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May 19 - May 25, 2020

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 582

Preschool Owner Offers to be Experiment Site for State

By Rick Pezzullo

Like many small business owners, Lisa Montalto is doing everything she can to stay afloat during the uncertain times created by the coronavirus pandemic.

Once Upon A Time Preschool & Day Care has been serving children from six weeks to 12 years old since 2012 on Peekskill Hollow Road in Putnam Valley. Prior to being forced to shut down temporarily on March 13, approximately 60 full and part-time students were enrolled.

Since that time, through a partnership with the Putnam Valley School District, only four children of essential workers have been cared for daily at Once Upon A Time.

"I'm trying to be optimistic," Montalto said Friday. "I'm seeing forward movement. My goal is to be open."

Montalto, who is secretary of the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and soon-to-be vice chair, is preparing to try to reopen cautiously following Governor Andrew Cuomo's phased approach for children of essential workers only.

Last week, Montalto penned a letter to Cuomo offering to be "a test site for protocol and policy" since she feels the childcare/preschool industry has been lost in the shuffle of businesses adversely affected by COVID-19 and regulations being put into place by the state.

"I have set up the framework to move forward but would truly appreciate the chance to have assist-



Lisa Montalto is owner of Once Upon A Time Preschool & Daycare in Putnam Valley.

ance in ensuring that I am doing the best I possibly can for the children in my charge out of RESPECT for the families, the children and the community as well," Montalto wrote.

"We are essential workers with quite an important role," she continued. "We put parent's minds at ease while they are on the front

lines and in the trenches allowing them to have focus on the task at hand. Please understand that this by no means is a criticism but rather an observation that I believe needs to be addressed when things calm down."

Once Upon A Time was successful in obtaining a few federal small

business loans to help Montalto in the short-term but she stressed one of those loans will have to be paid back. "The equivalent of a business ventilator is what they are," she said.

A letter Montalto mailed to parents in mid-April requesting partial payment of their annual contract

was met with mixed reactions. She explained she was simply trying to receive enough funds to cover monthly expenses, such as rent, taxes, insurance and utilities that continue to be due despite the drastic drop in enrollment.

"Some places are able to close because they're supported by a church or a synagogue. Some are corporate run. I think it was a fair way to maintain their contract," Montalto said. "There's no profit being made here. You have to be very creative and see how you will be able to maintain the business so you will be there when this is over."

Another major concern Montalto has is having access to cleaning supplies on a regular basis.

"How do I maintain everyone's safety and the same level of cleanliness?" Montalto said. "If I run out of cleaning supplies, I can't stay open. Nobody will just be able to open their doors and say welcome back."

Once Upon A Time normally runs a nine-week summer camp program for approximately 35 children and Montalto is planning to start accepting applications soon. This year's theme is the Renaissance.

"Our first and foremost reaction to things is nurturing. Now we're being asked to overlook that and not be nurturing," Montalto said. "Make me work smarter than harder. There's a lot to take into account."

Once Upon A Time Preschool & Daycare can be reached at www.onceuponatimepreschool.net, onceuponatimepreschool47@gmail.com or (845) 284-2941.

Board of Education Races in Putnam Take Shape

By Rick Pezzullo and Martin Wilbur

Half of Putnam County's six school districts will have competitive Board of Education races for the delayed trustees' elections this spring.

This year the elections and the budget vote will be held by absentee ballot only, following a recent executive order from Governor Andrew Cuomo. Each district will mail a ballot to every qualified voter in their jurisdiction.

The ballots must be returned to the district clerk's office by Tuesday, June 9 at 5 p.m.

The Carmel Board of Education has the most crowded field with six names that will appear on the ballot for two available seats. Trustee Tara-Elena DeTurris is running for re-election against challengers Paul A. Collazo, Debra Heitman, Matthew Morello, Evelyn Perrault and Gregory R. Purdy Jr. The second incumbent whose term expires this year, James Reese, has decided to bow

out.

In Mahopac, there are four candidates running for three, three-year term seats. Michael Simone is the lone incumbent in the race. Also running are Ben Dilullo, Tanner McCracken and Gilbert McMahon.

Brewster will feature incumbents Kerry Cunningham, the Board of Education's vice president, and Glenn Niles. The only newcomer on the ballot is Francine Santos.

Races in Putnam Valley, Haldane and Garrison will be uncontested. Incumbent

Joseph Ferraro is the only name on the ballot in Putnam Valley and Margaret Clements will be running alone for one seat in Haldane.

Three incumbents whose terms expire on June 30 were the only residents to submit petitions this year in Garrison. Courtney McCarthy's full term is expiring while Jocelyn Apicello and Matthew Speiser were appointed to their seats to replace board members who had resigned earlier this year.

Resident Remembers This Year's Grads with Special Program

By Martin Wilbur

Donna Arceri Morey didn't want Carmel School District's 2020 graduates to have a milestone achievement go forgotten.

Not just the high school students, but the fourth graders moving up to middle school and the eighth graders heading to high school next year.

So earlier this month she did something about it. Morey established the Carmel Central Schools Adopt a Graduate Program, where a member of the community or family "adopts" a student in one of those grades and provides him or her with a card, balloons and gifts. The goal is to recognize their achievement and bring some happiness to a student whose lasting memory of what should have been a special year has been of a public health emergency instead.

"I've gotten, I can't even tell you, how many e-mails from hundreds of people saying my child is so upset about not having graduation or not having prom and this is the first time I've seen them smile in a while," Morey said.

Morey picked up the idea from her sister and some of her friends who launched a similar

plan where they live in Dutchess County. She first compiled a list of the graduates in each of the three grades, then created a Facebook page where community members can register and select a graduate.

The family that adopts a student e-mails or messages their parents to get an idea what the youngster likes. Presents can include gift cards and/or a specific item. Most have totaled in the \$50 to \$100 range.

As of last week, 291 graduates had been adopted across the three grades with more on the way, Morey said.

Last Tuesday, Geri Munnick, a teaching assistant who has worked for the district for 21 years, delivered a couple of small gift bags to graduating senior Zach Rubin. It contained a gift cards to Dunkin' Donuts, Dick's Sporting Goods and a couple of other of his favorite places and some Twizzlers and M&Ms.

Rubin said he had heard of the program through the community grapevine but didn't know that he would be getting a package of gifts. He was pleasantly surprised when Munnick showed up at his door, although his parents, Ann and David, had been informed

ahead of time.

"It definitely means a lot," said Rubin, who will be going to the University of Colorado Boulder to study media production. "I really appreciate Geri coming out to my house and giving me presents and balloons. It really means a lot."

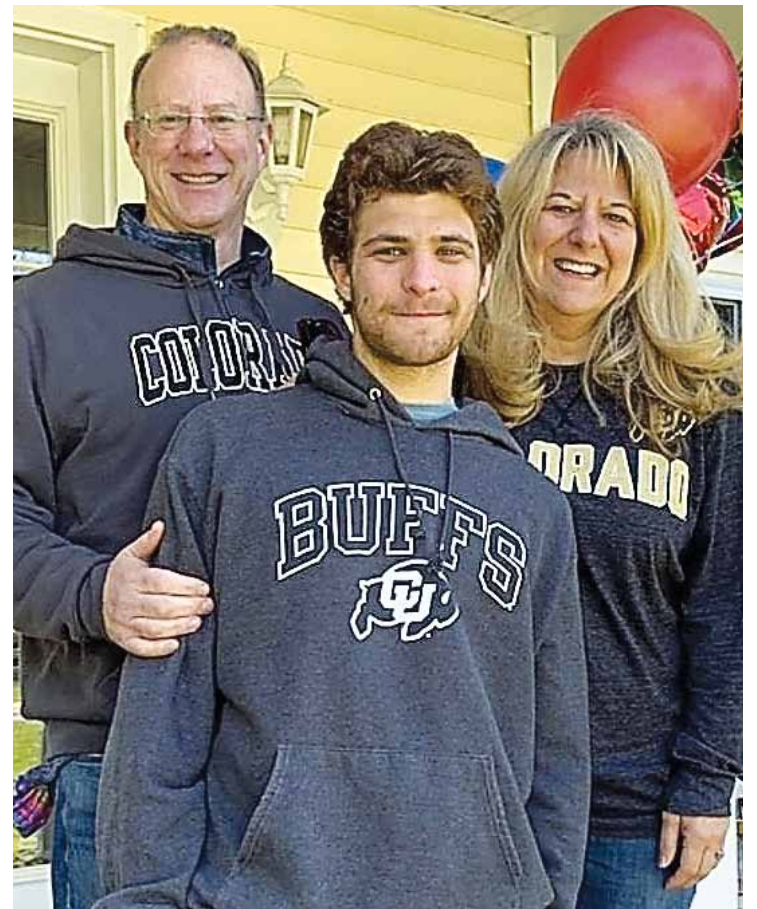
While the end of his high school days isn't what he had hoped for today's technology has allowed him to spend plenty of time – virtually – with friends.

His mother, Ann, said the disruption has had a silver lining.

"We've been taking advantage of the quality time with family, cooking together, baking together, eating meals together," Ann Rubin said. "He's been awesome, helpful and really positive, visiting friends at social distance and hiking. Just trying to get through it."

Munnick thanked Morey for bringing a little bit of joy to this year's graduates. When she heard about the program, she immediately decided to participate.

"Thank you for all your time and hard work you're putting in to making sure students get adopted," Munnick said. "This is a wonderful program and a fun way to celebrate the students who are moving up and graduating."



Carmel High School senior, pictured with his parents, David and Ann, received a surprise gift from community members and school district employee Geri Munnick last week as part of an Adopt a Graduate Program.

Information is healthy. Fear is not.

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Get the facts at
[Northwell.edu/Prepared](https://www.northwell.edu/prepared)



Facts and guidelines related to coronavirus are constantly evolving. The facts contained here are Northwell's best judgment at time of publication.

W'chester, Putnam Still on PAUSE; State Explores Summer Camps

By Martin Wilbur

A sixth New York State region is entering a Phase I reopening Tuesday but Westchester and Putnam counties must still wait longer until it reaches that stage's metrics.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Monday that Western New York, which includes Buffalo, now has the requisite number of contact tracers available, clearing the last hurdle that allows construction, manufacturing and curbside retail to resume provided social distancing and employee protections are followed.

The Mid-Hudson region, which encompasses the local area, is meeting four of the seven guidelines. Although the region now qualifies for one less guideline than it did last week, the dashboard on www.forward.ny.gov had not reflected the lack of compliance with the required number of contact tracers for the region.

For the local region, the rolling three-day average for net COVID-19 hospitalizations has fallen to 2.02 per 100,000 residents, just missing that standard, which needs to be under 2.0.

Mid-Hudson is only showing three consecutive days of declining deaths in the region where at least 14 is needed or less than five deaths on a three-day rolling average. The region reported 10 on Sunday.

New COVID-19-related hospitalizations statewide fell to 373 on Sunday and there were 106 deaths.

A region must have at least 30 tracers per 100,000 residents, something the state and each region's control room is tasked with supplying, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said.

"There's still a need to increase the number of people that need to do training and that's a pure administrative function," he said.

The Capital region, which includes Albany and seven surrounding counties, only needs additional tracers to begin its reopening.

Guidelines Expected on Camps, Ceremonies

State officials provided children and their families with a glimmer of hope that there could be a camp season this summer.

There are many hurdles to clear before that can become a reality; however, neighboring states are also considering the possibility and how to do it safely, said Budget Director Robert Mujica.

He said a major consideration is getting more information on whether there is a threat of a major increase in pediatric multi-system inflammatory syndrome cases. There were at least 137 cases across New York on Monday.

"We have to make sure we don't do anything to harm any of these children," state Health Commissioner Howard Zucker said on Sunday. "The numbers keep rising. The governor mentioned 16 states (have cases) but we have over 120 cases here, but if you look across the country it's past 200."

Potential guidelines will be released in time to prepare for the traditional late June start of the camp season, Mujica said.

However, at least two local municipalities have canceled their summer camps. Last week, Pleasantville announced it would call off their program and on Monday the Town of Yorktown did the same. Even if camps can reopen, swimming pools would be part of a Phase IV reopening. With the guideline of waiting at least two weeks until advancing to the next phase, that would mean a minimum of

six weeks to reach Phase IV.

Cuomo said that his office will be issuing guidelines this week on how to hold religious ceremonies and Memorial Day observances. He said perhaps there could be ceremonies with up to 15 people with proper social distancing and other safeguards in place.

Any Memorial Day ceremonies will not include parades, which have been canceled by municipalities this year because of the prohibition on large gatherings.

Testing Ramped Up

Any New Yorker who needs a diagnostic test for COVID-19 can receive one as the state has met its goal of increasing daily testing capacity to an average of 40,000.

Cuomo said that there are more than 700 sites throughout the state that are now

administering tests and that the drive-through and walk-in sites are under capacity.

"This is a very big advantage for us because testing was originally used to control the virus," Cuomo said. "Now testing is really going to be very helpful in monitoring the virus."

He announced a new partnership with CVS Pharmacies to conduct at least 50 tests a day at more than 60 of its locations throughout the state.

However, the new problem is the drive-through and walk-in testing sites are well under daily capacity, Cuomo said. In fact, an average of about 5,000 tests are being conducted at



CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

those locations where a maximum of 15,000 can be administered.

As a result, he urged anyone who thinks they have COVID-19 symptoms or has had contact with a

person who is positive to be tested, he said. That's in addition to all healthcare and frontline workers, including nursing home employees and first responders, any essential workers who directly interact with the public and any employee who is returning to work as part of a Phase I reopening.

"If you think you have symptoms, get a test. Get a test," Cuomo said. "It's up to you."

To find a nearby testing location, visit www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov.

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Croton Point Park, Playland Beaches to Open This Weekend

By Martin Wilbur

New York State's beaches, including those at Westchester-operated Playland and Croton Point Park, will be open for Memorial Day weekend with social distancing protocols remaining in effect and restrictions on capacity and activities.

County Executive George Latimer made the announcement Monday, three days after Gov. Andrew Cuomo gave the green light for beaches statewide to open this Friday. The two Westchester beaches will operate for four days, he said.

"Whether we keep it open beyond Memorial Day weekend will depend on how well we manage the demand this weekend," Latimer said.

Despite the Playland beach opening, Latimer said that the amusement park will remain closed at least through July 20. Under the state's guidelines for reopening, recreational facilities are part of the fourth and final phase.

As of Monday, the Mid-Hudson region, which Westchester and Putnam Counties are a part of, have not met the standard for a Phase I reopening.

Cuomo said last Friday that with Connecticut never having closed its beaches and New Jersey officials announcing earlier last week that beaches along its shore communities will be open for the long holiday weekend, it made sense to follow suit and spread out the crowds in the tristate area.

"If New Jersey opens beaches or Connecticut opens beaches and we don't



Beaches at Croton Point Park and Playland, above, will be open for the Memorial Day weekend but Playland's amusement park will remain closed until at least mid-July.

open beaches, you would see a flood of people into Connecticut and New Jersey and our relationship and responsibility to our other neighboring states is important," Cuomo said.

The state released a list of restrictions and protocols for the public as well as local and county governments to follow.

Crowds must be capped at 50 percent of capacity by monitoring all entrances and exits; no group contact activities such as football or volleyball; maintaining social distancing for employees and visitors; each employee and visitor must wear a mask if social distancing cannot be maintained; all areas of social gathering, including picnic areas and playgrounds and concession stands

must remain closed; and adequate staffing levels must be in place.

County and municipal facilities must at least meet the restrictions imposed by the state but more stringent rules can be imposed. Latimer said that for Croton Point Park and Playland, the county would follow the state's protocols. County and local officials can also choose to remain closed.

Glen Island Beach in New Rochelle will stay shuttered because it is being used as a drive-through testing facility.

Local officials must make their decision and publicly announce whether they will operate beaches in their jurisdiction no later than Wednesday in order to open by this weekend,

Cuomo said.

He said the three states in the tristate area along with Delaware, which will also open beaches this weekend, will have similar restrictions.

In New York, if localities fail to comply with the state's rules, the facilities will be shut down, the governor warned last week.

"If there is a problem and the locals do not enforce these regulations, we will close these beaches immediately," Cuomo said.

Playland beach and the boardwalk have been open for walking since the onset of the state of emergency in March.

Latimer said that the Fourth of July fireworks display at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla has been canceled for this year. The event takes place annually on the evening of July 3. The first seven of the county's 12 ethnic festivals at Kensico through July 20 have also been called off.

Kensico Dam Plaza along with all of Westchester's arks and four of the county's six golf courses will continue to operate.

"We also know that the weather's getting warmer, people want to be outside and going to a beach on Memorial Day weekend is very much who we are culturally," Latimer said.

Restrictions were lifted statewide on a few low-risk activities last Friday, including landscaping and gardening businesses, drive-in movie theaters and certain non-contact recreation such as tennis.

Cuomo extended the NY PAUSE until May 28 and the state of emergency until June 13 for the regions that have not met all the thresholds for a Phase I reopening.



We apologize for any inconvenience and appreciate your understanding during this difficult time. We hope everyone stays safe and healthy.

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New Castle Fire District Continues to Eye Firehouse Expansion Vote

By Martin Wilbur

New Castle Fire District No. 1 commissioners continue to search for a date to hold a King Street firehouse expansion referendum and they must decide whether to hold in-person voting or an election with only absentee ballots.

Erik Nicolaysen, chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners, said the district wants to schedule the vote for this year. At least two months would be needed from the time that the board sets the date until the vote is held because the commissioners plan on sending material to district residents and hold virtual public information sessions, he said. The

information sessions could possibly have a limited number of residents attend.

The board has yet to publicly release the approximate price tag for the expansion, which would include a three-bay addition. The full scope of the project and the cost should be known within two weeks after the contractor's estimates have been totaled, Nicolaysen said.

Although it is unclear how many fire district taxpayers are impacted by the ongoing economic shutdown, the cost of the desperately-needed expansion continues to escalate, Nicolaysen said.

"If we put it off for another year, I'm sure we're going to be looking at another 5 or 6 percent increase," he said. "It's a balancing act no matter how you look at it."

Last week, the board briefly considered whether a vote should be held during or after the summer and how voting should be conducted. Earlier this year, the Town of New Castle had extended an offer to the fire district to use Town Hall to hold the vote.

District Secretary Judi Weintraub said it might be wise to use absentee ballots since most election inspectors are older people, many of whom are likely hesitant to interact with the public as the pandemic continues to keep Westchester shut down. She did acknowledge that it would be more labor intensive.

"That would be problematic to get somebody to sit at these tables all day, especially because this could generate a large amount of people coming in,"



Fire commissioners in New Castle are planning for a referendum to fund the proposed King Street firehouse expansion this year.

Weintraub said.

Although the school board election and budget vote next month will be done exclusively through a mailed absentee ballot, Commissioner Terence Hoey said he wants the board to receive an opinion from the board's counsel and the state before considering the same system.

Nicolaysen responded that it is his understanding that it's the district's option whether to have in-person or paper ballots mailed to the voters.

He estimated that the district would need at least 60 to adequately transmit information to the public about the scope of the project, the need for the work and cost. As a result, the earliest the referendum could be held is before the end of July.

Information could be sent to residents via mail and e-mail as well as scheduling

an informational session that includes the project engineer, which could be presented through a Zoom call and/or broadcast over the New Castle Media Center. The presentation could be made with limited public attendance and proper social distancing could also be considered, Nicolaysen said.

If the district went to paper ballots that would be mailed to voters, the proposition could be held during the summer instead of waiting until the fall, even if a certain percentage of residents are out of town, he said.

"I think it would be a relatively minor problem," he said. "We can send the voting ballots where they want."

Resident Lynne Lambert urged the commissioners to consider putting off a vote until 2021 because many residents could be unable to handle a tax hike.

"I really think that the economics are so challenged right now that the timing is bad if you're trying to do it this year," Lambert said.

The new wing would be attached to the current firehouse and use the former Chappaqua Animal Hospital parcel that was acquired with the passage of a \$2.6 million February 2017 referendum. That vote was held following the previous year's defeat of a more than \$12 million proposition.

The district has reached an agreement with the Town of Mount Pleasant on what that town's residents who live in the district will contribute toward the project, Nicolaysen said.

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Post for by Adam Schleifer for Congress

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Bedford School Board Closes Budget Gap, Trims Tax Levy Hike

By Martin Wilbur

The Bedford Board of Education last week approved a \$139.7 million budget, closing an original \$3.3 million budget gap through additional savings and using just over half of a projected \$1.9 million surplus projected from this year.

Trustees were also able to trim the tax levy from their original target of a 2.02 percent increase to 1.85 percent in the 2020-21 budget, trying to find some relief for taxpayers in troubled economic times.

The final budget being sent to the voters, cuts 18 full-time equivalent positions but school officials were able to stave off deeper reductions.

"It's a bit melancholy for me and a bit bittersweet, this budget, but I think we did the best we could do," said Board President Colette Dow.

Earlier this month, district officials, factoring in an anticipated 20 percent cut in Bedford's roughly \$8 million state foundation aid that has been discussed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo unless New York receives federal assistance, needed to close a \$3.3 budget deficit. They also refused to touch \$2.55 million in expected transportation savings, but it is unclear whether districts will have to pay part or all of that money to transportation providers.

Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joel Adelberg introduced a second round of reductions totaling 13.4 full-time equivalent positions saving more than \$1.6 million. The cuts call for the elimination of two full-

time special education positions; 1.4 English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); one elementary school tier support; two elementary teachers; three middle school teachers; one high school teacher; two support staff members; and one full-time specials position.

That was in addition to Adelberg's initially proposed spending plan with a series of additions and reductions that resulted in 4.6 positions fewer positions, including four fewer elementary school teachers.

Adelberg said the cuts push class size to 25 or 26, the district's contractual limit with the teacher's union, in second grade at Bedford Hills and West Patent elementary schools and second and fourth grade at Mount Kisco Elementary School.

"We made some wise choices, not great choices, but the best choice we could under the circumstances, and they're sustainable," he said.

Between the board's meetings on May 6 and back-to-back sessions last Tuesday and Wednesday, the administration was able to make a series of small reductions shaving about \$200,000 from the deficit, reducing the gap to \$1,479,000.

Then the superintendent's team and the Bedford Association of School Administrators took pay freezes for next year along with the elimination of the 5:30 high school bus run and a \$500,000 transfer from operating expenses to the capital budget, which lowered spending by another \$670,000 to \$809,000, said Assistant Superintendent for Business and

Administrative Services Cynthia Hawthorne.

From there, trustees debated last week how much of the projected \$1,924,000 surplus realized through this year's school closure should be applied to the deficit, to other reserve funds, such as the Teachers Retirement System, tax certioraris or health insurance, or whether to make additional cuts. Some trustees also wanted to get the tax levy increase under 2 percent.

The previous week, some board members balked at using most of this year's likely surplus. Trustee Beth Staropoli countered that more cuts for her was unacceptable.

"I don't want to cut more programs," Staropoli said. "I don't want to offer less to our students, and I believe everyone believes that."

Lowering the tax levy to 1.85 percent would require finding another \$220,000, Dow said.

Despite discussion of wanting to limit surplus use, the board concluded that more cuts were unacceptable and went ahead with applying just over \$1 million in surplus.

Dow said the unique circumstances made use of the surplus acceptable.

"Are you funding a real structural deficit or are not you?" she asked. "In my opinion, this is not. I may be wrong but I don't believe we have a structural deficit next year. I think we have taken out sustaining costs."

Vice President Edwzzard Reder thanked administrators for their givebacks.

"Words can't express how grateful we are in the community for the shared sacrifice here," Reder said. "It's remarkable, the sacrifices. We appreciate it. Thank you so much."

If a budget should fail, it is unclear whether districts will have a chance for a second vote this year.

Endless Thanks

Northern Westchester Hospital staff has been showered with notes, many of them artistically designed, thanking them for their service during the COVID-19 pandemic. The notes line the walls at the hospital, providing inspiration to the healthcare workers as they toil to keep the community healthy.



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Uncertainties Cloud College Process for Students and Families

By Martin Wilbur and Ariel Markowski

Isabella De Feo and her classmates have lost out on their senior prom, walking across the stage at graduation, proudly wearing the sweatshirt of the college they've selected and all the bittersweet goodbyes.

While the Somers High School senior and millions of others in the Class of 2020 have been robbed of those long-cherished experiences by the coronavirus pandemic, it's their immediate future that has been thrown into the biggest flux.

Each year by May 1, nearly all students would know where they would be attending college in late summer, and admissions offices would have a clear idea of student enrollment.

But the process this spring has been scrambled with the possibility of online classes continuing in the fall, some students and parents having second thoughts about travelling too far from home and, in some cases, radically altered family finances.

"As much as (the coronavirus) has impacted our senior year, it has also impacted our college decisions," said De Feo, who will be attending Quinnipiac next year. "Many people, including myself, have had to send in an appeal form for more money."

That appeal turned out well for De Feo. She received the maximum scholarship, which allowed her to make her decision and commit to Quinnipiac.

But for others who don't receive a significantly enhanced scholarship, or at

least some assurance that they will have an on-campus experience in the fall that has long been a key drawing card for colleges, they and their families may not want to pay top-dollar to sit at home on a computer, according to several Westchester-based college counselors.

"That's a very valid point and that's a very big concern," said Alan Sheptin, owner of Sheptin Tutoring Group in Chappaqua. "If I'm a parent and I'm sending my kid to a private college, just for starters \$27,000 for five online classes, I could send my kid to Westchester Community College and do it for \$5,000. The finances are a major issue in how the schools are going to respond."

The possibility of distance learning remains real, particularly with schools in states that have had larger numbers of COVID-19 cases or have had hotspots. Last week, the California State University system, with about 500,000 students, announced its 23 campuses would remain closed and courses would continue online for the fall semester. Other public university systems and their private counterparts must also make a decision.

Ronald Feuchs, who owns and operates Stand Out for College, cited a survey reported on last month in Forbes and The New York Times revealing that 15 percent of college-bound high school seniors were considering a gap year.

Adrianna Tagayun has been one of the students mulling that option. Accepted to Worcester Polytech Institute, part of going



The pandemic robbed high school seniors of their graduation experiences this year and threatens to continue affecting the start of their college careers.

to college is not just going to class, she said.

"I've been seriously considering taking a gap year because there is already so much student debt in the country and there is no point in paying thousands of dollars without experiencing college life," said the Somers High School senior.

Uncertainty about enrollment levels is one reason why college wait lists have expanded this year, Sheptin said.

"Are students and their families going to

be as open to being a plane ride away or on the other coast should another pandemic occur?" he said. "I'm hearing parents saying I don't want my kid more than three hours away from home in case I have to get them in an emergency situation."

But it may also be economic survival for some colleges. Feuchs said there will be far fewer foreign students in 2020-21, many of whom pay full tuition to go to college in the United States.

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Uncertainties Cloud College Process for Students and Families

continued from previous page

"If not enough students enroll and you don't get enough tuition, that puts a tremendous financial strain on the university," Feuchs said.

Many schools have held off on their deadline to commit until June 1, or in some cases as late as July 1, to allow students the maximum amount of time to decide.

Pace University, for example, moved its decision day to June 15, except for their performing arts students, who had to commit by the usual May 1 deadline, said Vice President of Enrollment Robina Schepp. Most universities extended the timeline, recognizing that students needed more time to make what for many is the biggest decision of their lives, Schepp said.

She said earlier this month that responses from students on committing had been slightly slower than normal but not significantly so. The university also accepted about 14 percent more students this year.

"The challenge is, for us, to really feel like we're creating the same level of connection with students when we're not seeing them face to face," Schepp said.

One encouraging sign, Schepp noted, has been that the virtual visits this spring of would-be Pace students have been much more engaged than in previous years during on-site visits. Without able to see the school community in action for themselves, they are asking many more questions to get a better feel for their decisions.

The crisis hasn't only impacted high school seniors, some of whom were making their critical decision without knowing what next school year holds. Neal Schwartz, owner and director of College Planning of Westchester in Armonk, said high school juniors are almost certainly to feel the impact on multiple levels.

The second half of a junior's high school career has often been the most crucial time. But with cancellation of Regents, SAT and ACT exams and many schools opting for pass-fail grading, colleges are likely to view their performance with an asterisk, he said.

"For the high school juniors this was the year they were really supposed to shine," Schwartz said. "(They are) taking a pass-fail course, they canceled Regents. How can I show my abilities?"

Feuchs said if more seniors take gap years for 2020-21, that will likely make the challenges for juniors more daunting. There will be fewer spots available for next year's graduating class, particularly in public colleges and universities which offer comparatively greater value.

While SATs and ACTs have been rescheduled, there are factors that a student can control, Feuchs said. He advised this year's juniors spend this summer working on their personal essay rather than wait to the fall when they will likely be juggling school work and the rescheduled SAT and ACT exams.

Despite difficulties that no previous graduating class has had to face, De Feo said



An empty Pace University campus earlier this spring. The possibility of remote courses continuing in the fall has complicated the search and decision-making process for college-bound students this year.

she remains optimistic about her upcoming college experience.

"On behalf of the Class of 2020, I would like to say that although we are going through the toughest times of our lives right now that we are strong, we are fighters, we

will get through this difficult time together, and good things will happen for us even though it may not seem like that is possible as we are going through unimaginable circumstances at this moment in time," she said.

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Obituaries

Longtime No. Castle Building Inspector Richardson Dies at 68

By Martin Wilbur

William Richardson, a longtime North Castle building inspector, died from complications from the coronavirus on May 5 at the age of 68 years old.

Richardson, a lifelong Greenwich, Conn. resident, worked for the town for 25 years until his retirement about a year ago, said Town Supervisor Michael Schiliro. He

also volunteered for the Banksville Fire Department for 53 years, including 16 years where he served as chief.

Last Wednesday, the North Castle Town Board dedicated its live-streamed meeting to Richardson.

"He was a good employee, a dedicated employee, and it's just when this virus starts to hit close to home and it has been recently, and unfortunately, this is another

example of that," Schiliro said. "Our hearts go out to his family. He was a young man, retired recently, he worked hard his whole life, volunteered his whole life and unfortunately contracted the virus and it didn't end well."

Known to everyone as Bill, he owned and operated Babco Automotive in Banksville for 20 years until he started his second career, retiring as the fire marshal and a building inspector in North Castle.

In addition to his affiliation with the Banksville Fire Department, he was a New York State fire investigator and a member of the Westchester County Cause & Origin team; was a past member of the Greenwich RTM; served on the Middle Patent Rural Cemetery board; and was a member of the Cos Cob Revolver and Rifle Club. His free

time included spending time with his family, working on cars, all things racing and hanging out at the firehouse and the gun club. He will be missed by many friends.

Richardson is survived by his wife of 47 years, Jinny; daughter Rebecca Lane and husband Chris of Austin, Texas; grandchildren Gianna, Derek and Keira; son Bill of Monroe, Conn.; mother Frances of Easton, Mass.; brother Martin and wife Abby of Bedford; and a large extended family. He was predeceased by his father, William Sr., and in-laws Anthony and Mary Gumina.

A service will be scheduled for a later date. Arrangements were handled by Castiglione Funeral Home in Greenwich.

In lieu of flowers, consider making a donation to a charity of your choice.

Catherine Galbraith

Catherine Galbraith passed away on May 11 at the age of 81.

She was born in Putnam Valley to Adam and Ruth (Schneider) Timcoe. She and her late husband, Joseph, had been longtime residents of Jefferson Valley, where they happily raised their three kids.

She is survived by her son, William, and his wife, Bonnie; grandchildren Brianne and Billy; great-grandchildren Tucker, Tate and Julianna; her son, James, and his wife, Marylou, and grandchildren Joe and Ronny; her daughter, JoAnne, and her husband, David Siefert, and grandchildren Reid and Natalie; her brother, Fred Timcoe; and niece Karen and nephews Jason, Adam, Scott and their families. She was predeceased by her brother, Ronald, and her sister-in-law, Jane Timcoe.

Galbraith was employed by Westchester County Medical Center's Admitting Department for 24 years, where she received an award for her excellence. She enjoyed



Catherine Galbraith

German Shepherds, knitting, gardening and exercising. She was a wonderful wife, mother, mother-in-law and grandmother. We will miss her deeply. She will always be in our hearts.

Alice Smith

Alice D. Smith of Peekskill passed away on May 12. She was 94 years old.

Smith worked at Snowflake Laundry and West Ledge Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Peekskill.

She was born on May 17, 1925, in Philipstown to Otto and Susie Bischoff.

She was married to Joseph M. Smith Sr.

Smith is survived by three children, Joseph M (Anna Maria) Smith Jr. of Peekskill, Keven (Julie) Smith of Cornwall and Kelly (David) Nikisher of Wappingers Falls; eight grandchildren, Amanda (Guiseppe)

Musacchia, Natalie (Mark) DelleBovi, Keven Smith Jr., Julia Smith, Ryan Smith, Ashley Cleary, Heather Nikisher and David Nikisher; four great-grandchildren, Joseph, John, Michael and Gabriella Musacchia; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

She was predeceased by her husband, five sisters, Wilhelmina Ingersoll, Ruth Bischoff, Florence Sekel, Muriel Vogel, and Nada Montesano, and four brothers, William, Roy, Howard and Otto Bischoff Jr.

Visitation was held at Joseph F. Nardone Funeral Home in Peekskill on May 17.

Enrico Spalvieri

Enrico ("Rick") J. Spalvieri, 81, of Farmington, Conn., beloved husband to Marion (Troetti) Spalvieri, passed away peacefully on May 9.

Spalvieri was born on Mar. 11, 1939, the son of the late Nazzareno and Frances (Zange) Spalvieri. He was raised in Scarsdale, where he earned varsity letters from Scarsdale High School in football, basketball and baseball. He went to college and received his associate's degree from the State College of Florida in 1960.

In 1962, Rick and Marion moved to Harrison, where they raised their three children. In 1963, he opened and operated a landscaping and construction company, Spalvieri Landscaping Corp. After selling his business in 1998, Rick and Marion moved to Canton, Conn. to be closer to his children and began working as a greenskeeper at the Golf Club of Avon. He retired in 2014.

Spalvieri was a parishioner of the Church of Saint Ann in Avon and a member of the Prince Thomas of Savoy Italian Club. He was also an avid hunter and gardener; however,

his greatest joy was spending time with his family: his children, grandchildren and great-grandchild.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years; Marion (Troetti) Spalvieri, of Farmington; his two sons, Joseph A. Spalvieri and his wife, Dina, of Kent, Conn. and Christopher M. Spalvieri and his wife, Tara, of Newtown, Conn.; his daughter, Lisa A. Seminara and her husband, Nicholas, of Avon; his grandchildren, Samantha and her husband, Jason, and Gabrielle, Christopher, Rebecca, Martina, Madelyn and Nicholas; and his great-grandchild, Harper.

A memorial service for Rick will be held at a later date at the Church of Saint Ann. Donations in his memory may be made to either St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, Tenn. 38105 or the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758516, Topeka, Kan. 66675-8516.

Carmon Funeral Home & Family Center of Avon had care of the arrangements. For condolences, please visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com.

Mary G. Ferguson

Mary G. Ferguson, a former New York City resident who lived in Mohegan Lake since 1977, died peacefully on May 9 of

natural causes after a short stay at Calvary Hospital. She was 93 years old.

Ferguson was born on Oct. 3, 1926, and worked and lived in New York City with her parents, Rose and Frank Salsiccia, until she married Robert Ferguson from Croton-on-Hudson in April 1950.

She worked for more than 50 years as the executive administrative coordinator and office manager at Colonial Terrace in Cortlandt Manor. She retired in 2014.

She was an avid theater and concertgoer and enjoyed traveling. She was an active parishioner of St. Columbanus Church where she also taught CCD for many years.

Ferguson is survived by her daughter, Gail Ferguson, of Mohegan Lake as well as her many nieces and nephews.

A private burial will take place at Hillside Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory to the Calvary Hospital Fund would be appreciated.



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Mountain Bike Jumps at Mt. Pleasant Park Leaves County Nervous

By Martin Wilbur

Westchester officials are grappling with how to respond to a small mountain bike jump and skills park that was illicitly built in the county-owned Graham Hills Park in Mount Pleasant during the past two months.

More than a week ago a series of jumps made of dirt, wood and other materials was discovered by David DeLucia, director of park facilities for the county who is also an avid mountain biker. The park features a network of trails for bikers that was built in the 1980s.

The area where the jumps are located is more than a quarter-mile through the woods that can be entered on the southbound side of the Saw Mill Parkway at Marble Avenue. Most visitors, however, come in through the entrance to Graham Hills Park on Route 117, across the street from Pace University, and ride on the trails for at least a mile to the site.

DeLucia said it was apparently constructed by a loosely-knit group of biking enthusiasts.

"It was just random people deciding 'Oh, I'm going to build a jump here, I'm going to build a jump there,'" said DeLucia. "They did a lot of work."

Last Friday morning a group of county officials, led by DeLucia and



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTOS

A few of the jumps and bikers at an area of the county-owned Graham Hills Park in Mount Pleasant. County officials recently discovered that the jumps were built without authorization.

County Executive George Latimer, inspected the site. At the time of their arrival there were at least 20 bikers in the vicinity, from children to adults, some of them using the jumps.

The key issue for the county is liability if someone was injured, said County Attorney John Nonna.

"They'd sue the county, claiming we're on notice with this," he said. "It's a dangerous situation where we are liable and saying it's a dangerous situation because we allowed it."

Latimer, who was also informed of its existence by Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, said he was unsure what course of action the county will take. He said he would like to talk to the mountain bikers who built it and those who have been using the jumps.

While there was no ill-intent by

those responsible, Latimer said, building the jumps without authority on public land is a serious matter that has to be addressed. He expected a course of action to be decided in the coming week.

"We'll sit and talk about it and figure out what kind of response, a plan that's going to be," Latimer said. "That's why I was looking for people who were active in the mountain biking community, who'll sit with us and have a rational discussion and have a rational plan going forward. But we can't let people do whatever they want on public property."

Since the county found out about it, a petition drive was launched containing more than 2,000 signatures from people concerned that officials will bulldoze the area.

Bob Dillon, head coach of the Pleasantville mountain bike team

that competes in a New York league created by the National Interscholastic Cycling Association, said the jumps were likely built by those with newfound time on their hands, people who are likely home from school or furloughed from work.

Some of the youngsters Dillon coaches have gravitated to the site. With no youth sports or other organized activities, he hopes the county can reach a compromise with the bikers, he said.

"It's very well built," Dillon said. "This wasn't done by 12-year-olds with shovels. They knew what they were doing. They put in quality tabletops. It's become like a community of people that come and hang out now and enjoy it. There's nothing like it in the county."

Jason Bell of Briarcliff Manor, who was at the park with his young son Aaron, said it's a place to not only have fun but where you can socialize safely.

"This is one of only two areas of the park where you can social distance," Bell said. "If you go through the part of the trails, the raw, rooty, rugged trails, obviously we can't, you have bikes whizzing through at 30 miles per hour. So we can't stand and have a conversation."

Another frequent visitor, John of White Plains who asked that his last name not be used, said the area



Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti, left, and Bob Dillon, head coach of the Pleasantville mountain bike team, inspect one of the jumps built at Graham Hills Park.

is actually safer than many of the park's trails, some of which have steep descents that are littered with remnants of fallen trees and other debris. He said bikers from all over the county and Connecticut have been coming to the park for the jumps.

"With COVID, there's no school, no sports, a lot of people out of work right now, this is our outlet," he said. "My children are in travel sports. Without this, they'd be inside playing video games."

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Need Some Exercise? Try the Galleria 5K in White Plains



With health clubs closed and group exercise discouraged, the Galleria at White Plains is calling on Westchester County's residents to walk or run around the Galleria five times: the equivalent of five kilometers.

The Galleria 5K Challenge is easy. Simply start at the Galleria 5K sign posted near the Main Street garage entrance by Macy's and begin walking or running. One kilometer is

Gyms and health clubs may be closed but if you have a comfortable pair of shoes that's all you need to try the Galleria 5K Challenge, where walkers or runners can walk or run on the sidewalk around the perimeter of the shopping mall five times.

the equivalent of walking or jogging around the Galleria at White Plains once on the public sidewalks from Court Street to Main Street, South Lexington Avenue and Martine Avenue.

There's no set time or day for the Galleria 5K Challenge. Participants can do it whenever they please. Friends can do it together so long as they maintain proper social distance.

Participants who complete five circles around the Galleria at White Plains are invited to post #Galleria5K or #GalleriaHigh5 on their social media platforms.

"With warmer weather approaching and the continued closure of health clubs, we

thought the many residents of downtown White Plains might enjoy a fitness challenge that's not only a great workout, but is socially distant and safe," said Ty Peterson, marketing and business development manager of the Galleria at White Plains. "What we really like about the Galleria 5K is that it's inclusive. People at any fitness level can do it."

The Galleria at White Plains is located at 100 Main St. in White Plains.

Yorktown Cancels All Municipal Camps for This Summer

The Town of Yorktown's summer full- and half-day camps will be canceled due to continuing efforts to protect public health.

"We are disappointed as a department to cancel these programs, but we will be working within the structure of the four-phased state reopening guidelines to hopefully provide some weekly activities for your children," said town Recreation Director Jim Martorano Jr.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Yorktown had begun construction on the Junior Lake Pool. Work was disrupted by the pandemic, which means that the facility will not open this summer. At the same time, all pool permits were suspended by county health officials, so the Shrub Oak Pool and Sparkle Lake will be delayed until July if county officials allow pools to reopen, according to town officials.

All active parks remain closed, but passive parks, such as trails and nature preserves, remain open. Passive-park visitors must wear masks and maintain six feet of distance from other visitors.

However, not all town recreation is canceled. Yorktown opened two of its three tennis courts on Monday, part of activities deemed to be low risk by the state. The courts at Blackberry Woods Tennis Courts in Mohegan Lake and the courts at Downing Park, both of which have been refurbished, are open with restrictions. These include a one-hour time limit and singles matches only. Tennis will not be allowed in the middle courts to maintain proper social distancing.

Westchester County's Mohansic Golf Course remains open.

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P'ville Photographer Captures Today's Pain and Promise for HS Seniors

By Martin Wilbur

As Chad Kraus spent the early weeks of the COVID-19 crisis sheltering in place, he searched for a meaningful way to use his talents to help others in and around his hometown of Pleasantville.

A short time later, Kraus read an article about how a Washington D.C. area photographer had snapped pictures of high school seniors who lost all of the special moments that this time of year is supposed to hold.

With virtually all of his own photography jobs canceled as the stay-at-home order has now lasted through two months, Kraus thought he could provide a similar service to some of the seniors at Pleasantville High School free of charge.

He reached out to parents and families to spread the word, and last Tuesday and Wednesday spent his time taking portraits of students at the Pleasantville High School circle, using the school building as the backdrop. It wasn't meant to replace prom or graduation photos – he didn't want them wearing caps and gowns, suits or dresses or posing as though it was a yearbook picture – but rather to capture a bit of what each student was feeling



Kraus capturing portraits from a safe distance last week.

and missing.

"For some, a smile came naturally, but it was just meant to capture them and their current emotions, and whether that means a smile or a little bit of a close-mouthed smirk, whatever it is, it's really meant to be a little melancholy," Kraus said.

Each student who signed up was asked to wear their everyday clothes and bring an item that they identify with or from a favorite activity. Students brought a musical instrument, a piece of sports equipment, artwork or were wearing the colors of the college they are planning to attend.

Kraus said over the two days he photographed about 30 students. Some parents reached out to Kraus to tell him how much they



Chad Kraus

appreciated his efforts. But there were other students who would have liked to participate but the pain of losing the final three months of high school and all those special experiences hit too close to home.

"There's kids, there's student who weren't prepared emotionally to do it because they're still kind of sad from not being able to do all these things they were going to do," Kraus said. "There's prom, there's graduation and it would just be too much for them. So I'm sure some didn't do it because of that and yet I had others who said how great they thought it was."

He has since been contacted by the mother of a senior at neighboring Briarcliff High School, and along with other senior class parents, want Kraus to take similar portraits – only



Some of the roughly 30 portraits photographer Chad Kraus took last week of Pleasantville High School seniors outside their school.

they'll pay him for his services.

Kraus said that despite the difficulty of the time, with many families struggling economically, he has been heartened that so many ordinary citizens have reached out to help others. For the 30 students last week, he likely gave them a

memory that will be important to reflect on decades into the future.

"My hope is that

10, 20 years from now with some distance and some time can help and some perspective, and they could look back and share what this time was like with their kids and their grandkids and future generations," Kraus said.

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Letters to the Editor

Memorial Day 2020: An Old Veterans Point of View

Usually Memorial Day is a time for great sales, picnics, cookouts and parades. It has become a very anticipated long weekend. No work, no school and all those summer places open up on this day.

Some are wishing this will not change in this very troubling time of COVID-19, but that will probably not be the case this year. However, the exception has always been for John, Joe, Sam, Rita, Jane and hundreds of thousands of others like them. These were the military folks who gave their lives and for whom the day was intended.

Strange if you ask some young folks today, many would not realize or even know what the true meaning of the day or the reason it is celebrated. Their priorities this year are most probably focused more on the style face covering they should be wearing and how they will look in this

required new clothing item. Political types would lay their ceremonial wreaths often near a memorial stone and make moving speeches that are usually too long. In prior years we used to have a parade in our town, like in most small towns across America. It consisted of community leaders, police, fire departments, school bands and many scout groups.

Since I've been involved with a great youth community service group in our town, we always tried to plan something that depicts the true meaning of the day. Our best, certainly most moving was towing an American flag-draped coffin with signs around it showing the number of American casualties for each war. Through the entire parade route, as you might imagine, there was first surprise when the sound of taps we were playing

was heard. Then solemn emotion took over, and in many cases, there were tears on the faces of the older onlookers as we passed. It said all there was to say and brought home better than any words what the true meaning of Memorial Day should always be about.

It will be interesting to see how the resilient American spirit comes through in resourceful ways to celebrate Memorial Day in this pandemic year around our country. Thank you and God bless those Americans watching from a very different and peaceful place who made this day necessary.

Al Avitabile
Yorktown

Municipalities Need Litigation Protection for Legal COVID-19 Re-openings

I am the supervisor of the Town of Greenburgh. Like many similar municipalities, most of our facilities are closed and others are open with only a skeleton staff.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and a member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, testified before the Senate Health Committee on May 12 that reopening facilities too soon could lead to serious consequences, including risks of suffering and death.

Guidelines as to when to reopen various types of facilities (such as town and village halls, libraries and recreational facilities) are, through nobody's fault, not scientifically precise. There is clearly a risk that if a Town or Village Hall is opened on a fully-operational basis, one or more municipal employees or members of the public will unfortunately contract

COVID-19 and then bring a lawsuit against the municipality claiming that the municipality was at fault for not providing a safe environment. In Pennsylvania, there is already a lawsuit for wrongful death against a business legally authorized to reopen.

Hopefully, municipal insurance policies would cover the municipality and its public officers for lawsuit defense and any liability, but there is no assurance. There is a pressing need for governmental litigation protection.

Unfortunately, on the federal level, the issue of litigation protection has disintegrated into a partisan political fight. The only hope for litigation protection is on the state level.

Every citizen of New York lives within a city, town, village or other municipality. Municipalities provide essential public services, such as public safety, emergency

medical services, assistance for seniors, programs for at-risk children, recreational facilities, environmental protections, codes for safe buildings, etc. It is not in the public interest for municipalities to run the risk of COVID-19 lawsuits when they reopen their facilities. An adverse judgment could force municipalities to cut back on important services they provide to the public, or even go bankrupt.

I would like to suggest that the governor consider asking the legislature to pass an emergency bill providing that lawsuits for contracting COVID-19 in or on municipal properties cannot be brought against municipalities and its public officials which open town facilities in accordance with the Governor's directives.

Paul J. Feiner
Supervisor, Town of Greenburgh

Assembly Challenger's Record Void of Community Service and Voting

In your article last week about the primary challenge to Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, ("Appellate Division Upholds Democrat's Bid to Challenge Abinanti") you disseminate a false or at least very ignorant accusation by quoting the challenger's statement that "[m]y opponent has expended so much taxpayer money on this matter already."

This is absolutely incorrect and displays a disturbing lack of basic understanding of our legal system. No extra taxpayer money was spent on Abinanti's challenges to the errors in Ms. Williams' nominating petitions: judges and judicial staff are paid the same, no matter how many cases they hear. That's their job, all day, every day: to enforce the law. If a judge considers a particular legal action frivolous or improper, he or she can impose financial

sanctions; that did not happen here.

The fact that a court rules against you hardly means that a case is totally lacking in merit. More to the point, Mr. Abinanti used zero taxpayer money in this lawsuit and to propagate this misinformation is irresponsible, bordering on defamatory. I must urge you to take down that quotation immediately.

Overall, your article is far too kind to Ms. Williams, who has not previously been involved in government or in the community. Public records reveal that she has never even voted in a state or local Democratic Party primary; the first time she will ever vote in a Democratic primary will be for herself. She also couldn't be bothered to vote in the crucial 2017 county executive race between George Latimer and ardent Trump supporter Rob Astorino,

and even missed the 2014 gubernatorial election (when the Assembly seat she seeks was on the ballot).

Her conspicuous failure to engage with local policy issues or to participate even as a volunteer in local government, as well as her spotty voting record and apparent unfamiliarity with the operation of our legal system, have caused many voters to doubt her qualifications for starting at the highest level of state government. At a minimum, her wholesale abdication of civic responsibility and failure to participate in the electoral system ought to have been featured in your article. Thank you.

Professor Vanessa Merton
Hastings-on-Hudson

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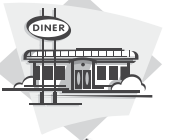
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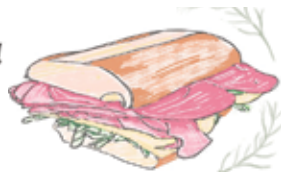
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Miles of Smiles as Bedford School District Hosts Car Parades

By Clever Streich

There have been so many experiences that students have missed out on the past two months that had previously been taken for granted.

Last Tuesday, the Bedford Central School District hoped to raise spirits and bring the community together by giving students something special to remember.

Three separate car parades navigated the roads of Mount Kisco, Bedford and Pound Ridge, the three municipalities that comprise an overwhelming majority of the district. Hundreds of colorfully decorated vehicles rolled by families with horns honking to celebrate community spirit despite the closure of schools since mid-March due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Police in each community helped enforce social distancing guidelines during the events that saw an estimated 400-plus cars that were part of the three parades.

For brothers Joseph and Nicco Racanelli, the parade was a chance to see friends and classmates after weeks of learning online.

"I'm so happy I get to see my friends again," said Joseph Racanelli, a Fox Lane Middle School student. "It's nice to see people and talk to them."

His brother, Nicco, had similar thoughts. "It's great to see my friends, because I haven't been with them in a while," he said.

The brothers had decked out their family's pickup truck with balloons, streamers and Fox Lane colors and logos. They, along with



CLEVER STREICH PHOTOS

Joseph Racanelli, left, and his brother Nicco in front of their family's Fox Lane-themed pickup truck before the Bedford School District's car parade in Mount Kisco last Tuesday.

many others who had gathered, showed their support by wearing their school's apparel. Some had even dressed up in fox costumes and pajamas, taking their spirit a step further.

District staff, teachers and administrators also participated. Fox Lane High School Principal Dr. Brett Miller was pleased with how the parades turned out.

"I think it's a beautiful day, we definitely lucked out with the weather," Miller said.



The line of colorfully decorated cars visiting a Mount Kisco neighborhood.

Fox Lane has been making a conscious effort to support this year's graduating class, and are developing plans for a safe graduation in June, he said.

"This is a time for (the district) to get together and say hello to the community," Miller said. "We thank them for all their support."

High school English teacher Paul Cullagh attended the Pound Ridge and Mount Kisco parades with his family.

"The car parade is a positive way to get out in the community," Cullagh remarked while preparing his car for the Mount Kisco leg of the journey. "It's a chance for people to get together while socially distancing, and to let the students know we're thinking about them."

Onlookers of all ages watched as cars rolled

by their residences, greeting spectators in likely the biggest community event since the stay-at-home order was put into effect.

Students who were not part of the parade held signs thanking their teachers. Heartfelt messages such as "We miss our MKES teachers," "Stay strong BCSD" and "We're all in this together" were just a sampling of the sentiments that were relayed to teachers and staff as the cars rolled by.

Sheri Brown, a Mount Kisco Elementary School art teacher, was overjoyed to see many of her students come out for the parade.

"I was so excited. Today showed that we all miss everybody so much," Brown said. "It was unbelievable to be together for the first time in two months."

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Yorktown Author Releases Book With 'Weird Stories' for Unusual Time

By Ariel Markowski

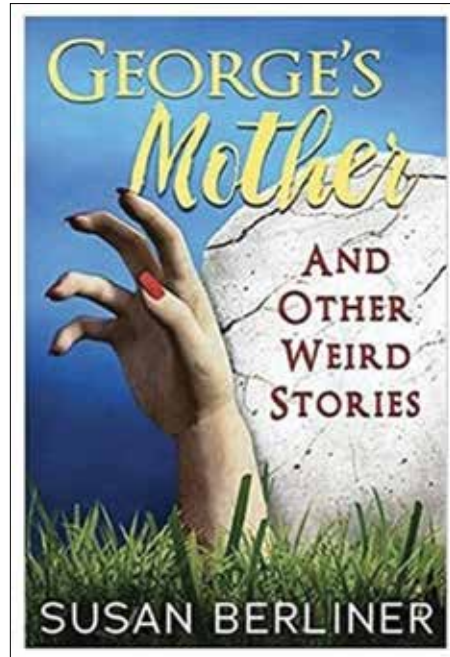
It was at a young age that Susan Berliner discovered her passion for literature. As early as her elementary school years, she was writing plays and stories.

The 40-year Yorktown resident has eight published books under her belt, the most recent of which was released in late March.

The collection of short stories in "George's Mother and Other Weird Stories" spans various categories, including thrillers, horror, sci-fi, fantasy and humor. In the world she has created, strange events occur, both positive and negative. The supernatural world is integral to each section.

"Reading is always important because it's how we learn," Berliner said. "But these days, reading fiction is especially important because it's a way for us to escape the disturbing reality of our everyday lives."

You might already be familiar with Berliner's previous works: "DUST," "Peachwood Lake," "The Disappearance," "Corsonia," "After the Bubbles," "Soldier Girl" and "The Sea Crystal and Other Weird Tales." If you have read and enjoyed any of these novels, her newest release would be a great option for your next read. Or if you're struggling to find an entertaining and productive pastime, "George's Mother and Other Weird Stories" would meet that criteria, regardless of your familiarity with



Berliner's other novels.

"I write supernatural fiction, but we're living in a world that seems unreal," Berliner said.

Ironically, her two dystopian books, "After the Bubbles" and "Soldier Girl," provide a closer connection to the lives many have been forced to adopt the past two months. It is understandable to want an escape, making Berliner's newest book all the more appealing.

Although these stories provide a means

by which to separate readers from their reality, the inspiration is often drawn from common, real-world situations. For example, Berliner describes the origin of one of these stories, "507-9302," as follows:

"Friends had a rogue house phone that made calls to neighbors by itself. The problem – a faulty connection – was soon repaired by their telephone company. In this story, the explanation for the calls is far more complex."

In her writing, Berliner manages to transform seemingly simple ideas into complex problems, which come about and are dealt with through a series of strange events.

Another story within the collection, "Megan's Crows," which, according to Berliner, was inspired by "Early morning caws [that] disturbed a young child in my family. Our solution was simple: a noise machine. But that gave me an idea: What if the problem with the crows was much more sinister?"

Curiosity and imagination are the traits that created a lifelong writer, as Berliner has long known she'd become. When one raises a question, a world of possibilities is revealed, and this can be taken literally in her case.

The world we know has become more challenging to endure. Why not enter a different world, if only temporarily? Berliner has provided readers with the opportunity to discover possibilities that



Yorktown author Sue Berliner had her eighth book released earlier this spring, this time a collection of short stories that cover a variety of genres.

exist only in fantasy. Now, more than ever, this is an essential idea to bring to light.

To order "George's Mother and Other Weird Stories" or to learn more about Berliner's writing, visit <https://susanberliner.com>.



A MESSAGE FROM

PUTNAM COUNTY EXECUTIVE, MARYELLEN ODELL
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATIVE CHAIRWOMAN, TONI ADDONIZIO
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE



Is Dusting a State of Mind or Does it Lead to a Healthier Life?

If we are made from dust and shall return to dust, as the Bible tells us, does that give us a pass to live with the stuff in between?

While dust is inevitable, it horrifies some of us, as though its presence on our furniture and floors tells the world something unflattering about us, not only as housekeepers but as human beings.

I don't do the dusting in my household and I'm not quite sure if it would get done if I were responsible for it. On second thought, a few months into a global pandemic, I am spending all my time at home, so maybe having a dusty environment would get to me psychologically after a while. It might symbolize letting everything go.

I remember an interview long ago in The New York Times in which an eccentric artist said she hadn't dusted her apartment in over 30 years, saying that "after the first two years or so, you really can't tell the difference." That kind of empirical research really impresses me.

In the HBO movie "Grey Gardens," Jackie Kennedy Onassis's aunt and cousin, Edie Beale, and her daughter are depicted as living in absolute squalor in a neglected ramshackle house, with garbage strewn throughout and a hoard of cats and raccoons relieving themselves on the floor. When Jackie arrives to help remedy the situation



By Bill Primavera

and registers her shock at the condition of the property, Edie dismisses her living environment by saying simply that her daughter "hasn't been keeping up with the dusting."

Is inattention to dust the first degenerative step to chaos in the home? Maybe for some, depending on their mental attitude about it, and in turn, how unkempt homes can affect its occupants.

A recent survey revealed that 83 percent of us are happier in a clean house and just the act of cleaning gives 57 percent of the population a feeling of satisfaction. Further, it shows that 38 percent of women and 24 percent of men

experience real stress living in a messy environment.

It would seem that, especially in these harsh times, dusting and cleaning can be therapeutic. Psychologists have found that there is a marked difference in mood before and after cleaning, just as with a therapy session.

Licensed psychologist Carol Nemeroff said a psychological boost may be derived from biological programming to clean our nests.

"And, because we know that good hygiene leads to good health," she said, "cleaning may ultimately be related to a basic survival instinct."

Wow, get out that dust rag!



For those who don't mind living with a coating of dust on their furniture and appliances, it may be motivating to know that dust is composed largely of our own flaking skin cells. Now that we know what it contains and that it can cause real stress, does this explain the expression uncomfortable in our own skin?

Add other flaky stuff like fabric fibers, dust mite excrement, hair, pet dander, pollen, regular dirt, debris and micro particles and you have a pretty nasty brew that can give people with allergies and breathing problems a real hassle.

But beyond the psychological and unhealthy effects of dust, it can do real physical damage to most everything it lands on, from furniture surfaces to clogging computer keyboards and vents.

There are fancy and simple ways to get rid of dust. The fancy way is with an air purifier of which there are two types: those with fans that pull air through filters that trap the dust and those called electrostatic precipitators in which an electrical charge is applied to the

dust drawn into the device and captured on oppositely charged plates. Both are available as either portable units, which offer varying degrees of effectiveness depending on the model, or as whole-house systems. Prices range from \$100 for a portable model to more than \$1,000 for a whole-house system.

But as a real estate agent, among the houses I've listed or sold, I was aware of only a couple that had a whole-house air purifier system. So unless people are plagued by allergies, I suspect that most of us dust with old-fashioned elbow grease, using either regular rags or one of those new magic dusters to which particles cling. Because the latter option can be expensive, a regular rag can be just as effective if dampened before use and shaken out frequently.

I definitely do not recommend a feather duster because it merely spreads the dust around until it lands again on surfaces.

It's funny how the exploratory process can affect you. As I sit at my computer, I'm very aware and uncomfortable in the knowledge that there is a lot of dust trapped between on the keyboard. Are the raccoons soon to follow?

Bill Primavera multitasks as a communicator. He is founder of Primavera Public Relations, a full-service marketing firm, a journalist with this paper and concurrently serves as a licensed realtor with many years of experience in the field. For questions or comments about the housing market or for consultation about selling or buying a home, Bill can be reached at 914-522-2076.

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As professional Realtors, we are keeping a close eye on the market. While it can't quite be "business as usual" right now, there is still strength and activity happening daily. If you are interested in taking advantage of the opportunities, we are here to guide and assist you, whether it's through actual or virtual showings, listing for sale, or leasing.

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NWH Offers Antibody Tests to First Responders, Essential Workers

Northern Westchester Hospital (NWH) is offering serology COVID-19 antibody testing at two locations for first responders and other essential workers who live or work in Armonk, Bedford, Chappaqua, Lewisboro, Mount Kisco, Pleasantville, Somers, North Salem, Yorktown or Pound Ridge.

NWH anticipates that testing for the general public will begin by early June.

In compliance with state Department of Health guidelines, effective now through May 29, antibody testing will be administered Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and noon or from 2 to 6 p.m. for first responders and essential workers who preregister. Testing is done at the Center for Healthy Living next to Whole Foods at Chappaqua Crossing or at the hospital's main campus at 400 E. Main St. in Mount Kisco.

There will be no testing on Memorial Day, Monday, May 25.

Antibody testing is available to the following priority groups:

--Animal care workers (such as veterinarians; automotive service and repair workers)

--Bank tellers/workers and building code enforcement officers

--Correction, parole and probation officers; child care workers; client-facing case managers and coordinators; and counselors (such as mental health, addiction, youth, vocational, crisis, etc.)

--Delivery workers, dentists and dental hygienists direct care providers

--Essential construction workers at occupied residences or buildings

--Faith-based leaders (e.g. chaplains, clergy); field investigators or regulators for health and safety; firefighters; food service workers and grocery store workers; and funeral home workers

--Healthcare practitioners, professionals, aides and support staff (such as physicians, nurses, public health

personnel); human services providers; hotel/motel workers; laundry and workers at dry cleaners

--Mail and shipping workers; maintenance and janitorial/cleaning workers; and medical specialists, nutritionists and dietitians

--Occupational, physical, recreational and speech therapists and optometrists and opticians and supporting staff

--Paramedics and EMTs, police officers and psychologists and psychiatrists

--Residential care program managers; retail workers at essential businesses such as grocery stores, pharmacies, convenience stores, gas stations and hardware stores

--Security guards and personnel, shelter workers and homelessness support staff and social workers

--Teachers, professors and educators; transit workers (including those at airports, railways, buses and for-hire vehicles and trash and recycling workers

--Utility workers

"While we recognize that many people want this test, it is important for us to prioritize resources to meet the most urgent public health need," said Dr. Marla Koroly, NWH's senior vice president for medical affairs and chief medical officer. "We fully expect to meet the demand in our communities as we continue to roll out testing beyond this priority group. Efforts to expand testing are critical to help scientists better understand how COVID-19 travels from person to person, why it affects people differently, whether the virus is seasonal like the flu and if people can be re-infected."

Serology or antibody testing is conducted with a simple blood draw to determine whether people who have been previously infected or exposed to COVID-19 have antibodies – proteins in the blood produced by the body's immune system – that help fight infection.



Northern Westchester Hospital Center for Healthy Living at Chappaqua Crossing is providing antibody tests for first responders and essential workers.

Antibody testing does not diagnose COVID-19 infection, but a negative result means the absence of COVID-19 antibodies in the blood. Most commonly, this indicates someone has not been infected with the COVID-19 virus, but it does not rule-out early or recent infection. A positive result indicates a person has been exposed to COVID-19 and developed antibodies in their blood. At this point scientists are not sure how detected antibodies impact immunity and protect against re-infection.

Regardless of test results, it is essential for people to adhere to the governor's executive order and the state Department of Health guidelines for masking, social distancing and hand washing.

Testing updates will be posted on the

NWH website at www.nwhc.net. People may opt to receive notifications by signing up for the hospital's e-newsletter on the website's home page or by following NWH on social media.

Pre-registration for testing can be completed at <https://bit.ly/3dFyuSG> and participants will receive a confirmation email after successful preregistration.

Please be sure to bring the following items to your appointment: proof of identification, proof of employment in one of the priority groups and a copy of your insurance card (co-payments are waived). Please know that your temperature will be taken upon entry, per New York State regulations.

Antibody Testing Expanded for General Public at County Center

The Westchester Medical Center Health Network (WMCHHealth) is expanding its antibody testing program.

Beginning Monday, COVID-19 antibody testing for the public is available by appointment at the Westchester County Center in White Plains.

Members of the public interested in COVID-19 antibody testing can call 914-326-2060, Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., for screening and to make an appointment.

After testing samples are secured, they are brought to Westchester Medical Center's Valhalla laboratories for evaluation. In most cases, results will be shared with each tested individual within 48 hours.

To date, WMCHHealth has conducted more than 8,000 antibody tests. Initially, testing was offered on a voluntary basis to

all WMCHHealth workforce members and patients of WMCHHealth, as well as to first responders, in partnership with Westchester County.

Now, with the expansion of testing appointments to include the public, WMCHHealth expects to perform thousands more COVID-19 antibody tests at the County Center, which is owned by Westchester County and is now operating under the direction of the New York State Department of Health and the Army Corps of Engineers.

What We Know Today

Antibody testing, also known as serological testing, detects antibodies present in the blood when the body is responding to a specific infection, such as COVID-19. Serological assays such as the antibody IgG test (used by WMCHHealth) are an indicator of exposure and antibody development –

and may show if an individual has ever been infected with the virus, even if they did not have symptoms.

As such, an antibody test detects the body's immune response to the infection caused by the virus, rather than detecting the virus itself. In the early days of an infection, when the body's immune response is still building, antibodies may not be present in detectable levels.

Antibody testing can play an important role in the fight against COVID-19 by helping to identify individuals who have been infected and developed antibodies to the virus. Test results will be used to estimate the total number of people who have been exposed and/or infected nationally.

Additionally, while the presence of antibodies does not confirm current or future immunity, it allows an individual

who tests positive for antibodies to donate convalescent plasma, a resource that can help others who are actively battling COVID-19.

An antibody test does not take the place of testing for active infection. WMCHHealth operates coronavirus infection testing sites on or near each hospital campus across the network. Testing for infection is available by appointment. Community members experiencing symptoms can visit WMCHHealth.org/Testing to find the nearest testing site.

For more information about antibody testing, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/serology-testing.html> or <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-serological-tests>.

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LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Village Treasurer of the Village of Pleasantville has received the Tax Roll and Warrant for the collection of taxes for the fiscal year 2020-2021. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the public does not have access to the Tax Receiver's office. Tax bills may be viewed and tax payments can be made online via the Village website

continued on page 26

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It appears on every coin issued by the Republic of Ireland since independence in 1921, and every government document.

But what of the harpers who made it so?

One immediately comes to mind, although not quite a contemporary, and I have mentioned him several times – Turlough O'Carolan. Born in County Meath in 1670, his blacksmith father moved the family to County Roscommon when O'Carolan was 14 years old. There the father was employed by the McDermott Roe family, members of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy. His son's poetic talents were recognized early on by Anne McDermott Roe, the family's matriarch, and she assisted in the young man's education. Tragically blinded by smallpox when he was 18, she had him tutored by a local harper, and three years later equipped him with harp and horse and set him off to journey the hills and vales of Ireland as an itinerant harper.

The music O'Carolan played spans many musical meters, but it is the slow air that is the most haunting. O'Carolan's contributions here are legion, but perhaps his best, and most poignant, is the last tune he composed, on his deathbed it is said: "O'Carolan's Farewell to Music."

Another particularly unique tune type



O'Carolan, the Blind Harper. Credit R.B. Armstrong, "The Irish and Highland Harps"

is the "planxty," or pleraca in Irish. While not exclusively O'Carolan's, he is most associated with it. A planxty is any tune composed in honor of a patron. And that is exactly who most of O'Carolan's tunes were composed for – wealthy Anglo-Irish landowners who would subsidize a harper in exchange for songs of praise extolling their virtues, set to the instrument's melodic strums.

My favorite

planxty is "Planxty George Brabazon," composed for a wealthy County Mayo landowner of the same name who was descended from King Henry VIII's treasurer. In fact, O'Carolan composed at least two tunes for the man, a strong measure of his admiration and devotion, without mentioning the depth of Brabazon's wealth and influence. O'Carolan was a master at the art of flattery. And what of it, if it put food in the mouths of children?

Of O'Carolan's repertoire, more than 200 compositions have come down to us. Many are staples of Irish trad, though some purists would argue that they are not really Irish music since O'Carolan was influenced strongly by Continental composers of his age.

Hogwash, in my opinion. His music is as Irish as any, and maintains a vibrancy to this day. Listen to such tunes as "Planxty Irwin," or O'Carolan's first composition,

"Sidh Beag agus Sidh Mhor," and it is no small wonder that his body of work is still a staple for anyone professing an interest in Irish trad.

Other favorites in his repertoire are "Fanny Poer," "O'Carolan's



By Brian McGowan

Concerto," "O'Carolan's Welcome," "Bridget Cruise," "O'Carolan's Quarrel with the Landlady," "O'Carolan's Draught" and "O'Carolan's Receipt."

O'Carolan married at 50, sired six daughters and a son and breathed his last on Mar. 25, 1738. While several other harpists struggled to keep the tradition alive, and some of them gathered in their eighties to play at

a memorable festival in Belfast in 1792, it is O'Carolan's music that continues to define Irish harp music to this day.

Give some of it a listen on the following YouTube tracks and let me know if you agree the music is timeless: "Planxty George Brabazon" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxthNQ3yLxg> and "O'Carolan's Farewell to Music" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNo-4k6knvo>.

Pleasantville resident Brian McGowan is a second-, third- and fifth-generation Irish-American/Canadian and author of two books: "Love, Son John," about World War II, and "Thunder at Noon," on the Battle of Waterloo. Both are available at Amazon.com. Reach him at brian.m.mcgowan1952@gmail.com. To see more on "things Irish," follow his blog, "Rethinking Irish," at www.rethinkingirish.com.

Irish Eclectic

A Spiritual View

By Fr. Nils Chittenden

Washing my hands for the third time in as many minutes the other day (sorting mail, then eating a sandwich, then forgetting I was eating a sandwich and absent-mindedly opening mail, and, well, you get the picture), an old clichéd phrase popped into my head: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."

As someone who generally tries to strive for both Godliness and cleanliness, it had always sounded very commendable to me but, I wondered now, why had these two attributes become tied together, even synonymous?

Jesus and his disciples were once accused by the religious leaders of the day of not washing their cooking utensils before using them. My sympathies would probably have been with the mainstream leaders on this one but, as with everything he did, Jesus had a bigger point to make. Cleanliness, he said, was about what came out of the person, not what went in. In other words, you could spend all

the time in the world sterilizing your pots and pans, but if you allowed gossip, aggression or resentment to flow out of you, you would still be soiled.

Right now, of course, we're focused on bodily cleanliness – and rightly so – but cleanliness is a holistic endeavor;

if we keep our bodies and our homes clean and germ-free, we shouldn't just stop there. We shouldn't forget that we also need to keep our hearts and minds clean from all of the thoughts and behaviors that

are every bit as debilitating and destructive as the coronavirus, and have the ability to infect those around us in all sorts of ways.

When we think of cleansing in terms of body, mind and spirit, then cleanliness really can become tantamount to Godliness.

Fr. Nils Chittenden is rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Armonk and is part of the Armonk Faith Alliance. The alliance also comprises Congregation B'nai Yisrael, Hillside Church, St. Patrick's RC Church and St. Nersess Armenian Seminary.



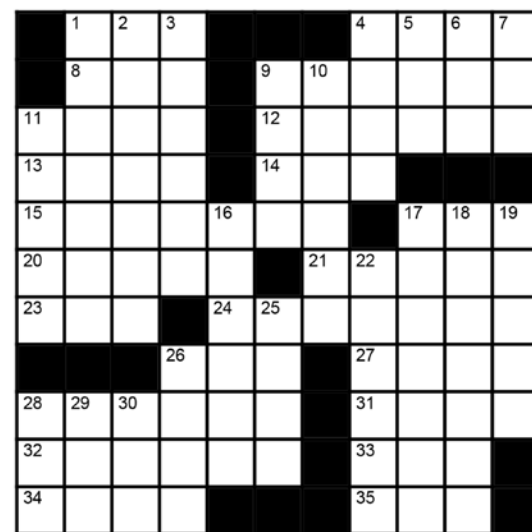
Crossword

Across

1. Lager
4. Tobacco mouthful
8. Flock sound
9. Dress down
11. Black birds
12. Made people laugh
13. Other
14. Nicole Kidman's hair color
15. Wasn't able to
17. Relaxation center promoting good health
20. Licorice flavored spice
21. Do-nothing
23. Even
24. Tell
26. J.F.K. regulators
27. Ancient pots
28. Van ____ son
31. Fix, in a way
32. Wicked
33. Even, for short
34. Curse
35. Insecticide

Down

1. Large edible mollusk
2. Case
3. Painting holders
4. Grime
5. "The Eagle ____ Landed"
6. Noshed
7. Unite inseparably
9. Horse habitat



10. It makes you sick!
11. Tooth trouble
16. Throw off course
17. Sucked through a straw
18. Flag
19. Like craft shows
22. Put water onto
25. ____ money?
26. Word on a gift tag
28. Strong joe
29. Mrs. John Lennon
30. Fraternity letter

Answers on page 28

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continued from page 24

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www.pleasantville-ny.gov, or sent via mail service to: Village of Pleasantville, Tax Office, 80 Wheeler Avenue 10570. Taxes and other assessments, if any, become due and payable June 1, 2020, but may be paid in two installments without penalty. The first installment may be paid without penalty from June 1, 2020 to and including July 1, 2020. The second installment may be paid without penalty from June 1, 2020 to and

including December 31, 2020. To all first installment taxes remaining unpaid after July 1, 2020, five percent (5%) will be added for the month of July, and an additional one percent (1%) for each month or fraction thereof until paid. To all second installment taxes remaining unpaid after December 31, 2020, five percent (5%) will be added for the month of January, and an additional one percent (1%) for each month or fraction

thereof until paid. On or before February 1, 2021 a delinquent list will be published. Mary Schwartz, Village Treasurer, Dated: May 19, 2020

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The Precepts of Wine Aging – at Home and in the Winery



By Nick Antonaccio

“Aged wine” is a rather open-ended term lacking any specificity to a particular wine. Your concept of aging may be a matter of a few days – or hours; mine may be several decades.

While one consumer may not have the patience or ideal storage environment to age wine properly, another may invest thousands of dollars in a state-of-the-art home wine cellar to allow a fine wine to develop and mature over an extended period.

A number of wine regions and individual wineries around the world age certain of their wines at the winery before the wines are released in the marketplace. Thus, a consumer has the choice of purchasing wines that have been “pre-aged” and ready for immediate consumption (or for further aging at home).

When you pop open that bottle you purchased today, it may already have been

coddled through several years of aging.

Typical winery aging for both reds and whites is 12 to 15 months. However, some wines are intended to be consumed fresh; they are released after just a few months of aging. Examples: Rosé, Beaujolais Nouveau.

Certain reds are mandated by regulatory bodies to be aged for a specific period before release. Example: Brunello di Montalcino must be aged in a combination of barrel and bottle for five years. Add an additional year and the winemaker may add the term “Riserva” on the label. When you purchase a Brunello, the label will thus indicate the period of aging at the winery.

Such rules govern other red wines as well. In other wine regions, local practice is considered sacrosanct. Example: in the Bordeaux and Burgundy regions of France, local winemakers typically will age wines in their cellars for two years before release. The

responsibility for continuing the aging process necessary for the wine to develop fully (as many as 30 years) is left to high-end merchants, expensive restaurants and collectors with personal wine cellars.

Each release date is governed locally

and may or may not carry a unique term designating the age. Of course, simple math is a key indicator. Example: If you purchase a bottle of Spanish Rioja from the 2005 vintage with the term Gran Reserva on the label, your smartphone browser will tell you that it was aged in barrel and bottle at the winery for five years and your smartphone calculator will tell you it has been aging away from the winery for an additional 10 years.

A unique wine that goes beyond regulatory guidelines: Vega Sicilia Unico, a world-renowned Spanish wine that is typically aged in the winery for at least 10 years before release, making it one of the longest winery-aged wines in the world.

As one might expect, having a wine aged under the controlled environment and professional supervision at the winery will extract the greatest expression of the wine and assure the consumer of its “provenance,” the documented history of the cellar conditions under which a wine has been stored.

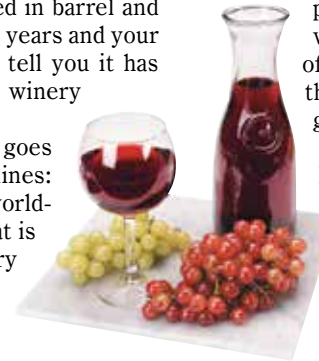
Another example of prolonged aging: Tête de cuvee Champagnes. Certain vintages are outstanding compared to others. Champagne makers, like the producer of Dom Pérignon, often age these

bottles longer – up to 15 years – before releasing them into the market, where under proper storage conditions they may age gracefully for several more decades.

Each release of Vega Sicilia and Dom Pérignon carry an associated premium to compensate the wineries for the added cost of long-term cellaring and the allure that a rare wine generates.

The choice is yours. Purchase a young, built-to-last wine and age it yourself in your home wine storage unit or purchase a winery-aged wine, at a higher cost than a typical bottle of wine, and enjoy it at your convenience.

Nick Antonaccio is a 40-year Pleasantville resident. For over 25 years, he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. Nick is the co-chairperson 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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Recommended Cookbooks to Peruse During COVID-19 Pandemic

For many staying at home and sheltering in place means pursuing new interests or reviving old ones there hasn't been time to follow.

Mahopac Public Library staff members are providing recommendations and virtual resources to engage community members who are looking for new ideas to inspire

them.

There are hundreds of titles available as e-books on Hoopla. Here are a few suggestions to explore.

The James Beard Cookbook. This is considered a timeless cookbook that was first published over 50 years ago. James Beard covers all the basics of home

cooking and offers simple but innovative recipes involving bread making, omelets, pasta, fresh vegetables, chicken, fish, salads, sauces and more. Julia Child stated: "James A. Beard was an American treasure, and his books remain the American classics that deserve an honored place on the shelves of everyone who loves food."

The Mediterranean Diet Cookbook. The Mediterranean diet is considered to be one of the healthiest in the world. It focuses on the food that is generally consumed by those living near the Mediterranean in Italy and Greece: seafood, some lean meats and dairy, vegetables, fruit, nuts, beans, whole grains and olive oil. This book includes 150 easy-to-follow recipes that encourage healthy eating as a way to lower mortality and heart disease and improve overall health.

The Spiralizer Cookbook from the Williams Sonoma Test Kitchen. Many chefs and home cooks have incorporated the spiralizer into their recipes. The spiralizer is a slicer that creates innovative shapes such as noodles, shoestrings and thin shreds from vegetables and fruit. You can make delicious and healthy meals that look pretty, too.

Top Chef the Cookbook. This book will appeal to those who want to expand their culinary repertoire and try more complex and creative recipes. It is tied to the hit Bravo television series "Top Chef" and presents 100 mouthwatering recipes from the show's first three seasons. It also includes photographs and discussions with the contestants and judges.

Forks Over Knives: The Cookbook by Del Sroufe. This title was a New York

Times bestseller and includes over 300 recipes for plant-based eating. Many people are interested in cutting out or reducing the amount of meat and dairy they consume. Losing weight, lowering cholesterol, preventing heart disease and diabetes are some of the advantages in following this way of life.

There are several cooking magazines available on RBDigital through the Mid-Hudson Library System and the Mahopac Public Library including Eating Well, Food Network Magazine, Rachael Ray Every Day, Cuisine at Home and Gluten-Free Living.

Mahopac Library staff member Lew Ann and her daughters love to cook (one is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America) and they often share different websites that offer recipes and culinary tips for cooks of all skill levels. They recommend: Half Baked Harvest, one of their favorite entrees is Pesto Potato and Burrata Pizza; Cookie and Kate, a blog that promotes healthy cooking with vegetarian recipes; Eating Well, a publication has been around for over 25 years and focuses on healthy eating; and Food Network, a website that provides a wide selection of recipes on healthy as well as comfort food from numerous famous chefs including Ina Garten, Guy Fieri, Bobby Flay and Anne Burrell.

For questions about accessing Hoopla or RBDigital, contact the Mahopac Public Library at askus@mahopaclibrary.org. For residents who don't have a library card and would like to apply for a digital card, visit www.mahopaclibrary.org and click the Services tab.

Prowling the Streets



KRISTEN HAEFNER PHOTO

Although dinosaurs went extinct about 65 million years ago, there has been much social media chatter about Tyrannosaurus rex sightings in Pleasantville recently. This dinosaur was prowling the streets, crossing Manville Road last Saturday afternoon.

Support Connection Earns GuideStar's Highest Seal of Transparency

By Rick Pezzullo

Yorktown-based Support Connection, Inc. has announced it has earned the 2020 Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of recognition offered by GuideStar, a service of Candid.

By sharing metrics that highlight progress Support Connection is making toward its mission, the organization is helping donors move beyond simplistic ways of nonprofit evaluation such as overhead ratios.

By updating its GuideStar Nonprofit Profile to the Platinum level, Support

Connection can now easily share a wealth of up-to-date organizational metrics with its supporters as well as GuideStar's immense online audience, which includes donors, grant makers, its peers and the media.

To reach the Platinum level, Support Connection added extensive information to its Nonprofit Profile on GuideStar: basic contact and organizational information; in-depth financial information; qualitative information about goals, strategies and capabilities; and quantitative information about results and progress toward its mission.

By taking the time to provide this information, Support Connection has demonstrated its commitment to transparency and to giving donors and funders meaningful data to evaluate nonprofit performance.

Support Connection, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that provides free, confidential support services and programs to people affected by breast and ovarian cancer. Founded in 1996, Support Connection is based in Yorktown, but through its toll-free services help people across the country. Services include one-on-one counseling with professional

counselors who are cancer survivors; ongoing peer-to-peer support groups; educational and wellness programs; webinars; social gatherings for cancer survivors; information and referral services; a toll-free cancer information and support hotline.

To learn more about Support Connection, visit www.supportconnection.org.

State Looking to Fill Slots to Create Team of Contact Tracers

Would you like to become a part of the COVID-19 Contact Tracing Initiative?

New York State is now searching for volunteers to fill three types of jobs: contact tracers, team supervisors and community support specialists.

Contact tracers are responsible for reaching out to the contacts of anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 to assess symptoms, ensure quarantine compliance and determine social support needs.

Team supervisors lead a team of 20

contact tracers and one community support specialist who work remotely using digital tools.

Community support specialists work with the team and the local health departments to address the physical and mental health and social and human service needs of each family, especially for those who are in isolation or under quarantine.

New York State plans to hire a team of 6,400 to 17,000 staff to help the state

Department of Health and local health departments perform contact tracing in communities across the state. The final number of staff will depend on the projected total number of COVID-19 cases.

More information about how to apply to be a part of the Contact Tracing Team can be found on the Westchester County Health Department Coronavirus Page. Visit the New York State website to find out more about how you can help.

Crossword Answers

	A	L	E			C	H	A	W
	B	A	A		B	E	R	A	T
D	A	W	S		A	M	U	S	E
E	L	S	E		R	E	D		
C	O	U	L	D	N	T		S	P
A	N	I	S	E		I	D	L	E
Y	E	T		R	E	C	O	U	N
			F	A	A		U	R	N
M	O	R	R	I	S		S	P	A
U	N	H	O	L	Y		E	E	N
D	O	O	M				D	D	T

Is it Safe to Go to the Emergency Room?

After weeks of isolation and social distancing, we are finally seeing signs that our efforts and sacrifice are paying off as the COVID-19 curve finally begins to flatten.

As we begin to imagine a return to a semblance of normal life, Northern Westchester Hospital remains committed to providing our community with the best and safest person-centered care in both its ambulatory and inpatient settings. Our very highest priority continues to be our community's physical and mental health and well-being.

This unprecedented pandemic has been frightening for everyone. One of the most alarming consequences is that people are staying away from the emergency room even when they are experiencing serious, life-threatening conditions. As a result, untold numbers of people may be dying at home or risking long-term health consequences by ignoring serious symptoms of heart attacks, strokes, infections and trauma.

We need people to understand that



By Dr. Jim Dwyer

it is safe to go to the ER, and far more dangerous to stay home and wait for serious symptoms to disappear.

It is important to visit the emergency room if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Chest pain, including tightness and pain that spreads to the arms, neck, jaw or back; sudden onset of shortness of breath, sweating, dizziness or lightheadedness; or unexplained nausea, indigestion or heartburn may all be signs of a heart attack. People who survive a heart attack may have weakened heart muscles and are at risk for life-threatening complications including another more serious heart attack.
- Body weakness, especially on one side; facial droop; difficulty speaking or finding words; sudden loss of vision; numbness or loss of sensation; or unsteadiness on your feet can be signs of a stroke. When caught early, immediate treatment may prevent death and minimize

a stroke's long-term effects. Even if a stroke is minor, it is important to receive an evaluation and treatment in order to prevent another, possibly devastating, stroke.

- Pain in the right lower quadrant of the abdomen (which typically increases when you move and intensifies over 24 to 48 hours), sometimes with loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting and fever, may be signs of appendicitis. When caught early, a surgeon can remove the appendix and often send you home the same day. If the appendix ruptures, a patient will spend days in the hospital and be at risk of life-threatening conditions that include peritonitis and sepsis.

Northern Westchester Hospital has instituted numerous safety protocols to ensure the health and well-being of our patients, physicians and staff.

When people visit our Emergency Department, they are required to put on a mask and are screened for COVID-19 symptoms at the entrance. Everyone in the facility wears a mask, and patients in our Emergency Department are treated in one of our 26 private rooms. Protection for staff and patients

prevents exposure to the coronavirus, and the chances of contracting the virus at the hospital are far less likely than contracting it in the community.

The care and safety of our community will always be our top priority, and there are many resources available to help.

For information on emotional support and COVID-19 testing, visit <https://www.northwell.edu/coronavirus-covid-19>. For specific information on what to expect if you need care at Northern Westchester Hospital, visit www.nwhc.net.

Our physicians, staff, administrators and all healthcare workers on the front lines continue to perform extraordinary work during these very difficult circumstances. We very much appreciate the community's unwavering support, and look forward to providing the skilled and compassionate care that our patients have come to expect.

We know we will all get through this together. As we begin to emerge from this crisis, please continue to wear your masks and practice social distancing. Stay safe and take care of yourself and your family.

Dr. Jim Dwyer is chair of emergency medicine at Northern Westchester Hospital.

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Mount Kisco Commons to Have Two New Tenants



An aerial shot of Mount Kisco Commons, site of Target and Stop & Shop on North Bedford Road. With two new tenants at the site, there are just two vacant spaces at the shopping center.

Admiral Real Estate Services Corp. announced Monday that The Greener Dry Cleaner and MINT Kisco Dental will be opening new locations at Mount Kisco Commons Shopping Center at 195 N. Bedford Rd. in Mount Kisco.

The two stores are located near Starbucks (within Target) and Chipotle, next to Mt. Kisco Wine & Spirits, Great Clips, C2 Education and Wells Fargo. Nearby retailers include Burger King, Dunkin' Donuts, Grand Prix New York and Petco.

Mount Kisco Commons, owned by Urban Edge Properties, is a regional shopping center anchored by Stop & Shop and the only Target in northern Westchester County. Located at the intersection of North Bedford Road (Route 117) and Preston Way, Mount Kisco Commons' location draws from an 80-mile area.

Joan Simon of Admiral Real Estate Services Corp. represented MINT Kisco Dental and

the landlord in each of these lease transactions. The Greener Dry Cleaner was represented by Fred Mastroianni III of House of Maxx Real Estate.

According to Joan Simon,

"The clients chose this center because of its high traffic count, proximity to Target and Stop & Shop, parking availability and demographics," said Simon. "Mount Kisco is a hub of Northern Westchester and draws from many surrounding towns, including Chappaqua, Bedford, Armonk, Katonah and Pound Ridge, among others. High ceilings in both locations make the space bright and airy, and the ease of pulling up to a dry cleaner and walking straight into a dental office makes it an extremely attractive location."

Only two spaces remain available at the center: a 2,719-square-foot retail and restaurant space adjacent to Chipotle and a 3,051-square-foot space next to Wells Fargo.

Westchester Cancels First Seven of This Year's Cultural Festivals

Seven of Westchester's 12 spring and summer cultural festivals have been canceled for this year with the county unable to ensure proper social distancing protocols at the events.

Each year, thousands of Westchester residents gather for the festivals, which are held at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla and Ridge Road Park in Hartsdale, that feature ethnic food, music, dance and vendors. The celebrations attract far too many residents to abide by safety guidelines handed down the National Center for Disease Control and New York State, said County Executive George Latimer.

The festivals canceled so far are this Sunday's Polish Heritage Festival; the Asian Heritage Festival on June 6; the Albanian Heritage Festival on June 7; the Portuguese Heritage Festival on June 7; the Irish Heritage Festival on June 27; the African American Heritage

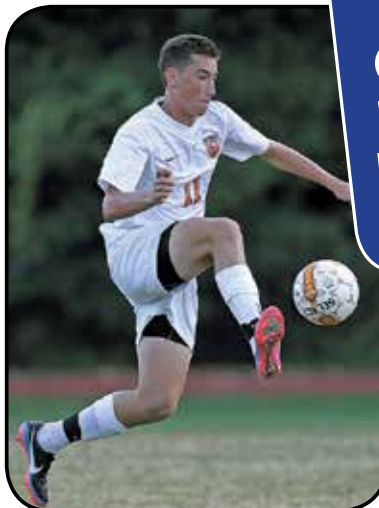
"These are some of my favorite events to attend, but right now, we

all must put safety first," Latimer said. The cultural heritage series is something many of us look forward to, both to celebrate our own personal heritage or to enjoy learning about the food, music, dance and heritage of other cultures that contribute to the great mosaic of Westchester's population – things that cannot be done while keeping a safe distance."

There has been no decision made on the Italian Heritage Festival scheduled for July 19; the Heritage of India Festival on Aug. 2; the Ecuadorian Festival on Aug. 9; the Jewish Heritage Festival on Aug. 16; and the Muslim Heritage Festival on Aug. 23.

The county Parks Department will evaluate the scheduling of all community events throughout the summer and into the fall. Any additional cancellations, postponements or rescheduling will be posted at parks.westchestergov.com.

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2020: Woulda, Coulda, Shoulda, But Didn't Happen!

There's nothing I can say, nor anything a loved one might suggest, that could heal the sorrow in the hearts of our seniors, who



By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports
Editor @Directrays

sought nothing more than a normal spring season before prom and graduation – the pomp and circumstance our high school and college seniors have come to expect.

But I'll try, for that has been my purpose for three decades. It's just a little harder to do this time since it's unscripted in the spring of 2020, the year of woulda, coulda,

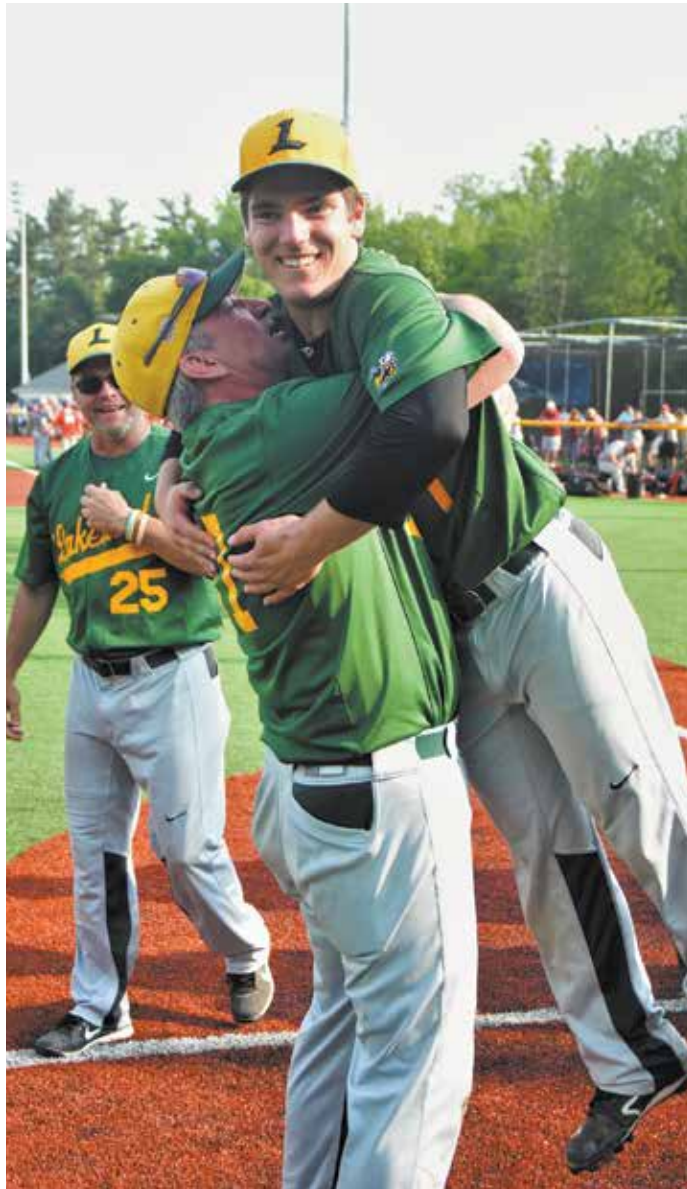
shoulda...but didn't happen.

We were poised to see the unveiling of one of the greatest baseball dynasties in Section 1 history, a potential three-peat for Coach Bill Casey's Class A Lakeland Hornets.

Five-time sectional champion Lakeland, for all its baseball grandeur, had never repeated as Section 1 champions before 2019. Yet, the 2020 club had its sights set on three in a row with, arguably, the section's top two pitchers – senior lefties Evan Berta and Joey Vetrano – in tow. This dynamic duo, along with fellow co-captains Zach Cohen and Andrew Croce, were set to lead the Hornets into a promised land few have reached in their high school careers until this damn pandemic pierced the globe.

I fondly watched these boys and their teammates compete since their Shrub Oak Athletic Club travel baseball days, so for them to be denied what might have been an historical, legacy-defining baseball season is heartbreaking. What I wouldn't give to be at a Lakeland baseball game right now.

"I still can't believe it," Coach Casey said. "I'm going to miss this group so much... good players, but better human beings."



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTO

Lakeland baseball players like Evan Berta and coach Bill Casey were robbed of a potential three-peat this spring

The global pandemic cut like a knife into the heart of Mahopac, too, where junior pitcher Shannon Becker was set to wreak havoc in the circle. It's not just seniors affected by this tragedy. Junior year is huge for recruits, and even the best of the best are behind the eight ball on account of COVID-19.

The Notre Dame-bound Becker is still headed for South Bend in 2022, but

the school records she would have set at Mahopac are limited at best. She will still hold every pitching record at Mahopac and emerge as the finest hurler in Putnam County history, but her final career numbers – strikeouts, ERA, etc. – will never be fully realized for what they would have been had she played her junior season for Indian Coach Cristina Giansante.

There may come a time in the distant future when someone challenges Becker's hold on Mahopac history, but I'll fight

tooth and nail for her legacy when all is said and done. Thankfully, we have her senior year to look forward to.

Then there's Briarcliff High, where boys' lax Coach Al Meola's Bears were dead set on repeating as Section 1 Class D champions. After winning the first sectional title in school history in 2019 and challenging for the state title, Briarcliff had big dreams this spring. You talk about a woulda-coulda-shoulda situation, and there's a picture of the Briarcliff lacrosse team alongside the phrase.

Meola's Bears were poised to take that Yorktown-like leap into the state lax pool with a slew of heralded underclassmen setting a tone that was put on pause. Briarcliff had not only met and defeated age-old rival Pleasantville face to face in an epic ti-

tle match last season, but the Bears exceeded every goal short of their final objective – a state title, which they lost in overtime.

This year was there for the taking and Meola's Bears were denied their opportunity, but we suspect the good soldiers he's mobilized will rise and own 2021.

Instead of competing for actual championships, the Class of 2020, and those just beneath them, are forced to deal with virtual gatherings, Zoom calls and drive-by B.S., which, while well-intended, amounts to a hill of beans in the grand scheme of competition. You guys were burned. There's no sugar-coating that. No bright side, but that which doesn't kill us makes us stronger.

The only goal in my life is to keep my family happy, safe and well provided for; that should always be your goal, too, no matter the hand you were dealt in 2020. Smile like you mean it because there's better days ahead #NeverForgetIt.

#RIP Jerry Stiller...scene-stealing, comic legend.

**Direct
Rays**

Overcoming the Difficulties of Working Out From Home

Our world has shifted. With schools, gyms and parks being closed, many athletes have been left to their own devices to train.

Whereas some may view these changes as a limitation to their ability to stay in shape, get stronger and remain powerful, the coaching staff at Athletes Warehouse have instead made the choice to see this as a monumental opportunity for learning and growth.

First, we don't want to ignore the obvious and pretend like it doesn't exist: Working out from home is tough. If it were easy and effective for athletes to train from home, venues such as Athletes Warehouse wouldn't exist.

Here are five reasons we have all found it difficult to train from home:

1. Structure. Especially with school and other activities being less regimented or canceled, the structure that we typically had to our day is gone. Determining when to fit our workout in throughout the day is no longer automated.

2. Accountability. Who is waiting on you for your workout each day? Who will

text you if you miss your time slot? With no one holding us accountable, the sting of disappointing someone we care about is no longer a motivating factor to getting your workout in.

3. Confusion on what to do. Should I stretch? Run outside? Do push-ups? How many? Mentally, it is easier and less taxing to complete a workout when there is a coach telling you exactly what you need to do to get better that day.

4. Lack of equipment. Many athletes are accustomed to the equipment they've had access to at their training facility. Understanding how to complete similar training styles with limited equipment is difficult even for the most experienced strength coaches, let alone a high school or college athlete.

5. Missing Connection. We'd all be naive to say that we don't love the interactions and connections that come from getting to train in a positive, high-energy environment. Getting a chance to be sur-

rounded by other athletes working hard and getting after their workouts is certainly easier than doing it solo.

The good news is that you're not alone. Everyone is struggling, strength and conditioning coaches included. Here is how Athletes Warehouse has tried to meet everyone halfway:

1. Monthly remote training programs. Monthly programs, designed specifically to meet the needs of each athlete, delivered daily straight to the athlete's app. Each coach interacts with their designated athlete on a daily basis to ensure there is a direct line of communication about the training program being implemented.

2. Equipment rentals. Our gym in Pleasantville is 17,500 square feet and is completely empty. All athletes with a monthly program have the opportunity to rent equipment from our gym so that they can complete their workouts with a wider range of exercises.

3. One-on-one and group online training sessions. Technology will be our

best friend and greatest asset during this time as we can virtually join you in your living room via Zoom, Facetime or Google Hangout. Scheduling a session and knowing you have a coach waiting for you is just the right amount of accountability and motivation needed.

4. Social media. For all of its faults, social media can be a tremendous asset to feeling connected to a greater whole. We have worked hard to use various social media platforms to continue to play a role in the daily lives of our athletes.

Cassie Reilly-Boccia lives in Lake Peekskill and is a sports performance specialist and co-owner of Athletes Warehouse in Pleasantville, a training facility dedicated to redefining the lives of student-athletes in the tristate area. Reilly-Boccia was a four-year starter for the University of Alabama softball team winning three SEC titles and a national championship, which she documented in her book, "Finished It - A Team's Journey to Winning it All." She grew up in Yorktown where she was a part of the high school softball team's first section championships in 2007 and 2008.



By Cassie
Reilly-Boccia

A BIG TIME THANK YOU TO OUR READERS!

"Thank You ! for the great news reporting in my backyard, Love it!"

"I found a humane way to keep squirrels off my birdfeeder in Bill Primavera's column and it worked! Thanks for this and all your content. It just shows you can find everything local and more in the Examiner!"

"Always enjoy reading your newspaper. Thank you."

"Love The Examiner..... would be terrible not to have it anymore."

"Thank you for keeping local reporting alive! Our community is better when everyone knows what is going on! Keep up the good work."

"You keep us informed, you keep us connected....Thank You!"

"We're in this fight together. Times are tough, but we'll get through this. Stay strong."

"Thank you for all you do to bring local news to the community. We're all better for having you around, and I'm glad to be able to do my part."

"Great local news. Apple Pie and the Examiner!"

"Keep up the great journalism and important work. Old school community journalism at its best."

"We are devout readers of The Examiner. A publication like this is

a necessity in our small local communities. Rarely do we go into Starbucks, the barber shop or the lobby at the Jacob Burns without seeing people engrossed in an issue. We are proud to support a paper based on integrity and a generous community spirit."

"It's an honor to support such a fantastic enterprise that means so much to our communities."

"I Thank You, Mount Kisco Thanks You and William Raveis Real Estate Thanks You. I Love The Examiner"

"This community is in desperate need of a local, community news source, especially as we wade into these uncharted waters caused by coronavirus. Adam is an amazing journalist who's built an upstanding, quality news outfit. He's been there for all of us, now it's time to be there for him and his team. Godspeed, Adam."

"Proud supporter of The Examiner. It's my favorite resource for news and happenings in our community."

"We have been fans and friends of Adam Stone and were fortunate enough to watch him create and print the first edition of The Examiner in 2007. Adam, his team, and the paper are a shining light in our community. It's not a flim flam local rag, it's real journalism that addresses the tough issues while celebrating and documenting the lives of our neighbors. Local news is important, it's where

national news starts... I'm proud that they are in my community and happy to support them in any way I can."

"Your service to the community deserves support in regular circumstances too, but especially in these difficult times."

"You've always supported our community and it's with great pleasure that we return the favor. May The Examiner continue to serve and thrive."

"I worked for The Examiner for about 3 1/2 years as a freelance sports writer and newspaper distributor. I learned a lot working with Adam, Ray and Andy, and they helped and supported me as I moved on to become a full-time sports reporter at the Poughkeepsie Journal. The Examiner is a venerable weekly, and I'm more than happy to offer my support during these hard times."

"I thank you for balanced informative local news. we gladly support you."

"Looking forward to continued fair and accurate local reporting. Wishing your staff and readers good health."

"As a member of CD17Indivisible, I much appreciate the outlet you have provided for the many letters to the Editor published in support of key local issues. We believe in a Free press that provides a voice to those who seek to call attention to Community concerns. As

such, I am pleased to contribute to your continuance and success in these challenging times."

"So proud of what you are doing for your community!!! Thank you!"

"Thank you for always covering Lakeland & Panas Sports!"

"We look forward to reading the hard copy of your Examiner every week. Martin Wilbur's reporting is accurate and always right on target."

"Putnam Examiner does a great job promoting student-athletes in our community Stay safe and healthy."

"Your reporting on local government news is excellent! We also enjoy your columnists, especially Nick Antonaccio on wine, Bill Primavera ("The Home Guru"), and Brian Kleupfel on birding. Keep up the great work!"

"You've always been their for Fox Lane so we're here for you."

"Adam, Martin and team, The Examiner is an important and valued resources for our community!"

Thank you to the 363 readers who, as of late Monday morning (in contributions of mostly \$25 to \$100) donated \$27,825 and growing. We appreciate all of the ongoing generosity and kind words.



To contribute, visit: givebutter.com/theexaminernews

You may also donate by check. Make checks payable to **Examiner Media** and mail to **P.O. Box 611, Mt. Kisco NY 10549**. Checks payable to Examiner Media are not tax-deductible.



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