



The PUTNAM Examiner

**Carmel
Superintendent
Resigns Amidst
Twitter
Controversy
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June 16 - June 22, 2020

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 586

School Official Resigns Over Racially Charged Posts

By Adam Stone, Rick Pezzullo and Abby Luby

Trustee Krista Berardi resigned her post on the Brewster Board of Education Friday night following a public outcry over her racially charged social media posts that have roiled the community.

"We recognize the events of the last few days have been painful for many," the board stated jointly in a Saturday morning letter. "As a board, we have an unbending obligation to the well-being of every child in our community. Toward that end, we will be working with our students, parents, administrators, faculty, staff, and community residents to promote positive and caring relationships, trust, and understanding."

Berardi declined an interview request from The Putnam Examiner.

Berardi, an art teacher for the last 16 years who teaches at Carmel, had one Facebook post on May 31 that suggested George Floyd's death may have been staged.

A second post displayed a Putnam 911 report about part of Route 84 being closed due to demonstrators and Berardi wrote: "This is the bull—I'm dealing with right now. It's been such an emotional rollercoaster the past couple of days, I just want to get out with my daughter for a couple of hours. These dumb—need to get hosed if they don't get off the highway. This will never make people sympathetic to your cause, it will make people hate you though."

The public outcry led to more than 50 people gathering in protest Friday outside the Brewster school district building.

"Personally, I believe it is imperative that Ms. Berardi resign from her position as a board trustee immediately," Board of Education President Sonia Mesika said in her Friday statement. "I believe she has breached the trust of the community. I find her posts reprehensible, offensive and inexcusable. They are not consistent with what I fight for every day while I serve on this Board, and in my opinion, what I believe our board as a



PHOTO BY ABBY LUBY

Protesters gathered in Brewster on Friday, applying pressure on the Board of Education to call on Berardi to resign.

whole represents."

An online petition demanding Berardi be removed was created by a Brewster High School student and had been signed by nearly 3,000 people in recent days.

"This is unacceptable," Emily Sullivan, the student behind the petition, had stated. "We need to continue to call for her resignation or removal. Kerry Cunningham (board vice president) and Erik Grutzner (trustee) have said that they want to put this event in the past... Can they so easily put the death of George Floyd in the past? Can they so easily put the centuries of systematic oppression in the past? We cannot allow her to remain on the board. We must continue calling for change."



KRISTA BERARDI

The Carmel Central School District, where Berardi teaches, has a social media policy but it only governs use of district equipment. However, the district is now revisiting the policy.

"In light of recent events, the Carmel Board of Education will be reviewing our social media policy within our district in greater detail and expand the policy language to protect our students and support our staff," Carmel School Board President John Cody wrote in an email interview with The Putnam Examiner. "We have a district equity team that was formed at the beginning of this current school year

made up of district administrators, faculty, parents, a BOE member, and BOCES staff to

continue ongoing work and research to make sure every Carmel student feels safe and supported coming to our schools."

The school board president declined to speak about Berardi specifically, noting how the district "does not discuss publicly the employment history of our employees."

"This matter has been turned over to legal counsel for review," he explained.

The district's Responsible Use Policy, which all employees must sign, covers just district technology on district time.

"The district has been made aware of racially insensitive posts made on social media, allegedly made by a member of our teaching staff," stated Carmel Superintendent of Schools Andy Irvin. "We regret the upset of those who were privy to the disturbing social media posts. The Carmel Central School District prohibits all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment and the social media

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Carmel Superintendent to Resign Claims Controversial Twitter Account Operated by Imposter

By Adam Stone

Carmel Central School District Superintendent of Schools Andy Irvin is resigning from his position as a controversy brews over whether a Twitter account belongs to him or was created by an imposter.

"I can confirm that I informed the BOE of my intention to resign from my position as superintendent effective August 30, 2020," Irvin stated in an email to The Putnam Examiner. "My resignation will be on the June 23 BOE agenda for the BOE to accept."

Irvin also sent a letter to the school community noting how

"social media posts made on an account that used my likeness to impersonate me."

"There are many posts on the account that I would have no problem being associated with but there are also racially insensitive, sexually insensitive and some just plain disgusting posts that make me sick to my stomach," he added. "The Twitter account is not my account and the posts are not mine. It is unfortunate that these posts are brought to light at a time after I have informed the BOE and Community of my intention to resign my position. I hope that my actions have made it clear who I

am and what I stand for. I have made many mistakes in my career and in my life but these are not among them."

Irvin has not yet replied to a question from The Putnam Examiner asking why he decided to resign.

"I am sorry that someone felt and continues to feel the need to drive wedges within the CCSD community and I am sorry that those insensitive messages are being circulated at all," he wrote in his letter about the Twitter account.

The apparent Twitter account in question — @No1NYSOXFAN — remains active and displays

Irvin's likeness. It features hundreds upon hundreds of tweets dating back to Sept. of 2011 through March of 2017. While many of the tweets are about rooting on Red Sox baseball, many are sexually explicit, embrace controversial political positions and use salty language.

Irving faced a significant backlash in Carmel this year when he didn't reportedly back football coach Todd Cayea. The coach, revered by a wide swath of the community, resigned under apparent pressure to leave earlier this spring.

The resignation also comes as the district grapples with how to

deal with art teacher Krista Berardi's racially charged remarks on social media. The teacher was also a Brewster Board of Education trustee. She resigned her post on the Board of Education Friday night.

The Carmel Board of Education appointed Irvin superintendent in 2015, following his service as the district's deputy superintendent. Irvin started with Carmel in 2008 as an assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. He has also worked as a dean of students in Scarsdale, a principal in Haldane and an assistant principal in Byram Hills.

School Official Resigns Over Racially Charged Posts

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posts at issue have been referred to legal counsel for review. Hateful and discriminatory speech and threats of violence or violence against persons on the basis of race or other protected class status (gender, disability, age, etc...) will not be tolerated in the Carmel Central School District. As a district, we endeavor to have and are committed to cultivating a culture of inclusion and respect for all of our students and families within our classrooms and throughout our school community."

Sullivan, a Brewster High School sophomore, stood at the center of the Friday protest holding a sign that said "Resign."

"Our organization is growing! We will not tolerate this!" an impassioned Sullivan called out.

The Brewster schools' superintendent also weighed in Friday with a letter to the school community.

"I have to speak up for my personal beliefs and what I stand for, just as you do," wrote Superintendent Dr. Laurie Bandlow. "I would like to send a clear message that it is inhumane and unconscionable to urge the use of fire hoses on peaceful protesters who are exercising their own First Amendment rights. We are not Bull Connor and this is not 1963 Alabama. It was wrong then and it's wrong now. We love and value every child, parent, and member of our community and we

will not tolerate racially insensitive comments. Students, alumni, parents, staff, community members who have reached out to us — we hear you. There is work to do, and we are up to the challenge. We need your partnership in addressing this wound that exists in our community and our society."

Brewster administrators prepared a joint letter of their own on Friday, noting in the message they wish to "express our disdain for the divisive, degrading, and senseless comments."

"We are concerned about the impact that such ignorant messages have on the emotional development of our children, both those who may internalize the message,

as well as those who may view it as acceptable and be influenced to hate as a result," the 15 signees from the Administrators Association of Brewster stated. "We remain steadfast in our commitment to support every child as educational leaders who promote social justice throughout this community for years to come."

In her bio on the district website, Berardi, the mother of two teenagers, stated she considers Brewster a great place to raise a family.

"Our community is close-knit, diverse and thriving!" she said.

As for the Brewster Board of Education, in the Saturday letter members said the district will be holding a public forum as soon as the gover-

nor's executive order is confirmed for larger gatherings of residents to come and be heard in person.

"We would like to acknowledge [Berardi] for her service and for making the decision to step down to help our community heal," the letter said.

The NYSUT teachers union also replied to a request for comment, explaining the "union's values include working toward greater equality and social justice in our communities and across our society as a whole."

"We will continue to do everything in our power to ensure that New York's public schools remain safe, welcoming spaces for everyone," the statement concluded.

County Legislators Demand Greater Transparency from Sheriff

By Gabriel Harrison

Putnam County legislators demanded greater transparency from the Sheriff's office during a committee meeting last week.

The discussion focused on the sharing of disciplinary records with the Legislature.

"We should receive reports and updates on situations that occur, and also explanations of more depth on how they've been handled and what's been done," said Legislator Neal Sullivan.

The meeting followed a week of protests in Putnam County and around the country against police violence.

"We've seen a bad apple in a police department, and it has turned the country on its head," Legislator Ginny Nacerino said. "We should have that information because it is our... responsibility to protect the people of Putnam County."

Last week, the New York State Senate voted to repeal section 50-A of New York State's Civil Rights Law, which shields police personnel information, including disciplinary records, from public access.

Sheriff Robert Langley, Jr. posted a statement saying he did not support the repeal.

Langley also wrote, "Some members of the Legislature and other members of county government want to have unfettered access [to] the personnel records of the members of the Putnam County Sheriff's Department."

Nacerino denied the claim, stating that no legislator arbitrarily requested unfettered access to personnel records. Legislator Paul Jonke concurred, saying he can't remember any incident of a legislator requesting records beyond disciplinary records.



Carmel High Seniors Honored with Signs

Lawn signs were placed along Route 52 in front of Lake Gleneida in Carmel to honor the Carmel High School Class of 2020. Pictured are (L-R:) Graduate of Carmel HS and Legislator Neal Sullivan, Graduate of Carmel HS and Legislator Toni Addonizio, Director of Veterans Services Karl Rohde, CHS Boys, Graduate of Carmel HS and Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell, Graduate of Carmel HS and Deputy County Executive Thomas Feighery.

State Has Lowest Infection Rate in Nation But Cuomo Urges Vigilance

By Martin Wilbur

New York has the lowest transmission rate of COVID-19 of any state in the nation even though it has been gradually reopening areas of the state for a full month.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo said that the statewide transmission rate has been about 1 percent the past several days out of an average of about 50,000 tests administered daily.

But Cuomo warned residents during his Monday briefing not to become lax, urging them to continue to wear masks in public and practice social distancing.

"People should follow the guidelines because the guidelines have been working," Cuomo said. "They have been working. We have months of data now that says the guidelines make sense. Keep following them because they are working."

Through Sunday, the state is down to 1,608 COVID-19 hospitalizations, the lowest total since Mar. 19. There were 23 virus-related deaths on Saturday and 25 on Sunday.

For about a week, the state has a new dashboard feature that tracks the infection rate in each of its 10 regions and in each county. During the past week, each region has had steady or slightly declining numbers, with fractional variations from day to day. At its highest point, the Mid-Hudson region, which includes Westchester and Putnam counties, had a 1.3 percent infection. By Sunday it had dipped to 1 percent.

On Sunday, Westchester was on par with the region at 1 percent while Putnam was at 1.4 percent. Ulster County's infection rate was so low it registered at 0 percent while Rockland and Sullivan counties were at 2.3 and 2.6 percent, respectively.

New York City, which entered a Phase 1 reopening on June 8, has gone from a high of 1.7 percent to 1.3 percent. The highest infection rate among the state's regions was Western New York, which includes Buffalo, at 1.4 percent.

Several upstate regions began reopening on May 15. The Hudson Valley and Long Island entered Phase 1 on May 26 and 27, respectively, and are now halfway through Phase 2.

"Since reopening, the virus spread has continued to go down," Cuomo said. "That, my friends, is an extraordinary exception when you look at all the other states around the country where they did the reopening, they didn't do it smartly and you saw the virus (spread) go up."

Cuomo pointed to rising infection rates in 22 states across the country, predominantly in the South and West.

Despite the good news, the governor said he was disturbed by a surge in complaints about individuals and businesses – about 25,000 complaints poured in late last week and into the weekend – with many of those from Manhattan and the Hamptons.

Cuomo urged local government to enforce the restrictions, otherwise New York will face the same plight nearly half the country is experiencing.

"If the local governments don't enforce compliance, they're not doing anyone a favor because if they don't enforce compliance, you will see the numbers start to go up, and if the numbers start to go up, you're going to have to see that area take a step back," Cuomo said.

In Westchester, there was just one COVID-

19-related death over the weekend, said County Executive George Latimer. Active cases have fallen to 775.

Meanwhile, in Putnam County there were nine active cases late last week. Deaths have remained unchanged at 62 since early last week.

Recreation Slowly Reopens

Putnam County Health Commissioner Dr. Michael J. Nesheiwat said that pool operators are submitting individual plans on how they will adhere to social distancing and mask-wearing practices along with outlining the cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces.

While face masks shouldn't be worn in the water, the six-foot separation will be enforced, he said. When out of the water at pools and



CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

beaches, masks must be worn and social distancing maintained.

"As long as we can assure these efforts, we can continue to improve

our metrics and proceed to the next phase of reopening," Nesheiwat said. "We must also remember however that for those who don't swim well, a pool or a beach can pose a serious risk. No one should swim alone or without supervision."

In Westchester, the county-operated Saxon Woods Pool in White Plains and the Sprain Ridge Pool in Yonkers are still on track to open next Friday, June 26 while the Willson's Woods Pool in Mount Vernon and the Tibbetts Brook Pool in Yonkers are scheduled to begin their seasons on Friday, July 3.

County day camps in Westchester with decreased capacity will open July 6. However, the remainder of the summer's cultural festivals at Kensico Dam Plaza have been canceled.

At the state level, Cuomo announced Sunday that "low-risk" youth sports may resume on July 6 provided the region is at least in Phase 3. The permissible sports are baseball, softball, gymnastics, field hockey, cross country and crew.

On Monday, Cuomo said that for regions in Phase 3 maximum gatherings will be increased from 10 to 25 people.

Five upstate regions have been in Phase 3 since last week with Western New York and the Capital District set to join them as well.

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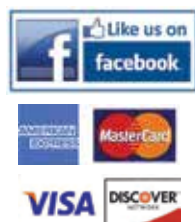
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Police Reform Bills Swiftly Approved; Police Organizations Criticize Process

By Martin Wilbur

The state legislature has passed a package of 10 police reforms bills but some of the measures have drawn the ire of representatives of a few major New York law enforcement organizations.

Last Friday, Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed legislation that repealed the controversial rule 50-a that shielded police officers' disciplinary records from public view, banned chokeholds, empowers the state Attorney General's office to investigate and prosecute officer-involved shootings and makes false race-based 911 calls a crime.

Other reforms include anyone who is not being arrested has the right to record and retain video of police activity and requiring state police to wear body cameras.

Cuomo said the long list of people of color, overwhelmingly black men, who have died at the hands of police over the past 40 to 50 years demands change, Cuomo said.

"Moving forward, there's still more to do and we're going to do it in the state of New York," he said. "The truth is this: police reform is long overdue and Mr. Floyd's murder is just the most recent reminder. It's about being here before, many, many times before."

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said the measures are not about branding police officers, but helping them to do their jobs more effectively. She recounted a story of her brother, a Marine who served in Vietnam, who then worked as a transit officer

for six years. He left law enforcement not because of his colleagues who did their jobs professionally, but because of a biased system that arrested as many black men as possible.

"We know this is the beginning but it's more to bring justice to a system that has long been unjust," Stewart-Cousins said.

Cuomo subsequently announced the launch of the state Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative, where every governmental body in New York that oversees a police department must review their department with community stakeholders and representatives of law enforcement.

Issues that must be addressed include use of force policies; crowd management; community policing; de-escalation training; restorative justice practices; implicit bias; community-based outreach; and a transparent citizen complaint disposition procedure.

Local governments must approve and submit their plan to the state by next Apr. 1 or lose state funding, Cuomo said.

However, last week, the day before Cuomo signed the legislation, the presidents of the state Sheriffs' Association and the state Association of Chief of Police fired off a strongly-worded joint letter to Cuomo, accusing the governor of "fanning the flames of division."

"We call upon you to stop exploiting anti-police hysteria and unwarranted political rhetoric to ram through legislation that is ill conceived, hastily crafted, and anti-police," stated the correspondence from Sheriff Jeffrey Murray and Chief Patrick Phelan.

"We call upon you to involve all stakeholders in this process, and we call upon you to do what's right."

The strongest pushback from law enforcement has involved the repeal of 50-a, which was approved along party lines. Most of the remaining pieces of legislation received strong bipartisan support.

Meanwhile, Chris McNerney, president of the Westchester County Chief of Police Association, last week criticized the state legislature for quickly moving ahead with these bills and failing to discuss the matter with police representatives was poor.

Law enforcement officials want to be involved in the discussion even if there is disagreement, said North Castle Police Chief Peter Simonsen.

"That's all that we would be interested in is being part of the process. All of us in law enforcement have a vested interest and a desire toward excellence," Simonsen said. "If there are things that need to change or should

change, whether legislatively or procedurally, training, etc., we're on board with it."

Simonsen, who on June 3 sent out a town-wide email to residents decrying the killing of George Floyd, said the department is one of 158 police departments out of more than 500 departments in New York that has been accredited by the state. Police departments that reach that level are subject to rigorous training and standards, he said, and all law enforcement agencies should strive for accreditation.

Westchester County District Attorney Anthony Scarpino applauded the reforms that have been approved, saying the legislature "has shown true strength in the swift passage of multiple bills aimed at reforming policing and other matters in the criminal justice system."

He also called on lawmakers to make it easier for municipalities to weed out and dismiss bad police officers.

One Paw Back, Two Paws Forward

The SPCA in Briarcliff Manor shut its North State Road site Sunday for a yearlong renovation project. Its temporary home is at 1966 Crompond Rd. in Cortlandt. All animals have been placed in foster homes. Plans call for every building on the premises to be leveled and replaced with state-of-the-art facilities.



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Cuomo Authorizes Second School Budget Vote for July

By Martin Wilbur

Gov. Andrew Cuomo issued an executive order last Wednesday that allows a second school budget vote for any district's spending plan that is rejected by the public this week.

The order came six days before the June 16 deadline for voters to have their ballots

mailed and received by district clerks. The deadline to hand-deliver ballots passed on June 9.

No date was set for a re-vote but it will occur sometime from July 9 to July 31, according to a joint release sent by most of Westchester's delegation to the state legislature. A future order from the governor

will determine the process, procedures and the precise date for a second vote.

The same order also continued the statewide state of emergency through July 9.

A large contingent of local state legislators and school officials applauded the decision on Wednesday.

"The extra time will allow voters to re-examine budget priorities and, hopefully, provide students with the support and resources they deserve," said state Sen. Peter Harckham (D-Lewisboro).

"The second vote is part of the annual school district budget vote process, and

today's action will allow for that process to proceed as designed, even in these extraordinary times," Pleasantville Superintendent of Schools Mary Fox-Alter said in a statement. "It will afford all communities the opportunity to reflect and discuss the impacts of the draconian cuts and restrictions placed upon a public school district should a district adopt a contingency budget."

The re-vote must occur before the end of July because school districts send their tax levy to municipalities by early August.

State Police Search for Two Men for Hate Crime in Putnam

State police are investigating a hate crime in which two white males stopped to yell racial slurs at a Hispanic woman who had stopped last Monday on I-84 in Brewster.

The woman had pulled her vehicle on the westbound shoulder of the highway near the Route 312 exit and was sleeping, police said. At about 5:30 a.m., two men who had been operating an older model, two-tone black and silver Chevrolet pickup truck, stopped their vehicle got out and allegedly screamed racist language.

As the woman attempted to drive away, her vehicle was struck by the suspects' truck. No information was

gathered about the license plate number. The woman did not suffer injuries and the truck fled westbound on I-84.

One man was described as possibly in his mid-forties with a husky build, copper-colored beard, blonde hair, thick-rimmed dark glasses, a green button-up shirt and baggy blue jeans.

The second man, possibly in his mid-twenties, had a skinny build, wore a green tank top and had an "Ang" tattoo on his left wrist.

Anyone with information regarding the possible identity or location of the suspects is asked to contact state police in Brewster at 845-677-7300 and reference Case Number 9634509.

Support Connection Announces New Look for Annual Support-A-Walk

Support Connection announces that its Annual Support-A-Walk, scheduled this year for Sunday, Oct. 4., will take on a new look, with a new tagline: "Walk With Us, Wherever You Are."

In lieu of gathering by the thousands at FDR State Park in Yorktown Heights, Support Connection invites people to walk wherever they are, near and far.

The event is Support Connection's most important annual fundraiser. Proceeds provide funding for their year-round breast and ovarian cancer support services, which have helped thousands of people since the organization was founded in 1996.

The Support-A-Walk was created by

local residents to bring attention to the needs of people affected by breast and ovarian cancer. Thousands of people participate each year in the uplifting event. Participants of all ages walk – often in honor of loved ones – in a celebration of life and a tribute to those who are affected by breast and ovarian cancer. Families, friends, co-workers and teams of walkers walk together. Individuals are also welcome to participate.

To learn more, visit supportconnection.org/support-a-walk-overview or contact Support Connection at 914-962-6402 or walk@supportconnection.org.



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Primary Voting Beset By Confusion, Mistakes in Westchester

By Martin Wilbur

Changes in voting locations, inconsistent communication, unreliable mail service to deliver absentee ballots and applications along with mistakes by the Westchester Board of Elections has sparked concern about voting for this year's primary elections.

To limit crowds at in-person polling sites due to the COVID-19 pandemic, New York State had announced in April that every citizen eligible to vote in the June 23 primaries would receive an absentee ballot application.

Voters needed to have had their absentee ballot applications received by their county's Board of Elections by June 16. The ballots originally needed to be returned by the close of business on June 23, but less than two weeks ago Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that as long as the absentee ballots were postmarked by next Tuesday and received by the Board of Elections by June 30, the vote would count.

A notice was set to be issued Monday by the League of Women Voters of Westchester informing the public of the various changes and voting options, said the organization's president Kathy Meany.

"For those that are still concerned that they have not received their absentee ballots or concerned about mail service or anything along that line, you can still go to a polling location and vote, but you have to go to your assigned location for early voting

and also (June 23), either one," Meany said.

However, last Thursday when voters started receiving their polling place information cards, there were several early voting polling locations and street addresses for those sites that were mismatched throughout Westchester, Meany said. The Board of Elections confused Mount Kisco, Mount Pleasant and Mount Vernon, she said.

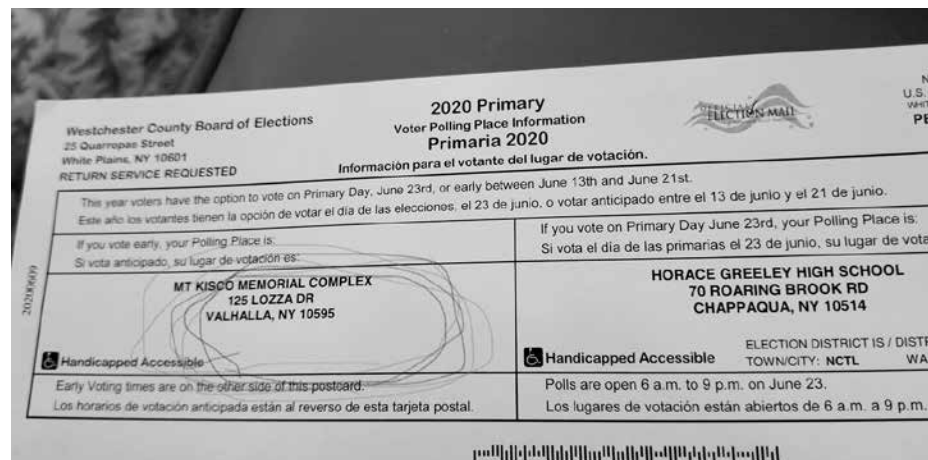
For example, New Castle, Mount Kisco and Bedford residents were assigned to vote at the Mount Kisco Memorial Pool Complex at Leonard Park for early voting, but the street address showed 125 Lozza Drive in Valhalla, the location of Mount Pleasant Community Center. The Valhalla site is only for Mount Pleasant and North Castle early voters.

A few Mount Pleasant voters reported receiving cards with the street address of 1 Roosevelt Square in Mount Vernon.

Likewise, Mount Vernon voters were provided with the Mount Kisco street address.

Reginald Lafayette, the Democratic commissioner for the Westchester County Board of Elections said that the printer retained to create the cards and mail them to voters made the mistake. New cards were to be mailed out the next day, he said.

Adding to the confusion, is that for many Westchester residents their early voting site is not their assigned voting location if they choose to wait until June 23, Meany said. She urged the public to vote early if



A New Castle resident's polling place location card containing the wrong address for early voting. Thousands of cards were mailed out to residents with errors last week.

they can, and if they must wait until next Tuesday to contact the Board of Elections.

"We're getting that word out that registered voters, if you want to vote early – and we are highly encouraging it at this point – follow the directions to the building," Meany said.

Ballots can also be hand delivered through next Tuesday, she said.

However, complaints have persisted. On Monday, Allison Fine, one of the Democratic candidates running in the 17th Congressional District primary, held a press conference outside the Board of Elections in White Plains Monday to highlight the problems.

She said in addition to the mismatched addresses other issues included a failure to include voting times for the Westchester early voting, some June 23 polling locations had yet to be finalized and there has been a lack of transparency regarding how many absentee ballots have been mailed out and received.

"I am outraged by the lack of transparency and egregious errors the board has committed in preparation for the June 23 primary election," Fine said. "The heart of our democracy is both the right and opportunity to vote, and that is being put at risk by the Board of Elections."

continued on page 8

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New Cuomo Bridge Bike and Pedestrian Path Opens to Public

By Martin Wilbur

The New York State Thruway Authority opened the highly-anticipated Mario M. Cuomo Bridge bicycle and pedestrian path on Monday that links Tarrytown with South Nyack and offers stunning views of the Hudson River.

The 3.6-mile path located on the northern side of the westbound lanes of the span offers six scenic overlooks for the public to stop and admire the sights.

"You can come across the Hudson River, which is spectacular in and of itself," said Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who was in Westchester on Monday for the dedication. "From the bridge you look south you can see New York City; you look north it's one of the most beautiful river valleys on the globe."

There is a walking lane and a bike lane on the 12-foot-wide path, and there is visitor parking at both ends.

One of the happiest people to see the project come to fruition is Greenburgh Supervisor Paul Feiner. A longtime cycling enthusiast, he said the path is a dream come true and "probably the most important recreation enhancement in the region in decades."

Feiner had advocated for a path connecting both sides of the river, however, it wasn't feasible with the old Tappan Zee Bridge. He believes that it could be an economic boom for his town with many more people passing through in addition to providing exercise and outstanding views of the river.



The two-year-old Mario M. Cuomo Bridge can now be crossed by bike or on foot with the unveiling of a new path on the north side of the westbound lanes.

"The Thruway Authority did agree to close the (old) bridge once a year for an annual Muscular Dystrophy charity bikeathon, which was very popular," Feiner said. "I remember bicycling over the bridge a few times. A thrilling experience. Fantastic views. Great exercise."

He plans to continue to work with the state to make Route 119 safer for cyclists. Feiner said if a Route 119 bike path or lane could be established from the South County and North County trail to the bridge it would help cyclists to bike from the Bronx or

Putnam County to the bridge.

The path that ends on the Rockland side of the bridge spills out into the visitors parking lot, the Esposito Trail, local sidewalks and State Bicycle Route 9.

Cuomo said the bridge and the path speaks to achievement, since there were many naysayers over the years who said a new bridge couldn't be built.

"Can we do this? Can we rise to the challenge? Are we capable of it? Can we do these big things?" asked Cuomo. "The bridge says yes we can."

Primary Voting Beset By Confusion, Mistakes in Westchester

continued from page 7

Judy Sage, a Mount Kisco Democratic district leader, said she was fed up with the problems and the possibility for disenfranchisement. It's of particular concern because many older voters often vote in person by habit or preference and may have a difficult time getting to the one polling location. Mount Kisco's one in-person site on June 23 is also Leonard Park.

Sage said she is also worried that the village's large Latino population may be confused.

"In Mount Kisco this incident was more the straw that broke the camel's back with respect to voting access and rights," Sage said.

Early voting hours in Westchester are 12 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, June 16 and Thursday, June 18; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17 and Friday, June 19; 12 to 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 20 and Sunday June 21.

All early voters in Putnam County will go to the Board of Elections located at 25 Old Route 6 in Carmel. Early voting hours there are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

For more information, contact the Board of Elections in Westchester at 914-995-5700 or visit <https://citizenparticipation.westchestergov.com/>

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New Castle to Create Racial Equality Task Force

By Martin Wilbur

The New Castle Town Board announced last Tuesday it is establishing a task force to combat racism a week after the re-emergence of a racist video created by several Horace Greeley High School students shook the community.

Official announcement of the pending formation of the Council on Racial Equity came the night after a difficult Chappaqua Board of Education meeting where school officials listened to impassioned pleas from community members and former and current students about a history of racist comments that have gone undisciplined.

Town Supervisor Ivy Pool had also mentioned the need for the task force, which will be led by people of color, the previous week in light of the national protests following the killing of George Floyd and

other recent events across the country. She said that in light of the revelations of the video in the local community, the need has become even more urgent.

"We are heartbroken and angry, and I as town supervisor am furious," Pool said. "Our community has failed to uplift and protect our black and POC neighbors. We failed, and my commitment as your town supervisor is to act."

The council will be comprised of a wide cross-section of town volunteers and led by members who are people of color, she said. Once formed, it will schedule listening sessions with the community to gather information and ideas to be incorporated into an action plan. The Town Board expects the plan to be submitted within three to four months.

While it was unclear how many task force members there would be along with other

minor details, Pool said the town needed to move swiftly.

"What action can we take as a town and as a community that will really make a difference," Pool said.

Town Board members enthusiastically supported the move. Councilwoman Lauren Levin said racist incidents in the community aren't just confined to the school district. Born in the Philippines, Levin said there have been times when customers cut in front of her in line at a local dry cleaner, saying they thought she worked there.

"It's mind-boggling that still happens today and to hear these kids, the kids in our community, it's just heartbreaking," said Levin while fighting back tears. "I really hope that all of us just accept this energy in this time because we can, we can all work together and make a difference and work toward something positive."

Community leaders and those whose backgrounds haven't made them targets of racism need to listen, internalize and act, said Councilman Jason Lichtenthal.

"(We need to) listen to what's being said, to listen to the pain that is felt by marginalized groups at this juncture, especially the pain that's felt by people of

color," he said.

Deputy Supervisor Jeremy Saland said the entire town must commit, whether at home, in government, in the schools and in their daily lives, to address "this history of racism and the culture of power and elitism." Everyone must also confront the problem and demand change, he said.

"We have to embrace it, we have to accept it, we have to deal with the big ugly, and until we do that we can't hide from it, we can't be ignorant, whether purposeful or intentional or not, and until we do that we're not going to be able to make any type of change," Saland said.

Councilwoman Lisa Katz said she was heartbroken by the comments from current and former students during last Monday's school board meeting and by the lack of progress.

"To me it really showed how far as a community and really as a society we need to go and to educate our children and ourselves about racial injustice and equality," she said.

New Castle residents interested in volunteering for the Council on Racial Equity are asked to fill out an application at <https://zfrmz.com/3vLW6tIhzEu2oHtesqJK>.



CLEVER STREICH PHOTO

A Time to Celebrate

It's been a tough past three months for everyone, particularly if you're a high school senior. But the soon-to-be graduates at Horace Greeley High School were able to be recognized by the community with a car parade through Chappaqua that ended near the train station. The Greeley graduation will also be held in cars this Saturday at the train station parking lot.

Westchester Authorizes \$15M in Borrowing for Saw Mill Sewer Work

By Martin Wilbur

Westchester County announced last week it is moving ahead with a \$15 million sewer project along Hunts Lane in Chappaqua, the first step in addressing problems stemming from the failing Fox Hollow Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Design for the Saw Mill Relief Sewer Project is scheduled to begin this year after the Board of Legislators recently approved a bond act to amend its 2020 capital budget and authorize the borrowing.

Construction is due to begin sometime in 2021. Work will include excavation and fill, tunneling, paving and other roadwork and the installation of a sanitary sewer pipe and manholes. Originally, the project was scheduled to start in 2024.

The accelerated work will relieve a chokepoint on the Saw Mill River sewer trunk line on Hunts Lane by increasing the diameter of the pipe size to 30 inches. It's a necessary first step in order to divert sewage from the 35-year-old Fox Hollow Wastewater Treatment plant, which serves two New Castle communities – the 149-parcel Riverwoods and Yeshiva.

There had been plans to send sewage from the two communities as well as a third development, Random Farms, to a trunk line to be built along Route 100 in Millwood to connect to a county sewer line. However, that project stalled because of a prohibitive \$26 million estimated price tag. Random Farms intends to make upgrades to its wastewater treatment plant and will not need to divert its sewage.

New Castle Supervisor Ivy Pool said last week's announcement was welcome news for the town but there is still much work to be done. After the county completes

alleviating the chokepoint, infrastructure will still need to be built to hook up the homes served by the Fox Hollow plant, she said.

"It's not a victory lap, insofar that there's a lot more work to be done in the partnership with many stakeholders," Pool said. "It's far from a done deal at this point. That said, unless the county was going to address this issue, we can't move ahead."

The hope is that the sewage from the Fox Hollow plant can eventually be sent to Mount Kisco's pump station. However, New York City's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has not yet authorized Mount Kisco to accept sewage from outside its borders.

Village Manager Edward Brancati said last week that the village continues to work with the DEP and the county on this issue. He explained that the Hunts Lane trunk line needs to be expanded to accommodate additional flow from anywhere north of the chokepoint, not just the two communities.

"This is a true example of all levels of government working together to advance a project that will create a solution to a longtime sewage problem for the Town of New Castle," said County Executive George Latimer.

County Planning Commissioner Norma Drummond added that protecting the quality of water is one of the government's highest priorities and that a significant step is being made to improve the county's sewer infrastructure.

The deteriorating Fox Hollow plant is in danger of discharging sewage into the nearby Croton Reservoir, which would jeopardize New York City's drinking water supply. Parts of Westchester are also serviced by the Croton reservoir.

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Obituaries

Lawrence Lombardi

Lawrence Emil Lombardi (Larry), CPA, died peacefully at his home in Briarcliff Manor on June 7. He was with his family, including his wife and best friend of 64 years, Patricia (Munnely) Lombardi.

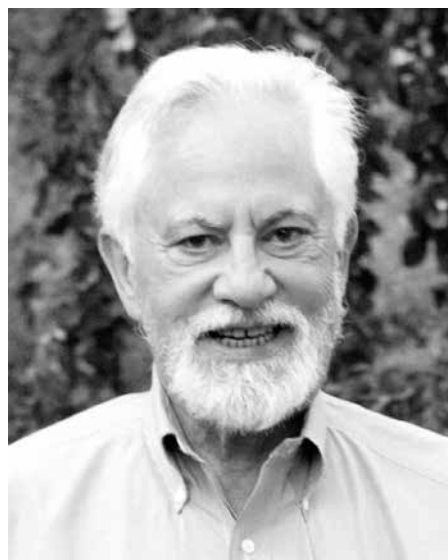
He was born in Mount Vernon in 1940 and graduated from Archbishop Stepinac High School. He went to College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass. and received his MBA from Columbia Business School. In 1962, he married Pat, his high school sweetheart. After working for Peat Marwick Mitchell, he launched his own certified public accounting firm in 1968, which he guided for almost half a century. To Larry, clients were family.

Lombardi had many passions but nothing brought him more joy than spending time with his four children and seven grandchildren. He loved coaching Little League and Babe Ruth baseball in Briarcliff Manor, and attending his grandchildren's baseball, softball, basketball and lacrosse games all around the state.

He is survived by his children, Michael, of Pound Ridge, Lisa of Larchmont, Caryn of New York City (who also attended Holy Cross) and Cathy of Carrollton, Va.; his grandchildren, Allison, Christie, Jillian, Tara and Michael Lombardi and Henry and Gus Bova; his daughter-in-law, Mary (Kennedy) Lombardi, of Pound Ridge; his sons-in-law, Dan Bova of Larchmont and Jay Hollingsworth of Carrollton, Va.; his brother, Ed and sister-in-law Rosalie; and his sister-in-law Marian. He was predeceased by his parents, Joseph and Louise (Iorio) Lombardi, and his brother, Paul.

Anyone who knew Larry saw he had the brain of a mathematician and the heart of an artist. He had a passion for photography, capturing action shots at sporting events and the natural beauty he observed around the world. He was known for photographing each wedding he was invited to and lovingly creating a beautiful album for the couple.

He also adored landscape design and specimen trees, and he designed his own home and gardens. An enthusiastic musician, he played clarinet and saxophone in his high school and college marching and dance bands, and he continued to pick up



Lawrence Lombardi

his sax throughout his life. He also loved listening to jazz and country music.

Larry had a gift for living in the present moment, savoring delicious food and fine wine and sharing fascinating stories. He loved to treat the people he loved to home-cooked meals, from crab-stuffed lobster to artfully-arranged antipasto spreads. An avid traveler, he liked to be on the go – whether he was driving across several states after working all day to catch a Holy Cross basketball game or traveling around the U.S. and abroad with Pat and their friends and relatives.

Larry immersed himself in the local culture when he traveled, taking unique photographs, exploring off-the-beaten-path restaurants – he was known for being able to find at least one authentic Italian restaurant everywhere he vacationed – and trying to speak the language wherever he went. The last trip he took before he suffered a stroke in 2015 was a vacation to Tuscany with his family to fulfill his bucket-list dream to introduce his grandchildren to a country he loved.

Due to social distancing restrictions, a celebration of Larry's life will be held at a future date.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider making a small donation to Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, the Holy Cross men's basketball program or Hospice Care in Westchester and Putnam.

Brenda Moscarella

Brenda Moscarella passed away from advanced dementia on June 1. She was 81.

Moscarella was born on Apr. 1, 1939 and raised in Spring Valley, Rockland County. Her parents were Margaret Duncan, a housewife, and Alfred Moscarella, a noted surgeon at Suffern's Good Samaritan Hospital. From a very young age she studied piano, and at 12, worked for several years with one of the world's very best teachers Claudio Arrau.

Raised Catholic, she graduated high school with the highest of honors from the Holy Child School in Rockland County. After a year or so at Oberlin Conservatory of Music, she left school for New York City to pursue acting and a bohemian lifestyle somewhat rebelling against her strict Catholic upbringing.

While working as a waitress in a Greenwich village café around 1959, Moscarella was introduced by actor David Margulies to Paul Resika, a painter. They were married in 1960 and lived in his apartment and art studio in the village. She gave birth to a son, Nathan, later that year. They divorced about four years later and she lived in the East Village with her son for a year before taking her first trip to her beloved adopted country of Greece.

After returning, she lived from 1966 to 1971, in New City and then Monsey, Rockland County. At that time, Moscarella worked several jobs, notably as a piano teacher and bank teller with her soon-to-be-famous co-worker, Lily Tomlin. In 1971, she fell in love with a man from Greece, and moved to Mykonos, one of the most beautiful places in the world. She broke up with the man but stayed on the island she loved for about seven years, working in translation, writing, photography and giving small private concerts. She also worked as an editor for the Athens Daily Post, an English language daily, as well as the Hellenic Broadcast Corporation.

Moscarella returned to New York City in the late 1970s and early '80s and worked

in charity and goodwill for the religious organization Covenant House, helping drug addicts and wayward youth get back on the right track, and served as executive director. She then traveled to a succession of places, including Cambridge, Mass. and Portland, Maine, helping others through the church mostly, wherever she was based. She lived as far away as Anchorage, and even the Aleutian Islands, as both a pastoral administrator and a newscaster on Alaskan television.

In the 1990s, Moscarella moved to Taos, N.M., where her brother, Alfred, lives to help care for her ailing mother until her passing after several years. She then continued to travel, to Greece and Maine, before returning to New Mexico. When her grandchildren were born, she relocated to New York's Washington Heights to be near her grandchildren who meant everything to her.

After developing advanced dementia, Moscarella spent her last two and a half years at Skyview Rehabilitation & Health Care in Croton-on-Hudson, where family visited her often and which she liked very much.

She leaves behind her brother, Alfred Moscarella, and his former wife Linda and current wife Joanne, and her niece and nephew, Raphael and Rachel Moscarella, all of Taos, N.M.; her only son, Nathan Resika, and his wife, Judit; and her grandchildren, Fabian and Flora, all of Valhalla.

An open casket memorial was held at Pleasant Manor Funeral Home in Thornwood on June 5, where family members recounted memories of her as her favorite recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations, was played by Glen Gould. She was laid to rest next to her parents at St. Anthony's Cemetery in Nanuet. Rest in Peace, Mom. I wished you'd lived longer than just 81 years, but you had a very full life!

Police Blotter

State Police

June 6: State police in Brewster arrested a 32-year-old Southeast man for aggravated DWI. He was traveling on Starr Ridge Road in Southeast when he was stopped for a vehicle and traffic law violation.

June 7: State police in East Fishkill arrested a 50-year-old Carmel man for aggravated DWI. He was traveling on I-84 in Southeast when he was stopped for a violation of the vehicle and traffic law.

White Plains Police

June 9: Police are investigating a trespassing incident where two males snuck into White Plains High School at 10 p.m. They walked around while looking into classrooms, but nothing was stolen.

June 10: Police received several calls regarding a black bear sighting near Hillair Circle. The units that were dispatched could not locate the bear. The department advises the community not to approach black bears and to be cognizant of the food

that is left outside.

June 12: A vehicle was stolen from in front of 50 Main St. when the owner left his car running while unattended for several moments. Police reported that the vehicle was recovered.

Yorktown Police

June 8: A Yorktown police officer on patrol observed a vehicle parked on the shoulder of Route 118 at about 6 p.m. While speaking to the occupant, a 17-year-old Brooklyn male, the officer detected a strong odor of marijuana. An investigation revealed the occupant was driving a stolen vehicle and his driving privileges were suspended. In addition, a quantity of marijuana was discovered. He was charged with criminal possession of stolen property and aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle.

June 10: A 60-year-old Yorktown man was charged with DWI following a one-car accident on Mohansic Avenue East.



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Editorial

Finding the Courage to Speak Up in a Post-George Floyd World

By Adam Stone

I gasped when I saw the text from my friend. An actual, audible, unintentional gasp, for no one's benefit while alone in my office.

The text contained a flier showing an image of a black fist and was advertising a Black Lives Matter rally in a local Westchester town. There was also an accompanying note from my friend saying, "I might as well just move to Harlem."

I immediately knew I had a decision to make. I could laugh it off with an "lol" or I could politely explain how his surprisingly retrograde sentiments on race are anathema to me.

I then thought about how hard people have worked over generations to improve race relations, literally sacrificing life and limb. They risked everything as they decided whether to march across bridges and maybe make monumental, historic change. I risked nothing as I decided whether to type a few keystrokes.

Suddenly ashamed I had paused for even a moment, I typed a reply that led to a meaningful conversation, including how I had misunderstood the point of my friend's message.

Although I was relieved, he didn't actually harbor the views I originally concluded his text exhibited, I also felt like I had accomplished a little something: expanding by a small fraction the space in the world where racial hatred is explicitly deemed unacceptable, unwelcome, uninvited. And here's the thing: during this inflection point in our country's history, as we mourn George Floyd's horrifying murder at the hands of Minneapolis police, it isn't just those holding explicitly racist ideas who we need to persuade.

It's also the generally tolerant middle-class white people often too polite to push back on subtle racism while in private conversation who we need to convince to speak out in ways large and small.

Let's not forget, we can and do make progress in this country. From the

abolishment of slavery, to women's rights, to civil rights to gay rights, the story of our country, from a distance, is a story of progress, even if that progress feels understandably elusive when living through the painful and systemic injustices people of color still undoubtedly endure every day and in abundance.

One of the most maddening elements of today's debate, on almost every topic, is how people quickly retreat to preconceived narratives in analyzing current events instead of evaluating circumstances of any news event on a case-by-case basis.

This unfortunate phenomenon likely helps explain now former Brewster Board of Education Trustee Krista Berardi's instinct to post to social media last week that Floyd's murder was staged and that protestors should be "hosed."

Let me first say, I think it's safe to assume Berardi is more than likely a good person at heart. She's a mother, until last weekend a school board member and a veteran art teacher in Carmel. While Berardi declined my interview request, I spoke with a former student of hers who described the teacher as "engaging" and an educator who "looks for potential in students."

But this wasn't the first time Berardi allegedly published an incendiary social media post.

What we need isn't more amen choruses on social media, with the left cheering on the left and the right cheering on the right. We need conservatives and liberals pushing back on their own when the dialogue strays from the facts or devolves into incivility.

While we need to ensure there's accountability, we also must be sure to avoid demonizing all those who express even hateful ideas. Hate the idea, not the person. Then aim, if possible, to engage, listen and educate, not tear down. It's the harder but more productive path. Most people who express monstrous ideas are not monsters.

I don't want to create a false equivalency.

It's my unequivocal view that the far right wing is the most dangerous wing on our current flight path, during a time of heightened animosity towards immigrants and minorities. But let's be sure the far left doesn't chill free expression by allowing us to characterize anyone as an unrepentant racist who, for example, points out (correctly and undoubtedly) how most cops are good cops.

One of my favorite conversation partners is my incredibly insightful friend Ani. Not long ago, Ani left Westchester because she wanted to "escape the latent racism that is rife in suburban white America." In fact, I gave Ani a sneak peek of this column and she provided some valuable pushback.

"When people talk about cops, it's not about individual cops and whether we have some that are good," she explained. "It's that the system too often protects and nurtures bad police and it seems like it is harder to be a good cop in current police culture than not...The reason why the protests are designed to disrupt your day out with your daughter is because you are protected by a system that murders black people."

What Ani observes makes perfect sense to me. Yet here's another true thing: concluding that those who hold racist views are irredeemable is to accept racism as a fact of life, instead of a byproduct of ignorance. You're also part of the problem if you're unwilling to spend a dime of social capital to enhance our cultural environment when you hear a friend express ugly ideas.

I have to believe there's someone in Berardi's life, perhaps someone who shares her general sensibilities but who rejects these more reprehensible views, who could have enlightened her to a degree on racial issues and save her a world of pain. Without that safeguard, she posted what she posted, she was condemned by her colleagues and she resigned in disgrace.

So next time someone makes a racially insensitive comment, realize how much is at stake. Your silence, or your voice, can make a world of difference.

Letter to the Editor

Farkas Has Strongest Record to Hit the Ground Running in Congress

In the Democratic primary on June 23, the 17th Congressional District has a wealth of candidates hoping to fill the seat held by Rep. Nita Lowey for over 30 years. We face the challenge of selecting someone who not only shares the strong Democratic goals and values of our district, but also has experience and ability to govern on the national level.

We are living in unprecedented and uncertain times. Time is of the essence. Now, more than ever, we need to choose a candidate who can hit the ground running.

Evelyn Farkas is such a candidate. Farkas has federal experience and national

recognition. Her relationships on Capitol Hill enable her to advocate and negotiate effectively for her constituents. She served as President Obama's Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Ukraine, Russia and Eurasia where she called out Russian meddling in our elections. She was the executive director of the Congressional Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Proliferation and Terrorism, which among other things, made recommendations regarding American vulnerability to an infectious pandemic. Farkas drafted and passed legislation for

seven years for the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee. Her career experience clearly sets her apart.

In addition to her experience and strong Democratic platform, Evelyn demonstrates impressive levels of passion, energy, compassion and intelligence. In short, in this time of uncertainty, Evelyn Farkas has what it takes to guide us to a society in which equality and justice are available to all.

Nancy Curcio
Ossining

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Letters to the Editor

Civil Rights, Environment Make Frei-Pearson Best for 93rd Assembly District

Election season 2020 has turned out to be an overwhelmingly complex, ever-evolving matrix of players. There are five Democratic Assembly candidates in the 93rd Assembly District, eight for Congress and New York State will run a primary for a presidential contest that has already – effectively – reached a conclusion. And that's before mentioning the complications due to the pandemic and normal, cyclical, Election Day, heart palpitation-inducing

difficulties.

I have been a homeowner in Westchester County since 2018, and in that time became involved in the local Democratic Committee. Having completed a master's degree and fellowship in diversity leadership and public administration, worked in disaster recovery since Superstorm Sandy in one form or another and watched aghast as fundamental pillars of democracy are assaulted daily from the federal level, I felt I would be

remiss were I not to involve myself.

We are called to task now to make civil rights the salient theme of this election, in close conjunction with environmental justice. Careful observers of both issues will recognize they are all-too-frequently intertwined.

It was in the committee that I came to know Jeremiah Frei-Pearson, and his work as a civil rights attorney, as well as leader of the Sustainability Committee. The White

Plains Democratic Committee endorsed Jeremiah as their candidate of choice, with Mayor Tom Roach later speaking on his behalf. Civil rights and sustainability are the quintessential issues of our time and I believe Jeremiah will be the representative we need in this moment for the 93rd District.

David Brezler
White Plains

Schleifer Would be Top Choice to Protect the Environment in Congress

They say we have 10 years left to find a solution to climate change. Ten years is all the Earth can take. Our lives have just begun, yet it feels like we already have a deadline. We have been tasked with something that feels impossible: saving the Earth.

Some people in government choose to avoid the science behind it all – they call it a hoax. The reality of the situation is that the Earth can only take so much, and we need meaningful legislation to combat this crisis.

That's why Adam Schleifer needs to be in Congress.

As a federal prosecutor, Schleifer prosecuted corporations for their environmental crimes, and he would continue to do so in Congress. Moreover, in supporting green technology, he looks to the future in order to fight the effects of climate change.

Adam understands the looming threat of climate change, and he will fight to get the job done. His policy plan includes restoring and strengthening the EPA, pushing for tax incentives to provide green

jobs and infrastructure and implementing a progressive carbon tax on fossil fuel companies and other large emitters of greenhouse gases.

He will also fight for a Green Infrastructure Corps as part of a national service program in an effort to give free higher education to those who serve.

Adam believes that “we each have the right to live on a healthy, habitable planet.” He will take action in Congress to ensure that future generations will have a sustainable Earth.

Right now, more than ever, we need government officials who trust and respect science. As a member of Adam Schleifer's Youth Advisory Council, I support him on his mission for a clean, healthy planet. That's why I will be voting for Adam Schleifer to represent us in Congressional District 17 on June 23.

Harrison Gay
Suffern

For North Castle, it's Scarpino, Buchwald and Burdick

With so many primaries this year, I am constantly asked “Who should I vote for?” The real question is, who is best for North Castle. In my opinion, it's Tony Scarpino for Westchester County District Attorney, David Buchwald for Congress and Chris Burdick for Assembly.

With all of the changes coming down the line, we need Scarpino to remain our D.A. I have firsthand experience with his office, whether through general town business or through our police department, and every experience is incredibly professional and results-oriented. Tony has committed his entire life to public service – an FBI career, followed by election to several judgeships, including state Supreme Court justice. Help me keep Tony right where he is.

Buchwald has represented North Castle incredibly well in Albany as our assemblyman for eight years. We need David to take his experience to Congress to represent us. As assemblyman, David has literally called me from the floor in

Albany at midnight to report an update on legislation critical to our town. From the Hergenhan Recreation Center parking lot (\$250,000) to the hotel occupancy revenue bill (\$125,000 in revenue), David brings a level of experience that we need for North Castle.

Burdick and I were elected councilman the same year, and elected supervisor the same year as well. More than anyone, he knows exactly the type of support from New York State that is essential to local municipalities like ours. He's a pro with a legal background that will provide the representation we need in Albany. Chris literally drove to Hartford to help us fight Connecticut's ill-advised I-684 toll, he's committed to sensitive environmental issues and he's a collaborator amongst all town supervisors to achieve common goals. We need Chris in Albany.

Mike Schiliro
North Castle Town Supervisor

Farkas Best Suited to Succeed Lowey, Help 17th Congressional District

I support Evelyn Farkas for Congress in the June 23rd Democratic primary election.

Once elected, Farkas will not need on-the-job training to be an effective advocate for our district. She is the only candidate with congressional legislative experience. For seven years she was part of the senior staff that drafted legislation for the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee.

Evelyn also served in the executive branch, having been appointed by President Obama to be deputy assistant secretary of defense for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia.

Because of her experience, Evelyn has been endorsed by current members of Congress such as Seth Moulton of Massachusetts, Marcy Kaptur of Ohio, Lois Frankel of Florida, Annie Kuster of New Hampshire, Julia Brownley of California and Tom Malinowski of New Jersey. This is the sort of national network that will allow her to get things done for her New York constituents.

In addition, Evelyn has the endorsements

of former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, former Secretary of State John Kerry and President Obama's Chief of Staff Denis McDonough.

As a Westchester County native and resident, Evelyn is fully aware of our local issues, such as the safety and economic concerns related to the decommissioning of Indian Point nuclear plant. I have read her detailed plans on this issue on evelynfornny.com, her campaign website.

For these reasons and more, I support Evelyn Farkas in the June 23rd primary.

Marsha Kressin
Cortlandt Manor

Stay Vigilant in Fight Against COVID-19 and Continue to Wear a Mask

We are all thrilled to have our region, and our Village of Pleasantville, coming back in phases from the drastic quarantine that was so successful in chilling the spread of the virus and saving lives.

As we move into more liberal phases, the fact remains that the virus is out there among us and ready to strike all of us, but especially those who are over 60 and with such frequent complications of obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc. It is not to be trifled with. It is scary to many.

As we happily move around more in our area, on sidewalks and park paths, in hardware stores and in other public places, I hope that we are careful to protect our

friends and neighbors around us.

Yes, wearing masks when coming into relatively close proximity, indoors or outdoors, is the law. But more importantly it's the right thing to do. Whether we think we are hale and hearty, or are out for a walk downtown, in a store or in parks, or are a high school or college student doing a run, please think of our friends and neighbors and wear a mask whenever passing on the street. It's for them that we wear the mask, and it just might make a difference.

J. Scott Dyer
Pleasantville

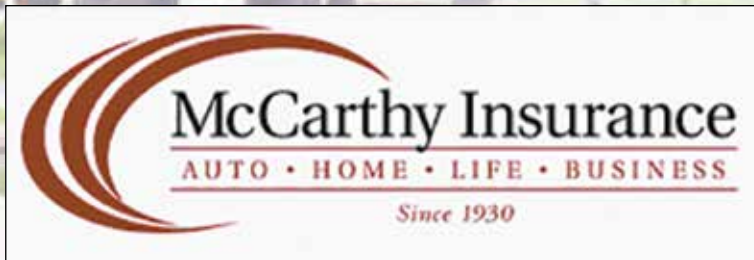
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I'm running to be your next Assemblymember because I will continue to fight for the people of the 93rd Assembly District, as I have day after day. Even more than that, though, I am running because I am the most qualified person for the job, and in these uncertain times, that is what we need in Albany.

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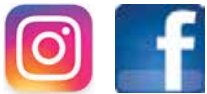
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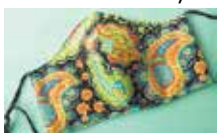
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Contemplating Stairs When I Don't Have Any

As a realtor who frequently serves senior members of our community, I am always aware of the presence of exterior steps or stairs inside that must be negotiated on any given property. Note how homes and condos catering to older citizens boast "no steps" as a selling point.

For the past five years, I have lived in a new one-level condominium with no steps, but for many years before that, I had lived in a colonial home with a steep set of stairs going down to the basement and another going to the second floor and still another going to the attic. Since I ran a business that required storage of materials in both the basement and the attic, I was often going up and down stairs. It was probably my primary form of exercise getting from one level to the other.

I can't say that I miss all those steps. The last time I climbed any stairs was during a fire drill when we were asked not to use our elevator. It almost killed me.

While stairs fill a very practical function of getting from one level to another, they can also make a very dramatic architectural statement in a home, from a soaring floating staircase in a central hall to a modern circular staircase winding around a column to a higher floor.

And speaking of circular stairs, have you ever wondered why they wind

counterclockwise when all of us tend to do things in a clockwise pattern? (Find the answer to that question at the end of this column.)

From grand castles to humble cottages, stairways have allowed more living space under the same roof by providing a means to get from one level to another. Unless you live in a ranch-style home or a one-level apartment or condo as I do, you climb stairs. Some of us love the transition from one living space to another. For years, I felt that I couldn't possibly sleep on the same floor as where I ate. But aging knees helped me overcome that requirement.

While we might focus on the architectural and practical contributions stairs make to a home, they also add greatly to the statistics of accidents, even death, in the home. All too often, homeowners take a dive down the stairway, especially when descending. Maybe it's because it's easier to climb steps than to go down even if the physical effort is greater when we are ascending.

My theory is that we feel more confident about where to place our feet going up, but many of us seem not to be as surefooted heading down, especially for people whose feet are larger than the width of the step.

I'm personally very conscious of the possibility of accidents on stairs, perhaps because of the story my mother frequently



told. At two years old, I opened the door to the basement and fell down a steep flight of stairs, landing on my head on the concrete basement floor. My mother screamed thinking I was dead.

And, I remember with dread the day my wife and I received a call from a neighbor saying that our daughter had fallen down a flight of stairs in her home while on a play date. She, too, survived the incident.

In "Gone with the Wind," three very dramatic incidents take place on the stairs: when Rhett scoops up Scarlett in his arms and bounds up the staircase, three steps

at a time, to their bedroom; when Scarlett falls down the steps and miscarries; and in the movie's last scene where Scarlett drags herself to the stairs to declare that somehow she'll win Rhett back.

But aside from the dramatic turn they might offer, stairs can be dangerous. More than 15,000 people die each year as a result of falls and as many as 1,300 of those take place by falling down stairs; additionally, many people suffer injuries on stairs, which are frequently not reported. Many accidents happen when there is an uneven step in a series. Actually, this was done intentionally in the distant past as a security measure to trip up enemies entering or leaving a property.

Now, about the reason that circular steps were designed in the Middle Ages in a counterclockwise pattern: At that time, it was critically important to safeguard the castle with stairs running counterclockwise. A defender of the castle would be on a higher level of the stairs and could therefore swing his sword freely in the open space to his right but his enemies below would keep hitting the wall to their right. Clever, huh?

Bill Primavera is a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc. (www.PrimaveraPR.com). His real estate site is www.PrimaveraRealEstate.com. To engage the talents and services of The Home Guru to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.

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By Bill Primavera



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Montrose Accordionist Serenades Frontline Workers Every Night

By Ariel Markowski

Some days just a few cars line up to listen and watch Don Simmons perform. Other days there are many more.

Regardless of the turnout, the socially-distanced gathering forms during the 80-year-old's daily 7 p.m. accordion performances in front of his Tommy Thurber Lane home in Montrose.

Since Mar. 15, Simmons has been playing outside each evening, and intends to continue until the coronavirus no longer forces him to stay home. Simmons, a liver transplant recipient, has a fragile immune system and has prudently remained in or around his residence for the past three months.

Upon discovering the early evening salutes to first responders and healthcare workers in Spain and Italy, as well as some neighborhoods in New York City early on during the crisis, Simmons thought he could treat his neighbors to something special as well.

"I feel a debt of gratitude for nurses and caregivers, especially since I had a liver transplant 14-plus years ago," said Simmons, who added that there are several medical professionals and first responders who live on his street. "I have volunteered (played) at hospitals and nursing homes since that time."

During his first performance, a neighbor happened to have her window open. She heard and enjoyed his music, and decided to ask him about it. With the encouragement of that first audience member, Simmons decided to have a daily concert.



Don Simmons has played his accordion outside his Montrose house every evening for three months to pay tribute to the frontline workers during the COVID-19 crisis.

"She's my most frequent audience (member)," Simmons said.

Simmons plays many different styles and genres of music from throughout the world, including Irish, German, Italian and French music along with rock, swing, Big Band, pop, country and show tunes. On an American holiday, he may play patriotic songs, or when appropriate, he'll perform hymns.

"(On) Sunday nights, because I used to play in the church before the coronavirus...I invite a couple of the people who sang with me, and we do hymns," he said.

Simmons' daughter, who lives a few miles away, decided to join him last Sunday. Once a week, a friend who enjoys rock music stops by.

Simmons has played the accordion since he was about 10 years old. He has several

different models, including an eight-year-old Dino-Baffetti 120-bass piano accordion Concerto III model that he has been using.

As an adult, his interest in playing was rekindled by a fellow accordionist, and once his five children were grown he resumed playing.

"I'm having a good time doing this," Simmons said. "I nap a little bit more... although my wife doesn't like to see too much of it."

Despite having been home-bound for three months, Simmons makes a concerted effort to keep busy. During the coronavirus lockdown, his musical talent has allowed him to do just that. He's also noticed that the music he plays brings people together in a unique way. With a video of him posted on YouTube, he's received accolades from far and wide.


"I'm getting some very positive responses... all over the country," Simmons said.


Although he's enjoying himself and some of the attention that has accompanied his accordion playing, the crisis has had its drawbacks. Only once has he seen his 14th grandchild, Milena, who was born Apr. 24.

Simmons said that everyone can help others in their own way. He emphasized his faith in the power of prayer, and hopes that people use their own beliefs to guide them through this unprecedented time.

"There's always something that you can do," he explained. "I see thank-you signs by the curb...and I'm encouraged by that."

To hear Simmons' music, visit <https://youtube/RoUjR5MDxcE>, or drive by his house and listen in person.








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There are three easy and convenient ways to vote this year:



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You must postmark your ballot by June 23rd to have it count.



Vote Early in-Person, June 13th – 21st

You can use any early vote site in Westchester! Sites in our district: County Board of Elections in White Plains; Harrison Veterans Memorial Building; Mount Kisco Memorial Complex; Pound Ridge Town House



Primary Day, June 23rd

Caution! Some poll sites changed this year.

Exciting New Chapter for Chabad at Synagogue Groundbreaking

By Lindsay Emery

For the past year-and-a-half, Chabad of Bedford had been looking for a new home after an electrical fire caused the premature loss of its former meeting place.

Luckily, they had already been working on plans for a new synagogue.

On Sunday, the community celebrated the groundbreaking for its 12,000-square-foot synagogue with a socially-distanced, day-long ceremony.

To comply with public health standards, families who belong to Chabad of Bedford reserved 10-minute time slots to participate in activities such as writing a letter in the new Torah scroll and putting their stamp on an art piece that will be featured in the synagogue. Families trickled into the site at 220 S. Bedford Rd. from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. to participate in the festivities.

Rabbi Arik Wolf and various elected officials offered words of encouragement and excitement about the project.

"Today is the day we begin to build the actual synagogue for this beautiful community," Wolf said. "But this future building, the physical structure that we're going to build, is really not what Chabad is all about."

Chabad is about creating an environment where people can seek out one's mission and where one can share and grow in their spirituality and Jewish knowledge, he said.

County Executive George Latimer explained how elected officials understand how there is something bigger than government.

"There's something that we believe in and even when we hold different faith traditions, we still see that there is something that is greater than those of us here," he said.

"But I say that, for a Jewish person going through this pandemic, there's a real sense that you can't wait to get back to worship," added state Sen. Shelley Mayer (D-Yonkers).

Assemblyman David Buchwald spoke of how his district office was down the street from Chabad of Bedford's temporary home and how he will miss them.

"I know that wherever you are physically housed, what really makes a truly special place is who makes up a community," Buchwald said. "Wherever you are, Chabad of Bedford has been a piece of meaning to so many and that is why I know that you're really looking forward to eventually having this bare piece of ground become a true home."



LINDSAY EMERY PHOTO

Rabbi Arik Wolf, second from left, and County Executive George Latimer, far right, are joined by other dignitaries at Sunday's groundbreaking for the new Chabad of Bedford synagogue on South Bedford Road.

Bedford Supervisor Chris Burdick echoed similar sentiments, expressing his enthusiasm for the \$6 million project and what it took to receive town approvals.

"Truly, it's my honor that I was able to help you through the often tortuous approval process that always takes longer than anybody would want, and we all know that there were bumps along the road and many conversations that I had with folks who may not have wanted this here," Burdick said. "But this was the right thing to do."

Joseph Roberto, chairman and CEO of PCSB Bank, was also recognized and awarded a distinguished community service award by Wolf on behalf of Chabad.

Wolf and his wife, Sara, started Chabad of Bedford 17 years ago. The community now includes about 250 families mainly from Bedford along with Mount Kisco, Chappaqua, Somers and Pound Ridge.

"Everybody wants to connect with other people and connect with ideas that are greater than themselves, and making this

opportunity in a social-distanced way was something that our community really embraced, and we've had over 100 families come through here from 10 in the morning and it's going to go through until 7 p.m. tonight, and it's been so gratifying the support and the partnership of our community members, our elected officials, our financial supporters and the community in general," Wolf said.

Pound Ridge resident Brian Hines and his family have been affiliated with Chabad of Bedford for about 10 years. He said that Chabad has been so special that it really didn't matter that they haven't had a true home because it's a community and a family.

"The passion that comes from Arik and Sara made you feel like you had a home even when there wasn't a physical building, so I think that now establishing a real physical home will hopefully help Arik and Sarah extend all the good that they do to a broader group of people," Hines said.

The new Chabad of Bedford synagogue will be a farmhouse-style, two-and-a-half-story building that will include a sanctuary, an event hall, classrooms, offices and a library. Construction is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021.

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Putnam Task Force Submits Reopening Safely Report; June 22 Town Hall Set

The Putnam County Business Council (PCBC) Reopen Putnam Safely Task Force submitted a 15-page report last week to the offices of the governor and the Putnam County Executive that offers insight into the critical needs of businesses across 12 priority industries.

Additionally, recommendations have been offered as a way to assist our state and local leaders with ongoing reemergence plans affecting the Putnam County economy.

"As the county's business advocacy organization, we have engaged a Reopen Putnam Safely Task Force to assist in shepherding our members and the business community, at large, as they reopen or prepare to reopen according to their industry phase," said Jennifer Maher, the PCBC chairwoman. "In collaboration with the Business Council of Westchester, we have developed a concise report based on the reopening and financial needs of our businesses. The intent is to give

voice to our business community at the highest level, so we are not overburdened, overlooked or underfunded during this slow recovery period."

The Putnam County Business Council will continue to engage with the business community and communicate its needs to the state and county prior to phases 3 and 4.

For business owners who wish to be heard regarding reopening issues and challenges, they may attend the PCBC Town Hall via Zoom on Monday, June 22 at 2 p.m. Those interested in joining may register at <https://tinyurl.com/y8vvrpfn>

Local businesses may also connect with the Business Council via e-mail, info@putnamcountybusinesscouncil.com, and by participating in other virtual events, which are posted to the site, as well as e-ailed to subscribers.

The public may access the task force's report at www.putnamcountybusinesscouncil.com.

Mahopac Resident Named Permanent Executive Director at Phelps Hospital

Phelps Hospital Northwell Health announced last week that former interim Executive Director Eileen Egan will lead the hospital as its permanent executive director, effective immediately.

A few months ago, Westchester County became New York's epicenter of COVID-19. Egan demonstrated incredible grace under pressure and her response was immeasurably valuable to dealing with a significant patient surge while keeping patients and team members safe.

Egan, who lives with her family in Mahopac, first joined Phelps in 1981 as a charge nurse in the Intensive Care/Critical Care and medical and surgical units. She has been a clinician, administrator and team leader throughout her tenure, which included 17 years as a nurse in the Emergency Department.

Egan has been at the heart of the Phelps community. After pursuing a career in law, she returned to Phelps in 2006 and has since succeeded in positions with increasing responsibilities.

Most recently, Egan was vice president of administration, where she oversaw the risk management radiology, physical and occupational therapy, hyperbaric medicine, wound healing, cardiovascular respiratory, speech and hearing and sleep departments. She also served as director of quality assurance and risk management, corporate compliance officer, chief of the Corporate Compliance Committee and assistant vice president.



Eileen Egan will lead Phelps Hospital in Sleepy Hollow.

Egan is also the recipient of the Phelps Star Award for outstanding service, commitment and attitude and she was nominated for Nurse of Distinction at Phelps and Emergency Nurse of the Year in Westchester County. She's a certified emergency nurse and certified in pediatric advanced life support and advanced cardiac life support. She holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from the College of New Rochelle and received her Juris Doctorate from Pace University School of Law.

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Looking Back on High School With Smiles and Sadness

As the school year winds down, the realization that high school is coming to an end brings a variety of emotions – gratefulness for the people I’ve met along the way, sadness to have to say goodbye, anxiousness on what the next four years will bring and excitement to embark on a new journey.

High school started off rocky. Going into freshman year, I was eager to leave the confinements of middle school and ready to enjoy the new freedoms. However, transitioning wasn’t as simple as I thought it would be. It became harder to balance school with extracurriculars, and while there were more freedoms, I managed my time pretty poorly.

The first two years were particularly challenging. As an introvert, I easily became lost in a big school, and while many friends rushed to sign up for clubs and attend football games, I wasn’t as comfortable with putting myself out there. By the end of sophomore year, I still hadn’t found my niche and struggled to keep up both academically and socially.

Then, the summer before my junior year, I moved from New Jersey to New York. Although I was nervous, I was also excited for a fresh start, and with the new environment, I told myself I would be different, too. Over the course of these past

two years, I went to school plays, joined several clubs, established a core group of friends and was ultimately much happier than I had been prior to moving.

As I reflect on my high school experience, here is some advice to younger students.

First, know that you don’t have to be fearless to be courageous. It’s okay if you’re afraid to put yourself out there, and it’s okay if you’re afraid of the unknown. But your fears don’t define you, and it’s never too late to face them. After moving, I found that trying something new, even though it may have been out of my comfort zone at the time, led to incredible experiences.

For example, I had always loved writing, but it wasn’t until my junior year that I decided to join the school newspaper. I didn’t know any of the writers at the time, but together we worked to deliver stories to the community. What was once a typical news site quickly grew into a platform for self-expression, innovation and creativity.

Eventually, I started contributing a column to The Examiner, despite my initial worries that an outside newspaper wouldn’t accept a young high school student. I’m grateful to have had the opportunity to share my voice with so many others. If there’s a passion you have, I encourage you to pursue it. You’ll be surprised at what you

can achieve when you let your fears empower you instead of hold you back.

Second, trust yourself and the people around you. If there’s one thing I wish I knew going into high school, it’s that asking for help is normal. Your teachers and peers are there to support you, and whether you’re falling behind in a class, struggling to balance your workload or having trouble making friends, you don’t have to go through it alone. There will always be people who have your back, and if you feel like you need help, don’t be afraid to speak up.

Later on in high school, you’ll probably face a lot of setbacks. Maybe you won’t score as high as you had hoped on the SAT, maybe you won’t get into your dream college. These hurdles are inevitable, but you have a community that’ll help you get over it. Believe in yourself, and believe in them.

Third, make sure to have fun. It may be cliché, but time does disappear quickly, and before you know it, you’ll be a senior reflecting on your experience. It’s normal to get caught up in the stress and competitiveness of high school, but try not to let it consume you. Instead of going out to lunch with my friends, I often stayed



By Ellie Dessart

in the library to study. On the weekends, instead of catching a movie or taking a trip to the mall, I’d finish assignments weeks before they were due, afraid that if I didn’t get ahead, I’d quickly fall behind.

Now that I’m about to graduate, I wish I hadn’t directed all my time and energy toward studying. While your schoolwork should be a priority, it shouldn’t stop you from going out and making memories with your

friends because these are the moments you’ll cherish the most. Go to football games, go to prom, cheer loudly, and dance unapologetically.

High school, like many things in life, won’t be a straight path; there will be mistakes and frustrations along the way. But your time will also be one of immense growth, new beginnings and self-discovery. You have the power to make your experience unforgettable. Don’t be afraid to live in the moment.

Ellie Dessart is a senior at Bronxville High School. Her monthly column, Inside the Mind of a Teen, examines and addresses the issues pertaining to teenagers at both the local and global level.

Inside the Mind of a Teen

The Mysterious 23rd of June: A Goddess Gets Her Revenge

Listen to enough Irish ballads and soon enough you will run across a seemingly favorite date for songsters to reference, and that date is “The 23rd of June.”

At least a few songs immediately come to mind: “The Jug of Punch,” a ballad made famous – or at least very familiar – by the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem on their early 1960s album “Hearty and Hellish.” There is also the equally renowned County Clare tune “Spancil Hill.”

Let’s consider “Spancil Hill” first. It’s an emigrant song, relates Pauline Murphy, a contributor to IrishCentral.com. Written in the 1870s by a County Clare native, Michael Considine, the song is born of his experiences in Boston and California, where he hoped to make his fortune and return to Ireland to claim the woman he left behind.

One version begins:

*“It bein’ on the 23rd of June, the day before the fair,
Sure Erin’s sons and daughters, they all assembled there...”*

But the original words from Considine are, in my opinion, much better:

*“Last night as I lay dreaming, of pleasant days gone by,
my mind being bent on rambling, to Erin’s Isle I did fly.
I stepped on board a vision and sailed out with a will,
till I gladly came to anchor at the cross of Spancil Hill.”*

Considine would never see his homeland again, nor the love of his life, and died in California at the tender age of 23. Yet he lives on today in the words of his song, as sad a tune as any emigrant ever penned.

It’s been sung by many, including the



Áine, Celtic Goddess of Summer

Dubliners, Robbie McMahon, Christy Moore and the Corrs, and is a staple in the vocal repertoire. “Spancil Hill” remains today the site of one of Ireland’s largest horse fairs, continuing Ireland’s equine love affair, a tradition hallowed in the mists of time.

“The Jug of Punch,” a lighter tune, is equally well-grounded, but far more comedic than Considine’s. There are several versions, sung by many balladeers in the tradition, and by no less a sean-nos master than the famous Joe Heaney. Its opening lines match one

version of “Spancil Hill”:

*“It being on the 23rd of June,
As I sat weavin’ all on my loom,
I heard a thrush in an ivy bush,
And the song he sang was The Jug of Punch,
Luddaly-fal-da-dee...”*

The song goes a number of verses, with a great demonstration of lilting, a time-honored vocal tool in Irish folk music.

But what, if any, is the significance of the date? There are other notable June dates in the Irish experience. But none seem to have captured the popular imagination like the day before the feast day of St. John the Baptist, the 24th of June, also known as Mid-Summer’s Day.

Scratch the surface, and we find that sunset on the 23rd of June marks the beginning of a pre-Christian Celtic feast honoring the goddess Áine (pronounced Awn-ya), the patron of summer, wealth and sovereignty. Her image is a red mare. That night great bonfires are lit on hilltops throughout Ireland, seeking her favor and blessing

for bountiful crops in the season to come.

In Irish myth and legend, she is said to have been violated by Ailill, King of Munster. Her revenge came when she bit off the King’s ear, from which point onward he was known as Aulom, which means “one-eared.”

Brehon Law, the law governing Celtic Ireland, held that a king must be unblemished. Áine’s act made Ailill unfit to continue his reign, and bestowed on Áine the power to both grant and remove a man’s authority to rule. She is recalled in a number of place names throughout Ireland, including the Hill of Knockainey in Limerick, Toberanna in Tyrone, Dunany in Louth and other sites in Derry and Donegal, in all of which you can find her name. At some of these sites she was openly celebrated as late as the 1870s, doubtless much to the chagrin of the local clergy.

And the day following the 23rd is hers as well, with a horse fair to boot!

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.



By Brian McGowan

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W'chester IDA Approves Intent to Fund Mt. Kisco, White Plains Projects

The Westchester County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) Monday approved resolutions of intent to provide financial incentives for two major residential developments in Mount Kisco and White Plains.

The projects, Kirby Commons in Mount Kisco and the proposed project at the White Plains YMCA site, represent hundreds of jobs and private investment of more than \$230 million at a time when the county's downtowns have been struggling with the COVID-19-related economic shutdown.

At its June 11 meeting, the IDA Board voted preliminary approval of incentives for the development of Kirby Commons, a \$130.5 million mixed-use, transit-oriented development featuring 217 apartments and 53,000 square feet of retail and community space.

Located at 17 Britton Lane and 1 Main St. adjacent to the Mount Kisco Metro-North station and Kirby Plaza, the project will include two mixed-use buildings located on the South Moger Avenue and North Moger Avenue parking lots.

Amenities will include a conference center, lounge and co-working space, gym, a Zen garden connected to an interior courtyard and a rooftop green space with multiple seating areas, grills and a fire pit.

The development is a joint venture of the Gotham Organization and Charter Realty Development of Manhattan.

The IDA Board gave the project preliminary approval of about \$3.9 million in sales tax exemptions and \$831,500 in mortgage recording tax exemptions. The project is expected to create 123 construction jobs and 52 new full-time jobs.

The board also gave preliminary approval of incentives for a \$100 million residential building to be built at the site of the YMCA building at 250 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Southern Land Company of Nashville is building 177 market-rate rental units on the site with 1,876 square feet of ground-floor retail space.

The building will include a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom units ranging in size from 600 to 1,850 square feet. Amenities will include a courtyard area with a pool, spa, garden terrace, barbecue grill, exterior fireplace and seating area. There will also be bike storage. Additional amenities being planned for the project include a pet spa, tune shop/work studio, resident lounge and conference room.

The White Plains YMCA building will be demolished to make way for the new development. According to Southern Land Company, a portion of the land purchase price has been advanced to the YMCA so that they are able to continue operations in their current facility and begin construction of a new daycare center to serve the community. Southern Land Company is also contributing \$3.2 million to the White Plains Affordable Housing Fund in lieu of including affordable units in their project.

The IDA Board gave the project preliminary approval of about \$2.5 million in sales tax exemptions and \$644,100 in mortgage recording tax exemption. The project is expected to create 128 construction jobs and create and retain 66 new full-time jobs.

"These innovative mixed-use projects in Mount Kisco and White Plains represent the kind of smart development that is helping to energize Westchester's downtowns with new housing and retail opportunities," said Westchester County Executive George Latimer. "In light of the current economic environment, it is encouraging to see this level of private investment in our county."

"We are pleased to provide preliminary approval of incentives for these two exciting mixed-use residential developments that are helping to reinvigorate our downtowns with new housing and retail that appeals to millennials and empty-nesters," added Westchester IDA Director Bridget Gibbons.



An artist's rendering of Kirby Commons in Mount Kisco, which received preliminary approval from the Westchester County Industrial Development Agency. Another mixed-use development in White Plains at the YMCA site on Mamaroneck Avenue also received approval.

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How a Travel Writer Has Survived the Lockdown

As a travel writer I've had my wings clipped and have been grounded for the last few months, with seemingly no light at the end of the tunnel.

My recent amazing trips of a river cruise on the Mekong River from Cambodia to Vietnam and a decadent week at Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni, Bellagio, Italy on Lake Como, are simply unforgettable memories.

One of the secrets to surviving this period of isolation and maintaining my sanity was having my amazing girlfriend and traveling partner with me.

Another secret was taking invigorating walks every day no matter the weather on the historic Old Croton Aqueduct trail outside my door. It's how New York City got their water for more than 100 years.

I also survived by losing myself in three very diverse books: "The Splendid and the Vile" by Erik Larson, a story on how Winston Churchill helped the United Kingdom survive the Nazi blitz and outwit Hitler; "Apropos of Nothing," Woody Allen's hysterically funny and revealing autobiography; and "The Plague" by Albert Camus.

We quickly realized the only time our lives appeared to be normal was when we were immersed in the planning, preparation and devouring of our incredible dinners every night.

We never ventured out to supermarkets; we ordered everything from the folks at Fresh Direct.com, OmahaSteaks.com and Sockeye@WildAlaskanCompany.com.

I could not have survived without these spectacular food suppliers and



their life-saving home deliveries. My hero is Fresh Direct and their dedicated, professional food maven at its Westchester warehouse. We had ultra-fresh seafood that tastes like it just jumped out of the ocean, their organic

chicken breasts, freshly-sliced prosciutto, aged Parmigiano Reggiano cheese and freshly grilled Italian artichokes, along with the picture-perfect fresh vegetables, seasonal ripe fruit and anything else we needed to prepare our meals.

For my steak fix, I ordered filet mignon from Omaha Steaks. I also reached out to the Wild Alaskan Company, and their box of overflowing fresh sockeye and coho salmon and

black cod.

Perhaps my biggest hero was caviar supplier Khavyar. Nobody has fresher, more delicious caviar at more affordable prices. I would splurge for a jar of Osetra Black Caviar and a few jars of the less pricey Ikura Caviar, the delicious orange salmon eggs.

Every Friday at 6 p.m. we would celebrate one more week of sanity by devouring a jar of caviar with a glass of iced Champagne or Grey Goose Vodka. We'd toast to "next year at this time being away on an

Other decadent dishes included chicken parmigiana and a tower of small medallions of chicken with layers of Rao's marinara chicken sauce, mozzarella, oregano, topped with shredded mozzarella.

Then there were the Greek-inspired dinners featuring layers of sautéed eggplant, sautéed ground lamb, tomato sauce, pine nuts, topped with ricotta



By Richard Levy

cheese and baked.

My piece de la resistance, fish and chips, was made with black cod, which was crunchier and moister than any devoured in London. My secret ingredients were baking soda and beer, flour and egg. We dipped the fish in thick batter, tossed it into bubbling oil for 10 minutes or until it was golden brown.

Take heart, one day soon this plague shall lift and you'll be off on a well-deserved vacation. But until then, consider cooking up some savory meals, losing yourself in a book and taking a long walk in the woods. They'll help keep you maintain your sanity. Bon voyage.

Hastings-on-Hudson resident Richard Levy is a former advertising "Mad Man" creative director and now a travel writer. He's also

an inventor of innovative new products and is writing and illustrating a new children's book. You can contact him at RichardLevyTravelWriter@gmail.com.

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The Merging of Winemakers, Consumers in the Evolving Bacchusphere



By Nick Antonaccio

We've all been inundated with negative news that for months has been hard-hitting and persistent. The pandemic, the economy, the social unrest, the turbulent equity and bond markets have all taken their toll on us

in unique ways.

As I presented in last week's column, wine preferences are evolving. A number of consumers are experimenting with higher priced wines. They are discovering that higher prices may equate to higher quality. Crossing this threshold may be life altering for some in their wine-centric cosmos.

This trend has evolved over the last decades as new wine consumers have come of age and entered the wine-buying marketplace.

And the wine industry has been responding. This progressive change has culminated in a realistic benefit to wine consumers.

The trend? Higher quality wines, of greater diversification and at lower prices – the QDP Index.

This value-to-price phenomenon has

emerged over a number of years and is now hitting its full stride. Everywhere we shop for wine we see “new” grape varieties from previously unsung regions – all at higher quality levels than in the past. We are immersed in a global trend that embraces innovation but is firmly anchored in tradition, a trend that leverages the tried and true with bold nuances. It is global yet highly localized.

Let's explore the underpinnings and the ultimate consumer benefits of this trend.

In my opinion, the greatest impact on the QDP Index is sociological. There has been a generational shift in the focus of winemakers that is common to all winemaking regions. It has manifested itself in today's generation of young men and women who have a newly-placed sensibility of the environment, a

combination of global and local perspectives on winemaking and a perpetual eagerness to explore, experiment with and employ the latest trends in winemaking. These young winemakers bring to their craft the legacy of their forefathers coupled with

the present-day awakenings of their peers around the globe.

Here is one example: In Spain, winemaking has been a tradition for thousands of years. And for those millennia, the craft of winemaking has been passed down from

generation to generation with little change. Local palates had become accustomed to these wines and Spanish producers were able to eke out a living. Then along came the European Union in 1993 and a revolution began to take place.

Spain began to wake from its agrarian slumber and embraced the collective benefit offered by its membership. This meant a new purchasing power, the availability (read profitability) of unencumbered cross-border trading and the sharing of knowledge with sister countries. The sons and daughters of winemakers who came of age in this new era were sent to France and Italy to be educated in the latest techniques and technology being employed. In one fell swoop, Spanish wines leapt into the 20th century.

Today, wine consumers are enjoying significantly higher quality wines (thanks to a greater appreciation of natural farming and painstaking attention to natural wine making techniques) produced from diversified grapes not previously exported, all at prices well below comparable offerings from other countries. The QDP Index is clearly evident in the Albarino and Monastrell wines that have been revitalized after centuries of old-world styling – and in an affordable \$10-to-\$15 price range.

Of course, these young winemakers needed a market in which to ply their wines.

Herein lies the flip side of the QDP Index: the young generations of wine consumers.

In the United States, wine is becoming the preferred alcoholic beverage of both Generation X and the Millennials, in spite of press to the contrary.

These new generations of consumers, always seeking new adventures, have found that wine offers a high-quality product that is broadly diversified at very affordable price points – and have brought young winemakers and their wine-consuming counterparts to new heights of mutual satisfaction.

The confluence of these factors will continue to expose consumers to new grapes,

from revitalized wine regions, produced by maverick winemakers. Every wine-lover – of every generation – can enjoy the benefits of this positive trend.

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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Sports

America Needs to Reach Out, Embrace and Hug One Another



By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports
Editor @Directrays

Let's just get this out of the way: since we're all on bended knee, our souls an open exhibit, I'm sorry to anyone I've ever offended; black, brown, yellow or white (and any color I've left out).

It wasn't intentional, I swear, because I don't see color through my lens or in my heart. The respect we need for each other right now is critical to

our societal renaissance, which includes racial equality, spiritual belief and every open wound in American society.

Our souls need the exposure of inner reflection, transparency and accountability. We can all play a pivotal role in this upheaval, and it starts with an apology. Racism isn't conservative versus liberal. All political persuasions must come together for change, removing the poison within and making even the most subtle form of racism unacceptable.

In every game I've ever covered, there were winners and losers, and I pulled for both just the same no matter their creed or color. Whether it was Elton Brand or Donnie McGrath. Derrick Dennis or Ryan Shilling. Robbie Anderson or Nick Gargiulo. Chris Tanta-

los or Joe Vetrano. Cathy Cortez or Emma Bozek. Aubrey Griffin or Brittany Shields. It never mattered. Color or race be damned!

Instead of teaching our kids that everyone gets a trophy, we need to teach our kids that racism should never have a role in sports and life, that we're all in this together. I wish real life could be more like sports because in that huddle and in those locker rooms are some of the strongest bonds ever formed, regardless of color or religion. In sports, our differences do not matter on the playing field.

Civil unrest has come to a head now, and this is where we are after a really bad police officer did something as heinous as anything we'd ever seen. We are at a crossroads regarding the direction of our divided nation.

Harmony seems implausible right now. But this old greybeard says it's time to unify, time to radically, yet peacefully, challenge our views on race. We have, as a nation, so much to apologize for, from inequality to injustice, despite being the most powerful republic on earth #Facts.

That said, there are only so many things I can apologize for without recognizing the greatness of this nation, what it used to be and what it will become again, if we can get past this monumental hurdle.

There's a litany of other things I'm sorry for, so let's divvy it up.

I'm sorry if you're a Knicks fan and have to accept the fact that owner Jim Dolan runs a rudderless ship that has seen his club win one (yeah, one!) singular playoff series since 2001.

I'm sorry if you don't like former Giants quarterback Eli Manning for only returning two Super Bowls in his 16 years. Eli is gospel in this neck of the woods for good reason, so don't you dare tread on that.

I'm sorry if you still think LeBron James was or is better than five-time MVP and six-time NBA champ Michael Jordan, the real #GOAT, right up there with Babe Ruth and Wayne Gretzky.

I'm sorry if you think the 1992 Olympic Dream Team wasn't the finest cast of All-Stars ever assembled because there has never been a more gifted, purposeful unit in the history of sports. Patriotism and pride were at an all-time high, kind of like at Lake Placid in 1980. There's nothing like the Olympics to bring our country together.

I'm sorry if you think Paw Patrol should be banned because Chase the Cop Dog is viewed as problematic. I'm sorry if you think Lego should consider removing police and firefighters from its Lego City line. You might have too much time on your hands if you

think Paw Patrol or Lego are the problem. Most cops are good, hard-working folks that risk their lives every day for our safety. It's now a thankless and terribly dangerous job.

I'm sorry if you can't figure out a way to be tolerant, inclusive and kind to anything with a heartbeat, including spiders, but excluding ticks #IHateTicks.

As a Mets fan, I'm sorry if you can't get past the 27 World Series championships the Yankees have provided their fans. Imagine the backdrop of New York sports without the Yankees. Our sports championship cupboard would be close to empty.

And I'm also sorry if you believe the flag of the United States of America and its accompanying anthem are offensive in any way, shape or form. Get over it.

I'm sorry for cancer. I'm sorry we can't have a difference of political opinion without a snide remark and harsh words for one another. I'm sorry social media has wrecked the way people deal with each other. I'm sorry that my cell phone has figured out a way to track my thoughts and portray them in advertisements five minutes later on Facebook.

Can somebody please make a Michael Jordan-like move and figure out a way to make our country great again, to accept each other for who and what we are? It's one race, the human race.

Now that I've apologized for everything imaginable, can we just hug it out?

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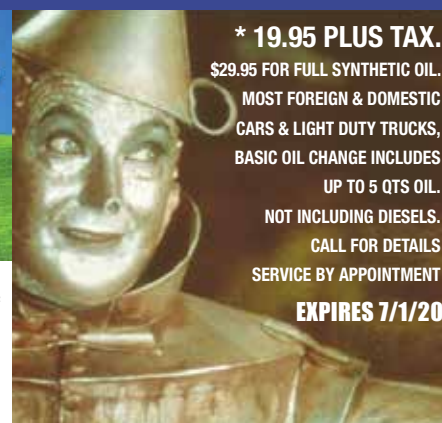
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Hundreds Demonstrate for Racial Justice in Mahopac

By Gordon Moccio

Hundreds lined up in Mahopac Sunday to show their support for racial justice.

Protesters met at Michael Geary Memorial Rink and marched down the street to Chamber Park, where live music was played and poems and speeches were read from individuals who said they have experienced racism firsthand in Mahopac, either at school or in encounters with police.

One of the speakers was Daniel Aramprice, a political advocate for the racial justice movement in Putnam County. He expressed that his eyes were opened to racism

when he was getting his master's degree at John Hopkins University. After speaking privately with his professors about racial issues in modern society, he felt obligated to start writing to school districts and meeting with senators to remove the racism that existed within the community, as well as in other districts.

He later told The Putnam Examiner there are three things that need to be done for change to occur locally.

"One is to remove the racist mascot—the indigenous mascot we have had for over 100 years that we have been appropriating. Two is to create a committee on diversity and inclusion that is multi-disciplinary, encompasses a student lens, people of color, administrators and officials, so that we can all meet together and come to the table to discuss what is right and how we can move forward," he said.

"And three is to condemn issues of racism that we see internalized to the school district and externalized to the school district as well, so that our students of color know that we are on their side and we are with them, and



PHOTO BY GORDON MOCCIO

Protestors knelt together during demonstration in Mahopac last week.

that we can work with them to mitigate these problems," he concluded.

At the protest site hundreds of confessions were hung up from people who have allegedly experienced racism at Mahopac High School. Whether it was from other students, coaches, or teachers, it was made known that there is a racial issue occurring within the walls of the high school.

The confessions were from students of all races, some saying how they were called a terrorist for being Middle Eastern, or called racial slurs for expressing their African American culture.



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