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June 15 - June 21, 2021

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 13, Issue 638

## Slashed Budget Going Before Carmel School Voters for a Second Time

By Abby Luby

The defeat of last month's proposed budget for the Carmel Board Central School District for 2021-2022 has forced the district to come up with a new revised, scaled back budget. The final tally in the May vote was 1,125 for and 1,296 against. The second vote on the revised budget is Tuesday, June 15.

The first proposed budget was \$133 million for the 2021-2022 school year and included a 1.69 percent tax levy increase. The new budget has been reduced by \$1 million bringing the revised sum to \$132 million and a tax levy increase of 0.6 percent or a 1.51 percent increase from last year's budget. Should the revised budget be approved, reduced spending will be seen on facilities' improvements, computer equipment, a reduction of two busses in the replacement cycle, expenditures for curriculum work, travel, conferences not related to federal grants and a 10 percent reduction of spending on all supplies. Other cuts are positions ending due to retirement and includes seven teacher assistant positions, one secondary art position, one elementary position, one office assistant position at the district office.

The reduced June budget will spend the biggest chunk of the budget, \$71.2 million, on instructional support. The next largest expense is for Benefits/Debt/Transfers at

\$42.8 million, \$12.7 million will be spent on general support, \$6.3 million on pupil transportation, \$365K on Community Programs.

The district has other funds they can use. Revenue from the New York State School Aid at \$29.2 million, miscellaneous revenue totals \$1.8 million, a fund balance allocation in the amount of \$2.2 million and the 0.60 percent tax levy will earn the district \$99 million. Some programs will be paid for using Federal Stimulus funds. Summer school and compensatory services would be paid for by the Federal Stimulus Grant.

Eric Stark, Assistant Superintendent for Business, said district reserves can be used, if necessary, such as the tax certiorari and employee benefits reserves, a capital reserve for capital expenditures and an unallocated fund balance which is like a rainy-day fund at 4 percent of the budget.

If the June budget does not receive voter approval, by law, the BOE must adopt a contingency budget which would have a zero percent tax levy increase and the budget would be the same as last year, \$131 million. State guidelines for contingent budgets require an additional \$591,566 in reductions to the proposed budget. Among some of the cuts the district would have to make would be for school buses by \$251K and equipment by \$42.9K.

Board Trustee Debra Heitman-Cayea

expressed concerns about cuts to buses in what she cited as one of the largest school districts in the region at 80 square miles. She asked what would happen if the district had to operate with a contingency budget.

Stark said there were spare buses in the fleet. "It is possible that we would have to reroute the fleet, but we wouldn't have to do it immediately. On a contingency budget it is possible the district couldn't purchase new buses and they would then have to reroute buses," he said.

Superintendent of Schools Mary-Margaret Zehr said throughout the budget revision process the board reviewed all aspects of the budget. "The key reasons for many of our decisions was recognizing that the staff has the most impact on students' success," she said. "But our students next year are our priority hands down. The focus

of any reductions was to make sure the supports for any of our students would be present throughout the school year."

**Budget Vote: June 15, 2021, 6 a.m. -9 p.m.**

Questions to Joanne Stevens, district clerk, at 845-878-2094, ext. 210.

**Voting Locations:**

Registered voters must vote at their designated polling place based on address. If you are unsure of your polling place, please call Joanne Stevens, District Clerk, at 845-878-2094, ext. 210:

**Patterson Residents:** CCSD Administrative Office, 81 South Street, Patterson

**Kent/East Fishkill Residents:** Kent Elementary School, Route 52, Carmel

**Carmel/Putnam Valley/Southeast Residents:** Carmel High School, 30 Fair Street, Carmel

## Critical Race Theory Viral Video Puts Carmel in Nat'l Spotlight

By Abby Luby

At a public meeting last week, topping the Carmel Board of Education agenda was the revised budget after the district's proposed budget of \$133,581,366 for the 2021-2022 school year was defeated in May.

Preceding the formal budget review, the board held an open session which ran an hour and 45 minutes, allowing many district residents to express a wide array of polarized views from decrying mask wearing to wasting taxpayer's money. The room was full, and a line stretched back from the microphone.

Among the accusations: how the district wasted taxpayer money by raising taxes to overpay educators and staff, a demand to reimburse alleged undisclosed district funds to taxpayers with monies assumed saved during the pandemic. With a full house, many jeered and held up their fists, others applauded loudly.

Although Board President Michelle Yorio opened the public comment session stating that critical race theory was not part of the school curriculum, many were there to voice their opposition to critical race theory under the assumption that it was already being taught in the schools. Critical race theory has been around for decades, with advocates citing its design to promote understanding of inequality and institutional racism in the United States.

Carmel School District parent Tatiyana Ibrahim has made national news criticizing the district for "emotionally abusing" students by teaching critical race theory and what she claimed were communist

values. Others have joined her crusade of accusing Carmel educators of promoting Black Lives matter, LGBTQ equity and anti-police ideologies.

Cheering Ibrahim's position was Dylan Guarducci, a 2015 Carmel High School alumni. "Do you oppose critical race theory?" he stated, receiving a hefty round of applause. "Critical race theory has crept into our schools. I heard the librarians around here — I heard you guys were giving out some Black Lives Matter pins. Black Lives Matter is a Marxist, domestic terrorist group."

Interspersed with the critics were those who supported the board and the district. Many Carmel High School students praised the board and their teachers, voicing support for the district and dismissing claims of bias in the schools.

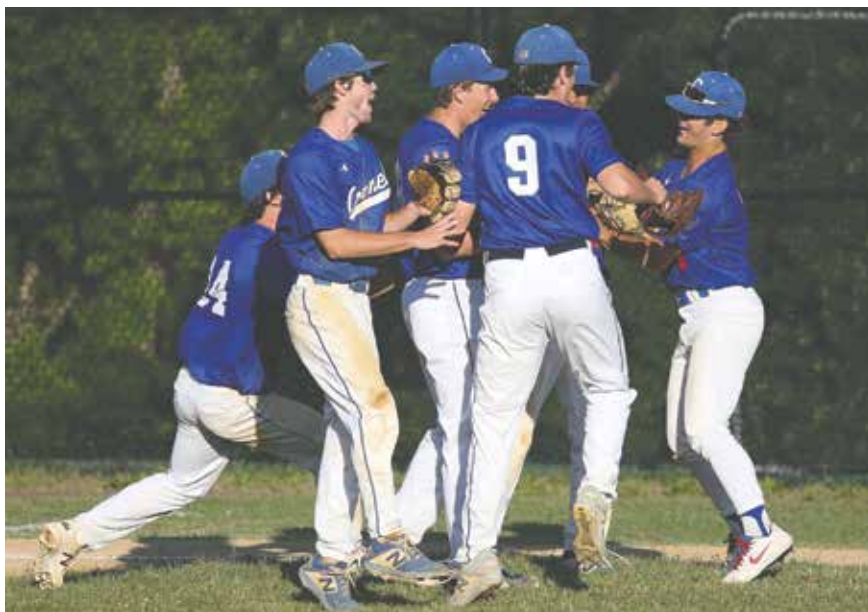
"None of what you are saying is true and what people were claiming is happening in the schools is not happening," said Carmel High School sophomore Karen Medina. "Not once in my time at Carmel High School have I been told to go out and murder police officers. The resource officers in our school are respected."

Deirdre Miles of Patterson urged the audience to read literature that reflects lives of blacks, books that she said are in the school library. She recalled what it was like being the only black student in her high school classroom.

"If you want to come together as a community, it starts here," Miles said.

By the time the board ended the public comment session, most residents had left leaving a handful of people to hear and comment on the revised budget.

## Ram Tough!



ROB DIANTONIO PHOTO

### Carmel Cops 1st Section 1 Title in 31 Years

Members of the Carmel baseball team celebrated two huge wins last week, including the Rams' 5-1 Section 1 Class AA title triumph of host RCK Saturday to earn the program's first sectional title since 1990 after knocking off visiting White Plains, 6-5, in Thursday's semis... see Sports Pull-Out



# Second Annual Putnam Pride Event Celebrates Local LGBTQIA

On Saturday, June 5, Putnam Pride held its second annual rally and march in coordination and solidarity with Putnam for Black Lives. The event began at the Putnam County Historic Courthouse in Carmel, where speakers and clergy emphasized the importance of working together to create change and mobilize community. Guest speakers included the following prominent members of the Hudson Valley and surrounding LGBTQIA+ community: Kristen Browde (she/her/hers), co-chair of the National Trans Bar Association and president of the LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York; James Young (he/him/his & they/them/theirs), Program Director at Queery; Robyn Schlesinger (she/her/hers), who serves on Westchester County's LGBTQ Advisory Board and Police Reform Task Force and is a member of Queery's Advisory Council; Anthony Arrien (he/him/his), a Putnam Valley-based transgender man who facilitates The LOFT's adult transgender peer support group twice per month, is a board member of GLSEN Lower Hudson Valley, active in PFLAG Putnam and is also a full time employee of the Town of Putnam Valley; and Juan Fonseca Tapia (he/him/his/ él), Coordinator at the Queer Unity Empowerment Support Team (QUEST) and a local LGBTQIA+ and racial justice activist. Speakers focused on the importance of intersectionality and visibility in the fight for LGBTQIA+ equality and centered black, trans and nonbinary experience. The rally took place on the day and in the location of Putnam for Black Lives' 27th rally for black lives since the murder of George Floyd last year. Norma Pereira (she/her/hers/ella) and Anita Conway (she/her/hers) opened the rally with a blessing of the land as a tribute to the

native people from whom it was stolen, and Putnam Pride organizer, Eileen McDermott (she/her/hers), welcomed the crowd and urged those in attendance for Pride to join the next Putnam for Black Lives rally, since racial justice is inextricable from the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. Following the speakers, Drew United Methodist Church Pastor Martha Vink (she/her/hers) and Trinity Lutheran Church Pastor Jen Boyd (she/her/hers) led a moment of silence for the many victims of violence and discrimination over the past year.

After the moment of silence, Putnam Pride's hosts for the day, the locally renowned drag queens Angel Elektra (she/her/hers and he/him/his) and ShayD'Pines (she/her/hers and he/him/his), donned in rainbow drag attire, arrived to lead the crowd of approximately 200 people down Gleneida Avenue — while shouting "Love wins!" and "Black Lives Matter!" — to Gilead Presbyterian Church, which graciously donated its lawn for several hours of music, entertainment and performances. Gilead Church is welcoming to all, "regardless of race, ethnic heritage, national origin, age, ability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic standing... and stands in support of Black lives and the lives of all who suffer from discrimination and abuse." Pastor Martin McGeachy (he/him/his) welcomed everyone to the event and affirmed his support of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Performers included: P3tch (Liv DiFusco - she/her/hers); Regina Singel (she/her/hers); Mathilda Cullen (she/her/hers); Jeffie Zitovsky (he/him/his); Fia Sanchez (she/her/hers); Duane Boutté (he/him/his); Monkeytown Milk Spillers (Jill Paxton



- she/her/hers, Rod Cumming - he/him/his, and Daniel Basiletti - he/him/his, with accompaniments from Brittany Carrasco - she/her/hers, Stephanie Schleicher - she/her/hers and Regina Singel); and The Amateur Scrubs Dancers (James Young - he/him/his & they/them/theirs, David Glen - he/him/his, Jeff Gurkin-Young - he/him/his & they/them/theirs, Rakesh M - he/him/his, and Blair Perryman - he/him/his & they/them/theirs). The stage was also opened to the public for The People's Mic, where announcements were made about the launch of two important new local organizations: the Putnam County Human Rights Task Force and the Community Engagement and Police Advisory Board. Both organizations will work to ensure Putnam residents have outlets to air concerns and complaints in a community-led and safe atmosphere.

Funds were raised with advertising support from local organizations, agencies and businesses, including Rainbow

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The county government did hang the Putnam Pride official banner at Cornerstone Park on June 9, where it will remain throughout the month of June. The Historic Courthouse in Carmel also was lit up in rainbow colors June 3-5.

## Putnam County Day 2021 Marked Virtual and with Exhibit

June 12th marked the 209th birthday of Putnam County, a celebration of a new county in a new country. Unfortunately, the annual observation of Putnam County Day at the Historic Courthouse was canceled again this year. However, a virtual celebration and outdoor exhibit on the steps of the Historic Courthouse was put on display for this special occasion.

"The Historian's Office has been busy working with local historians, historical societies, museums, schools and Carmel's Boy and Girl Scouts to assemble a video program and an outdoor exhibit which focus on the presence of the American Flag in our local history," said Jennifer Cassidy of the Historian's Office. "It's an impressive study of patriotism."

Some of the earliest appearances of the American flag in the Putnam County Archives, located in Brewster, can be found in the F.W. Beers Atlas of New York and the Vicinity published in 1867. The Historian's Office created a two-volume video in which they provide in-depth history of the illustrations of Putnam County homes and establishments that are adorned with Old Glory, some of the earliest images of the County.

"A second volume features the Cub Scouts of Carmel Pack One and Daisy Troop 1049 who contributed an amazing history

of the American flag that complements historic and contemporary photographs of towns and villages and people throughout Putnam County, we are so grateful for their participation," said Cassidy.

An additional feature for 2021 is the outdoor exhibit of images from county-wide collections. The public is invited to visit the steps of the Historic Courthouse to view panels which feature amazing images from every town and village thanks to the Historian's Collection, Putnam History Museum, Southeast Museum, as well as the Carmel, Kent, Patterson and Putnam Valley historical societies.

"We encourage everyone to explore the County Seat, view the exhibits at the courthouse and continue their stroll down Gleneida to admire the Row of Honor," said Cassidy. "During this time of year, the flag theme works well as Putnam County Day feeds into Flag Day on June 14th and the following weekend, June 19-20, is New York State's Path Through History weekend."

Putnam County Day is an annual event that typically includes a ceremony, historic presentations, and awards for outstanding people, projects and publications that enrich and record Putnam County's history. Cassidy hopes that everyone can gather next year at the Historic Courthouse to celebrate the 210th birthday of the county.



Carmel Pack 1 Scouts participate in Putnam County Day 2021, photo by S. Baio



# New York State on Verge of 70% Vaccination Threshold

By Martin Wilbur

New York's diminishing infection rate and slowly but steadily rising vaccine rate has put the state on the verge of a near full reopening.

On Monday, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said the vaccination rate for adults 18 years old and up was 69.9 percent, which means the state will reach the 70 percent threshold imminently. Last week, Cuomo said once vaccinations reach 70 percent, all mask requirements will be lifted except for several institutionally mandated facilities such as entering public transportation, health care facilities, prisons and homeless shelters.

"Seventy percent is a great milestone," Cuomo said. "The president set 70 percent by July 4 as an optimistic milestone. Not all states will hit it, but we will reach it earlier than anyone thought."

Over the past couple of weeks New York has continually been competing for the lowest infection rate in the country on a consistent basis using the seven-day average. Sunday's positivity rate was 0.52 percent, and it dropped to 0.41 percent on the rolling average over seven days.

By region, the highest infection rate was Finger Lakes at 0.62 percent while the Capital region had the lowest at 0.33. Mid Hudson and New York City were at 0.39 percent.

The key reason for the drop, Cuomo said, is the slowly increasing vacation rate. The state has now administered 20.1 million doses with more than 11.1 million people having received at least one shot and just over 9.8 million completely vaccinated.

The encouraging news prompted the governor to announce Monday that this year's New York State Fair in Syracuse will have no restrictions when it opens on Aug. 20 for its customary late summer run through Labor Day. Earlier this spring, when Cuomo announced a partial reopening, the seven-day rolling average stood at 2.06 percent statewide.

Although progress has been outstanding, Cuomo said the state will continue to try and push the vaccination rate higher.

"We hit all those milestones but it doesn't mean that when we hit 70 percent it's over," he said. "It means it's working; it means we're doing well, but it also means keep going, and that's what this celebration is going to be. It's not the finish line at 70, but we're coming around the last turn on the track and we have to focus and we have to know that we're doing well, but we needed one more push to really get vaccinated to get the COVID beast under control."

The numbers were even better in Westchester, County Executive George Latimer reported on Monday. Active cases have shrunk to 270 well under the 1,100 cases from one month earlier on May 14. Hospitalizations have dropped to 22.

On Sunday, Latimer said results were returned from 3,136 COVID-19 tests and there were just 12 positives, a positivity rate of just under .04 percent.

"The numbers are extremely encouraging and they show that the vaccination works," said Latimer. "The more people that are vaccinated, the less likely they're going to get the disease."

Under the state's updated vaccination standard, which counts the percentage of people 18 years old and up who have received at least one dose, Westchester's number stood at 74.8 percent.

"A tremendous accomplishment that everyone should take credit for," Latimer said.

It was announced Monday that the county has extended its Tourism & Film's marketing campaign and its rallying cry to Go Beyond Without Going Far, said Natasha



## CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Caputo, Westchester's director of Tourism and Film.

The campaign, which will run through much of the fall, will partner with the county Chamber of Commerce, municipalities and other communities to encourage residents and visitors to spend time in their locales.

The campaign tagline will overlay an image that identifies a Westchester County community by name. The goal is to collaborate in highlighting the unique appeal of the county's cities, towns and villages, encouraging economy-boosting

visitation and spending.

"With the increased vaccine doses and the decline in cases and the warmer weather, this spring brings fresh optimism and pent-up demand to travel," Caputo said.

White Plains Business Improvement District Executive Director Brittany Brandwein announced that that municipality will launch Staycation White Plains.

Cuomo also touted the entire state's tourist attractions, which is much more than New York City.

"This summer has to make up for everything we went through the past year," he said.

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# Pleasantville Pedestrian Committee Highlights Key Safety Issues

By Abby Luby

Now that the weather is warmer and more people are outside, walking safely in and around the Village of Pleasantville is foremost in many residents' minds.

Last week the village's Pedestrian Committee held a public forum to update the Village Board and the public about upcoming safety improvements and future plans to ensure pedestrian safety.

"We're dedicated to improving pedestrian safety, encourage walking for everyone's health and the health of our planet, to create a culture of mutual respect between pedestrians and drivers," said Carrie Roberts, chair of the committee that was established in 2018. "We came together because we love the village and love walking. Pedestrian safety affects everyone."

A survey initiated in 2019 on how to advance pedestrian safety received 653 responses, showing residents wanted more sidewalks and speed bumps and that speeding traffic was a major concern. The survey also indicated problem areas in the village, highlighting three key intersections – Bedford Road and Marble Avenue, the Saw Mill River Parkway exit at Manville Road and the intersection at Manville and Washington Avenue near the Jacob Burns Film Center.

Throughout the almost two-hour live-streamed meeting, residents raised questions about specific streets and crossings. Some residents wanted to know why there couldn't be more sidewalks and speed bumps on streets frequented by schoolchildren.

Police Chief Erik Grutzner explained that some streets are under the Town of Mount Pleasant's jurisdiction. However, even for those that are under the control of the town, county or state, the police department can contact the correct office to find potential solutions to safety problems.

Sidewalks for Nannahagan Road, Broadway, Ashland and Church Street were also requested. But Mayor Peter Scherer said there are challenges.

"Putting sidewalks in are problematic," Scherer said. "Every time it comes up it is fraught with discussion. Many neighbors don't want a sidewalk in front of their homes because of either privacy or maintenance. As far as Church Street, it certainly is a cause for enforcement and there is a new speed light there for people who may not realize how fast they're going."

The committee also suggested more crosswalks on Bedford Road to help students cross at Great Oak Lane and Parkway Terrace.

Pleasantville Avenue resident Michael Gold expressed deep concern for cars making illegal right turns off of the Saw Mill River Parkway onto Grant Street, keeping many pedestrians waiting for an extended time to cross safely. It is a main crossing for children walking to school.

"It's appalling to see drivers' complete disregard for pedestrians in that area," Gold said. "My daughter and I cross there (in the morning) before the crossing guard is there. I'm afraid somebody is going to get hurt. I've e-mailed the police and the county and wrote to the state reps and haven't heard back."



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

One of Pleasantville's troublesome intersections, Bedford Road at Marble Avenue, has caught the attention of the village's Pedestrian Committee.

Other suggestions included installing a traffic camera to record vehicle violations or to build a pedestrian overpass. Roberts suggested starting a petition to build an overpass.

The committee also reviewed accomplishments to date. Two years ago, it launched the "Slow Down Look Up" campaign that highlighted the need for pedestrians and drivers to be alert. Some 300 Slow Down Look Up signs were delivered around town, with many still on residents' lawns.

Pedestrian safety improvements in the village thus far include a new light with push-button activation at Manville Road and the Saw Mill exit.

Footings has been poured for a new signal at the southwest island at the Manville Road-Pleasantville Road intersection and installation of the signal is expected to be completed soon, according to Jeff Econom, superintendent of Public Works.

New speed signs are scheduled to be installed at Broadway and Church Street,

Washington Avenue near the Toll Brothers condominium complex, Manville Road near Soldiers & Sailors Field and on Bedford Road and View Street.

Light sequencing traffic lights with a delayed red light to allow pedestrians to cross are expected for the Bedford Road-Wheeler Avenue crossing, Bedford Road and Marble Avenue and Pleasantville Road near Key Food where there are high-volume pedestrian crossings.

A Community Pride Crosswalk is scheduled to be painted bright green at Marble Avenue near Parkway Field within the month, Econom said.

Econom said lights sequencing is to allow for better traffic flow. As a result, the lights will all turn green at the same time to alleviate a lot of the stop-and-go traffic which is in the village," he said.

The committee proposed a new crossing guard at Bedford Road and Pleasantville Road by the island near Key Food when school resumes in September. The Village Board will consider the request when it reviews the village budget. Pleasantville spends about \$100,000 a year on crossing guards.

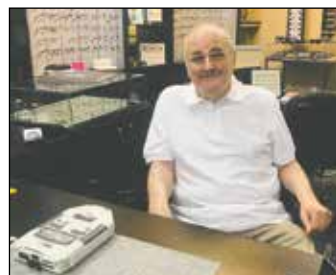
The committee also encouraged residents to become "neighborhood ambassadors" if a safety issue is identified on their street and to report it to the Pleasantville Police Department at 914-769-1500 or by e-mailing policechief@Pleasantville-ny.gov.

For more information, visit the Pleasantville Walks Facebook page or e-mail ppc@Pleasantville-ny.gov.

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# Narrow Majority of Kisco Residents Against Marijuana Sales at Hearing

By Martin Wilbur

A narrow majority of speakers called on the Mount Kisco Village Board last week to opt out of marijuana dispensaries and consumption lounges pointing to concerns about underage use and spurring harder drug consumption.

About 10 members of the public weighed in on the possibility retail sales in the village during the opening session of the live-streamed hearing on June 7.

Retired Mount Kisco police officer Lou Terlizzi said he was concerned that if marijuana sales were allowed in the village there was the chance it could fall into the

hands of minors and have deleterious effects on the still-developing brain.

Terlizzi also worried that there was no test yet developed like the breathalyzer to help determine if a motorist is suspected of having used marijuana. It would also put officers into an awkward position during traffic stops.

"Is having more people under the influence of a mind-altering drug what we want from our village?" Terlizzi asked. "I don't think it makes Mount Kisco stronger or better."

Parent Allison Mastrogiacomo said with young children at home she doesn't want to have to deal with having marijuana sales within the village, especially as they get older.

"I have small kids and it is proven that if you have more access teens will use, teens are more prone to addiction because their brains are not developed yet," said Mastrogiacomo.

Former mayor Michael Cindrich, who also is retired from law enforcement, said without a test for driving under the influence of marijuana should be enough for the board to opt out.

"I don't want to see the village become the destination location while every other community decides to opt out," Cindrich said.

Hector Rodriguez, representing Mount Kisco Partners in Prevention, a local drug prevention organization, said the Marijuana Taxation and Regulation Act

allows officials in municipalities that opt out to change their minds and later allow for the sales. However, if Mount Kisco were to permit sales and/or lounges from the outset, it could not reverse its decision.

However, the pro-marijuana sales crowd was represented during the hearing. Resident Andrew Kwon said many respected people use marijuana, including attorneys and doctors and some of his friends who are also professionals.

"I think there's this perception of it being a predictor of criminal activity or anything of that sort," Kwon said. "It will not be the case."

Dr. Lynn Parodneck, a medical marijuana physician who practices in the village, said research has shown that cannabis is no longer considered a gateway drug and does not lead to further dependence.

Pete McLaughlin, who works with Parodneck, said allowing retail sales will take away the black-market dealers and

allows for regulation and the village to generate tax revenue.

"I think there's an opportunity to control it, where it comes from, who uses it when they use it and takes this money away from a black-market program of cartel-sponsored (dealers)," he said. "That really doesn't benefit anyone except the criminal element."

According to the law, there would be a 13 percent sales tax on marijuana sales, with 9 percent going to the state, 3 percent to the municipality and 1 percent to the county.

Mayor Gina Picinich said regardless of what the board decides, people will have a right to possess marijuana and use it, although it is not allowed where smoking is prohibited. Residents would also be able to grow up to a certain number of plants but would have to obtain a license.

The board adjourned the public hearing until its next meeting.

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# New York AG Announces Election Protection Hotline Open Through Primary

New York Attorney General Letitia James last Friday announced that the Office of the Attorney General is making its election protection hotline available for the upcoming June 22 primary and during New York's early voting period, which runs through Sunday, June 20.

The hotline will be available to troubleshoot and resolve a range of issues encountered by voters, including voting by absentee ballot due to the COVID-19 crisis or in person at their polling place.

"New Yorkers should be able to exercise their right to vote with confidence and ease," James said. "As some states move to limit voting rights, we are doubling down on voter protection and support. This hotline will address any challenges voters face across the state and provide guidance for those casting a ballot. My office is committed to ensuring New Yorkers are able to vote safely and effectively and will do everything in its power to protect fair and equal elections."

The hotline and digital forms are accessible in multiple languages. The hotline will be open through Sunday, June 20 between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. for the entire

early voting period, and between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. on Tuesday, June 22. Written requests for election-related assistance may be submitted at any time through the online complaint form at <https://ag.ny.gov/election-hotline>.

Hotline calls and written requests for election-related assistance are processed by attorneys and staff in the attorney general's Civil Rights Bureau.

The attorney general's office has operated the voter access hotline since November 2012. During previous elections, it has fielded hundreds – and sometimes thousands – of complaints from voters across the state and worked with local election officials and others to address issues. James reminds all registered voters that they have the right to accessible elections.

In addition, all registered voters have the right to vote free from coercion or intimidation, whether by election officials or any other person.

Voters that experience problems can report issues to the Office of the Attorney General by calling 1-800-771-7755 or e-mailing [election.hotline@ag.ny.gov](mailto:election.hotline@ag.ny.gov).

## Early Voting Hours and Polling Sites for Primary

- Tuesday, June 15, 12 to 8 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 16, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Thursday, June 17, 12 to 8 p.m.
- Friday, June 18, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, June 19, 12 to 5 p.m.
- Sunday, June 20, 12 to 5 p.m.

### Westchester County Early Voting Centers

County residents registered to vote visit any early voting site.

- Eastchester Public Library, 11 Oakridge Place, Eastchester, N.Y. 10709
- Dobbs Ferry Village Hall, 112 Main St., Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. 10522
- Greenburgh Town Hall, 177 Hillside Ave., White Plains, N.Y. 10607
- St. Gregory The Great Church, 215 Halstead Ave., Harrison, N.Y. 10528
- Mamaroneck Town Center, 740 W. Boston Post Rd., Mamaroneck, N.Y. 10543
- Mount Kisco Memorial Complex at Leonard Park, 1 Wallace Drive, Mount Kisco, N.Y. 10549
- Mount Pleasant Community Center, 125 Lozza Drive, Valhalla, N.Y. 10595
- Joseph G. Caputo Community Center, 95 Broadway, Ossining, N.Y. 10562
- Pound Ridge Town House, 179 Westchester Ave., Pound Ridge, N.Y. 10576
- Rye Brook Firehouse, 940 King St.,

- Rye Brook, N.Y. 10573
- Somers Town House, 335 Route 202, Somers, N.Y. 10589
- Jefferson Village Annex, 3500 Hill Boulevard, Yorktown Heights, N.Y. 10598
- Yorktown Cultural Center, 1974 Commerce St., Yorktown Heights, N.Y. 10598
- Doles Center, 250 S. 6th Ave., Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10550
- Mount Vernon City Hall, 1 Roosevelt Square, Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10550
- New Rochelle City Hall Annex, 90 Beaufort Place, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10801
- New Rochelle United Methodist Church, 1200 North Ave., New Rochelle, N.Y. 10804
- Peekskill Nutrition Center Neighborhood Center, 4 Nelson Ave., Peekskill, N.Y. 10566
- Peekskill Lincoln Depot Museum, 10 S. Water St., Peekskill, N.Y. 10566
- Westchester County Board of Elections, 25 Quarropas St., White Plains, N.Y. 10601
- Grinton I. Will Library, 1500 Central Park Ave., Yonkers, N.Y. 10710
- Nodine Hill Community Center, 140 Fillmore St., Yonkers, N.Y. 10701
- Riverfront Library, 1 Larkin Center, Yonkers, N.Y. 10701

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# Obituaries

## Marie Croft

Marie Croft died Jan. 2, 2020, at Brandywine Living in Alexandria, Va. She was 81.

Born Aug. 2, 1938, in Peekskill to Bernard and Marie Schottle Fassnacht, she attended Assumption School through ninth grade and graduated from Peekskill High School in 1955.

On Apr. 7, 1956, she married George T. LaDue at Assumption Church in Peekskill, and along with him operated LaDue's Dairy until his death in January 1974.

Marie was employed by the Hendrick Hudson School District from 1974 to 1978 and the Westchester County Department of Probation from 1978 to 1995. She was a volunteer at Hudson Valley Hospital Center in Cortlandt.

She married William A. Croft on Sept. 15, 1984.

She is survived by three sons, George (Susan) LaDue of New Market, Md., Stephen (Kim) LaDue of Fort Mill, S.C. and Terence LaDue of Cary, N.C.; two daughters, Jean Neale of Hopewell Junction and Ann (James Cahill) Croft of Alexandria, Va.; son-in-law Douglas Ferony of Peekskill; 11 grandchildren, Cynthia (Todd) Striegel, Katherine (Joe) Pancione, Valerie Powell, Jennifer, George, Gregory and Jonathan LaDue, Jeanine Gaskins, Sophia and Darren Ferony and Violet Cahill; and seven great-grandchildren, Trevor, Ryan and Evan Striegel, Semaina and Amias Gaskins, Brooke Powell and Kelly Pancione.

Marie was predeceased by an infant son



Marie Croft

in September 1969; her husband, George T. LaDue; son-in-law Arthur Neale in December 1989; daughter Joan (LaDue) Ferony in September 1998; and brother Francis Fassnacht in August 2015. Since Marie's passing, her brother-in-law, William Durr, passed away in April 2020, and her sister, Hilda Durr, passed away in May 2020.

A graveside service will be held on Friday, June 25 at 11 a.m. at Assumption Cemetery in Cortlandt Manor.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to hospice.

## Arthur Nicoletti

Arthur Nicoletti, more commonly known as Art, Artie or a variety of other names not appropriate for an obituary, passed away peacefully on June 3 at the age of 74, surrounded by his wife Susan and son Matthew.

Art courageously battled pancreatic cancer for the past 18 months, which he fought with grace, dignity and humor until the end. He stared fear and death in the face and never blinked. We could not be prouder of him.

Born Apr. 5, 1947, Art grew up in Yonkers, where he was raised by his mother Millie (Lamberti) and father Rocco. He grew up in a loving home with his siblings, Rocky, Lorraine and John, where they were taught the value of helping others, especially those less fortunate, at a very young age. He carried this with him throughout his life.

On Feb. 8, 1975, Art married the love of his life, Susan Benedict. After spending many joyful years traveling the world together, they settled down in Pleasantville, where they continued their love for helping others while raising their son Matthew.

Art's career began after he completed his master's degree at Pace University in New York, which led him to a successful career working for Texaco. While there, he rose through the ranks, conducting business and building relationships throughout the world. In 1994, he became president of Texaco Trading and Transportation in Denver, followed by becoming president of Equiva Trading Company in Houston. He concluded his career assisting in the coordination of the Texaco/Chevron merger before retiring at 54 years old and moving to Bonita Springs, Fla.

Many words can be used to illuminate the life of a man whose infectious smile welcomed all into his circle of love. "Real-life superhero" is a title that truly captured Art's essence; an ordinary man who did extraordinary things. He found great joy

in bringing people together to help others because he knew it brought out the best in them. With his bold, intentional and joyful spirit, Art empowered a team of over 600 volunteers to provide thousands of Thanksgiving meals to the less fortunate, every year – a tradition that will surely live on.

Art was passionate about everything he did in life, whether it was cooking one of his many famous meals, eating ice cream, listening to music, exercising, organizing trivia events or cheering (more like screaming) at a sporting event. Art's love for others is a legacy that he leaves behind, empowering others to follow their dreams while taking care of those around them. There is no doubt his noble and generous contributions left this world a better place.

Art is survived by his loving wife, Susan; his devoted son and daughter-in-law, Matthew and Jennifer; his loving grandchildren, Vinny, Sammi and Olivia; his brothers, Rocky and John (Barbara); his sister, Lorraine (John); his in-laws, Pat (Diane) and Wendy; his best friend, Phil (Michele); 10 nieces and nephews; and 16 great-nieces and great-nephews. He was recently predeceased by his sister-in-law, Joanne, who we know has welcomed him with open arms.

Many thanks to all of Art's family and friends. You enriched his life and surrounded him with so much love and support. He was so appreciative of all of you.

Art was honored at Beecher Flocks Funeral Home in Pleasantville. Visiting hours were on June 10 and 11, followed by a memorial service on June 11.

While flowers are welcome, we know Art would greatly appreciate donations to the Shadow Wood Charitable Foundation at [www.shadowwoodcharitablefoundation.org](http://www.shadowwoodcharitablefoundation.org).

A memorial service will be held in Bonita Springs, Fla. at a later date.

*Obituaries continued on page 22*

## Fernando Pinto

Fernando Correia Pinto, 88, of Pleasantville went to heaven on June 12 to join his predeceased wife, Maria Alice De Sousa Pinto.

Fernando was born on Feb. 14, 1933, in Sande, Marco De Canaveses, Portugal and came to the United States in 1966. Fernando worked for Higham Press of Pleasantville for over 30 years.

He was the beloved father of Manuel Pinto, Anthony Pinto and Margarida Pinto; the beloved grandfather of Fernando Pinto, Anthony Pinto Jr., Christopher Pinto, Krystianne Lee Van Sise, Timothy

Pinto, Margarida Velardo, Christina Pinto, Matthew Pinto and Vincent Velardo; and the beloved great-grandfather of Waylon Van Sise, Makayla Pinto, Alyssa Pinto, James Pinto, Christopher Pinto Jr. and Avery Pinto.

The family received friends at the Beecher Flocks Funeral Home on June 14. A Mass of Christian Burial was scheduled to be celebrated at Holy Innocents Church in Pleasantville on Tuesday, June 15 at 10 a.m., followed by burial at All Souls Cemetery in Pleasantville.

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# Dems' County Clerk Primary Pits Idoni vs. Yonkers Councilwoman

By Martin Wilbur

County clerk is a position few people give much thought to – until a business license, passport or land record must be obtained or access to one of the hundreds of thousands of documents stored at its office is sought.

It is the oldest elected position in Westchester County, although in day-to-day practice largely a records management center.

That's why it came as a surprise to some that four-term incumbent Timothy Idoni was challenged this year in a Democratic primary for his seat by Yonkers Councilwoman Shanae Williams.

But Idoni, who would become the third longest-serving clerk since the office was filled in 1684 should he win and complete a fifth four-year term, took the challenge in stride. He said the Democratic Party has become so dominant in Westchester that for many positions the only competition are intraparty challenges.

"You expect a primary these days. Everything is internal," said Idoni, 66, a New Rochelle native and resident. "It you're not getting primaried, you're doing such a superior job or somebody's looking to take you out. It's the nature of the job."

The primary challenge, Idoni's second since becoming county clerk, comes from Williams, 32, who first became interested in government as a state Assembly intern while attending SUNY Albany. Born in Kingston, Jamaica, she immigrated with her family to Yonkers when she was nine years old.

But it was the green card process, and her

fortuitously-timed internship, that opened her eyes to see how government can help average people. She learned she needed her green card renewed after 10 years or apply for citizenship – she opted to become a citizen – and acknowledges she would have been lost had there not been people in Albany to help her.

"I realized that I was in a very fortunate situation because where I was, being in school and having access to folks who were able to help me through the internship that I did," said Williams, who earned an online master's degree in business administration from Walden University while working for six years in the Yonkers mayor's office.

But she realized that there were many people, including many of Westchester's immigrants, who did not have that access or have the rules explained to them straightforwardly.

Williams, who successfully ran for Christopher Johnson's council seat after he moved on to the Board of Legislators, said her key goal if elected county clerk would be to make citizens, many from underserved communities, aware of the many services that the county clerk has to offer.

She intends to increase community outreach and use of the office's mobile passport vehicle. Williams plans to include other services to that vehicle and to be consistently visible at events and street fairs throughout the county.

"That's really my passion, that's why I'm in government right now and that's why I'm running for county clerk," Williams said. "I



Westchester County Clerk Timothy Idoni is being challenged in next week's primary by Yonkers Councilwoman Shanae Williams.

know firsthand how important resources and information and having access to those can be for the average person throughout Westchester."

Idoni has been a Westchester public servant for more than 30 years, although he never intended to run for public office. After earning a master's in public management at NYU, his goal was to become a city manager.

While still in school, Idoni interned as an assistant to the Bronxville village manager, then got a job as the director of emergency services and deputy city manager in New Rochelle. From there, Idoni in 1985 became village manager in Ardsley for five years.

He then left the public sector for two years to work for a nonprofit affordable housing

agency to gain housing-related experience, which is needed to manage larger cities.

But that's where the opportunity for elected office emerged. Idoni was approached by a bipartisan group to run for New Rochelle mayor because the city was \$1 million in debt. He agreed, got elected and his administration started making transformative changes, reducing staff by more than 20 percent, recruiting businesses and developers.

"I brought in the first Home Depot and the first Costco into Westchester, so that helped satisfy the financial aspects of (the city)," Idoni said. "They bring in a lot of money and still do. Then we started building tall buildings downtown like everybody else is doing these days."

While still serving as mayor, Idoni ran and won the county clerk's race in 2005, soon began making changes. Westchester was the first county in the state to electronically record mortgages and deeds and later court documents. He expanded the mobile unit from four trips a year to making it an almost weekly destination before COVID-19 hit. The office has also streamlined the processing of pistol permits.

In another term, Idoni plans to physically change the layout of the clerk's office to make it more efficient for the public and safer for employees should the pandemic continue to affect society. Then he hopes to expand the types of court actions to be filed electronically. Matrimonial cases are still handled on paper.

"You can make change but it's change within the scope of the job as opposed to social change issues," Idoni said.

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# Letters to the Editor

## Feldman's Thoughtful Approach to Governing is What Ossining Needs

In a community as diverse as Ossining, to be an effective leader one must seek to understand the diverse lived experiences of all those who reside in this community.

An effective leader must be willing to engage in dialogue that offers opportunities for all stakeholders to have a seat at the table. Backdoor negotiations or cherry-picked committees that exclude the general public almost always inevitably backfire, creating further mistrust between constituents and local representatives, and in turn has created a deadlock in growth and moving our community forward in the positive direction it deserves.

It's no secret that when Ossining is united in its mission, we accomplish great things.

The Town of Ossining needs leadership that is capable of restoring trust and relationships with community members. A

leader willing to seek guidance and input from beyond what and who they already know. Someone willing to take pause, to collect and examine all information and acknowledge that what they want personally may not be what is right for the whole.

As a resident of the unincorporated Town of Ossining, I must rely solely on the town supervisor and board for representation. A board by which the majority reside outside the jurisdiction they represent, making engagement with their unincorporated area constituents all the more important and necessary.

In my personal experience, Elizabeth "Liz" Miller Feldman is the only current board member to demonstrate the willingness to engage in difficult conversations on behalf of all of her constituents. While I have sometimes been

exuberantly passionate in communicating issues of concern for the community that raised me and is now raising my children, Liz Feldman has remained poised in her approach and always listens and acknowledges my concerns by bringing them to the table.

For me the decision is simple. I support the candidate who represents me and who has demonstrated her possession of the qualities we should all seek in a representative. Poised strength to follow her convictions while engaging and listening to all points of view and making decisions based on what is right for the whole.

I support Elizabeth Feldman for town supervisor.

**Marisa Santucci Caruso**  
Ossining

## Liz Feldman is Ossining's Best Choice for Town Supervisor

When Elizabeth (Liz) Feldman was elected the first female commodore in the Ossining Boat and Canoe Club's 100-year history, it was clear that she was a natural leader destined to achieve great results; first for the all-volunteer community boat club and later for the whole Town of Ossining.

When Liz was elected town councilwoman, she quickly put her lifetime of experience in both the town and the Village of Ossining to work for the benefit of all of our residents. Liz's deep knowledge of our community has set her apart from all of the relative newcomers in local government, and her unique ability to lead by patiently building consensus in a cordial and understanding way has made her an invaluable asset to the town council.

Liz Feldman has built an extraordinary number of warm relationships with every part of our diverse community. She's friendly, approachable and she's always respectful and ready to listen. She has served ALL of our town residents very well during the past five years, and she looks forward to applying her natural talent for leadership to move our town forward in these challenging times.

As your new town supervisor, Liz Feldman will dedicate herself full-time to the important work of building a more vibrant and more equitable town. She'll work at preserving our green spaces, protecting our watershed and preserving our historical structures. She'll work to address climate change by imposing new energy efficiencies in town operations,

both to reduce our carbon footprint and to save taxpayer dollars on energy costs. She'll work to expand affordable housing opportunities for our seniors.

Liz Feldman's broad community connections along with her listening, communication, collaboration and management skills will be vital as we work together to help Ossining recover from the pandemic and the heavy toll it has taken on our businesses and residents.

Vote for the candidate who has devoted her heart and soul to the town we all love. Vote for Liz Feldman in the Democratic primary.

**Mark J. Fry**  
Ossining

## Democrats Made a Mess of Indian Point and the Area Will Suffer

Not only have Democrats made a complete mess of national issues like the Mexican border and building up unsustainable debt and deficits, but on the local level, Gov. Cuomo's closing of Indian Point nuclear power plant will cause much higher electric bills, blackouts and more carbon emissions.

Democrats failed to stop the closing of the plant, which had a record-breaking 573 continuous days of safe operation, even though they control all local, county and congressional offices. Nita Lowey, former

chair of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, was supposed to find a location to ship the many hundreds of tons of radioactive spent fuel rods, which she failed to accomplish. State Sen. Peter Harkham and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef failed to stop the closing. Local town officials failed to stop the closing, despite projections that the plant had many years left of useful life.

Democrats are supposed to be for a clean environment, yet now electric energy will be generated by fossil-fuel plants. Indian Point supplied more than 25 percent of

the electricity for the entire New York metropolitan area, now replaced by carbon-emission fossil fuels. And it will have devastating effects on the local economy mandating higher taxes and higher electric charges.

We've had enough Democratic control. Let's give the Republicans a chance to clean up the mess created by the Democrats.

**Dick DeLorenzo**  
Crompond

## Feldman is the Right Leader Right Now for Ossining

Ossining town supervisor. A position that can be voted on not only by the residents of the unincorporated Town of Ossining, but also by village of Ossining and Briarcliff residents, and is often overlooked.

Town supervisor is a mix of a mayor and village manager for the unincorporated town residents, and (hopefully) works together with the two villages (Ossining and Briarcliff Manor) to benefit town residents as a whole.

I have been on the Town Board and have worked with both Dana Levenberg and Elizabeth Feldman. To me, the choice is clear.

Liz Feldman, a lifelong Ossining resident, is intelligent and deeply knowledgeable about the town as a whole, including the community and the environment. She exudes quiet confidence. Her ability to actively listen and take in information and facts is unparalleled. She believes deeply in doing what is right and truly listening to and meeting the needs of the residents.

She has been on the board for six years and understands all aspects of the job, from our water sources to taxes to roads. Ms. Feldman has been part of the

accomplishments that have been made these past six years by the board, sometimes as the force for implementation. Sometimes she was the force for stopping things that needed more thought. She is strong and fair and will provide the right direction for Ossining now.

Please join me in voting for Elizabeth Feldman in the Democratic primary.

**Kim Jeffrey**  
Former Ossining Deputy Town  
Supervisor/Town Council Member



# Letters to the Editor

## Feiner, Always on Call, Looks to Help Constituents With All Kinds of Issues

I recently saw a campaign sign on the side of the road while I was driving which read "Paul Feiner; Always on Call."

Usually, these signs don't affect how I cast my vote in an upcoming election. Now, however, I truly believe that Paul Feiner is always on call. Feiner, the current Greenburgh supervisor, is running for re-election in the June 22 primary.

I am a senior and I have had serious medical issues related to chronic infections for many years. Due to the serious symptoms I continue to experience every day, I was forced to leave my career in 2001. I need an infusion of intravenous Gamma globulin every three to four weeks to support my compromised immune system, and with the help of my doctor, I have been able to obtain this very important drug for more than seven years.

Due to financial issues and the very high cost of this drug, I had been receiving financial assistance over this time. I could not have afforded the co-insurance required by my insurance plan without this help. With COVID-19 ever present, this drug is even more important now to help protect me from that virus. The specialty pharmacy which has been providing me the drug as well as financial assistance, effectively went out of business in the latter part of 2020 after having been acquired some time ago by a larger pharmaceutical company. My prescription for the Gamma globulin was transferred to this large pharma company, and so I applied for financial assistance through them as well. I never had an issue with the previous specialty pharmacy I had been working with.

It seems that with the new pharmacy and a different policy. They declined to offer me financial assistance and I was unable to receive this very important drug for eight weeks, at which time I agreed to pay the co-insurance so I could get the infusion I seriously needed. I was looking for other sources of financial assistance, but none seemed to be available at the time.

It was suggested I speak with my town supervisor. Maybe he or she could help. I had nothing to lose so I called Feiner. His cell phone number is readily available and he took my call. When I explained my problem, he suggested I e-mail him with the details of my struggle, and so I did, and I included a letter from my doctor to the pharma company requesting help on my behalf.

In turn, Paul sent these to several of his contacts with his input, requesting help on my behalf. One of his contacts was a senior corporate executive of the large pharma company which had declined to help me with financial assistance. His letter with my documentation made a difference. I received word within a short time that they had changed their policy and that I would be eligible for their financial assistance retroactive to Jan. 1, 2021, and for the remainder of the year. I was then able to order the drug, which was delivered shortly thereafter.

So, as the campaign sign says, Paul Feiner is always on call. Thanks, Paul, for your help. You've earned my vote.

**Vince Giangrande  
Greenburgh**

## New Castle Democratic Committee: Our Candidates Stand for Party's Values

Anyone can run on the Democratic line, but only one slate deserves the D after its name in November. Democrats for New Castle have all worked to elect Democrats at all levels of government and represent what the party is all about – equity, community service and shared prosperity.

The choice for the June 22 Democratic primary is clear – Holly McCall for town supervisor, Lori Morton, Michael Weinberg and Jennifer Bounds for Town Board. This slate, Democrats for New Castle, has the overwhelming support of our Democratic leaders including Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, former congresswoman Nita Lowey and County Executive George Latimer. Our committee, the New Castle Democrats, endorsed this slate as the clear choice for our town due to their experience, commitment and compassion.

But it's not just their endorsements, it's the fact that all four of these candidates have already dedicated their time and talents to making our town better. McCall currently serves as vice president of the Chappaqua Board of Education, where she ensured that schools were able to open full-time despite a

global pandemic. Morton has already made an impact on our town's sustainability and conservation goals in the short time she has served on the Town Board. Weinberg has been an advocate for businesses in New Castle through his work on the Chamber of Commerce and now on the Millwood/West End Advisory Board. Bounds has moved our town toward greater equity and inclusion through her leadership on the Council on Race and Equity.

In addition, Bounds is the only candidate on the ballot for the two-year term who is committed to taking the seat if elected. (Her opponent is moving out of New Castle and has publicly expressed that she will not take the seat.)

These are the types of experienced and dedicated leaders we need to keep our town moving forward. We can't wait to vote for these candidates in the Democratic primary. We hope you will join us in being a voter. Early voting is until June 20.

**The Town of New Castle Democratic  
Committee**

## Levenberg's Record of Accomplishments Makes Her the Choice for Ossining

Elections matter. Please join me in re-electing Dana Levenberg as Ossining town supervisor.

Dana and I partnered on a number of initiatives during the five years that our service as Ossining's chief elected officials overlapped. The moment Dana took office, she began working toward her vision for a more equitable and sustainable community. She brought with her nine years of experience on the school board and seven years as chief of staff for Assemblywoman Sandy Galef, following a private sector career in media production. Equally important as her professional skill set, are her tremendous energy, hands-on involvement and tenacity.

Dana is best known for her leadership on environmental initiatives, and has represented our town admirably, serving in influential positions throughout the region. She has raised unprecedented amounts of grant funding, improved Ossining's financial standing, established the Community Equity Task Force and partnered with the NAACP to address racism head-on.

I don't have harsh feelings toward Dana's opponent. But when it comes to who is best able to lead Ossining during the next term, there is no question. Both candidates have been in town elected office for exactly the same amount of time. They have exactly the same voting record. But their records

of achievement are vastly different. Ask the candidates for a list of what they have accomplished, spearheaded or even just introduced for Ossining town government, and there is no comparison.

I implore voters not to sit out this Democratic primary election under the mistaken belief that our community would be equally well-served by either candidate. Town supervisor is the only official who acts as both legislator and administrator. Dana's ability to manage a budget, garner grant funding and lead major improvement initiatives will have real world consequences for Ossining. Her years of experience working with public budgets and legislation were just the foundation for all that she has accomplished as our supervisor.

Registered Democrats in the Town of Ossining, which includes the Village of Ossining and most of Briarcliff Manor, mark your calendar now. Vote early at the Community Center through June 20, or at your regular polling place on June 22.

Elections matter. The future of Ossining matters. Cast your ballot to re-elect Dana Levenberg as town supervisor.

**Victoria Gearity  
Former Ossining Mayor**

## Check the Record: Levenberg is the Best Choice for Ossining

On June 22, I'll be casting my vote in the Democratic primary to re-elect Dana Levenberg as supervisor for the Town of Ossining.

As someone who has invested so much of my time volunteering to help move this community toward environmental sustainability, I am keenly aware of the support needed to bolster efforts from local government. Supervisor Levenberg has done an outstanding job of creating, shepherding and supporting important initiatives to propel us into an eco-conscious mindset. She has demonstrated her commitment to our community in environmentally forward-thinking ways. And she shows up and helps with programs because she knows how important they are – she walks the walk.

Some of the critical efforts spearheaded by Supervisor Levenberg are the development of a new Comprehensive Plan with sustainability elements; local legislation to support solar panel and battery energy storage installation; Community Choice Aggregation so that residents can participate in 100 percent renewable energy options; LED streetlight replacement; energy benchmarking for municipal buildings; addition of electric vehicles to the town fleet; and the EnergySmart HOMES program through Sustainable Westchester.

One of the many endorsements Levenberg received in past elections is from the New York League of Conservation

Voters for her work. The Town of Ossining is emerging as a leader for green initiatives and has been recognized for these efforts – the continuation of Tree City USA designation for completed tree inventories, Sierra Club recognition for 100 percent green Community Choice Aggregation, inclusion as a Clean Air New York community partner and awarding of protections for the state Department of Environmental Conservation's Unique Area adjacent to the Croton River.

It's important to remember that there is no candidate that will get everything right. You can disagree with certain positions or actions taken by an elected official, but still be confident in their leadership skills. My decision is not about who I like better. My vote goes to the only candidate who has business, municipal and organizational management experience. The person who can best manage a \$15 million municipal budget, teams of people and multiple projects while maintaining the municipal, intra-municipal and county relationships needed to make magical things happen. Supervisor Levenberg is the best candidate for Ossining.

**Suzie Ross  
Co-founder, Ossining Documentary &  
Discussion Series  
Executive Board, Ossining100  
Executive Committee, The Climate  
Reality Project, Westchester Chapter  
Chairperson, Green Ossining**



# Letters to the Editor

## Feldman's Service, Life Experience Makes Her Strong Fit for Supervisor

I write today in support of Town Councilwoman Elizabeth (Liz) Feldman for Ossining town supervisor.

Liz is uniquely qualified to represent all the people of Ossining. As a lifelong resident, having lived in both the unincorporated area of the town and in the Village of Ossining, Liz attended Ossining schools and sent both of her children to the Ossining public schools. This gives Liz a wide and deep understanding of our community and the needs and concerns of our residents and businesses.

She brings a passion, combined with a quiet competency, to her role on the

Ossining Town Board, which combined with her wealth of experience as former commodore, managing the membership of the Ossining Boat and Canoe Club (OBCC) and as a leader in the Ossining Flotilla of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, will serve her well as town supervisor.

Liz excels at helping to manage and coordinate the diverse group of volunteers at the OBCC, helping to bring opposing groups together for the common goal of saving the historic clubhouse from demolition. The success of this campaign kept the OBCC open and available as one of the most cost-effective venues for on-water recreation on

the beautiful Hudson River.

Liz worked full-time while raising two boys as a single parent. Although her job does not come with the protections offered by a union collective bargaining agreement, she supports collective bargaining rights for all workers and fair wages and benefits for town employees, whether represented by a union or not.

I've known Liz Feldman for over 20 years. She is a person of great integrity that is always happy to step up to respond to the challenges faced by Ossining residents and businesses with a smile and a "How can I help?"

Liz treats everyone with respect and compassion at work and in interactions with all people in both villages and the unincorporated area, which make up the Town of Ossining.

Help Councilwoman Elizabeth Feldman continue to move Ossining forward as a greener, safer, more inviting, more interesting community. Vote for Elizabeth Feldman for Ossining town supervisor.

**In Unity Always,  
Robert R. Daraio**

**Former Trustee, Village of Ossining**

## Agudelo Lacks the Leadership and Skills to Represent Peekskill

At the recent Peekskill primary debate, my colleague, Vanessa Agudelo, spewed falsehoods about the council. I can no longer quietly sit by without responding to her false accusations.

I was taught at a young age that your integrity is one of the most important attributes a person can have, especially a person in a leadership position. Ms. Agudelo states that the council does not listen to her; we do not pass legislation that she brings forth in a timely matter and that we shut the door on the public. She claims she is the only person on the council that represents the public interest. These are all falsehoods. What she does not state is that she claims to be the unheard or a victim if you do not agree with her position or idea.

Ms. Agudelo lacks the skills that an elected official should have in order to speak to people even if they have different opinions and she needs to learn how to build consensus. The art of compromise is a skill that is required when you work in a group, and sometimes you may not get your way. These are skills that we are taught at a very young age. We are also taught that you are not always going to get what you want. Throwing a temper tantrum or blaming others like your colleagues or committee

members will not move the needle in your favor.

At the debate, it was obvious yet again that Ms. Agudelo never reflects upon herself because it is always everyone else's fault. This is not the kind of leader we need in Peekskill.

We need a leader who can bring people together even if we all do not think the same way. A leader who does not make you feel less of a person if you happen to respectfully disagree with some ideas. A leader who can build consensus with their fellow colleagues and can work across the table with people that have different opinions.

A leader does not have to steamroll their ideas but can respectfully talk to people and sometimes agree to disagree. We do not have to all think alike and agree all the time but we do need leaders with integrity, honesty and skills to work with all the people.

This is why I am supporting Vivian McKenzie for mayor and Rob Scott, Ramon Fernandez and Dwight Douglas for council. Integrity is what Peekskill needs and these candidates have it!

**Councilwoman Patricia Riley  
Peekskill**

## Form Based Code Doesn't Address Downtown Chappaqua's Challenges

I have been a Chappaqua resident for the past eight years and have been trying to open a casual food business with carry-out and dine-in options for the past seven years. I have been told by numerous property owners or their representatives that they don't want food businesses in their vacant spaces.

The Form Based Code provides as-of-right development ability to owners who will seek to maximize profits, not maximize benefits for the community. New developments will drive up rents and make it more difficult for potential tenants like me to afford lease space in Chappaqua.

The Form Based Code in its current iteration doesn't benefit all of the stakeholders in the hamlet and is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. The real problem is the real estate owners' inability to collaborate with the residents,

school district, business owners and Town Board to create a thriving and flourishing commercial and residential hub. Chappaqua can do without more real estate agencies, banks, dry cleaners or salons – all tenants real estate owners love. Chappaqua needs more "social spaces" that include art and culture, restaurants and establishments that promote the hamlet to future residents and businesses, a category that doesn't seem to appeal to property owners.

Chappaqua has a poor track record on development. The focus shouldn't be on mediocre expansion but rather on improvement of the current tenant mix that benefits the community as a whole. The Form Based Code is going to offer more of what we already have and less of what we need.

**Dan Soloway  
Chappaqua**

## Levenberg is All About Getting Things Done for Ossining

I am writing to add my voice to those who support Dana Levenberg's bid for re-election as Ossining town supervisor. I have known Dana for about two decades, watching her work tirelessly to bring innovative ideas that would benefit all members of our community.

Dana's environmental and street safety initiatives were the first I noticed. She was the organizing force behind walk-to-school days for Ossining students, meant to encourage healthy activity and pedestrian safety. Fast forward and you can see how that legacy grew into action that secured grant funds for many green initiatives, such as charging stations for electric vehicles at town parks, bike safety, a food scraps program and incorporation of sustainability elements into the new Comprehensive Plan.

Dana has also been a long-term advocate for equity and opportunity for all Ossining's residents. Her service on the school board, co-creation of the Ossining Micro Fund and creation of the town's Community Equity Task Force are all testaments to that.

Dana's energy to show up for Ossining is impressive, not only for the expected occasions but also in small, personal ways. Throughout the pandemic, she was a cheerleader for local businesses, highlighting them in social media posts, along with videos of a meal she'd purchased or a conversation she'd had with owners or fellow residents. She is also a leader in the important work of encouraging organ donor enrollment.

Add all this to the robust list of accomplishments like park and infrastructure improvements and sound fiscal management (with taxes under the cap and a ratings improvement), and I am fully convinced that our community would be wise to re-elect Dana as supervisor.

I hope you'll join me in doing that by casting your vote for Dana in the Democratic primary.

**Ginny Loughlin  
Ossining**

## Levenberg Has All the Qualities to Continue Serving as Ossining Supervisor

Dana Levenberg is a rock-solid choice for Ossining town supervisor. A cursory glance at her long list of accomplishments over the last five years will make her effectiveness evident. Instead of going into those details, I'd like to provide a framework for what I think makes a great town supervisor.

There are three questions that I ask myself when deciding whether to endorse someone for supervisor: Do they have a compelling reason for wanting the role? Do they have a compelling vision for the town? Are they able to work well with others?

To the first question, Dana's main reason for wanting to be re-elected is to close the gap between where the town is and where it could be. She wants Ossining to be the best place it can be to live, work and play. This makes her effective at complicated projects like raising the town's credit rating.

That leads to the second question regarding vision. She wants to make

Ossining greener and more welcoming for everyone. With the town recovering from a pandemic that has ravaged the economy and health of our community, Dana's thoughtful approach to recovering in a way that doesn't leave anyone behind is inspiring.

Can she work well with others? Absolutely. What I appreciate most about Dana is her way of engaging community members that think differently than she does on important issues. She takes the time to understand why people believe what they do instead of trying to convince them they're wrong.

I've been honored to call Dana my friend for years. I'd be even more honored to call her my town supervisor for another term. In-person early voting for the primary begins this Saturday, June 12 and runs through June 20. The primary will be held on Tuesday, June 22.

**Omar Lopez  
Ossining Village Trustee**



# New Castle Takes Stand Against Spate of Anti-Semitic Attacks

By Martin Wilbur

When a rash of anti-Semitic attacks erupted last month after the deadly fighting between Israel and Hamas, it was disturbing to most people.

What has been more troubling for many American Jews was that the hate incidents weren't happening in a distant country but right here in the United States, including attacks in New York.

On Sunday, the Town of New Castle and its Holocaust & Human Rights Committee held an hour-long program at the gazebo in Chappaqua near the town's Holocaust Memorial to denounce the rise in anti-Jewish bigotry and vowed to fight against all forms of hate.

"I never, ever imagined that I would find myself in New York in 2021 witnessing the horrific attacks we have seen against Jews here in the United States," said Chappaqua resident Harriett Schleifer, the national president of the American Jewish Committee and one of the program's speakers. "This is not Paris or Berlin; this is not 1933. This is 2021 in the greatest country in the world and yet we've seen an alarming rise in attacks on Jews simply because of our religion."

The event, which attracted about 100 people, was spearheaded by Councilwoman Lisa Katz. Last Tuesday the entire Town Board approved a resolution to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism, the first municipality to do so, she said.



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTOS

About 100 people attended New Castle's rally on Sunday to combat the recent rash of anti-Semitic incidents around the United States. Right: Harriett Schleifer, one of the speakers at New Castle's event Sunday to fight anti-Semitism.

Katz said New Castle hasn't escaped unscathed. Jewish children locally have felt uncomfortable as the events unfolded half a world away. She said the community, which prides itself on being inclusive, couldn't be silent any longer.

"When acts of hatred, bigotry or violence occur, we understand it is an affront to everything we stand for," Katz said. "Anti-Semitism in all its forms is contrary to the beliefs and values of our town and to all of us standing here today."

Rabbi Aaron Brusso of Bet Torah in Mount Kisco said the Jewish community has been in pain since the rash of attacks. The anti-Semitic attacks happening so close to home has been a shocking experience for many who thought that by being in the United States



they were largely protected.

"This is what Jews dealt with in other times and other places," Brusso said. "This is America and America is supposed to be different. We were strangers in Egypt thousands of years ago, we were strangers in Spain in the 15th century, we were strangers in France in the 19th century. But in 21st century America we were home – or so we thought."

The Anti-Defamation League reported that in May there were 305 anti-Semitic incidents in the United States, more than double for the same time frame last year. Of those incidents, 11 were assaults, while the rest were predominantly harassment and vandalism.

To help combat bigotry, people of different races, nationalities and religions must stand with one another. Dr. Mehnaz Afridi, the

director of the Holocaust Genocide and Interfaith Education Center in the Bronx and a professor of Islamic studies at Manhattan College, said she has dedicated her life, as a Muslim woman, to fight anti-Semitism. She is also the first Muslim to lead a Holocaust Center in the United States.

"I come here today to say to you that I am here for you," Afridi said. "That I stand by you, that this is a crucial point for Jewish-Muslim relations. This is a crucial time for us in America. Why? Because this is the only country in the world that has religious freedom."

Afridi explained that even in other western democracies or in Pakistan where she was born, she "felt more othered." But in the United States she has the freedom to travel or wear what she wants.

Assemblyman Chris Burdick (D-Bedford) said he helped secure a \$30,000 state grant for the Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center in White Plains, which does critically important work to help educate students and other about the Holocaust.

For local resident Gaye Altman, she said it was important for her to take time out of her day and attend Sunday's program to display the unity that many of the speakers talked about.

"When someone taps you on the shoulder and says that this is something you have to do, you have to stand up, you have to be proactive and do all that you can to get hate and bigotry and anti a lot of things, this was very important, very important," Altman said.





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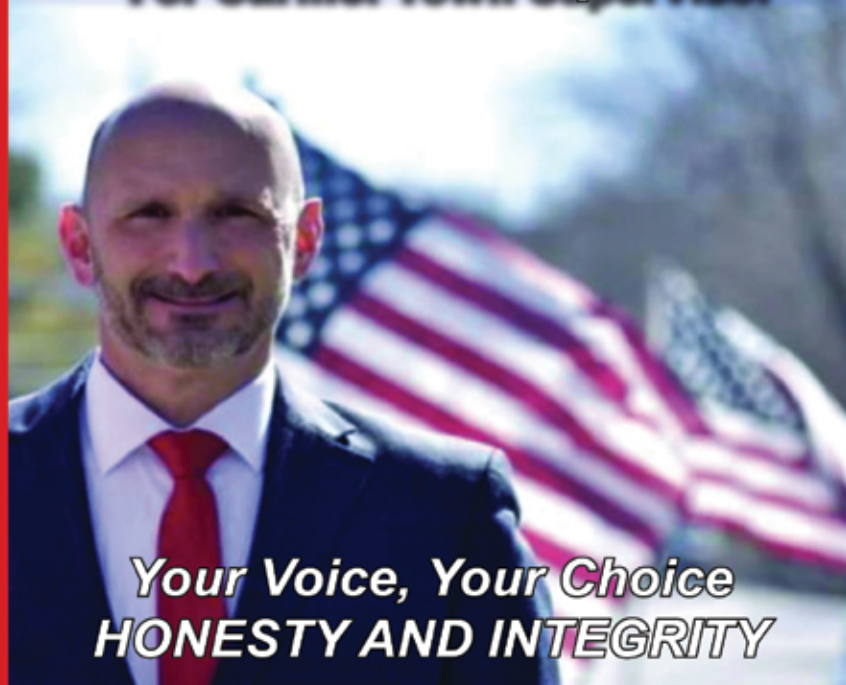


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# Yorktown Hosts its Inaugural LGBTQ Pride Event, March

By Samuel Rowland

A rainbow sea filled the parking lot of Yorktown’s Town Hall on a cloudy Saturday last week as the town celebrated its first-ever public LGBTQ Pride event and march.

Participants filed in to the beats of a drum circle led by the Westchester Spirited Drummers, wearing pride flags for various genders and sexualities as capes, donning colored wigs and hair sprays, holding homemade signs and wearing t-shirts expressing support and love.

“This progress...has not been achieved by accident,” said Rep. Mondaire Jones (D-White Plains), the keynote speaker and the first openly gay Black member of Congress. “It’s because people like us came together and have fought for this.”

After the speeches ended, loud and colorful marchers chanted, sang and danced their way to Jack Devito Memorial Field. Despite a lingering drizzle driving some of the attendees away, the marchers filled the parade route with their bodies and voices, especially while singing along with classic Pride hits, such as ABBA’s “Dancing Queen” and Lady Gaga’s “Born This Way.”

Other notable speakers at



SAMUEL ROWLAND PHOTOS

Rep. Mondaire Jones addresses the throng that participated in last Saturday’s LGBTQ Pride March in Yorktown.

the event included Yorktown Councilman Ed Lachterman and Assemblyman Kevin Byrne (R-Mahopac). Byrne, who learned about the event only an hour before it started, spoke extemporaneously, and touted some of the LGBTQ rights bills that had passed during his tenure, claiming that “New York is ahead of the curve.”

Lachterman spoke about his brother, a former president of SUNY Stony Brook University’s Gay Student Union.

“For Michael, the pride parade



Revelers came out to celebrate Pride Month at Yorktown’s first-ever Pride event and march last Saturday.

was about awareness and an understanding that gays and lesbians were normal people,” Lachterman said. “His desire was for the parade not to accentuate the differences in people, but to celebrate the commonalities.”

Kristen Browde, co-chair of the National Trans Bar Association, addressed the Republican politicians bluntly at the event, surprising even the organizers who had invited her.

“Today is the first day of early voting. And that may be why you see them here celebrating with us,” Browde said. “You can vote for people who actually are for equality



Yorktown’s inaugural Pride March drew an impressive crowd walking from Town Hall to Jack Devito Field.

and justice. And I hope we will be celebrating at a time when there are real warriors across the board.”

“The idea of us gathering for the first Pride March in Yorktown brings so much joy to my heart,” said Anthony Calbi, the organizer of the official post-march party at Yorktown Grille. “It seemed like a pipedream many years ago but it is reality today. This is history and I couldn’t be more excited!”

Calbi, who has been an outed gay man with the support of his friends and family since 2012, has hosted “Love Wins” parties for Pride Month since 2017 at Yorktown Grille. After hosting the increasingly popular parties for LGBTQ locals and their allies the next two years before taking a pandemic-induced break in 2020, he

was tapped by Yorktown for Justice last month to host its official after-party and to give a speech of his own.

Yorktown for Justice was established last year, formed as a response to the nationwide protests sparked by the murder of George Floyd. Marisa Ragonese, director of the Westchester County Youth Council, helped organize a Black Lives Matter march for Yorktown after seeing marches in Somers last summer.

When Ragonese and Rachel Freddy and the other organizers saw the turnout they had generated, they quickly decided they needed to keep the momentum going, organizing fundraisers, donation drives and community art events throughout the past year.

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# Dads & Grads

## Making the Best of a Virtual Graduation Ceremony During a Pandemic

By Gloria Raskin

Of all the important days in everyone's lives – births, weddings, college admissions, first jobs, first homes, retirement – the most important one for me is graduation.

It can be any graduation, from any elementary, middle school, high school or college. If I am in earshot, as soon as I hear the faint strains of Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance," my eyes start to tear and my nose starts to drip. The audience stands and claps while we strain to see the graduates enter.

I can remember graduating to the same tune, only we had words to the music. We called it "Land of Hope and Glory," and sang as we marched down the aisle in a local movie theater where our high school graduation took place.

I look at graduates, some jubilant, some embarrassed to be noticed, some happy and a few with tears in their eyes, too. They recognize the symbolism; this is the end of one part of their young lives and beginning of another.

Our oldest granddaughter was going to



be graduating from a small university in North Carolina. We were hoping we could attend, but the college considered the options carefully and eventually limited each graduate to two tickets. Of course, her mother and father would attend. Her younger sister would watch it on Zoom,

along with her grandparents. In my opinion, they chose correctly, considering safety and the pandemic above all else. They held three distinct graduation ceremonies; we were in the 1 p.m. group.

We prepared for the event by positioning ourselves on the sectional

in our family room at the appointed time with the computer resting on my knees. We watched the dignitaries enter the room and be seated, several feet apart from each other, as were the graduates. We listened to the orchestra play the school's alma mater and paid close attention to the speaker who delivered a most inspiring message.

Finally, it was time for the graduates to receive their diploma, walk on stage, shake hands and pose for a keepsake photo.

As our graduate's name starts with a letter at the end of the alphabet, we watched all the graduates walk up a few steps onto the stage, receive their diploma, shake hands, pose for the photographer and walk off. We held our breath as our graduate ascend the pair of steps, received her diploma and smiled. Her face lit up and her two grandparents smiled broadly at the same exact time.

While we would have chosen to be there in person, Zoom was better than not seeing it at all!

*Gloria Raskin is a Mount Kisco resident.*

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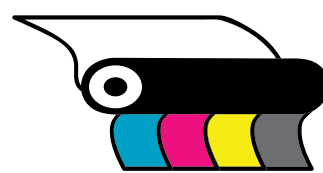
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# Lighting Can Make for a Brighter, More Intriguing Environment

COVID-19 did a good job of casting a pall over our day-to-day lifestyle, stuck mainly at home as we were and venturing out only masked and fearful of getting too close to anyone else.

It would be totally understandable if we were to classify this period as our dark days. Especially during this somber time, I was glad that I had considered my indoor lighting carefully when moving to my new home six years ago.

Because I have my walls covered in artwork – mainly landscapes and antique portraits, I planned my overhead lighting so that focused spotlighting would brightly illuminate each piece. At the same time, that lighting spills over to better illuminate the rest of my living room and dining room.

To me, proper lighting is very important to establish the mood of a room. Inadequate lighting can be a real downer, especially on a dreary day. Good lighting brightens our environments, especially at night.

As a realtor, I always suggest that sellers leave all the lights on when a showing is scheduled. This is no time to be cheap about electricity. Brightly lit rooms are more welcoming and can better show buyers what they're getting. And no one wants a "dark" house.

When I was in college, I appeared in a play called "The Madwoman of Chailot" by



By Bill Primavera

Jean Giraudoux with the actress Linda Lavin who would later go on to achieve fame as "Alice" on television. The most stunning thing about that production as I recall was the amazing effects achieved by its lighting director, on staff in the theater department, who was an incredible talent.

I remember that when the curtain rose for the second act, the stage was completely dark and slowly a small pin spotlight illuminated only the face of the madwoman in the center of the stage. Just that lighting effect alone brought applause from the audience.

Every scene of the play was an arresting study in shadow and light where brightness drew the viewer's attention where it needed to be while other areas of the stage receded. I was mesmerized as I observed how light created movement and mood by playing off stationary surfaces.

Many years later I was reminded of my interest in stage lighting when Barry Liebman, director of Yorktown Stage, shared with me his feeling that a production really doesn't come to life until the lighting director does his job with a show, going so far to say that seeing a set dramatically lit for the first time has brought him to tears.

His saying convinced me that someday I should have a home where its lighting would be as dramatic as a stage set, and that would require a custom-designed lighting

system. But having always lived in antique homes, my lighting was primarily from traditional lamps.

When I moved to a new condo at Trump Park Residences, however, my dream for dramatic lighting presented itself. I arranged with management to have electrical contractors work with me to install a system to light my great room, which I had designed basically as an art gallery for my collection of portraits and landscapes. The lighting system I planned was to highlight the paintings on three walls: portraits on the living room side, pastorals on the dining room side and a large abstract on the third wall in between.

At first, I was planning to hire a lighting designer, but I was lucky to find an electrician with sensitivity to my ideas and needs – and working in tandem with an electric supply company, we all worked wonders together.

There were many technical challenges to overcome working on the top fifth-floor condo with 10-foot ceilings, installing high hats in a soffit with insulation material. The casing for the high-hat units I originally wanted turned out to be too large to be accommodated in the soffit, but I had the good fortune to be assigned a job manager



who was as much an artist as he was an electrician.

He guided me every step of the way in terms of which product to use – we sourced a small LED light whose imprint on the ceiling is only two inches square – as well as the appropriate spacing and angles of light to employ. And he cut such clean holes that nary a speck of spackle was needed for patching the plasterboard.

Now completed, the overhead pin spots illuminate my great room/gallery in

a warm and inviting way. Rather than being surrounded by flat walls with two-dimensional shapes on them, the lighted paintings create great depth and richness to our space.

While we have other traditional lighting sources in the room, it really requires no light other than that resting on the faces of the portraits and on the landscapes of the pastorals. The effect takes us to other acquaintances and distant places beyond the space we occupy. It's transporting.

Bill Primavera, aka The Home Guru, is a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc., the longest running public relations agency in Westchester ([www.PrimaveraPR.com](http://www.PrimaveraPR.com)). To engage the services of The Home Guru and his team to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.



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# Dana's Diner Set to Serve Up Delicious Food in a Family Atmosphere

By Erin Maher

For better, for worse. In sickness, in health – and in business.

At least, that should have been the wedding vows for Mahopac residents Dana and Thomas Palumbo. Both chefs by trade, the couple is bringing great food in a casual dining atmosphere with the opening of their new eatery, Dana's Diner, in Mahopac.

Dana Palumbo, 37, has always loved to cook. The Mahopac native hails from a big Italian family who gathered, laughed and connected through cooking in the kitchen. With each passing year in her house, she gained greater responsibility in the kitchen.

"Being in the kitchen was second nature," Palumbo said. "The older I was, the more I got to do."

But her passion did not instantly lead to her career as a chef. Instead, at 30, after working in the architectural design industry, Palumbo decided to return to school to pursue her dream of cooking.

She attended the Institute of Culinary Education in Manhattan and worked at Maialino's in Gramercy Park under the tutelage

of restaurateur Danny Meyer after graduation. She built an impressive resume, cooking for the likes of Iron Chef Michael Symon, the Organic Farmer and Purdy's Farmer & the Fish in North Salem.

The pandemic in 2020 saw Palumbo at home, like most of the world. Turns out being in her hometown was right where she needed to be. One day Palumbo was driving and saw a "For Rent" sign in she and her husband's favorite breakfast spot in town. They immediately called the landlords.

Since last year, they have been getting the diner in shape for this week's opening. From the signage to the refrigeration and everything

in between, the two chefs-turned-business owners transformed the establishment's interior to make it their own – including paying homage to communities in Westchester and Putnam.

One of the walls in Dana's Diner is a "Featured Artist" wall, which includes pictures from local artists. Palumbo plans to display work from a new artist every month, hoping to attract talent from the neighborhood. Currently featured



ERIN MAHER PHOTO

Thomas and Dana Palumbo stand in their establishment, Dana's Diner, which is scheduled to open Wednesday in Mahopac.

is Megan Dorazio of Port Chester. She is credited for taking all of the photos on the website and social media for Dana's Diner.

Palumbo's eatery allows her total freedom in the kitchen, and she and Thomas have worked tirelessly in the research and development of the diner's menu.

"Every morning my husband and I wake up, we come to the kitchen and cook food together," Palumbo said. "That's the most amazing part of all of this. Bouncing ideas back and forth between the two of us. It's a menu with a little bit for

everybody. It's been exciting; it's been fun. We got back and forth a lot about whose version of a dish is better. It's so fun."

The menu will feature foods to tantalize all appetites. She has something to please every palate, from fresh salads to signature dishes like chicken and zucchini bread waffles with hot honey and some pretty amazing burgers.

"It's a nice neighborhood restaurant," Palumbo said. "It's nothing fancy; it's nothing pretentious. It's just good food. A nice and casual family setting."

Thomas will run the kitchen. While he executes flavorful dishes, Palumbo will be working the front of house, greeting guests with a big smile and warm energy. Sometimes, the Palumbos will have their seven-month-old son in-shop as well. He was a large part of why the couple wanted to open a diner.

"It's really hard when you're chefs to be able to see your kids grow up because you usually work nights and weekends," Palumbo said.

Now, the husband-and-wife team will be able to have ample family time.

"We'll get to watch him get off the bus and watch him grow up as he gets older," she said.

Dana's Diner is set to open on Wednesday, serving breakfast, lunch and a touch of family love from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday.

"I come into the diner now, and I just look around and I'm so impressed," Palumbo said. I'm so grateful for the help my husband has given me. I'm so grateful for everything my family has done for me over the years."

Dana's Diner is located at 525 Route 6 in Mahopac. For more information, visit [www.danasdinermahopac.com](http://www.danasdinermahopac.com).

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## Hammond Museum Re-opens With Japanese Stroll Garden Ablaze in Color

The Hammond Museum and Japanese Stroll Garden, the fabled center of innovative art and Asian culture in North Salem, has just re-opened after a year of COVID-19-induced hibernation.

Executive Director Elizabeth Hammer, Board of Trustees President Marleen Kassel and staff welcomed some 300 members and friends on Saturday, May 15 for an extensive program of entertainment and activities.

Opening day featured a tour of the main gallery exhibit of artists inspired by East Asian brush painting (Asian Brush Artists Guild), a guided tour of the Japanese stroll garden, a Tai-chi and Qigong demonstration, tea ceremony demonstrations, a Shogetsu School of Ikebana (cut-flower arranging) demonstration and classic stories for

young children next to the Bamboo Grove. With the re-opening, the Hammond begins the year celebrating its garden's 60th anniversary.

"Like so many museums and cultural institutions, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to close the Hammond for 17 long months," Hammer said. "We're so grateful for the continuing support of our members, our board and our grantors – the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, Arts-Westchester, the Westchester Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation."

As a center for art and culture, about 300 artists from 32 countries are artist-members.

With the re-opening, the Hammond is launching a new and varied program of online and live exhibitions, lectures, tours and classes. A sample of a few up-coming programs are lessons in the delicate art of Ikebana flower arranging, online lectures on landmark Asian works of art and live festivals that celebrate Japanese culture with activities and presentations.

The Hammond Museum and Japanese Stroll Garden are fulfilling the vision of founder Natalie Hammond, who created her estate in North Salem "to become a place of natural beauty and tranquility, meant to delight the senses and re-fresh the spirit."

This spring and summer offer local residents a wonderful opportunity to emerge from self-imposed quarantine, take

a deep breath and immerse them-selves in the beauty of the Hammond's Japanese Stroll Garden and galleries.

A complete schedule of coming events and lectures, as well as information about memberships, member benefits and the opportunity to arrange for an individual, family or group tour of the gallery and stroll garden can be found at [www.hammond-museum.org](http://www.hammond-museum.org). To schedule a docent-led tour with tea and Japanese sweets, call 914-669-5033.

The Hammond can also be booked for special family occasions such as weddings, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and family reunions as well as corporate events with a flair and surrounded by the serenity of nature.



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# Obituary

## Amy Traudt

Our world lost a beautiful bright spirit. Many of us lost a best friend.

Amy Mittelstadt Traudt passed away on Friday, June 11 at the age of 50 after a courageous battle with cancer. She was surrounded by loved ones who will honor her legacy by continuing to live their lives to the fullest.

Amy was born in Mount Vernon on Sept. 3, 1970. She lived most of her life in Pleasantville, graduating from Pleasantville High School. She completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in special education at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. Amy was proud to be a K-2 special ed teacher for 20 years at P.S. 105 in New York City. She was a tireless advocate for students and their parents, making sure they got the best education possible. Her ability to connect with her students and co-educators is apparent in their love for her. Amy's passionate, direct approach and love for her students and co-educators will never be forgotten by her teaching family from the Bronx, including her dedicated Paras.

Amy lived both simply and large. Her smile and laughter were contagious. She will be remembered for her skills as a star softball pitcher, dart thrower, golfer and all-around athlete as well as a dog lover, beach lover and kayaker. Amy played softball for Pleasantville High School and Mount Saint Vincent and her pitching prowess led her to be the first woman inducted into the Mount



Amy Traudt

Saint Vincent Athletic Hall of Fame. She also hosted a yearly softball tournament in honor of her late mother, raising funds for the Lustgarten Foundation.

Amy will be forever loved by her husband and best friend, John. She will be deeply missed by her loving dog Emma, her puppy Henry and her recently rescued dog Silver, as well as her "evil" cat Libby. Amy was predeceased by her mother, Ann Rupp Mittelstadt.

She is survived by her father, Robert H. Mittelstadt, and his wife, Irene, and her siblings, Robert and his wife, Beverly; Lois and her husband, Bill Volcko; Eric and his

wife, Nancy; Edward and his wife, Cathy; Ken and his partner, Carol; and Steven and his partner, Kathleen. Amy will also be forever remembered by her aunts and uncles, numerous nieces, nephews and extended family. She will be deeply missed by her close friends Lisa and Mike Schliman and their daughters Kaitlin and Isabella, her brother-in-law Matt Traudt and his partner Ellen, all of her extended Traudt Family as well as numerous dear friends.

On Wednesday, June 16, there will be calling hours from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m. at Beecher Flocks Funeral Home, located at 419 Bedford Rd. in Pleasantville. On

Thursday, June 17, a funeral mass will take place at 10 a.m. at Holy Innocents Catholic Church, located at 431 Bedford Rd. in Pleasantville.

In honor of Amy, please take some time today (and as often as possible) to pause and love someone as much as Amy did. Amy's husband John and her family appreciate all the support and love they are receiving as they navigate through the next week and months and forever.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in Amy's honor to the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research at <https://lustgarten.org/donate>.

## Bet Torah Opens Registration for Toddlers Program

Registration has begun for Kitah Katan, a program of separation, socialization, sharing and fun for toddlers at Bet Torah in Mount Kisco. Classes will begin Sept. 14 and run through June 9, 2022.

Children 18 months and older (as of September) enjoy two mornings a week of music, art, story time, movement and indoor and outdoor play. Classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:30 to 11:45 a.m. A snack is provided.

An early childhood head teacher and teacher assistants conduct each morning

of fun. Kitah Katan provides a special time for young children to experience learning through play in a beginning school setting. Limited spots are also available for families wishing to enroll their children in Bet Torah's regular nursery school program for the 2021-22 school year.

Bet Torah Nursery School is located at 60 Smith Ave. in Mount Kisco. For more information about the program, a brochure or to register for Kitah Katan, call the nursery school at 914-666-7595 or visit [www.bettorah.org](http://www.bettorah.org).

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# Chicago 7 Book Editor Delivers Cautionary Tale From Trial 50 Years Ago

By Martin Wilbur

In late 1969, a trial unlike any other in American history captured the nation's imagination.

Eight anti-Vietnam War activists went on trial for conspiring to riot at the previous year's chaotic Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

The suspects, which included the likes of Abbie Hoffman, Tom Hayden and Jerry Rubin, would become known as The Chicago 7, after Judge Julius Hoffman had one of the eight defendants, Black Panther co-founder Bobby Seale, bound and gagged in court before ordering that he be tried separately.

Three editors, including Yorktown Heights resident and lawyer and writer Mark Levine, had a book released last fall, "The Trial of the Chicago 7: The Official Transcript." They edited the more than 22,000 pages in court transcripts from the trial down to about 350 pages in what amounts to a blow-by-blow recap of the trial.

Its printing by Simon & Schuster coincided with the 50th anniversary of the verdict and last year's release of the film of the same name that was written and

directed by Aaron Sorkin.

But Levine said the story's relevance today is more than a recent milestone anniversary of a footnote in American history. It remains a warning for Americans in 2021, with the backdrop of a fractured county and those in power looking to hold onto power at any cost in a changing nation.

"We wanted to show the confrontations, the outrage as well as the humor that was there," said Levine. "Really, there had never been a trial like that in terms of both sides, or all three sides actually because the judge was not really an impartial arbiter here, basically showing so much antagonism and bias in the courtroom and the defendants talked back."

Next Monday, June 21 at 7 p.m. Levine will be part of a program at the Bedford Playhouse where he will discuss the differences between the movie and what actually happened in the courtroom. Levine will also talk about how he and co-editors George McNamee and Daniel Greenberg was able to get the transcript of the trial into the book in about 16 days.

What made the trial of The Chicago 7 so different, aside from it turning into a circus, was the defendants and their attorney,

William Kunstler, took their protests from the street into the courtroom, Levine said. Even the most spectacular trials of the 20th century to that point, the Scopes trial or Sacco and Vanzetti, never had the out-of-control antics on display.

"Even the significant trials never had a situation where the defendants and their lawyers basically decided to stand up to the judge and continue the protests in the courtroom, and you also never quite had a judge like Julius Hoffman," Levine said.

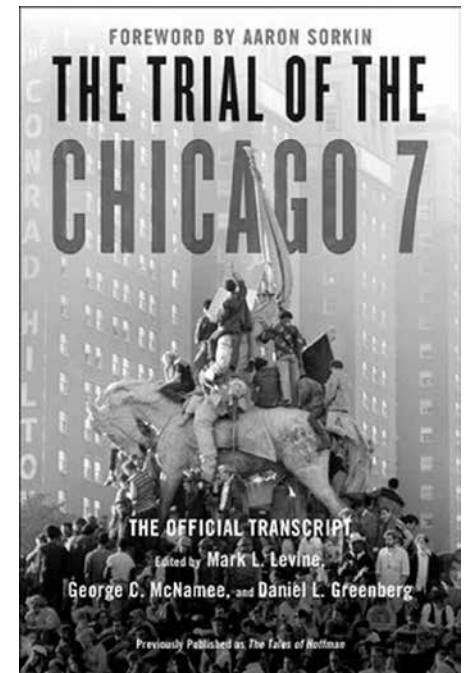
The defendants were convicted but won their appeal.

"(The appeals court) basically said the judge provoked the defendants and there were so many errors by the judge and by the prosecutor, and even if there hadn't been errors, that the attitude and the sarcasm of Judge Hoffman and the prosecutors would have been enough to reverse," Levine said.

Kunstler and co-counsel Leonard Weinglass made the trial about the First Amendment and the right to protest. The Chicago 7 had sought a permit to demonstrate and the city turned them down.

Levine said the importance of the ability to protest and to have dialogue with others that you disagree with is a lesson that Americans should heed today.

"I think that people have to realize that it's important to allow peaceful protest to go on and everybody has to listen to people with dissenting view and have a conversation about what's happening



Yorktown resident, lawyer and writer Mark Levine co-edited the 22,000-page transcript into "The Trial of the Chicago 7," a book that was released last fall. Levine will be speaking Monday evening about the book and the trial at the Bedford Playhouse.

without the violence and without the hatred on both sides," he said.

To attend the program on Monday at the Bedford Playhouse, visit <https://bit.ly/3fzweyX>.

## United Way COO Retires After 49 Years With Organization

Carlene Gentileco, a tireless, steady force who served as chief liaison to hundreds of corporations and nonprofit organizations and helped to raise hundreds of millions of dollars for community organizations, is retiring after 49 years with United Way.

Gentileco, a Chappaqua resident, served in a variety of leadership roles under five different CEOs at United Way of Westchester and Putnam. Her retirement is effective at the end of the month.

"Always the first to arrive at 7 a.m. and usually the last to leave, Carlene's steady commitment is ever-present and easily relied upon," said Tom Gabriel, president and CEO of the United Way of Westchester and Putnam. "She is meticulous, focused, goal-orientated and has an amazing gift for retaining facts – all of which make her an ideal member of anyone's leadership team. No wonder five different CEOs have relied upon her during her 49-year tenure at the United Way."

Since 2008, Gentileco has served as the chief operating officer at the United Way. She was responsible for ensuring the day-to-day operations of the organization – including its finance, human resources and IT functions. She is also supported the organization's Board of Directors. Most notably, she has been responsible for managing the organization's popular Nonprofit Leadership Summit since its inception almost 20 years ago.

From 1998 to 2008, Gentileco served as the senior vice president for resource development, working closely with more than a dozen staff and hundreds of volunteers to support fundraising efforts at the workplace and in the local community.

Prior to that, from 1987 to 1998,



Carlene Gentileco of Chappaqua retired recently after working for the United Way of Westchester and Putnam for 49 years.

Gentileco served as vice president for local communities where she was responsible for volunteer relations, individual giving and special events amongst other things. She also served as vice president of administration overseeing the organization's data processing team. Carlene began her career at the United Way in its Finance Department.

She has served on almost a dozen United Way Worldwide committees.

Notable accomplishments included running the Nonprofit Leadership Summit, the area's premiere educational and training conference for the nonprofit community involving more than 200 nonprofit organizations and attended by more than 600 each year.

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*continued on page 26*

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# Eamon DeValera: An Irish Giant Despite Uncertain Roots

We continue this month exploring Irish patriots, a group in which few stand as large as the legendary Eamon DeValera.

At the age of 34, "Dev," as he was known to friend and foe alike, faced a hangman's noose for his role in the Easter Rising of 1916, another of Ireland's many attempts to break the bonds of British rule.

One thing alone saved him – a baptismal certificate his mother produced that showed he had been born in New York City in 1882. The British relinquished. Executing a man who claimed U.S. citizenship would surely not have swayed the U.S.A. to join Great Britain and her allies in the trenches of the First World War. Dev went on to fight another day, and ultimately led the Republic of Ireland in the role of Taoiseach, or prime minister, for many years.

DeValera. Now, that definitely does not sound like an Irish surname. It isn't. It is Spanish.

And here the ambiguities of DeValera's parentage surface. Some even suggest that his purported father, a Spanish native named Juan Vivion DeValera, may have been a fabrication by Dev's mother, in an attempt to hide the real identity of the man with whom she either had an affair or

otherwise been compromised.

Regardless, there is no argument that the outcome of that union became the man who more than any other shaped Ireland, for better or for worse, in the years after the yoke of British rule was lifted – at least for the 26 counties of Southern Ireland that eventually became the present-day Republic of Ireland.

New York City in the 1880s was an Irish city. The majority of the population was Irish-born, and Irish immigrants continued to stream there in search of its "streets paved with gold." One was a 23-year-old woman named Catherine Coll, from Bruree, County Limerick. She set foot in New York in October 1879.

Author Tim Pat Coogan's biography, "Eamon DeValera: The Man Who Was Ireland," recounts several possible situations the poor girl faced as she tried to make her way in a land of strangers. Boston-based amateur genealogist, Jim McNiff, has one observation that has not surfaced in other investigations. He suggests the possibility that Catherine, known as Kate, a domestic servant, may have been seduced by an employer, or even

possibly the employer's son.

Enter Juan DeValera, who is variously recorded as being a sculptor, a painter, a music teacher or even a restaurant dishwasher. An acquaintance of Kate's employer, he hastily marries her in 1881 in Greenville, N.J., where her employers have moved with Kate in tow. A year later a son is born. Christened George, and sometimes called Edward, he will have no memory of his father and scant recollection of his mother.

Juan, always of poor health, goes west to Denver, where it is hoped that the mountain air will restore his health. Sadly, it does not, and he dies there in November 1884. His purported son is just two years old.

But how does the boy, New York-born and only half-Irish, end up in Ireland?

His grieving mother puts him in the care of a family friend so that she can return to work, and before long realizes he

might be better off with family back home in Ireland. Her brother, Edward Coll, is about to return there, having soured on America. In 1885 he takes his barely three-



By Brian McGowan

year-old nephew with him back to Bruree, there to be raised in a strange place by a grandmother he has never met.

Some of these experiences may have shaped a personality in DeValera that some would call cold and calculating, always hiding something behind what must have been a great poker face. But in the end his mother came through, and when

she learned that her son was about to be executed for rebellion, she left no stone unturned in producing evidence of his birth on American soil, a fact that more than any saved him from a martyr's death in 1916.

*Pleasantville resident Brian McGowan was born and raised in the Bronx and is a second-, third- and fifth-generation Irish-American/Canadian, as his immigrant ancestors followed several paths to the New World. Reach him at brian.m.mcgowan1952@gmail.com or on Twitter (@Bmcgowan52M). He is the author of two books, "Thunder at Noon," about the battle of Waterloo, and "Love, Son John," about World War II. Both are available at Amazon.com.*



Eamon DeValera  
1882-1975

## Irish Eclectic

## A Spiritual View

By Cantor Lilah Sugarman

Each week in synagogues, Jews around the world and across denominations read from the same section of the Torah, the Hebrew Bible.

In this week's portion, the prophetess Miriam dies. She was in charge of nourishing the Israelites by leading them to water, and with her death, they grew thirsty and complained to Moses. God tells Moses to speak to a rock, and water will come forth from the rock. Moses tells the Israelites that he will bring forth water from the rock, and then he hits the rock two times with his staff.

In the short term, Moses successfully gets water for the Israelites, but ultimately, he made a grave mistake in his relationship with God and with nature. Moses does not trust in God and the power of his words. He is impatient and runs to aggression. Also, in hitting the rock, Moses attempted to control and even subjugate nature. Because of these

actions Moses is not able to enter the land of Israel with the Israelites.

We can learn a lot from Moses' mistakes and learn to channel Miriam. Rabbi Shefa Gold writes in her interpretation, "Miriam had a way with water. She could touch the depths with her song and call forth spiritual nourishment. No matter how difficult the journey, Miriam's dance

would bring ease and beauty to the process itself."

We must learn to channel Miriam, talk to the rock, have patience and trust in the power of words rather than rushing toward aggression.

We must channel Miriam in how we work with nature so that our beautiful home, Mother Earth, is safe for future generations.

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



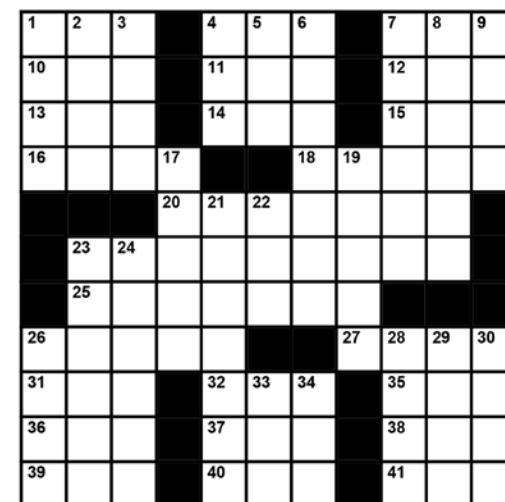
## Crossword

### Across

1. Functioned as
4. \_\_\_ and cheese
7. Do a math sum
10. Class with a studio
11. Lode load
12. Veggie that rolls
13. Take in, as a movie
14. A drink with jam and bread...
15. Manhandle
16. Winged predator
18. Stringent
20. Spontaneous
23. Mainly
25. Arbitrator
26. Not as coarse
27. Gossip, slangily
31. Marching insect
32. Possessive pronoun
35. First body part to try out the water
36. It's sold in bags
37. Headgear
38. Gothic, for one
39. Wine-list option
40. Pick one
41. Shook hands with, say

### Down

1. Use soap and water
2. Paint-store calculation
3. Slow-cook
4. All the rage
5. "... all men \_\_\_ created equal"



6. Tape \_\_\_ (tailor's device)
7. Plea
8. So very much
9. Sunrise occurs at this time
17. Place-setting piece
19. Attempted
21. Song starting "My country, 'tis of thee"
22. Driveway surface
23. King's son
24. Leased out
26. Weatherman's word
28. Bookkeeping entry
29. Upset
30. Shaq's former team
33. Brown colored
34. Get data secretly

Answers on page 30



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continued from page 24

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# Music Conservatory of Westchester to Present Juneteenth Celebration

In recognition of our nation's historically underrepresented African American composers, on Saturday, June 19 at 7 p.m. the Music Conservatory of Westchester will present a Juneteenth celebration concert including musical performances by the music school's faculty and an opportunity to learn more about the featured composers.

The program will be presented with limited in-person seating in the conservatory's Recital

Hall as well as streamed live for the greater public to enjoy.

The White Plains community music school is dedicated to its ongoing work in awareness and action toward racial diversity and inclusion within its student community as well as in the repertoire taught at the conservatory. This concert is a major step toward promoting equity and recognizing and celebrating composers whose work is rarely performed.

## Grandpas United Announce Inaugural Annual Civic Engagement Awards

As part of its mission, Grandpas United of the White Plains Youth Bureau has established a Civic Engagement Award Program and is honoring six graduating high school seniors who have developed the knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make a difference in their community.

Grandpas United announced recently that Alana Burrows of Holy Child High School, Kyle Shepherd of Stepinac High School and AnnaLynn DiMarco, Viktoriya Jones, Shelton Registe and Cayla Ross, all from White Plains High School, are its 2021 Grandpas United Civic Engagement Award winners.

Together, the six winners have served people of all ages in and around the community. They have ventured as far as Albany to do so, and have done so as part of the White Plains Youth Bureau, the Youth Court, their local churches, towns and the Girl Scouts.

Beyond the normal volunteer activities

included in civic engagement, the students who have been recognized have gone so far as to create public service announcements; honored by other organizations; facilitated workshops at conferences; been appointed to county boards; become part of a youth state government in Albany; become spokespersons for their organizations at public events; become board members in their organizations; raised thousands of dollars for needy persons; and recruited young voters, among other initiatives..

Their future plans include dentistry, working with the underprivileged abroad, starting their own companies and perhaps running for governor one day.

The mission of Grandpas United of the White Plains Youth Bureau is to utilize the talents, skills and experiences of our grandpas to improve the community.



Musicians Jeremy Jordan (piano/keys), Jake Robinson (drums) and Dan Asher (bass) will be among the performers at the Music Conservatory of Westchester's Juneteenth celebration this Saturday evening. The program features the music of underrepresented African American composers.

"The conservatory's diverse community represents more than 30 different nationalities and ethnicities," said Executive Director Jean Newton. "We believe that the music we teach and listen to should reflect this, and aim to expand awareness and appreciation of our rich heritage of composers of color."

Juneteenth, also known as African American Freedom Day, is a day to celebrate one of the final acts of emancipation of slaves in the United States on June 19, 1865. It marks the day that Union Major Gen. Gordon Granger landed in Galveston, Texas and stated that all slaves were free. This announcement took place two years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in Confederate states.

The Conservatory's Juneteenth Celebration

will feature music by prominent composers such as Adolphus Hailstork and Herbie Hancock. In addition to musical performances by the Conservatory's world-class faculty, the Juneteenth event will include a question-and-answer session with the performers talking about the various composers and stories behind the music.

Visit <https://musicconservatory.org/community/> to reserve in-person seats or access the live-streamed link to the Music Conservatory of Westchester's Juneteenth Celebration. Seating in the Recital Hall is limited due to COVID-19 safety protocols. Admission is free.

The Music Conservatory of Westchester is located at 216 Central Ave. in White Plains. For more information, call 914-761-3900.

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# Speaker Inspires Those Suffering From Mental Illness to Seek Help

By Ariel Markowski

At the age of 17, Kevin Hines concluded that his life was no longer worth living. His depression led him to take a tearful bus ride to the Golden Gate Bridge.

Hines, at the time battling paranoid delusions and depression, looked down, and after some contemplation, decided that he deserved to die.

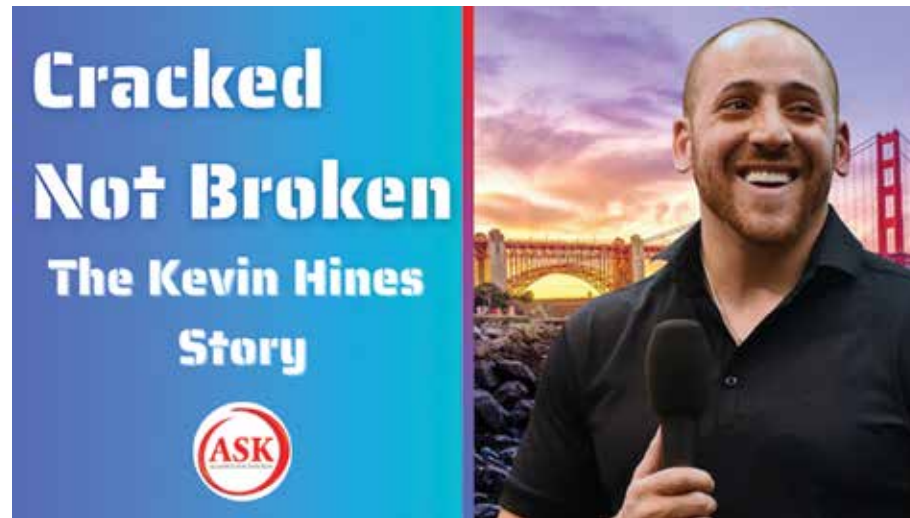
He jumped from the span, intending to end his life rather than continuing to live with mental illness.

Now a mental health advocate, Hines, 39, shared his shocking story with an online audience last Thursday evening. The event, titled "Cracked Not Broken," was organized by the Alliance for Safe Kids (ASK), a Yorktown-based nonprofit that promotes awareness of youth mental health, substance use and abuse prevention and other destructive behaviors.

Its name conveys the principal message Hines' story demonstrates – it is never too late to take action toward improving mental health.

"Everybody passes away," he said. "Give yourself time, plus hard work, for things to change. The only way to get better is to work hard."

For the vast majority of those who attempt suicide by jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge, they succeed in



Kevin Hines, who survived a suicide attempt after jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge when he was 17, spoke to a Yorktown forum about mental illness last week.

taking their own lives. Of the 27 people who attempted suicide in the year that he jumped, Hines was the only one to survive, a miracle of sorts.

The instant he released his grip from the bridge, he said he was filled with regret. Hines said he prayed to God that he could somehow be saved. Once he hit the water and reached the surface, a sea lion (whom he later named Herbert) circled beneath

him, keeping him afloat until the rescue team arrived.

Since that day, Hines has managed to take advantage of his opportunity to live. His story has gained national recognition. Countless people have owed their lives to Hines who has made it his mission to help others suffering from mental illness.

The goal of last Thursday's event was to help eliminate the stigma often associated

with talking about mental health and acknowledging that one needs help. Hines argues that the best way to go about that is to talk about it honestly.

In addition to providing advice to the audience during his presentation, he outlined a set of guidelines for those struggling with mental health issues, which include his 10-step regimen The Art of Wellness. It can also be beneficial to those who consider themselves mentally healthy because it stresses how to cope more effectively with the emotions that accompany difficult situations.

The program was timely because over the past 15 months many people have struggled with their own mental health as a result of the pandemic. Isolation and boredom have often been referenced as causes for depression or destructive behaviors.

There are myriad resources for individuals facing mental health crises, but a few include the online crisis network IMALive at [www.imalive.org](http://www.imalive.org), the Westchester chapter of the National Alliance of Mental Health at [www.namiwestchester.org](http://www.namiwestchester.org) and Westchester's suicide prevention hotline at 914-925-5959 or at <https://mentalhealth.westchestergov.com/mental-health/suicide-prevention>

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# Team Examiner Misses Repeat in Mt. Kisco Little League Title Game

By Jack Sullivan

A family of geese turned the heads of Advanced Endodontics' outfielders upwards as The Examiner's leadoff hitter entered the batter's box, marking the start of Mount Kisco's Triple-A Minor League Championship last weekend.

Having thrown his last warmup, the Advanced Endodontics' pitcher dug a cleat into the mound as the first of many "Let's go Examiner!" chants rang out.

Led by coaches John Zissu, Mike McNamee and Brian Sullivan, Team Examiner, which was looking to defend its title, is as close as they come.

"I've coached a good number of these players for years," McNamee said before the game. "This is my third and final year with the team, so it's somewhat bittersweet."

Following this last minor league game, the players will graduate to a different age-division – "the big leagues," as McNamee refers to it. The Examiner's batting order has returned many familiar faces over the last few seasons, marking an end to that tradition.

The first inning was emblematic of the game: a strikeout, a walk and a pair of well-fielded ground balls, which highlighted the power of both teams' ace.

Despite a lack of early offense, the enthusiasm of the players, coaches and parents never waned at Leonard Park. Routinely warning his energized team away from the on-deck circle, Advanced Endodontics Coach Mike Bauscher understood the thrill of



Team Examiner's nine players in front of their dugout before facing Advanced Endodontics in the Triple-A Minor League Championship.

playing for a title.

"In the end, our focus all year has been on developing skills and making sure everybody is a better baseball player now than when the season started," Bauscher said. "So, this chance to play in the championship is just a testament to how hard our kids have worked."

Bauscher recognized the improvement of his players and the ensuing joy of improving at a game they love.

"Each player really committed to learning baseball, and to doing it the right way," he said. "They've been a great group of kids who've played hard, and I'm really excited for them as they continue to enjoy the sport."

With offense at a premium, the game quickly turned into a pitcher's duel.

"Everybody's striking out," said Examiner

fan Tom Sullivan. "I'd think it might be championship game nerves. But, to be honest, the pitchers haven't been making it easy for either offense."

Yet for every foul-tip and missed swing, any frustrated grimaces or frowns were soon followed by ear-to-ear smiles; the players were there to have fun, and fun they had.

"These coaches do a great job," added Advanced Endodontics supporter Greg Adams. "They mean what they say about making the game enjoyable. In the end, it's all about fun for the kids."

That liveliness was capitalized toward the end of the game, as The Examiner found themselves defending a bases-loaded, one-out situation. Up to that point in the fifth inning, neither team had been able to generate any

offensive attack. However, the game was decided in the penultimate inning as a clutch single by Advanced Endodontics secured a 1-0 lead heading into the sixth.

The Examiner's final opportunity was extinguished by the same difficult pitches, resulting in a championship victory and on-field celebration for Advanced Endodontics.

Following the game, Examiner coaches sat outside their dugout with the team, reinforcing the success of their season and the fantastic performance of both competitors that morning. The final score aside, the game was exciting.

"This has all been great for the kids," McNamee said. "Everyone here had a blast, and it's been a privilege to coach them all."

## Crossword Answers

1	W	A	S		4	H	A	M		7	A	D	D		
10	A	R	T		11	O	R	E		12	P	E	A		
13	S	E	E		14	T	E	A		15	P	A	V		
16	H	A	W	K		17				18	S	T	E	R	N
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					23	P	R	I	M	A	R	I	L	Y	
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28	F	I	N	E	R					27	D	I	S	H	
31	A	N	T			32	I	T	S		35	T	O	E	
36	I	C	E			37	C	A	P		38	E	R	A	
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# The Heritage and Evolution of the Wine in Your Favorite Bottle



By Nick Antonaccio

"It's like putting new wine in old bottles."

I recently heard this time-worn phrase as a politically charged comment on proposed federal legislation. I began thinking of this in the context of wine.

The wine industry has evolved more in the past decade than perhaps in the previous century. The introduction of new technology and new techniques has raised the overall quality, quantity and diversity of wines available to consumers.

The profile of many of today's wines is dramatically different from the mass-produced, mass-marketed wines of yesteryear. Has there been a sea change in winemakers' approaches to making wine? Or more appropriately, is it possible to discover or create anything new in an industry that has been plying its craft for at least 6,000 years?

Have the shifting sensibilities of winemakers evolved to the point where they are now putting new wine in new bottles? Has science –

in the form of DNA testing, sophisticated soil analysis and innovative electronic equipment – substantially changed the inherent characteristics of grape varieties and supplanted the traditional means of making wine?

And at the risk of running afoul of logic, let me stretch my metaphor once again. Have the noted advances achieved in winemaking over the past decade in fact created throwback wines? Are old wines being put in new bottles?

Allow me to dwell on this last premise.

For all of the recent advancements evident in wines being introduced in the market each week – under the influence of scientists, winemakers, marketers and consumers – it seems to me that, in a number of cases, what I am drinking today did not exist in the 1900s. Yet many of these wines bear a resemblance to those produced by our forefathers for centuries.

Consider these points:

1. New farming techniques are proliferating. As chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides were being introduced in the 1950s, many American and European producers embraced them wholeheartedly,

## You Heard It Through the Grapevine

abandoning the organic practices of past millennia.

Fast forward to the 21st century. There is a growing movement to a "new," symbiotic relationship with nature. Each year the use of chemical products in vineyards declines. Centuries-old terms such as organic and biodynamic are in vogue. In fact, many of today's farming practices are strangely similar to those employed by the Roman Empire as it planted grapevines across its vast holdings around the Mediterranean Sea.

2. Winemakers in California and Oregon are producing new Pinot Noir wines that have never existed before. At last count there are now more than 200 clones of Pinot Noir vines being planted – and their grapes blended – in some fashion.

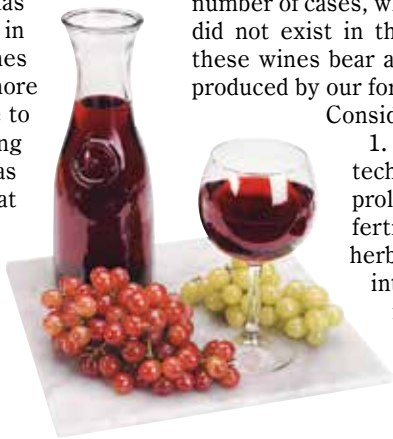
However, many of the centuries-old mother rootstock of these plants emanated from the Burgundy region of France where they still flourish today. New Pinot Noir wines are being evaluated on their French heritage and the subtle variations from their baseline ancestors.

Similarly, in Italy, Super Tuscans are heralded as new wines. What makes them unique are grape varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah, grapes not indigenous to Tuscany. Yet these new wines have been produced in Bordeaux for centuries.

*'Forging forward or moving backwards? New age or old age wines?'*

Old wine in new bottles. It sounds counterintuitive, but the rich history and traditions of winemaking are clearly evident in the exciting and vibrant new wines in today's marketplace. Don't be fooled by their disguises.

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



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