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April 15 - April 21, 2014

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 8, Issue 345

Chappaqua Fire Displaces Seven Residents, Floral Shop

By Martin Wilbur

The house containing Whispering Pines of Chappaqua may have been irreparably damaged from last Friday's devastating early morning blaze but the popular floral shop is expected to soon be back in business.

Stetson Hundgen, the son of owner Beth Hundgen, said Monday his mother is in the process of searching for a temporary location in and around Chappaqua and is looking forward to resuming filling her orders during one of the busiest stretches of the year.

"We will be back," Hundgen said. "We don't know where but we're looking for a location."

It would probably take two to three days after a temporary place is found for the family-owned business to be up and running, he said.

Whispering Pines and the seven residents who lived in three upstairs apartments in the early 20th century wood structure at 91 Bedford Rd. were displaced following the raging inferno that was reported shortly after 1 a.m. on Apr. 11. All of the residents escaped without injuries.

Firefighters from the Chappaqua Fire Department and several surrounding departments took about four hours to get the blaze under control, according to authorities. The house has since been condemned by the town and fenced off and will have to be torn down.

Despite the loss of Whispering Pines' home and the three apartments that housed the seven residents, including a family with a child and four other adults, the fact that no one was hurt was reason

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Board Still Mulling Mount Kisco's \$20.7M Village Budget

By Neal Rentz

There will be no service reductions in Mount Kisco's proposed \$20.77 million budget for 2014-15 despite its staying within the state-mandated property tax cap.

Village Manager James Palmer told trustees Apr. 7 that the general fund would include a tax rate increase of nearly 3 percent. The spending plan also includes a tax levy increase of 2.49 percent, a full 1 percent above the threshold but due to a provision in the state law the village manages to adhere to the limit.

Taxes on the average home in the village assessed at \$38,000 would rise by \$104 for the next fiscal year, which begins June 1.

General fund spending is slated to increase \$451,667, a hike of 2.2 percent over the current year.

Palmer told village trustees that although the tax cap for the coming fiscal year is 1.48 percent, the village is eligible to carry over \$199,028 from the 2013-14 budget, the amount it was under the cap.

He noted that Mount Kisco residents this year pay 52 percent of their property tax bills to their school district, 33 percent to the village and 15 percent to Westchester County.

Despite the increases, there are some factors working in the village's favor, Palmer said. Due to the strong performance of the state retirement fund, there will be no increase in pension contributions in the upcoming year. There is also an expected increase in Mount Kisco's non-property tax revenue next year of nearly \$130,000 to an anticipated

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A Deserved Honor



Mount Kisco resident Joseph Bronzino, left, was honored by Mayor Michael Cindrich and village officials last week for 65 years of service to the Mount Kisco Fire Department's Rescue Fire Police. Officials announced that Apr. 8 was Joseph P. Bronzino Day in the village.

DOT to Benchmark: State's Retaining Wall Can Stay Put

By Janine Bowen

It does not appear the state Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) evaluation will have to be reopened for the proposed Benchmark assisted living facility project following a correspondence from the Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding a stone retaining wall.

According to a letter sent by DOT Senior Transportation Analyst Akhter Shareef, "no substantial exceptions are taken" regarding Benchmark's application for site access approval.

Initially, there was debate as to who would be responsible for the state-owned retaining wall on the Bedford Road property. It was thought that the wall would need to be moved further back

onto the parcel.

"We are delighted that there is no substantial impact. It's as much of an endorsement we can hope for from the DOT before we apply for the highway work permit," said David Steinmetz, the attorney representing Benchmark.

According to the Apr. 11 letter sent to Village Administrator Patricia Dwyer, the wall will not need to be moved; however, a portion of the wall may need to be removed near the proposed entrance point to improve sight distance and make room for snow storage.

The letter also states that responsibility for the wall's maintenance, where the cut will be made to create the entrance to the site, will belong to Benchmark. That was something Steinmetz said he had already

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Chappaqua Fire Displaces Seven Residents, Floral Shop

continued from page 1

to be thankful. One resident needed to use the fire escape.

"One of the residents woke up and saw the flames outside," Hundgen said. "He woke everybody up and they exited safely."

It was not immediately known what

caused the fire, although Hundgen said he was told the fire started outside and quickly spread upward. The county's Cause and Origin Team is investigating the matter.

Red Cross provided the suddenly homeless residents with three days of emergency shelter at the Holiday Inn

in Mount Kisco. Red Cross volunteer Carolyn Sherwin said they were all successfully relocated and financial support and other items were coming in. Following the weekend, each of the households were staying temporarily with friends or family.

Although everyone managed to leave the premises without any problems, all of their possessions were gone.

"They lost everything," Sherwin said.

Sherwin noted the impressive outpouring of support to help the families get back on their feet.

"The generosity of the Chappaqua community has been phenomenal," she said.

Meanwhile, Whispering Pines, which has been in Chappaqua for the last 11 years and in business since Beth Hundgen's father started the enterprise in Somers in the 1950s, will fill its orders as quickly as possible. Not only is this Passover and Easter week when flowers and plants are in heavy demand, but Mother's Day, one



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

The century-old house at 91 Bedford Rd. the day after the fire that displaced Whispering Pines and seven residents.

of Whispering Pines' two busiest days of the year, is fast approaching along with a hectic wedding and Bar Mitzvah season, Hundgen said.

To donate items or money to the displaced families, contact the Red Cross at its Metro New York North office in Greenwich, Conn. at 203-869-8444.

Board Still Mulling Mount Kisco's \$20.7M Village Budget

continued from page 1

\$6,262,000. The extra income is from sales and mortgage taxes and building permits, Palmer said.

However, the village is facing an increase of more than 20 percent in workers compensation premiums, he said.

Only one resident spoke during last week's public hearing. Andrea Eisenberg thanked officials for increasing the library budget, but asked the trustees to spend more for programs and to open the library on Sundays. Palmer has proposed to increase the village's contribution to the library's operation by 4.4 percent, which would bring funding to \$1.8 million.

Mayor Michael Cindrich told Eisenberg that he lobbied in support of the \$8 million bond nearly a decade ago to pay for the construction of the new

library. There were about \$1 million in cost overruns, and he has worked with residents to schedule fundraisers to provide additional library funding so the extra construction costs would not be paid through property taxes.

"The village board, I think, is united in its support of the library," Cindrich said.

He added that the board would continue to review the budget during upcoming work sessions.

"The budget does not reflect any cutbacks in service," Cindrich said.

Officials would also look to reduce spending in various areas without laying off any village employees, he said.

The board voted unanimously to close the hearing, but will accept written comments until Apr. 28, the tentative date the board will vote on the final budget.

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New Castle to Cancel Several Specialty Camps This Summer

By Martin Wilbur

Five summer specialty camps that have been offered by New Castle's Recreation and Parks Department and use Chappaqua School District facilities will not be offered this summer following a change in the district's fee schedule.

Robert Snyder, the town's Recreation and Parks superintendent, said the \$75 hourly rate that is in effect is too cost prohibitive for those camps' operators to continue. This summer, the lacrosse, wrestling, soccer, baseball and Teaches Soccer camps will not operate, he said.

Snyder said the Teaches and David Lee basketball camps will continue to run since those programs have generally attracted more children, which gives the operators a greater chance of absorbing the costs.

"I understand the economics, but it's a situation that we can't control because we don't set the price," Snyder said.

Previously, the camps were run without a charge from the school district to the town, he said.

Typically, about 25 to 30 children enroll for each camp each week, but at \$75 an hour for three to six hours per day, the operation was unsustainable for



ANDY JACOBS PHOTO

NBA player David Lee, above, will still offer his summer basketball camp in New Castle this year, but five other operators have decided not to continue because of the fees to use the Chappaqua School District's facilities.

most operators, Snyder added.

Chappaqua Board of Education President Jeffrey Mester said the town was informed of the changes more than a year ago. Last summer, the higher

fee was also in effect but the town and school district negotiated a resolution following bills that were unpaid for many months, he said.

Since then, the town has been aware that the fees would be in effect this summer. Mester said the district has always charged fees that cover only the costs to the district for use of its facilities. That has not changed.

"Those fees are quite reasonable and quite frankly below market value," Mester said. "When a local resident or organization wants to use our facilities, we only seek to cover our costs."

Snyder informed the town board in time for its Apr. 1 work session of the likelihood that the five camps would not be offered this summer. He said last week there has been virtually no feedback from the community. Parents and children generally don't sign up for these camps until sometime later in the spring, so there's a possibility that many are unaware of the situation this year, he

said.

Fee changes for use of district facilities were agreed to by school officials after receiving advice from its attorneys, according to Mester. Camps that were run by the town or through local organizations are covered by an intermunicipal agreement where a flat fee is charged.

However, the summer camps that are now in question are run by for-profit entities, which provides a different dynamic.

"We have been advised that the district is not able to offer our facilities to for-profit groups without a benefit to our taxpayers," Mester said in an email response. "When

these groups have come to us directly to inquire about field rental for their programs, we have had to turn them down. In its simplest form, we simply cannot transfer a (Chappaqua Central School District) taxpayer asset to a for-profit, outside the district company."

"I understand the economics, but it's a situation that we can't control because we don't set the price,"

—ROBERT SNYDER

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DOT to Benchmark: State's Retaining Wall Can Stay Put

continued from page 1

anticipated and was included in the proposed zoning change resolution.

Steinmetz said there are still multiple requests that Benchmark must comply with before it is granted the highway work permit from the DOT. The permit would allow the applicant to make the necessary changes to the wall.

Benchmark must submit for review its traffic impact study, which was completed earlier this year, to the DOT as well as a distance matrix showing posted speed limits, sight distance and maneuver types

required for ingress and egress from the site.

"We remain quite confident that we will be able to resolve all of the issues to the village's satisfaction," said Steinmetz.

The issue of the stone wall was first raised on March 31, when DOT sent an email to Dwyer just hours before the village board was scheduled to vote on the proposed zoning change for the Benchmark facility. The vote on the rezone, which would create a floating elder care zone in a residential area, was postponed at that time, pending further investigation.

Despite the latest development, Mayor Peter Scherer said there is currently no vote scheduled for the next regular village board meeting on Apr. 28, the earliest possible date there could be a decision by the board.

Scherer noted the points addressed in the letter must be completed before a vote on the rezone is done.

"It may be that these things are very simple, but we don't know," Scherer said.

In addition, the mayor mentioned that new Trustee Steve Lord, who was sworn in on Apr. 7, will need to be given time to prepare and research the documents associated with the Benchmark application before voting.

Perfecto for the P'ville Penguins



The Pleasantville Penguins U10 fourth grade girls winter soccer team finished first in their division after an exciting game held at the Armonk Indoor Sports Center on Sunday, March 30. The girls were undefeated in seven league games throughout the winter, then won the championship game 2-0. The Pleasantville Penguins also finished first in two winter tournaments.

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State Board Closes Hearing on Chappaqua Affordable Housing Fire Safety

By Martin Wilbur

Public comments concluded last week in front of a state panel that will determine whether the Chappaqua affordable housing project complies with fire safety codes.

Representatives for Conifer Realty argued during the hearing before the regional state Board of Review at Cortlandt Town Hall that the 28-unit Chappaqua Station slated to be built on Hunts Lane meets or exceeds fire safety code requirements, despite the need for eight variances.

New Castle Building Inspector William Maskiell, along with several project opponents, countered that there is insufficient room for fire trucks to set up their apparatus around the roughly one-third-of-an-acre site, which is surrounded by the Metro-North train tracks on one side and the Saw Mill Parkway on another. Maskiell also stated that the diesel fuel from the trains would pose a safety risk for the residents.

“It may not have hydraulic oil on these trains, but there are diesel trains that come down there, and that’s a fire hazard,” he said.

Conifer is seeking the variances from the state for both a building permit to erect the structure and public funding from the county and state.

The units would count toward



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO
New Castle Building Inspector William Maskiell, left, last week addressed potential fire and safety hazards that could be created at the Chappaqua Station affordable housing project.

Westchester’s requirement of building 750 affordable units to comply with the housing settlement it reached nearly five years ago with the federal government. In December, a vote to release county funds narrowly failed 9-8 because a majority of lawmakers on the Board of Legislators wanted the fire safety issues and the variances resolved before releasing the money.

A decision on the variances is due the next time the board meets, which will likely be in June. New Castle officials have until Apr.18 to submit comments

pertaining to the material received from Conifer last Thursday that refuted many of the safety criticisms that had been previously raised. Conifer has an Apr. 23 deadline for final rebuttal.

As part of its presentation, Conifer brought in two fire safety specialists who commented on a host of issues, including whether there is proper space around the property, sufficient access by fire trucks and adequate infrastructure to allow firefighters to reach the site quickly.

Rich Tobin, an assistant chief for the FDNY who has also served in departments in Westchester, complimented the construction of the building.

“If built, it will be one of the safest buildings in town,” Tobin said.

During a half-hour presentation, Jeff Wilkinson, another fire safety expert retained by Conifer, showed photos

displaying how there would be sufficient space for the fire trucks to reach the property and fight a blaze once there. A practice run in January from the Chappaqua Fire Department stationhouse to the site took four minutes to reach without using sirens. That timeframe is expected to diminish with the use of sirens, Wilkinson said.

Conifer attorney Randall McLaughlin said the evidence compiled by his client clearly shows the accessibility of the site for fire trucks. He also said the building would exceed the state’s requirements for fire safety by having more exits and hydrants than what is required.

“So a picture is worth a thousand words,” McLaughlin said. “Clearly, there is absolutely no problem with access.”

However, opponents questioned the information provided by the developer. Chappaqua resident Ed Frank said there would be no way firefighters could reach the scene within four minutes because the Chappaqua Fire Department is a volunteer operation and its responding members would first report to the stationhouse before heading to the scene.

“So it’s not four minutes,” Frank said. “That’s a total exaggeration.”

Project supporters from the public did not speak but several wore yellow t-shirts that read “Yes! Affordable Housing at Hunts Lane.”

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P'ville's McGrath Sells Stake in Seafood Shack

Several months after Pleasantville restaurateur Phil McGrath sold his portion of the Iron Horse Grill to his business partner, he has done the same to the newest of his establishments.

McGrath announced last week Andrew Economos has bought out his stake in the the Seahorse Seafood Shack on Wheeler Avenue.

The sale of the Seahorse came after the two had a disagreement on the direction of the eatery, he said, although McGrath maintained it was an amicable parting. The pair, along with a third partner, Todd Albright, still have an interest together with The Pony Express, across the street from the Iron Horse and the Seahorse on Wheeler Avenue.

McGrath, who also teaches at Westchester Community College, said he is devoting more of his time to teaching and to expand the Pony Express elsewhere in the county.

The main obstacle to accomplishing the Pony Express expansion has been rents, he said. Downtown Pleasantville has reasonable rates of about \$35 per square foot on average. They could have moved into a location in Scarsdale for \$79.50, he said.

"We just haven't found the right location," McGrath said.

—Martin Wilbur

Lord Sworn in, Takes Seat on Pleasantville Village Board

By Janine Bowen

New Pleasantville Village Trustee Steven Lord was sworn in during last Monday night's annual organizational meeting.

Lord, 46, a business consultant who has lived in Pleasantville since 2000, ran unopposed to fill the seat left vacant following former trustee Brian Skarstad's retirement. Lord said he was eager to help work with the rest of the board to deal with the issues facing the village.

"I take it extremely seriously, and I think the title...is an apt one. Trustee means that people are trusting you to do the right thing," Lord said. "The community, the country, the state, needs thoughtful, insightful, measured discourse about the problems that we face."

Following the Apr. 7 swearing in, Mayor Peter Scherer took a few moments to thank Skarstad for his service to Pleasantville during his 15 years on the board.

"It's been an extraordinary run of a person who has a unique combination of great intellect, great goodwill for this place called Pleasantville, as well as a capacity to be humorous and occasionally irreverent in ways that can puncture the balloon just as it needs to be done in the world of government,"



Steven Lord took the oath of office on Apr. 7.

Scherer said.

This is actually Skarstad's second retirement from the board, having served from 1997 to 2006. In 2009, he returned to fill the seat vacated by Scherer who was elected mayor. After presenting Skarstad with a plaque to commemorate his service, Scherer joked that he would see him at his third retirement.

Skarstad spoke fondly of his time on the board, saying that it had been fun even when he was faced with difficult

issues that kept him up at night.

"I just have to say that it was all worth it. I'll brag about this until I die. That I was on the board, that I was a deputy mayor," he said.

Mindy Berard, who was elected to her third term in March, was not present at Monday's meeting but will be sworn in for her three-year term upon returning from vacation.

"Mindy is a longstanding volunteer in the Village of Pleasantville. We are delighted to welcome her back," Scherer said.

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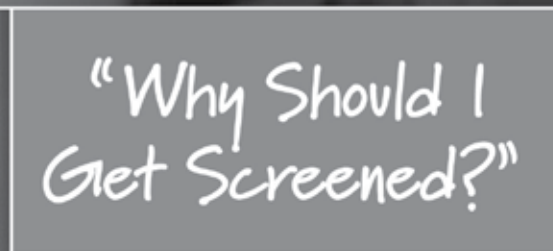
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FACT: Colorectal cancer doesn't always cause symptoms, especially early on.



"It doesn't run in my family."

FACT: Most colorectal cancers occur in people with no family history.



"Why Should I Get Screened?"



"But that test..."

FACT: There are several kinds of screening tests for colorectal cancer.

Police Blotter

Mount Kisco Police Department

Apr. 5: Report of criminal mischief on Main Street at 2:22 p.m. A parking lot security guard reported that he saw a female subject scratch the body of a 2003 BMW. The matter is under investigation.

Apr. 5: Information was received from a complainant at 5:27 p.m. about possible narcotics sales on South Moger Avenue. The complaint is being investigated.

Apr. 6: A 26-year-old Ossining man was arrested on North Bedford Road at 11:46 p.m. and charged with DWI after driving on the sidewalk. The suspect

was also given seven tickets for various vehicle and traffic law infractions.

Apr. 9: An employee at Northern Westchester Hospital reported at 1:58 p.m. that there were unauthorized charges made on her credit card. Afterwards, the money was returned to her employer's account. The matter remains under investigation.

Apr. 9: A 25-year-old Mount Kisco man was arrested at 10:09 p.m. and charged with two counts of second-degree assault, a Class D felony. The suspect was charged in connection with striking a 67-year-old man in the head with a brick on March 27 after the victim had tried to stab him in the neck. He was also charged with beating up an 18-year-old male on Maple Avenue on March 29.

Apr. 10: An employee who was alone in a South Moger Avenue business at 3:58 a.m. reported hearing loud banging. She then noticed that the store's window cracked. There are currently no suspects. The matter is under investigation.

Apr. 10: A 33-year-old homeless man was arrested at 5:33 p.m. and charged with trespassing, a violation, at Neighbors Link on Columbus Avenue.

Apr. 11: A Diplomat Drive resident reported that she saw her neighbor, a 45-year-old man, naked on his terrace. The responding officer told the man of the complaint, who told the officer it would not be an issue again.

Pleasantville Police Department

Apr. 7: Report of a burglary on Pleasantville Road at 2:30 a.m. No further information was made available because the matter is under investigation.

Apr. 8: A 22-year-old man was arrested at 4:12 p.m. and charged with petty larceny for shoplifting at Key Food on Pleasantville Road.

Apr. 9: A 21-year-old man was arrested at 10:56 a.m. for circumventing a vehicle's interlock device.

Apr. 10: A 45-year-old man was arrested on Edgewood Avenue at 9:28 a.m. for various vehicle and traffic law violations.

North Castle Police Department

Apr. 4: A woman reported at 4:09 a.m. that there was a disoriented male

on North Broadway. The responding officer spotted a disabled vehicle. The operator of that vehicle was subsequently arrested for DWI.

Apr. 6: A Blair Road resident reported at 12:13 p.m. his mailbox was damaged. Earlier this same morning, the resident stated that he found the mailbox broken and in the roadway about 60 feet from his driveway.

Apr. 6: Report of a grand larceny at a Bedford Road residence at 5:12 p.m. The resident reported that upon arriving home from vacation jewelry was missing.

Apr. 9: Report of a littering incident on Meadow Hill Place at 3:19 p.m. The complainant reported seeing a red Subaru and throw bottles out of the window. The passenger in the vehicle was wearing a white cap. No further information was given.

Apr. 9: A caller reported from North Broadway that she accidentally locked her seven-month-old daughter inside her car. The caller stated her daughter is not in any distress. The towing company was notified.

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Chappaqua Crossing, Master Plan Status Spark Rezone Debate

By Martin Wilbur

A Chappaqua resident who lives near the former Reader's Digest property implored New Castle officials last week to delay making any decisions regarding retail development at the site until the Master Plan update has been completed.

Jessica Reinmann of Cowdin Lane grilled the town board and town attorneys Nicholas Ward-Willis and Edward Phillips for about a half-hour at the board's Apr. 8 meeting, urging them to set aside the findings statement approved by last year's council. The findings concluded that various environmental issues associated with 120,000 square feet of retail space could be mitigated.

"In all my research, nothing says you have to rely on SEQRA," Reinmann said. "It is a great piece of information, it's a great piece of information that there are going to be environmental issues and these issues could be mitigated. It is your right to say that we don't want mitigated issues. We want no issues."

The issue has once again hit a nerve in the community since developer Summit/Greenfield filed a revised Preliminary Development Concept Plan on Apr. 4 that features a more traditional neighborhood design inside the 116-acre complex while the town continues the year-long process of updating the Master Plan.

Ward-Willis responded that the town

could choose to ignore the information gathered during the SEQRA process but would do so at its own legal peril.

"If the board were to risk a decision that is inconsistent with the SEQRA findings it can subject itself to litigation from the developer who would argue that that decision is inconsistent and not a rational basis for the SEQRA findings," Ward-Willis said.

Adding fuel to the issue have been public comments made by Supervisor Robert Greenstein in recent weeks stating that the town board's decision whether to grant Summit/Greenfield's rezone for retail for a portion of the site will likely be guided by advice from its legal representatives.

Meanwhile, the developer and the town reached an agreement more than two years ago to have the litigation suspended pending the outcome of the rezone vote and site plan review.

Greenstein, who won election last fall in part due to his opposition to retail at Chappaqua Crossing, said although his views haven't changed, the lengthy history involving Summit/Greenfield and the town essentially has the municipality's hands tied.

He said he expects the board, which delayed referring the amended Preliminary Development Concept Plan to the planning board, to make the

referral at its next meeting.

"You can't just pretend that this is a brand new application with a brand new developer," Greenstein said. "There is an eight-year history there, there is litigation there, there's a suspended lawsuit, there was a completed SEQRA process, there's a findings statement that was already adopted. This is ultimately going to be a legal decision and I've said that ultimately it's the town board's responsibility to make that decision."

Officials will have to evaluate the strength of Summit/Greenfield's litigation with its attorneys, he added.

Reinmann pressed the town attorneys to inform the public of the legal

ramifications if the board denied the rezone and what chances the town would have of winning a lawsuit. Both attorneys hesitated to discuss the case publicly.

She then called on the board to strongly consider a moratorium to insure the application won't move forward until the Master Plan work is done.

"You owe it to us to explain the legal ramifications, and if you don't, you will leave just like the other two (board members) left and you will leave the next board with a whole mess," Reinmann said. "So approve a moratorium, figure out what to do with Chappaqua Crossing, get a Master Plan together and stop having all this legal jargon thrown at us."

Mt. Kisco Fire Commissioner Appointed

Frank Randazzo, left, shown here with Mayor Michael Cindrich, was appointed as a Mount Kisco fire commissioner at last week's village board meeting.



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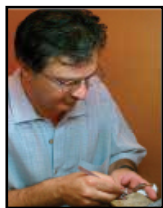
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P'ville School Officials to Consider Veterans Tax Exemption

By Janine Bowen

The Pleasantville School District is considering adoption of the Alternative Veterans Tax Exemption, which would provide a tax break to qualifying veterans.

Assistant Superintendent for Business David Quattrocchi said during an Apr. 8 presentation to the Board of Education that 234 veterans in Pleasantville would be eligible for the exemption, with benefits totaling \$102,268. The lost income would be made up by increasing taxes to all other property owners,

leading to an increase of \$33 per parcel.

Eligible residents include any veteran who served during a period of war, or a veteran who did not serve during wartime but received an expeditionary medal from the Armed Forces, Navy, Marine Corps or during the global war on terrorism. Residents who are members of the reserves and meet additional qualifications and Gold Star Parents, who lost a child in war, would qualify for the discount.

Before adopting the exemption, the board is holding a required public hearing

May 6. Last week several residents spoke in favor of the exemption.

"We have a longstanding relationship with [veterans]," said resident Lori Stockel. "Their relationship with us has been very symbolic of the community and our support of them and, philosophically, I think that we owe it to our veterans, based on this partnership, but also the sacrifices that they have made for our country and, ultimately, for our children. So, I would be very much in favor of this exemption."

Several other residents, including some veterans, noted that the increase in taxes for others would be equivalent to two weeks of Starbucks coffee or a night out at McDonald's. They also noted that over time the amount of tax dollars that need to be redistributed will decrease as older veterans die off.

"This would really serve as a nice signal for any military family looking to move into the area," said Scott Elliot, a veteran of the global war on terror who currently serves as commander of American Legion Post 77 in Pleasantville.

Board members were in favor of supporting local veterans, but believed the exemption has been mishandled by

the government. They worried that it would pit community members against each other, since the proposition offers a tax decrease at the expense of others. Trustees said the program should operate similar to the STAR Program, which offers rebates.

"I think the basic premise of this is not in the tradition of the democratic process," said Trustee Lois Winkler.

The board also questioned why it was given the power to grant the exemption since it is unrelated to education.

"We're here about the education of our children," said Trustee Emily Persons. "Teachers and students and this, on many levels, has nothing to do with students, so why are they asking us to vote on this? It's not fair."

Since the decision to adopt the exemption will affect all village residents, the board decided that in addition to the May 6 public hearing, it will place the item on the ballot as an advisory proposition during the May 20 budget and board of education vote. Although the results of the advisory proposition will not be binding, the board will use public opinion to guide its decision on the matter.

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P'ville Middle School Takes Home 'Best' Award at State Science Olympiad

A group of GEEKS from Pleasantville Middle School took home the Best Performance by a Small School award at the state Science Olympiad Championships in Rochester on Apr. 4-5.

The GEEKS, or Great Enthusiastic Educated Kid Scientists, was the first-place team from the Lower Hudson Valley Region and placed 15th out of 36 schools in the state. The state title went to Paul J. Gelinas Junior High School in Stony Brook, which will advance to the National Championship in Florida.

During the two-day event, 15 Pleasantville students competed in 25 challenges against middle schools from across the state, medaling in three of the challenges.

The team, led by Drs. Martha and Chuck Matteo, is just in its second year but has proved formidable. In its inaugural competition, the team was awarded Best New School at the regional competition held at Scarsdale Middle School. At this year's regionals, Pleasantville finished fourth overall to earn a spot in the championship along with three other teams from Westchester: Scarsdale, Rye and Yonkers.

On the second day of the state competition, Pleasantville sixth-grader Ella Furniss and eighth-grader Rohan Chandy took third place in the electricity and magnetism challenge known

as "Shock Value." In the Boomlever challenge, which involves constructing a boom from light woods such as balsa and adding weight until the boom breaks, sixth-grader Maya Sauthoff and seventh-grader Jonathan Hayes placed fourth with a boom that was able to hold up under 15 kilograms of weight.

In addition, Chandy took fifth place in the Wheeled Vehicle challenge and Sauthoff and Furniss finished seventh in the Simple Machines category.

Even students who did not win medals managed to make an impression at the event. Pleasantville eighth-grader Allegra Copland and Anu Subramanya, a sixth-grader, competed in Robo-Cross, a challenge requiring remote-controlled robots to move about a confined space, picking up objects ranging from ping pong and tennis balls to batteries and Lego pieces. Their entry, which employed an innovative conveyor belt made of duct tape to grab the objects, not only effectively managed the tasks, but wowed the crowd. One judge was reported as saying that the design was the most creative he had ever seen.

Pleasantville Middle School's volunteer coaches are all local residents, including retirees with a background in STEM-related disciplines who are willing to share their enthusiasm and knowledge.

Martha Matteo said the effort is part



The students and coaches who represented Pleasantville Middle School at the recent state Science Olympiad Championships in Rochester.

of a larger community-based initiative called "Pleasantville Friends of STEM," intended to increase science, technology, engineering and math learning opportunities in the district. It was started by the Matteos, Dr. Usha Sankar, Ravi Subramanya and other community members and works closely with Pleasantville Middle School Principal Vivian Ossowski and the school's extended learning coordinator Melissa Brown.

Other volunteer-staffed programs include two Math Olympiad teams (one each for grades 5-6 and 7-8) and two robotics teams, one from the middle school and another from the high school. The group is open to all students and seeks to identify additional members of the community with talents to contribute.

To learn more, contact Dr. Martha Matteo at mmatteo@att.net or Ben Serebin at ben@reefsolutions.com.

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Editorial

New Castle Wise to Take Chap Crossing Litigation Threats Seriously

In less than four months, the new members of the New Castle Town Board have been given a front row tutorial on how much more difficult it is to govern than it is to get elected.

Not that the discussion that transpired last week regarding Chappaqua Crossing should be any surprise to Supervisor Robert Greenstein and council members Lisa Katz and Adam Brodsky. All are attorneys and are very sharp and bright people who almost certainly understand that if you've been elected to office you better have thick skin.

One of two major issues that helped get them elected last November was their opposition to retail at the former Reader's Digest site. At the very least, they were opposed to plowing ahead with major development decisions there before the town could complete its Master Plan update, which is expected to last through the end of this year--if not longer.

However, as anyone who has followed some of the long and tortured history of Chappaqua Crossing knows, is if there was an easy solution it would have been reached years ago.

The board is being pressured by some vocal project opponents to hold off making any decision. Some of them could be the same people who helped get the majority trio elected.

However, the legal realities and responsibilities are such that if the board newcomers took the same stance on the issue that they did as candidates the town would likely be tied up in litigation for years, wasting hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars.

There were calls last week from one resident for officials not to feel pressured to accept the approved findings statement, as if its conclusions are optional. The resident also called for a moratorium.

Both positions, if followed by the board, would be reckless and irresponsible. The state Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) insures a process that, if followed, would largely determine if environmental hurdles can be cleared.

Greenstein, Katz and Brodsky are as aware of this as anyone. That is why Greenstein bluntly told those at last week's town board meeting that with eight years of lawsuits and amended plans the town may not be able to backtrack.

Opponents must keep in mind that it is ludicrous to think that the 116-acre campus will lay mostly empty, as it is today, in perpetuity.

But it is even more absurd to ask officials to expose all town taxpayers to costly litigation because some are opposed to change.

Letter

Mrs. Green's Patrons to Boycott Until Labor Strife is Resolved

The undersigned neighbors, parents, and business owners are writing to express our dismay at the actions of Mrs. Green's Natural Market in firing employees who sought to join a labor union, and to inform you that we are boycotting all of Mrs. Green's stores until the company rehires the workers they fired, and until Mrs. Green's respects the workers' lawful right to organize.

Mrs. Green's has refused to respond publicly, so their position is unknown. What can be discovered from the public record, however, is the following:

At the end of 2012, new management took over Mrs. Green's Natural Market, and employees reported that working conditions almost immediately changed for the worse. An overwhelming number of employees filed a request to join the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union in May 2013. The proposal to join lost by three votes. The National Labor Relations Board charged Mrs. Green's with violating federal labor law by having illegally interrogated and intimidated employees in the weeks leading up to the vote. The federal

charges were settled in November 2013, and Mrs. Green's agreed under federal order to post a notice regarding the workers' labor rights in the store for a 60-day period.

During this posting period, Mrs. Green's suddenly fired nine pro-union workers, all on the same grounds of "poor customer service." Most of these fired workers had been at Mrs. Green's for more than seven years, with some having worked for the company for more than a decade. All of the employees who were fired were leading supporters of the union. The UFCW has since filed federal charges against Mrs. Green's, charging that the company retaliated against those employees. The union seeks their reinstatement, and intends to pursue a new referendum.

In the meantime, these workers, many of whom we have known over the years as we patronized Mrs. Green's, have been picketing every day, often in the cold and snow. As we see it, they are standing up for their basic rights, and for the right to be treated with dignity under the law.

We are deeply disturbed that a

company which seeks to align itself with progressive, sustainable, "green" values would so apparently violate federal law in such a flagrant manner, and treat long-term employees so shabbily. Mrs. Green's is owned and operated by Natural Market Food Groups of Irvington. Its home page states plainly, in bold font, "We Believe in Goodness." When you mistreat valuable employees who are well-known to your customers, and appreciated by them, it is impossible to see that slogan as anything but empty and cynical boilerplate. This behavior would be unacceptable from any company, but the disparity between the implied values of Mrs. Green's and its recent actions is particularly offensive.

Stores like Mrs. Green's succeed in neighborhoods such as Mount Kisco and Katonah because of a loyal and committed customer base that feels connected to the store and its employees. Until this matter is resolved, and the employees reinstated, we, the undersigned will take our business elsewhere, and we will encourage our friends and neighbors to do the same.

Please sign our petition at <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/431/682/665/boycott-mrs-greens>.

Letters Policy

We invite readers to share their thoughts by sending letters to the editor. Please limit comments to 250 words. We will do our best to print all letters, but are limited by space constraints. Letters are subject to editing and may be

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Adin Witt
Student/Photographer, Mount Kisco

By Martin Wilbur

When Adin Witt asked his mom if he could borrow her camera a few years ago, she was fine with the idea as long as he was careful handling the equipment she had bought for herself.

Adin took the camera and quietly started taking photographs, mainly of nature scenes in his backyard, in his travels in the area and when he and his family would go on vacation.

It wasn't until his uncle showed Adin's mother the pictures that he had taken and placed on a home computer that she realized he had a gift.

"I was shocked," said his mother, Marjorie Strelzyn-Witt. "I had no idea he could do this."

Witt, now 14 and a Horace Greeley High School freshman, is this month's featured artist at the Mount Kisco Public Library. He has about 75 of his photographs on display, taken with his Nikon D3100.

What sets Witt's work apart is his focus on details, whether it be a flower, a plant

or a single piece of fruit or vegetable hanging on the vine.

"I don't just look at the big picture," explained Witt, a Mount Kisco resident. "If there's a bush, I look at a small portion of it and then I see like 'Oh, this looks cool, so I think I'll take a shot.' It can come out okay or it can come out amazing."

His work that's adorning the walls of the second-floor community room is pretty amazing, especially considering Witt's interest in photography started only three years ago and that at such a young age he has an eye for the intricate and the unusual.

Whether it's capturing droplets of water on a tomato, a rainbow inside a water drop or an insect on the bud of a flower, Strelzyn-Witt said through his photography her son can pick up details that most others, including herself, don't usually see.

"He would look at a picture and it could be of anything and it has like an airplane and he could say, 'See that plane, it's really



far away," Strelzyn-Witt said. "He looks at things differently."

While Witt now has an extensive portfolio, his photography hasn't been only for his own enjoyment. Last year for his Mitzvah project that culminated with his Bar Mitzvah, he sold part of his collection to raise about \$1,000 for Pet Rescue, a Larchmont-based nonprofit organization that finds homes for dogs and cats. It is where Adin and his parents adopted their dog and also happens to be the subject of two photos in the exhibit.

He is also looking to find other venues to display his work, such as nursing homes, that could brighten the days for other people.

Witt, who is currently taking a digital photography course at Greeley, said when shooting he often looks for different angles on an object or subject.

"Sometimes I'll take a photo randomly and it'll be like, 'Oh, this looks cool,'" said Witt, who plays tennis every day after

school and also plays the trumpet. "I can be surprised sometimes."

His first full-fledged exhibit came about innocently enough. Last year, his mother arrived at the library hoping to donate books, which she learned aren't accepted. However, during her visit she saw the upstairs community room that is transformed into a gallery featuring a different artist each month.

Strelzyn-Witt inquired about how her son could be considered. Witt put together his portfolio and months ago was selected. Appropriately, he was chosen for April, the first full month of spring, although he did include two of his photos depicting winter scenes.

While the overwhelming majority of his photos are of the outdoors, he does have the two of his dog and an intriguing shot of his neighbor's child. Photographing people is something he wants to work on.

"It's hard to get them still," Witt said. "It's a lot more difficult, definitely, especially the kids because they can't stay still."

Witt's eye and talent has him thinking about pursuing a photography career. He would like to one day see his work in a magazine or newspaper. If he does it professionally, he could say that he got his start at his hometown library, something that has given him the confidence to continue.

"It makes me feel like I can accomplish this and keep going on with it," Witt said.



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15th Annual Native Plant Sale at WCC Set for Apr. 26

Hundreds of beautiful, beneficial plants will be available at The Native Plant Center's 15th annual Native Plant Sale on Saturday, Apr. 26 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Westchester Community College in Valhalla. Admission is free.

This year the sale will celebrate birds because it falls on the birthday of wildlife artist John James Audubon (1785–1851), for whom the venerable bird conservation organization was named. To honor this occasion—and to bring communitywide attention to the role gardens can play as habitat—the sale will offer a large selection of plants especially beneficial to birds, many recommended by local chapters of the National Audubon Society.

"Backyards—and gardeners—can make a difference," said Carol Capobianco, Director of The Native Plant Center at Westchester Community College. "Populations of many bird species are in decline. Gardeners can create habitat for birds by changing their plant palette to include native plants. When designing a garden, think not only about four-season visual interest but also year-round food sources, shelter and water."

Hummingbird favorites, butterfly host plants, and other species loved by native pollinators also will be among the perennials, shrubs and trees for sale. Native plant specialists will be on hand to answer questions and assist gardeners in



choosing great options for their sites from the 3,000 plants and more than 75 species offered.

The day will kick off at 8:15 a.m. with a guided bird walk on campus led by Bedford Audubon's naturalist Tait Johansson. Bring your binoculars. The sale opens to the public at 10 a.m. (Native Plant Center members may enter at 9:30 a.m.) Other bird-themed activities for the day include information about local birds; the sale of garden accessories such as bird baths, houses and feeders by the

Wild Bird Center; and other celebratory treats to wish a "Happy Bird-day" to Mr. Audubon.

The Native Plant Center is teaming with Audubon chapters in the area to bring attention to the interdependency of native plants and birds. Bedford Audubon, which celebrated its 100th anniversary last year as a chapter of the National Audubon Society, is spearheading the efforts.

"We're so happy to be partnering with The Native Plant Center to celebrate

John James Audubon's birthday and conservation," said Janelle Robbins, executive director of Bedford Audubon. "I can't wait to see more home landscapes evolve into wildlife oases for birds and butterflies."

As in past years, McCue Gardens of Wethersfield, Conn. will be present at the sale, offering a unique selection of delicate woodland plants.

The sale is located at Westchester Community College, 75 Grasslands Rd. in Valhalla. Sale attendees should enter the East Grasslands entrance and park in Lot 1.

Volunteers are needed to prepare for the sale and to assist on sale day itself. Those interested in volunteering, or those seeking further information about the sale, should visit www.nativeplantcenter.org, email wcc.nativeplant@sunywcc.org or call 914-606-7870.

The Native Plant Center was established in 1998 as the first national affiliate of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Tex. The Native Plant Center maintains demonstration gardens and educates the public about the environmental necessity, economic value, and natural beauty of native plants through conferences, field trips and classes in its Go Native U continuing education program.



Many of our customers knew our dear framer Thom.

He passed away on March 19th. He was our "project man".

He tackled any project we gave him with confidence, had a wonderful sense of humor and he loved discovering all things new and interesting, from an art exhibit to a website that answered geometry questions. Anyone who hired him to hang art in their home will remember his skill and lovely positive attitude.

Thom loved thin blond women with hips smaller than his.

He was an amazing cook and enjoyed the occasional Orange Crush.

He loved to laugh and listen to a good story. One day we showed up and he had created a sign

which hung over his desk saying, "genius bar".

He had an indomitable spirit and energy when he was well.

When he was sick he rarely let us in on the horrible days he was living.

We miss him so much every day and ask after you read this you pass it along to anyone who smokes. Let them know that leukemia caused by smoking killed one of the greatest guys we ever knew and had the pleasure of working with every day.

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A Wild Story Illustrates What Do-It-Yourself Chores to Avoid

Some of you may be old enough to remember the men's movement of the mid-1970s, which I tolerated for a short while. Men would gather to pursue personal growth and to relate better to others by sharing issues and discussing how we might best deal with them.

Personally it didn't do much for me, but it was in one of these groups that I heard the most fantastic story about what we should not be doing ourselves around the house. I've waited more than 30 years to tell it.

One night when it was a rather quiet member's time to share, he told the story about how he had climbed a ladder on his two-story house to clean his gutters, lost his balance, fell and knocked himself unconscious. When he came to, he was in the emergency room, his wife by his side, having his head checked out.

While there, he discovered that he found the male technician very attractive and subsequently realized that the trauma to his head had completely changed his sexual orientation--or so he claimed.

Wild, right? The bottom line for him was that a simple, albeit dangerous chore around the house had totally altered



By Bill Primavera

his lifestyle. For me, it was proof that I should never do anything around the house that is either dangerous or for which I am unqualified.

But we guys are a stubborn lot. And women are right up there with us when it comes to the satisfaction we derive from doing ourselves what we might hand over to others for a price. There are other factors involved, both practical and psychological.

For one, not all of us are moneybags. When I first moved to the suburbs, I could barely scrape together

the money needed for the mortgage, utilities and taxes each month, much less even considering whether I could afford a service to have my lawn cut or my shrubbery pruned.

On the other hand, with a young family and a stressful job, I was grateful for the therapeutic element that came with building my own book shelves, applying my own wallpaper and doing my own foundation plantings. I would step back and say, "Wow, that's some heck of a job; no one could possibly do it better."

And you know what? Except for some really skilled artisans I have found along the way, like a carpenter who is an artist

with wood, and a painter who can do faux work that should be in a museum, my handiwork from years past stands up very well indeed.

To this day, every time I step into my bedroom, almost compulsively, I look at the perfectly matched pattern on the papered walls and marvel at how each corner is miraculously matched to the other. When I am in my dining room, I can't stop myself from observing the stenciling along the top of the walls, the swag and leaf pattern on which I labored for weeks on end when my back and neck were supple enough to endure the physical effort required.

But the years do take their toll. As soon as the snow melted I started my first ritual of spring: to redress my driveway and parking area by leveling the mounds of crushed bluestone created by the snowplow during the winter. Of course, I soon heard a window open and my wife admonished me to stop immediately, warning that the chore is as taxing as shoveling snow and that I'm too old to do it. I responded that it's good, healthy exercise for me. We went back and forth. She won, but only because I try to be a good husband and don't want to worry her. I must face the reality that it's time to be a different kind of homeowner with a different kind of "to do" list, mainly one of who to call to get the various jobs

done that need to be done.

According to the Consumer Products Safety Commission's most recent report, nearly a quarter of a million people have to visit emergency rooms each year simply because they fall off a ladder. Indeed, this is the most dangerous chore around the house.

In descending order, the next most dangerous home improvement chores are: lawnmower accidents; power tool accidents; chemical-related accidents (pool chemicals, paints, lubricants, solvents and other household or workshop cleaning agents, so read those labels carefully); chainsaw accidents (I was always afraid to even own one); and finally, electric shock. (Always assume a wire is "hot," unless you know for sure that the power has been turned off.)

Happy do-it-yourselfing, but be careful which chores you choose.

Bill Primavera is a Realtor® associated with William Raveis Real Estate and Founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc., the longest running public relations agency in Westchester (www.PrimaveraPR.com), specializing in lifestyles, real estate and development. His real estate site is: www.PrimaveraRealEstate.com and his blog is: www.TheHomeGuru.com. To engage the services of The Home Guru and his team to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.

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'Art Detective' to Discuss Works Looted By the Nazis at Purchase

Art looted by the Nazis often makes headlines and even features in popular culture such as the recently-released movie "Monuments Men." But how does an art museum actually research its collection to find lost, stolen or smuggled masterpieces?

Art expert Victoria Reed will speak at Purchase College on Wednesday, April 23 about her experiences as an "art detective" for Nazi-looted art that has made its way into major art collections.

Reed is curator for Provenance at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. She is responsible for tracing the provenance, or ownership history, of the museum's collection, looking for potential seizures, thefts and losses during the Nazi era and beyond.

"This is the real-life 'Monuments Men,'" said Professor Rachel Hallote, coordinator of the Jewish Studies Program at Purchase College "This is part of what museum curators do, and is work that is crucially important. When it is successful, it helps both the museums and the public."

Reed, who is responsible for the research and documentation of provenance for much of the Museum of Fine Arts' encyclopedic collection, reviews the potential acquisitions and loans of the museum, and works on due



Art expert Victoria Reed will talk about Nazi looted art next week at Purchase College.

diligence policies and practice. She has published extensively on matters related to provenance research.

Reed's appearance is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., in the Red Room of the Student Services Building at Purchase College, located at 735 Anderson Hill Rd. in Purchase. The event is free and open to

the public.

The lecture is made possible by the Samuel G. Fredman Family Program in Holocaust Education in Memory of Mims Fredman. It is one of the highlighted public events of the academic year for Purchase College's Jewish Studies Program

Volunteer for the 2014 Armonk Outdoor Art Show

Looking to get involved in a great community event? The nationally recognized Armonk Outdoor Art Show is seeking leaders and volunteers for all areas of the show, especially for the children's activities booth at this year's show, scheduled for Sept. 20-21. Other volunteer positions are also available. The show's net proceeds benefit the programs and facilities at the North Castle Public Library.

All the programs at this library are sponsored by the Friends of the North Castle Public Library, which produces the art show, now in its 52nd year.

To sign up to volunteer, contact Debbie Heidecorn at dheidecorn24@gmail.com or give your name and email address to one of the librarians.

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PCTV to Hold Inaugural Gala May 3 to Raise Money for Station

By Martin Wilbur

There are many public access channels in Westchester that provide tapes of meetings and events within the municipalities they serve. Few, if any, offer what Pleasantville Community Television (PCTV) brings to its viewership.

PCTV's roughly 55,000-household reach features an assortment of original programming, much of it filmed at its studios on Jackson Alley in downtown Pleasantville. There are shows, produced and hosted by local community members, on art, writing, music and overcoming office and workplace challenges, among many others.

"We can take a variety of topics and really create a diverse programming menu for so many people in this community and the surrounding area," said Juliette Saisselin-Killion, PCTV's operations board manager.

However, providing that programming and other services to the public costs money. With shrinking payments from the town's cable providers and village government limited to how much it can assist has forced PCTV to explore other revenue-generating means.

On Saturday night, May 3, PCTV will be holding its first-ever fundraising

gala at the Rowsley Estate in Scarsdale, said Saisselin-Killion, who is hopeful that there will be 80 to 100 attendees. The event, which will be catered by Pleasantville's Jean-Jacques, will also honor longtime Pleasantville Chamber of Commerce President and Beecher Funeral Home owner William Flooks.

Saisselin-Killion said the selection of Flooks as its honoree was a fairly obvious choice for, given his commitment to the community and his unwavering support for the station. In fact, Flooks hosts one of its recurring shows, "Chamber Chat."

"We just thought it was fitting to honor somebody who was not only a big supporter to PCTV but to the community as a whole," she said.

In recent years, the need for PCTV to fundraise is more important than ever. Its budget for the village's upcoming fiscal year, which begins June 1, is \$194,000. The village has proposed in its budget to provide \$94,000, leaving the remaining \$100,000 to be raised through donations, sponsors and events such as the gala, Saisselin-Killion said.

Earlier this year PCTV announced that it would be looking to start filming ads, documentaries and corporate and educational videos for outside clients in order to expand its revenue stream.

"Our operational costs are increasing,



Pleasantville Chamber of Commerce President William Flooks will be the honoree at PCTV's first-ever gala on May 3.

our equipment is old, so we really have to increase our outside revenue," Saisselin-Killion explained. "So the fundraiser is part of that focus."

PCTV is in a position to seek third-party clients in large part because its

station manager, Shane McGaffey, has extensive background in background and education in film, she said. It also helps the station separate itself from others in the crowded video production arena.

"That helps us to differentiate us a little bit from the traditional video company and I think that it allows us to try and utilize his expertise to target specific clients," Saisselin-Killion said.

Despite the expense, it's crucial for PCTV to continue to have strong content that can be viewed on television in the village and on its website. For its devoted viewers in Pleasantville, Mount Pleasant, New Castle, the town and village of Ossining, and some parts of Mount Kisco, it can be seen on Channel 76 for Cablevision subscribers and Channel 36 for Verizon customers.

"PCTV has become sort of this go-to place to find out what's been going on with what's happening in the village, and they can see it on their website," Saisselin-Killion said.

Tickets to the gala, which starts with a cocktail hour at 6 p.m. and is followed by dinner, cost \$125 per person. The Rowsley Estate is located at 37 Drake Rd. in Scarsdale. For more information and to buy tickets, visit www.pctv76.org.



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Glass Onion's Jaros to Be Honored at P'ville's Chamber Event

By Janine Bowen

Glass Onion Originals owner Matt Jaros has been named the Business Person of the Year by the Pleasantville Chamber of Commerce.

Jaros, who will be honored by the chamber on Apr. 23, opened the gallery gift shop in 2004 with his wife, Emily

Wong. He has watched the business expand from a small location on Manville Road to a thriving shop at 4 Washington Ave. that brings unique and handcrafted merchandise from across the country to local residents.

"It's an honor. To be voted on by your colleagues and fellow business people,

it's very special. It's probably the nicest honor of my whole career, actually," Jaros said.

The goal at Glass Onion is to give customers a chance to buy merchandise they may not find elsewhere. Jaros noted that there is something special about handmade items because of the great care each artist brings to his or her work.

"One of the goals, by having artisan-driven merchandise, is to create an experience for someone when they come in the store, so you leave like you just saw something beautiful or fantastic," Jaros said.

The friendly and welcoming atmosphere for Glass Onion's patrons contributes to customer satisfaction, he said. Jaros and his staff do their best to help every person who walks into the shop find a perfect gift in their price range. The store also offers shipping and free gift wrapping.

Jaros said he is proud to accept the chamber's honor, noting that the award symbolizes how the community respects and appreciates the business. Community is critical to Glass Onion Originals, as Jaros and Wong support a wide variety of local organizations,



Matt Jaros, owner of Glass Onion, a Pleasantville gift shop featuring handmade pieces.

Water Bottle Industry Documentary Set for April 21 in Chappaqua

The Chappaqua Library and New Castle's Sustainability Advisory Board are co-sponsoring a free screening of the documentary, "Tapped," on Monday, Apr. 21 at 7 p.m. at the Chappaqua Public Library, located at 195 S. Greeley Ave. in Chappaqua. A lively, compelling discussion following the film will be led by Braeden Cohen, sustainability/compost specialist and educator at the Greenburgh Nature Center.

Come for this event on the eve of Earth Day while having an opportunity to win a free Nalgene or Klean Kanteen safe, reusable water bottle! Reusable, BPA-free water bottles have been generously provided by the Nalgene and Klean Kanteen companies.

New Castle's primary water source is the Catskill Aqueduct System. It is treated at the Millwood Water Treatment Plant

and provides residents with superior quality water that meets or exceeds all of the mandated drinking water standards. Bottled water that is produced and sold within the state is not required to meet FDA's regulations. Which would you rather provide to your family?

"Tapped" is an inside look at the multibillion dollar water bottle industry. While the cost of gasoline has ranged from two to four cents per ounce for the past few years, you pay on average five cents per ounce for bottled water. This documentary is a behind-the-scenes look into the unregulated and unseen world of an industry that has privatized and sells back the one resource that ought never to have become a commodity: our water.

For more information regarding this event, email newcastlesab@gmail.com.

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ArtsWestchester 2014 Award Luncheon Celebrates 49 Years

By Pat Casey

Supporters of the arts in Westchester joined ArtsWestchester at the Marriott Hotel on Friday, Apr. 4 to honor and congratulate the 2014 Arts Award recipients.

In the celebratory spirit encouraged by the successful Hatitude Exhibit at ArtsWestchester, guests were encouraged to wear hats and milliners and displayed

their designs during a silent auction.

The Arts Patron Award was given to Hannah and Walter Shmerler for their many years of generous support across various arts organizations in Westchester, including the Performing Arts Center at Purchase, the Westchester Philharmonic and ArtsWestchester where Hannah Shmerler has served on the board since 1999 and as chair of its Education

Committee.

The New Choral Society was recognized with the Arts Organization Award for its 20 years of presenting outstanding concerts and masterworks.

Caramoor Center for Music and Art received the Innovator's Award for its large-scale outdoor sound art exhibition, "In the Garden of Sonic Delights." The exhibit runs from June through November

2014 at five sites.

Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art received the Community Award for its positive impact on the City of Peekskill over the past decade by broadening the understanding of contemporary art in a multicultural urban community.

Music Therapy Institute of the Music Conservatory of Westchester received the Community Award. Yorktown High School Dance Company was given the Education Award, and the Westchester County Arts Leadership Association received the Sophia Abeles Education Award.

The event sponsor was First Niagara Bank

Rebuilt Playland Boardwalk Opens; New Season Begins May 10

The Playland boardwalk, which suffered major damage during Hurricane Sandy, opened last week featuring by a rebuilt section that extends to Rye Town Park.

The boardwalk and a large section of the boardwalk from the Pier Restaurant to the miniature golf course was completely rebuilt with a Brazilian hardwood known as Ipe. The Brazilian wood does not splinter, is more durable and can last more than 30 years, compared to 15 to 20 years for standard wood. It is more fire resistant. The cost for the 37,300 square feet of replacement decking is about \$2 million. FEMA will reimburse the county a portion of that cost.

Titan Construction Group, based in White Plains, was hired to complete the project. Playland Opening Day scheduled for Saturday, May 10.



Left to right: Kathleen O'Connor, commissioner, Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation; John McNeiece, general foreman, Titan Construction; Scott Donnelly, project manager, Department of Public Works; County Executive Rob Astorino; Jay Pisco, commissioner, Department of Public Works and Transportation; Bill McNeiece, president, Titan Construction.

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EVENTS

RINALDIFLEAMARKETS.COM First Market. Sunday April 6th. 900 Dutchess Turnpike (Rt 44) Poughkeepsie NY. Free Admission & Parking. Great Food, Bargains. Vendors Wanted! RINALDIFLEAMARKET.COM See You There!

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IFCA HOUSING NETWORK IN OS-SINING seeds a new Executive Director to further the mission of sustaining community, diversity and opportunity through workforce/affordable housing and vital social services. Please see www.ifcany.org. **Cover, resume and salary history to Susan Egmont, Egmont Associates, segmont@egmontassociates.com.**

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Great Ways to Celebrate Easter and Spring With Kids

The onset of spring brings with it more than mild weather, it's the season for Easter celebrations, spring cleaning and renewal. Remember all those favorite Easter traditions you had as a kid? It's time to keep them alive with your family and to start new ones.

There are many ways your family can make spring and Easter fun and even educational.

Egg-stra Special Fun

After a long winter, a good old-fashioned Easter egg hunt is a great way to usher in spring, giving children an opportunity to spend time outdoors with friends and family.

Before heading outside, let kids get creative and craft their own unique bags to fill with treasure. Decorate eggs by dyeing them and adding your own special designs. Invite friends and neighbors to join in the fun.

Easter Basket Ideas

You can help avoid those sugar highs by sprinkling in just a few sweet treats and filling kids' baskets with fun, educational alternatives, instead.

Consider a kid-friendly tablet, such as VTech's InnoTab 3S and additional fun, age-appropriate software cartridges that allow a child to progressively learn key subjects such as math, reading and science in steady stages. With all their favorite characters from Sofia the First, Doc McStuffins, Jake



RAWPIXEL - FOTOLIA.COM PHOTO

Taking advantage of the great outdoors is a way for families to help celebrate Easter and the season.

& the Neverland Pirates and more, they'll have so much fun they won't even realize they are learning. Or opt for action toys that can promote motor skill development, like VTech's new Switch & Go Dinos Turbo and Go! Go! Smart Wheels electronic vehicles.

Learning toys and books can make your kids' gift baskets even more special and long-lasting. More ideas for Easter basket alternatives can be found at www.VTechKids.com.

Take a Spring Hike

After a long winter most children have cabin fever, along with their parents. Take advantage of the season to head out for fresh air.

Take a nature hike at a nearby park or even in your own backyard, if your children are too little for longer treks.

Prepare in advance by learning about trees and plants together by reading a library book or surfing age-appropriate

sites online. Then have kids identify local greenery along your route. And collect a few rocks or flowers to bring home as keepsakes.

Out With the Old

Make spring cleaning a fun family affair by giving children a bin to fill. Whoever fills the bin with the most stuff or the quickest gets to pick a family treat like eating at their favorite restaurant or a movie.

Teach children the rewards of giving by donating gently used items to a local charity. One perk of cleaning and donating is it makes room for new things.

And you can breathe new life into old toys by purchasing new accessories for dolls and action figures, or new software for electronic games. For example, a range of educational cartridges are available for VTech's InnoTab, including such kid favorites as Monster's University, which includes nine games, an e-book and more.

"Spring is a great time for parents to take a fresh approach to learning, incorporating themes of nature and renewal into children's toys and activities," said Dr. Lise Eliot, early childhood development expert who consults for VTech, a leader in age-appropriate and developmental stage-based electronic learning products for kids.

Spring is a season for fresh air and renewal, so renew your family's minds and spirit along with your home.

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Easter Sunday Champagne Brunch

UNLIMITED EASTER BUFFET

Scrambled Eggs, Applewood Smoked Bacon, Turkey Sausage

Cinnamon French Toast with Maple Syrup

Freshly Baked Muffins, Bagels and Breakfast Pastries

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Penne Alla Vodka

Boneless Breast of Chicken with Fire Roasted Peppers

Filet of Sole Florentine

Accompanied by Vegetables Du Jour, Oven Roasted Potatoes and Confetti Rice

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Happenings

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 "Happenings Calendar Submission" in your email subject line. Entries should be sent to Martin Wilbur at mwilbur@theexaminernews.com.

Tuesday, Apr. 15

Pysanky. Extravagant eggs. For children in grades 4 and up. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 4 p.m. Free. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-238-4779.

Wednesday, Apr. 16

Zumba Fitness. Achieve long-term benefits while having a blast in one exciting hour of calorie-burning, body-energizing, awe-inspiring movements meant to engage and captivate for life. For all fitness levels. Dance Emotions, 75 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. Every Monday and Wednesday at 9 a.m. and Saturdays at 10 a.m. Drop in or weekly discount rates available. Info: Contact Peggy at 914 960-4097.

Knitting Group. Hats for our servicemen and women overseas and other ongoing projects for care centers and hospitals. Clinton Street Center, 1A Clinton St., Pleasantville. 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Meets every Monday and Wednesday. Info: 914-769-2021.

Senior Benefits Information Center. Counselors offer older adults one-on-one counseling covering a broad range of topics including Medicare health and prescription plans, food stamps, HEAP, EPIC, weatherization, minor home repair

and tax relief programs. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 Main St., Mount Kisco. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free. Every Wednesday. Info: 914-231-3260.

Knitting Club. Come learn to knit, or if you already know how, bring your current project and enjoy a visit with other knitters and crocheters. Beginners should bring a pair off size 8 or 10 straight knitting needles and skein or worsted weight yarn. Open to knitters and crocheters 10 years old and up. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 4 to 5:30 p.m. Free. Meets every Wednesday. Info: 914-666-8041.

Famous Gardens as Art. With LIU professor Valerie Franco. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whipoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Hot Topics in College Admissions. A workshop led by college counseling professional Dr. Gay S. Pepper. Pepper, a former college admissions officer, will discuss new trends such as changes in the SATs, admissions policy for students transferring from community college, financial aid and how they will impact students and parents. Katonah Village Library, 26 Bedford Rd., Katonah. 7 p.m. Free. RSVP required. Info and RSVP: 914-232-3508 or email katref@wlsmail.org.

Thursday, Apr. 17

Let Your Yoga Dance Classes. The popular Kripalu noon dance class is now in Chappaqua! Combines easy dance, gentle yoga and great music. Come join this noncompetitive, heart pumping and joyful experience. Drop-ins welcome. Dance Emotions, 75 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 10 a.m. \$20 per 75 min. class. Every Tuesday and Thursday. Info: 914-238-8974 or email claudiayogadance@gmail.com.

Earth Day Art. Drop in and craft. All ages; with an adult. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 1 to 4 p.m. Free. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

Multilingual Mother Goose. Learn and share songs and rhymes in other languages. For children birth to five years old; with an adult. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 2:30 p.m. Free. Meets every Thursday. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-238-4779.

Poetry Slam. An evening of creative rhymes, smooth flows and inspirational minds. Come with one of your own poems to read or to hear some great poems by others. Poetry should be based on Martin Luther King, African-Americans, peace, nonviolence or related topics. Refreshments

served. Thomas H. Slater Center, 2 Fisher Court, White Plains. 6:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-525-3076 or email library@mlkwestchester.org.

Maundy Thursday Services and Agape Meal. St. John's Episcopal Church, 8 Sunnyside Ave., Pleasantville. 7 p.m. Info: 914-769-0053.

Friday, Apr. 18

Good Friday Services: Children's Stations of the Cross. St. John's Episcopal Church, 8 Sunnyside Ave., Pleasantville. 10 a.m. Info: 914-769-0053.

Family Film. Come see a recently-released animated movie. All ages. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 4 p.m. Free. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

Good Friday Services. St. John's Episcopal Church, 8 Sunnyside Ave., Pleasantville. 7 p.m. Info: 914-769-0053.

Saturday, Apr. 19

Chappaqua Farmers Market. Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 191 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 8:30 to 1 p.m. Every Saturday until May. Info: Visit www.chappaquafarmersmarket.org.

continued on page 26

PARAMOUNT

HUDSON VALLEY THEATER

Music, Movies and More!

**Rolling
in the Aisles**
April 18th, 8pm



Rolling in the Aisles Featuring Joey Vega, Tommy Gooch, and Michelle Balan. Joey Vega recently wowed 18,000 people at Brooklyn's Barley Center. He is Marc Anthony's favorite comedian. He also has toured with Chris Rock. Tommy Gooch's ranting self-deprecating, family oriented style of comedy always makes him a loveable favorite for a feature act. Michele Balan was a finalist in "last comic standing". Don't miss this great line up of comedians!

**Dead On Live:
Best of the Dead**
April 25th, 8pm




Multi-instrumentalist Marc Muller directs a Note For Note celebration capturing this important and beloved period in the Grateful Dead's long, illustrious, and stylistically diverse career. The best of '70-'75 features music from Workingman's Dead to American Beauty all the way through Blues For Allah. Muller has assembled an impressive cast of world class musicians that have been able to reproduce virtually every note of every instrument, as well as all of the beautifully orchestrated vocal arrangements. Don't miss this amazing show.

Kashmir
May 10th, 8pm



Kashmir, the nation's #1 Led Zeppelin tribute show, it is the most authentic representation of Led Zeppelin on the modern national touring scene. Each of the 4 band members assumes their individual role with pinpoint accuracy. Kashmir possesses the live stage show, sound, and likeness to bring audiences and fans back to the days when the mighty Led Zeppelin ruled the musical landscape.





MOVIES

April Sunday, April 20th, 3pm: The Ten Commandments

May Sunday, May 4th, 3pm : Doctor Zhivago

Great Restaurants and plenty of free parking! 1008 Brown Street, Peekskill, NY 10566 Box Office: 914.739.0039

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P'ville International Association to Host Special Night Apr. 25

"When you're standing in the Peace Park on the South Korea side of the Demilitarized Zone you appreciate better both the heightened tensions and the tremendous desire for peace," said Pleasantville High School senior Benji Taubenblatt.

"In South Africa they call a certain point at dusk 'Magic Hour' because the special colors in the sky and the elongated shadows create a magical effect, especially out in the brush on safari," reflected Maggie Sullivan.

"My family home in Costa Rica was typical of the modest homes in the countryside. The boundaries between inside and out were fluid and you felt very close to nature and the people," recalled Cary Chapman.

Taubenblatt, Sullivan and Chapman were three of 13 Pleasantville High School student "ambassadors" who traveled abroad last summer under the auspices of the Pleasantville International Association (PIA). The students lived with host families in Europe, Central America, Africa, Australia and the Navaho Nation. They earned their ambassadorships by working to raise funds and by sharing their experiences with school and community groups.

While the students learned a great deal about other cultures, what they



Above: Maggie Sullivan at the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa.

Right: Pleasantville High School senior Benji Taubenblatt at Peace Park in the demilitarized zone in South Korea.



learned about themselves was even more impressive.

PIA has been helping to organize trips through the Experiment in International Living and the American Field Service, two nonprofit groups, for more than 40 years by providing stipends to the students to help defray the cost of the trips. This summer, 12 student ambassadors will bring the flavor of Pleasantville to places as far flung as Tanzania, Ecuador, Thailand and Spain.

On Friday, Apr. 25, PIA will be

hosting its annual International Night at St. John's Episcopal Church, located at 8 Sunnyside Ave. from 7 to 10 p.m. Returning ambassadors will share brief stories of their trips. Attendees will enjoy a wide array of appetizers and desserts from around the world, while listening to music from various cultures. Gifts from around the globe, and services by the ambassadors will be auctioned. Live auction items will include weekends at vacation homes and a private tasting party at a local wine store.

From 9 to 10 p.m., two high school

rock bands, Screaming Onions and Pale White Blur, will provide a different kind of cultural experience.

All proceeds from the event will help other Pleasantville youth gain a broader understanding of the world outside our borders, and bring their experiences back to the community.

Tickets are \$30 at the door. Seniors and children under 18 can get in for \$10. For more information, contact Kathleen Hammond at Hamm05@verizon.net.

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Sat., May 10, 2014

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12 & 24-mile family recreational ride.

The Inaugural
Putnam Pasta Picnic
with an all-you-can-eat spaghetti and meatball feast. Open to the public.

Happenings

continued from page 24

Pleasantville Farmers Market. The market is back indoors and even better than last year, with more winter-grown produce, meats, breads, cheeses, prepared foods and all the goodies you know and love. Pleasantville Middle School, 40 Romer Ave., Pleasantville. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Every Saturday until mid May. Info: Visit www.pleasantvillefarmersmarket.org.

Invasive Plant Identification and Removal Techniques. Learn why our natural areas are not as healthy as most people think. One of the biggest threats are invasive plants and animals. Learn about the problems they cause, how to identify them and proper control techniques. We will also remove some on the grounds. Please bring gloves, clippers and loppers if you have them. Westmoreland Sanctuary, 260 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Mount Kisco. 10:30 a.m. Members: Free. Non-members: \$5. Info: 914-666-8448 or visit www.westmorelandsanctuary.org.

Learn Chair Yoga. Experience greater flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, improved balance, strengthening and toning of muscles, better digestion, stress reduction, mental clarity, improved breathing, relaxation and an overall sense of well-being. No previous yoga or fitness experience exercise necessary. Led by Alka Tewani, registered yoga therapist and certified chair yoga instructor. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 10:30 a.m. Free. Every Saturday through June 7 (except for May 24). Info: 914-273-3887.

Greyhound Rescue and Rehab Meet and Greet Adoption Day. Petland Discounts, Thornwood Town Center, 10-18 Broadway, Thornwood. 12 to 3 p.m. Info: Contact: Amy Eisenberg at 631-273-6363, visit www.petlanddiscounts.com or email aeyenberg@petlanddiscounts.com.

What Came First? See if you can answer the age-old question: What came first the chicken or the egg. All welcome. Teatown Lake Reservation, 1600 Spring Valley Rd., Ossining. 1 to 2 p.m. Members: Free. Non-members: \$5. Pre-registration required. Info and pre-registration: 914-762-2912 ext. 110.

Saturday Specials. A program for special needs kids and their families. Stories, songs, sensory activities and schmoozing. For all ages. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 2 p.m. Free. Registration required Info and registration: 914-238-4779.

Amazing Amphibians. Join a naturalist to discover the slippery, slimy and cold blooded world of amphibians. This informative and hands-on program lets you meet some local amphibians up close. Then walk to our forest and pond to see what other amazing critters live there. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 2 p.m. Members: Free. Non-members: \$8. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit

www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Easter Vigil. St. John's Episcopal Church, 8 Sunnyside Ave., Pleasantville. 7 p.m. Info: 914-769-0053.

Wine and Woodcocks. A rite of spring in the natural world is the mating display of the male woodcock. A wonderful aerial display is performed at the end of dusk which is easy to miss if you don't know where they like to dance. Look, listen and enjoy wine and cheese. Limited space and parking. Westmoreland Sanctuary, 260 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Mount Kisco. 8 p.m. Members: \$5. Non-members: \$8. Pre-registration required by Apr. 17. Info and pre-registration: 914-666-8448 or visit www.westmorelandsanctuary.org.

Argentine Tango Dances. Great music and dancing on a 3,500-square-foot dance floor. Enjoy a pleasant time with friends. Refreshments served. Broadway 26 Dance, 26 Broadway, Hawthorne. 8 p.m. to midnight. \$16. Also the first Sunday of each month from 3 to 6 p.m. \$12. Info: 914-725-3023 or 914-484-5101 or e-mail sampelayo@optonline.net.

Sunday, Apr 20

Easter Services. St. John's Episcopal Church, 8 Sunnyside Ave., Pleasantville. 8, 9:15 and 10:45 a.m. Info: 914-769-0053.

Easter Worship and Egg Hunt. Easter worship featuring special music followed by an Easter egg hunt for children. All welcome. Pleasantville Presbyterian Church, 400 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. Service at 10 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt at about 11:15 a.m. Info: 914-769-0458 or visit www.PvillePresby.org.

Easter Brunch. A special holiday brunch on our terrace overlooking the golf course. Mohansic Grill, Mohansic Golf Course, 1500 Baldwin Rd., Yorktown Heights. 11 a.m. to -2 p.m. Call for prices and reservations. Info and reservations: 914 962 9300 or visit www.mohansicgrill.com.

Monday, Apr 21

Baby Time. A fun interactive lap sit story time. Includes songs, rhymes and a few very short stories to give babies an opportunity to socialize and parents a time to share. Recommended for newborns through 12 months old. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 10 to 10:20 a.m. Free. Every Monday and Wednesday through April. Info: 914-769-0548 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Toddler Time. Uses finger plays, action rhymes, songs and stories to encourage an enjoyment of books and to stimulate early listening skills, learning and speaking skills. Recommended for children one to two and a half years old. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 10:30 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday through April. Info: 914-769-0548 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Preschool Story Time. An interactive story time using picture books, songs,

finger plays, action rhymes and other activities to encourage the enjoyment of books and language. Recommended for children two and a half to five years old. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 11 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday through April. Info: 914-769-0276 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Veterans Roundtable. Informal discussion and camaraderie among members and public service projects. Clinton Street Center, 1A Clinton St., Pleasantville. 1 to 2 p.m. Free. Meets every Monday. Info: 914-769-2021.

Stories and More. Stories and snacks. For children in grades K-3. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 4:30 p.m. Free. Every Monday. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

"Tapped." The Chappaqua Public Library and New Castle's Sustainability Advisory Board are co-sponsoring a screening of this documentary. A lively and compelling discussion following the film will be led by Braeden Cohen, sustainability/compost specialist and educator at the Greenburgh Nature Center. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 7 p.m. Free. Info: Email newcastlesab@gmail.com.

Tuesday, Apr. 22

Baby Time. A fun interactive lap-sit story time. Includes songs, rhymes and a few very short stories to gives babies an opportunity to socialize and parents a time to share. Recommended for newborns through 12 months. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 125 Lozza Drive, Valhalla. 10 to 10:20 a.m. Free. Also Apr. 29. Info: 914-741-0276 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Toddler Time. Uses finger plays, action rhymes, songs and stories to encourage an enjoyment of books and to stimulate early listening skills, learning and speaking skills. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 125 Lozza Drive, Valhalla. 10:30 to 11 a.m. Free. Tuesdays through April. Recommended for children one to two and a half years old. Info: 914-741-0276 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Preschool Story Time. An interactive story time using picture books, songs, finger plays, action rhymes and other activities to encourage the enjoyment of books and language. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 125 Lozza Drive., Valhalla 11 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Recommended for children two and a half to five years old. Tuesdays and Thursdays through April. info: 914-741-0276 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Japanese and Origami 101. Learn Japanese paper folding and language. For children in grades 4-6. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 4 p.m. Free. Also April 29 and May 6 and 13. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-238-4779.

"NIMBY: Nature in My Backyard." A lecture by Dr. Chris Nagy, Mianus

River Gorge's director of science and land management to commemorate Earth Day. He will focus on the connectedness of animals, plants and humans in our region while highlighting the role that preserves and private lands play in the protection of quality of life and the environment. Bedford Historical Society's Historic Hall, 608 Old Post Rd., Bedford. Light refreshments at 7 p.m. Lecture at 7:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-234-6992 or visit www.westchesterlandtrust.org.

Wednesday, Apr. 23

Support Group for Alzheimer's Caregivers. Temple Shaaray Tefila and Westchester Jewish Community Services have scheduled this forum to provide a place for caregivers to discuss their feelings, share their experiences and support one another. A specialist from the Alzheimer's Association will lead the group and provide educational materials and information. All welcome. Temple Shaaray Tefila's Youth Lounge, 89 Baldwin Rd., Baldwin Corners. 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Free. Will meet the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Registration required. Info and registration: Contact the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900 or visit www.alz.org/hudsonvalley.

Fiber/Yarn Hobby Group. Pleasantville Loves Yarn (PLY) is a group of knitters and fiber lovers who meet to learn from each other and enjoy each other's company. Bring whatever you're working on and share your knowledge or learn from the group. All skill levels and any fiber/yarn hobby (knitters, crocheters, spinners, weavers, etc.) welcome. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 1 to 3 p.m. Free. Info: 914-769-0548.

Teen Book Club. Enjoy amazing books, fun snacks and entertaining discussions with Lauren Berger, who is working on her Girl Scout Gold Award. This month's book will be "The Face on the Milk Carton" by Caroline B. Cooney. For students in grades 6-8. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 5 to 6 p.m. Free. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

The Art of Bagdad. With LIU Professor Valerie Franco. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

"Jewish-Owned Art & The Nazis." Art looted by the Nazis often makes headlines and even features in popular culture. Art expert Victoria Reed, curator for Provenance at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston will talk about her experiences as an "art detective" for Nazi-looted art that has made its way into major art collections. Purchase College's Student Services Building, Red Room, 735 Anderson Hill Rd., Purchase. 7:30 p.m. Free. Info: visit www.purchase.edu.

At the Intersection of Economics, Politics and Wine

'the world of wine intrigue'



By Nick Antonaccio

I've been penning this wine column for over six years. I've written on topics relating to the finer points of winemaking, the broad expanse of new wines popping up all over the world and the lighter side

of the antics of personalities in the wine industry.

Every once in a while, I've even drawn parallels between the world of economics and politics and the world of wine intrigue.

Remember the depths of the Great Recession when Western governments were thrown into economic stress and were cutting governmental expenditures deep and wide? The parallel affecting the world of wine: the French and British parliaments cut their wine budgets and sold off portions of their wine cellar.

Remember the national campaign by the Russian government to reduce the widespread problems of alcohol abuse? The parallel affecting the world of wine: the Prime Minister ironically offered his advice to reduce the

alarming level of alcoholism. He exhorted the citizenry to "drink wine, not vodka."

Remember the "rise of the machines" scenario that evolved when the United States switched its military tactics in the global war on terrorism by replacing a portion of its conventional bombing apparatus with drones? The parallel affecting the world of wine: a vineyard owner purchased a civilian drone to combat the terror being rained on his vineyards by insects and natural diseases. Drone flyovers spray pesticides and measure grape ripeness amongst a myriad of other efficiency- and productivity-enhancing sorties.

Last week I discovered another parallel between the world of economics and politics and the world of wine intrigue.

The tension over the ideological and military volatility between the Ukraine and Russia took

me by surprise. Brinkmanship, Cold War and détente were phrases I thought had gone the way of the demise of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. But lo and behold, the ousting of Ukraine's president and Russia's maneuvering to take

advantage of the ensuing unrest provoked a worldwide crisis reminiscent of the 20th century Cold War.

The instability of the Ukraine government has fomented strange developments. Russia annexes Crimea, offers economic aid to the Ukraine, then threatens to cut off Russia's natural gas pipelines to the Ukraine. The United States and the European Union counter with their own economic sanctions against Russia amid offers and assurances of political support for a free, united Ukraine.

The parallel affecting the world of wine: in the Ukraine and, more specifically, the Crimean peninsula, wines have clout. The Ukraine has been building its wine industry and its international wine trade. Crimea is the crown jewel of the Ukrainian wine industry, with a reputation for producing fine wines since the Russian czars ruled.

Crimean sparkling wine beat all French competition in a 1900 international tasting. Since then Crimean wines have been prized, both in-country, in Russia and in Ukraine.

Today, the largest wineries in Crimea are (were?) owned by the Ukrainian government, complicating the future

of the newly segregated Crimean wine industry. Since these esteemed Crimean wines are no longer able to be sold to its largest market, the Ukraine, Russia has stepped in and ordered Russian wine shops to increase their inventory of Crimean wines. Sales of Crimean wines have doubled in Russia in recent weeks.

The battle is on to support the Ukrainian and Crimean economies. The IMF and Russia have each offered the Ukraine aid totaling over \$15 billion each. Russia has gone one step further, contemplating \$1 billion specifically earmarked for the development of the Crimean wine industry, just as it significantly raised its heavily subsidized pricing of natural gas sales to the Ukraine.

Economic news is now saturating the airwaves. Could the competing wine industries become the crux of a showdown on wines produced and exported to the rest of the world? Wines and natural gas seem like rather strange bedfellows.

Nick Antonaccio is a 35-year Pleasantville resident. For over 15 years he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. 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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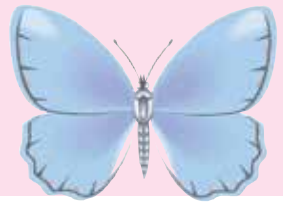


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