



One Killed, Three Injured in Head-On Crash in Putnam Valley

By Rick Pezzullo

A Mahopac man was killed and three teens were injured in a head-on crash last week on Wood St. in Putnam Valley.

According to Putnam Sheriff Kevin McConville, a 23-year-old Mahopac man

was heading north on Wood St. at about 8:55 p.m. Sept. 27 when his vehicle crossed into the path of a southbound vehicle, driven by an 18-year-old Lake Peekskill male.

The 23-year-old driver of the first vehicle, Bryan Tumolo of Mahopac, was

pronounced dead at the scene.

The other driver and a 17-year-old female passenger from Putnam Valley were airlifted to Westchester Medical Center with serious injuries. A second passenger, a 15-year-old female from Putnam Valley, was transported by ambulance to Westchester Medical Center.

The NYS Police Collision Reconstruction Unit assisted Sheriff's Deputies and Investigators at the scene with the accident investigation. Members of the Carmel Police Department also assisted at the scene.

Related GoFundMe pages have been created for the three injured victims, all of whom reportedly remain hospitalized in stable and critical condition.

A GoFundMe for sisters Caitlin and Emily Quinn, the passengers in the vehicle that was struck, has raised more than \$46,000 as of Monday.

Meanwhile, a similar effort for Ethan Cruz, the injured driver, has raised almost \$23,000 as of Monday.

Anyone who witnessed the accident is asked to call Sheriff's Investigators at (845) 225-8060.



Ethan Cruz (left) with Emily (back) and Caitlin Quinn.

Tough Road Ahead Forecasted for Businesses in Attracting Workers

By Rick Pezzullo

Businesses in Putnam County and the region are facing many challenges in recruiting employees following the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During a breakfast symposium hosted by the Putnam County Economic Development Corporation (PCEDC) Sept. 29 at the Putnam County Golf Club in Mahopac, business representatives and local leaders listened to two experts discuss the state of the regional economy and its impact on businesses and residents.

"Our goal is to raise awareness of our organization with prospective businesses interested in starting up or relocating to Putnam County, and to provide insight into economic trends and growth opportunities that will impact our local businesses, which we wholeheartedly support," PCEDC President Kathleen Abels stated.

Adam Bosch, president and CEO of Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, a policy, planning and research organization, painted a somewhat dim picture of the many factors surrounding the large number of current vacancies in the workforce.

"There's a major shortfall the region has to wrestle with," Bosch, a former journalist and journalism adjunct professor, stressed. "We need more workers than we have and that's not likely to change. We need a community of people who are thriving and not just surviving."

E.J. McMahon, founding senior fellow of the Empire Center for Public Policy, a

nonpartisan think tank based in Albany, said through August, New York State was an estimated 287,000 jobs short since the pandemic struck in March 2020. He noted only Vermont, Hawaii and Alaska had worst numbers regarding regaining jobs.

He said one of the reasons for the slow recovery was individuals deciding to retire rather than reentering the workforce. Bosch said that was a trend that was expected to continue.

Some of the areas where jobs have become difficult to fill are healthcare, food service, construction trades, warehouses, drivers with CDL licenses and EMTs.

Bosch said the cost of higher education, childcare and housing have contributed to the workforce dilemma.

With the median sale price of a home in Putnam in 2022 standing at \$505,000, Bosch said home ownership has become out of reach for many working families.

"We're just not keeping up with the amount of housing we need," Bosch said. "People who end up in rentals, they're stuck there. We need to open our eyes that we need the full spectrum of housing."

Bosch and McMahon both pointed out how the migration of residents to other states has also played a role in less people being able to fill jobs. Bosch said about 5,000 people annually are fleeing the region for more affordable places to live and in more pleasant weather climates.

The gloomy statistics prompted Abels to remark, "That was extremely informative, and terrifying."

Showing Support



Hundreds turned out at FDR State Park in Yorktown Sunday for Support Connection's annual Support-A-Walk, the non-profit organization's largest fundraiser of the year. For more photos, see page 14.

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Carmel High Twirler to Represent Team USA in England



Samantha Rizzo with coaches Matt and Meredith Freeman.

Carmel High School sophomore Samantha Rizzo has earned a spot representing Team USA in the first ever International Baton Twirling Federation (IBTF) Nation's World Cup Championship in Liverpool, England in August 2023.

Rizzo, 15, began twirling baton when she was only four years old and started twirling competitively at the age of six. She currently is the Feature Twirler at Carmel High School. When not in school or traveling to State College, PA, to work with her coaches Matt and Meredith Freeman of M Twirling Team, Rizzo is often at the Patterson Recreation Center where she has spent most of her childhood practicing the sport that she loves.

In July 2019, Rizzo competed at America's Youth on Parade (AYOP) National Twirling Competition where she qualified to receive the Gold Invitational for Twirl Mania, a competition that was held at the ESPN Sportscenter in Disney World in February 2022. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Rizzo kept pushing and practicing in her backyard during virtual training sessions with Freeman. Her dedication and hard work earned her a spot in the Top 5 at Twirl Mania the following year.

Rizzo kept the momentum going into the spring of 2022 when she traveled to Wildwood, NJ to compete in the All-East Championships. After two days of competition, Rizzo came out on top, winning first place in both the Rhythmic and 2-Baton categories. In April, Rizzo competed in the New York State championships where she earned the title of state Strut champion.

Samantha credits her achieving her life-long dream of representing Team USA to her two coaches.

Rizzo is also grateful to Patterson Recreation Center Director Matt Chibbaro for opening the Center to Rizzo and her family to allow for countless hours of practice and rehearsal.

"We are so proud of Sammi for reaching one of her goals. She works hard, and it shows," Chibbaro said.

Rizzo is also thankful to her friends and family for their unconditional love and support, and to her parents and siblings to partaking in this journey with her across the many, many miles to reach her goals.

This is a press release provided by the organization. It has been lightly edited and is being published by Examiner Media as a public service.

Local Leaders Oppose Proposed NYSEG Rate Increase

By Rick Pezzullo

Elected officials in northern Westchester and Putnam spoke out last week in opposition to a proposed 31% rate hike for NYSEG electric customers.

The state Public Service Commission (PSC) held a virtual hearing on the proposal Sept. 28 that, if approved, would result in a \$10 to \$18 monthly increase for residents. The rate increases would take effect on May 1, 2023.

Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater and Somers Supervisor Rob Scorano both told the PSC to reject the proposal.

"Families, seniors and businesses are all trying to figure out how they will keep their lights and heat on this winter," Slater said. "A 31% rate increase would be catastrophic and force many, especially our seniors on a fixed income, to choose between purchasing lifesaving medication and keeping their lights on. That is a wholly unacceptable proposition which is why the Public Service Commission must reject this proposed rate hike."

On September 13, the Yorktown Town Board unanimously passed a resolution reaffirming its opposition to the proposed rate hike, pointing to the increase in

production costs which have been passed on to consumers causing utility bills to already skyrocket.

Scorano said the Somers Town Board would be formally opposing the plan soon, saying, "NYSEG is the sole electricity provider for the Town of Somers and we urge the Public Service Commission to reject the proposed rate increases."

Officials in Putnam Valley, Carmel, Patterson and Southeast are also urging PSC to give NYSEG a thumbs down. The Carmel Town Board submitted a letter to the PSC on September 9.

"Our taxpayers are facing increased hardship and a rate increase of this magnitude will severely impact their ability to maintain their standard of living," Carmel Supervisor Michael Cazzari said.

"It is unfortunate that NYSEG decides to hike its rates at this time with the state of our economy and the stress it is putting on our residents," Patterson Supervisor Richard Williams stated. "A rate increase of 31% will not help ease the crushing burden many of our homeowners and neighbors are grappling with."

NYSEG serves 907,336 electricity customers and 270,204 natural gas customers in New York State.

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Millwood Fire Department Unveils New Public Safety App

By Martin Wilbur

The Millwood Fire Department has introduced the latest in technology to help its members better serve and protect the public.

Within the past two weeks, the department has launched a new public safety app called MyLocalSafety, believed to be the first fire department in Westchester and the region to use the service, said Chris Halliday, district manager for IamResponding, which powers the app.

Residents within the coverage area of the Millwood Fire Department can include information about their family members, including any relatives who are elderly, whether the household has pets, if there are solar panels on a house's roof or if anyone uses oxygen while firefighters are rushing to the scene, Halliday said.

Any additional information that can be of value to first responders could save a few minutes, and ultimately a life.

"Time matters, that's what this is about," Halliday said of the benefits of the app. "Situational awareness and saving time for the responders to be able to do their job quickly and efficiently."

Each resident who downloads and uses the app, which is free to residents, can decide how much information they choose to include to preserve privacy. However, the more relevant information that is provided that could help firefighters



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

The Millwood Fire Department is one of the first fire services in Westchester to roll out the new MyLocal Safety app that is designed to improve service and response for community members as well as push out information to the public. The department used its annual open house on Sunday afternoon to help inform the public about how they could benefit.

should they ever have to rush to the scene would be helpful.

Halliday also said the app isn't just for information in the event of a personal emergency. Another component to the service is that the fire department can also communicate non-emergency information such as special events like open houses

and how to volunteer or donate to the department.

Other useful information includes road closures due to an accident, flooding or roadwork or if one of the utility companies are making repairs, Halliday said.

Chief Chris Raguso said it will help the department improve service to residents

who rely on the Millwood Fire Department.

"We are excited to bring this app to our community and are confident that this will help us in responding to emergencies," he said. "This is the digital equivalent of the old 'save my child' and 'save my pet' window stickers, but far better. We are very hopeful that the community will use this free app so that we can better protect their homes and families."

Millwood used their annual open house on Sunday afternoon as a rollout of the app to the community and to encourage residents to sign up. Halliday is hopeful that as more people learn about the app they will download it. He would also like to see departments sign on for the service as well.

"This is the first department that I'm aware of in the county and in the area that's providing this app," Halliday said, "and the hope is not only to be able to use it with their community, but give a reason for other fire departments in the area to say maybe that would be a great tool for us to have as well."

The MyLocalSafety app is available for download from both the Apple App Store for Apple devices and the Google Play Store for Android devices.

For more information about the service and links to download the app, visit www.MyLocalSafety.com. After its downloaded, Millwood Fire Department residents can enter the code number 382894 to add the department to their MyLocalSafety app.

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Mt. Pleasant Approves Code Revision Allowing Dogs on Leash at Park

By Martin Wilbur

The Mount Pleasant Town Board unanimously approved a town code revision that allows dogs in the Hardscrabble Wilderness Area but they must be on a leash that extends no more than six feet.

This summer some residents who live near the town-owned passive park objected to the site being used by dog walkers who have routinely let their dogs off the leash.

Municipal law does not allow dogs in any of its parks. However, the roughly 235-acre area has been a popular spot for dog walkers from Pleasantville, Briarcliff Manor and surrounding communities. Some residents stated that unleashed dogs aggressively jumped on them, children and other dogs, sometimes causing a nuisance and a safety hazard.

Mount Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi said last week the town is trying a pilot program that is being incorporated into the section of Chapter 83 that regulates dogs where they can be in the park but on a leash as long as it is no more than six feet. It revises a blanket prohibition on dogs in all town parks, a regulation that's been on the books since 1975, according to the Town Board resolution.

He said since Hardscrabble doesn't have a playground while many other town parks do and it's been a popular spot for dog owners, it makes sense to try it there.

"We're watching it, we'll get reports back," Fulgenzi said. "The neighbors will report back, the (Recreation and) Parks Department

will report back, and if there are no issues, it will probably continue."

Last week, the Town Board held a public hearing regarding the revision of the portion of the code regulating dogs before its vote. Speakers voiced mixed reaction to the board's attempts to come up with a compromise.

While the updated section of code doesn't specifically refer to the Hardscrabble Wilderness Area, it mentions that dogs would be allowed in a park "if permission is granted by the Parks Superintendent in connection with program or activity sponsored or permitted by the Town Recreation Department." This would be considered a town-sponsored activity that is endorsed by the department.

Jordana Silverstein, a dog owner and trainer, said the amended section of the code eliminates the possibility of owners ever having their dogs off-leash outside in Mount Pleasant unless they have a big enough backyard at home. It also penalizes the overwhelming majority of owners who have good-natured, obedient dogs, Silverstein said.

She suggested that for those parks with playgrounds the regulation is fine, but there should be a mechanism to allow for dogs to be off-leash at some location.

"There's got to be someplace in our town where people can take their dogs to, whether it's for specific hours or with certain circumstances, but to say you can't bring your dog to a single park, it seems cruel to me," Silverstein said.

Another resident, Mark Saracino of Valhalla,

said it seemed reasonable to mandate the six-foot leash requirement to ensure safety for other people using the park.

Hawthorne resident Daniel Blaise suggested the town explore finding a spot for a dog park, which have been popular in some communities in Westchester as well as in some New York City neighborhoods. That way dog owners can have their pets socialize and get exercise, but safety in the town parks would still be achieved.

"A child should feel secure to walk down the street without beings afraid of a dog," Blaise said.

Fulgenzi said that while some communities like dog parks they can sometimes cause greater headaches then had been anticipated.

The supervisor said there is no specific time period that the pilot program will last but the town will be monitoring whether the new regulation at Hardscrabble is effective.



Is He Here Already?

It may seem a bit early, but Santa Claus returned to Westchester last Friday to help the county announce the return of Westchester's Winter Wonderland Drive-Thru Holiday Light Extravaganza at Kensico Dam Plaza for this holiday season. The 1.2-mile route of holiday lights will include several new features, including a new North Pole and live Santa display, a Kaleidoscope Corridor, a snowman caroling corner and an expanded Peace on Earth LED display with animated trumpets and angels. Westchester Winter Wonderland begins Friday, Nov. 25 and extends through Jan. 1. For tickets and more information, visit www.wwinterwonderland.com.

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Residential Zoning Amendment Stirs Concerns in Pleasantville

By Abby Luby

The Pleasantville Village Board opened a public hearing last week to amend the village residential R-2A zoning district, which if adopted, would require the entire frontage of two-family homes to face Bedford Road.

Susan Favate of BFI Planning, who helped the village craft the proposed amendment, said the change was fairly minor and would potentially impact only four properties along Bedford Road.

"We looked at the impact of the existing two-family homes as well as future development of two-family homes and only four lots along Bedford Road could potentially be developed as two-family homes," she said.

The issue surfaced in April when a proposal was presented to the Pleasantville Planning Commission to build two two-family homes, one for the corner lot of Bedford Road and Clark Street and the second pitched for the adjacent lot on Clark Street.

Objecting to the proposal was former Pleasantville mayor Bernard Gordon who said the proposed two-family home on Clark Street shouldn't be considered in the R-2A but in the zone for one-family homes. All houses on Clark Street are single-family homes. Since then, the developer has changed the plan to build single-family residences on Clark Street.

There is also growing concern that the

perspective buyer of the Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson property on Bedford Road and Great Oak Lane would build multiple two-family homes. However, Mayor Peter Scherer said under the current proposal, should it move forward, the existing parcel would be subdivided into six lots with two two-family homes facing Bedford Road and four one-family homes on Great Oak Lane.

Some village residents expressed concern at last week's hearing that the amendment could prevent additional affordable housing stock that multifamily homes could offer.

"I see the need by the village for a capacity for a range of housing types and a range of price points where people can come in and get started," said resident Peter Russell. "Two-family homes are a lot of times a place where families can get started, whether it's rental or ownership, it can be a house where people can build some wealth."

Russell said the proposed amendment could be a signal that the village is pushing against the development of more multifamily homes.

Scherer explained that what has been pitched is modest and primarily addressed some residents' concerns.

"For a long time, there have been quite a number of two-family homes embedded into single-family neighborhoods," Scherer said. "These (two-family homes) have been very successful without difficulty and we have been accommodating as a community to new rental housing."

That the amended code would lessen economic diversity in the village and is instead a response to a fear of larger development was voiced by Pastor Susan Chupungco of Pleasantville's United Methodist Church.

"It seems counter to our goal to enact legislation that will continue to ensure the cost of living in Pleasantville continues to be unobtainable for more people," Chupungco said. "Reducing the number of two-family homes will continue to decrease affordability and economic diversity in our village even further. The ability to live in the downtown area is incredible and it should be expanded to more people of various economic means."

Chupungco said two-family homes can better accommodate single parents and makes it possible for married couples to afford to have a parent stay with them.

"That would create stability for children who can stay in their communities and in their schools with their friends rather than relocate to more affordable housing," she said.

Gordon thanked the board for moving quickly to amend the zoning and suggested the village consider some long-range planning for future housing.

"If it's going to change the nature of single-family residences, it should be done with the community in a long-range plan so everybody understands the issues involved in changing a single-family zone into a two-family or multifamily zone, Gordon said.

"We all can appreciate the difficulty and cost of housing for first-time home buyers. It's not an issue of zoning but more an issue of the economy and all the other factors that go into that."

Having a more flexible range of housing stock is key to the village's future, Russell said. "It's not just for young starters, but for folks my age who are living in houses too big for them. It's hard to downsize and stay in the same community. We place a high value on walking and shopping in Pleasantville."

The public hearing will remain open until the next board meeting on Oct. 13, when a formal vote is expected.

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No. Castle Looks to Convert Old Verizon Lot into Parking in Armonk

By Martin Wilbur

North Castle officials plan on converting a two-acre parcel formerly owned by Verizon into additional parking in downtown Armonk to ease a shortage of spaces during high-volume hours.

A preliminary layout last week was unveiled by the town's consulting engineer Joe Cremele of Kellard Sessions that also included landscaping, curbing and a new location for dumpsters to hold recyclables and garbage.

Under the configuration presented by Cremele at last Wednesday's Town Board meeting, there would be room for about 49 parking spaces in the new lot located off of the Kent Place parking area near the North Castle Public Library.

Cremele said he included a six-foot landscaped buffer on an island between the existing Kent Place lot, which is located behind the stores on the west side of Main Street, and the new parking area. There would also need to be mitigation because there is about 21,000 square feet of wetland buffer that is expected to be disturbed, he said.

Another requirement would be for the town to obtain several easements.

"There are a number of private property towns here and there are a number of agreements that would have to take place," Cremele said.

Additionally, there would be two compactors housed in the new area, one for garbage the other for paper and cardboard.

There would also be a dumpster that would hold bottles and glass for recycling.

Town Board members were encouraged with advancing the plans. Supervisor Michael Schiliro said a parking study conducted by the town during the pandemic showed there are enough spaces in the aggregate in Armonk, they are not all in the right locations. For example, there are typically excess spaces on Old Route 22, but at peak times there is a shortage on or near Main Street, he said.

For years, the town had been pursuing

the Verizon property as a logical solution to the parking crunch. The sale finally materialized last year.

"I'm hopeful we can make further improvements on the rest of the lot, but at least we can add additional downtown parking, which is what we need," Schiliro said.

"I think you did a beautiful job," Councilman Jose Berra told Cremele after his presentation. "I think this is really good and within the realm of things very easy to follow."

Cremele said he will next start to lay out the easements in the plan to definitively learn which property owners need to grant easements. Then Town Attorney Roland Baroni will look to execute those easements with the affected private property owners.

Town Administrator Kevin Hay mentioned that he expected the construction would begin next summer. It is not clear how long it may take to do the work, what it would cost or how the town is going to pay for it. Once Cremele submits firmer plans, the amount of time it would take and the cost might come into focus, Hay said.

Great Finish for a Great Cause

Ronald McDonald House of the Greater Hudson Valley last week completed the Dashing for Dylan Endurance Challenge, an annual fundraising event in honor of Dylan J. Hoffman, for the entire month of September. The Challenge supported the families at Ronald McDonald House located at the Maria Fareri Children's Hospital in Valhalla. On Sunday, there was a Family Fun Day celebration at Crawford Park in Rye Brook to conclude the effort, which included face painting, obstacle courses, a bounce house, ornament decorating, BBQ, raffles, giveaways, music and more. The goal for this year's challenge was to raise \$80,000.



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Letters to the Editor

Arena Would Offer Fresh Perspective to Address State’s Challenges

No matter what side of the fence you usually vote, the treatment we all got during the pandemic with extended mandates, lockdowns and a lowering of our standard of life, we all have been thinking that this wasn’t what we wanted.

Our state, more than others, kept our lives almost hostage for the better part of two years. What we mainly have to show for it now are boarded up buildings, closed family businesses and a state economy that isn’t where it should be. Students have suffered, the communities we live in have suffered. Somehow, we need to turn it around.

In Albany, we have somehow elected a group of “representatives” that don’t truly represent all of the voices in the community. One-speak, one-mind of a government that focused on issues that haven’t helped as much as hurt.

That’s why I have taken a strong look at Gina Arena for state Senate. Quite simply she aims to:

1. Cut taxes and make our communities more affordable
2. Help businesses thrive and create good-paying jobs
3. Protect our environment

Let us represent our area in 2023 with a fresh perspective, a strong drive to provide a different focus on what we need and want and shake things up just enough to make the quality of life in our area what it used to be. It’s time to focus on issues that really matter. It’s time to vote for Gina Arena for New York State Senate to represent us in the 40th state Senate District.

Kimberly Morella
Lewisboro

There’s a Clear Trend Between Industrialization and Climate Change

A recent letter to the editor about climate caught my attention (“Mother Nature Controls Climate Change, Not Humans,” September 27-October 3) and I’d like to offer some information that might be helpful.

The writer proposed that humans have no impact on climate and that all is controlled by “Mother Nature.” I take this to mean that the planet we share is a vast network of innumerable unique ecosystems, all in a constant state of change. No one could argue such a view; however, evidence has shown that since humanity’s industrialization, among these various changes, there is also a well-documented, rapid warming trend that puts all our health, safety and economic

prosperity at considerable risk.

I would encourage all readers to refer to the surprisingly readable Fourth National Climate Assessment compiled jointly in 2018 and guided by the Departments of Energy, State, Commerce, Interior, Health & Human Services, Defense and Transportation, as well as NASA and the National Science Foundation, among many others. NASA also provides excellent information about the global impacts of climate change at its website, climate.nasa.gov.

James Connelly
Pleasantville

Harckham’s Support of Key Issues of Our Times Merit His Re-election

In the upcoming November election, we have an opportunity to re-elect our exceptional state Sen. Pete Harckham for another term. I support Sen. Harckham, and here are a few reasons I believe him when he promises to fight for the issues I am passionate about.

- He worked diligently to pass the Reproductive Health Act, ensuring women in New York can make their own reproductive health choices. He said: “In New York, we remain committed to upholding the rights of women to receive reproductive healthcare of their own choosing without governmental intrusion.”
- Sen. Harckham co-sponsored two bills fighting back against the recent Supreme Court decision to overturn freedom of choice for women. The first bill (S.9039) protects the rights of women traveling to New York for reproductive healthcare and the second

(S.8778) rules that law enforcement officers may not arrest any person for providing reproductive healthcare within New York State.

Sen. Harckham kept his word.

- Sen. Harckham passed the toughest climate protection law in the nation (S.8378C). Protecting our clean drinking water sources is vital.
- He passed landmark legislation to require zero emissions vehicles by 2035.
- And he increased funding for law enforcement and gun violence interruption to keep us safer.

Sen. Harckham keeps his word.

And I believe he will keep delivering for us all. Vote for Sen. Pete Harckham on Nov. 8.

Kathleen Talbot
Peekskill

Community-Minded Carey Would Be Excellent Choice for Kent

As someone who has been a resident of Kent for over 50 years, I write in support of Simon Carey for Kent Town Board and ask all readers to support him in November’s election.

Simon and his family have lived in Lake Carmel for 20 years. He is an active member of the Chamber of Commerce, the Kent Planning Board, Kent Natural Resource Committee and the Putnam Country Industrial Development Agency. His daughters attend school in Kent and Carmel and his spouse is active in the community as well.

Simon’s focus is to preserve our town’s natural beauty and to secure funding to repair causeways, roads and dams. He is committed to drawing new small businesses to Kent to strengthen our business districts. His professional expertise in construction helps him with all this work for our town.

I urge you to vote in this year’s November election and to support Simon Carey for Town Board.

Jacky Beshar
Kent

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Columns

It's Digital Inclusion Week: What Does That Mean for Westchester?

By Margaret Käufer

Researchers have shown that the greatest determinant of COVID-19 mortality was internet access. It is a correlation, not a cause. But why are we surprised?

Research also confirms that internet access determines success across multiple areas: heart health, voter turnout, reading scores and employability. Research explains what we intuitively know: Internet access helps us be healthier and wealthier.

Westchester is a top 10 digital county. Despite that, we must acknowledge that thousands have been left behind in a digital divide defined by poverty, race and gender. Living an analog existence in a digital world is inequitable. Westchester needs systemic digital inclusion solutions from policies to coalition building to programs.

Since 2020, The STEM Alliance has been bridging Westchester's digital divide with

our Digital Equity Now initiative, providing more than 1,000 clients with hotspots, Chromebooks and 15 hours of basic tech education. We accomplish this through nonprofit partnerships and soon, with the support of AT&T, we will be launching a new outreach platform called Digital Pathways to expand our reach. Through device ownership, internet access and just 15 hours of "on ramp" training, our clients triple their comfort level on workforce platforms like Google Calendar and Gmail.

Take the story of Consuela, an immigrant mother of two children. She worked full-time as a home healthcare aide just making ends meet and had no digital connection to her daughters' schools. Our Digital Equity Now program changed her prospects. At work, she was quickly promoted to office assistant with a pay raise and managerial duties. At home, Consuela can fully participate in her daughters' schooling by following

assignments on Google classroom.

This program has been transformational for Consuela. But the news is even better; in 2021, the federal government passed the Digital Equity Act, committing \$2.75 billion "to ensure that all people and communities have the skills, technology, and capacity needed to reap the full benefits of our digital economy." Those monies will flow through the states and, in New York, be dispersed through our NY Broadband Program office's State Digital Equity Plan.

How do we take action? First, the county needs to represent our interests to the NY Broadband office.

Second, we need to become digital inclusion trailblazers as defined by the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA): write a digital equity plan, support coalition building and fund digital inclusion work.

Third, define digital inclusion success as a three-part solution – internet access,

device ownership and basic tech training. Digital inclusion is not just about high-speed broadband infrastructure. Skill-building is needed for tech adoption and workforce development.

Fourth, expand current digital inclusion work so that Westchester is "shovel ready" for the imminent funding.

We are on the precipice of something big: historic federal funding to systemically bridge the digital divide for all Westchester residents. But county leadership will be key to our success. It's a complicated problem with a simple solution. Let's blaze a digital pathway for all of Westchester by laying the groundwork now.

Margaret Käufer is president of The STEM Alliance, a Westchester-based nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing STEM education and enrichment initiatives and to ensuring equal access to STEM learning opportunities to all.

Letters to the Editor

Congestion Pricing for NYC Would Provide Clear Benefits to All

Congestion pricing will be implemented in New York City next year. There are challenges to implementing the new program, but unfortunately some politicians, such as state Senate candidate Gina Arena, are spreading misinformation to make electoral gains.

Congestion pricing is not a tax, it is a solution for the burden that tens of thousands of private vehicles put on the region. Nor

is it unproven, having been successfully implemented in Singapore, Stockholm, Milan and London, which benefited from a 30 percent reduction in traffic congestion during the first year of the program in 2003.

New York City's congestion pricing program will also result in fewer cars, less traffic and easier parking. Automobile traffic would decline, and thousands of trucks would no longer clog city streets. The MTA would benefit from increased funding and better service, which would result in a ridership boost on subway, bus and commuter rail lines. This decreased traffic will also provide environmental benefits by reducing particulate matter and carbon dioxide emissions, reducing hospitalizations for asthma and other respiratory conditions.

Rather than advocating only for people who can afford to drive everywhere, I'd hope Ms. Arena would want to help constituents who also need public transit. Sen. Pete Harckham is supporting solutions that will effectively impact the true cost of regional transportation and boost the economy. Ms. Arena's criticisms do not offer any real fixes to the challenges of traffic and poor air quality that are required to improve the lives of Hudson Valley and New York residents.

Chandak Ghosh
Chappaqua

Pete Friedrich
Mount Kisco

Regard for Neighbors' Property: A Dilemma for the Dog Walker

By Eric A. Kreuter

At the outset, I am not a dog owner, but I like all animals. What upsets me is when owners of dogs walk their pets near the property of neighbors and allow them to relieve themselves on their neighbors' lawns.

While the vast majority are prepared and do scoop up poop, they do nothing to clean up when the dog urinates on the grass. Unfortunately, when this happens, the grass burns out due to the rich nitrogen content.

Also, when a dog urinates on a particular spot, it will attract other dogs to also "mark their territory." The owner of the affected property is left with unsightly bare spots. Remediating the aftermath requires the owner to buy and put down fresh soil, seed and straw, then water the area hoping for new grass to grow. There are warning signs that can be posted to keep dogs off the lawn and sprays that can be applied to the grass leaving an odor unpleasant to dogs.

From a dog owner's perspective, the dog certainly needs to relieve itself and they may view all property available for this purpose, just a part of life in a community. The perspective of the property owner is that they have a right to enjoy their land without harm done to it by the pets of other people. Some may feel the last couple of feet of everyone's lawn really belongs to the town. Then again, the owner of the property is required to maintain that part of the lawn. Who is right?

Recently, I asked a dog walker why he

felt it was okay to allow his dog to relieve himself on my lawn. He thought it wasn't a big deal, but politely suggested putting up a sign and applying the spray. He also said had there been a sign he would not have allowed his dog to relieve itself on my property. The problem is that there was, indeed, a sign only two feet above the spot where his dog urinated (it was affixed to the mailbox post). He said he did not see it.

Does the dog walker have a dilemma if they care to walk their dog around the neighborhood and respect the rights of property owners? Dogs prefer to urinate on grass; that makes sense. They can go frequently in increments during a walk. Perhaps it is unreasonable to expect every dog owner to be restricted to only their property boundary. So, what is the solution?

I suggest each dog owner consider their own views on this subject and each property owner to think about how they feel, and if posting signs or applying sprays is the answer, then that should be respected. In the case of a direct request from a property owner to a specific dog owner to not allow their dog on their grass, perhaps the person walking the dog ought to heed that request. Otherwise, it leads to unnecessary ill will.

Perhaps larger communities should have dog parks for dogs to freely roam, socialize and, yes, do their business. No easy solutions but food for thought.

Eric A. Kreuter is a Yorktown Heights resident.

Zeldin is Wrong Choice to Serve as Governor

I was amused to read the recent Letter to the Editor "Zeldin Will Stop the Crime Wave Sweeping New York." Recent indictments show that Donald Trump and his children are responsible for a major New York crime wave. If he becomes governor, Lee Zeldin would likely pardon the Trump family, allowing them to continue their criminal behavior without consequences. Zeldin would also push for an abortion ban, creating criminals out of women who want control of their own bodies.

Want to prevent crime in New York? Don't elect Lee Zeldin.

Calendar Submissions

We're happy to help spread the word about your community event. Please submit your information at least three weeks prior to your event and include the words "Calendar Submission" in your email subject line. Entries should be sent to Robert Schork at happenings@theexaminernews.com.

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Police Blotter

County Police/Mount Kisco

Sept. 26: Officers responded at 7:33 a.m. to a rollover accident involving a diesel fuel delivery truck on the access road from Lexington Avenue to the pumphouse off of the Saw Mill Parkway. The driver suffered minor injuries. It was determined that only a small amount of fuel had spilled from the truck. The Mount Kisco Fire Department and Mount Kisco DPW also responded and contained the spill from reaching a nearby stream.

Sept. 29: Three Brooklyn men, ages 23, 20 and 19, were arrested and booked at the Green Street precinct and charged with third-degree menacing and third-degree criminal mischief after a Maple Avenue resident reported at 1:13 p.m. that a group of men was trying to break into his apartment. Officers detained two men and a juvenile on Maple Avenue and located a fourth suspect on Main Street. The victim told officers that the group had been pounding on his door, demanding to speak with a person named Kevin and saying that Kevin owed them

money. No one named Kevin lives at the residence. The front door to the apartment was found to be badly damaged. The suspects were arraigned in Mount Kisco Justice Court and released pending an Oct. 17 court appearance. The juvenile was turned over to his mother and is required to appear in Westchester County Family Court on Oct. 6.

Sept. 29: An officer responded to a Main Street business at 1:35 p.m. after an employee reported receiving several threatening text messages, possibly from an ex-boyfriend. An investigation is continuing.

Sept. 30: Officers responded to Barker Street at 9:15 a.m. at the request of a man who needed to remove personal possessions from his residence. The man is unable to stay at the residence due to a Temporary Order of Protection that bars him from having contact with another person at that same address. He was escorted by officers to retrieve his property and left without incident.

Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

Sept. 20: A caller reported at 7:36 p.m. that he was out eating and an individual threw something at his vehicle. He stated that he drove off and the same individual then showed up outside of the Lutheran Church and punched the caller as he exited his vehicle. He indicated he did not need Croton EMS. Patrols responded and obtained a general supporting deposition from the caller. Patrols report harassment took place but the caller is declining to prosecute.

Sept. 24: A caller reported at 5:45 p.m. that a male fell and hit his head on the train tracks at the Croton-Harmon train station. Patrols and Croton EMS responded. After being evaluated, the patient was transported to Phelps Hospital by Croton EMS.

Sept. 24: A caller reported at 7:28 p.m. that people were fighting on northbound Route 9 because of the traffic. Patrols responded and checked the area with negative results. Patrols assisted with traffic by directing more cars off of the highway.

North Castle Police Department

Sept. 25: A Washington Avenue caller reported at 1:20 p.m. that about five minutes in the past while sweeping her driveway she observed a female wearing a black hoodie staring at her while flipping a red switch

blade. The caller stated she then called inside for her husband and the woman walked away. The responding officers canvassed the area with negative results. A report will follow.

Sept. 25: Report of a school bus that was rear-ended with students onboard on Route 22 at 7:47 a.m. Armonk Garage was subsequently notified, and safely removed a Mazda from the roadway without incident. One of the responding officers advised that the children on board were transferred to another bus. The roadway was cleared and reopened. A report will follow.

Pleasantville Police Department

Sept. 25: Officers responded to a call of a suspicious person on Broadway at 4:47 p.m. They found a 16- or 17-year-old male who asked to be transported to a hospital for a psychiatric evaluation.

Sept. 27: A caller from Bedford Road reported at 11:31 a.m. that he has been receiving harassing calls from an acquaintance.

Sept. 28: Report of a larceny on Pleasant Avenue at 10:17 a.m. The complainant reported the theft of tools and construction equipment of unknown value.

Sept. 30: A party was arrested at 9:10 a.m. and charged with offenses related to a domestic dispute on Fairway Drive.

Yorktown Police Department

Sept. 25: A 41-year-old Yorktown man was charged with criminal mischief, a Class A misdemeanor, following a report of a domestic dispute at 9:28 a.m. An investigation determined the man allegedly damaged a U.S. passport of a female.

Sept. 27: Kevin Velasquez, 32, of Yonkers, was charged at 10:45 a.m. with fourth-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance, a Class C felony, after being found unconscious in the front seat of a parked vehicle on Crompond Road. A quantity of cocaine was found in a small Ziploc bag in his lap.

White Plains Police Department

Sept. 24: Jeffrey Faulk, 28, was charged with third-degree grand larceny on Westchester Avenue at 11:02 a.m.

Sept. 25: Melvin Oliver, 46, was charged with third-degree assault on Main Street at 5:54 p.m.

Obituary

Patricia Ann Fitz

Patricia Ann (Prior) Fitz died peacefully at her home in Armonk on Sept. 26 at the age of 80.

"Patti" was born in Nashua, N.H. to Perley Washburn Prior and Elizabeth Huff Prior. Patti graduated from the Air Force Academy High School in Colorado Springs, Colo. After high school, she moved to Tokyo where she taught English at a Japanese elementary school.

Following in her mother's footsteps of becoming a nurse, Patti graduated from Beverly Hospital School of Nursing. Patti worked as a registered nurse for years at Boston Children's Hospital and in Brattleboro, Vt. While attending nursing school, Patti met the love of her life, Carl F. Fitz Jr., at the Main Street Methodist Church in Nashua.

Carl and Patti were married for 46 years and lived primarily in Walpole, N.H. where they raised their three children and where Carl operated the family-owned Fitz, Vogt & Associates food service management company. Carl and Patti also lived for many years and built their "dream home" on Pleasant Lake in New London, N.H. Patti took great pride in, and was very skilled at, parking the boat in the boathouse on the lake.

Patti loved the ocean, gardening and flowers, spending time with her family, and being social with friends. She cared deeply for those in her life.

Patti is predeceased by her parents, husband and daughter Beth (Fitz) Scialdone. Surviving family members include her two sons and their spouses and her five grandchildren, Carl F. Fitz III and his wife, Colleen, of Dunbarton, N.H. and their children Carl IV and Carrick



Patricia Ann Fitz

and Jason S. Fitz and his wife, Katarina, and children Neve and Hope in Armonk. Patti's grandson Benjamin Scialdone, son of Beth, lives in Vacaville, Calif.

The funeral was held on Sept. 30 at First Baptist Church in New London, NH, followed by a brief reception at the church. Burial immediately followed in Walpole before a reception at The Restaurant at Burdick's. Rev. Cindy Johnson officiated the ceremony. All who attended celebrated Patti's life.

To sign an online guestbook, visit www.chadwickfuneralservice.com.

Chadwick Funeral Service of New London assisted the family with arrangements.



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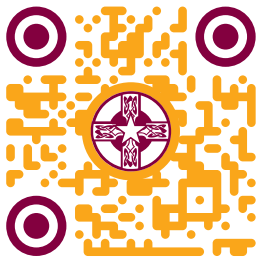
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Westchester Advises Residents to Be Ready for Major Storms

The two devastating hurricanes that recently caused destruction from the Caribbean to Canada's Atlantic coast are reminders of the dangers that severe weather can bring during hurricane season.

County Executive George Latimer urged residents to review their emergency plans, stock up on critical supplies and stay prepared in case severe weather strikes Westchester.

"Hurricane Fiona caused enormous damage around the Caribbean, including in Turks and Caicos and Bermuda," he said. "It devastated the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, which had yet to fully recover from a hurricane five years ago. Fiona even

brought her wrath all the way to the Canadian Maritimes. Then came Hurricane Ian, which devastated much of Florida, causing loss of life and leaving millions without power. The fury of the storms we are experiencing cannot be underestimated."

Latimer said the county's Office of Emergency Management was monitoring the remnants of Ian, which has been downgraded from a hurricane but continues to cause flooding along portions of the East Coast.

County emergency responders recommend residents set aside several days' worth of non-perishable food, water and medicine, and keep other critical supplies

on hand like flashlights and batteries in case they are stuck in their homes without power. Residents should also have a "go-bag" ready in case they are asked to evacuate on short notice during an emergency.

Commissioner Richard Wishnie of the Department of Emergency Services said hurricane season runs from June 1 through Dec. 1. He recommends that residents create an emergency preparedness kit that includes a gallon of water per person a day and a three-day supply of canned, packaged or other shelf-stable, ready-to-eat food.

Foods that can be stored include ready-to-eat canned meats and fish, protein or fruit bars, dry cereal and granola, peanut butter, nuts, crackers and canned fruit or juice.

Other items residents should have available is a manual can opener and eating utensils, flashlights and batteries. A first aid kit and battery-powered or hand-crank radio.

Commissioner of Health Dr. Sherlita Amler said before any major storm, residents should make a list of their medications, charge their cell phones and laptops and fill

their car's gas tank. Residents should also have masks, wipes and hand sanitizer in a go-bag.

Residents with oil tanks at home should top off their tanks and tighten the cap to prevent spills. Above-ground tanks should also be strapped to a secure fixture to prevent tipping in case of flooding.

If you lose power, call Con Edison or New York State Electric & Gas directly. Con Edison can be reached at 800-75-CONED. NYSEG customers can call 800-572-1131 for electricity outages or 800-572-1121 for gas-related issues.

Wishnie said families should also consider what additional preparations to make for people with special needs or who care for the elderly, infants or pets. Family members also should plan for how they will communicate if local phone service is not available or is overwhelmed by high demand.

For more practical tips on these and other topics, visit <https://emergencyservices.westchestergov.com/severe-weather> or <https://www.ready.gov/>



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Tuesday

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Wednesday, October 12th

All other collections
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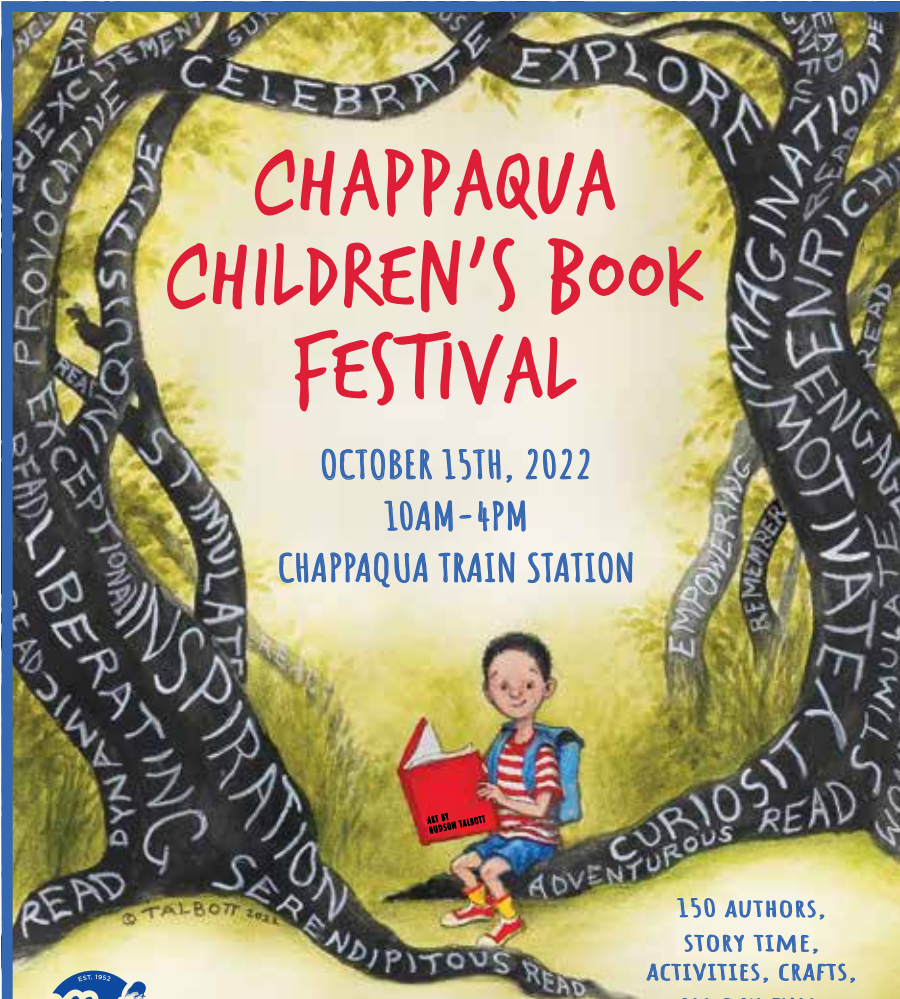
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Shortz's Table Tennis Iron Man Streak Reaches 10 Years

By Martin Wilbur

New York Times crossword puzzle editor Will Shortz has barely been sick for the last 10 years. He believes he has found the elixir that keeps him healthy.

For the past decade, Shortz, who has owned and operated the Westchester Table Tennis Center in Pleasantville since its 2011 opening, has played table tennis every single day. If you're counting, that's 3,652 consecutive days, as of Oct. 3, the 10th anniversary of the last day he missed.

"First of all, it's a very healthful sport," Shortz, 70, said of the benefits of table tennis in his life. "It uses both the brain and the body. I have not been seriously sick since I started this (streak), and almost not sick at all. And table tennis is a social game. You're just a few feet across the table from your opponent and you can talk, which you can't do in most other sports, so it's very friendly."

Shortz acknowledged his drive to play every day is a tad obsessive. His self-imposed rules dictate that he must play for at least 10 minutes against a real person on a regulation table. Typically, he goes for 60 to 90 minutes. He must get in his play at some point between the moment he rises in the morning until the stroke of midnight that ends the day.

Shortz was determined to play daily starting in 2012. But a problem arose when he arrived in Croatia for the World Puzzle Championships in early October.

"I couldn't read the signs, I couldn't ask



anyone in English, and the club that I was going to closed a little before I thought it would," Shortz said. "I arrived just as it was closing. I don't speak Croatian, so I couldn't ask 'Please, let me come in and play.' So I missed that day; that was Oct. 3. Of course, I started again."

And has been going strong ever since. Friends suggested he try playing every day in 2013, but film his exploits. He recorded his play from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31.

"Of course, I wasn't going to stop playing table tennis, so the streak has continued," Shortz said.

No doubt there have been challenges to



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTOS

Westchester Table Tennis Center owner and crossword puzzle maven Will Shortz speaks to players on Sunday who helped him celebrate a full decade of playing the sport every day.

keep the iron man streak alive. Since he has frequently traveled abroad to host the World Puzzle Championships and other events, hopping time zones can cause problems. When heading from New York to Asia, since it's on the other side of the International Date Line, Shortz must play before he leaves for the airport.

One year, when the championships were held in Bangalore, India, he traveled on Emirates airline to Dubai to stay over for a couple of days to make sure he could play.

Another time, on a trip to Hawaii, Shortz had a scheduled noon flight local time back to New York, and the taxi service was scheduled to take him to the airport at 9:30 a.m. The length of the flight and the time zone change mandated he play before leaving.

The hotel where he was staying had a ping

pong table near the pool, but there was no one there to play in the morning. When his cab arrived, he convinced the driver to be his opponent for 10 minutes.

"I gave her a nice tip and that's how I kept the streak alive," Shortz said.

The pandemic shutdown in 2020 also presented issues. His center was shuttered to the public for three months, but he went there to play with a friend who wanted him to continue. Not even a COVID-19 positive last December stopped him.

"It wasn't so bad, though," Shortz said. "I came over after closing hours and a friend played with me, and it's a pretty safe sport. The table is nine feet across and the tables are spread out. We have a 23-foot ceiling so it's almost like being outdoors."

Members at Westchester Table Tennis on Sunday saluted Shortz on his unusual achievement. Hastings resident Steve Zeitlin said he's thrilled for him.

"I think it's one of those quirky miracles that deserves extraordinary attention," Zeitlin said.

Amoolya Menon, 13, of Mount Kisco, one of the top players in her age group in the United States, said she tries to play every day, so she understands the dedication required.

"It's definitely not easy," she said. "It's definitely an accomplishment."

Shortz knows that there will be some circumstance one day that will prevent him from continuing. But until then, he's always ready for a game.

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Any questions or to register, please call (914) 528-1572

From Burns Film Center Employee to Filmmaker at Popular Festival

By Martin Wilbur

As a Horace Greeley High School senior in 2012-13 and during time off from college, Ethan Fuirst worked at the Jacob Burns Film Center selling tickets, scooping popcorn and directing patrons to the correct screen.

Next week Fuirst returns to the independent theater in a far different capacity.

Fuirst's 15-minute short film "The Victorias" will be shown as one of the entries in this year's Jewish Film Festival, the Burns' longest-running annual event and arguably its most popular.

Next Tuesday, Oct. 11, he will be part of a Q&A with festival curator Bruni Burres following the film's screening. Fuirst will appear with fellow filmmaker and Westchester product Sophie Parens. Parens also has a short film, "Zaida," on the "Exciting New Voices Close to Home: Shorts Program."

"My parents and grandparents are coming, and the Burns means a lot to me as a former employee, but my parents and grandparents are people who've lived in Westchester for a long time," Fuirst said. "They've gone to the Burns as moviegoers, and so the Burns just doesn't mean something to me, it's someplace for me to present my



ETHAN FUIRST PHOTO

work to my family on screens that they associate with validity."

Fuirst, who was a film major at Kenyon College in Ohio, said "The Victorias" consists of talking with seven performers who he worked with at the New York City Tenement Museum on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

They played the role of Victoria Confino, a 14-year-old Sephardic immigrant in 1916, one of thousands of immigrants from more than 20 nations who lived in the apartment building on Orchard Street between the 1860s and 2011. That building is now home to the museum.

All of the performers who played Confino's character were laid off at the start of the COVID-19

pandemic. When that happened, the group lost more than a job.

"This was not just about employment," said Fuirst, who worked as a museum tour guide. "It was about performing and portraying another life and the connection they had to each other."

Parens, from Sleepy Hollow, made "Zaida" following the 2017 riot in Charlottesville, Va. It is dedicated to her grandfather, Henri Parens, who survived the Holocaust as a pre-teen and went on to become a noted psychoanalyst who dedicated his career to fighting prejudice.

The two-week festival kicks off this Thursday evening with a screening of "Karaoke," an Israeli comedy about an upper



SOPHIE PARENS PHOTO

Shots from two short films, "The Victorias," left, and "Zaida," made by local filmmakers that are part of this year's Jewish Film Festival that begins Thursday evening and runs for two weeks at the Jacob Burns Film Festival in Pleasantville.

middle class Sephardic couple. The festival continues for two full weeks of films addressing a wide variety of subjects and issues about the Jewish experience.

Burres said selecting the roughly two dozen films and programs that make up the Jewish Film Festival is always an exceedingly difficult task. This year she decided to place an extra emphasis toward humor given the current time.

"There are some serious stories and wonderful films that are about looking at our past and present and difficult stories," Burres said. "So, I've always, since I started programming, wanted to have that humor part of Jewish culture as well."

Among her notable selections is "Valiant Heart," a French film about six Jewish children who in August 1942 take refuge where no one would think to look for them.

Another recommended film is "iMordecai," starring Judd Hirsch and Carol Kane, a married couple who are Holocaust survivors. Hirsch's character, Mordecai, finally decides to get an iPhone, which opens up his world to all kinds of possibilities making him feel young again.

For those who prefer a forgotten bit of American and Jewish history, there's "Jews of the Wild West." Jewish immigrants or their children also made their mark in the west in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

In fact, the first American western, "The Great Train Robbery," the star was Broncho Billy Anderson, whose real name was Max Aronson. Then there was Levi Strauss, who made his fortune by designing comfortable pants for ranchers. They were just two of the estimated 100,000 Jews who migrated west in the decades leading up to World War I.

For a complete schedule of films that are part of this year's Jewish Film Festival, and for tickets to these and other screenings, visit www.burnsfilmcenter.org.

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Septics: Why the Big To-Do About Where Doo-Doo Goes?

If your house is on sewer, you may think that this piece about septic systems has no application to you. But as I understand it, as many as one-third of us within the reach of this newspaper are on septic.

And if you're not, you may someday fall in love with a house that is, like I did.

As a realtor, just recently, when I started a home search for new clients, my first directive from them was, "Don't show us anything that isn't on sewer." Yet the couple preferred homes with privacy in more remote locations where, more often than not, there are no sewer lines.

As I became more a veteran in the real estate business, I tended to gently nudge clients if I felt it was for their own good. So, in response to that preference, I would ask, "Why not? A septic system is not something to fear."

The fact that I once owned an 18th century house that still had an abandoned outhouse in the yard when we first visited it should have led me to have some questions about where the doo-doo went. But at the time, as such a young and naive kid who knew little about the way houses work, I never bothered to ask whether it was on septic or sewer. Imagine? Hardly Home Guru-ish.

Once ensconced in that home, we soon noticed that the sinks and showers were



By Bill Primavera

draining slowly and that the toilet wasn't flushing properly. That's when I realized that we probably had a septic tank that needed to be pumped.

When the service people arrived, my wife and I were at first somewhat startled by the slogan on their lime green t-shirts that said, "Your s--t is our bread and butter!" We laughed, albeit nervously, as city transplants at the time when the film "Deliverance" had just been released.

But after much poking around, the service providers found a wonderfully built septic system. From what they could tell, it probably hadn't been pumped in a

very long time. But once the tank was pumped to remove the sludge on the bottom and the scum from the top, we never had a moment's problem with it. The only maintenance we did, when we remembered, was to pump it every five years to keep it in top working condition.

Now Westchester County requires that septic be pumped at least once during every five-year period, but one septic expert told me it's not necessary to pump that often, suggesting that it's a way for the county to boost tax revenue. But who knows?

The septic tank comes to us courtesy of a French inventor named John Mouras around 1860. The components he established then are still pretty much in effect: The house



drain connects to the septic tank where all wastes either settle or float. Heavy solids sink to the bottom where they are broken down by bacteria to form sludge, while the lighter solids rise to the surface as scum. This process allows the wastewater in between to be released to the absorption field.

To show the efficacy of a good septic system, I have been involved with the sale of a Frank Lloyd Wright-tutored home built in 1962 and, when it came time to check the septic tank, we couldn't find it. The testing service came over and we poked and prodded for a long time, working on an old survey, and it was no place to be found.

So we called in a snaking company that had to place a snake with a camera down

the waste pipe. It was shoved through quite a distance to the tank, and it was found in a very unlikely location, next to a giant tree that certainly wasn't there 50 years ago. When the lid was lifted, maybe for the first time in a quarter-century, the tank was clean with a minimum of sludge and practically no scum on top. When things work, they work.

Bill Primavera is a residential and commercial realtor associated with William Raveis Realty, as well as a publicist and journalist writing regularly as The Home Guru. For questions about home maintenance or to buy or sell a home, he can be e-mailed at williamjprimavera@gmail.com or called directly at 914-522-2076.

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Arc Stages, Director Take ‘Great Leap’ Bringing Show to Local Stage

By Martin Wilbur

Rui Dun’s love of theater runs deep, but there aren’t many productions that speak to the 31-year-old director’s personal experience.

That has changed with her opportunity to direct “The Great Leap” for Pleasantville’s Arc Stages for a seven-performance run over three weekends starting Friday evening.

It is playwright Lauren Yee’s critically acclaimed story about a young Chinese-American man who is regarded as a playground basketball legend in San Francisco’s Chinatown and talks his way onto a college team that travels to Beijing to compete against a Chinese national squad. The play is set during the post-cultural revolution in the late 1980s.

Dun was born and raised in China, and after school left her hometown for Changchun to work for a small theater company for six or seven years. She arrived in New York to attend The Actors Studio Drama School and gravitated to the works of Asian-American playwrights, including Yee. “The Great Leap” debuted on Off Broadway in 2018.

“That one just stuck with

me since then, and I’ve been sort of following her career on the sidelines,” Dun said of the playwright. “So ‘The Great Leap’ has been put up a few times around the country, so it has always been a story that’s always been very important, and I wish everyone could see.”

What makes the story special for Dun, having now experienced life in both the United States and China, is its “duality of identity” as both an Asian and an Asian-American story.

“But in this, with the reaction of father and son, there’s that duality of what does it mean to grow up in China versus growing up in America, and it has been in my mind because, obviously, I relate to Chinese-American stories,” Dun said. “However, that’s not everybody’s story. There’s always that divide between Asians who arrived from Asia and Asians who grew up here, so this is sort of that landscape I wanted to explore, so that’s exciting.”

Arc Stages’ Artistic Director Adam Cohen said he selected “The Great Leap,” which features actors Fang Du, Jose Gamo, Ken Straus and Yeena Sung, for the theater company’s Next Stage production because he felt it was an important and poignant piece.



PETER SCHERER PHOTO

The cast of “The Great Leap,” a critically acclaimed play written by Lauren Yee. Pictured, from left, are Fang Du, Yeena Sung, Jose Gamo and Ken Straus. The production is at Arc Stages in Pleasantville for five more performances over the next two weekends.

Finding plays that aren’t well-known to the general public but tell a compelling story is one of the hallmarks of Arc Stages.

“We do these shows because they have something to say, that the art is important and that people can come and get lost in the night for a few hours and sort of go away thinking about something, and I think we can all use that,” Cohen said.

Dun said when Cohen reached out to her to direct the show, she

jumped at the chance, even though at the time she had left New York for Portland, Ore. because the theater world had shut down in the wake of COVID-19. She currently works for a non-profit organization and has returned to Manhattan.

“For Adam to put on a story that’s less represented, that’s very exciting for me,” Dun said. “It’s finally, finally, a story I really connect with that I can direct and realize a vision that’s true to me.”

One of the key reasons Dun left China to come to the U.S. for graduate school was she felt she had learned leadership skills while working for the theater company but was hemmed in as Chinese society typically relegates women to supporting roles. She was also attracted to see if she could make it in New York’s vibrant but demanding theater scene.

It helped Dun that starting with her generation most students in China are taught English, which helped when she arrived in New York. But while she was prepared language-wise, there was a deep cultural divide that affects simple tasks, such as ordering food.

Dun looks upon theater as a way to help her fulfill her artistic ambitions instead of necessarily making it her main livelihood.

“I’m thinking of theater more as a nurturing experience in my life rather than a career,” Dun said.

Performances of “The Great Leap” continue on Oct. 7, 8, 14, 15 and 16. Show times are 8 p.m. except for the final performance on Oct. 16, which is a 2 p.m. matinee. Tickets are \$28 to \$38.

Arc Stages is located at 147 Wheeler Ave. in Pleasantville. For tickets and more information, visit www.arcstages.org.



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Byrne Names Transition Team, Prepares to Lead Putnam County

Assemblyman Kevin Byrne, the unopposed Republican and Conservative Party candidate for Putnam County Executive, announced Monday the formation of his county transition team.

Over the last several months, Byrne has hosted a variety of outdoor constituent forums in addition to fact-finding meetings with officials from inside and outside county government.

Byrne has reached out to every town supervisor and village mayor in the county to hear their thoughts and discuss ideas on how they can do more to work together. He has also met with a wide variety of county government officials within and outside New York State.

Assembling his transition team and planning for the future in anticipation of a November victory is a logical progression.

"When I began my campaign, I made it clear that it was as important to me to earn the confidence of the people of Putnam County as it was to earn their votes," Byrne said. "With the announcement of our transition team, the voters can be assured that I am prepared to hit the ground running come January and that my administration will be staffed with competent, credible professionals."

Byrne has secured a group of top-tier government experts to review the current structure, finances, programs and personnel within Putnam County government and to provide him with detailed recommendations and a forward-thinking plan for the county's future operations.

The transition team will be chaired by Jim Burpoe, commissioner of the Orange County Department of General Services. Other members include former Putnam County deputy commissioner of mental health & social services Joe DeMarzo; George Oros, former Westchester County chief of staff to Rob Astorino and former chair of the Westchester County Board of Legislators; former assemblyman and current Southeast Town Attorney Willis Stephens Jr.; and former Putnam County Attorney William Spain.

"The members of the transition team bring decades of experience in county budgeting, fiscal management, economic development, law, labor negotiations, private business, transportation and more," Byrne said. "The team's expertise will be bolstered by other subject matter experts who can assist in other specialized areas such as health, infrastructure, planning, etc. Their insights will be invaluable as we work towards making Putnam County a more efficient, transparent, and effective government."

Transition Team Chairman Jim Burpoe. Burpoe currently serves as the Commissioner of General Services for Orange County. As commissioner, Burpoe is responsible for the procurement of about \$340 million in goods and services every year. He has streamlined government operations, saving taxpayers millions of dollars annually while enhancing processes and services countywide. Additionally, Burpoe manages Orange County's information technology and purchasing departments. His background includes building and managing his own multimillion-dollar retail technology start-up company, as well as his time in public service

as a law enforcement officer and U.S. Army veteran.

Joseph DeMarzo. DeMarzo served Putnam County for more than 25 years in a variety of capacities including deputy commissioner of social services, Youth Bureau and Mental Health including Alcohol, and Substance Abuse Services. He remains active in the community as a board member of CoveCare and Putnam Hospital Center. DeMarzo is a passionate advocate for young people and those struggling with mental health and substance use issues.

George Oros. Oros has an extensive background in county government,

previously serving as chief of staff in Westchester County under former county executive Rob Astorino. Oros previously served for many years on the Westchester County Board of Legislators, including as chair. He is a recognized expert in economic development, public policy and government operations and currently serves as an economic development consultant for the Town of Cortlandt. Oros, an attorney, also operated a private law practice for many years.

Willis Stephens Jr. Stephens is a former assemblyman and the current Southeast Town Attorney. He has an in-depth

knowledge of planning, zoning and land use as well as state and local government.

William Spain. Spain has deep roots in Putnam County. Presently in private law practice, Spain previously served as the Putnam County Attorney and Carmel town attorney. He has expertise in county law including the charter, rules and regulations.

County Legislator Bill Gouldman. He will serve as the transition team liaison to members of the Putnam County Legislature. Gouldman, a longtime Putnam Valley resident, is in his third term on the county legislature and is the chair of the economic development and energy committees.

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9am-12pm



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- Unlabeled/unidentified containers
- Household batteries (AAA, AA, C, D, 9V)
- Rechargeable batteries, sealed lead acid batteries
- Fire Extinguishers
- Propane Tanks
- Ammunition, explosives, fireworks
- Asbestos products
- Construction debris
- Furniture, toys or clothing
- Smoke Detectors
- Medical waste, old medications
- **NO COMMERCIAL BUSINESS ITEMS**
- **ITEMS IN GARBAGE AND/OR LAWN BAGS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

All waste is subject to inspection and will only be accepted in the County's discretion. Please be advised that if any not accepted items as specified above are brought and are determined to present a hazard to residents, workers or the environment, Putnam County reserves the right to take any necessary safety measures, the cost of which shall be the resident's responsibility.

Pre-Registration Required.

Please visit our website at:

www.putnamcountyny.com/health/recycling/#haz to schedule your appointment. Please bring your confirmation email with you to the event. For more information about waste disposal options, recycling and more, please call (845) 808-1390 ext. 43125 or visit our website above.



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The household Hazardous Waste program is partially financed with a grant from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.



Veterans, Supporters Set to Honor Military With 50-Mile Ride on Sunday

By Martin Wilbur

About 50 bicyclists and adaptive athletes are expected to make a grueling 50-mile trek this Sunday through Westchester and Putnam counties and onto the West Point Military Academy.

The Face of America Liberty cycling challenge will feature veterans, including those who have been disabled, current West Point Cadets and citizens to honor active and retired military members.

Ride Director Jim McCauley said the veterans, particularly those who wheel themselves for 50 miles in trikes, are an inspiration to countless others.

"I'm a Vietnam veteran. The courage, the heart, the stamina of these people," marveled McCauley. "If you get killed, you get killed, but if you lose your legs, you're still alive and you have to go on with life. These people, men and women, do it and they do it with smiles on their face. They're an inspiration."

The national nonprofit organization World T.E.A.M. has organized the Face of America challenges throughout the country for more than 20 years. There have been longer multiple-day challenges including a Washington, D.C. to Gettysburg run and others at meaningful sites throughout the country.

This is the fifth year that the ride to West Point has been held, but the first time since 2019. McCauley said this year the



About 50 cyclists and disabled veterans in trikes will be heading out on Sunday for the Face of America Liberty challenge, a 50-mile bicycle or trike ride from Sleepy Hollow up to Putnam County and on to West Point.

route has been altered and will be going through Chappaqua for the first time.

The challenge starts this year at Phelps Hospital in Sleepy Hollow at 8 a.m., heads north on Route 117 through Mount Pleasant, New Castle and Mount Kisco, McCauley said. Following the first rest

stop at Northern Westchester Hospital, the participants head north to Yorktown for their next rest stop at a parking lot across the street from Yorktown Imaging on Commerce Street.

Next, the athletes will head west to Route 9 in Cortlandt and Peekskill, up

into Putnam County onto Route 403, then over to Route 9D, before traveling south to cross the Bear Mountain Bridge before moving on to West Point. A third and final rest stop will be at the Garrison Volunteer Fire Department, McCauley said.

The circuitous route in northern Westchester and Putnam was needed to avoid what is commonly referred to as "the goat trail," a two-lane road that extends from the area near the Annsville Circle in Peekskill to the Bear Mountain Bridge.

"Because we have the guys on trikes, we have to try and limit the steepness of hills, we go through all the back roads and we end up coming out and we go north to the Garrison Volunteer Fire Department," McCauley said.

The event is expected to feature Col. Gregory Gadson, a West Point graduate and more than 20-year field artillery officer who lost two legs in Iraq in 2007.

McCauley said all of the participants need to stay in great shape in order to complete the route.

"This is one thing, then, like all of us, you have to keep training," he said. "You have to stay in shape. You can't just go out and do a 50-mile ride."

Organizers are still welcoming volunteers to help at the rest stops. To volunteer or to learn more about the Face of American Liberty rides, visit <https://wtsevent.org/foaliberty/support-our-cause/volunteer/#form///y>

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New Examiner Foundation Built, Construction to Come

Membership Program Launches

By Adam Stone

After 30 months of tweaking, fiddling and ultimately fundamental change, we've finally arrived at a place I can foresee (generally speaking) as our new normal.

The Examiner has always been a fun but bumpy ride with many ups and downs over the past 15 years.

But the last two and a half have been a true rollercoaster – good and exciting times mixed with occasional nausea.

Here's a recap:

March 2020: Global pandemic upends

already battered local news industry; hundreds of newspapers perish.

April 2020: We're rescued by you after joining COVID Local News Fund via the Local Media Association.

May 2021: Substack awards us a grant to launch a news product on its platform.

July 2021: We hire former Westchester Magazine editor and others and start Examiner+ digital newsmag.

October 2021: The New York Times profiles our launch.

November 2021: Facebook Journalism Project picks us to join Accelerator program.

February 2022: Columbia Journalism Review showcases our story as Substack Local case study.

May 2022: Gain Trust Project entry,

instituting initiative's eight ways to enhance transparency and journalism.

July 2022: With digital subscriptions growing but expenses soaring, we scrap newsmagazine concept.

Today: Ditch transactional Substack subscriber approach. Pivot to audience-supported membership model where we deliver bonus content and more hyperlocal community news funded by you. But also provide extras like no-charge advertising for your favorite local charity, free show tickets, discounted restaurant deals, special film center prices, the publication of your pet photos and much more.

There will undoubtedly be new twists and turns and shifts in different directions between our print and digital platforms.

We'll be rolling out an exciting website redesign in the coming weeks, and we're taking significant steps to improve our print newspapers.

But the foundation is now constructed as we continue to rebuild for a stronger journalistic future.

If you subscribed to Examiner+ already, you're all set!

But if you haven't, and you'd like to join your friends and neighbors in our growing community, support our efforts to cover more local news, and get fun, free stuff along the way, go to TheExaminerNews.com and click JOIN AS MEMBER at the top left of the homepage.

Examiner Publisher Adam Stone founded the company in 2007.

Peekskill Museum to Hold Gala Event October 13

On Thursday, Oct. 13, The Peekskill Museum will host a gala event honoring Dr. John A. McGurty Jr. at the Factoria, located 5 John Walsh Boulevard in Peekskill, from 6 to 8 p.m.

McGurty has been an iconic figure in Peekskill for decades. In addition to his outstanding private practice caring for patients over the years, his service to the community and beyond includes affiliation with NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital, working with the fire department, police department, ambulance corps, trauma

center and Bedford Correctional Facility along with two tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan with the military. McGurty has also received civic recognition as the recipient of the Chester Smith Award, the Elks Community Service Award and as grand marshal of the Peekskill St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The gala will include hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and an opportunity to thank McGurty for his exceptional contributions to the community. Funds raised from the event will pay for much-

needed repairs and improvements to the museum, a nonprofit organization that relies exclusively on donations, membership subscriptions and bequests.

Tickets are \$100 per person. Please RSVP by Oct 9 and send checks to the Peekskill Museum, P.O. Box 84, Peekskill, N.Y. 10566, or via PayPal on the museum's website at www.peekskillmuseum.org under the "Donate" section and include the names of all attendees.

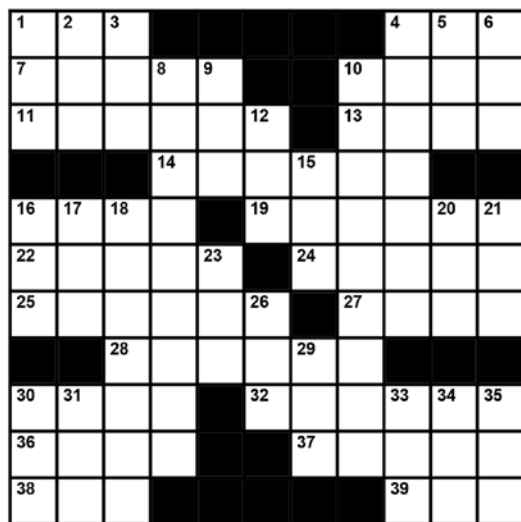
Crossword

Across

1. Police alert, abbr.
4. Speed measurement
7. Piece of land
10. "The ___ that bind or Putnam lumber yard, Mahopac Railroad ___"
11. Tile pattern
13. Way to go
14. Ambassador
16. Plant's start
19. In due order
22. Defeat utterly
24. Cut up
25. Everyday
27. "___ la vie"
28. Distressed maiden
30. Prickle
32. Gone
36. Man's cologne
37. Hymn
38. Card you might want to change out abroad
39. Initials at sea

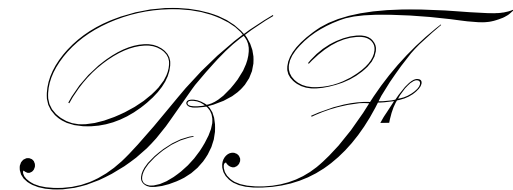
Down

1. Automatic cash provider
2. Adept
3. Undergrad degs.
4. Melting pot
5. Architect I.M. ___
6. Old White House inits.
8. Shopping at this Mahopac gift shop is very wise



9. Bind
10. Octopus arms
12. Special effects: (abbr.)
15. Abbr. on a business letter
16. Fig. in identity theft
17. Rock music style
18. Membrane that vibrates to sound
20. Campers, for short
21. Take home
23. Comedian
26. Pelican State sch.
29. Medium-like perception
30. Small ammo, abbr.
31. He was famous for spoon bending
33. Telegraph code
34. Einstein's birthplace

Answers on page 25



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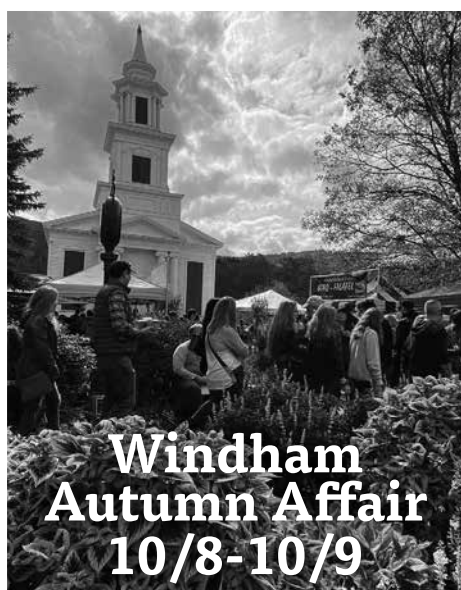
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continued on page XX



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Sandwich Generation: Steps to Navigate Taking Care of Kids and Parents

I am starting to feel that the sandwich metaphor is getting a bit stale. Caregiving for one's children and parents at the same time is not always a squeeze. It can feel routine and ordinary. Lots of driving to practices and appointments. Lots of discussions concerning food and drinking enough water.

Maintaining relationships and handling responsibilities with the people in your life is a lifelong activity. Life turns into a Panini press when a crisis erupts or multiple issues arise at the same time. The larger discussion that needs attention is how to respond to the added stress of mid-life and coordinating care of those who require assistance.

Mid-life weaponizes your anxiety and thrusts you into challenges that are unexpected. Generally speaking, the spontaneity and flexibility of early adulthood allows for changes in relationships and career paths that do not significantly impact your upward trajectory. Adding marriage, children and a mortgage cements certain

financial and familial obligations that cannot be ignored.

Responsibility may start to feel like the enemy of fun. Life becomes a giant checklist. Prioritizing one element may unintentionally cause you to neglect other elements, leading to frustration and resentment. An aging parent starting to falter could be the thing that makes you feel like you are losing control.

The ability to persevere is strengthened by supportive family and friends, as well as financial stability. A shortage in either component will lead to an increase in stress.

Caring for children and aging parents simultaneously requires delegation. If you are financially stable but lack a solid support system, utilizing resources to pay for

some form of care may be necessary. If money is in short supply, but a strong family dynamic exists, you may be able to lean on them for caregiving help.

Once children are under a regular school schedule, the school hours

can be an opportunity to give attention to an aging parent's needs while balancing work requirements. New hybrid and virtual work arrangements save commuting time which can be realigned and set aside for caregiving duties.

Relieving the intensity of mid-life stress is necessary to avoid letting down the people who need you to stay strong. Being middle-aged is being experienced. You can analyze the successful and unsuccessful family situations that you have observed and personally apply the best practices. Having a network of able professionals to ensure that your financial life is secure and home maintenance is up to date can be a huge stress relief.

Personal relationships may be harder to manage, but so much stress can be tied up in how you and you partner get along or do not get along. Mid-life is not the time to keep everything inside, remain stoic



By Alan D. Feller, Esq.

and let life's difficulties overwhelm. Creating a family calendar and setting aside at least one day a week to go over issues and possible resolutions are easy steps. With so much going on, a series of small victories or positive outcomes can be sustaining.

For some, mid-life's stress requires more active treatment. There are many therapeutic options for a person in need. Before taking action that will cripple a family's ability to function, self-care is an intelligent first step.

Contact the professionals at Sloan & Feller today to find out more about caring for the people in your life and setting up a successful plan.

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

Assistance of Counsel

Acupuncture Recommended to Assist in the Treatment of Cancer

Oncologists recommend acupuncture as part of management for cancer pain, fatigue and hot flashes. Cancer patients considering acupuncture should seek certified or state-licensed practitioners who have training or experience in working with cancer patients.

Clinical trials support the use of acupuncture to relieve pain, nausea and vomiting, dry mouth, fatigue, hot flashes and nerve pain resulting from cancer treatments. In some studies, benefits lasted well after treatment.

Pain: Clinical trials demonstrate that acupuncture can help reduce pain, including joint or nerve pain associated with cancer treatments as well as other types of chronic pain.

Fatigue: Several trials show that acupuncture reduces fatigue, including cancer-related fatigue.

Anxiety/Sleep: Several studies show that acupressure and acupuncture can help relieve anxiety related to tests and procedures. It may also help with anxiety in general, which can then help improve one's sleep significantly.

Nausea/Vomiting: Acupuncture can reduce chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting.

Constipation: Evidence suggests acupuncture may help relieve constipation, which tends to be a side effect from some medications.

According to traditional medicine, acupuncture points are located at specific areas along channels or meridians. Qi (pronounced chee, meaning energy) is believed to flow in this network, which connects different parts of the body. Pain and disease symptoms are thought to arise

when Qi is not flowing. Acupuncture treatments are used to promote this flow and balance of Qi to relieve symptoms. It is also known to release pain-relieving or feel-good chemicals in the brain.

Studies in animals and humans have shown that acupuncture can stimulate pain relief and reduce stress, anxiety and depression. Other studies have shown it can improve sleep, increases blood flow and may help reduce inflammation, which may also explain pain-relieving effects.

MRI studies show that acupuncture causes changes in the brain that reflect changes in the body. Other studies show that certain acupoints for dry mouth correlate to saliva production. Acupuncture also improves nerve signaling in patients



By Andrea Gurciullo

with nerve pain.

Researchers are continuing to examine the mechanisms by which acupuncture exerts these effects. Additional findings may help to optimize treatment regimens in the future.

Andrea Gurciullo is a licensed acupuncturist in New York and New Jersey and is a master of traditional Oriental medicine who studied acupuncture and traditional medicine at the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine in San Diego,

where she was also an associate professor. She treats patients in ProClinix's Armonk, Pleasantville and Larchmont locations. For questions about this article or the injuries or conditions she provides care for, contact her at 914-354-3920 or at agurciullo@proclinix.com.

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Crossword Answers

1	A	P	B							4	M	P	H		
7	T	R	A	C	T				10	T	I	E	S		
11	M	O	S	A	I		12		13	E	X	I	T		
					14	R	E	G	15	E	N	T			
16	S	E	E	D					19	I	N	T	U	R	N
22	S	M	A	S	H				24	C	A	R	V	E	
25	N	O	R	M	A	L			27	C	E	S	T		
					28	D	A	M	S	29	E	L			
30	B	U	R	R					32	U	S	E	D	U	P
36	B	R	U	T					37	P	S	A	L	M	
38	S	I	M									39	H	M	S

Pumpkin Picking Fundraiser at Muscoot Farm

Fall into the autumn season at Muscoot Farm for pumpkin picking and hay rides at its Pumpkin Picking Fundraiser, scheduled for this weekend, Oct. 8-10 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The event is free. Pumpkins vary in price based on size. Hayrides are \$5

each, and free for children three and under.

Visitors will also be able to visit the animals, but the trails will be closed. The farmers market is open on Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The fundraiser benefits the Friends

of Muscoot Farm, which preserves and interprets, for the public benefit, the agricultural, cultural and natural heritage of a Westchester County farm, circa 1880-1930.

For more information, visit muscootfarm.org or call 914-864-7286.

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Sealed Bids will be received and publicly opened at the Office of the Purchasing Director of the Town of Cortlandt, Town Hall, One Heady Street, Cortlandt Manor, New York at 2:00PM, October 12, 2022, for the bidding of **Uniform Apparel #22-24**. Those interested in submitting bids may secure copies of the specifications at the above address during business hours weekdays. Anyone who wishes to attend a bid opening should make an appointment. If you are a reporting agency, kindly email the Town of Cortlandt and we will forward you a copy of the bid results.

Jennifer Glasheen
Purchasing Director

Sealed Bids will be received and publicly opened at the Office of the Purchasing Director of the Town of Cortlandt, Town Hall, One Heady Street, Cortlandt Manor, New York at 2:00PM, October 13, 2022, for the bidding of **Snow Plow & Ice Control #22-23**. Those interested in submitting bids may secure copies of the specifications at the above address during business hours weekdays. Anyone who wishes to attend a bid opening should make an appointment. If you are a reporting agency, kindly email the Town of Cortlandt and we will forward you a copy of the bid results.

Jennifer Glasheen
Purchasing Director

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The Consequences of the Evolution of Science and Society



By Nick Antonaccio

The concept of unintended consequences has always fascinated me. As modern society has sought to improve lives – medically, economically and technologically – unforeseen outcomes have

affected us as dramatically as the original intended results.

Examples abound, and seem to be increasing:

1. Banning DDT in the 1970s. Over the years, its widespread use in agriculture assuredly saved many from hunger. Yet, in undeveloped countries, the cessation of spraying mosquito-infested wetlands with this carcinogenic product caused an increase in the mosquito population. This practice led to the unanticipated and unintended deaths of millions infected with fatal malaria.

2. The advance of technology. This still unfolding story may have the greatest unintended consequences in the social history of humankind. Less than 25 years ago, our interaction with each other was primarily visual and auditory. Today, across the globe we're evolving into beings who communicate via smartphone keyboards and touch screens.

We're increasingly becoming slaves to

smartphone "pings." They are affecting our psyches and raising stress levels. In our every waking moment we are becoming addicted to reacting to the latest e-mail, text message and tweet, or consumed in downloading the latest apps.

Our minds are becoming like pabulum as we no longer rely on our sensory perception of the world; there's an app for that. Certainly, the increase in productivity over the past quarter-century has been significant, but I wonder what consequences lie ahead as we increase our use of and reliance on technology?

3. The new French paradox. A number of French winemakers adhere to organic grape-growing techniques, eschewing the marvels – and shortcomings – of man-made chemical fertilizers, fungicides, herbicides and pesticides. Organic winemaking has grown significantly over the last decade, with popular support for the health of vineyards, global farmlands, the atmosphere and wine consumers.

Several years ago, the French government decided that these organic practices were having an unintended consequence on French wines.

The background: The French government set a goal to reduce the use of pesticides by 50 percent in the next decade, and for good reason. A French laboratory test of 92 bottles of wine found small (non-lethal) traces of pesticides in all 92 bottles, a number of which were organically produced. Another,

unrelated, laboratory test of 300 bottles found pesticides in over 90 percent of them.

This startling result for organic wines may be attributable to shifting winds that carry air-borne pesticides from non-organic vineyards to those sustained organically, and higher than normal rainfall in certain years that carry atmospheric-trapped pesticides across a wide swath of vineyards. Also startling was the finding of trace amounts of two illegal chemicals.

The unintended consequence: Decreasing the use of pesticides resulted in a growth in the population of the leafhopper insect capable of carrying a disease that can destroy entire grape crops.

But that wasn't the only consequence.

How did the French government respond to this devastating threat?

How did the French government compensate for the unintended consequence caused by the proliferation of the leafhopper insect?

A simple, yet paradoxical, solution. It forced grape growers to spray pesticides to control the leafhopper – even the organic farmers. The consequences for non-compliance were substantial: a fine of \$40,000 and six months in jail.

At least one organic farmer – in Burgundy – was prosecuted. This organic and

biodynamic farmer, Emmanuel Giboulot, has steadfastly avoided the use of chemicals in his vineyards.

Evidence of his diligence is self-evident. His vineyards have not suffered from the debilitating disease carried by the leafhopper insect. Yet he faced potential governmental prosecution for his practices. This action prompted wide debate and support for Giboulot, resulting in no criminal action and the uninterrupted continuance of his farming practices.

Yes, unintended consequences occur in a number of unusual ways. The French government has topped them all by self-creating new unintended consequences in an attempt to address previous self-created unintended consequences. Another example of a well-intentioned bureaucracy ultimately making matters worse.

Nick Antonaccio is a 45-year Pleasantville resident.

For over 25 years, he has

conducted wine tastings and lectures. Nick is a member and program director of the Wine Media Guild of wine journalists. He also offers personalized wine tastings and wine travel services. Nick's credo: continuous experimenting results in instinctive behavior. You can reach him at nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com or on Twitter @sharingwine.

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'Miracle' Baseball Enriches the Life of Westchester's Disabled

By Adam Stone

The 16-year-old young man stepped up to bat four years ago, knowing only swings and misses in his baseball career.

Almost every spring and fall Saturday for a decade, since he was seven, he'd failed to make contact.

After 10 years of watching just whiffs, dad Mark Shearon assumed the inevitable.

But then he heard the most beautiful sound of his life: THWACK!

Max Shearon rocketed a ball past the mound, beyond the outstretched arm of the overjoyed coach-pitch hurler.

Dozens of families erupted in cheers from a pair of bleachers.

Dad cried tears of joy; in fact, he cries at most every game.

"I shed a tear of happiness, it's just so super emotional," said the 20-year Scarsdale resident, who describes Max as "globally delayed."

Field of Dreams

The lives of the Shearons, and thousands of others over the years, are enriched by The Miracle League of Westchester, a nonprofit organization designed to give local children and adults with disabilities the opportunity to play baseball as a team member in an organized league.

Since the organization's debut fall season in 2007, local families have been able to deliver the gift of baseball to their loved ones, in a way Little League and adult rec ball cannot.

Miracle Field, specially designed with a rubberized and cushioned surface at Ridge



Friends, families and other youngsters cheer on the players of The Miracle League of Westchester, which for the past 15 years has given local children and adults with disabilities the chance to play baseball in an organized league.

Road Park in Hartsdale, was provided by Westchester; the county continues to run its upkeep.

Players participate for free, and the league is mostly sustained from donations via fundraisers, including a major annual golf



Max Shearon, playing on Sept. 24. As a 6-foot-1 Miracle League veteran, he swung and missed for a decade before crushing a pitch past the mound four years ago. Now 19, he makes contact in every game.

tournament in June.

The league is propelled by a group of dedicated volunteers.

Longtime Executive Director Rick Monzon tends to all the little details, such as walkup music for each batter as they stride or are wheeled to the batter's box. Monzon was the

one pitching underhand to Max when the ball was smashed past the mound four years ago.

There's Crying in Baseball

The league also provides a support system for people navigating the challenges associated with having a disabled person in their family.

"It can be daunting sometimes," said Monzon, whose 21-year-old son William, a league veteran, has Down Syndrome. "It can be difficult to learn the process of how to get services and can be overwhelming. It creates situations for parents where we can become resources. The parents chat and develop friendships and play dates happen. It works out very nicely."

As for Mark Shearon, he's like most any baseball dad, even though the London native didn't play the game himself.

Everyone rightly says it's about having fun. But it's a lot more fun when a taste of personal victory is earned – like solid contact that feels like a miracle.

For Mark, his wife Sharon, and his 22-year-old son Zac, a medical student, it's gratifying to see Max achieve success and growth in every game.

"Can you imagine going every week and not really hitting the ball?" Shearon said. "For Max, it was amazing. The smile on his face. He makes contact every week now. He feels that same joy every week; it's that same feeling for him. He gets that intensity of feeling every week."

And dad gets a good cry.

To learn more about The Miracle League of Westchester visit: <https://mlwny.org>

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Irving's 'Legend' Adds Fall-Themed Snacks, Beverages at Sunnyside

Historic Hudson Valley has announced the addition of fall-themed menu items at our popular event, Irving's "Legend" at Washington Irving's Sunnyside, including local beer and New York State hard cider.

"Legend," a spine-chilling retelling of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" at Washington Irving's Sunnyside, is now even more of a festive fall treat with expanded food and beverage options, including beer and hard cider.

Visitors to this popular event, which features celebrated master storyteller Jonathan Kruk along with live music by Jim Keyes, can now enjoy fall-themed drinks, such as local beer from Captain Lawrence, 1911's New York hard cider and

pumpkin spice soda, as well as fun snacks like fudge in seasonal flavors, an exclusive, limited-edition 'Legend' popcorn mix and cider donuts.

The museum shop, which can be visited before or after the event, is filled with souvenirs and local finds, including Legend-themed t-shirts, hats and other merchandise.

Due to popular demand, the 2022 season will also feature more performances, including the evenings of Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day and Halloween.

Performing amid the lush landscape of Washington Irving's estate, Kruk, accompanied by live music by Jim Keyes, brings to life the story of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" in this outdoor, evening event.

Irving's 'Legend' is scheduled for Oct. 8-10, 14-16, 21-23 and 28-31. Online tickets start at \$30 for adults and \$24 for children. Historic Hudson Valley members receive a 15 percent discount on tickets.

Sunnyside is on West Sunnyside Lane, off Route 9, in Tarrytown. Washington Irving's Sunnyside is at 3 W. Sunnyside Lane in Irvington, one mile south of the Tappan Zee Bridge.

Historic Hudson Valley, Westchester's largest cultural organization, educates and entertains more than 325,000 visitors a year through school programs, tours



Master storyteller Jonathan Kruk performs with the Headless Horseman in "Legend," which is featured this month at Washington Irving's Sunnyside.

of National Historic Landmarks and have earned a national reputation as among Halloween-themed experiences which the best in the country.



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