two of the sections finest programs at 4:15 p.m. It's always entertaining when these two have at it.

No matter how you slice it, it'll be fun to see the kids back in action, so get out there and cheer them on if and when you can.



Briarcliff field hockey players get their pre-season work in as opening day looms.



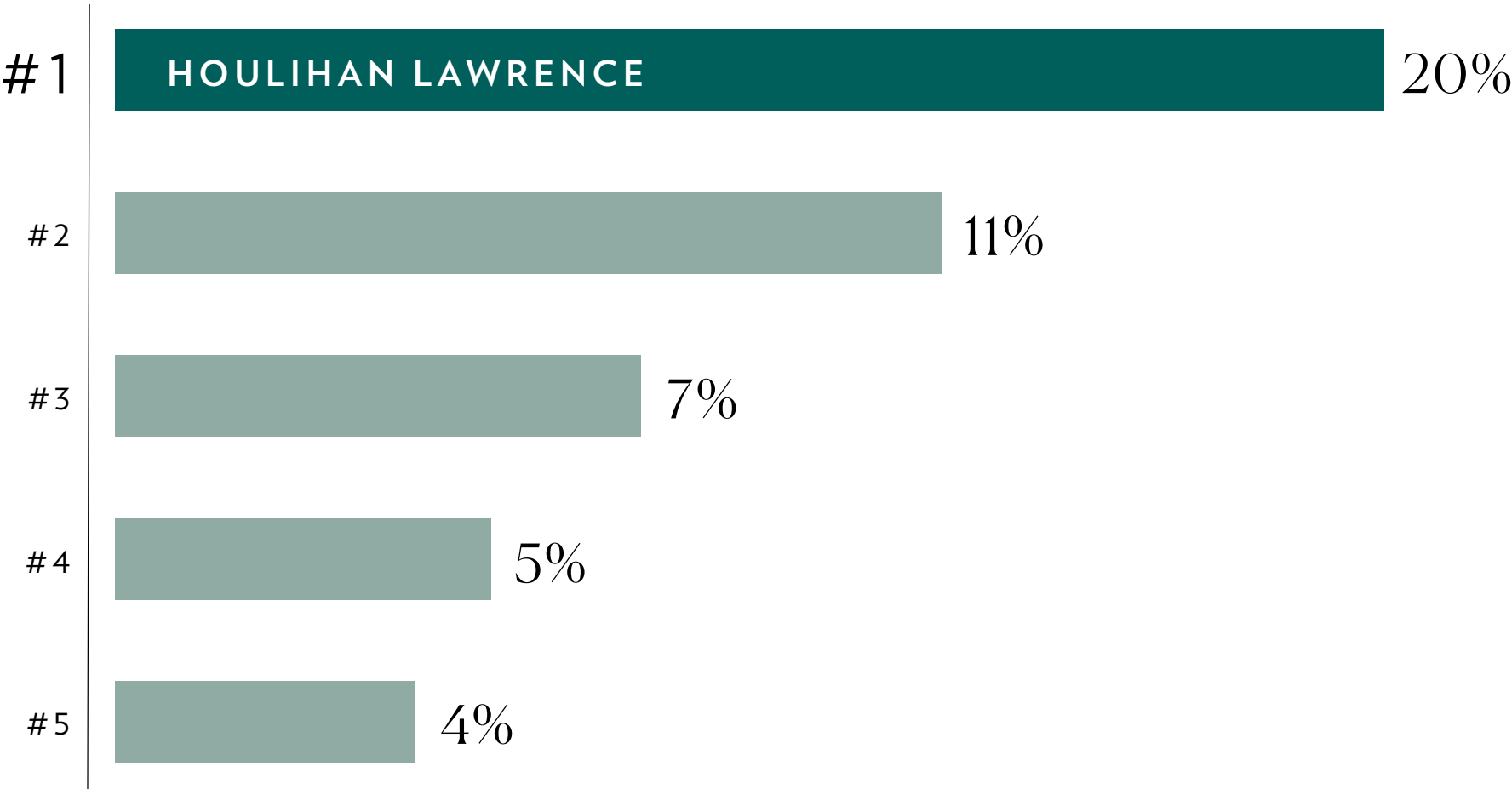
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