

New Owner Seeks to Benefit Community

J. Philip Commercial Group recently announced the completed sale of 1875 Route Six, a 12,000 square-foot office building in Carmel, for \$975,000. Purchased by retired businessman and Carmel resident Edward Santalone, the property will honor leases with current second-floor occupants, including the Carmel VA Clinic and law firm Costello & Folchetti. Previously leased to Sterling Bank, Santalone seeks to use a portion of the first-floor space to benefit the community. "When I sold my business in 2018, I was looking for a way to make a positive impact on our community," Santalone said. "When J. Philip Commercial showed me this property, it sparked creativity and fulfilled my investment requirements. The ample first floor provides the flexibility for me to offer space to non-profits or other public-spirited programs and enterprises. This is my family's home and now we can contribute in some small way to the town's future."



Philipstown Resident Charged with Murdering His Father

By Rick Pezzullo

A 20-year-old Philipstown man has been charged with the murder of his father in a trailer park last November.

Louis Joseph Weber IV was arrested by the Criminal Investigations Division of the Putnam County Sheriff's Office August 23 following a lengthy investigation on charges that he intentionally murdered his father, Louis Joseph Weber, 72, on November 4, 2019.

According to Putnam County Sheriff Robert Langley, Jr., officers were dispatched via Putnam 911 to the Post Road Trailer Pak in Philipstown on a report of a structure fire. Upon arrival, deputies discovered a trailer home fully engulfed

in flames. Officers were unable to gain entry into the home due to significant fire and smoke.

After the fire was extinguished by firefighters from the North Highlands, Cold Spring, Garrison and Fishkill fire departments, a search of the residence led to the discovery of the deceased body of Louis Weber.

Louis Weber IV was charged with murder in the second degree and is currently being held in the Putnam County Correctional Facility. No motive was given for the crime.

Langley thanked the Putnam County District Attorney's Office and the New York State Office of Fire Prevention for their assistance in the probe.

Masks, Sanitizers, Thermometers Part of Back to School Kits

By Rick Pezzullo

The annual theme for this September's National Preparedness Month created by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) is "Disasters don't wait, make your plan today."

But with the coronavirus pandemic, this year is unlike any other, so being prepared has taken on a new meaning, especially for families and their children getting ready to return to school.

To combat COVID-19, recommendations for back to school supply kits include such items as extra masks, hand sanitizers and thermometers.

"There were some amazing stories of

neighbors helping neighbors with our recent tropical storm Isaias and the Putnam County agencies pulled together, going above and beyond, as they always do," said Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell. "For individual residents and families, discussing how to best communicate during times of emergencies or disaster, and having a primary plan and a back-up is the best advice."

Putnam Health Commissioner Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD, agreed, adding "This has been a year like no other, and as September approaches and families prepare to send their children back to school, they are adding masks, sanitizers and now thermometers to not only their preparedness

kits, but also to their back-to school routines. Having a thermometer and a back-up thermometer, and creating a routine to ensure you are able to assess the health of your family, is especially important as we make plans to reopen our schools safely."

Preparedness kits or disaster kits are sometimes also called "go kits," especially when they are assembled in a duffel bag or other easy-to-carry sack or backpack that may be necessary if authorities are urging evacuation. FEMA's Ready.gov website has a handy list of basic supplies to include in your emergency kit, along with more specific suggestions, and how to maintain your kit. Ready.gov also has tips for creating an emergency plan

and lists the disasters or emergency situations that you can prepare for in your plan.

"We prepare by conducting numerous drills throughout the year so we are ready when an emergency or disaster happens, and we urge residents to prepare as well by having extra supplies and a communications plan" said Ken Clair, Putnam's Commissioner of Emergency Services. "Isaias was the ninth tropical storm of the hurricane season, and there were many downed trees and power outages. An enormous amount of work needed to be done, and our team got it done."

To start or update a personal or family emergency plan, FEMA's website is the place to start. Visit: <https://www.ready.gov/plan>.

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Putnam County Man Sentenced for Child Rape

A Putnam County man has been sentenced to 18 years in state prison and 20 years of post-release supervision following his March conviction on raping a child.

Khori Salmon's sexual conduct began against his child victim in the Bronx and continued after he moved to Putnam County in 2017. The abuse continued and, as Putnam County District Attorney Robert Tandy stated, it culminated in the rape of Salmon's victim "on two occasions in his residence in 2018."

Salmon, who was sentenced on August 17 by Judge James Rooney, must also register as a sex offender. He had been convicted on March 11 following his trial where he faced charges of Course of Sexual Conduct Against a Child in the First Degree and two

counts of Rape in the First Degree.

"District Attorney Tandy would also like to thank Carmel Police Department, whose detectives investigated and arrested Salmon on the aforementioned charges, specifically Detective Frank Chibbaro, Detective Michael Sheil, and Detective Sgt. Michael Nagle," the press release stated. "This conviction was the product of fantastic collaboration between numerous law enforcement agencies and my office."

The New York City Police Department and the Bronx District Attorney's Office were also involved with the joint investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Melissa Lynch and Nicholas LaStella.

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State Teachers Union Calls for Mandatory Mask Use in Schools

By Martin Wilbur

The state teachers' union last week demanded that all districts require students, teachers and staff to wear face masks in school virtually all the time to minimize the transmission of COVID-19.

New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), along with President of the American Federation of Teachers Randi Weingarten, called on state lawmakers and Gov. Cuomo to make mask wearing mandatory except for socially distanced breaks and for medical issues.

NYSUT President Andrew Pallotta said while the state has strongly recommended that masks be used there are dozens of districts that are treating the guidance as optional.

"We need to get this right and there's no room for mistakes," Pallotta said. "Mistakes may cost lives, and we must err on the side of caution. We also must be clear and concise about what that means."

Weingarten called out several of the more than 200 school districts throughout the state that have failed to adopt mandatory mask policies. Most are upstate, including Cairo-Durham in Greene County, Watkins Glen and numerous school systems in the Finger Lakes region, she said. There are about 700 public school districts across New York.

While opponents of mandatory mask wearing have argued that children are far less likely to face serious health consequences because of COVID-19, the virus can be transmitted to adult relatives or members of the faculty and staff at school even youngsters are asymptomatic.

Weingarten said that in some areas the use of face coverings is being viewed through a political lens, rather than a public health matter.

"When you see these examples of ignoring or defying the mask issue, which is absolutely the foremost safeguard, then you know, unfortunately, this needs to be a mandate instead of simply strongly recommended," said Weingarten, who pointed to the state of Connecticut and many areas in Pennsylvania that are requiring mandatory mask use.

Dr. Ken Spaeth, chief of occupational environmental medicine at Northwell Health, said with the absence of a vaccine or treatments for the virus, the simple step of wearing a mask can go a long way.

"I think at this point it goes without saying, it's simply six feet, that use of masks and social distancing are the most effective tools we have to have any effective infection control," he said. "In places where these are utilized, you see good control, and in places where these are not utilized that's where you tend to see (transmission) rates going up. In a school community, indoors, I think a reasonable approach here is to mandate masks and to maintain social distance."

Wearing masks and maintaining social distance is no small task, particularly when teaching younger children, said Pallotta, who started his career as a kindergarten teacher.

State Records 100,000 Tests in One Day

Results from just over 100,000 tests were received on Saturday statewide, the first time since the start of the COVID-19 crisis

in March, that New York recorded that many tests in a single day.

Of the 100,022 tests, there were 698 positive results accounting for a nearly 0.7 percent transmission rate.

In Westchester, through Saturday, there were 496 active cases and 37 COVID-19-related hospitalizations. During the past week, two additional deaths were recorded in Westchester.

On Sunday, New York recorded a statewide rate of just under 1 percent, according to the state's coronavirus dashboard. Three



CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

regions, including the Mid-Hudson region, recorded transmission rates of more than 1 percent. Mid-Hudson and Central New York

were at 1.3 percent

while Long Island was at 1.2 percent. New York City clocked in at 0.9 percent on Sunday.

Bee-Line Standard Service

The Westchester County Bee-Line bus system will resume front-door boarding on all buses starting next Tuesday, Sept. 8. All buses are now outfitted with protective barriers that provide floor-to-ceiling plastic

sheeting around bus operators. This will end free ridership that began on Mar. 23 when passengers could enter through the rear door.

"We will continue to do everything to ensure safety on the Bee-Line for both our passengers and our drivers," Westchester County Executive George Latimer said. "With protective driver shields being installed on the entire fleet of 325 buses, we are confident that we can safely bring back front door boarding and return the system to a more normal operation."

The Bee-Line is the second largest bus service in the state, only behind New York City.

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Pace Fraternity's Summer Project Raises Money for DJ Henry Fund

By Martin Wilbur

Despite social distancing and being far removed from campus, members of a Pace University fraternity used its ingenuity and ability to network to raise more than \$1,600 for the DJ Henry Dream Fund this summer.

The fraternity, Alpha Chi Ro, spent virtually the entire month of July to raise the money for the Massachusetts-based nonprofit organization that was created by Danroy (DJ) Henry's parents following his death in October 2010. The fund contributes toward performing arts and summer programs for children 5 to 18 years old in Massachusetts, where Henry was born and raised.

Brandon Joachim, who spearheaded the drive, said while the fraternity engages in a variety of fundraising efforts, this campaign was personal for him because of the upcoming 10th anniversary of Henry's passing. Henry was a Pace student and member of the school's football team when he was killed by a Pleasantville police officer at the Thornwood Town Center.

Joachim said that despite an annual walk, there are many students on campus who have little to no knowledge of Henry's story.

"In light of everything that's been happening this summer, I think Pace has

made more of an effort to make it known," Joachim said. "So I definitely want to do my part in helping that, too."

For the first week of the four-week effort, Alpha Chi Ro made an Instagram post and donated 12 cents from its coffers for every like it received, which totaled \$150, he said. He settled on 12 cents because that was Henry's jersey number when he played for Pace.

Then, during the second and third weeks, its members partnered with two other Pace fraternities, one in Pleasantville and the other on the New York City campus, to encourage social media donations from \$1 to \$5 toward the DJ Henry Dream Fund. That raised about \$1,200, Joachim said.

For Week 4, in order to increase awareness about what happened to Henry, they used Minecraft to produce a child-friendly DJ Henry story, which raised the balance of the money.

Given the challenges presented by COVID-19 and that many people may have been hurt financially by the pandemic, Joachim said he and his fraternity brothers wanted to impose very small commitments to contribute.

"There wasn't too much expectation," he said of any fundraising goals. "We just wanted to shed some light. We didn't think it would be as good as we thought at first. Our biggest goal was just to raise \$120.



Danroy (DJ) Henry, who was killed by police in 2010 at the Thornwood Town Center, hasn't been forgotten by the Alpha Chi Ro fraternity at Pace University. Fraternity members used social media to raise more than \$1,600 for the DJ Henry Dream Fund, which benefits youngsters in Massachusetts.

People kept on donating."

Henry's mother, Angella, who oversees

the DJ Henry Dream Fund, said the efforts of today's Pace students nearly a decade since her son went to the school is heartwarming for her and her family. She said it's hard to believe that so much time has passed since her son's death.

"It's extremely special that students who didn't attend school with DJ have taken up the cause and continue to keep his name and legacy alive," Henry said. "It's important that the Pace community/staff teach the students about DJ. He gave so much of himself to that school and I'd hate to have him be forgotten."

Previous volunteer efforts by Alpha Chi Ro included helping benefit Blythedale Children's Hospital in Valhalla and the children at JCCA.

Joachim said devising this summer's fundraising for the fund helped him and other fraternity members accomplish something constructive during a difficult period with the pandemic and the social justice protests.

"During that time, I was like in a completely, completely different zone," he said. "It was a very depressing time. With the quarantine as a backdrop of things, we were already stuck inside. It's a lot for us to take. It definitely gives people time to self-reflect and see things for what they are."

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Pace Athletes March for Racial Justice and Remember DJ Henry

By Martin Wilbur

About 200 Pace University student-athletes marched from the Pleasantville campus to the Thornwood Town Center Sunday afternoon, calling for racial justice and an end to police brutality against people of color.

Holding signs and chanting slogans, the diverse group of athletes ended the walk with a rally where Danroy (DJ) Henry, a Black 20-year-old Pace student and a member of the school's football team, was shot and killed by a Pleasantville police officer nearly 10 years ago.

Carlton Aiken, quarterback for the Pace University football team, said the captains of all of the school's sports teams collectively agreed not to practice last Thursday, the day after six NBA teams and several Major League Baseball teams decided against playing following the shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisc.

"We sat out of practice, so we didn't want to sit by and do nothing, we wanted to be seen and heard and what better way to be seen and heard than walking to where a tragic event had happened to someone on our campus and one of our fellow athletes," Aiken said.

Several students said that

since the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May and last week's incident involving Blake, an increasing number of Pace students have become increasingly aware of what happened to Henry in the early morning hours of Oct. 17, 2010.

"I know that some people know the basics of the story but they don't know the details and they don't know all the ins and outs," said Blair Wynn, a 2015 Pace graduate and a current assistant football coach. "A lot of stuff is not discussed as it should be, as it needs to be, if you ask me."

Henry was behind the wheel of a car parked in the fire lane next to the curb with two friends, out celebrating after a game with teammates. Meanwhile, a fight had broken out outside the old Finnegan's Bar & Grill in the Town Center. A Mount Pleasant police officer asked that Henry move his car, and when he did Pleasantville Police Officer Aaron Hess walked in front of the vehicle and shot through the windshield. Hess was then propelled onto the hood of the car. Henry who died a short while later.

A grand jury failed to indict Hess several months later. Henry's parents filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the officer and the

Village of Pleasantville, settling in 2016 for about \$6 million.

Some of the marchers also called for authorities to reopen the case in hopes of investigating and trying Hess for Henry's death. Earlier this summer a change.org petition was launched with a goal of collecting 500,000 signatures. As of Sunday, more than 352,000 names are on the petition.

Nadia Vestman, who graduated from Pace last spring, was one of those who wants the matter re-examined.

"There's a lot of people that still haven't gotten justice," Vestman said. "No matter how many signatures we get it's up to the politicians of this country to actually bring justice to the officer that did the killing of these innocent people, and as much as we can sign these signatures, we need the support from our local politicians, national politicians, and this is just a start."

Dyson Frank, a freshman and a member of the men's basketball team, said he was pleased the walk served multiple purposes.

"We did this in memory of (Henry), but we also do it to support the Black community and all community impacted by police brutality," Frank said.

In addition to alumni, the



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

The lead group of Pace students embark on a two-mile march from the campus on Sunday to the Thornwood Town Center, where Danroy (DJ) Henry was shot by a Pleasantville police officer almost 10 years ago.

marchers were joined by a few local community members who showed their support. Along the roughly two-mile walk on the sidewalks from the campus to the Town Center, which was done in separate groups of about 25 people, Pleasantville and Mount Pleasant police officers were stationed at various points to make sure there was no trouble along the way.

In the weeks leading up to the anniversary of Henry's death, there will be more events, and not

just protests, said Joey Manforte, a Pace men's lacrosse player.

"We're ready to do some fundraisers to donate to different organizations to help the families that may have been in loss or in pain or in suffering, things that have been going on as well as spreading awareness," Manforte said. "We're never doing too much to get the word out. We can change one mind at a time, like as you see this movement going on."



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P'ville School Officials Advocate for Child Care Funding Help

By Abby Luby

With about 500 families that have children under 12 years old, the Pleasantville School District is among the districts strongly advocating for increased child care funding from the state and federal governments.

At its meeting last Tuesday, the Board of Education announced steps that are being taken to help connect parents with reliable and affordable child care resources. The board also appealed to state and federal officials to release funds already earmarked for child care.

Board member Jill Grossman initiated the outreach by meeting with Kathy Halas,

executive director of the Child Care Council of Westchester. That outreach resulted in learning about specific policy issues and the presentation of a webinar for parents last Wednesday hosted by the council.

The webinar discussed free services to help working parents find safe and affordable child care in Westchester, while also addressing other issues. The tape version of the webinar will be shared by the district to the public as soon as possible.

Advocacy to help parents and child care businesses is among the board's highest priorities. The federally sponsored CARES Act, passed by Congress in March, provided

\$162 million in child care funding to New York State; \$70 million of that funding has yet to be allocated.

Last week the board was also in the process of completing letters to state and federal officials asking for much-needed funds to help parents by supporting child care programs. The letters are being sent to Gov. Andrew Cuomo, state Sen. Peter Harchham (D-Lewisboro), Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti (D-Pleasantville) and Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D-Yonkers). Among other requests, Grossman said the board will ask the state to release the remaining \$70 million in CARES money.

"The letter also calls for increasing child care tax credits for families and to adjust the income threshold so more families can qualify for the tax credits because the threshold is so low," she said.

Currently a family of three living in Westchester making more than \$44,000 fails to qualify for child care tax credits, according to the Child Care Council of Westchester.

"Making \$44,000 is below poverty level," said board Vice President Emily Rubin Persons. "With this whole pandemic and everyone working from home and all these crazy things going on in our lives, it is clear that child care is so pivotally important. That's why it is important schools reopen. But for people who have children younger than kindergarten or for people who work longer hours, child care is especially important, and it's been ignored."

In July, the House of Representatives passed two bills providing more than \$60 billion in

direct funding for the child-care industry. One bill, the Child Care is Essential Act, created a \$50 billion fund to provide grants to help pay for personnel, sanitation, training and other costs associated with reopening and running a child care facility during the pandemic.

Most recently, Senate Republicans included a provision in their coronavirus relief bill allocating \$15 billion for child care providers and grants to help child care centers reopen and follow health and safety guidelines. But no action is expected until the Senate returns to Washington after Labor Day.

The board's letter to the federal government is addressed to President Donald Trump, U.S. senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand and Rep. Nita Lowey. It stresses the importance of including the Child Care is Essential Act in the next stimulus bill that would support child care businesses across the country.

The draft letters have been shared with other school districts and the Child Care Council of Westchester for additional input.

"We want them to sign on or do something similar," Grossman said.

The board is expected to formally approve both letters at its meeting on Tuesday. Once approved, links to the letters will be on the board's advocacy page.

Pleasantville Superintendent of Schools Mary Fox-Alter thanked Grossman.

"I was telling my colleagues that my board was out there pushing this important issue," Fox-Alter said. "They were super excited to join in."

Educators, Local Residents Honored for Leukemia Society Fundraising

Two public school teachers are the winners of this year's Man & Woman of the Year competition for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's (LLS) Connecticut Westchester Hudson Valley chapter.

Robert Bergmann of Briarcliff Manor and Christine Causa of White Plains raised \$38,703 and \$28,315, respectively, during a 10-week fundraising campaign to support LLS' goal of finding cures for blood cancers and ensuring that patients have access to lifesaving treatments. Bergmann is a third-grade teacher in the New York City public school system. Causa is an elementary school teacher in the White Plains School District.

In a campaign that was impacted by COVID-19, the winners were among only three candidates who were able to participate and collectively raise nearly \$168,000 to help fund the groundbreaking research that is pioneering many of today's most innovative approaches to fighting cancer. The awards were announced at a virtual Grand Finale Gala event on July 30.

Man & Woman of the Year is a spirited fundraising competition in which community-minded individuals agree to become candidates and form campaign teams to raise as much money as possible to help people with blood cancer.

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Serratore Mounts Challenge for W'chester Democratic Committee Chair

By Martin Wilbur

For the first time in 16 years there is a contest to lead the Westchester Democratic Committee.

Mount Kisco Democratic Chairman William Serratore is looking to unseat longtime county party chair Reginald LaFayette in the Sept. 17 election at the party's convention. Also, on the ballot is veteran Greenburgh Democratic Chair Suzanne Berger.

Serratore, 56, said after being appointed the county committee's executive director in July 2019, he has traveled the county and senses that Democrats are clamoring for change – including in their party's

leadership.

"I think what we heard very loud and clear was that the electorate is looking for new faces, new blood, new messaging and for change," said Serratore, a 27-year Mount Kisco resident who owns an energy supply company.

He said he plans to have the committee more accurately reflect the population of Westchester racially, geographically and through sexual orientation. While Serratore is still putting together his ticket of 12 vice chairs, a second chair, a secretary/treasurer and executive director, he has named Bedford Councilwoman MaryAnn Carr to be one of his vice chairs if elected. His slate of vice chairs will be comprised of six men and



Mount Kisco Democratic Committee Chairman William Serratore is taking on longtime County Chair Reginald LaFayette for the post on Sept. 17. Greenburgh's Suzanne Berger is also in contention.

Sen. Peter Harckham, who is facing a strong challenge from former county executive Rob Astorino.

"My sole goal, here, and always has been, I'm committed to the Democratic Party for purposes of principles and values and electing folks that represent those principles and values," he said.

Attempts to reach LaFayette and Berger last week were unsuccessful. LaFayette, of Mount Vernon, has been chair of the county Democratic Committee for the past 16 years and has never faced a challenge for his post in any of his previous re-election bids.

The roughly 1,900 Democratic district leaders decide who becomes the next chair.

Galef to Hold Virtual Town Hall on Election Law This Thursday Evening

This Thursday, Sept. 3, Assemblywoman Sandy Galef (D-Ossining) will be hosting a virtual town hall on the topic of election law to address questions, concerns and ideas related to voting in the 2020 general election.

Galef's guests will include Westchester County Legislator Catherine Borgia (D-Ossining), Brianna Cea, senior researcher at the Brennan Center for Justice, and Jarret Berg, a New York attorney and voting rights advocate.

"I am looking forward to this discussion on election law as we approach the 2020 General Election in November," Galef said. "The pandemic has presented challenges related to voting, and it is important that my constituency is informed on how to vote in a safe and secure way."

To obtain the Zoom attendance information for the meeting, call Galef's district office at 914-941-1111 or e-mail galefs@nyassembly.gov.

six women.

Serratore said along with diversity, the county Democratic Committee must do a better job communicating with the smaller committees around Westchester and to coordinate a strategy with the local parties to hold onto seats that may be vulnerable and to identify possible pickups at every level of government by locating and nominating strong candidates.

For this fall, the seat that Serratore would focus on would be the 40th state Senate District matchup of Democratic incumbent

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Letters to the Editor

Failure of Officials to Address Hateful Act is a Stain on Putnam County

I am writing today to express my deep sadness and shame. As a lifelong resident of Putnam County, I have experienced so many wonderful things. I am proud to be a resident of the Town of Southeast and a graduate of Brewster High School.

However, today I have a very heavy heart. A week ago Saturday, at a peaceful demonstration to support Black Live Matter and other social justice issues, a man driving a truck covered in obscenities, ones I refuse to repeat here, obstructed traffic and threatened the demonstrators, most of whom are local students. It was blatant, it was hateful, and yet many of our leaders remain silent. Even more sadly, only weeks ago our county legislator

voted against creating a Human Rights Commission in our county.

I love this county but I refuse to be blinded to the half-hearted and anemic response to this hateful act by Assemblyman Kevin Byrne. He has spent more time defending his non-response on Facebook than making a substantive statement against this act of hateful aggression. If we can't as a county come together and agree that this cannot and will not stand in Putnam, what does that say about us? What does that say to our residents – all our residents? We need to show the people of Putnam that everyone is welcome here, you are safe here and hate has no place here. As a community we will be judged by how we

treat all our people.

Finally, I want to say there have been a few bright spots. State Sen. Peter Harckham put out an immediate response condemning this hateful act, and Stephanie Keegan, who is a candidate for Assembly, was at the demonstration, and has been a voice of hope, unity and leadership. Remember people like them in November. The people we elect represent all of us, and we should hope in the face of hate those elected officials would stand up for what is right. It is the very least they can do.

Zach Disador
Southeast

More Middle-Class Housing is Needed for Peekskill

It's difficult to find a reasonably-priced apartment in Peekskill if you make \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year. That isn't right. A healthy mix of housing is critical for Peekskill to thrive and remain equitable.

We're at risk of only having housing on each end of the price spectrum. Peekskill has built low-income housing over the years, and now developers are building market-rate apartments primarily aimed at those making over \$100,000. That leaves few options for people who don't qualify for low-income units but can't afford to pay \$30,000 a year in "market" rents.

Right now, the mayor and Common Council have a chance to address that – but are coming up short.

A developer wants to build 78 units on Central Avenue featuring high rents and

luxury amenities but needs to buy public land to move forward. Because of this leverage, the council has a rare chance to create dozens of reduced-rent units for those earning roughly \$45,000 to \$75,000, the exact housing that's in short supply.

The developer has offered a plan with a healthy mix of prices, including apartments for the working and middle class. This would mean that more teachers, health care workers, hospitality staff and many others who give so much to Peekskill could actually afford to live here.

Unfortunately, the council insists on backing an option that includes just eight units with reduced, reasonable rents. The remaining units would be market rate, including \$2,700 one-bedrooms and \$3,200 two-bedrooms, way out of reach for most

families. There is nothing stopping the Common Council from supporting the middle class, other than a desire to attract more people making six figures.

Instead of looking at this as a chance to add market-rate units, the council needs to see this as a rare chance to create reasonably-priced housing. The city doesn't usually have leverage and it would be a shame to miss this opportunity.

I urge the mayor and council to choose the mixed-income option and ensure more housing for the middle class before selling public land to a private developer.

Conor Greene
Peekskill

Letter to Editor Attempted to Justify White Supremacy, Racism

As a lifelong Pleasantville resident and a reader of The Examiner, I was horrified to read a racist letter to the editor published on Aug. 18 ("Black Lives Matter Practices Violence, Revenge, Not Racial Harmony").

The author referred to their "amusement" at the burning of a Black Lives Matter banner on Quaker Road in Chappaqua. There is nothing remotely amusing about torching a message that expresses the inherent value of our Black neighbors and community members. Fire has long been a symbol and tool of white supremacist agendas. Overseas, Nazis wielded torches, burning buildings and symbols of Jewish life. Closer to home, this fire evokes the torches, fire bombs

and lynchings of the KKK.

In the months following George Floyd's death, it's estimated that between 15 million and 30 million people have participated in demonstrations to demand change. In Pleasantville, a group of high school students organized a stunning call to action and celebration of Black life.

Since Jacob Blake was shot seven times by police officers, the sports world has taken a unified stand like nothing we've ever seen before. Book groups, community action coalitions, school curriculum overhauls and workplace policy changes have swept through the country. A few weeks ago, a 12-year-old Quaker from our community joined the calls for

change and painted a banner to express neighborly goodwill and a message of political solidarity.

The wheels are in motion. In Westchester's small, predominantly white communities, it's our job to make sure our Black neighbors are safe, valued and welcome. Under no circumstances can we condone the hate-filled burning of a 12-year-old's expression of solidarity and care. Under no circumstances should The Examiner publish an ill-informed, racist justification of white violence.

Charlotte Hill
Pleasantville

Examiner Exercised Poor Judgment in Printing Letter With Hateful Ideas

I am writing to express my disappointment in the recent letter to the editor from Richard Vastola, which was published by The Examiner regarding the Black Lives Matter movement. This letter exhibited extreme fragility and insensitivity, and undermines the progress

Pleasantville continues to attempt to make as a community. It also contained falsehoods such as asserting that black struggles are self-inflicted.

It is my view that The Examiner plays a vital role in the spread of ideas within our community and should hold itself to a

higher standard – one that does not include fragile and hateful ideas.

Thank you for your time.

Owen McAndrew
Pleasantville

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Guest Column

It's Imperative for New York State to Invest in Home Health Care Workers

By Geri Pinciario Mariano

On July 29, Hand in Hand, a domestic employers network, and the CUNY Graduate Center released "Essential but Undervalued: Understanding the Home Care Workforce Shortage in the Hudson Valley." A number of Hudson Valley elected officials participated in the virtual press conference.

Sadly, the COVID-19 pandemic underscores the need for home care workers as deaths in New York nursing homes reached unfathomable numbers. And for all those who died in nursing homes, most died alone with no one by their side.

With state legislators holding hearings in the Senate and Assembly about these nursing home deaths, the time is now to learn what went wrong and what can be done better in the future. Attention must be paid to the need for home care workers for the elderly and those with disabilities wishing to live in their homes in their communities.

I am one of the latter, a 52-year-old woman with congenital disabilities. Though given up by biological parents and left at White Plains Hospital in 1967, Westchester County Department of Social Service workers decided I should not be fated to live my life in an institution. A family was found and I grew up in and have remained a lifelong resident of the county, living in the Town of North Castle since 1972. Over the past 10 years and several surgeries gone awry, my days of independent living are long gone. I now receive home care assistance seven days a week.

During this pandemic, especially the early weeks and most recently the power outage lasting days from Tropical Storm Isaias, my aides were heroic, showing up for every shift, making sure my needs were taken care of. Personally, I cannot imagine having been anywhere else than in the safety of my own home.

Unfortunately, though, "my girls" and all

home care workers are woefully underpaid with little to no benefits. With the looming state income shortfalls resulting from the economic shutdown, Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Programs (CDPAPs) are in the crosshairs of Gov. Cuomo's desired Medicaid cuts.

With the devastating loss of life in nursing homes, these home care workers are more than essential; they are life savers for countless aging or disabled or immunocompromised New Yorkers desperate to stay out of facilities.

Here in the Hudson Valley, the average home care worker makes just \$18,500 a year – while the cost of living hovers around \$100,000. No surprise, then, that 24 percent of home care workers surveyed live in poverty, and 39 percent rely on Medicaid themselves. Every year, over 5,100 workers leave the occupation.

As New York's baby boomers age, the job openings in care work keep multiplying

– with no one to fill them. In the Hudson Valley, this sector will experience more growth than any other occupation by 2026.

The state must look to invest in the home care sector and these essential workers, extending fair pay and benefits, protecting key sources of state funding for home care companies and launching innovative pilot projects through the proposed Home Care Jobs Innovation Fund.

Right now, investing in home care work is a moral obligation – to the workers who do the caring and those they care for. Please call your state senator and Assembly representative and urge them to take on this issue. All of us, whether our loved ones or ourselves, have a stake in this life-and-death matter.

Armonk resident Geri Pinciario Mariano is an inspirational speaker who raises awareness of and advocates for rights of people with disabilities.

Letters to the Editor

Too Many Unanswered Question to Pursue New Somers Sewer District

Shame on our Somers Town Board. It was abundantly clear that they spent the last five months planning to push through the sewer district in Shenorock and Lake Lincolndale during a pandemic.

On Aug. 20, they held a public hearing without notifying us. To watch, visit www.SomersSewers.com/meetings, an informational website created by a coalition of organized residents). This is the meeting you want to watch!

There has been a lack of proper notification; all public hearings require publication in a paper at least 72 hours prior to the hearing. They did not do this. They hid behind the governor's mandate limiting public gatherings to 50 people. (We found out this was not true, as an essential meeting there was no mandate as long as

there was enough open space to socially distance.) They turned taxpayers away when the 50-person limit was reached. Why hold the meeting?

They limited public comment and questions. There has never been a time limit at public hearings. Our questions were not answered at the end of the public comment and we had no opportunity to have a dialogue. Some of the questions asked were: If we refuse to give them permission for an easement what happens? Will they claim eminent domain on our property? Why isn't this an optional hookup since everyone won't benefit because a lot of people have spent the money to repair their septic systems? Why aren't they considering an area with the homes just around the lake like they wanted to do in

2015? It should be done one phase at a time, not all lumped together.

The map, plan and report, as currently worded, fails to guarantee that the town will not continue on with this project without funding. They say they won't, and who believes that? Our costs can double very easily and they do not need to go back to the comptroller's office for approval once the district is created.

They hired a PR firm with our money to sell a project and made poster boards that were inaccurate and got their information from the engineer who can't seem to get a map, plan and report correct.

Residents are responsible for eight things, not three like they were originally told. The new sewer tax will be on your property tax bill, so it is a new tax. They

cannot guarantee no new assessments will be done. Grinder pumps will need to be installed on 25 percent of properties. If you lose electricity, they say they would bring a generator to your house to pump out your holding tank. This was laughable.

The lack of collaboration and transparency by the board is disheartening. None of the board members live in these neighborhoods and their taxes aren't getting raised.

We encourage everyone to follow the money. The engineer, who is a Somers resident and has family in our lake community, is going to benefit by pushing this project because he plans on making \$9 million on this \$62 million project.

**Linda Luciano
Shenorock**

Ongoing Improvements Are Much Safer Than Secure Boxes for Ballots

There have been suggestions to have "secure boxes" around the county for people to deposit ballots without going to either the local post office or to an in-person voting site. There are difficulties with this idea.

Any sort of unsupervised casting of ballots lends itself to ballot harvesting and other conditions that put the chain of custody of a ballot into doubt. Moreover, libraries in many areas have had to shut their overnight slots for receiving books and other media due to various kinds of malicious mischief. It does not take too much imagination to see such ballot boxes being the target for similar misbehavior.

We also have to remember that the

"Australian ballot" was adopted in New York State so that there is a private space for a person to complete a ballot – out of the sight of an employer, a religious figure, a spouse, a union official or an officious activist who might want to intimidate someone into a vote not truly of their own choice.

Finally, we should not put in place untried procedures at the last minute before a presidential election – but there are useful adaptations that can be made for current conditions.

Having worked for years as an election inspector, I am impressed with the system of bipartisan panels at in-person voting sites in New York State. We come

together in a spirit of what one might call "coopetition." The inspector panels work well together in part because we know no bad things will happen with people in the room representing different political sides.

I am also happy that starting with this year's primary, in place of the unwieldy poll roster books, electronic tablets are now being used that contain the county's voter information (including each voter's original signature) and is now being used to receive each voter's signature. Digitizing the poll roster in this way makes possible an adaptation based on the current election law provision for poll sites at congregate care facilities like nursing homes.

This year, a bipartisan pair of inspectors

should be sent to the shut-in voters in a given election district (of about 1,000 voters) with the secure pouch that is currently used to receive absentee ballots at in-person voting sites. The inspectors would have with them the poll roster iPad that the voter would sign with a sanitized stylus. The voter puts the completed ballot into the pouch – so no one other than the voter handles it. The inspectors then would bring the pouch with the ballots to the bipartisan county Board of Elections to maintain the chain of custody.

**Ed Unneland
Pleasantville**

Letters to the Editor

Publishing Certain Letters Leads to Violence, Revenge, Not Racial Harmony

I just read, with a huge degree of sadness and a large sense of dismay, the divisive letter to the editor ("Black Lives Matter Practices Violence, Revenge, Not Racial Harmony," August 18-24), a reaction to your article about the burning of the Quaker Meeting House BLM banner.

I understand "old-fashioned" people exist and that they do not always understand current movements or embrace growth. But that is not the reason I write.

What I have issue with is The Examiner publishing the letter. In my opinion, by

promoting this kind of negativity you gave this man a pat on the back, an endorsement of sorts. Free speech is one thing; validating a letter that belittles a movement and questions history is dangerous.

The human brain is not fully developed until around the age of 25. The recent murder of two people peacefully expressing themselves by a 17-year-old young man is proof of that. The more we publish, televise and promote inflammatory thoughts like "some of the wrongs for which they seek retribution are real, but others are self-

inflicted, imaginary, or ancient history," the more these people will do things like burn signs, paint hateful symbols and feel empowered to harm others.

This is a small town. How do you think people of color feel reading that letter? I ask you, was slavery self-inflicted or did the slaves imagine it? If that is not what the writer meant, what did he mean? Too much written is free for very dangerous interpretation.

So, who is The Examiner? Should you publish divisive letters to get a response, to

stir the pot, to wave your "free speech no matter how dangerous" flag? Can you sleep at night knowing you have caused more unrest in the world? Are you OK knowing people of color, already in the minority here, are experiencing more fear because of you? I really hope the answer to all of those questions is no. Maybe we could all work together to create a community where people of all backgrounds feel safe.

Kat Nemec
Pleasantville

Astorino is the Candidate With the Real Ties to New York City Corruption

In every election since Greg Ball, Republican candidates sound the alarm that New York City will take over the Hudson Valley. Now Rob Astorino's supporters are pointing to state Sen. Pete Harckham as the latest threat. It's time to just say enough with the scare tactics. So here is something to consider.

On July 26, 2016, the New York Post reported that U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara's "corruption probe into the dealings of two shady businessmen," Jona Rechnitz and Jeremy Reichberg, who have been linked to the New York City pay-to-play scandals, led to the offices of Astorino, then the Westchester County executive, being subpoenaed and the subject of an FBI investigation.

On Oct. 18, 2019, LoHud reported that "Rechnitz, who took the stand in three high profile New York City trials, said he cut a check in 2013 for \$5,790 to cover most of the cost of a Rolex Submariner watch for former County Executive Rob Astorino."

Rechnitz also testified that he and

Reichberg donated \$15,000 to Astorino's re-election campaign. In a quid pro quo Astorino repaid them by getting them county police chaplain positions. Surprise, neither was a clergy member. The positions got them parking placards.

The famous Astorino Rolex was to be sold, with the proceeds absorbed into the Department of Justice's Asset Forfeiture Fund. So, clearly, Astorino is the one linked to shady New York City politics, while Pete Harckham is linked to Hudson Valley values.

Harckham's Hudson Valley values includes legislation in support of women's health, the environment, Indian Point workers and people with substance abuse disorder. His leadership has resulted in an increase in school aid of \$1 billion, a permanent 2 percent property tax cap, millions for clean water and extra funding for both veterans' programs and first responders.

Joyce Pear
Yorktown

Letter Demonstrated Egregious Lack of Knowledge on Black Lives Matter

As a reader of The Examiner and a resident of Pleasantville for 26 years, I feel compelled to respond to the letter to the editor "Black Lives Matter Practices Violence, Revenge, Not Racial Harmony" in the Aug. 18-24 issue.

I take offense to its overall sentiment, and specifically wish to comment on particular statements which I find most egregious. First, the image of the black fist raised is not one of "threatening violence." This is a fist raised symbolizing unity and power and the urgency to fight back against racial discrimination and inequity.

Injuries suffered by Black Americans described as "sometimes real but others are self-inflicted, imaginary or ancient history" is not based in fact and would be difficult to accept for anyone knowledgeable about the history of our country and the impact of slavery and

systemic racism from its inception.

I can understand why The Examiner might print such a letter – giving voice to those who choose to express their opinion. However, I know that this is not the opinion of many in our community. I am not one to write letters to the editor but I hope that letters in response will be published as I am sure there will be many.

This is a time when we hope to see positive change in our community and our country. Local publications like The Examiner have an opportunity to create a platform for a more respectful, thoughtful and relevant exchange of ideas toward that positive change. I hope that future publications will be in line with that purpose.

Ele Weinstein, MD
Pleasantville

Astorino is the Best to Lead 40th District, State Forward

In this current climate, New York needs Rob Astorino more than ever. New York desperately needs a voice in the state Senate to act on repealing the dangerous cashless bail law and improving police practices rather than defunding the police. It's obvious what a disaster that legislation has wrought, in New York City especially.

As county executive, Rob helped create 44,000 jobs and held the line on spending, while at the same time managed to preserve essential services, make new investments in child care, county parks and roads and infrastructure. To close the massive budget deficit, Rob first looked to cut spending and not raise taxes. He's ready to do the same job for New York!

By working to cut excessive and unnecessary taxes, Rob hopes to reduce

soaring property taxes and eliminate job-killing regulations. He's behind safely opening our schools in September and putting parents and teachers in charge of that decision and not politicians. Distance learning was a stop-gap measure, and we need to get our children back to the classroom and give them every advantage that in-person learning and interaction offers.

Rob Astorino is who we need to change the direction New York is going in right now, and it's up to the voters to bring about this change. His campaign motto says it all: We need to Fix Albany & Rebuild New York.

Marielaina Phelan
Yorktown Heights

Unsubstantiated Claims About Harckham's Record is Fearmongering

Regarding the letter to the editor "Harckham's Policies are Causing Crime to Explode" (August 18-24), state Sen. Pete Harckham's opponent is engaging in fearmongering and making unsubstantiated claims that Sen. Harckham has somehow hindered law enforcement and contributed to an unidentified rise in crime in the county.

Unfortunately, some of his supporters are taking this disinformation at face value. There hasn't been an overall increase in crime across the 40th Senate District because of bail reform. In fact, public safety is one of Sen. Harckham's top priorities. Sen. Harckham has been and continues to work closely with Westchester police chiefs and the Westchester Police Benevolent Association on various issues

and has awarded more than \$500,000 in law enforcement and public safety grants to municipalities and law enforcement agencies across the district. Next year, one of his top priorities will be to ensure police officers receive funding for continued training on racial issues.

It's important to support law enforcement and also increase public trust among all community members. Sen. Harckham is working diligently to strengthen the relationships our law enforcement professionals have with the people they serve in order to keep our neighborhoods respectful and safe for everyone.

Justin White
Mount Kisco

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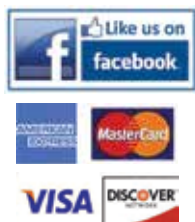
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Obituaries

James Kopfensteiner

James Kopfensteiner, a Cortlandt resident, died Aug. 20. He was 80.

Kopfensteiner, better known as Big Jim or Mr. Kopf, was born Feb. 17, 1940, in Bath, Pa.

He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in May 1961 and was honorably discharged in May 1967.

Jim married Judith Leggiro May 9, 1964, and owned a family painting and general contracting business.

Big Jim was kind, caring, a loving husband, awesome daddy, grandfather and great-grandfather. He gave of himself



James Kopfensteiner

unconditionally and always put his family first.

Big Jim was an avid sports lover. He loved to watch, coach and instruct his children and grandchildren. He also loved umpiring collegiate softball and officiating basketball.

Kopfensteiner is survived by his loving wife; children Cindy (Mike), Debbie (Dave) and Christine; seven grandchildren, Mikey, Jamie, Kayla, Danielle, Joe-Joe, Brianna and Stephanie; and one great-grandchild, Laila.

Frances Jensen

Frances Oliva Jensen, a Mohegan Lake resident, died Aug. 21. She was 82.

Jensen was born in the Bronx on Apr. 13, 1938, to Rocco and Mary Oliva. She and her husband, Larry, worked side by side to build and grow a family business. In 1957, they opened Jensen Office Supply in Mohegan Lake. In 1995, after 38 years of serving their local community, they retired and closed the business.

Jensen went on to work at Lakeland High School as a teaching assistant where she touched the hearts of many students and colleagues. Some of her students would



Frances Jensen

affectionately call her "Grandma Jensen." She loved gardening, all animals, cooking and sharing new recipes with others. She touched the lives of those around her with genuine love and kindness. Fran will be greatly missed but will live on in the hearts of her family forever.

She is survived by her devoted husband, Larry; loving children Dawn, Larry, Glen and her daughter-in-law, Nicole; her cherished grandchildren, Michael, Evan, Olivia and the most recent addition to her family, her grandson Michael's fiancé, Kate, and her daughter, Mya.

Jagger Diem

Jagger Michael Diem, a resident of Ossining, died suddenly on Aug. 25. He was 18.

Diem was born in New York City on Oct. 30, 2001, and lived in Ossining for the past year. He was a 2019 Fox Lane High School graduate, where he was well loved. He played in rock ensemble and had many friendships from his days at the Boys & Girls Club in Mount Kisco.

He was most proud of working at Atria on the Hudson, an assisted living facility, where he served as essential personnel during the COVID-19 crisis. He would often talk about how he loved the residents, his co-workers and the camaraderie at Atria. He recently stepped in and performed the Heimlich Maneuver on a resident in distress. He couldn't believe he had actually saved someone's life.

Diem will be remembered for his "mile-wide" smile and bright blue eyes that lit up any room he walked

into, his desire to help everyone he encountered, his sparkling, lightning fast wit, sense of humor and warm heart. From a young age he had a reputation as "the baby whisperer" because every small child he encountered was drawn to him.

He had many varied interests and an insatiable thirst for knowledge. He would spend hours researching topics as varied as political history, the future of the planet or how-to videos. He wrote and performed his own rap lyrics and was always finding and sharing new beats.

Jagger was most proud of his sisters, Zuri and Nyla Diem, who inspired him. They meant the world to him.

He is survived by his ever-loving parents, Amber Briscoe of Ossining and Paul Diem of Poughkeepsie; stepmother Sabine; beloved sisters Zuri and Nyla; grandparents Linda (Ma'am-a) and Mike (Boppa) Chowske and Kate and Tom Maloney. He was predeceased by his grandfather, Michael "Pop Pop" Diem; uncles Terry Briscoe (Laura), Sean Briscoe (Julie), Michael Chowske, Nicholas

Chowske (Andrea) and Michael Diem (Bess); aunts Amy Anarella, Kathy Purslow (Bob), Mary Diem, Kathy Pecunies, Susan Munson (Mark), Kelli Squicciarini (Nick), Kimmy Dispigna (Frank), Jeanette (Don) White, Pamela (Paul) Davis and Carol Doyle; and cousins Logan, Kristiana, Joel, Asher, Amanda, Dustin, Damon, Allysa, Levi, Luke, Aiden, Noah, Michael, Gregory, Pam, Mark, Tommy, Kristin, Katie, Brandon, Ralph, Brian, Ryan, Jay, Johnny, Greg, Kevin, Nina, Juliette and Francesca.

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Pleasantville Moves Ahead With After-school Program

By Abby Luby

Pleasantville officials determined last week the village would run an outdoor after-school program in September and October after a majority of respondents to a recent survey indicated they need help with child care.

The program, which will feature various activities and sports, is mainly for elementary school students at Bedford Road School.

However, the Village Board postponed making a decision on the popular Panther Club, which is held indoors, because of staffing and custodial expenses. Some parents – about 25 percent of those who responded – expressed concerns regarding health risks and the expense for the Panther Club. Others

mentioned that they needed more extensive after-school arrangements for their children.

“The survey highlights that there are a set of parents who are desperate for significant children care,” Mayor Peter Scherer said. “There seems to also be a set of parents who found another solution or are working at home and looking for some relief and for their kids to have enrichment opportunities.”

The 12-question survey, sent to more than 200 parents of Bedford Road School and Pleasantville Middle School students that are in the village’s Recreation Department database, produced 137 responses, with 60 percent indicating they need after-school care for their children. There was less interest in after-school programs for middle school

students.

“The general interest appears to be about 120 potential sign ups,” said Trustee David Vinjamuri who, along with Pleasantville Superintendent of Recreation & Parks Matt Trainor, spearheaded the survey. “That’s a lot of interest.”

Many respondents were more interested in outdoor, sports or activity-based clubs. Among the desired activities mentioned was a ninja obstacle course, soccer, baseball, softball and basketball.

“We could have drills and activities with an emphasis on fun rather than on competition,” Trainor said of the two-hour program.

The club will have a maximum enrollment of 15 students a day and will be conducted over a six-week session. The projected cost for one day a week is \$125 per student per session.

There are some logistical concerns, including walking students from Bedford Road School to a local field. Most parents indicated that they would want the transportation of children from school to a playing field handled by program staffers.

There are ongoing concerns about whether the village can operate the Panther Club this year. It would be a twice-weekly indoor program open only to students attending Bedford Road School on either Tuesday and Thursday or Wednesday and Friday to mirror the students’ remote learning schedules. The projected cost would be \$400 to \$500 per child per month.

“The plan would be to keep them in the classrooms doing various activities such as arts and crafts or games,” Trainor said.

However, if all of the school’s kindergartners signed up for the Panther Club, Trainor said it would reach the permitted enrollment for the club, particularly if the youngest students were given priority.

Last year monthly fees for the Panther Club ranged from \$218 to \$530 per month.

Factors that figured into the programs’ costs were staffing and custodial fees needed to run both the outdoor program and the club.

“There are additional supplies needed and other fringe costs that would be significant fees,” said Village Administrator Eric Morrissey. “There are a lot of factors going on.”

Trustee Nicole Asquith said she would be concerned about mixing populations of students from the school-assigned cohorts. The village has not received much information on how the school district is isolating cohorts, she said.

It was also unclear if the clubs could use the school’s bathrooms, the basketball court or other facilities.

Children would be required to wear masks for the outdoor program and the Panther Club, if there were to be a Panther Club. Less than 5 percent of surveyed parents said their kids would be unable to wear a mask.

“We do need recreation center employees to remind kids to wear masks,” Trainor said. “We also need to tell our staff soon if we are hiring.”

Scherer said it was clear the village could run the outdoor program.

“It’s the best and most realistic program we have,” he said.

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Feeding Westchester Distributes 27,000 Lbs. of Food at Mt. Kisco Market

By Lindsay Emery

Hundreds of families lined up in Mount Kisco last Thursday to collect more than 27,000 pounds of fresh produce that was distributed, highlighting the growing hunger in communities throughout the county.

Feeding Westchester partnered with Stop & Shop and Neighbors Link for the latest summer fresh market outside Mount Kisco Elementary School as more than 500 families walked or drove up to receive their packages.

"We're doing over two million pounds (of food) a month," said Judy Campisi, interim vice president of development for Feeding Westchester. "In normal times it ranges from 800 (thousand) to a million pounds a month so we're distributing twice as much food since COVID than we have typically done."

Through the five fresh markets across Westchester County, Feeding Westchester has reached more than two-and-a-half times as many households than last year, Campisi said. Last summer, the Elmsford-based organization served clients 20,533 times through the fresh market program; this summer, that number has soared to more than 52,000.

The increased food insecurity prompted Feeding Westchester to reach out to organizations such as Neighbors Link across the county that are in touch with the people they serve in their communities.

Before the pandemic, Neighbors Link,



LINDSAY EMERY PHOTO

Volunteers from Neighbors Link along with Feeding Westchester and Stop & Shop distribute thousands of pounds of food to about 500 families in the community last Thursday outside Mount Kisco Elementary School.

which provides services to the immigrant community in Mount Kisco and elsewhere in Westchester, did not distribute food. But they listened to the concerns of their community over the past few months and responded.

Neighbors Link has distributed food at its center on Saturdays, said Martha Palomino, volunteer coordinator for Neighbors Link.

She said the partnership with Feeding Westchester guaranteed credibility to the people they serve.

"We have been in the community for almost 20 years offering a lot of programming for the integration of immigrants; that is the core of our mission," Palomino said. "And so people recognize us as a productive partner and clients, those we serve, trust us."

In addition to Neighbors Link, Feeding Westchester partnered with Stop & Shop, which donated 10,000 pounds of produce from New York farmers. Some of the produce included was green and yellow squash, green peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, romaine leaf lettuce, corn and peaches.

"As a grocery store that supports many communities across Westchester, we know how important it is that people and families remain fed and being able to offer fresh produce to those who are maybe facing a little bit of food insecurity or are currently dealing with financial troubles, we know that it's really important to be able to give back to the community," said Maura O'Brien, manager of external communications and community relations at Stop & Shop.

Events like the fresh market in Mount Kisco identify the food insecurity that residents are facing within the community that others might not have recognized as a problem before the pandemic.

Neighbors Link volunteer Gary Cohn talked about how the organization's volunteers come out because there is such great need. Some volunteers travel from more than a half-hour because the effort is worth it.

"I think for a lot of people, like the people that drive by, it's taking the blinders off that even in their own community there is significant need," Cohn said.

The Feeding Westchester fresh markets will continue into the fall, but won't be held as frequently during the week, Campisi said.

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SOUP

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ENTREE (Choose One)

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2.5 lbs. Fresh Brisket

ACCOMPANIMENTS (All Included)

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One Upside of a Pandemic: More Romance

The intended headline for this piece contained that short, sweet word that always catches our attention, especially when it involves the foibles of some of our politicians.

But my wife suggested that I not use that word in a headline in a family newspaper, and further, she questioned whether the subject itself was at all suitable.

In my defense, I noted that if it weren't for sex (oops, I mean, romance), none of us would be here. So, I think it's a valid subject to explore as it relates to decorating in a way to encourage or at least support it. And during a pandemic when we are all stuck at home, there certainly is time for it.

As I see it, and as I've read in some of the blogs that have considered the subject, there are certain basic elements in creating a romantic environment for the setting in question – the bedroom. Here's The Home Guru's somewhat censored list.

Privacy. It's important to feel tucked away from other inhabitants of the house, including the four-legged kind, with a good lock on the door. Blinds or window coverings are necessary, especially if your bedroom is on the first floor.

Lighting. Over and above everything else, including a comfortable bed, there should be appropriate lighting – low and soft. That forgives a thousand sins. A New York Times reporter recently interviewed a decorator



By Bill Primavera

who was starting to hoard more flattering incandescent bulbs, feeling that the plug could be pulled at any moment in favor of more efficient, but less flattering florescent or LED lighting. If you don't have one, a dimmer might be installed.

Color. Hues in the room should be warm rather than cool to set the mood. Tones from the red or brown families, even dark chocolate, can make a room's occupants feel completely embraced by their surroundings.

Sound. I have one of those sound-effect machines that produces sounds of nature that lull one to sleep. A better option

may be an iPod with a playlist engineered for romance. Look at what "Bolero" did for Dudley Moore in "10."

A fireplace. Most people would agree that a fireplace is the most romantic feature in any room. But if you don't have one in the bedroom, you might consider the new electric fireplaces that are so convincingly realistic. If it generates true heat, you can lower the temperature in the rest of the house and be cozy just cuddled up in your bedroom.

Warm flooring. If you don't have wall-to-wall carpeting but rather a hardwood floor, it's a good idea to have a fluffy kind of throw rug on either side of the bed so that it's not a cold shock to the feet when settling in with someone else's feet.



The bed. I suggest that the most romantic bed is the old-fashioned canopy type or any other design that involves draping from the ceiling. In previous centuries, bed draping provided protection from the cold, but it now suggests privacy on all sides. And here's a tip about beds purchased for romance: Never buy one with a footboard. It can prove inhibiting, even painful, especially for taller people. Abraham Lincoln had to sleep diagonally in his bed.

If the mattress is too firm, it can be murder on the back, and it's hard to feel amorous when lying on a slab. But one that's too soft presents other problems. To the rescue are the new mattresses that can be adjusted for firmness, even providing different settings for each side of the bed.

Appliances. There might be a small refrigerator for refreshments so that the flow of the evening won't be interrupted by a trip to the kitchen. I remember reading that when Barbara Streisand was married to Elliott Gould, they kept a refrigerator as an

end table so that she could enjoy coffee ice cream in bed.

Ashtray? As an afterthought, if this were written 50 years ago, I would have suggested having a cigarette box, lighter and ash tray on an end table because of the expectation at that time of what people many wanted afterwards. But most of us have given that up – the smoking that is. A smoking-days acquisition that my wife and I laugh about now was an ashtray with a bean bag bottom that could sit level on my chest.

No matter the nature of your relationship, or even if you choose the single life, a quiet, romantic refuge for waking up or retiring can set the mood for anything that comes in between.

Bill Primavera, while a writer and editor, is also 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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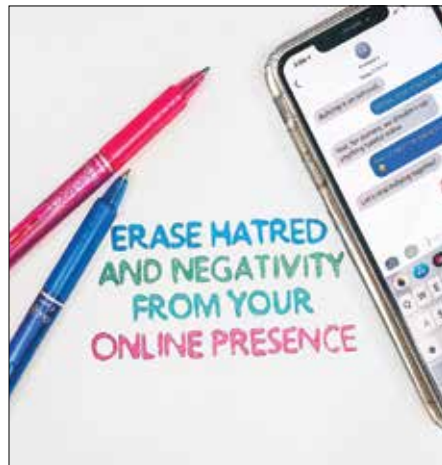
Help Erase Bullying This School Year

This year's back-to-school season may look different, but no matter what learning environment kids find themselves in this fall, bullying is a real cause for concern.

One in five youngsters 12 to 18 years old has encountered bullying, according to StopBullying.gov. It can happen in person, online or by text. In an effort to combat the problem, Pilot Pen launched the Erase Bullying for Good campaign in 2015 to help support bullying prevention programs in schools nationwide.

For a smooth start to the school year, here are back-to-school tips for facing the issue.

- Sometimes children hesitate to share negative situations they're encountering. That doesn't mean they aren't showing signs that something is wrong. Pay attention to sudden changes in mood, sleep patterns, study habits or other signs of stress. Let children know that if they're bullied or witness bullying, it's okay to come to you or another trusted adult, like a teacher, counselor or coach. A strong trust network helps kids feel safe and empowered.
- If your child is being bullied, reassure them that they're not alone and have done nothing wrong. Let them know you'll work through this together. Follow up with school officials to ensure the negative behavior is being addressed, especially if your child is being physically bullied or feels like



they're in danger.

- The presence of digital devices and broad reach of social media means more avenues for bullies to reach their targets. Maintain an open dialogue with your child regarding online activity, and don't be shy about keeping an eye on profiles and posts.
- Being the target of bullying can feel isolating and overwhelming. If your child witnesses bullying, encourage them to be an "upstander," not just a bystander. This involves being an ally who stands up to bullies, and it can be as simple as seeking help from an adult, or as ambitious as starting an anti-bullying program at school.
- It can be disheartening to learn that your own child has engaged in bullying.

Remember, bullying is a behavior, and behaviors can be changed. Help your child identify underlying feelings that may be causing them to act out in this way and encourage them to find positive outlets such as sports, art or journaling.

- It's important for children to understand that the goal of bullying is to make the victim feel scared or powerless. Parents can equip children with the knowledge, resources and confidence they need to feel empowered in the face of bullying, as well as with tools that align with this cause.

By the end of 2020, the Erase Bullying for Good campaign, through purchases of Pilot's FriXion Erasable pens, will have contributed more than \$450,000 to organizations committed to bringing bullying prevention and education programs to U.S. schools.

Bullying is all too common. However, parents can play an active role in helping put a stop to it this back-to-school season and beyond.

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A Wide Selection of Culinary Choices for Diners to Indulge

By Morris Gut

As part of our local brewery bounce, we were anxious to visit Allen Wallace's Soul Brewing Company on Wheeler Avenue in Pleasantville. They originally opened in mid-March, the day before the COVID-19 lockdown began to take effect in Westchester. Bad timing, to say the least.

Soul Brewing currently has outdoor tables on Wheeler Avenue and there is distanced seating inside. It was a warm afternoon for our visit, so we took a table inside. Our amiable hostess, Montana, helped us select two nice IPAs: El Tropicale

and Truth Serum. A bag of BjornQorn was a good spicy nibble. There is a short list of finger foods available. If you want to visit, they are returning to their normal hours.

As an aside, while we were there my facemask came apart. Montana, our barkeeper, noticed and offered me another from a box she had behind the bar. That was very nice.

Soul Brewing Company is located at 41 Wheeler Ave. in Pleasantville. It's open Wednesday and Thursday from 4 to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 12 to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 12 to 6 p.m. There are growlers for take-home. Info: 914-800-7685 or visit www.soulbrewingco.com.

Tasty Meal at Freebird

Stopped in for a bite at Freebird Kitchen and Bar after taking in some brews at Wolf & Warrior Brewing Company. Freebird was serving a limited menu but there were enough choices to keep it appetizing. We ordered a meaty half-rack of baby back ribs and a Cobb salad, both reasonably priced. I am happy to report both dishes were quite satisfying, with ample portions suitable for sharing.

Freebird has made changes to the bar and dining room due to COVID-19. There is seating outdoors and their rooftop is open as well.

Freebird Kitchen and Bar is located at 161 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Open daily. Take-out available. Info: 914-607-2476 or visit www.freebirdkitchenandbar.com.

Return to the Beehive

The Beehive Restaurant has been buzzing in Armonk for 15 years for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Its comforting combination of eclectic specialties sprinkled with a tasty Greek influence keep patrons coming to this stretch on Old Route 22. It is a diner-esque experience, in a way.

We were coming back from a drive up north and hungry, so we decided to stop in. Had not visited in a long time. Scored a table indoors on a balmy evening, and they were distanced properly. There is outdoor seating under a tent and on the patio. Our waitress brought us our cocktails while we perused the menu. The place was bustling



Armonk's popular Beehive Restaurant.

with families at 6 p.m.

My companion ordered Greek Spanakopita with fresh dill, spinach and feta cheese wrapped in country phyllo. It was listed as an appetizer, but she requested it as a main course. For me, the Turkey Chop Cobb Salad caught my eye. It arrived loaded with cubed roast turkey, avocado, egg, bacon, tomato and a large helping of creamy Ranch dressing on the side. It was satisfying after having

continued on next page

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A Wide Selection of Culinary Choices for Diners to Indulge

continued from previous page

been on the hunt for a good Cobb salad for a while. As busy as it was, our waitress kept a fine eye on our table. Both dishes turned out to be very good.

The Beehive is located at 30 Old Route 22 in Armonk. Take out and curbside pick-up available. Open daily. Info: 914-765-0688 or visit www.beehive-restaurant.com.

Changes Coming to Stone Barns

I recently reported about the big job Stone Barns in Pocantico Hills was doing with its resourceD food boxes during the pandemic. Now we are hearing there will be a major shakeup. Dan Barber, founding executive chef and the driving force since its opening, is stepping aside. According to Barber, the highly-lauded culinary facility is switching to a guest chef residency program. It is an effort to promote diversity at the restaurant. Guest chefs

will be selected from diverse backgrounds and bring their unique culinary vision to the kitchen and the public.

Sounds to me that their usual format will also have to change if they reopen to full dining in 2021. Reservations had always been hard to come by, and dinners in their formal dining room, which could run up 10 to 15 courses, started at around \$300 per person. We will have to wait and see. Info: Visit www.bluehillfarm.com.

High Holiday Cooking Courses

Preparing for the High Holidays, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur? Want to reproduce a good version of Bubbe's brisket? The Streicker Center at Temple Emanuel in Manhattan is offering free online cooking courses from Sept. 8-11 geared to the Jewish holidays. Featured are presentations by noted food writers Melissa Clark and Joan Nathan. Sounds good to me. We have signed up for a couple. Info: Visit www.emanuelnyc.org/contact/streicker-center.

Mussels at Home – Rediscovered!

We like diving into a bowl of mussels from time to time at restaurants that prepare them properly. During the COVID-19 crisis we have rediscovered how easy, cost-effective and delish these mollusks can be when prepared at home. Our two-pound bag of PEI mussels cost \$4 and change as a special at a local market. More than enough for the two of us.

So far, we have prepared them with a capicola-based sauce with onions, white wine, a little cream and fresh herbs –

Provençal style. We did a classic Moules Poulette recently as an ode to my old friend, Chef Maxime Ribera, who rocked us with his food during the late '80s and '90s at Maxime's in Granite Springs and Bistro Maxime in Chappaqua. Truly delicious, if you are a mussels fan. Here's a good basic recipe from Martha Stewart at www.marthastewart.com/330234/mussels.

Morris Gut is a restaurant marketing consultant and former restaurant trade magazine editor. He has been tracking and writing about the food and dining scene in greater Westchester for 30 years. He may be contacted at 914-235-6591 or at gutreactions@optonline.net.



The Cobb salad at Freebird Kitchen and Bar in White Plains.



The Beehive's delicious Spanakopita.

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Why an Estate Plan is Necessary for Young, Single Adults

By: Alan D. Feller, Esq.

Imagine you are 24 years old. College and graduate school are done, not exactly paid for, but finished all the same.

A first job has you feeling empowered. You are still living at home, but you have replaced your red racing car bed with the SLATTUM bed from IKEA and your Hannah Montana poster has been removed in favor of a pastoral painting picked up in Cold Spring.

In other words, you have transitioned into adulthood. Your phone's reminders are filled with all the places and restaurants you want to visit as soon as the pandemic ends. There are loads of appetizers that you have yet to photograph and share on Instagram. Friends and more than friends swirl around you. Plus, you just adopted a Pembroke Welsh Corgi puppy.

One Tuesday, an hour before dinner, mom sits down next to you on a stool at the kitchen island while you are enjoying sparkling lime water. She has that look in her eyes, the look that says she is worried that you have no idea what you are doing and you are about to ruin your life. You meet that look with a perfectly timed eye roll. Not a word has been spoken, but you know what is coming. A pre-emptive strike is necessary in this situation.

"Mom, I set up an automatic savings account, I have already talked to HR about my retirement plan options and I do plan on finding an apartment – eventually."

Mom does not blink as she absorbs her child's words.

"You should think about an estate plan," she intones. You stifle a laugh. "I hereby leave all of my debt and my phone case collection to Dad!"

Silence. Then a fizz and a pop from the sparkling lime water punctuates your sentence.

Is your mom overdoing it? Not really. Setting up an estate plan is not difficult. A health care proxy and a power of attorney come in handy in case of a health emergency to simplify decision-making.

Before the pandemic, this logic would probably fail to resonate. The COVID-19 hospitalizations forced many families to confront their own lack of planning. Without basic advance directives in place, health care facilities and financial institutions may throw up some roadblocks before they authorize a decisionmaker. Even at 24, you have a financial life – bank accounts, credit card, a car, a retirement account and other personal assets. Someone has to properly handle these responsibilities if you cannot.

An unfortunate result would be to recover from an illness then discover that credit card bills remained unpaid and your credit score sunk. A bad credit score will hamper efforts to rent an apartment, buy a car, increase your credit limit or purchase a home. Choosing a reliable

agent under a power of attorney is a smart idea.

Planning for your mortality is not something most 24-year-olds prioritize, but it lays the groundwork for intelligent financial thinking and organization. One simple consideration is to make sure that your financial account beneficiary statements are up to date.

Preparing a will in your 20s is also a wise step in a very long chain of decisions. It can set you on a course to manage increasing complexity in your financial life, including property ownership. A will can also contain a pet trust for your

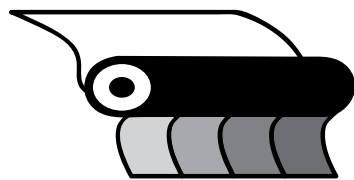
dog or cat that can select the person who will care for them and provide money for their care.

Your parents will continue to have a major influence on your financial thinking as your 20s progress, but certain slices of independence will start to emerge. Estate planning and financial organization should not be put off until your 30s and 40s. Good habits established early will bestow advantages that will allow you to live your best life.

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



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Sports May Look Different But Training Methods Are Constant

Since the onset of COVID-19, many different aspects of our lives have changed. One of those is our youth and high school sports programs.

Student-athletes are having their sports seasons drastically altered due to restrictions and health safety concerns. Even with the revamped fall sports schedule this school year, it is important that athletes maintain a training regimen that allows them to be physically ready to participate in full activity. This will allow greater performance, reduced risk of injury and heightened enjoyment when returning to their sport because they won't struggle due to diminished fitness levels.

The concept of sports specific training can be broken down into a few separate categories that should be addressed in order to be healthy and prepared for participation.

First, strength training is critical. Musculoskeletal strength allows an athlete to move their body safely at high velocities, absorb contact and other forces that the sport demands and make for better recovery from high-intensity training sessions.

Weight training two to three times per week, with enough time between sessions to recover, is more than an adequate stimulus to gain strength. Most athletes will need 48 hours between strength

training sessions to recover. In a study by David J. Szymanski, et al, published in The Journal of Strength and Conditioning in 2007, a 12-week medicine ball strength-training program was used to increase the power and strength of baseball players. This significantly increased the athletic capacity of the players for their season and demonstrated that advanced equipment wasn't necessary to gain strength and power.

Next, and arguably the most important layer of training, is cardiovascular fitness or sports conditioning. Our student-athlete sports typically demand a high level of fitness. Participants must be able to run, sprint, dodge and move efficiently for upwards of 60 minutes. Each sport has specific types of cardiovascular demands. Football has high-intensity bursts of sprints with breaks after each play while

soccer has high-intensity bursts mixed with jogging or running. The unique qualities of the sports mean that the conditioning should

mimic the movements that occur during competition. Making sure an athlete is doing the proper type of cardio training three to four times a week, with enough time between sessions to recover, will set him or her up for success.

One of the most neglected but important factors in training is flexibility and mobility training. Flexibility is the body's ability

to move muscle tissue through its range of motion while mobility is the ability to move a joint through its requisite range of motion. When an athlete is lacking in either one it not only exposes them to injury but decreases the ability to recover from exercise and limits the athlete's speed and power.

In a 2002 study by J. P. Hunter and R. N. Marshall published in Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise, lack of flexibility in the lower extremities severely limited the athletes during vertical jumping performance. The ability to generate and control power is part of what makes an athlete good in their sport. Stretching and foam rolling are great ways to address flexibility while Pilates and yoga-based movements can be excellent for mobility and flexibility.

Often overlooked is the key component of recovering from training, the ability to have a planned, active recovery or rest day. Athletes adapt to their training by repairing the musculoskeletal tissue and their cardiac muscle while sleeping or at rest. This is why it is always recommended that one of the seven days of the week be considered a rest or active recovery day.

Active recovery can vary depending on the athlete's age, fitness level and



By Eric Faatz

experience but generally consists of low intensity, low stress and therapeutic activities that promote recovery. Examples would be going on an easy long walk, light swimming or pool activities and stretching or foam rolling.

In Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise in 2008, H.M. Anderssen studied soccer players' ability to perform and recover between matches. Those that did not have planned recovery or had insufficient recovery showed significant trouble with high-intensity performance during competitive matches.

While sports have changed due to the pandemic, that doesn't mean athletes should be unprepared to play when activities resume. A specifically tailored training regimen devised by a certified strength and conditioning coach along with coaches and health care providers will help an athlete return to the playing field successfully.

Eric Faatz is a certified athletic trainer at ProClinix Sports Physical Therapy & Chiropractic in Armonk. For more information about this article or about ProClinix, Faatz can be reached at 914-202-0700 or at efaatz@proclinux.com or visit www.proclinux.com.

THERE'S A WORD FOR IT

A vocabulary-building quiz By Edward Goralski

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

1. **omniparity** (n.)
A) universal equality B) a joint effort C) unlimited power
2. **anonym** (n.)
A) something different B) an announcement C) a pseudonym
3. **Neptunist** (n.)
A) a lifeguard B) a beachcomber C) a sailor
4. **miraculate** (v.)
A) to appropriate wrongly B) produce by a miracle C) reflect
5. **ambilaevous** (adj.)
A) clumsy in both hands B) double-dealing C) moving about
6. **theic** (n.)
A) staged effects B) excessive drinker of tea C) a theologian
7. **paregoric** (adj.)
A) forgiveness B) painkilling C) preeminent
8. **charette** (n.)
A) period of intense work B) a travel arrangement C) physical grace

1. A. Universal equality
2. C. Someone who wishes to remain anonymous;
3. C. A sailor or mariner
4. B. To produce by a miracle
5. A. Equally clumsy in both hands
6. B. An excessive drinker of tea
7. B. Painkilling; analgesic
8. A. A period of intense work or creative activity undertaken to meet a deadline
- ANSWERS:



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Understanding Wine Purchase Influences During a Pandemic



By Nick Antonaccio

We're beginning to slide into pre-pandemic wine buying mode. No longer is our favorite libation solely a cell phone call away or a few clicks on a retail shop's website. We can now visit our favorite brick and mortar shop to do

what we enjoyed in the seemingly distant past of early March.

For the past five months I had been calling in my wine and spirits orders. At first, like any new experience (for me), the novelty was exhilarating.

"Hi, Graeme, I'd like to order my favorites that you've stored in your point-of-sale software. And I'd like to stop by your entrance in 10 minutes and have you place the order in my trunk."

This worked very well for a few weeks, but then I realized how heavily I had previously relied on my wine merchant to recommend new wines. My latest favorites in his database changed every visit, as he recommended different wines from my previous favorites.

I began to fall into the drudgery of consuming the same wines each time I called or tapped in an order. I missed the repartee with my wine merchant, reading the back labels of bottles and generally forming a self-defined profile of my likes and dislikes.

I then realized there are a number of criteria I consider when selecting a wine, which an in-store experience can enhance – or confuse. These include labels, origin and price. But is this a haphazard, emotional decision-making process or an intellectual deduction based on an informed opinion, maybe even instinctive behavior?

I also realized that successful wine merchants are able to identify these traits in each customer and recommend wines that meet their profile. But what is the basis for identifying these traits? And do I even realize what they are without the benefit of my wine merchant's database?

Am I alone in this dilemma? Apparently, this happens quite often. Often enough to inspire a research group to conduct a study on what factors influence consumers when they are faced with the multitude of choices encountered in a well-stocked wine shop. Which of the myriad of criteria is the most influential in a shopper's



purchase decision?

As a public service, I offer a study I came across recently on the internet. The American Association of Wine Economists (AAWE) – yes, there is such a group – is a "non-profit, educational organization dedicated to encouraging and communicating economic research and analyses and exchanging ideas in wine economics."

The testing encompassed a combination of empirical and psychological criteria. Isn't that what economists do best? Their initial research with a study group concluded that wine choices were a function of perceived quality, which was typically based on the impression of a wine rather than an actual drinking experience. They then considered the pricing and the packaging of wine. They discerned that the following sub criteria on a label were key to a consumer's decision-making process: a wine's place of origin, the grape varietal and the brand name.

Of these three criteria – quality, price and packaging – they weighed the impact of each based on the input received from the

study participants. They determined that each criterion is intertwined with the other.

For me, a non-alcoholic example of this quickly came to mind. When Apple first introduced the iPhone in 2007, it was an also-ran to the behemoth cell phones of the time. But the unique, revolutionary design and ergonomics gained a foothold, convincing consumers to purchase a product they didn't realize they needed. Quality, pricing and packaging prevail for Apple and so too for select wine producers, according to the AAWE study.

After exhaustive research in first identifying the decision-making criteria of a typical consumer and then painstakingly researching, testing and evaluating those criteria, the AAWE concluded there is one overriding criterion, one that is far and away the most influential consideration for a consumer: price.

But you probably figured that out on your own. Ah, but what price to be paid for a quality wine? Check here next week.

Nick Antonaccio is a 40-year Pleasantville resident. For over 25 years, he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. Nick is a member and Program Director of the Wine Media Guild of wine journalists. He also offers personalized wine tastings and wine travel services. Nick's credo: continuous experimenting results in instinctive behavior. You can reach him at nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com or on Twitter @sharingwine.

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Learn about the smarter plan at **indianpointdecommissioning.com**

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

Indian Point Energy Center



Town of Yorktown Honored for Hiking Trail Support

The New York State Recreation and Park Society recognized the Town of Yorktown and the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference last week for their work maintaining and protecting hiking trails in the community.

The society gave the town and the conference its Outstanding Corporate Partnership Award for collaborating on about 50 miles of hiking trails in the town. The award recognizes individuals or organizations that have given leadership and support by providing equipment, volunteer time, in-kind donations and other services with the goal of preserving

or enhancing public parks.

Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater said the town's hiking trails have proven to be valuable assets, especially this year.

"We saw it at the height of the pandemic," Slater said. "We saw an incredible volume on our trails because it gave people a safe place to go outside, exercise and enjoy the natural beauty of our community."

Mohegan Lake resident Jane Daniels accepted the award on behalf of the conference, to which she has belonged since 1979.

"The partnership couldn't be better with the parks department, and I say I am



Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater, left, and Jane Daniels, center in green shirt, accepted an award from the New York State Recreation and Park Society on Aug. 25 for the Town of Yorktown's collaboration with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

so lucky to be partners with them, and I know there's a mutual feeling," Daniels said.

The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a volunteer-powered organization that builds, maintains and protects public trails. Together with its partners, the conference strives to ensure

that trails and natural areas are sustainable and accessible for all to enjoy.

The New York State Recreation and Park Society serves parks and recreation professionals by promoting professional development, public policy development, and public awareness, among other activities.

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Sports

Holding out Hope for Low-Risk Sports Might Be Futile



By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports
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Every time King Cuomo discusses sports and/or athletics, I feel like we're taking advice from a guy who thinks he can inbound a basketball to himself, a guy that lacks some of the basic instincts regarding competitive sports.

For instance, just last week, Gov. Cuomo announced that varsity soccer was a low-risk sport that he would be willing to grant clearance to this fall, while in the same breath prohibiting volleyball and cheerleading, which he considered high risk.

I get it, volleyball and cheer are indoor sports. He's in a tough spot calling these shots amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, but he's obviously never seen a Somers-Yorktown boys' varsity soccer game, where 21 of the 22 players on the field are converging on a head ball in front of the cage, with skulls crashing.

Has Cuomo ever seen a White Plains soccer game? There's nothing low-risk about the way Coach Gigli's Tigers get after it. Girls' soccer is also far from low-risk when you consider the ladies are just as competitive as the boys. Have you seen Mahopac's All-NYS senior Mia Klammer crash the cage? She's insane (in a good way)!

So, trust me, there's nothing low-risk about soccer, which is part of Cuomo's problem: He knows not of what he speaks, and he put that to the test when he said high school football teams can practice this fall but can't play games. What's the difference when it comes to COVID-19? Are players at less risk in practice than in games because of the mandated non-contact nature of these practices? I suppose. But we're still assembling en masse.

"I think it's a flawed plan," Mahopac High football Coach Dominic DeMatteo said of Cuomo's peculiar plan to allow football teams to practice starting Sept. 21 but not play games. "I don't know how you motivate players to practice if they can't play actual games. I cannot tell you how disappointed I am with the leadership with regards to this situation and how frustrated I am for our children. I can't put it into words."

I'm 100 percent on board with soccer being played this fall, just as I am with cross country, field hockey, volleyball and cheer, so the fact that Cuomo considers soccer low-risk is fine by me. But I know better, and so should he. That's a significant part of the problem.

Now, football, on the other hand, has to be considered a high-risk sport in any year, so I get that New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) schools are not permitted to start playing games in their respective football seasons in mid-September because you can't just throw an ill-prepared football team on a gridiron. Football is a different animal and must be treated as such, though I believe it can be done safely like it is throughout much of the country.



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS



NYS Gov. Andrew Cuomo maintains varsity soccer is a low-risk sport but decried cheerleading as high risk while also passing the buck to individual school districts to decide if and when they should allow sports this fall.

Currently, 35 of America's states are playing varsity tackle football with the vast majority showing a higher seven-day positive COVID-19 rate than New York, according to the Centers for Disease Control. That includes states that played games this weekend and have been practicing for weeks. While New York State currently sits at about a 0.8 percent transmission rate and cannot play football per Cuomo, North Dakota (14.9 percent), Alabama (13.9 percent), Texas (13 percent), Arkansas (10 percent), Utah (8.8 percent), Indiana (8.2 percent), Oklahoma (8.2 percent), Tennessee (5.7 percent) and Ohio (3.5 percent) all played football games last weekend.

I get that regulations will limit football practices to non-contact drills among groups of 10 or less at any given practice, but we're still assembling young men in fairly large settings no matter how you slice it.

After a lengthy Friday meeting with its 11 sectional directors, the NYSPHSAA and Executive Director Robert Zayas announced they will advise member schools with proper guidance regarding the return of sports this fall.

Cuomo announced that low-risk scholastic sports would be permitted to start Sept. 21, and followed by saying it's up to each individual school district to decide whether or not they want to compete, essentially waiting several months before passing the buck like the savvy politician he is.

The ambiguity surrounding Cuomo's proclamation was vexing for coaches, players and administrators to comprehend, and the NYSPHSAA didn't receive the actual guidance they were hoping for, so they

were set to work through the weekend to create a viable plan to send to schools early this week.

"We are hoping to play sports come hell or high water," Mahopac Board of Education President Mike Mongon said last Friday, the same night the district announced it would return to fully remote learning until at least early October, possibly longer.

I'd like to believe Mongon and the other glass-half-full optimists, but I can't help but feel as though the rug will eventually be pulled out from under the feet of our student-athletes in the very near future, even though youth travel sports went full bore this summer without significantly spiking coronavirus cases.

When a council of New York State school superintendents sends a letter to Cuomo urging him to follow Nassau County, which canceled all sports until 2021, it's not a good sign for our student-athletes. Cuomo said last Wednesday that school districts should make their own determination, which is another bad sign given the recent budgetary issues due to increases in safety precautions, the fact that desks have to be 7.5 feet apart in every class and buses have extremely limited capacity. How can we have one plan to separate students for the classroom and another on the field of play? That's why I expect all Section 1 sports to be pushed back to 2021 sometime this week. Let's hope I'm wrong.

Byram Hills soccer Coach Matty Allen recently tweeted "The parameters placed on NY districts to open their classrooms have hurt the chances of schools having sports. When desks have to be 7.5 feet apart and you can't share equipment in gym class,

how can superintendents allow sports? It's about the classrooms not the fields."

Thus, the conundrum. The NYSPHSAA is aware of the science and data around youth sports played throughout the summer, including AAU basketball and travel baseball. If we do move forward with low-risk sports this fall, the guidance the NYSPHSAA provide schools will not include how many games a particular program can play and who it schedules, though several athletic directors have suggested they would prefer to see local clusters of schools in their respective regions competing geographically instead of classifications, which adds additional travel. That will be up to each section.

Massive safety protocols will be mandated and must be followed. Players, coaches and limited fans will be under the microscope, unlike much of the summer sports events I witnessed, which, in some cases, were lackadaisical, to say the least, when it came to social distancing and masks.

Coaches in low-risk sports will be granted information about each individual sport this week – what practices will allow, what it will look like to play games and what the expectations are for distancing, masks and things of that nature. It's going to be a nightmare, make no mistake. But it's better than sitting around all fall waiting for a second spike in our region even though the rate of infection has dropped below 1 percent for several weeks now.

We can't live in a bubble, folks. Be wise, be cautious, keep your distance when possible, keep the elderly and those with pre-existing situations at bay, follow the new rules, but, for the mental and physical well-being of our youth, let's play some dang ball until we discover that going about "business as normal" is not practical at this point in time.

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