



The PUTNAM Examiner

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Putnam COVID-19 Breakdown:

Countywide: 3,164
(active 153)
Carmel: 1,126
Southeast: 718
Kent: 457
Patterson: 339
Putnam Valley: 327
Philipstown: 197
Hospitalized: 13

December 8 - December 14, 2020

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 611



Beagle Abandoned in Carmel

The Putnam County SPCA is seeking information regarding the abandonment of an adult female beagle. On December 1, at approximately 1 p.m., a delivery driver observed an individual push the dog out of an older model, Black Jeep Wrangler onto the side of Route 301, in the Town of Carmel. The vehicle then sped off as the dog attempted to follow it. The witness was able to catch the dog and brought it to the Putnam Humane shelter. The Putnam County SPCA is asking for anyone that might have information on this incident to please contact the Putnam County SPCA Humane Law Enforcement Division at 845-520-6915. SPCA Chief Ken Ross stated, "Abandonment of any animal is a crime in New York State. Anyone who does this, especially at this time of year, is heartless."

Unlicensed DWI Driver Indicted in Head-On Crash that Injured Four

By Rick Pezzullo

An unlicensed motorist driving drunk was indicted Friday in a head-on collision that injured four in June on Route 9D in Philipstown.

Putnam County District Attorney Robert Tendency announced that Elmer Medina, 44, was indicted by a Grand Jury in Putnam of aggravated vehicular assault and aggravated driving while intoxicated, both felonies.

During the evening rush hour on June 29, Medina allegedly drove on the wrong side of the road into oncoming traffic and slammed head-on at a high rate of speed into a vehicle carrying a mother and her three children.

The female driver required surgery on her neck and two of her three children suffered injuries and burns. Medina was also injured and sent to the hospital.

Medina was found to be intoxicated at the time of the crash and had no license. If convicted, he faces up to five to 15 years in state prison.



ELMER MEDINA

Tendency thanked New York State Police and Investigator Jaemie Caban of the Putnam District Attorney's Office for their work in the case, which is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Nicholas LaStella.

Carmel Schools Shift to Remote Learning Through 2021

By Anna Young

With rising COVID-19 cases placing an abundance of students, teachers and staff members in quarantine, Carmel school officials have opted to switch the district to remote learning through 2021.

During a special Board of Education meeting last Thursday, Interim Superintendent Eric Stark announced plans to shutter all schools through January 8. He said the current surge in coronavirus cases has placed a burden on the school district, asserting the health risk Putnam County faces with the holiday season underway.

All schools will begin remote learning on December 14, except for Carmel High School, which transitioned to remote learning on Monday due to a new positive COVID-19 case.

"At the district level, we believe that the next four weeks will be

critical," Stark said during the December 3 meeting. "With the infection rate where it is right now and especially if it continues to increase, we cannot sustain our current model without compromising many things, but above all without compromising the health and safety of our students and staff."

Overall, the district will be closed for a total of 13 days, not including the holiday recess at the end of December.

While some board members cited some grievances with closing schools and the impact it'll have on education, Stark explained there are inconsistencies in learning when students are placed in quarantine and teachers are expected to swiftly adapt to the situation. Stark indicated students would benefit from learning remotely on the same platform during this time.

Furthermore, he said the district has been bogged down work-

ing with the Department of Health to contact trace every time there's a positive coronavirus case, adding with large numbers of teachers, teaching assistants, custodians, bus drivers, monitors, etc. in quarantine, the district is facing a staffing shortage.

"This directly impacts our schools and we have had quite an uptick in positive cases among our students and staff, as well as very large numbers of students and staff who have needed to quarantine," Stark said. "As is the case throughout the region, we are having a lot of difficulty in finding substitutes in all categories of employees."

Overall, 922 students have had to quarantine since September, officials said, with 48 percent, or 439, of those students quarantined in the last two weeks. Of the 158 staff members who have had to quarantine since September, 42 percent

were also in the last two weeks.

Officials added that the district has also received several requests from parents to switch their children from in-person learning to remote learning, citing a fear their child could be exposed to the virus and forced into a quarantine that would disrupt the holidays.

While Stark stressed the decision to close wasn't made lightly, Trustee Eric Mittelstadt called the district's findings and decisions "bogus."

"I think this is an awful model and I'm not really in favor of it at all," Mittelstadt said. "I think we should find a way to keep these kids in school as long as possible in any way possible, especially the K-4."

Trustee Matt Vanacoro also urged officials to find a way to bring the elementary school grade levels back to school sooner.

As the district moves to remote

learning, Stark said teachers will be allowed in the school buildings to teach from their classrooms. While there have been no furloughs at this time, Stark said a conversation on the topic between administrators and the Board of Education will begin this week.

Board Vice President Michelle Yorio said that while the board may be resistant to the district's decision, it's one they have to live with. The decision, which was made by Stark, did not require board approval.

"This is not an easy decision for any of you to make and there's no easy choice here," Yorio said. "Even though I would prefer to have everybody in school all the time, we don't have to like it, we just have to live with it and let's just hope we can get through this season without a tremendous uptick and that things can look a lot better moving forward when we return in January."

Brewster High Students Host Home for the Holidays Driving Tour

By Rick Pezzullo

Brewster High School's Democratic Congress is hosting Home for the Holidays, a holiday lights driving tour for Brewster families.

"A few weeks ago, someone posted in a Facebook group that my mom belongs to about a holiday lights driving tour in Hyde Park and asked whether something similar could be done in Brewster," said junior Nora Paladino, vice president of Democratic Congress. "I thought it was a great idea that would build community and spread some holiday cheer, so I brought it up to Democratic Congress."

After running it by the club's advisors and checking in with the Southeast Museum (which usually does a holiday walking tour but unfortunately had to cancel it this year because of COVID), students decided to move forward with the idea.

Overall, 22 homes have registered for the event and the club is in the process of creating a num-

bered, anonymous map which will allow local families to drive the tour route and vote online for their favorite holiday lights display. From December 11 through December 20, each of the homes on the list will be lit from 5 to 9 p.m.

Kobacker's has donated a gift card for the winner, which will be announced on December 22.

"Democratic Congress is the bridge between high school administration and students and focuses on building community," Paladino said.

The club usually holds an annual Day of Community, during which high schoolers run activities at JFK Elementary School and CV Starr Intermediate School. Since that event cannot be held this year due to COVID, club members believe activities like the holiday lights driving tour are even more important for students.

"We're hopeful that this event builds community in Brewster and can bring some joy to this unusual holiday season," Paladino said.



Members of BHS Democratic Congress pictured here at left: Diana Vink, Kristen Mulvihill, at right Kayla Fox, Tahj Arnold, and Nora Paladino.



Assemblyman Kevin Byrne's holiday drive runs through December 17.

Assemblyman Byrne Hosting Holiday Toy and Food Drive

By Rick Pezzullo

State Assemblyman Kevin Byrne (R, C, Ref-Mahopac) is hosting a holiday toy and food drive in partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities and various local food pantries that serve the region, through December 17.

"The holiday season is about giving, and now more than ever it is essential to help local families in need," said Byrne. "The pandemic has wreaked havoc on so many members of our communities, many of whom rely on food pantries during the holiday season. Giving back by provid-

ing them with food on their tables and gifts for their children during this holiday season is a simple but meaningful act to spread holiday cheer. I am grateful for the opportunity to team up with Ronald McDonald House Charities and help support our many local food pantries to serve our community."

Any unwrapped toys donated will go to the Ronald McDonald House Charities to give to families who are staying in their charitable residences while their children struggle with a medical crisis. Any non-perishable food donations will go to local food pantries.

Drop-off locations for the drive are:

- Carmel Diner: 63 Gleneida Ave., Carmel Hamlet
- Patterson Rec Center: 65 Front St., Patterson
- Putnam Valley Town Hall: 265 Oscawana Lake Rd., Putnam Valley
- Southeast Town Hall: 1360 NY-22, Brewster
- Mahopac Library: 668 US-6, Mahopac
- Somers Dunkin Donuts: 325 Route 100, Somers Town Center, Somers
- V Bagels: 1 Lee Blvd., Jefferson Valley
- V Bagels Brewster: 2505 Carmel Ave., Brewster

Hearing Slated on Salaries for Top Putnam County Officers

By Rick Pezzullo

A public hearing is set to be held on December 16 to establish salaries next year for appointed officers in Putnam County.

The hearing will take place at 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. before Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell via Audio Webcast, the link to which can be found at www.putnamcountyny.gov.

If approved by the Putnam County Legislature, the Local Law shall take effect 45 days after its passage and is subject to permissive referendum.

The highest salary being proposed is for Michael Nesheiwat, Commissioner of Health, at \$190,383. Next in line is Michael Piazza, Commissioner of Social Services/Mental Health/Youth Bureau at \$151,139, followed by Paul Eldridge, Personnel Direc-

tor, at \$141,776.

Other employees that are part of the hearing include: Michele Alfano-Sharkey, County Auditor (\$115,094); Diane Schonfeld, Clerk of the Legislature (\$102,363); Director of Real Property Tax Services (\$100,591); Catherine Croft, Commissioner of Board of Elections (\$95,956); and Anthony Scannapieco, Commissioner of Board of Elections (\$95,956).

Copies of the Local Law are available at the Office of the Putnam County Legislature, Room 313, 40 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, New York 10512.

Comments will also be accepted via regular mail submitted to the above referenced address, electronic mail to maryellen.odell@putnamcountyny.gov, and facsimile to (845) 808-1901.

**SMALL NEWS IS
BIG NEWS
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Cuomo: Restrictions Loom Unless Virus Spread is Brought Under Control

By Anna Young

As COVID-19 cases continue to surge in New York, restaurants and non-essential businesses could face closure or additional restrictions if hospitalizations levels fail to stabilize and trend toward critical levels.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo warned on Monday a new initiative will place a particular region into a shutdown, similar to what happened in the spring, if its seven-day COVID-19 average indicates that within three weeks area hospitals will hit critical capacity. He said that would equate to 90 percent of a hospital's volume.

"If hospital capacity becomes critical, we're going to close down that region, period," Cuomo said. "We will manage the hospital system as well as it can be managed, but if you're going to overwhelm the hospital system, then we have no choice to go to close down."

If restrictions are implemented, indoor dining would be prohibited in New York City, with the rest of the region restricted to 25 percent capacity. Any restaurant located in an area labeled an orange or red zone would only be allowed to serve via takeout or delivery, Cuomo said.

Currently, restaurants in New York City are restricted to 25 percent indoor capacity, with the remainder of the state allowed up to 50 percent.

To mitigate the recent uptick in hospitalizations, the state Department of Health has called for a 25 percent increase in all hospital beds and is imploring retired nurses and doctors to return to service. Those who return will have their registration renewed for free, Cuomo said.

He added that while New York still has one of the lowest positivity rates in the nation, the rapid rate of coronavirus spread is concerning, especially with the holidays approaching. More than 70 percent of the spread stems from small indoor gatherings, Cuomo said.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, joined Cuomo during his press briefing and explained that the effects of Thanksgiving have yet to be seen, noting that a surge in cases will likely happen around Christmas. He characterized it as a surge upon a surge.

"If those two things happen and we don't mitigate well, and we don't listen to the public health measures that we need to follow, we can start to see things get really bad in the middle of January," Fauci said. "Without substantial mitigation, the middle of January can be a really dark time for us."

On Monday, cases of coronavirus increased by 516 in Westchester, bringing the total number of positive cases to 55,187 since the start of the pandemic. The new data comes after Westchester tallied over 700 daily cases for three consecutive days.

There are currently 7,925 active cases, with a 6.09 percent daily positivity rate on Sunday. That number is based on 8,468 tests administered.

"We have more than doubled the amount of active cases in the last three weeks," County Executive George Latimer said on Monday. "It's safe to say we are in the second peak of the disease."

The county reported five more deaths on Monday, raising COVID-19-related fatalities to 1,534 since March. There were 19 deaths

reported in the last week.

Latimer added that while the county has not reached its hospital capacity, there were just over 300 virus patients in Westchester hospitals. There are about 3,000 hospital beds in the county.

Statewide there were 7,302 new positive cases on Monday, with total COVID hospitalizations now 4,602. The state recorded 80 additional COVID-19-related fatalities, bringing the death toll to 27,229 since March.

"We're coming into Hanukkah, Christmas and New Year's and we will not see our population vaccinated before that happens," County Health Commissioner Dr. Sherlita Amler told The Examiner. "Unless people listen and change their behavior, the numbers are going to continue to climb, both the number

of cases and deaths."

Of the 29 areas labeled COVID-19 hotspots throughout New York, Port Chester and Peekskill continue to report the worst infection rates, a trend that has remained consistent over the last week.

On Sunday, the seven-day rolling average of those tested in Port Chester rose to 11.42 percent, an increase from 11.27 the previous day. Peekskill's rolling average increased slightly to 10.59 percent.

Currently, portions of Ossining, Peekskill, Tarrytown, Yonkers and New Rochelle are designated a COVID-19 yellow zone. Port Chester is still in an orange warning zone.

The zoning designation is part of a three-tiered, color-coded system imposed by the state to reduce high infection rates and

target micro-clusters. If labeled a hotspot, with yellow the lowest and red the highest, additional restrictions are implemented to mitigate spread of the virus.

While Ossining and Tarrytown reported lower infection rates on Sunday compared to previous days, Yonkers and New Rochelle saw a slight increase, state data showed.

Ossining has a seven-day average of 8.68 percent, with Tarrytown reporting 5.70 percent. Yonkers is 5.76 percent, a rise from 5.13 percent on Saturday, and New Rochelle is now 5.94 percent.

"It's just sad, and it's sadder because most of these things could be prevented if people just listened," Amler said. "Unless people start getting serious and do what they need to do, we won't see a decrease."

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Westchester Officials Memorialize Lives Lost to COVID-19 in Ceremony

By Anna Young

With Westchester County reaching a tragic plateau in coronavirus-related deaths, clergy members and elected officials gathered in Yonkers last week to pay tribute to the more than 1,500 residents who have died since March.

County Executive George Latimer last Thursday hosted the memorial ceremony at Lenoir Nature Preserve, where a Ribbons of Remembrance monument had been erected in May. The memorial consists of a tree and rope structure that allows visitors to hang ribbons with the names of someone who has died of COVID-19.

Since March, Westchester County has recorded 1,527 COVID-19-related deaths as of last week.

Latimer said the memorial serves as a reminder of all we have lost to the virus and the resilience residents must continue to display navigating through this next phase of the pandemic.

"To see people that we love die in a context of a pandemic is in some ways harder than any other way because what took their lives was not visible to us; it was everywhere and it was nowhere and it's still there," Latimer said.



County Executive George Latimer pauses to reflect and remember the more than 1,500 Westchester residents who have died so far from COVID-19 at the Ribbons of Remembrance monument at Lenoir Nature Preserve in Yonkers.

"We do what we have to do, not only for us to survive but for the people we interact with to survive, and unfortunately we have a monument to the fact that over 1,500 people did not survive."

Latimer stressed that all those who died were alive last Valentine's Day and had the opportunity to be truly and fully loved by a family member, friend or spouse. He added that with every update he provides to the community on the virus, he thinks of Eastchester Councilman Glenn Bellitto.

Bellitto, 62, died of coronavirus

on Apr. 2, shortly after being hospitalized. At that time, Bellitto was one of 71 Westchester residents whose lives had been claimed by the virus.

"Glenn was afflicted by this, and in almost no time at all, he went from being sick to being gone forever," Latimer said. "The most important thing is that we remember those that have died, and it is a scar to talk about COVID and not remember the people who died."

Rev. Troy DeCohen, senior pastor at the Mount Vernon

Heights Congregational Church, implored people to remember that many of those who have died perished alone. With several constraints in place in area hospitals restricting visitors, many reportedly died while family watched or said goodbye virtually.

With the winter months ahead, the memorial will now be relocated indoors to the main floor of the county Office Building at 148 Martine Ave. in White Plains.

Members of the public are still welcome to add names to the monument at its new location.

"This pandemic will pass, but for anyone who hung a ribbon and everyone else who is grieving a loved one they lost to COVID, there is a hole that will always remain forever," Board of Legislators Chairman Ben Boykin (D-White Plains) said. "We must remember, and we must commit ourselves to always remember."

Ballard-Durand Honors, Pays Tribute to Those Affected By COVID-19

As a tribute and memorial to those whose lives have been affected by the pandemic, Ballard-Durand Funeral Home presents the Ballard Hope Tree, a living symbol of hope and will.

"Adorned with 15,000 shimmering green lights and flying dove ornaments, we designed the Ballard Hope Tree to provide a feeling of calm, reflection and encouragement to those who need it," said owner Matthew Fiorillo.

The goal is for the community, families and individuals to view the Hope Tree as a beacon of peace and renewal in the midst of their heaviness and to experience

comfort and healing.

"The Ballard Hope Tree will let our communities know that they are not alone, that their families and loved ones will not be forgotten and that we greatly appreciate our community members who put their lives at great risk to assist others during the height of the pandemic," Fiorillo said.

The Ballard Hope Tree will be displayed outside Ballard-Durand's White Plains location on Maple Avenue on the corner of South Broadway.

For more information, call 914-949-0566 or visit www.BallardDurand.com.

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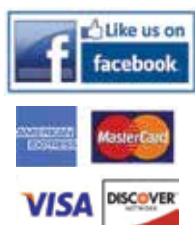
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DSS Holiday Gift Drive to Lift Spirit of Westchester's Foster Children

As many families gear up for the holiday season, Westchester County Executive George Latimer and the Department of Social Services (DSS) are asking for help to lift the spirits of the county's foster children.

DSS has announced it is soliciting gift card donations this year as a part of the department's annual holiday gift drive for the children.

This year's modification to gift cards – in lieu of shopping for, handling and distribution of boxed toys – is meant to ensure the least possible contact with others for the donor and the person who is donating while still allowing for the drive to be held.

"While we face a holiday season like no

other in our lifetimes, it is important to still take time to remember those less fortunate in our community while still ensuring safety protocols are followed," Latimer said. "This holiday gift drive provides that opportunity."

The effort has provided gifts for the children DSS serves for the last 15 years, and this year is the most difficult. Each donation goes a long way to bringing some holiday cheer to children.

Currently, Westchester County has more than 500 children in foster care, from infants to 21 years old.

"Westchester's foster families are eternally grateful to those who have supported the drive over the last 15 years,"

said DSS Commissioner Kevin McGuire. "We look forward to another successful – albeit different – effort."

Gift cards to local Westchester businesses are preferred but all age-appropriate gift cards are welcome. The drive is also accepting monetary donations. Checks may be made payable to the Westchester Child Welfare Holiday Fund.

Gift cards and questions can be directed to Barbara M. Sabater, program coordinator of constituent affairs, Department of Social Services, 112 E. Post Rd., White Plains, N.Y. 10994. For more information, call 914-995-1937.



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Q: What are the symptoms of a kidney stone?

A: You might feel waves of severe pain in your back or side below the ribs. Pain might spread to your groin and lower abdomen. Nausea, vomiting and blood in the urine are possible. If you experience extreme pain, vomiting, or fever, go to an urgent care facility, or your hospital ER. Otherwise, have your symptoms evaluated by your primary care physician.

Q: What actually is a kidney stone?

A: A stone is rock-like material formed within the kidney. Most stones have a calcium component, and are caused by inadequate fluid intake, an overabundance of calories, and excessive salt intake. Stones with a uric acid component are caused by an excessive meat intake. When a stone passes out of the kidney and enters the ureter, the tube becomes blocked, urine backs up, the kidney swells and pain results.

Q: What are my treatment options?

A: A small stone may "pass" from your body naturally. If necessary, your physician can provide medication for pain and nausea and allow natural passage of the stone. Uric acid stones can sometimes be dissolved

with medication. A large stone blocking a kidney, or a stone associated with an infection, can be life-threatening and must be treated urgently. For stones that cannot pass on their own, a urologist may advise one of three outpatient procedures, depending on the size and location of the stone.

(a) External shock waves to shatter the stone, turning it to smaller stones that can then pass on their own.
(b) Inserting a small telescope to laser the stone into tiny fragments.
(c) If the stone is very large, a telescope is passed directly into the kidney through ones back to fragment and remove the stone.

Q: Can I help prevent kidney stones from forming?

A: Yes, however, once a kidney stone is removed, if a person does not change his or her diet or fluid intake, there's a 70 percent chance another will form. Help prevent calcium stones by remaining well-hydrated. Avoid consuming large amounts of dark leafy vegetables, peanuts, Vitamin C tablets and chocolate. To avoid forming a uric acid-type stone, limit meat, including red meat, chicken or fish.

No. Castle to Review Eagle Ridge FEIS With Hotel Part of Plan

By Martin Wilbur

The North Castle Town Board is scheduled to review the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) this week for a hotel and residential plan for a 32.5-acre parcel formerly owned by IBM.

At its most recently meeting on Nov. 18, the board signaled to representatives of the Eagle Ridge project that it prefers to have a hotel as part of the proposal after the applicant sought to eliminate the lodging facility earlier this year because the hospitality industry has been hard hit by the pandemic.

Town officials, however, have pressed the developer to include a hotel in the plan, particularly after the town's only hotel, La Quinta Inn on Business Park Drive, left town last year.

Last month the developer, MADD Madonna Armonk LLC sought direction from town officials.

"We're really looking for guidance, which direction we're going to be going in the findings statement, whether it's the hotel as part of the project, which was the preferred alternative in the FEIS, or the all-townhouse alternative that we presented," said Kory Salamone, an attorney for the applicant.

According to the FEIS, the property on North Castle Drive, would be subdivided into two parcels, one of 17 acres, the other 15.5 acres. The smaller parcel, which is on the northern portion of the land, is proposed to have a four-story, 72,000-square-foot 115-room hotel. The facility would include a 135-

seat restaurant, a 45-seat bar and a junior ballroom for up to 100 guests.

On the same parcel to the east, there would be 59 condominiums in a four-story, 71,600-square-foot multifamily building, consisting of 39 two-bedroom units and 20 one-bedroom units. Eleven of the units would be affordable.

On the 17-acre portion, 50 market-rate townhouses that are age-restricted for 55-year-olds and up have been proposed. The townhouses would each contain two bedrooms with an office or den, a two-car garage and two off-street parking spaces.

While the board wants the developer to pursue FEIS with the hotel, some expressed concern during the board's last meeting about excessive density and whether the project would be in character with the town. Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto was also skeptical that the project would be suitable for the area and if it would trigger additional costs to the town, such as fire service or additional traffic.

"This is a very big project and obviously it's going to generate taxes to the town, but my concern is that what cost to the town in terms of a project like this, perhaps it's going

to force us to go to a paid fire department," DiGiacinto said. "That would be a new budget item for us and it would be a very significant budget item for us."

Councilman Barry Reiter appeared to be more aggregable toward the proposal.

"I think it's a good project and I think we need a hotel in this town," Reiter said. "We need something that really provides a service. I guess that's what needs to be fine-tuned."

The review of the FEIS will be during Wednesday's Town Board meeting, which starts at 7:30 p.m.



Caring About Reading

(914) Cares recently donated more than 1,000 books to Mount Kisco Elementary School and Bedford Hills Elementary School to benefit the Bedford Central School District's Literacy Library campaign. The donation will help build home libraries for children who cannot afford to purchase books and promote at-home reading.

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Guest Column

Complicity in the Pleasantville Chainsaw Massacre

By Michael Gold

I saw somebody commit murder. And I paid to make it happen.

I killed a giant tree. It was at least 75 feet tall, a Norway maple. Its trunk was so thick you couldn't stretch your arms completely around it. Even LeBron James might not be able to do it.

The tree's branches reached ever upward to absorb sunlight. Its leaves flickered in the wind.

Squirrels and chipmunks scrambled and scratched up the trunk into the tree's upper reaches, often jumping from limb to limb, the branches quivering as they walked on them. If I looked almost straight up, I could see the squirrels' tails twitching and curling as they tight-rope their way across the thinnest twigs. Birds sat on the branches and scanned the area for food.

It took two days to kill the tree. The teeth of the chainsaws bit into the tree bark, the light-colored sapwood, then the darker, brown heartwood.

As the chain saws conducted their murderous work, the sound flooded the neighborhood. I felt very bad about disturbing our neighbors.

Even worse, the chainsaws used gasoline! That sends more carbon dioxide into our air, which is something we really don't need. The guilt keeps building. (If only we could send all our carbon to Mars.)

Humankind's technological genius has its limits. It takes a lot of time to cut down a 75-foot monster plant. The last of the trunk proved to be especially stubborn. It took three

men from the tree cutting company to move it off the base and onto the ground.

The smaller branches and limbs were placed in a wood chipper. Large pieces of the trunk too big for the chipper were put into the flat bed of the tree-cutting company's truck.

The dead bark was covered in saw dust and moss that had grown on the tree.

The squirrels and chipmunks have lost a haven. In my most ridiculous imaginings, I conjured up scenarios where they assemble in a long line in the front yard and throw acorns at me whenever I walk outside.

As for the humans, we've lost the shade over our front yard, which cooled us and our house.

A mature tree absorbs 48 pounds of carbon dioxide a year, according to the Arbor Day Foundation, and makes air for us to breathe. That's gone.

The Norway maple is considered an invasive species, but that does not make me feel less guilty. They "produce large numbers of seeds that are wind dispersed and invade forests and forest edges," states the University of Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group website.

"The dense canopy formed by Norway maple inhibits the regeneration of sugar maple and other tree seedlings, reducing forest density," the UConn site explains.

The reason we had the tree cut was simple. If a storm with strong winds hit, a large, heavy branch might strike my daughter's room. Over the summer, as our home was being renovated, a branch from the tree, which sits in our neighbor's yard by our fence, fell and almost hit one of the men working on its construction.

In August, during the tropical storm, a tree from a Norway maple on the other side of our house dropped into our front yard, destroyed the grass we had just planted and slightly damaged pieces of our front porch.

So, to me, the choice was regrettable, but clear. People need to be safe. Homes too.

I was briefly comforted by the fact that the wood from the tree will be turned into mulch for growing plants, but that still wasn't good enough.

After the killing was done, I made a donation to the nonprofit American Forests to plant trees. Just \$1 plants a tree, either in a wild forest or threatened landscape. The organization hopes to plant three million trees this year.

Also, Pleasantville offers a tree planting program to residents. If you own property on a village street, you can plant a tree in your front yard and split the cost with the village. The municipality will plant the tree, and it becomes the property of the owner. You can choose the type of tree from a list, from a northern red oak to an American dogwood. I intend to take advantage of this program and contact the village in March to plant a new tree in our yard.

I have also discovered that I can turn myself into a tree. There are a few companies out there that will take your ashes when you pass away and put them in soil to grow a tree, which your family can plant close by where they live.

On second thought, I think I'll stick with planting trees.

Pleasantville resident Michael Gold has published articles in The New York Daily News, The Albany Times-Union and other publications.

Letters to the Editor

Acknowledging Racism is a Critical Step for a Community

The Yorktown Coalition on Community Safety and Engagement was created as required by New York Executive Order 203. After watching the Nov. 24 coalition meeting, I feel compelled to speak up.

There seemed to be some question about what was intended by EO 203. In the order itself, the Governor states: *"WHEREAS, the foregoing compels me to conclude that urgent and immediate action is needed to eliminate racial inequities in policing, to modify and modernize policing strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and to develop practices to better address the particular needs of communities of color to promote public safety, improve community engagement, and foster trust;..."*

It is quite clear that addressing racism is at the heart of this initiative. It's very difficult to do that without first acknowledging that racism exists across the world, across the country and right here in our town. That is the very first step to addressing the issue, yet it seems to be a difficult one for our community to take. Perhaps that is why it has been insufficiently addressed at the coalition's public meetings. Since it is such an uncomfortable topic, that may explain why when speakers have attempted to address it, they have not always been

treated with respect.

Anyone who attended the Yorktown March for Civil Justice in June of this year was able to see the courage displayed by the young people of our town who were willing to get up in public to tell their personal stories of experiencing racism right here in Yorktown. Please let their bravery not be in vain.

As a longtime Yorktown resident, I greatly appreciate the resolutions that the Town Board has put forth condemning racism and hatred of all kinds. But that is only a first step. Without further action, we cannot make progress to root out racism right here where we live. It is very important to listen to our community members who have had these experiences

— and to hear them with compassion and a willingness to learn.

I hope that when the coalition drafts its report, it will address the issue of race just as prominently as EO 203 itself does.

I am a member of Yorktown for Justice and also sit on the Steering Committee of Race Amity of Northern Westchester & Putnam, but I speak here for myself. I hope that my fellow community members will join me and many others in learning more about racism, its history, its current manifestations and ways to move forward together as one community.

Judyth Stavans
Yorktown Heights

Make Sure to Refer to Children as People

In his article on the Lightbridge Academy ("Childhood Education Center Makes its Westchester Debut," December 1-December 7), Martin Wilbur writes "The Lightbridge program is based on helping each child reach its different development appropriate milestones..."

Since when is a child an "it?" Have we become so politically correct that we can't

use proper pronouns in our discourse? Couldn't Mr. Wilbur have written "... helping each child reach his or her different development appropriate milestones...?"

Natalie Barklow
Greenwich, Conn.

Interaction Within Schools Focus of Mt. Pleasant Police Reform Discussion

By Martin Wilbur

The committee reviewing Mount Pleasant's police policies and procedures last week primarily focused on improving the relationship with the two residential treatment facilities for youths and whether the presence of police in public schools is beneficial.

Police Chief Paul Oliva led the discussion for the nearly two-hour Police Reform Committee meeting, where he initially provided an overview of the department and the town's demographic information before engaging with committee members. Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed an executive order last June that requires every governmental entity in the states that oversees a police department to review its practices.

Currently, there are 46 officers for more than 43,000 residents, Mount Pleasant's population as of the 2010 Census. It is less than the 48 officers employed by the town through much of the 1960s and '70s, Oliva said.

About 84 percent of town residents are white, just over 5 percent are Black, 3.26 percent are Asian and 5 percent are from other races. Native Americans and Pacific Islanders each comprise a fraction of 1 percent. Oliva said there are currently no Black officers, although there are some officers of mixed races. However, the department does not ask for a job

candidate's racial background. There are currently three women officers.

Oliva said he tells his officers it's critical for them to have relationships with all segments of the community.

"I tell them we're in a customer service business, and that's what we do," he said. "We're there to help people and help the community out, and you are not going to see them on their greatest days sometimes, but you have to have patience and it's customer service."

In recent years, the two residential facilities for youths in town, the Pleasantville Cottage School and Hawthorne Cedar Knolls, have attracted much attention with repeated incidents and calls for police to report to the campus.

Margarita Carson, the director of security at the JCCA campus who was standing in last week for committee member Richard Hucke, the campus director, said there has been significant progress in improving the understanding between the residents, staff and the police. The officers that have responded to the schools have exhibited professionalism and great care, Carson said.

She reminded Oliva, Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi and the 11 other committee members that 85 to 90 percent of the calls to the campus are psychiatric and not criminal emergencies. Much of the schools' population has experienced serious trauma in their lives and are youths of color, who

come from communities that have not had a lot of confidence in law enforcement, Carson said.

"Many of our youths have had traumatic experiences, but they come from communities, lower income communities that have not had experience with police officers," she said. "We are still battling a systemic racist system that has policies and procedures that really impact our ability to be successful in caring for the kids."

Town resident and committee member Kelsey Padgett questioned whether having police officers visit public schools on a regular basis is beneficial.

"To me, it seems like the reason why we're having these meetings is that the police are not trusted by certain parts of every town and every city, and that young people and people of color, and so what do we want to do to help change that and I don't know that cops being in your school helps that," Padgett said.

Oliva mentioned that his department not only wants a strong relationship with teachers and administrators but the students as well. The police seek to avoid ushering a student out of the building in handcuffs.

There is also still the concern of school shootings.

"The best way, I think, to prevent a school shooting is to be preventative and have a feel for the student population and

have the ability for another student to say, 'Hey, my friend is saying stuff or this kid is saying stuff, I don't know what to do,' and to have that outlet so they feel comfortable enough with the police that they can actually go to them and say something," Oliva said.

Committee member Clare Degnan, a representative of the Legal Aid Society of Westchester, suggested the town explore implicit bias training. Oftentimes, a person isn't aware they have implicit biases.

"We all have implicit biases, which affects how we all interact with everyone and how we deal with whomever we are dealing with," Degnan said.

Carson, who lives on the JCCA campus, said while the Mount Pleasant police have been very respectful, as a woman of color with a Black son, she has had to educate him on how respond to police.

"I'm very concerned for his safety at times being in the community, and there are conversations that I have to have with my son that some people will never have to have with their kids," she said.

That includes making sure he doesn't wear a hood or asks permission to move, Carson said.

The committee will convene again for a live-streamed meeting this Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 6 p.m. Residents can watch the meeting by registering on the town's website.

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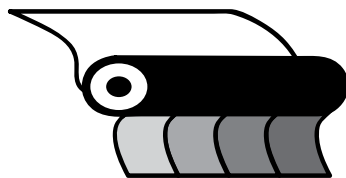
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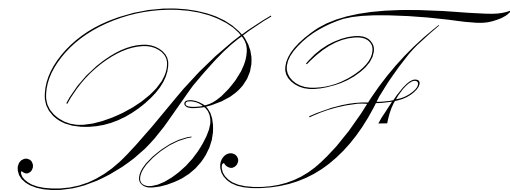


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Obituaries

William Belmont

William "Bill" Belmont, 83, passed peacefully into eternal life on Nov. 24 after bravely fighting cancer for many years.

Bill was an avid golfer and reader, but his first love was always his family. He owned and operated a barber shop in Thornwood and Pleasantville for over 40 years. He attended Pleasantville High School and graduated in 1956 and was known for playing every sport in Pleasantville and being a spectator for his four kids and beyond. Not only did he enjoy playing golf, but he taught the game to many as a golf instructor. He retired to Boynton Beach, Fla. where he was active in his church and community. Bill was someone friends and family could always count on for



William Belmont

advice, to lend a hand or to put a smile on their face.

Belmont is survived by his four children who were his pride and joy – Bill (Joan) Belmont, Margaret (Tom) Gilmartin, Rick (Sandra) Belmont and Pam Belmont. He leaves eight grandchildren, who lovingly knew him as "Pop," Tim (Stacey Fox) Belmont, Lauren (Rob) Clancy, Greg Belmont, Michael (Lauren Hahn) Gilmartin, Gina Belmont, Steven Belmont, John Belmont and

Janiya Belmont. He also leaves four great-grandchildren, Sophia, Jackson, Sadie and Shane, and many nieces, nephews and in-laws whom he loved dearly. He is also survived by the mother of his children, Donna (Bleakley) Belmont.

He was predeceased by his mother and father, Mildred and Rocco Belmont.

EMT-B, Connecticut state certified EMT, NHA certified EKG/EEG technician, NHA certified phlebotomy technician and AHA BLS provider (CPR and AED).

Recently, he worked for CareMount in the Neurology Department while being a volunteer at the Yorktown Ambulance Corps. Ferri had a passion for helping others, which contributed to him pursuing a career in the medical field. He had a thirst for medical knowledge and aspirations to become a physician assistant. He cared for his grandparents whom he adored. He enjoyed challenging himself by building computers even if that meant pulling all-nighters. He also loved working on his car.

Ferri is survived by his loving parents, Kathy and Angelo Ferri, of Cortlandt; his twin sister, Lia Ferri (Philip Honovich), of Rye; his younger sister, Danielle Ferri, of Mineola, N.Y.; his beautiful niece, Sofia Honovich of Rye; his maternal grandparents; his dearest paternal grandmother, Anna Ferri; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Hudson Football Mothers Club and remained a fan of Hendrick Hudson sports long after her children had graduated. She was a fan of the New York Yankees and loved Derek Jeter but hated A-Rod. She was also a member of the Buchanan Senior Citizens.

Wessells was predeceased by her husband, John S. Wessells Sr., of Buchanan, and by her grandson, John Samuel Wessells III. She is survived by her children, Catherine Bellino (Dale), Patricia Fotino, John S. Wessells Jr. (Gail) and Thomas Wessells; and her grandchildren, Kerstin McGarry (Sean), Tara Wessells, Christopher Wessells (Rene), Michael Wessells, Daniele Wessells, Rachel Steen (Rob) and David Wessells.

wife of 54 years; sons Daniel (Amy) and Eric (Renee); brother Neil (DiAnne); brother-in-law Robert Littman (Ruth); and grandchildren Henry, Abbie, Ruby and Zoe.

Contributions may be made in his honor to Guiding Eyes for the Blind of Yorktown Heights, Harlem Lacrosse or the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCan).

Matthew Ferri

Matthew Joseph Ferri died Nov. 29 at his residence in Yorktown. He was 31.

Ferri was born July 17, 1989, and lived in Cortlandt his entire life until recently when he moved to Yorktown Heights. He earned his bachelor's degree in allied health sciences with a concentration in health sciences and a minor in biological sciences from the University of Connecticut in 2012. While in school he interned at Mount Sinai Center for Eosinophilic Disorders, completing 264 hours of shadowing doctors during endoscopic procedures and helping with research projects.

After graduating from the University of Connecticut, he worked for TransCare EMS as a full-time emergency medical technician while performing more than 300 hours of clinical rotations with paramedics. He was most proud of his various certifications including NREMT Nationally Certified EMT, state certified

Donna Wessells

Donna M. Wessells, a lifelong Peekskill and Buchanan resident, died Nov. 25. She was 91.

Wessells was born Aug. 22, 1929, in Watertown, N.Y. to Joseph and Dorothy Allen. She graduated from Peekskill High School and later worked for the telephone company as an operator prior to becoming a full-time mom. She was married in 1949 to John S. Wessells of Peekskill and celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in 2019.

She raised her family in Buchanan and lived there for 69 years. She was active for many years as a member of the Hendrick

Howard Ellison

Howard Ellison, a Yorktown resident, died Nov. 29 after a prolonged battle with pancreatic cancer. He was an accomplished marketing research leader and a loving, devoted husband, father, grandfather and friend.

He is survived by Judy (nee Littman), his

David Rogers

David "Tiger" C. Rogers of Cortlandt Manor died after a courageous five-month battle with metastatic kidney cancer on Nov. 20. He was 56.

Rogers was a highly regarded leader in the software technology industry in the area of customer success/client relationships. Most recently, he worked for SMARSH in New York City before his illness.

Rogers was born in Bryn Mawr, Pa. on Dec. 7, 1963, to Dr. Honour Howe and David Rogers. He graduated from The Shipley School in Pennsylvania in 1982, and earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a master's in business administration from St. Bonaventure University in 1989 and 1991, respectively.

Rogers honorably served his country as a lance corporal in the United States Marine Corps from 1984 to 1988 as an aircraft ordinance technician. He was an active member in the West Point Army A-Club and the national organization, Irreverent Warriors, devoted to helping prevent veteran suicide. He was a member of numerous industry-related professional organizations.

On Dec. 10, 1994, he and Sarah Fowler (formerly of Adams, N.Y.) were married at Chautauqua Institute in Chautauqua, N.Y.

Rogers will be remembered for his generosity and kindness to others, his leadership and mentoring acumen, his

ability to create connections and build relationships, his love of cooking and baking bread, his amazing gardens (vegetable and flower), his incomparable tailgates at West Point football games, his devotion to his wife, his love of his dog and his overall passion for life – his joie de vivre for all things.

He is survived by his spouse of 26 years, Sarah Fowler-Rogers, and their fur-baby Abigail (of Cortlandt Manor); his mother, Honour Moore (of Radnor, Pa.); brothers Christian Moore (of Colorado Springs, Colo.) and Philip Moore (of Philadelphia); his mother- and father-in-law, Pamela and Karl Fowler (of Henderson, N.Y.); brother-in-law Karl Fowler Jr.; several nephews and a niece, Zachary, Rhett and Patrick Fowler (of New York) and Brandon and Grace Moore (of Colorado); one great-niece (Lilliana); and two great-nephews (Chase and Declan). His stepfather, Rev. Rudolph Moore, passed before him.

Memorial contributions may be made in Rogers' memory to <https://www.irreverentwarriors.com>. The mission of Irreverent Warriors is to bring veterans together using humor and camaraderie to improve mental health and prevent veteran suicide. Contributions may also be made to <http://vetalitycorp.org>. The purpose of VETality is to reintegrate U.S. military veterans into society through education, training and career networking thereby increasing veteran employment.

Carol Schulz

With profound sadness we announce the passing of Carol Rosemary Schulz, our loving and devoted mother and a friend to all whose lives she touched.

She had the most beautiful smile that could light up your soul; Carol's contagious cheerfulness is what made her so special. She made everyone feel valued. She marveled at the smallest accomplishment. You left her company feeling better.

Carol's 79 years were a series of outstanding accomplishments. After many years as a stay-at-home mom, she took college courses. Her engaging personality rocketed her to success as a corporate trainer where she taught employees of companies such as Bacardi, Canon and Citibank how to hone their sales and presentation skills. She then went on to form her own successful business as a consultant in the same field.

In 1980, Carol was discouraged by the lack of advice she received from physicians regarding menopause. Menopause wasn't a medical focus at the time, so she researched and dug deep to find her own answers and decided to share them for all of the women in her shoes. The result of her research was a book: "60 Second Menopause Management: The Quickest Ways to Handle Problems and Discomfort." Her work was published worldwide and translated into many languages, including Turkish and Russian.

In earlier years, Carol started her career path at New York Air as a flight attendant and rose to an administrative position where

she was responsible for the management of crew scheduling, budget planning and corporate communications.

At six feet tall, she was a statuesque beauty. In 2008, Carol was crowned "Ms. New York Senior America." She had a lovely voice and the chutzpah to perform engagingly on stage. Carol received citations from senators and mayors for the significant contributions she made to improving the quality of life of seniors in Nassau and Suffolk counties. She was also awarded "Miss Congeniality 2008," which is not at all surprising given her welcoming and warm personality.

Carol, mom, Gammy, is most remembered by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchild for her ability to make everything fun. We fondly remember her steak and rake parties, elaborate scavenger hunts, freeze-outs at the beach and dancing for dessert. Her grandchildren will enjoy the memory of special days at West Hampton, Disney World, Aunt Julie's Florida house, simple trips to the library and playground and walking to town for Italian ices. As toddlers, they all remember bouncing on her knee and can still sing the songs she taught them.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 9 from 5 to 7 p.m. at Beecher Flocks Funeral Home in Pleasantville. A funeral mass is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 10 at 10 a.m. at St. Patrick's Church in Armonk. Internment will follow at Greenfield Cemetery, 650 Nassau Rd., Uniondale, N.Y. 11553.

Memorial donations are welcome to the Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org).

Armonk Golf, Condo Project Moves Forward After Years of Delays

By Martin Wilbur

It has been more than a decade since a group of partners bought the old Canyon Club on Bedford Road in Armonk. They sought to transform the 156-acre property and golf course into a 21st century country club community with a redesigned course and luxury condominiums.

Since December 2009, when they bought the parcel and renamed it Brynwood Golf & Country Club, there were innumerable debates about residential density and obstacles galore over water supply, potential traffic generation and the partners' difficulty in obtaining financing.

While 2020 has proven to be a tough year for nearly everyone, the pieces have finally fallen into place for the project that is now called The Summit Club at Armonk. In recent months, renovation of the course redesigned by Rees Jones has been steadily progressing, with an April opening planned, said Jeffrey Mendell, the project's managing partner and a 25-year Armonk resident.

Just before Thanksgiving, the formal application for the residential component was submitted for site plan review. The project is on the North Castle Planning Board's Dec. 14 agenda. That will be followed two nights later by a special Town Board meeting where the applicant's representatives will present an alternate plan to Water District No. 2 residents in hopes of bringing adequate water to the site for the proposed 73 condominiums.

"We've been getting inquiries steadily



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

One of the holes that is under construction at The Summit Club at Armonk. The redesigned golf course is scheduled to open in April as the developers seek site plan approval for 73 luxury condominiums.

since we closed (the golf course) four years ago," Mendell said. "People want to know what's going on, when it's going to open and if it's going to open. Now I can comfortably say that the project is moving full speed ahead."

Mendell said crews will continue with the golf course renovation through Dec. 19, then take off for the holidays and resume over the winter, weather permitting.

Course improvements will include three new holes on the back nine, the rebuilding of all fairway and greenside bunkers along with the adjustment of some bunker locations to give players additional shot options. Several greens and landing zones are being reshaped

to improve playability for the 6,700-yard course.

Mendell said the 10th hole was eliminated and the former par 5 hole 17 has been split into two holes, one a par 3 and the other a par 4.

The goal is to open the front nine by Apr. 1, followed by the back nine, where many of the new greens are being installed, before the end of April. Mendell said the course will be served by a trailer that will be home to the pro shop and the membership director. Adjacent to that will be a patio with food and beverage with fire pits and music.

After more than 10 years of fits and starts, it took a pandemic that has made life so



An artist's rendering of one of the proposed residential buildings at The Summit Club at Armonk.

difficult on so many to breathe new life into the project.

"There's no question the pandemic has been a plus for both the golf business and the residential business in Westchester County," Mendell said. "Most golf clubs are filling up or are full and raising their prices. Golf is a great pandemic sport. In fact, the worse you are at it, the farther you are apart from everybody on the golf course, and since most people are not very good, they're very safe out here."

Furthermore, the residential market in Westchester and other suburban communities has gotten a significant lift as families flee the city and more congested parts of the tristate area for open space.

Mendell said he expects the site plan review to move smoothly and efficiently. With the zoning in place, he's hopeful his team can receive its approvals relatively quickly and start construction on the condominiums next summer. Current plans call for the 73 market-rate units to be housed in seven buildings, and seven affordable

continued on page 14

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UNDER RABBINICAL SUPERVISION DAILY

Chappaqua Singer, Rotary Collaborate on Holiday Concert to Help SPCA

By Martin Wilbur

For so many over the past nine months, it's been Zoom meeting after Zoom meeting and other virtual get-togethers, whether it's for work or to see family and friends.

On Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m., a virtual concert by singer and Chappaqua resident Frank Shiner will try to bring some holiday spirit and enjoyment to a local audience while also helping the SPCA of Westchester.

The Chappaqua Rotary Club has organized the virtual holiday event where the public can go to the organization's Facebook, Twitter or Instagram accounts to get the link to watch the free concert and also make a donation to the organization if they wish, said the club's President Eileen Gallagher.

Gallagher, who volunteers at the SPCA, which is in temporary quarters in Cortlandt while renovations are being done at its Briarcliff Manor location, said that Rotary has been unable to hold any of its fundraisers since March. Shiner, also an animal lover, offered to perform a holiday concert from his home to benefit the SPCA, Gallagher said.

"We said 'Okay, let's do it,' because this

way any donations that we get are going to go directly to them and it's a way of supporting what they do and having people kind of get into a holiday spirit, even though some people may be a little weary from Zooming meetings and concerts and everything," Gallagher said. "But it's a lovely way to hear his music and to actually see you are supporting the SPCA and everything they do."

Shiner, an actor and singer in the 1980s before he opened his own business, returned to singing about 10 years ago. He and his wife happened to be dining at a restaurant during an open mic night, so he took to the stage and performed. That evening spawned a rebirth of his singing career with the release of his debut album, "The Real Me" in 2014. Three years later Shiner followed up with his second LP.

But opportunities to perform have evaporated since the onset of the pandemic.

"I just said being locked down, not being able to perform and doing something good with it, I said yes," Shiner said of Wednesday's concert. "We've had a ball working on this. It's really been fun. It's such a great cause to help these creatures that can't help themselves and can't even tell us if they're having a problem."

Much of what is expected to be an hour-



Chappaqua resident and singer Frank Shiner will perform a virtual holiday concert Wednesday evening that will also serve as a fundraiser for the SPCA of Westchester.

long set will feature traditional Christmas songs, he said. Shiner will also add two secular songs that he thought would be appropriate for the event. The program will be interspersed with stories and anecdotes.

In his home, Shiner has a lighting and

sound system, he can create reverb and pipe it directly through Zoom.

"I think it's just time to get back to who we are again and back to tradition," Shiner said. "I wanted to make it nostalgic, I wanted to make it about good times again because they're coming, they're coming back."

Gallagher said the evening will also enable local residents who donate to the SPCA to buy dinner on Wednesday from selected Chappaqua restaurants at a discount. Anyone who makes a donation of at least \$100 would be entitled to a 10 percent discount. Participating establishments are Bobo's, Craft Pizza & Beer, Ibiza, Le Jardin du Roi, Pizza Station, Susan Lawrence Gourmet and Taco Street.

The goal was to support local restaurants who have been supportive of Rotary's causes and to hopefully drive some business their way, she said.

"It became a kind of a dinner and a show thing," Gallagher said. "They can go pick up their food, and then they're supporting these restaurants by taking out, and the restaurants are helping out by giving a discount to entice donations of \$100 or more. It's basically part of our goal to support local organizations and to give back."

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Ballard-Durand Honors and Pays Tribute to Families and First Responders Affected by COVID-19

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Taghkanic Chorale Overcomes Obstacles to Present Virtual Holiday Concert

By Martin Wilbur

Taghkanic Chorale has been providing Westchester music lovers with high-quality chorale performances for the past 53 years.

With nearly all in-person concerts and performances, from local theater groups to concerts to Broadway shows, remaining on the shelf for the foreseeable future, the roughly 30-member Yorktown-based group desperately wanted to find a way to continue the tradition of their holiday show.

Ingenuity combined with expert use of technology and hours of editing by Music Director Jason Tramm and his son will allow Taghkanic Chorale to do just that. The group will present a virtual concert this weekend that is appropriately titled "Hope and Healing."

"We were a little discouraged because it was looking pretty bleak, but then we started to realize as long as we didn't get together physically that could be part of the concert," said David Watson, a tenor and longtime chorale member.

Part of the concert, which is scheduled for this Saturday at 7:30 p.m., will consist of the full chorus. Each member received a guide track with Tramm conducting, Watson said, and the members each filmed themselves and recorded their parts on their iPhones. The singers then sent their recordings to Tramm, who along with his son, is putting all the parts together.

The other half of what will be about an hour-long program also required meticulous planning. About 15 of the chorale's members



One of Taghkanic Chorale's outdoor rehearsals this fall in preparation for its recorded holiday concert, which will be shown virtually this Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

rehearsed outside Holy Name of Mary Church in Croton-on-Hudson, the venue of most of its performances, throughout the fall, Watson said.

Then on Nov. 17, those singers split up into small ensemble groups to record in real time in the church with the windows open, proper social distancing and masks, he said. There was no audience in the pews.

For each song, it takes about 10 man hours of work to piece all the parts together and present the concert as though it was a type of Zoom call, Watson explained. Tramm is the conductor of chorale music at Seton

Hall University who also has expertise in the technical aspects of piecing together taped performances while his son is a videographer.

Watson said shortly after the pandemic hit it seemed far-fetched that Taghkanic Chorale would present any type of performance in 2020.

"It seemed a little unlikely at the time back in March that we would be able to pull this off," Watson said. "The impression we were getting was that chorale singing is almost the antithesis of controlling the spread of COVID because you're breathing in really

heavily, you're expunging air, expelling air, you're enunciating, you're spitting all over each other inadvertently when you make an S or a P or a T."

The program is designed to be an inspiring and uplifting experience with pieces from both classical and modern composers. It includes excerpts from Handel's "Messiah," Mendelssohn's "Elijah," and Vivaldi's "Gloria." "The Awakening" by Joseph Martin and "Earth Song" by Frank Ticheli will also be performed along with a few recognizable and loved holiday songs.

There will be commentary between some of the selections about how the chorale was able to pull off the concert.

Given the disruption and despair for so many people this year, Watson hopes the concert will provide the chorale's fans with some holiday season joy, a bit of normalcy and something to look forward to this Saturday evening.

"It was ingenuity, it was resourcefulness on the part of our maestro, our music director, just this indefatigable optimism," Watson said. "He would not be deterred. He said 'We're going to make it through this.'"

The concert begins online this Saturday at 7:30 p.m. Listeners should log onto <https://youtu.be/BSJg0AudkFc>. The recording will be available on YouTube until the end of December. The performance is free, although donations are encouraged to help support the nonprofit chorale's work. Donations may be made by visiting <https://www.taghkanicchorale.org/donations>.



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No. Castle Receives More Than \$9M in State Funds for Repaving Work

By Martin Wilbur

More than \$9 million in state funds have been obtained to repave state roads in the Town of North Castle over the next few years.

Last month Assemblyman David Buchwald (D-White Plains) announced four separate paving projects in different areas of town that will repair roads that in some cases have significantly deteriorated.

About \$5.2 million has been earmarked

to repave Route 22 from Route 120 north to Middle Patent Road, which is almost to the Bedford town line.

A second piece, which will cost \$490,000, will see Route 433 repaved for its entire stretch from Route 22 to the Connecticut state line.

Then Route 120 will be repaved starting at the Great American Center office complex into the Town of Harrison, Buchwald said. That state has set aside \$2.7 million for that project.

Buchwald said that the Route 120 piece is critical because it is the original surface from decades ago and is in close proximity to the airport.

“This is important, obviously, for residents of North Castle that are driving south but also anyone in Westchester County that goes to Westchester County Airport,” he said.

Another project in town that is scheduled in town that is likely to be undertaken at least a couple of years down the road will

be the repaving of Main Street through the heart of downtown Armonk, Buchwald said. About \$1 million will be set aside for that work.

A smaller repaving project has already been started on Route 128 in the vicinity of School Street, Buchwald said.

In addition to the money for the road work, the outgoing assemblyman also announced a \$125,000 state grant will be used toward improving the HVAC system at the North White Plains Community Center.

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Armonk Golf, Condo Project Moves Forward After Years of Delays

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units to be built at a yet-to-be-determined location off site.

The units will feature two- and three-bedroom residences with a den. Price points for the units have not been released but it will be a luxury residential community with a sports and wellness orientation for people who want to live well, Mendell said.

“I think it will take three to five years to build out and we’ll probably be building multiple buildings at the same time,” he said. “So it’s really a function of the market, but I’m confident it’s going to go a lot quicker

given the strength of the residential market in this area.”

Mendell said the decision to rebrand the facility The Summit Club at Armonk was to give the project a fresh start. It’s also a nod to the property being at one of the highest elevations in the area with spectacular views.

“It’s a really special piece of property, which is why I was first attracted to it many, many years ago,” he said.

For more information, visit www.thesummitclub.net or call 914-273-9300.

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

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The Pandemic is a Time to Bring the Outdoors Inside

It's been more than nine months since COVID-19 has made us aware that the world outside our front doors is less safe than it used to be. Today, I venture outside only when necessary, wearing a mask and keeping a safe distance from others. It's a different world that we live in today.

Having been reared in the Tidewater area of Virginia, I spent most of my early years outside – and barefoot at that. So, it was a real transition for me when I went to college and lived in a third-floor dorm and couldn't just swing open the door and feel the lush, soft grass under my feet.

Now as I contemplate my more stay-at-home existence, I have one particular interest: How can I at least have some semblance of outdoor living?

I began my adult life in a series of apartments and townhouses in New York City and Boston, so at least I was not completely new to the notion of being home in a building, but the decades of tending to my own homestead made me feel deeply connected to the outdoors.

I know I'm not alone. Just recently, as a realtor, I worked with a retired couple who had to make the hard decision of whether to move to one of two styles of condominium: one with a front and back yard, the other in a building with just a Juliet balcony.



By Bill Primavera

The former affords many of the same outdoor pleasures of single-family home ownership, but bears the responsibility of maintenance, if only for some flower beds, which the husband didn't mind, but the wife did. The latter was maintenance-free but lacking that connection to nature, except for the views from oversized windows. The couple eventually chose the latter.

As for me, I know I am now happier in new digs without a yard and content with an elevated view of trees and surrounding hills to greet me each morning. However, the days have grown

darker as we approach winter, and soon many of us will be leaving home before the sun rises and returning after dark. So much for the nice view.

Especially for the winter months, here are some ideas to bring a bit of the outdoors inside.

One no-fail option is to fill your home with plants, and literally have nature alive in your home. The volumes written on the choosing and care of houseplants can fill a wall of shelves, but the basics remain the same: observe how much light a room gets, see which plants grow best with that amount, select the hardier specimens – especially if you are a beginner – and from that group pick what pleases you most. If potted plants aren't your thing, use the



decorator's secret and source out some convincing artificial plants. They may not replenish the air like their genuine counterparts, but I am convinced that they have the same soothing effect on the psyche. From a delicate orchid to a tall, potted palm, artificial plants can give you any look you want without the need to match plant to environment.

My wife Margaret is particularly clever in mixing artificial blossoms with real cut stems to create bountiful centerpieces, especially during holidays. Sometimes she and our guests make a game out of trying to guess which blooms are real and which aren't.

If it's the smell of real flowers you miss, you can try to bring fragrance into your home through aromatherapy, potpourri or scented candles, but make sure they are low in chemicals.

Plants and flowers aren't the only way to bring the sense of nature indoors. An organic feeling can also be built through the various textures of wood, stone and other surfaces. You may be lucky and have these built into the structure of your home already, be they unique wood floor planks, exposed ceiling beams or a stone fireplace. Otherwise, you can use smaller elements to the same effect.

Consider a line of seashells along a mantelpiece or a hand-carved wooden bowl that still retains the irregularities of the original tree. One deluxe option, which includes the element of water, would be one of the new designs of vertical indoor fountains, where water flows down over a wall of copper, slate or pebbles.

While we are on the subject of flowing water, let's not forget the element of sound. There are machines advertised that generate the sounds of ocean waves, rain or birdsong. Now you can also create the same soundscape with the use of an app or a streaming music service.

With such diverse options available, I do not need to lose the feeling of being in a verdant landscape of my own creating, no matter what the season is outside.

Bill Primavera is a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc., the longest running public relations agency in Westchester. To engage the services of The Home Guru to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.

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Debating the Aging Qualities of Bordeaux and California Wines



By Nick Antonaccio

My longtime friend Rick and I have ongoing debates on many different aspects of wine. Many times, our debates focus on nuances rather than broad-scoped issues; at other times, on our biases to a particular wine region after one

of our many couples' wine adventures.

This week I'm reprising a column on a subject we have debated for years, with no clear winner. The issue: Do fine wines from around the world age differently? Are certain wines stylized to reach their peak in the first few years of release or are they made to be cellared and aged to allow them to evolve into something different, something more refined?

Rick and I typically focus on the aging merits of Cabernet Sauvignon-based wines from California versus those from Bordeaux. Can an American wine that is produced to meet the American palate hold up, and improve, in the 15 to 20 ensuing years after release? Does a Bordeaux wine that is stylized to evolve and develop in the bottle age differently than its California competitor?

This is what a typical debate sounds like.

Nick: The French have been experimenting with crafting wines for centuries. They've taken what Mother Nature has handed them and created a wine that reflects their land and their heritage. Through experimentation,



they've developed an approach of blending grapes that best represents the unique natural elements of Bordeaux – its soil and microclimate. These wines are the heart and soul of the people of the land. California Cabernets, on the other hand, offer what many Americans seek in their wines and their lives: instant gratification, the here and now experience, an in-your-face attitude.

Comparing Bordeaux wines to California wines is like comparing Mozart to The Rolling Stones. They are both distinctive and have their individual appeal, but will The Rolling Stones' style be popular in 200 years, as Mozart's has been? I think not.

Rick: Nick, you've got it all wrong, my myopic buddy. The French have produced a wine that oftentimes lacks fruit and alcohol and is quite austere when released. Their "style" is a result of forced techniques to compensate for the less than stellar growing conditions in Bordeaux. California Cabernet

Sauvignon-based wines benefit from superior growing conditions – more sunshine, more consistent weather and more suitable soil. These elements produce great wines. Even the wine critics favor this style.

Nick: The wine critics? You've struck a sensitive chord, my misguided

friend. Americans are overly influenced by critics' palates. Why should I be influenced by someone whose palate and preferences may be totally opposite from mine? A number

of American critics seem to prefer fruit-forward, high-alcohol, low-acid, soft-tannic California Cabernet-based wines. By definition, these wines are difficult to age. There are no subtle nuances, no long-lasting tannins to provide backbone. The fruit tends to dissipate over time, leaving a high-alcohol wine with little finesse.

Rick: You're missing the point, my Francophile sympathizer. Don't you remember that famous wine tasting in Paris in 1976 when the Americans scored higher than their Bordeaux competitors? I will

accept a portion of your argument regarding the Bordeaux style you keep harping on.

In the last few decades many high-end California producers have embraced this style and are producing wines that have more aging potential. And they cost about half of what the Bordeaux command. Wines like Opus One and Dominus are crafted in the Bordeaux style, so they can be enjoyed while young but will evolve as they age – the best of both worlds, like listening to The Rolling Stones.

Nick: Hogwash. The wines at the 1976 competition had hardly any age on them and the California entrants were produced in the Bordeaux style. By the way, Opus One and Dominus are owned by two of the most famous French Bordeaux wineries.

Rick: Okay, my unrelenting wine geek friend. I concede. History tells me that Bordeaux is a safer bet. But I'm also going to cellar a Cal Cab; then we'll finally resolve our debate. And I'll still be listening to the Stones.

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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As we enter the holiday season, we want the comfort and support of our friends and loved ones now more than ever. As cases of Coronavirus continue to increase across New York, the safest way to navigate the holiday seasons is to celebrate at home with the people you live with. Get creative with virtual gathering ideas. If you do gather, remember to wear your mask correctly so it is effective, stay at least 6 feet away from others who do not live with you, and wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

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The illustration above is an artist's depiction of the Indian Point property after the completion of major decommissioning work.

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A Picture's Worth a Thousand Birds: Wildlife Photography Highlight of Year

By Brian Kluepfel

This was the year that really flipped us the bird, but 2020 is nearly over. A deadly virus combined with incalculable human hubris and selfishness has brought us to a frightening point, and I'm frankly glad to be alive.

This column, ultimately, is about connecting people to birding, and I'm sorry so many hundreds of thousands will never have that opportunity again.

Humanity and wildlife – forever linked in the chain of life – have reason for slight optimism, however. The non-human ecosystem actually has done well during the pandemic, given that the normal level of disturbances that often harm wildlife was drastically reduced, such as carbon emissions and vehicular traffic. We were forced to leave nature alone, and this was a good thing.

On the human side of the equation, vaccines are being developed, and while we await them, many people are finally taking the coronavirus seriously enough to take precautions to protect themselves and others. Under the new administration in 2021, I'm sure more care will be taken to protect the environment, and greener solutions to problems are more likely.

One thing I was fortunate enough to do this year before the world went completely mad was to visit my wife's native country, Colombia. I met my in-laws and extended family for the first time. I had wonderful

food. And, of course, being one of the most avian-dense places in the world, we saw a lot of birds, by attending the annual Colombia Bird Fair in Cali. We also visited some other sites around the country.

We saw multicolored tanagers, we saw green honeycreepers, we saw crimson-rumped toucanets. Lots of different hummingbirds in a country that boasts 73 species.

Near a golf course, we saw blue-headed parrots. In the mountains near Salento, we saw an incredible sight – the Andean condor – Colombia's national bird and the largest flying bird (by weight and wingspan) in the world. The condor andino had a wingspan of nearly 10 feet; I was gobsmacked to see something that big and from pretty close up, too.

Along the hot, sunny shoreline of Cartagena, we saw huge brown pelicans trawling for fish, and magnificent frigatebirds scissoring the air. A laughing



PAULA ZORRILLA PHOTO

The beautiful yellow-headed caracara, on a light pole in Colombia earlier this year, is one of the many species of birds found in the South American country.

falcon took us by surprise, surveying a 51st-floor bar where we were sipping cocktails.

Finally, just outside Mama Lucia's apartment (my mother-in-law), a beautiful yellow-headed caracara took up residence on a light pole. This is a reminder, as "urban birder" David Lindo told us at the bird fair, "just look up. You'll see birds." True, everywhere.

So we'll take our photos from Colombia to Saw Mill River Audubon's annual members-only exhibition this Thursday, Dec. 10 (via Zoom, of course). While we'll miss the usual cookies, punch and face-to-face conversation with our friends, we'll get to see that there were some bright spots in a dark year, and that there is indeed light at the end of the tunnel.

Brian Kluepfel writes for *Lonely Planet* travel publications and *Birdwatching Magazine* and edits the *Saw Mill River Audubon* newsletter. Catch him at www.birdmanwalking.com.

THERE'S A WORD FOR IT

A vocabulary-building quiz By Edward Goralski

Words of the Month Club – December Edition/ This week the quiz words come from the December entries found in the book "The Cabinet of Linguistic Curiosities" by Paul Anthony Jones. The book is "A yearbook of forgotten words" that features a "curious or long-forgotten word of the day, picked from the more obscure corners of the dictionary."

1. ice-bolt (n.)

- A) an avalanche B) a frozen waterfall C) a cold front

2. premonstrance (n.)

- A) immunity B) an omen C) a forceful protest

3. bamblusterate (v.)

- A) to give a boost B) fall flat C) confuse

4. abbozzo (n.)

- A) a minor misstep B) an upbeat state C) a rough draft

5. scuddle (v.)

- A) to wash dishes B) poke about C) cut firewood

6. piper's-bidding (n.)

- A) a last-minute invitation B) a fantastic plan C) a call to arms

7. scurryfungue (v.)

- A) to shake out B) hastily tidy a house C) search about

8. doniferous (adj.)

- A) slightly ill B) domesticated C) carrying a gift

ANSWERS:
1. A. An avalanche
2. B. A potent; an omen
3. C. To hoax; to confuse
4. C. A rough draft or preliminary sketch
5. A. To wash dishes
6. A. A last-minute invitation
7. B. To hastily tidy a house
8. C. Carrying a gift



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A Spiritual View

By Cantor Lilah Sugarman

"Don't let the light go out, it's lasted for so many years."

We are in the Jewish month of Kislev, and it is in this month that we have the holiday of Hanukkah, which celebrates bringing more light into the darkest time of the year.

As we enter the darkest and coldest months, I want to offer two lessons from the Jewish tradition that I think we can all draw on to bring more light into our lives and allow for nourishment, support and comfort during these months ahead.

The first is the idea of Hitlamdut, which is a reflexive form of the Hebrew word for learning. It is often translated as the internalizing of learning. Another way to think about it is by engaging in a sense of curiosity that allows for further connection and understanding.

Practicing Hitlamdut asks us to notice and explore further our everyday actions. Rabbi Pamela Wax suggests practicing Hitlamdut

by noticing what you can learn from others' small actions at least three times each day.

This first practice is an internal practice of learning and curiosity. The second is more external. In our tradition, we are taught to "Love our neighbor as ourselves."

In this time of uncertainty, I charge you to use these months of winter to safely connect with and

support your neighbors. Whether it be calling and checking up on a friend or dropping off food for a family in need, take these months of uncertainty to bring comfort to others.

May we all use these next months to connect through curiosity and support others through kindness.

Lilah Sugarman is the cantor at Congregation B'Nai Yisrael in Armonk and is part of the Armonk Faith Alliance. The alliance also comprises Hillside Church, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, St. Patrick's RC Church and St. Nersess Armenian Seminary.



Westchester Chordsmen to Offer Virtual Holiday Concert This Sunday

The Westchester Chordsmen is a nonprofit performing arts organization whose members sing a wide range of musical styles including pop, Broadway, doo-wop and jazz arranged in beautiful a cappella four-part harmony.

The Chordsmen have a long history of providing free community service programs throughout the year. This includes its autumn a cappella youth music festival for high school students, its college singing scholarships and its holiday season sing-outs at senior resident and medical facilities. The group also offers free singing lessons for men twice a year.

The Westchester Chordsmen is a member chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society whose motto is to keep the whole world singing.

The choir's leadership team has done a superb job through the pandemic, turning lemons into as much lemonade as possible. This year, instead of rehearsing together weekly and performing live concerts, the Westchester Chordsmen have held

a virtual rehearsal every week and performed all its songs remotely. When the choir performs a song remotely, each member creates a video of himself singing the song in his own home, which is easy to do on the computer with an app such as Quicktime. The first valuable lesson learned is that anyone can do one thing to instantly make themselves look better – smile.

The premiere performance of the Westchester Chordsmen's annual holiday concert will be performed remotely this Sunday, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. The concert is free and will also be available for viewing for a limited time afterward. Join us at this concert of seasonal favorites, many familiar songs and some new hits for the season.

Come celebrate the holiday season with the Westchester Chordsmen. For more information, visit chordsmen.org/show to register to get the link for the performance.

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Examiner Sports



Bailey Double!

Byram Hills Senior Strutted Stuff, Named League MVP in Title Season

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor@Directrays

There were some surprises on the Section 1 soccer circuit and then there were some of the usual suspects doing their thing in what was anything but a normal 2020 campaign. With the state tournament cancelled on account of COVID-19 restrictions, Section 1 broke the section up into six regional sub-tournaments, crowning four large school champions and two small school divisions. It wasn't ideal, but we got to the finish line with some form of normalcy that our student athletes richly deserved.

LEAGUE II-C

One of those champions was Putnam-Northern Westchester small school regional titlists **BYRAM HILLS**, which championed the section for the seventh time in Coach Matt Allen's 20 years along the tradition-rich Bobcat sideline. In a year when Class A soccer was arguably as strong as Class AA, the top-seeded Class A Bobcats (9-0-1) went through the small school field like water through a hose, outscoring their playoff foes -- Hen Hud (5-1), Peekskill (6-0) and Panas (4-0) -- by a combined 15-1 count. In fact, Byram outscored its 10 opponents 38-3 for the year, despite a COVID-induced 16-day



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

Byram Hills senior M Bailey Goldstein had plenty to strut about as he led the 2020 Bobcats to the Section 1 Putnam-Northern Westchester small school regional championship and locked down the League II-C MVP during a COVID-19-plagued season, in which Section 1 crowned six regional champions throughout Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess and Rockland counties... see Boys' Soccer Notebook

quarantine and won the League II-C title, a league that produced two regional titlists (John Jay CR).

All-Section Bobcat senior Bailey Goldstein (8G, 12A) scored at least one point in every game and was voted the II-C Player of the Year while junior teammate Ross Eagle (12G, 4A) gained an All-Section nod and

will lead the unit's march into 2021. Eagle showed his proficiency to tickle twine when he bagged a hat trick in the 5-1 quarterfinal win over Hen Hud. Senior D Kalden Harp, the Byram Hills Athlete of the Season, and junior F Nico Bisgaier (5G, 13A) secured All-Section HM nods while senior G Aidan Cogan was named to the All-League team.



Greeley D Owen Parson parlayed his senior season into a second All-Section campaign.

"We're so incredibly thankful to the Byram Hills administration for allowing us to play and supporting us through the season," said Bobcat Coach Matt Allen, who sits just five wins shy of 300 for his career (295-68-28). "Despite a 16-day layoff due to a Covid quarantine, our athletic department worked incredibly hard to get us back on the field and on track to play the remainder of our schedule. The boys responded in kind, playing five games after the quarantine, outsourcing our opponents 25-1 in those five games. More importantly, we played the season with the heavy hearts for Christy Saltstein, who passed away over the summer, and the boys played with the same heart and resilience that her family has shown. It was an incredible year for our league as well. So proud to be a part of a new league that performed so well in the postseason, featuring two champions and two semifinalists."

HORACE GREELEY (10-4), which came on strong down the stretch, was one of those semifinalists, but the fourth-seeded

continued on next page



Byram Hills junior F Ross Eagle locked down an All-Section nod.

Sports

Quakers were knocked off by No.1 CAR-MEL, 2-1, in OT in the Putnam-Northern Westchester large school regional semis after eliminating defending Section 1 Class AA champion OSSINING in the opening round. Greeley seniors Owen Parsons, the backbone of the defense, and fiery M Zach Eichenberg, were each awarded an All-Section nod while Bennett Shropshire earned All-Section HM. Senior M Justin Miller was named All-League.

LEAGUE I-A

Class AA **CARMEL** did some big-time damage in the Putnam-Northern Westchester large school tournament, reaching the finals before falling to John Jay CR in overtime on a golden goal. The top-seeded Rams (10-1) went undefeated in the regular season before winning two playoff games for what was believed to be the first time in school history (not including outbrackets). Additionally, the Rams went undefeated in League I-A, perennially one of the toughest leagues in the state.

The Rams were rewarded with three All-Section awards, including junior D Dwyant Suazo, among the most gifted players in the section, senior D AJ Patino (4G, 2A) and senior M Simon Douglas (6G, 2A).

Carmel also notched three All-League nods in junior M Tayte Wong, senior M JD Vargas and sophomore G Joe Galeano under League I-A Coach of the Year Vasiliy Shevelchinsky.

Outside mid Jack Aurteri (3G, 4A) triggered a lot of runs for a balanced attack.

"We did not have a consistent striker to rely on, so it was a collaborative team effort from everyone," the coach said. "We had nine different goal scorers. We did not concede many goals, thanks in large part to the back line of AJ Patino, Dwyant Suazo, Jack Curtis and Nico Calvelli.

"We are grateful to Section 1, and our

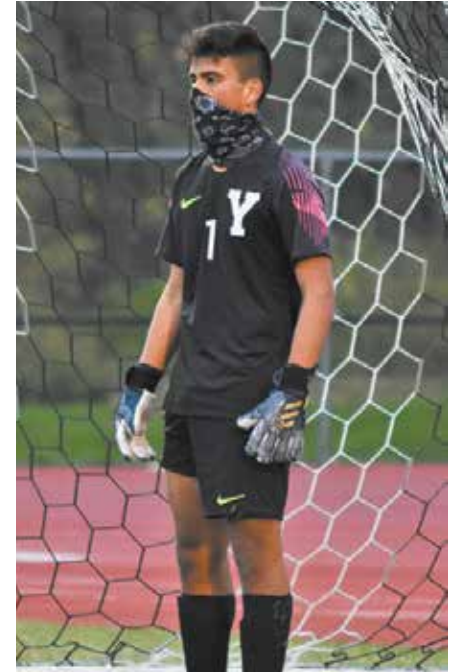


Carmel junior D Dwyant Suazo (6) copped All-Section honors and ranks historically among best backliners in Rams history.

school district for giving us the opportunity to have a season with everything that is still going on," Shevelchinsky added. "Not everyone was as fortunate. We had multiple school closures but the players adjusted to the new difficult circumstances and really made the most of each situation. We will be graduating 12 seniors. All of them were an integral part of our success. They helped solidify the culture for our program. The boys

made sacrifices, bought all in, and played for each other. Our goal next season will be to maintain the level of success we had and keep growing. We may have caught a few people by surprise this season but everyone will be ready next year."

No. 7 **MAHOPAC** (2-8-1) saw its season end in an opening-round loss to Yorktown. Indian senior Nick Biagini (8G) was the finisher and procured All-Section honors after



Yorktown G Dylan Lopez led a stingy Husker defense and grabbed an All-Section nod.

leading the club in scoring while senior M Mario Bunjaj (2G, 6A), a playmaker, was All-Section HM. Mahopac seniors Marco Choussa and Joey Colatruglio were each named All-League.

"All of our seniors from Mario Bunjaj, Nick Biagini, Joe Colatruglio, Dimas Augustin-Mendez, Brian Merlino, and Vinny Rodriguez were great to have this year," Coach Chris Mulholland said.

LEAGUE II-D

Second-seeded Class A **YORKTOWN** (10-1-1) had its undefeated season come to a screeching halt in a semifinal PK loss to John Jay CR, thus ending one of the finest regular

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Carmel senior M Simon Douglas garnered All-Section honors and led Rams in scoring.



Mahopac senior M Nick Biagini (10) and Carmel junior D Dwyant Suazo were both tabbed All-Section.

Sports

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Somers senior D Derek Marques was league MVP and a no-brainer All-Section selection.

niors M George Popovic (11G, 6A) and D Mason Murphy. Senior D Teddy Kozera was named All-Section HM while All-League honors went to seniors Chris Judge (3G, 7A) and defenders Tony Granitto (4G, 3A) and Ruslan Semenko. All in all, it was a solid season for a Husker program that maintained its rep in Section 1.

“Next year we will be looking to remain highly competitive,” Yorktown Assistant Coach Justin Huff said. “We will be returning some key guys in important spots. Peter Tinaj, who we unfortunately lost to injury this year, will be looking to cause havoc up top with George Popovic. Mason Murphy and Jack Pryblyski will likely get a bump into the midfield as we usher in a new set of underclassmen like Mike Duffy, Ryan Tomeny and Jake Levine.

Class A **SOMERS** went down sooner than anyone expected when Coach Brian Lanzetta's third-seeded Tuskers (8-3) were knocked off by No.6 John Jay in the opening round of the tournament. Observers of Section 1 soccer kept waiting for Somers to peak in time for the playoffs, but scoring goals proved to be a bigger problem than expected and the Tuskers never rose to their lofty pre-season expectations.

Led by the League II-D Player of the Year, senior D Derek Marques, the Tusker defense was tough to beat. Marques was rated among the most skilled players in the section. All-Section senior F Zane Bronson (6G, 6A) led the attack along with All-Section HM junior Bennett Leitner (8G, 2A), who will return next season with All-League juniors mids Daniel D'Ippolito (6G, 7A) and Michael Micceri.

No.3 **WALTER PANAS**



Somers junior Bennett Leitner was named All-Section HM in 2020 and has big plans for 2021.



Yorktown junior George Popovic earned All-Section honors for his 2020 season and will enter 2021 with unfinished business on his mind.

seasons in program history. Coach Ed Polchinsk's Huskers had the better of the run against the Wolves, but one key flip of the field turned into a transitional nightmare that ended Yorktown's season but didn't prevent the Huskers from getting four players named All-Section, including seniors G Dylan "D-Lo" Lopez and M Marco Landocino, plus ju-

"Class A will be loaded as it seems to be every year," he added, "but I know we'll be right in the thick of things when it matters. If we can maintain our focus and drive leading up to and during the season I know we'll be very successful. As a program we will never stop striving to improve ourselves."

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Sports

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Boys' Soccer Notebook



Two-time All-Section Panas senior Tristan Phillips drew attention every time he took the field as one of the most prolific scorers in Panther history.

(7-4-2) had one of its finest seasons in recent memory under Coach Peter Pryscklak, doing so behind a superb finish from two-time All-Section senior F Tristan Phillips (10G, 4A). A dynamic finisher throughout his career, Phillips (43G, 10A for his career) teamed with All-League junior M Kyle Ar-

raiano (6G, 1A) to form a potent scoring combo. Historically, Phillips will go down among the top Panther playmakers. Senior G Kyle Rizzo, named All-Section HM, was the backbone of the defense with over 100 saves and two shutouts, while junior M Eddie Chicaiza was named All-League.

"Panas Soccer has accomplished a lot this season, some things that have never been done," Coach P said. "The boys were able to host and win a home regional game and make it to the regional finals. We don't think that's ever been done. We won seven games and we're not sure when the last time Panas has won that many games."

"Kyle Arraiano and Eddie Chicaiza will be back with a vengeance next year after getting a taste," the coach added. "Junior defensive midfielder Elvin Meija and sophomore center back Jackson DiLorenzo will be back to anchor the squad. We are happy to have played this season under the circumstances. We are excited to bring back 11 returners from this year's successful squad. They boys played with passion, battled adversity, and helped make Panas a soccer school."

No.5 **LAKELAND** (6-6-1) had an early, first-

round exit from the tournament after a 3-0 loss to No.4 **PEEKSKILL**. Hornet senior wing Antonio Gerbasi (5G, 4A), who will move on to SUNY Potsdam, was named All-Section HM while senior D Austin Bergen and sophomore M Derek Jaramillo were tabbed as All-League choices. Hornet Coach Tim Hourahan is pinning the future of this prideful program on Jaramillo's back and appreciated his seniors commitment to the trade.

"Antonio was our most improved player and a late bloomer who will do really well in the SUNY conference for four years, and Austin has been a three-year starter in the program, who has been a great leader," he said. "Derek returned to us after playing academy his freshman year and may have been the most consistent player we had this fall."

The sophomore class, including All-League HM Sonny Karaqi (6G, 4A), is strong.

"It's been a few years since we were in the mix after winning four-straight league titles from 2013-2016 over Somers and Yorktown," Hourahan concluded. "But those two teams have run the league the last four years and been at the top of the table in all of class A as well. We really do like our younger guys that are coming back next season. We return our entire offense and have some real technical players in this group. We will lean on this young core over the next two years and hope that this group will be the ones to bring us back towards the top of our league and in our section, which is an absolute beast now."

BREWSTER (1-7) had a rough season and was quarantined for the playoffs but not before senior M Carlos Palma and sophomore M Matteo Gulla were rewarded as All-Leaguers. The Bears' record is not indica-



Pleasantville's Mike Saldana was named All-Section and League Player of the Year.

tive of how tough they played.

"Like every other team, we were hit very hard by Covid and injuries," Bears Coach Jerry Frieri said. "Our schedule was very top heavy, with more than half the league games against number one Yorktown and the number two Somers. We were no pushover and the team culture was completely overturned."

A highlight of the season was Brewster's 2-1 win at John Jay CR. The team is expected to continue improving through a sustained commitment to its rebuilding plans.

LEAGUE II-E

Dutchess County champion Beacon took home top honors in the league, including League MVP Warren Banks, but fourth-seeded **PEEKSKILL** (7-6) had its best season in recent memory before falling in the Putnam-Northern Westchester small school regional semis to Byram Hills. The playoff win over Lakeland was the biggest win in close to a decade. Junior D Kevin Mendez received an All-Section nod while leading Coach Jonathan Iasillo's. Junior M Erick Guinansaca was named All-Section HM and will pair with Mendez as the top returnees next season. All-League juniors Johnny Moroch and Alex Sapatanga return up top to fuel further promise among the rising Red Devils.

No.8 **HEN HUD** knocked off No.9 **CROTON** in the opening round but were bounced from the tournament by Byram Hills. Senior M Gio Cardona earned an All-Section HM nod for the Sailors while senior D Luke O'Neil was named All-League.



Pleasantville's Patrick Panek secured All-Section honors.

continued on next page

Sports

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Westlake junior F Gianluca Ruggiero took home All-Section honors after scoring six goals.

LEAGUE III-A

PLEASANTVILLE (10-3-1 overall, 6-2-1) came out on top of the league under league Coach of the Year Beau Morki and League MVP Mike Saldana (4G, 2A), but failed in its quest for a regional title when the third-seeded Panthers were ousted by No.1 Bronxville in the Southern Westchester small school finals.

Saldana will be missed but the Panthers

have plenty in reserve as they continue to build a solid, respected soccer program.

"Mike was a great one-on-one defender for us," P'Ville Assistant Coach Jim Campbell said. "Along with Connor Whynott, he solidified our back four and that was awesome."

Panther senior M Patrick Panek (3G, 6A) drew up an All-Section campaign playing mostly in a defensive mid position.

"Patrick was our leader on and off the field, he made everyone around him better," Coach Campbell said.

Senior F Mike Collins (5G, 1A) earned All-Section HM for the Panthers. "Mike was a relentless attacker, super fast. He gave defenses fits all year," Campbell said.

Seniors, including versatile Matt Moses, Arjun 'Mr. Clutch' Singh (4G, 3A) and Whynott, all earned All-League, as did sophomore F Will Peacock (7G, 1A), who played like a seasoned senior since Day 1. So did sophomores Shubhro Biswas (CB) and G Adam Panek, according to Campbell.

"Coach Morki has a good feeling about the future of our defense," Campbell said.

No.6 **BRIARCLIFF** (4-5-2) was knocked out of the Putnam-Northern Westchester small school regional by Panas in the opening round. Junior M Tyler Cho did his part to continue the Bears' strong tradition by notching an All-Section nod. Senior G Jacob Zednik delivered an All-Section HM season between the pipes while senior F Luca Vargish and junior F Nico Santucci were tabbed



Briarcliff's Tyler Cho was a dominant factor for the Bears, thus earning All-Section honors.



White Plains senior D Eric Ramirez (5) was named league player of the year and tabbed to the 2020 All-Section team.

All-League.

WESTLAKE (5-6 overall, 4-3 league) has a ton to look forward to in 2021 with four underclassmen receiving individual postseason accolades, joining All-Section senior D Josh Corona (2G), the backbone of the Wildcat defense.

Junior F Gianluca Ruggiero (6G) dialed up an All-Section season while junior G Francesco Michilli was All-Section HM. Juniors, F Martin Sunjic (2G) and D Tommy Giaccone, were named All-League after No.8 Westlake knocked off No.9 Hastings to win its first playoff game in a decade. The season ended in a loss to eventual Southern Westchester small school champion Bronxville.

"We are incredibly grateful to have played through 2020 and our program was lucky to have such strong senior leadership during a difficult and obstacle-filled season," Westlake boss Joe Callagy said. "The program has made some notable strides forward despite the circumstances, including our first playoff victory in 10 years."

Key departures include Corona, Connor Cronin and Paul Julian but the cupboard will be restocked with the likes of the aforementioned juniors, plus G Francesco Michilli and



White Plains senior D Victor Flores earned All-Section honors.

M Isaiah Ortiz.

"We're looking forward to a 2021 team that will have 18 returning players, including eight frequent starters, six of whom have been varsity players since 10th grade."

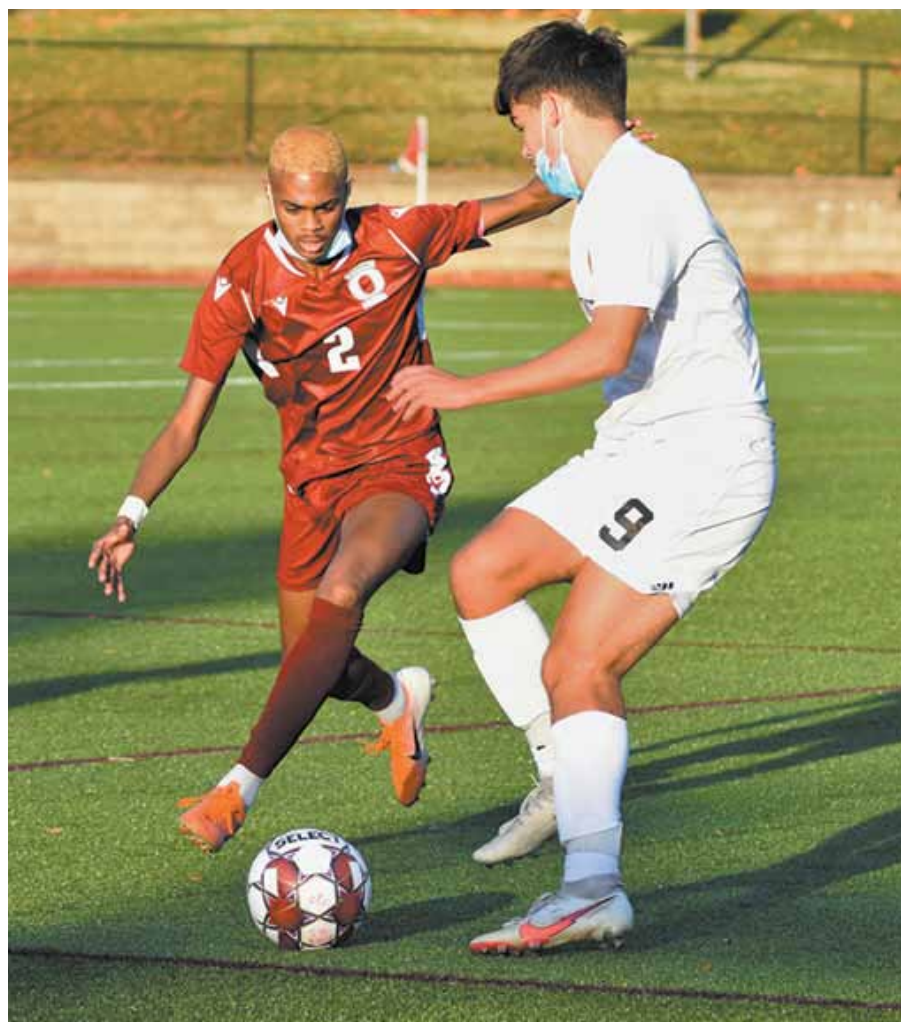
No.6 **VALHALLA** (5-5) advanced to the second round after knocking off Tuckahoe in the Southern Westchester small school

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Sports

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Boys' Soccer Notebook



Ossining All-Section CB Malcolm Phillips and White Plains' All-Leaguer Gael Baraldi had big seasons.

regional but were knocked off in the quarters by Pleasantville. Viking senior M Jason Otiniano was named All-Section while junior D Thomas Casale was All-Section HM and senior G Jonah Strupinsky was All-League.

LEAGUE I-D

No.2 **WHITE PLAINS** (7-1-3) dominated league play and took home top honors behind the play of All-Section senior M Eric Ramirez, the league MVP. The Tigers didn't stop there as Coach Mike Lambert, the league Coach of the Year, guided the Tigers to the Southern Westchester large school regional finals before losing to Mamaroneck in the title tilt.

Senior CB Victor Flores will depart with All-Section honors but All-Section sophomore Jair Cano is expected to lead the 2021 squad, along with All-League soph Gael Baraldi.

Seniors D Jonathan Calpeno and CM Ruben Collazos were both named All-Section

HM while seniors Alan Meneses and Mario Martinez-Jiminez locked up All-League honors.

"This senior class faced a season like no other," Coach Lambert said. "Despite that, they managed to earn a league championship for their school. They had a goal and a job and were successful at both. I'm proud of them. They have set the bar pretty high for future years."

Defending Class AA champion No.5 **OSSINING** (6-7) was eliminated at No.4 **GREELEY** in the opening round of the Putnam-Northern Westchester large school tournament but not before seniors Malcolm Phillips and Yohance Douglas were rewarded with All-Section honors. Senior wing Kevon Evans was named All-Section HM while senior Luis Castillo was All-League for a Pride team that struggled to score goals this season after an historical 2019 campaign that saw them capture the city by storm.



Ossining M Yohance Douglas locked up an All-Section nod.

FOX LANE (0-10-2) went winless this fall but saw senior G Charles Della Penna earn All-Section HM honors and senior CM Ben Belfiglio and junior Luis Diaz Giron earn All-League.

LEAGUE III-D

North Salem took home top honors in the league, but behind a strong effort from All-League freshman G Ronan Kiter, No.7 **HALDANE** eliminated No.10 **PUTNAM VALLEY**, 3-2, to snag bragging rights between the bordering towns and win its first playoff game in five years. Haldane was then knocked off by North Salem in the Putnam-Northern Westchester small school quarterfinals. Senior M Noah Elias earned an All-Section and senior D Andrew Silhavy was All-Section HM nod for the Blue Devils (4-9) while senior D David Ordonez was All-Section for the Tigers (2-11) and senior G James Salvia was All-Section HM.

Freshman M Liam Stapleton looks like

a player **CROTON-HARMON** can build around after the Tigers (2-10) had a down season. Senior D Patrick Fleming earned All-League for the Tigers. PV's Christian Moreno and Haldane's senior D John Dwyer and freshman Matt Nachamkin were also named All-League.



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