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April 21 - April 27, 2015

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 9, Issue 398

Murphy Calls for School Nurses to Administer Narcan

By Martin Wilbur

State Sen. Terrence Murphy (R-Yorktown) appealed last week to the state Department of Health to allow school nurses to be able to administer Narcan, a life-saving treatment often used to counter a heroin overdose.

Murphy, co-chairman of the New York State Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Abuse, said that the recently approved 2015-16 state budget includes \$272,000 for school districts statewide to obtain Narcan kits.

Participation in the program is voluntary to avoid tacking on another unfunded mandate, he said.

"We're not going to wait until our kids drop dead," Murphy said last Thursday while accompanied by school officials from throughout his district and representatives of anti-drug organizations at the Valhalla Ambulance Corps headquarters. "This has been a simple-to-work, common sense piece of legislation and a funded piece of legislation that we have gotten through

on this budget. It's extremely important to realize and control the epidemic that's going on here in the Hudson Valley."

Murphy said the task force is going to meet with state health officials in the coming weeks to revise the parameters of who may administer Narcan, an antidote that is placed in the nose. He is optimistic that school nurses trained and certified in administering the treatment will be added to that group at least in time for the start of the new school year in September.

Judy Mezey, of Student Assistance Services, said while no student in Westchester has died from an overdose while in school, having a kit available could mean the difference between life and death.

During the Apr. 16 press conference, Mezey pointed to a photo of Justin Veatch, the Yorktown teenager who died from an overdose in 2008 at 17 years old, and said if there had been an episode in school,

continued on page 4



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

State Sen. Terrence Murphy announced a plan to have school nurses trained in administering Narcan in hopes of preventing overdoses in school.

P'ville Residents Split Over Joining Community Energy Program

By Janine Bowen

As Pleasantville officials mull over joining a community choice aggregation energy buying program through Sustainable Westchester, residents appeared divided over whether the program would be right for the village.

At last Monday night's village board meeting, Sustainable Westchester Co-chairman Mike Gordon explained how the program benefits residents of participating communities.

"The benefit from this process is simply that we can bring some value to the municipalities and help make something real that we have envisioned making real for a number of years," Gordon said.

So far three Westchester communities--Lewisboro, Croton-on-Hudson and Somers--have opted to participate in the

group energy buying program, which Gordon said will help deliver better rates to residents through alternative energy service companies (ESCOs). Another 10 municipalities are currently considering joining Sustainable Westchester.

Gordon said residents still using Con Edison are paying two separate charges, one for energy consumption and another for energy delivery through the poles and wires owned by the utility.

Since Con Edison is not permitted to profit on the sale of energy and because it is required to get a portion of its energy from specific sources, the utility doesn't have the ability to negotiate lower rates, said Gordon. Furthermore, Con Edison is more concerned about delivery of energy, he said.

continued on page 7

Chappaqua Resident Named to Lead Boys & Girls Club

By Neal Rentz

The Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester in Mount Kisco has found its new leader from within the organization.

Chappaqua resident Alyzza Ozer, who came aboard as the Boys & Girls Club's chief development officer last October, was recently appointed its new CEO.

Ozer, 51, was unanimously chosen by the club's board of directors to fill the vacancy created when Executive Director Brian Skanes departed on Apr. 10 after serving for 21 years. Skanes has become director of major metro services for Boys & Girls Clubs of America, working out of the Albany area.

"In our search for executive leadership for our organization, Alyzza was the natural choice," said R. Todd Rockefeller,

continued on page 4



CO-COMMUNICATIONS PHOTO

Chappaqua resident Alyzza Ozer is the new CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester in Mount Kisco.

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Navid Mootabar, MD

Chief, Obstetrics & Gynecology
Director, Institute for Robotic & Minimally Invasive Surgery
Northern Westchester Hospital

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Q: What gynecologic conditions do you see most frequently in your practice?

A: Endometriosis, uterine fibroids and ovarian cysts are the big three. With endometriosis, cells from the lining of the uterus are found in the pelvic area. This can cause pelvic or abdominal pain, painful periods and painful intercourse. Uterine fibroids are benign tumors (most remain benign) growing from the uterus wall. They can cause pain, especially if large and pushing against other organs, heavy and painful periods, urinary symptoms, infertility or miscarriage. An ovarian cyst is a fluid-filled or solid growth in an ovary that can be benign, pre-cancerous or malignant, and can cause pain.

Q: What should I do if I have one or some of these symptoms?

A: Do not delay in seeing your gynecologist. I stress this because women are so busy that they often unnecessarily put up with pain. These conditions are diagnosed through a complete medical history and physical exam, sometimes aided by ultrasound and, in the case of endometriosis, a laparoscopy, in which a camera detects uterine cells in the pelvic area.

Q: What are my treatment options?

A: Since these conditions are stimulated (not created) by female hormones, medical treatments include hormonal medications, such as birth control pills, coupled with pain medication. Surgical options at Northern Westchester Hospital for all three conditions include advanced minimally invasive approaches, specifically leading-edge robot-assisted single-incision laparoscopic surgery (SILS), which can be performed through a single incision in the belly-button.

I am one of only a few physicians in the Hudson Valley trained in single-incision laparoscopic GYN surgery, which offers women a faster recovery than even traditional robot-assisted surgery and a near-invisible scar.

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Conifer Realty Opposes Relocating Chappaqua Affordable Housing Project

By Martin Wilbur

The developer of the Chappaqua affordable housing project is willing to consider town-owned land near town hall as an additional location but will not abandon the controversial Hunts Place parcel.

Randolph McLaughlin, an attorney representing Rochester-based Conifer Realty, the applicant for the 28-unit Chappaqua Station proposal, said in a statement last Friday that the municipal property on Washington Avenue will not be used in lieu of the land they have sought to build the project on for the last five years.

"Conifer has consistently advised the town, including the supervisor, that it is willing to consider the Washington Avenue site as an additional site," McLaughlin said in an e-mail statement. "They are not prepared to abandon a project they have spent five years trying to bring to completion and for which they already have a special use permit."

McLaughlin's comment came three days after New Castle Supervisor Robert Greenstein reiterated the sentiment of the board majority, asking Conifer to relocate Chappaqua Station to Washington

Avenue.

Greenstein said at last Tuesday night's town board meeting that officials are willing to work with Conifer to have the company switch properties. The often criticized Hunts Place location "reflects unfavorably upon the goals and values of our community."

"The town board advised Conifer it's strong interest in having Conifer relocate its project to a vacant property owned by the town located near town hall on a tree-lined residential street near the heart of downtown Chappaqua," Greenstein said.

Project opponents have blasted the Hunts Place site because the building would be built virtually to the lot line on the one-third of an acre property and would pose safety dangers because of its proximity to the Metro-North tracks and the Saw Mill Parkway.

Conifer Realty, which secured its fire code variances from the state Board of Reiew earlier this year, went to court in February arguing it has up to 25 years to build the project. Town officials contend the special use permit, approved by the prior town board in September 2013, expires after 18 months but the applicant may ask for an extension.

Chap Crossing Retail Issues to Be Discussed By Town Officials

By Martin Wilbur

The New Castle Town Board and representatives of Summit-Greenfield are scheduled to hash out dozens of issues regarding the Chappaqua Crossing retail Planned Development Concept Plan at tonight's (Tuesday) board work session.

Town Attorney Nicholas Ward-Willis said last week that the findings statement approved in October 2013 by the prior town board contained more than 130 conditions on issues ranging from architecture to traffic. On Apr. 14 the town board closed concurrent public hearings on the proposed retail Preliminary Development Concept Plan (PDCP) and retail remapping local law. Written comments will be accepted by the town through Apr. 30.

"(This) week we'll have a more informed discussion, and hopefully the applicant can join us as well, and we'll go through the conditions and decide which the town board wants to have addressed now...and which ones will be taken to the planning board for their site plan review," Ward-Willis said.

At the town board's request, there had been minor architectural changes made

to enhance the rear exterior of the retail buildings.

Project planner Andrew Tung said that Summit/Greenfield had not yet spoken to the state Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding improvements that need to be done on surrounding state roadways but those talks are scheduled to occur shortly.

He also said there have been no new tenants to sign retail leases but multiple parties are interested.

"I have no signings to report, per se, but we have a lot of people that are close," Tung said. "They are waiting whether this is going to happen in a shorter term rather than a longer term."

Supervisor Robert Greenstein said last week that Lighthouse Youth Theater/ Standing Ovation Studios of Armonk had signed a two-month lease to use the Chappaqua Crossing Theater, previously referred to the Wallace Auditorium. The theater group is scheduled to have two weeklong productions at the venue starting in late May (see page 26).

Tuesday's work session at town hall will begin at 6:45 p.m. with the PDCP discussion scheduled for about 8:20 p.m.

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Chappaqua Resident Named to Lead Boys & Girls Club

continued from page 1

president of the board of directors. "Alyzza brings many years of nonprofit experience, superior business acumen and tremendous passion to the position; she has mastered the business of philanthropy. I am confident that the club is well positioned for continued success with Alyzza at the helm."

Ozer, an attorney with more than 25 years of experience in commercial real estate, entered the nonprofit field seven years ago. Ozer said that in 2008 she wondered to herself if, when she reached

80 years old, she would look back on her life and be satisfied. Ozer decided then to devote herself to working for nonprofits.

Ozer said she is proud of many of the club's achievements, including the continued success of an educational program for at-risk high school seniors. The program has maintained a 100 percent high school graduation rate for its participants over the past six years.

It's been one of many programs over the years that the club has provided to assist youths 18 months to 18 years old, Ozer said. Other programs have addressed

mentoring and tutoring to ensure children are ready for kindergarten, increasing literacy rates, and boosting attendance and academic success while avoiding risky behaviors, she said. Between 400 and 600 youngsters come to the club every day.

Since being hired by the Boys & Girls Club last fall, one of Ozer's proudest achievements was helping to secure a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) grant, she said. Ozer said she would work to expand its services.

"We are implementing new mentoring and volunteer programs, thus looking for an increase in community involvement," she said.

Prior to joining the Boys & Girls Club, Ozer served as senior vice president of resource development and community engagement for the United Way of Westchester and Putnam and regional vice president of the Manhattan office of the American Cancer Society, leading fundraising and programming initiatives.

Ozer has been involved in philanthropic endeavors throughout her life, serving on a wide assortment of nonprofit boards and committees, including the American Diabetes Association and the American Cancer Society.

The CEO post has replaced the executive director position because "philanthropy is a business," Ozer said.

Murphy Calls for School Nurses to Administer Narcan

continued from page 1

personnel would have been ill-equipped to handle the situation.

"It could have happened in school and if it did Narcan could have saved his life," Mezey said.

The likelihood of an overdose occurring in school is increasing because heroin use appears to be on the upswing, Murphy said. Last year, there were more deaths from heroin in New York City than homicides and two weeks ago Erie County reported 13 overdoses in one week, he said.

Also, the five lower Hudson Valley counties of Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Dutchess and Orange are considered high intensity drug trafficking areas, Murphy said.

Carol Bumbalow, a nurse at Walter Panas High School in Cortlandt, agreed with Murphy's plan, saying it makes sense for her and her colleagues to have the chance to save lives.

Murphy said while this program isn't the long-term solution to the area's drug problems, it at least provides a way to potentially prevent needless deaths.

"Is this the answer to the solution? No. This is a band aid to save lives until we can get to the root of the problem," Murphy said.

Crossing the Mississippi

Will Shortz, far right, New York Times crossword puzzle editor and owner of the Westchester Table Tennis Center in Pleasantville, crossed off Mississippi as state 49 earlier this month in his quest to play table tennis in all 50 states. Shortz, along with colleague Robert Roberts, far left, journeyed to Mississippi College to play with three members of its national championship team. Andy Kanengiser, second from right, is the team faculty adviser. Shortz has only Hawaii left on his list.



WILL SHORTZ PHOTO

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Chappaqua Adopts \$117.9M School Budget; Tax Hike Just Over 1%

By Janine Bowen

Chappaqua Central School District officials adopted a \$117.9 million budget last week that carries a tax increase of a little more than 1 percent for the 2015-16 school year.

The budget, unanimously adopted on Apr. 15, features a .89 percent spending increase over the current budget. New Castle residents will see a tax rate increase of 1.17 percent while Mount Pleasant property owners will have a 1.14 percent tax hike. Assistant Superintendent for Business John Chow explained that the variance in tax rate is due to different equalization rates in each municipality.

One of the biggest expenditure increases is technology, which will rise

\$158,402 (11.68 percent) for hardware purchases and new technology initiatives, Chow said.

District salaries will increase \$1,440,490 (2.38 percent) while expenses related to employee benefits will decrease \$1,423,953 (5.09 percent). The decrease in employee benefits is due to the projected reduction in district contributions to the Teacher Retirement System from 17.53 percent this year to 13.26 percent next year.

Resident Judy McGrath noted that even though pension contributions have had an uncharacteristic decrease this year, it isn't an indicator that the cost will remain low. She urged board of education members to continue to advocate for mandate relief to

make sure that the district can continue to keep taxes low in the future.

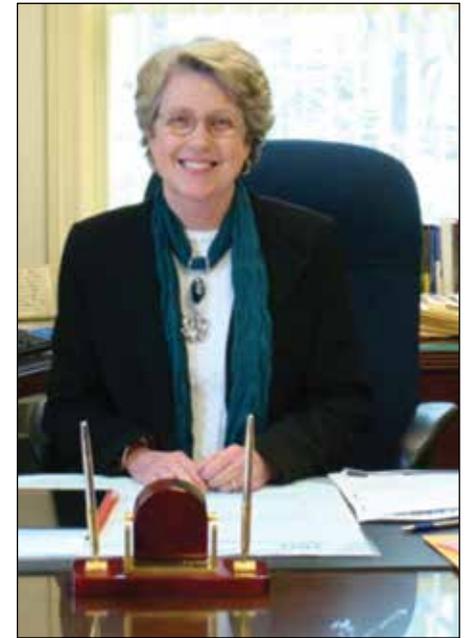
"I think this year and last year there's been so much focus on testing and teacher evaluation that some of the other mandate issues that have been discussed in the past have kind of been left by the wayside and one of those is pension reform," McGrath said.

Property taxes, accounting for 90 percent of the district's revenue, will increase by \$1,118,891 (1.07 percent). Chow said the district budgeted state aid to remain at the same level as 2014-15 because school officials aren't confident the reported increase is reliable.

Superintendent Dr. Lyn McKay said new technology initiatives, the expansion of the summer camp program and the adjustment of personnel based on enrollment are some of the key budget pieces. Trustee Victoria Tipp added that she believes new programs are giving students the tools they need to succeed while making school more relevant to everyday life.

"It's important to recognize that we have to stay sustainable as much as possible while not degrading our programs, so I think we managed to do both," she said.

The district will host a community question-and-answer session on the adopted budget on Apr. 29 at Seven Bridges Middle School at 9:30 a.m. and



Chappaqua Superintendent Dr. Lyn McKay

7:30 p.m. There will also be a budget hearing on May 6.

The ballot for this year's budget vote will also include a proposition authorizing the district to transfer \$600,000 from fund balance to the school lunch fund to finance renovation work in the cafeteria at Horace Greeley High School. Although this proposition needs voter approval, it will not increase the budget or have any tax implications.

Play Ball

Last Saturday was Opening Day for the 2015 Mount Kisco Little League season. The Examiner Media sponsored Green Team is coached by Mike Hopkins and Scott Spolansky. Players, pictured left to right, are Max Rubinstein, John Czernyk, Logan Provost, Brady Hopkins, Dylan Baier, Danny Spolansky, Matthew Cambareri, Will Oliverio and Nate Getman.



NANCY HOPKINS PHOTO

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Staff Reductions, No Program Cuts in Mt. Pleasant School Budget

By Neal Rentz

The \$59,092,000 2015-16 budget proposed by Mount Pleasant Superintendent of Schools Dr. Susan Guiney calls for no academic program cuts despite staff reductions due to lower special education enrollment.

The district's spending plan would be within the state property tax cap of 2.76 percent. The tax rate increase is .95 percent. Property taxes on the average home in the district, assessed at \$8,300, would increase \$92 next year.

The budget's instructional portion, which includes teacher salaries,

instructional administrators, sports and other afterschool activities, supplies, equipment, textbooks and transportation, makes up 77.5 percent of the 2015-16 proposed total spending.

At Hawthorne and Columbus elementary schools, Guiney requested one additional guidance counselor and school monitor. She proposed an additional .5 English language learner (ELL) teaching position to be shared between the two schools.

Guiney is proposing reductions of 2.5 teaching assistants and one teacher aide position at the elementary schools.

In addition, her budget includes a .4 speech/language teacher reduction at Hawthorne Elementary School and a .7 special education teacher at Columbus Elementary School.

At Westlake Middle School and Westlake High School, Guiney proposed hiring an additional ELL teacher, one more writing lab teacher and another math lab teacher. She is also seeking to add a .4 coordinator for an International Baccalaureate Middle Years program, a .4 art elective teaching post, a .4 reading teacher and an additional .2 career development and occupational teacher.

Also at the secondary schools, Guiney is looking to cut three teacher assistants.

Guiney stressed last week that the staffing reductions are in special education, but do not constitute a program cut. The reductions are being sought because the district expects 15 fewer students--400 pupils instead of 415--in special education programs next year, she said. Layoffs could be avoided if some special education staff choose to leave before the start of the new school year, she said.

The secondary-level teaching staff increases are being sought to help implement Common Core curriculum, Guiney said.

The board of education is scheduled to adopt the 2015-16 budget tonight (Tuesday) at a meeting scheduled for 8 p.m. at the combined middle school/high school library. A public hearing will be held May 6. Residents will have the chance to vote on next year's budget on May 19.

Contested Race for Mt. Pleasant Board of Ed Next Month

There will be at least one contested board of education race in the immediate area next month.

While school trustee candidates running unopposed has become the norm in recent years, four candidates will face off for three seats in the Mount Pleasant School District.

Trustee Thomas McCabe will be joined on the May 19 ballot by candidates Catherine Tully, Peter Peale and Colleen Scaglione Neglia. Board President James Grieco and fellow Trustee Vincent D'Ambrosio decided against running for re-election.

However, there will be unopposed races in Pleasantville and Chappaqua. Two incumbents, Emily Persons and Larry Boes, were the only two district residents to submit petitions for the two open seats on the Pleasantville Board of Education. Both are seeking their second term.

Meanwhile in Chappaqua, current Board Vice President Alyson Gardner will run unopposed for her third term. All terms are for three years.

Deadlines for candidates to submit their petitions to the district office was on Monday at 5 p.m.

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**SMALL NEWS
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Zero Waste, Clean Up Days This Weekend in North Castle

By Martin Wilbur

Spring is always a good time to discard the old clutter. This weekend North Castle is offering the town residents a chance to throw out what they don't need in an environmentally friendly manner and help the town look its best.

On Saturday the town's Recycling Committee will hold its 11th Zero Waste Day, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Residents can bring a wide variety of items--gently used spring and summer clothing, furniture,

children's bicycles, pet and dog supplies, up to six bank boxes paper for shredding and e-waste such as computers, fax machines and televisions--to the area behind Town Hall at 15 Bedford Rd. in Armonk. There will also be collection of cooking and motor oil.

Recycling Committee Co-chair Beth Pollack said the town's efforts has increased environmental consciousness, making Zero Waste Day a popular and important event.

"I think our community is very aware of everything and really does try and do the right thing," said Pollack. "This is a very educated community and one that is committed to doing the right thing."

Linda Trummer-Napolitano, also a committee co-chair, said the town's work to publicize recycling, including the monthly electronic and scrap metal, has raised awareness to limit trash and increase recycling. From 2013 to 2014, North Castle reduced the tonnage of

its garbage by 368 tons and increased recyclables by 403 tons, Trummer-Napolitano said.

Pollack said that about 15 to 20 volunteers will assist motorists who drive up behind Town Hall to unload the recyclable items from their vehicles. Organizers want the public to stay in their cars for safety reasons, she said.

For the past couple of years, the spring Zero Waste Day has been scheduled only once a year. Trummer-Napolitano said it was difficult getting some of the participating vendors to attend and help out in the fall. Also, the turnout was much lighter.

While Saturday is dedicated to recycling, Sunday is for Town Wide Clean Up Day, where volunteers will spread out throughout the town and pick up litter--bottles, cans and paper--along North Castle roads. Bags and safety vests can be picked up in the Town Hall lobby or at the community center in North White Plains on Sunday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

For more information about Clean Up Day, contact volunteer coordinator Elise Hutner at CleanUpNorthCastle@gmail.com.

The events coincide with Earth Week, which is celebrated annually during the week of Apr. 22.

Used Sports Equipment, Bike Collection on Tap for May 2 in P'ville

Do you have any old soccer cleats to get rid of? How about bicycles, shin pads, lacrosse sticks, balls or bats?

Don't throw them out, drop them off at PleasantvilleRecycles' fourth annual sports equipment collection.

On Saturday, May 2 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., the committee will collect used sports equipment as well as bicycles in any condition. (No skis or bike helmets will be accepted.)

The collection site is the parking lot behind Henckels, adjacent to the ball fields and the Pleasantville DPW Recycling Center at 1 Village Lane. The event will take place rain or shine.

The sports equipment will be sorted and made available to residents for free on Pleasantville Day, Saturday,

May 16 (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.). Stop by the PleasantvilleRecycles table early for the best selection. Everything will be given away on a first-come, first-served basis.

Bikes will be donated to the nonprofit Recycle-a-Bicycle, which uses them as a resource to foster youth development, environmental education, community engagement and healthy living in New York City. Check <http://www.recycleabicycle.org/> for more details.

"Last year we collected hundreds of pieces of sports equipment and were able to find them all new homes," said PleasantvilleRecycles Chairman Dan Turner. "It was a win-win-win. Some residents were able to get rid of unwanted items cluttering their houses and others were able to pick up just

what they needed without spending a dime. And we were able to keep a lot of items out of the waste stream. We hope to do even better this year."

PleasantvilleRecycles is a group of Pleasantville residents eager to improve and expand recycling in the community. It works to increase residents' use of existing recycling programs through education and outreach; to enhance the village's current programs; and to identify and develop new waste reduction, reuse and recycling initiatives.

Check www.pleasantvillerecycles.org and follow the group on its Facebook page for information on these events and on recycling.

Sensei Mark Dwyer

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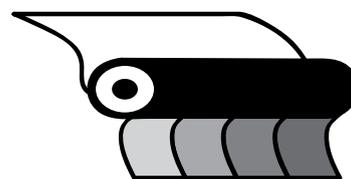


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P'ville Board of Ed Adopts \$48.9M Budget; Tax Increase at 1.18%

By Janine Bowen

The Pleasantville Board of Education adopted its 2015-16 budget last week carrying a tax rate increase of 1.18 percent.

Assistant Superintendent for Business David Quattrocchi said next year's budget will be \$48,926,573, a \$1,510,296 spending increase (3.19 percent) over the current year. District officials have explained while this appears to be a large increase, the jump includes several one-time payments including for the \$3.5

million bond that was approved by voters last May.

If the budget, which was adopted by the board on Apr. 14, is approved by the public, a homeowner with a house assessed at the district's average will see a tax rate increase of 1.18 percent, or \$16.82. The tax levy will increase 1.82 percent.

District officials said they were proud of the budget, noting that this is the fifth consecutive spending plan increases under 2 percent.

"We've been able to increase programs, do what we need to do, put in a strategic plan, have goals that are operationalized through it all," said Superintendent Mary Fox-Alter. "It's a community effort to have a 1.82 (percent) levy cap, a tax rate of 1.18 while we are continuing to move forward. I think that is really commendable."

The largest increase in expenditures is salaries, up \$1,013,234 from \$25,384,696. Expenses for employee benefits will decrease by \$370,233 to \$10,912,587,

thanks to reductions in Teacher Retirement System and Employee Retirement System contributions.

District revenue is projected to be \$13,845,789, which represents an increase of \$882,961. That includes \$268,000 from the Smart Schools Bond Act, a state initiative which provides districts with funds for technology improvements. The district will also receive an additional \$260,288 in state and building aid in 2015-16.

A public hearing on the adopted budget will be held on Tuesday, May 5.

P'ville School Officials Opt for Organic Infill in New Artificial Turf

By Janine Bowen

After several months of debate, Pleasantville school officials have opted to use an organic product for the artificial turf field infill at the middle school and high school.

At the Apr. 14 Board of Education meeting, trustees voted to award bid for \$1,543,200 to replace the athletic fields and track to Kings Capital Group in White Plains. The base bid, which would have utilized crumb rubber infill for the turf at the high school and middle school, came in at \$1,403,200. However, since other bids came in lower than expected; officials had extra funds to use for the alternative infill.

The organic turf, which is comprised 90 percent coconut and 10 percent cork, will cost an additional \$105,000, but

district officials concluded that the benefit outweighs the slightly higher cost.

Trustee Louis Conte said since he believes a material should be considered unsafe until proven otherwise, that was an important factor in his decision to vote for the organic infill. He said the benefit of the decision will extend beyond students.

"I think that what we are doing is being responsible to our community," Conte said.

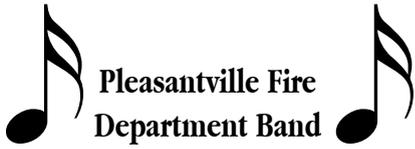
Resident Matthew Finkelstein, a founding member of Parents Advocating Clean Turfgrass (PACT) who has been strongly opposed to the use of crumb rubber, praised the board for its consideration of organic infill. He noted that coconut is largely considered to be one of the healthiest substances available and explained that because the infill is

organic, it will be easier to dispose of when the fields need to be replaced again in the future.

"It's a good healthy product so I think that's a really good choice," Finkelstein said.

In addition to utilizing the organic infill, district officials also decided to authorize a full replacement of the track for an additional \$35,000. Board of Education President Shane McGaffey explained that the current track is 10 feet shy of regulation length, forcing the district's track teams to schedule all meets away from the school.

"We do happen to have a great track team, a great cross country team, so it will be nice to have official things here," McGaffey said.


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Police Blotter

Mount Kisco Police Department

Apr. 12: Report of an assault on Spring Street at 6:05 p.m. A 28-year-old Mount Kisco man was assaulted by an unknown male subject with a knife. The victim sustained a three-inch laceration to his left forearm and was transported to Northern Westchester Hospital for treatment. There are no suspects in the attack. The incident is under investigation.

Apr. 13: Report of a possible petty larceny on Emery Street at 9:50 a.m. Copper material was missing from the AT&T antenna from the water tower site. There are no suspects; the matter is under investigation.

Apr. 13: An unknown subject left part of

a bagel on the front door of a psychologist's office on Smith Avenue at 3:17 p.m.

Apr. 13: Complainant reported at 7:14 p.m. that 10 minutes in the past she was to pick up her son's cell phone from his father but that the father refused to return it to either her or her son.

Apr. 15: A 51-year-old Mount Kisco man was arrested at 11:52 a.m. for violating an order of protection at a St. Marks Place residence.

Apr. 15: A 51-year-old Mount Kisco woman was arrested at 12:12 p.m. at Target on North Bedford Road for allegedly stealing \$244 worth of various health care items. The woman was caught and detained by store security until the responding

officers arrived.

Apr. 15: Report of an assault at a residence on Barker Street. A 54-year-old woman stated that she was beaten up by another woman in the residence's laundry room. Police are interviewing the woman who was accused by the victim but no action has been taken yet.

Apr. 16: Three burglaries or attempted burglaries were reported overnight at various businesses on Main Street and Lexington Avenue. At 12:56 a.m., an attempted burglary was reported at 513 Main St., followed by a second attempted burglary at 544 Main St. at 3:11 a.m. A burglary was reported at 351 Lexington Ave. at 3:54 a.m. and another at 192 E. Main St. at 9:18 a.m. An investigation is ongoing.

Pleasantville Police Department

Apr. 13: A Madison Avenue resident reported at 4:15 p.m. that he found his glove compartment open in his vehicle that was parked outside his house. His wallet with various personal items were removed.

Apr. 13: A Guion Street resident reported at 6:22 p.m. that her vehicle had been entered overnight and loose change had been taken.

Apr. 14: Personnel at Key Food on Pleasantville Avenue asked at 4:17 p.m. for assistance to remove an unwanted patron

from the store.

Apr. 15: The manager of Mavis Tires on Marble Avenue reported a dispute with an ex-employee at 9:46 a.m. The subject had left the premises before police arrived.

Apr. 17: A New Street resident reported at 9:07 a.m. that her vehicle had been entered sometime overnight and various possessions were stolen.

Apr. 17: A Columbus Avenue resident reported at 9:11 a.m. that a wallet was stolen from her vehicle sometime overnight.

North Castle Police Department

Apr. 10: Report of a suspicious incident at a High Street residence at 2:07 a.m. The complainant stated that he believes someone has been in the home because the lights are one and there are papers shuffled around. Officers responded to the scene.

Apr. 13: A Kavey Place resident reported at 2:33 p.m. that her 51-year-old son has injured his head in a fall. He is reportedly conscious. The call was transferred to 60 Control. The responding officer stated that the party refused medical attention.

Apr. 14: A party arrived at headquarters at 11:28 p.m. to report having received threatening text and Facebook messages. A witness deposition was secured. The complainant wished to make this issue a matter of record.

Obituary

Anneliese Parziale

Anneliese Marie (Annie) Parziale, a Chappaqua resident and Horace Greeley High School graduate, died at home on Apr. 18.

She was 25.

Born on Aug. 27, 1989, Parziale was an avid Syracuse basketball and Jets fan, loved to swim, snowboard and ski. She also had a great love for children.

Parziale is survived by her mother, Caroline; father Lucian; her grandmother,

Anneliese Bockino; brother Luciano; sisters Michele Hughes, Maria Parziale-Taylor and Melinda Parziale; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

The family received friends on Apr. 20 at Beecher Flooks Funeral Home, Inc. in Pleasantville. A funeral Mass was held Tuesday, Apr. 21 at 10 a.m. at Holy Innocents Roman Catholic Church in Pleasantville.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her name to St. Christopher's Inn, 21 Franciscan Way, Garrison, N.Y. 10524.

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New Playland Deal to Be Scrutinized By County Lawmakers

By Pat Casey

Last week, County Executive Rob Astorino endorsed a proposal by Standard Amusements LLC to invest \$25 million in private money to restore Playland.

The plan, which was submitted in response to a request for proposals by Astorino, is based on the vision of Nicholas Singer, a Westchester native who attended Harrison public schools and whose family frequently visited the amusement park during his youth.

Now under review by the Board of Legislators, the proposal suggests that the county pay \$2,250,000 up front; invest \$22,750,000 million of its money within five years into refurbishing the park; and make annual payments to the county starting at \$300,000 and escalating 2 percent a year. The county would also receive 7.5 percent of profits once Standard Amusements recouped its initial investment.

Currently the county loses about \$4 million annually.

For its \$25 million investment, Standard Amusements would receive the right to operate the park for 15 years with an option to renew for an additional 15 years under what is being called the Playland Management Agreement (PMA).

Singer is a financial executive who has founded and operated several successful investment firms. He is currently the managing member of Purchase Capital,

which among other projects, has invested in United Parks.

Singer formed United Parks in 2014 with CEO Jack Falfas, said to be one of the country's foremost amusement park operators. Standard Amusements has entered into an operating arrangement with United Parks.

The PMA's structure allows the county to retain full control of the property, as well as any material benefits from the capital improvements made by Standard Amusements.

Rejuvenation of the park would be handled by Falfas, who would personally oversee Playland's operations and live in Rye during the agreement's first full year.

The PMA follows a recommendation in a report commissioned by the county from Biederman Redevelopment Ventures. The report recommends that the "daily operation of the amusement park and parking lot sections of Playland should be transferred to Standard Amusements."

It reached its conclusion after extensive outreach and conversations with virtually every operator who could potentially run the park, according to the county executive's office.

"Without this kind of cash infusion and private management, hopes of rejuvenating and reinvigorating the park are not realistic," Biederman stated in the report.



ASTORINO OFFICE PHOTO

Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino endorsed a proposal last week by Standard Amusements to manage Playland.

At a press briefing following the proposal announcement, the Board of Legislators' Parks Planning and Housing Committee concluded that the ability for the public to be involved had been lost and that they would have liked more transparency while the Biederman report was being compiled.

"We paid \$100,000 for the Biederman report," said Legislator Catherine Parker (D-Rye). "At this stage a selection has been made. The public should have been more involved. It is our job to make sure we have a good deal."

Noting that the current deal is not the same one proposed by Standard Amusements in 2013, Legislator Catherine Borgia (D-Ossining) said it was the lawmakers' responsibility to vet and analyze the specifics on the financials.

The board has 60 days to review the

proposal, a schedule lawmakers said they have every intention of meeting.

If the board approves the plan, Standard Amusements would co-manage the park with the county for the 2015 season, beginning the transition to its role of sole operator on Nov. 1.

Under the agreement, Standard Amusements would manage the amusement park, parking lot, beach, pool area and boardwalk. Outside the agreement are the Children's Museum, Pier Restaurant & Tiki Bar, Edith Read Sanctuary and the Ice Casino, which is run by American Skating Centers Entertainment through a separate asset management agreement with the county.

Standard Amusements would continue the park's current admission policies. Entry into the amusement park would be on a fee basis. Access to the boardwalk and property that surround the amusement park would be free.

The investment by Standard Amusements would be used to upgrade the park's overall appearance; improve the dining experience; restore historic rides; add new attractions; and increase marketing. Standard Amusements may also add temporary athletic fields in the parking lots to accommodate spring and fall sports.

Playland is scheduled to open on Saturday, May 9.

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Editorial

Playland Proposal a Win-Win for Public-Private Enterprise in Westchester

The proposal to establish Standard Amusements as the operator of Playland is an exciting one.

The vision of Nicholas Singer, one of the partners to be potentially involved with the park, has a wonderful back story as Singer used to attend the park often when he was a child. He tells stories of how the park would be open to IBM employees – his father worked there – for special events, and he often skated at the ice rink during the off season.

Children grow up with fond memories from their youth. In Singer's case these fond memories are accompanied by an impressive background in finance and a successful investment history.

The relationship between the now

government-run amusement park and a private entity, not only makes sense from the point of view of saving Westchester County from having to potentially close the park as it continues to lose \$4 million annually, it saves the unique and much-valued waterfront property for use by the public.

Sometimes it takes a special kind of vision to keep childhood dreams alive. Westchester is lucky to have an investor who is spirited enough and willing to do the work to keep a very popular recreation facility open.

With the due diligence of the Board of Legislators to ensure that the deal is sound for taxpayers, Westchester may have a unique solution that is a win-win for

everyone involved – especially for children and their families.

Funding for Narcan Makes Sense

If there's a reason for a school district to refuse the state-funded Narcan kits when they are made available, it would be curious to know why.

State Sen. Terrence Murphy's inexpensive first-year initiative to be funded by the state—\$272,000 for districts statewide—is a drop in the bucket compared to the number of lives it could save.

Of course, each district is going to have to make certain their school nurses are certified in administering it. But in an era of mounting unfunded mandates, signing on at no cost to a district is a no-brainer.

Letters to the Editor

Paulin Was Wrong to Repeat Debunked Sexual Assault Statistics

The following comment was posted to Assemblywoman Paulin on her website in response to her column "Time to Change Sexual Assault Policy on College Campuses" (March 10-16, 2015).

"In a letter to the editor of The Examiner (not accepted), quotes from the following articles were sent to counter your specious claim that one in five female college students were sexually assaulted.

From USNews:

<http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/economic-intelligence/2013/10/24/statistics-dont-back-up-claims-about-rape-culture>

The Rape 'Epidemic' Doesn't Actually Exist -Statistics don't support the contention that 'rape culture' is pervasive.

By Caroline Kitchens Oct. 24, 2013

From TIME magazine:

<http://time.com/3222543/5-feminist-myths-that-will-not-die>

MYTH 4: One in five in college women will be sexually assaulted.

From the Department of Justice:

"According to the Department of Justice, the incidents of sexual assault in the United States has declined significantly in the past two decades, down 64 percent from 1995 to 2010 and remaining stable at that lower rate. Feminists and their political allies, including both President Obama and Vice President Biden, have repeatedly claimed that 1-in-5 female college students are victims of sexual assault. However, according to DOJ

statistics, "the actual rate is 6.1 per 1,000 students, or 0.61 percent (instead of 1-in-5, the real number is 0.03-in-5)."

And, in fact, female college students are less likely to be raped than are females of the same age who don't attend college.

In addition it is highly irresponsible for an elected official to use questionable, if not actually, false data to justify a policy which eliminates the longstanding "innocent until proven guilty" in a court of law and replaces it with "guilty without recourse" before a non-judicial body in a "she/he said-he/she said" situation where there no other witnesses.

E. Patrick Mosman
Pleasantville

Media Obsessed With Ratings and Entertainment, Not the True Issues

Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul has announced he'll be running for the presidency of the United States in 2016. He also had the audacity to challenge the news media in several interviews after he'd declared his candidacy. How dare he!

By all accounts challenging the integrity of the news media was a bad thing. The only problem is that the indignation and negative critiques were coming from the news media. Can you say conflict of interest? Better yet, can you say Brian Williams or Dan Rather? Paul's

challenging of the media upset Fox News' Megan Kelly so much she bashed Paul on three consecutive nights.

Let's be clear, as far apart as you might think Fox News and CNN are politically, they'll gladly come together to destroy anyone who questions the credibility of these alleged journalists. Let's be clear about something else. It's not the "news" business anymore, it's the "entertainment" business. Just ask everyone who gets their "news" from John Stewart and The Daily Show. The news gathering and

dissemination agencies in this country are a joke! "News stories" are now narratives pieced together with scraps of facts to fit a political agenda. Alleged news stories are so sensationalized and hyped they make Chicken Little look like a piker.

They've already started stoking the fire of hate between candidates so they can sell some air time reporting on the candidates' yummy mudslinging. We'll probably see the "news" media reach new lows as they avoid the most pressing issues, and focus on media-generated issues that will bloody as many candidates as possible.

As an example of a lack of journalistic integrity, go to this link and read how The Journal News changed this letter, but kept my name on it. This was after I was assured there was no problem with my letter. <http://www.lohud.com/story/opinion/readers/2015/04/15/presidential-election-politics/25821423/>

Richard Rocco Panetta
North White Plains

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Neil Baron
Retired Attorney/Children's Book Author,
Pleasantville

By Martin Wilbur

You can make the argument that Neil Baron has been just as busy after retiring in 1998 as he was before making that decision.

A former partner in a law firm started by his father, his expertise focused on fixed income securities, serving as counsel to some of the biggest organizations in the financial industry--Standard & Poor's Rating Group, Salomon Brothers, Chemical Bank, Citigroup, among others.

Baron and his firm also served as counsel to the Reagan Administration that helped draft the enabling legislation to allow for mortgage-backed securities.

In 1989, his law firm merged with a bigger outfit and he went to work as general counsel for FitchRatings for the next nine years.

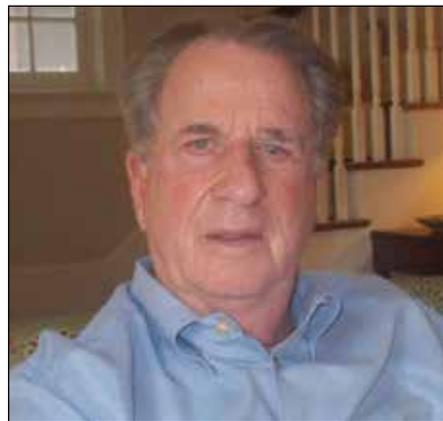
While he has remained active in various aspects of the law and financial fields, working as a consultant and launching his own business, Criterion Research Group, a research company that provided information to industry professionals and investors that he sold after four years, Baron

has always enjoyed writing. In fact, since his retirement--if that's what you want to call what he did 17 years ago--he's written two screenplays and, most recently, his first children's book.

"I'd get up there at seven o'clock in the morning and I'd never done anything that made the time pass more quickly, and my wife, I would hear her say, 'Do you want a sandwich?' and it would be noon already," said Baron, a 40-plus-year Armonk resident before he and his wife, Torrey, moved to Pleasantville last year. "It just went so fast."

Despite enjoying writing, it hasn't been a straight path to success. He said he was told following one of the works he submitted, a story loosely based on a former client of his who had been accused of insider trading, that he wrote like a lawyer.

But writing has provided Baron, 71, a creative outlet. Last year, he self-published a children's book, "The Nutty Grampa!" which retells many of the funniest moments he's had with the oldest two of his six grandchildren. He's brought copies to The Village Bookstore and Try & Buy.



Most recently in another effort, Baron has pitched to his current and former home municipalities, Pleasantville and North Castle, an ongoing online forum for residents to speak out on various issues.

But Baron isn't relinquishing his hand in the legal and financial worlds.

"I like to stay involved in the areas that I know something about in addition to writing, and I play a lot of golf. Badly," Baron deadpanned.

"When you have a background that you're steeped in with a certain area of expertise, you don't want to leave it completely," he added.

Even if he wanted to separate himself, the 2008 financial crisis probably would have pulled him back in. He spent plenty of time in Washington speaking to congressional committees and various agencies following the start of the recession and market meltdown.

While he half-jokingly says that "I left in 1998, so you can't blame me for anything," what happened to the economy pained Baron. Even worse was the failure of the ratings agencies to objectively evaluate and communicate problems in the investment and mortgage world. One of the problems was ratings agencies competing for clients.

"There was a great deal of integrity, objectivity at both S&P, then Fitch, and to see what a terrible job they did, it's disheartening," Baron said. "It's sort of like taking something that I was very involved in and very proud of, and it succumbed to--I can't say it any other way--succumbed to greed."

Baron spent his early years in the Bronx before his family moved to Scarsdale when he was 10. Fluent in Spanish, he graduated from Hartwick College and also went to school at the University of Barcelona for a year. He didn't plan on following in his father's footsteps but after working at a construction job, he decided to go to Case Western Reserve Law School.

"I found I really liked reading cases and I liked the discussions in classes," said Baron who has three grown children. "So I did well in law school and when I came out, I didn't interview with any other job because my father's practice was there."

Whether it was his law training or his own creative streak, Baron said he has no choice but to find additional stories to include his other four youngest grandchildren.

"I have to," he said. "There's just two grandkids in there."



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Rob Andersen
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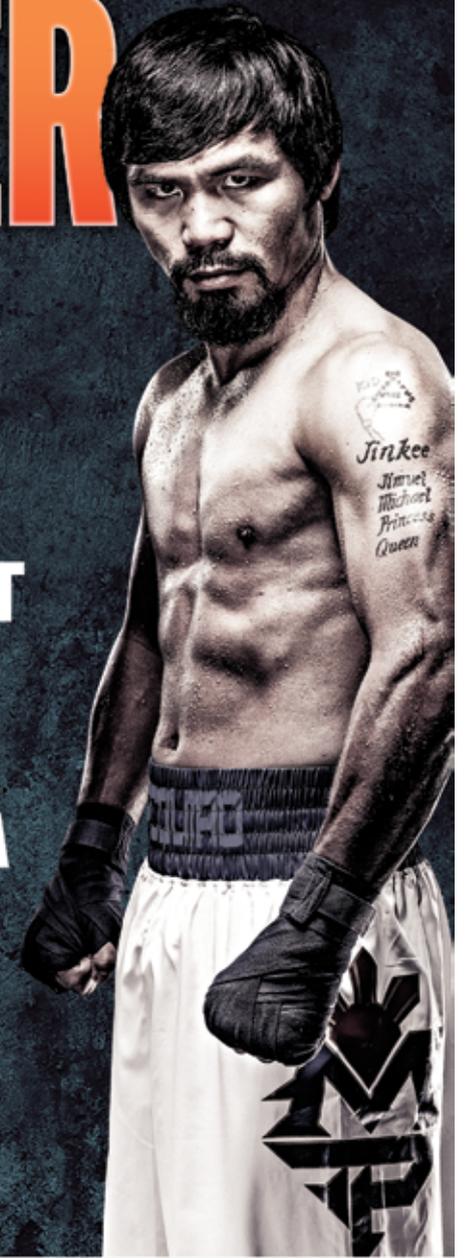
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Fox Lane Team Among Winners at Inaugural App Development Bowl

By Janine Bowen

A pair of siblings from Yorktown took home the grand prize in the Westchester Smart Mobil App Development Bowl, while Fox Lane High School took home multiple awards.

Lindsay and Mark Aldrich, students at Yorktown High School and Soundview Prep School respectively, won the top prize of \$1,000 and the opportunity to pitch their app to a panel of industry experts at the "Face Time for Entrepreneurs" session at the Health Tech 2015 Conference next month. Their entry was a smart phone app that allows caregivers of Alzheimer's patients to work together to ease their burdens.

Each of the 50 teams that entered the competition was required to create an app for a smartphone or tablet that would help improve the lives of those affected by Alzheimer's or dementia. The brother-and-sister team, which was the smallest team in the competition, created the app that a panel of expert judges deemed to be the most creative, functional and usable.

"We're happy to just be able to participate in helping the community in any way," Lindsay Aldrich said.

The pair said that they never expected to win, but joined the competition because of an interest in the medical field. They said they were pleased that their entry emerged victorious.

Of the 30 finalist teams from Westchester,

New York City and Long Island who presented their apps on Friday afternoon, several local teams won awards in four separate categories. One of the most successful teams was The Koding Kidz from Fox Lane High School in Bedford. They developed a virtual scrapbook app that allows caregivers to set up a compilation of photos and can be organized into albums and accompanied by descriptions so patients can look at moments from their life to help their memory.

"We're really happy with the finished product and it really showed a lot of perseverance and a lot of hard work and a lot of time spent," said The Koding Kidz member Sean Sacks.

The team, which consisted of six students across multiple grade levels, placed second in two categories: the Caregiver Award, presented for the app that best serves the well-being of the caregiver to support the emotional, physical and psychological needs of the patient, and the Creativity Award, given for the app that had the highest score in content design, innovation and uniqueness.

The team also took home first place for content usability, which awarded teams whose apps are easy to use, appropriate to the task and provide easy navigation for the users.

"We wanted to make it very user-friendly to get to the audience -- older people who



JANINE BOWEN PHOTO

The Koding Kidz, comprised of Fox Lane High School students and one of the big winners of the first-ever Smart Mobil App Development Bowl, with their coach, County Executive Rob Astorino and one of the competition's judges.

really aren't in the technological age," said team member Benjamin Coleman.

Others explained that they developed their application by looking at similar apps to see what was missing. One of the most important aspects, said team member Danny Delannes-Molka, was that they made sure the app never specifically mentions Alzheimer's or dementia to avoid further alarming patients already frustrated by memory deficiencies.

Going forward, the team would like to be able to introduce audio into the app because they have learned from caregivers that even though Alzheimer's patients may still be able to read, their comprehension declines

as the disease progresses.

Although only seven teams were awarded prizes, County Executive Rob Astorino, who launched the Westchester Smart Mobil App Bowl in February, commended each of the teams, noting that they all submitted ideas that exceeded his expectations.

He said the compassion and brainpower of today's youth will help to solve the world's problems going forward.

"How wonderful is it to see members of the younger generation burning the midnight oil to help ease the burdens of men and women at their twilight," he said. "It gives us hope in an age when we really need it."

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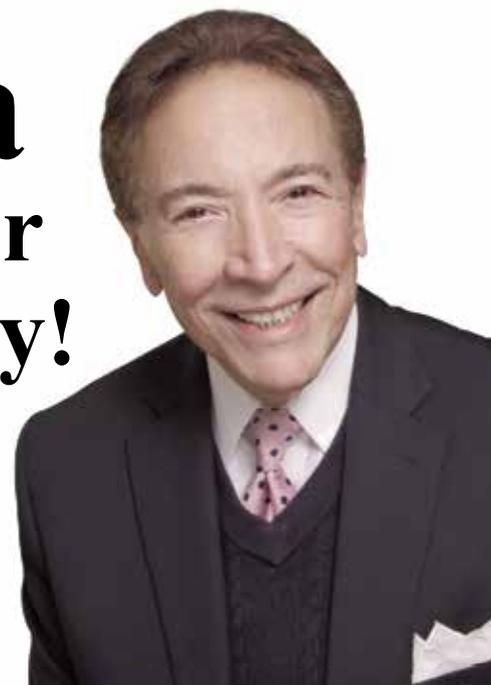
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Gin Blossoms to Headline 2015 Pleasantville Music Festival

By Janine Bowen

Gin Blossoms, a pop rock band, has been announced as the headline act for this year's Pleasantville Music Festival, scheduled for Saturday, July 11.

The group rose to fame in the early 1990s with songs such as "Hey Jealousy," "Found Out About You" and "Allison Road." Pleasantville Music Festival Executive Director Andy Goodman said he's thrilled to welcome the Gin Blossoms to the village for the 11th annual festival.

"The recognition and the hits that they have...people listen to those songs and they're immediately transported, they're immediately happy and they say, 'Wow,'" Goodman said.

Joining the Gin Blossoms at this year's fest will be G. Love & Special Sauce, a Philadelphia-based alternative hip-hop band, and Beebs and Her Money Makers, a ska and funk group that will headline the Beer Garden Stage. Marshall Crenshaw, known for hits such as "There She Goes Again," will headline the new Chill Tent Stage with an acoustic performance.

"These are not no-name bands, they're huge, all of them and they hit different parts of the musical palate," Goodman said of the lineup.

He explained that festival organizers were able to book these bands with the help of this year's charitable sponsor, the Love Hope Strength Foundation. The foundation raises money for cancer research and frequently attends concerts and festivals to swab people cheeks to see if they are able to be placed on the bone marrow donor registry.



MERRICK MUSIC GROUP PHOTO

It was announced on Monday that Gin Blossoms is the headline act for the 2015 Pleasantville Music Festival.

These artists worked their summer tour schedules around the Pleasantville Music Festival as part of their ongoing relationship with Love Hope Strength.

Although the complete lineup is still a work in progress and more bands are expected to be announced in the coming weeks, several local bands are already set to appear. Lost Leaders and Rebecca Haviland & Whiskey Heart, bands that have deep Westchester roots and whose members attended SUNY Purchase, will perform.

Both acts have had airplay on Westchester's 107.1-FM The Peak, which will once again serve as the exclusive broadcast media sponsor for the festival.

There will be two unknown local bands that will have the opportunity to open the festival, thanks to a battle of the bands competition. Goodman said submissions for the contest, which was open to musicians 26 and younger, are currently being reviewed and narrowed down to a group of finalists.

Since the festival's initial goal was to provide a forum for local bands to showcase their talents, Goodman said it's important to strike a balance between bands who are trying to gain recognition and those who have already made a name for themselves.

He said when he attended the festival as a spectator, and later as a volunteer, he was always impressed by what he saw from bands that he had previously never heard of.

"I love that...you're going for one thing, you're going for maybe that big name, but you're discovering something new and coming out actually getting more...than you thought you were going to get coming in," Goodman said.

Advance tickets for this year's Pleasantville Music Festival will go on sale on Friday, Apr. 24. Tickets are \$45 for adults and \$24 for students and seniors. This year, tickets will be available through Ticketmaster.com as well as at a box office that will be set up at the village's recreation center on Marble Avenue.

In addition to tickets, this year people can reserve a space in tent city in advance. Traditionally, spaces for tents were given out on a first-come, first-served basis, but this year a spot can be reserved for \$35.

"You don't have to get there at the crack of dawn to camp out; you don't have to worry about being the first and beating everybody else because your ticket is reserved," explained Goodman. "It's like theater seating, you're going to get a particular space."

For more information, visit www.pleasantvillemusicfestival.com.

Children's Book Drive to Benefit Young Readers at Neighbors Link

By Martin Wilbur

Deborah Notis and Marilyn Rivkin launched their business, gamechanger, a few years to help Westchester children improve their performance in academics, music, art or sports.

For the second consecutive spring, the pair will be giving back to the community with the same objective in mind.

Starting Friday, May 1 and continuing throughout the month, Notis and Rivkin have organized a children's book drive where six area businesses will set up receptacles to collect new and gently used books for children and teens. The collected items will be donated to Neighbors Link in

Mount Kisco.

Notis said after launching gamechanger, which refers parents to highly qualified and competitively priced tutors, art and music teachers and sports coaches, and were embraced by the communities they serve, they sought to reach out to those areas and help others in return.

Notis and Rivkin, whose business serves all of Westchester but has families concentrated in the Mount Kisco and Chappaqua area, thought that since helping youngsters reach their potential has been their mission, there's no better way to do it than promoting children's literacy.

"When we started the company, we

wanted to make children feel empowered and enable their parents to make them more well-rounded, and we both feel that reading is the greatest thing that you can give a child," Notis said.

Rivkin said Neighbors Link was selected after one of the organization's volunteers, who is friendly with them, suggested that if they were doing the book collection again, it was be an excellent choice. Since Neighbors Link helps recent immigrant families in and around Mount Kisco to integrate into the community, it is also helps to empower and educate those families, she said.

"What if these children do not have access to books?" Rivkin asked. "We wanted to make sure that that would not be an issue for them."

Last year for the inaugural collection, gamechanger was able to donate more than 800 books to the Ossining Children's Center. This year, they are hoping to exceed that number.

Rivkin said with summer looming it is also a good idea to put books into children's hands and encourage the love of

learning outside of the classroom.

"We're heading to the summer and if we can get them excited, maybe they'll carry that through the summer months and will help them for the future academic year," she said.

Neighbors Link Executive Director Carola Bracco said she was delighted to learn the organization was chosen.

The Columbus Avenue facility has a small library, but this will allow a fresh supply of books to give to the roughly 700 families that Neighbors Link serves, Bracco said.

It also will help parents, some of whom are learning the language themselves, and practice reading and understanding English along with their children, she said.

"We're very proud to have been selected and we're proud to be participating," Bracco said.

English and Spanish language children's books will be accepted during the drive.

For more information about the book drive or gamechanger, call 914-449-6772, visit gamechangernow.com or e-mail connect@gamechangernow.com.



Drop-off Locations for Children's Book Drive

TWIST, 1136 Pleasantville Rd., Briarcliff Manor.
The Office of Dr. Kathy Hirsch, 153 Main St., Suite F1, Mount Kisco.
Walgreens Chappaqua, 411 King St., Chappaqua.
Mount Kisco Seafood, 477 Lexington Ave., Mount Kisco.
Douglas Elliman - Armonk, 404 Main St., Armonk.
Rockin' Jump, 333 N. Bedford Rd., Mount Kisco.
Check out facebook.com/gamechangernow or www.gamechangernow.com for any additional locations.

Home Improvement

Is Your Home Hurting You? Reducing Pollutants and Chemicals at Home

The spring cleaning season is a great time to take a closer look at some of the potentially harmful chemicals present in your home -- and to seek out healthier alternatives.

In recent years, homeowners have started asking better questions about what pollutants are lurking around nearly every corner, from building materials to the paint on the walls down to the backing on carpeting. While it's neither realistic nor necessary to remove every toxin from a home, there are a few common sources that can be addressed easily.

"The good news is, you don't have to be a chemist to understand what products and materials are safe to have in your home," said Anne Hicks Harney, architect and director of sustainability at architectural firm Ayers Saint Gross and member of the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Materials Knowledge Working Group. "You can arm yourself with the knowledge needed to make smarter choices for you and your family."

Harney offers a few tips to help reduce or eliminate common toxins in the home.

Go Natural

Whenever possible, use natural or water-based materials and cleaning agents. Also, be aware of:

- Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs).

From paint to composite wood, VOCs are found in many products and are responsible for that tell-tale chemical "smell." When it comes to paint, "Low VOC" or "No VOC" are your best options and are easy to find.

- Flame Retardants and Petrochemicals. Commonly found in such foam products as couch cushions and insulation, these are a bit more challenging to avoid. The risk is that these chemicals are known to accumulate over time in the human body. Looking for an alternative? Try a natural fiber such as down in your upholstery.
- Plastic Additives. Plastics are beneficial in a number of household materials but their use should be limited when possible. Search for a carpet with a polyvinyl chloride (PVC)-free backing or try wool, a natural alternative. For tile or sheet flooring, avoid vinyl products and consider linoleum or cork and rubber options instead.

Ventilate Your Home

It's good to open your windows every now and then to get the air circulating into your home and any chemical smells out. If you can't open your windows due to outdoor allergies or poor outdoor air quality, indoor plants constantly



FOTOLIA.COM PHOTO

regenerate air and provide a pretty alternative.

Take to the Web

Manufacturers and professional organizations are becoming more transparent about educating consumers. Check out resources like the AIA Materials webpage or <http://architectfinder.aia.org> to learn more about sustainable products and to find professionals who can assist your efforts.

Don't Know? Don't Buy

As a general rule of thumb, if you don't know and understand what a product contains, don't put it inside your house. Take advantage of the wealth of information now available at your fingertips to make safer choices.

During this spring cleaning season, take the time to protect your family by removing harmful pollutants from your home.

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Reflections on a Day of Cleaning Up the Neighborhood

A few years ago, I wrote a piece about litter and how it relates to the real estate industry. I was inspired because I had just been asked to cancel a showing appointment when a couple had done an advance drive-by of the house and found that it was in a neighborhood where they felt there was an excessive amount of litter left on the streets.

"We wouldn't want to live in a place where our neighbors could just leave litter in front of their own homes without picking it up," they told me. They even added for emphasis, "We just wouldn't want to live among people who could stand to live like that."

I must confess, I have similar feelings when I'm driving down a road. I don't know if I'm obsessive, okay. Maybe I am, but any foreign object of litter on the road catches my eye like a magnet and sets up that feeling of guilt that I can't stop my car, get out and pick it up.

If I happen to be on my own street, even if it's not in front of my house, I do it. Otherwise it's just impractical. After all, don't we all get honked at if we linger just a second too long when the light turns green?

Litter does affect the value of our neighborhoods and, unfortunately, at



By Bill Primavera

least in my case, it tends to affect our feelings about those among us who are not as conscientious as we are, just as my client expressed when canceling her appointment. Indeed, what kind of people would throw trash from their car on to the road and just not give a damn about it?

Last Saturday, I had six hours to ponder that question as I personally cleaned up a half-mile of one of the three roads, the busiest one, that borders my property. It was the day

Yorktown designated as "The Battle of Yorktown," our annual litter clean up wonderfully sponsored by our town and directed by Kim Angliss-Gage.

I adopted that road some years ago in exchange for a sign promoting my real estate practice, and at first, I would hire people to do the job for me. But for the last two years I've done the job myself as mental therapy, in part to vent my anger against those who litter and in part, of course, to maintain the appearance of my neighborhood.

First, I am unhappy to report that despite all the campaigns to discourage littering, we seem to have more of it on our roads. My collected volume was probably at least 25 percent more this year than last year. But the type of litter

seems to be shifting a bit. The number of empty cigarette packs has diminished (besides the health factor, who can afford them anymore?), but alarmingly, the number of empty liquor bottles has greatly increased as has beer cans.

As I worked, I would quell my anger by visualizing the litterbugs as mostly unhealthy people, judging from the predominance of fast food packaging and plastic containers of those sugary jumbo drinks. Indeed, since litterbugs offend only when no one is looking, all we know about them

is the scant information Keep America Beautiful tells us: they tend to be men between the ages of 18 and 34 who drive more than 50 miles a day and eat in fast food restaurants at least twice a week.

While I mumbled and grumbled during the course of those hours I spent keeping a watchful eye on how close the cars were driving to me (most drivers were very considerate), I totally enjoyed



The Home Guru with his stash of trash from his hometown's litter clean up day, "The Battle of Yorktown."

the experience of cleaning up. In fact, these were among the most gratifying hours of my year. While doing something good for myself and the neighborhood, I helped restore a patch of Mother Earth to some semblance of how she should be.

There was only one negative factor involved in the experience. From so much bending and stooping, I found that my muscles were aching the next morning, more so than I remember in the past. Oh, yes, I forgot. I'm another year older. That's all right. Doing good at least makes me feel younger.

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). 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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Business of the Week

Hat Art By Cathy Pleasantville

By Colette Connolly

There's nothing better than a beautiful hat to bring out the whimsy in all of us, said Cathy Fellows, a talented milliner, who in January launched her own unique collection of custom-made hats, fascinators and headpieces.

The gregarious Pleasantville resident runs the fledgling business, known as Hat Art By Cathy, out of her home. She credits much of her inspiration and her love of millinery to her mother, who she said has a beautiful hat collection.

"Her mantra is that clothing should be an expression of your personality and that the clothes and accessories you wear should always make you feel wonderful, and I've always tried to keep that in mind," said Fellows, the mother of two grown daughters.

But simply loving fashion isn't enough to create a hat-making business. Fellows is also a talented seamstress who has created numerous outfits for herself and others, in addition to

serving as the costume mistress for a number of Pleasantville High School theatrical productions. That's where her older daughter assisted with hair and makeup during her senior year and where her younger daughter performed throughout her high school years.

A former stay-at-home mom, Fellows said the time was right to start a small business of her own. Her foray into the hat-making world happened quite by accident. She recalled that a family friend was having difficulty finding a suitable hat for a wedding, one that expressed her personality, and she asked Fellows if she would create something.

Since then, this self-taught hat maker has created an array of headwear for special occasions, including her own daughter's wedding. She even designed and made an assortment of beautiful hats for the ladies of the Pleasantville Presbyterian Church Brandywine Bell Choir, of which she is a member.

That was a fun project to take on, she



COLETTE CONNOLLY PHOTO

Pleasantville resident Cathy Fellows who recently launched her home-based hat-making business, which provides hats for women for all occasions.

Fellows likes to describe it, "a modern form of wearable art."

It typically includes delicate flowers, lace, feathers and jewels and can be recognized by its large decorative design and a birdcage veil.

Fellows' vintage-inspired designs are sure to top off any outfit. The foundation for her hats comes from a material known as sinaway, which helps create a variety of hat shapes, including classic brims and sturdy hat bases.

Together with horsehair, a stiff, yet pliable, fabric made from woven horsehair, Fellows, a California native, has been able to create some stunning effects for her customers.

"I often get a picture in my mind from talking to people," said Fellows, who also considers skin color and face shape when designing a hat. Many of her creations, she added, are often an expression of her customers' personalities.

"This is a great new creative outlet for me, and it's fun," said Fellows, who has been spreading the word of her business through word of mouth.

"Women want to feel good about how they look and hats make them feel that way."

Some of Fellows' unique designs can be found on her website, www.hatartbycathy.com. She can be reached at hatartbycathy@gmail.com.

said. And even more enjoyable was the fact that after putting all of the finished products on a table, each woman in the bell choir was instinctively drawn to the hat that suited them most.

Some of Fellows' most popular creations are called "fascinators." Once known as a lightweight hood or scarf, today's fascinator is more likely to be a formal piece of headwear that is often worn as an alternative to a hat, or as

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Breathe Easy: COPD and the Benefits of Pulmonary Rehabilitation



By Harlan R. Weinberg

Pulmonary rehabilitation is increasingly recognized as a significant part of treatment for people with chronic respiratory illnesses and other lung conditions.

Even for those with very impaired lung function, this specialized rehab can improve quality of life and the ability to live independently.

This program of specialized exercise and patient education helps improve activity endurance, while lessening a person's sensation of shortness of breath. The goal is to improve quality of life and a person's

ability to function independently at home and outside.

Pulmonary rehabilitation benefits those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), smoking-related lung disease, asthma and other lung disorders that progressively limit breathing. People recovering from an acute exacerbation of COPD, those who are pre- or post-lung transplant and lung cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy can also be assisted.

Here, I replace popular myths about COPD with empowering truths about the positive impact of PR for people with this illness. I think you'll breathe easier after getting this encouraging information.

Myth: Only smokers get COPD.

Truth: A substantial number of people with the condition have never smoked; 42 percent of COPD sufferers are former

smokers, 34 percent currently smoke and the remaining 24 percent never took a single puff.

Myth: There is no treatment for COPD.

Truth: There is a range of treatment approaches for COPD that can help a person live better with the disease. These include medication, supplemental oxygen, transplant evaluation, enzyme replacement and/or pulmonary rehab. Your diagnosis determines which treatments will most benefit you.

Myth: If you have COPD, it's too late to quit smoking.

Truth: It is never too late to quit. Doing so will help slow the progression of the disease.

Myth: Exercise is too hard if you have COPD.

Truth: Exercise is a very important part of improving life with COPD and a vital component of a comprehensive

pulmonary rehabilitation program. The rewards of exercise are plentiful: It will improve COPD symptoms, increase endurance and help reduce stress, among many other benefits.

Supervised by a staff of specialists that includes an exercise physiologist and respiratory therapists, participants in Northern Westchester Hospital's Pulmonary Rehab program benefit from a personalized, medically-monitored exercise program consisting of three weekly one-hour sessions over three months. The program is tailored to your capacities and needs.

Dr. Harlan Weinberg is medical director of pulmonary and critical care medicine at Northern Westchester Hospital in Mount Kisco. Dr. Weinberg offers expertly curated medical information on his website www.knowledgeofmedicine.com

Preserving the Monarch Butterfly: Plant Milkweed in Your Garden

By Allie Herskovitz

Did you see many monarchs in your garden last year? Probably not.

Every year the beautiful Monarch Butterfly travels from central Mexico to the Canadian border and back. This astonishing trip of 3,000 miles is accomplished by three generations and has been called one of the "epic journeys of the animal kingdom."

The monarch migration is now severely threatened. Just a few years ago hundreds of millions of these beautiful creatures made an annual trek through the United States. Last year, less than 600,000 made the same journey. If something isn't done soon to reverse this trend, some biologists fear ours may be the last generation to know the joy of monarchs in our backyards.

Monarchs only lay their eggs on one plant--the milkweed. Across the country, the milkweed habitat is rapidly disappearing due to herbicide and pesticide use and genetically modified

crops, climate change and roadside mowing. Without milkweed, the monarch butterfly cannot reproduce. According to the Reppert Laboratory at the University of Massachusetts, the monarch colony size in the U.S. is now at a record low.

Everyone can help preserve the monarch and its amazing migration. Families in Westchester can make a difference with just a little effort. Why not add some milkweed into your landscape this spring? Consider starting milkweed seeds now, then transfer young plants to a flower garden, border, curbside or open field in June. Alternatively, you can go to your local nursery and pick up a few plants. Help re-establish the milkweed habitat in our region and watch the monarch numbers grow.

Milkweed is a hardy plant. It needs full sun, but can thrive in many types of soil and needs little water. Plant seeds or a small plant and watch it quickly grow. There are many types of milkweed that



attract monarchs. Two common varieties in the Northeast are the common milkweed and purple milkweed. For a list of plants that attract monarchs in our

region, visit <http://www.monarchwatch.org/garden/plant-list-monarchwatch.pdf> or <https://monarchbutterflygarden.net/5-spring-plants-save-monarch-butterflies>.

For more information about threats to the monarch migration, how to easily create your own backyard monarch garden and ways everyone can protect this beautiful butterfly, explore these website resources: MonarchWatch at the University of Kansas at www.MonarchWatch.org, www.monarchbutterflyusa.com, a site for children and teachers, and the North American Butterfly Association at www.naba.org.

Let's work together to preserve the beautiful monarch and its great migration.

Allie Herskovitz is a junior at Briarcliff High School and an Ambassador Girl Scout in Briarcliff Troop #2299. For her Gold Award, the highest award in Girl Scouts, Allie is creating several community monarch waystation gardens and developing education programs for children and her community.

Voting Rights, Income Inequality Forum Set for Apr. 30

Westchester for Change, an all-volunteer, grassroots organization, is hosting an educational forum entitled "Voting Rights and Income Inequality: Seeing the Connections" on Thursday, Apr. 30 at Greenburgh Town Hall, located at 177 Hillside Ave. in Greenburgh at 7:30 p.m. The forum is open to the general public and free of charge.

This forum will explore how making voting easier in New York State may lead to economic changes, such as raising the minimum wage and other economically progressive laws, and how forum attendees can play a role.

Two recognized experts will be on hand to address these issues: Julie Ebenstein, staff attorney with the ACLU's Voting Rights Project, and Kristina Andreotta,

deputy organizing director, Citizen Action of New York & Public Policy and Education Fund of New York.

The Voting Rights Act is 50 years old this year. Yet for all the progress of the last five decades, politicians continue to neglect many of the concerns of racial minority and lower-income voters. The 1960s were the apex for middle class incomes and for voting rights protection.

Since the 1970s, incomes have become stagnant relative to gains in productivity. At the same time, voting rates have declined. In 2014, only 28 percent of eligible voters in New York State exercised their right to vote, making New York among the states with the lowest voting participation rates in the country. (See McDonald, Michael, "State

Turnout Rates," United States Elections Project, Feb. 24, 2015.)

"The right to vote is the cornerstone of democracy," Ebenstein said. "Making it easier to vote is one of the goals of the ACLU's Voting Rights Project. I'm pleased that Westchester for Change has given me the opportunity to discuss this important topic at its forum."

Westchester for Change anticipates that several elected officials will be in attendance.

The forum is co-sponsored by Citizen Action of New York; Community Voices Heard; Concerned Families of Westchester; Mount Vernon United Tenants; the NAACP of White Plains and Greenburgh; White Plains Democrats and WESPAC.

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. 21

Italian Language and Culture With Mara De Matteo. Born and raised in Italy, De Matteo combines lively conversation with grammatical instruction in her classes, creating interactive lessons on the richness of Italian culture, past and present, through real-life anecdotes, literature, personal memoirs, films and photography. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd East, Armonk. 6:30 p.m. Free. Tuesdays in April. Info: 914-273-3887.

Wednesday, Apr. 22

Master Networker Meeting. Join this high-energy interactive membership network of learning-based, service-oriented entrepreneurs and business leaders. Come be a guest any Wednesday to learn more about this world-class business training and referral program. Mount Kisco Coach Diner, 252 E. Main St., Mount. 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Free. Every Wednesday. RSVP suggested. Info and RSVP: Contact Julie Genovesi at 303-929-7203 or e-mail julie@eurobella.net or just drop in.

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.

Pound Fitness Program. A 45-minute full-body cardio and stress relief jam session, fusing Pilates, cardio, plyometrics, isometric movements and poses. Using lightly weighted drumsticks called Ripstix™ and combining constant simulated drumming resulting in working the entire body. Dance Emotions, 75 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 10:15 a.m. \$20. Every Wednesday. Info: Contact Peggy at 914 960-4097.

Mommy Meet Up. Whether it's your first child or your fifth, this program is a great way to get out of the house, meet new friends and enjoy time with your baby. For newborns birth to eight months old and their moms. Romper Indoor Playground at World Cup Nursery School & Kindergarten 160 Hunts Lane, Chappaqua, 10:15 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Wednesday (except holidays) through June. Info: Contact Kim Bremer at 914-238-9267 ext. 20.

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. 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Free. Every Wednesday. Info: 914-231-3260.

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. Meets 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.

"Congo in Four Acts." Initiated as a project to help young Democratic Republic of Congo filmmakers develop their craft, this work is a quartet of short films telling the story of various aspects of life in the African nation. Neuberger Museum of Art, 735 Anderson Hill Rd., Purchase. 12:30 p.m. \$5. Seniors (62 and up): \$3. Students, staff, faculty and museum members: Free. Info: 914-251-6100 or visit www.neuberger.org.

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 of 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. Every Wednesday. Info: 914-666-8041.

Wednesday Night Bingo. Regular bingo tickets and specials available for sale. Includes coffee, tea and hot chocolate. Hot dogs and soda for sale. Holy Rosary School, 180 Bradhurst Ave., Hawthorne. Doors open at 6 p.m. Games start at 7:20 p.m. \$2 (for one card). Extra game cards may be purchased for \$2 or \$3 each along with a few specialty games. Every Wednesday.

Art Discussion Series: Hans Holbein the Younger. Born after Columbus discovered America, Holbein the Younger learned to paint from his father, an accomplished painter in his own right. With a letter of recommendation from Erasmus, this Northern Renaissance artist was renowned for his portraits, book design and religious art. Led by Professor Valerie Franco. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887 or www.northcastlelibrary.org.

Thursday, Apr. 23

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-minute class. Every Tuesday and Thursday. Info: 914-238-8974 or email claudiayogadance@gmail.com.

Story Time Playgroup. Join Miss Debbie for a story, music and playtime with toys and books in this new program. Children and a parent or caregiver can spend special time together and make new friends. For children six months to four years old. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 1:45 to 2:30 p.m. Free. Every Thursday. Info: 914-769-0548 or visit www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Drop-in Homework Help. Difficult math problems? Tricky grammar questions? Drop in to the Teen Zone after school for some extra help from a high school volunteer. For students in grades 6-8. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 3 to 4 p.m. Free. Also Apr. 28 and 30. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

From Stripes to Liveries: The Dress of Africans in Renaissance Art. Come hear Paul Kaplan, Purchase College professor of art history, share insights into the history of early Western attempts to explore the form and meaning of African textiles and dress through representations of black African figures in artworks from the Renaissance in Europe. Neuberger Museum of Art, 735 Anderson Hill Rd., Purchase. 4:30 p.m. \$5. Seniors: \$3. Museum members, SUNY Purchase students, faculty and staff and children (12 and under): Free. Info: 914-251-6100 or visit www.neuberger.org.

Read to Rover. Dogs love listening to stories. Come meet Rover and read your favorite story. For children five years old and up. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Every Thursday. Info: 914-864-0130 or visit www.mountkicolibrary.org.

Money Smart Week Series: Investing Over the Lifespan. At different stages of life we have different goals. How should we invest to have the best chance of funding our goals? Why is it important to maintain a well-diversified portfolio, even in retirement? Why do most investors buy high and sell low? Explore the answers and learn the one proven method for increasing return while reducing risk. Presented by Anthony DeVito, certified financial planner and past president of the Greater Hudson Valley Financial Planning Association. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 6:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

What's Happening at Fordham's Louis Calder Center Biological Field Station? Tomas Daniels, director of Fordham University's Calder Center Biological Field Station, will introduce the Armonk-based center to the community that they have been stationed in for over 40 years. He

will describe the ecological research at the center, the importance of field stations to their community and reveal the mystery of what goes on behind the closed gates. The first part of an ongoing series. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 6:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Zumba Fitness Class. Addie-Tude Performing Arts Center, 42 Memorial Plaza (lower level), Pleasantville. 7 to 8 p.m. \$15 a class. \$29 for four classes. \$55 for eight classes. Meets every Thursday. Also Saturdays from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Info: 917-215-1720, e-mail AddietudeDance@gmail.com or visit www.Addie-tude.com.

"Orphans." A Small Town Theatre Production about two brothers, one sensitive and reclusive and the other who supports his damaged younger sibling by petty thievery, makes the house a virtual prison for him--before the older brother kidnaps a rich, older man who turns out to be the father figure the boys have always yearned for. Hergenhan Recreation Center, 40 Maple Ave., Armonk. 8 p.m. \$15. Also Apr. 25. Info and reservations: Visit www.smalltowntheatre.com.

Friday, April 24

Rummage Sale. Pleasantville Presbyterian Church, 400 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Also Apr. 25 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Bargain Day with 50 percent off most items.) Info: 914-769-0458 or visit www.pvillepresby.org.

Zumba Gold Class. A trial class featuring Zumba's low-impact approach. Drop in anytime. Addie-Tude Performing Arts Center, 42 Memorial Plaza (lower level), Pleasantville. 11 a.m. to noon. Free. (\$12 drop-in fee after free trial class.) Every Friday. Also Tuesdays from 10 to 11 a.m. Info: Contact Amy Olin at olin.amyj@gmail.com.

Money Smart Week Series: Estate Planning and Asset Protection. James L. Hyer, Esq., a partner with Bashian & Farber, will lead this seminar, touching on basic estate planning tools; those seeking to minimize federal and state estate taxes; reduce vulnerability to creditors; and protect disabled relatives. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 1 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Pizza With Author Jennifer Lyne. A new area resident, Lyne will stop by to chat about writing and her debut novel "Catch Rider," a "horse story" that received a starred review in *Kirkus* magazine. For students in grades 6-12. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

Magic: The Gathering With Lucas. Drop-in and play. Beginners and experienced players welcome. For students in grades 7-12. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

continued on page 24

Mt. Kisco Chamber to Recognize Florist at Annual Celebration

Frank Yozzo, owner and operator of Four Seasons Flower Shop, has been named the 2015 Citizen of the Year by the Mount Kisco Chamber of Commerce (MKCC). In addition to honoring Yozzo, the chamber is celebrating 50 years of supporting business spirit and growth in "the hub of northern Westchester."

The celebration will take place on Wednesday, May 13 at 6:30 p.m. at Holiday Inn of Mount Kisco, located at 1 Holiday Drive. More than 150 business owners, professionals and civic-minded residents are expected to attend this annual event.

Yozzo was born and raised in Mount Kisco, having attended St. Francis Elementary School and Fox Lane High School. He is the youngest of 10 children.

He discovered his passion for decorating at a young age. At 14, he decorated his sister's wedding. When a floral shop owner saw his work, she offered him a job. Yozzo seized the opportunity and learned everything about the florist business.

In 1963, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. Upon returning home at 24, he opened Four Seasons, which is about to celebrate 50 years in business.

Yozzo has been married to his wife, June, for nearly 42 years. They have two children, Ashley and Alexis. He is also the proud grandfather of Carmela,



Frank Yozzo, owner of Four Seasons Flower Shop, has been named the Mount Kisco Chamber of Commerce's Citizen of the Year.

Frankie and Antonio.

What makes Yozzo the quintessential Citizen of the Year is his unending desire to give back to his community

without any expectation of or need for recognition. For years, he selflessly donated his time, materials and talents to make Mount Kisco a more beautiful place to live. The community has enjoyed the red ribbons that he painstakingly wrapped around the barrels at Christmas time and his holiday transformation of the gazebo with its perfectly placed bows and garland. His bright green bows with their flowing tails of ribbon that he hangs on the trees along the St. Patrick's Day parade route have also been greatly appreciated.

The local schools and churches have been the recipients of his generosity. When asked, Yozzo never hesitates to provide a donation and he is always eager to lend his decorating talents to help spruce up one of their events.

This year the chamber is also proudly celebrating the organization's 50th anniversary and the spirit of business success.

"Both Frank Yozzo and the recognition of our longstanding Mount Kisco businesses and congratulations to their collective achievements, is a sure reason to celebrate, and we are truly excited about the 2015 Citizen of the year event," said MKCC Executive Director Caroline Loeb.

The chamber is currently accepting raffle donations and offering advertising

opportunities in a special keepsake souvenir journal. Details can be found at www.mtkiscochamber.com.

The celebration will commence with wine and hors d'oeuvres at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner and awards ceremony at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$135 per person; a limited number of group tables are available.

For additional information, or to register for the event, call 914-666-7525 or e-mail director@mtkiscochamber.com.

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Happenings

continued from page 22

Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Free. Fridays through Apr. 24. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

Friday Night Films: "35 Up." Before reality television, director Michael Apted created the Up Series--the original documentary that examined the lives of several English children every seven years as they journeyed from adolescence into adulthood. This segment checks in at age 35, with marriages, divorces, unemployment and family issues developing in various ways. Discussion led by Professor Val Franco. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd., Armonk. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Chappaqua School Foundation Spring Benefit. Join hundreds of friends and neighbors at the foundation's most important fundraising event of the year. Enjoy great food and drink, socialize and meet this year's grant winners. Proceeds to benefit the foundation and provide funds for creative programs within the Chappaqua School District. Trump National Golf Club, 339 Pine Rd., Briarcliff Manor. 7 p.m. Tickets start at \$215. Info and tickets: Visit www.chappaquaschoolfoundation.org.

WCC Film Series: "Haute Cuisine." Hortense Laborie is a celebrated chef. To her great surprise, the president of the Republic appoints her as his personal cook. She accepts reluctantly, but ultimately works passionately to produce stylish and authentic cuisine. Her sturdy character elicits jealousy from other chefs, but only for a while. Westchester Community College's Gateway Center, Davis Auditorium, 75 Grasslands Rd., Valhalla. Doors open at 7:10 p.m. Refreshments at 7:30 p.m. Screening at 7:50 p.m. \$11. Seniors (60 and up): \$10. Info: Contact Bob Bruckenthal at 914-723-3186.

"Outside Mullinger." The Hudson Stage Company presents this play written by John Patrick Shanley, author of "Doubt" and "Moonstruck." North Castle Public Library's Whippoorwill Hall, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 8 p.m. \$30 and \$35. Also Apr. 25 at 8 p.m. and Apr. 26 at 3 p.m. Info and tickets: Visit www.hudsonstage.com.

Saturday, Apr. 25

Pleasantville Volunteer Fire Department Recruitment Open House. The department will conduct tours of the station and firefighter apparatus, allow visitors to try on firefighter gear and provide activities and informational opportunities for visitors. Also to be discussed, the requirements needed to be a volunteer and information to let visitors know how to get involved. Pleasantville firehouse, 75 Washington Ave., Pleasantville. 8 a.m. to noon. Free.

Red Cross Blood Drive. Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 191 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info and appointment: 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit www.redcrossblood.org.

Pleasantville Farmers Market. The market moves indoors featuring vendors with winter-grown produce along with a variety of meats, cheeses, breads and prepared foods. Pleasantville Middle School, 40 Romer Ave., Pleasantville. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Every Saturday through May 9. Info: Visit www.pleasantvillefarmersmarket.com.

Mount Kisco Farmers Market. St. Mark's Church, 85 Main St., Mount Kisco. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Info: Visit <https://www.facebook.com/MtKiscoFarmersMarket>.

Zero Waste Day. The Town of North Castle will hold its 11th Zero Waste Day. Residents may donate gently used items for reuse and to recycle scrap metal and electronic waste and to shred personal papers. Also donate clean, gently used spring and summer clothing, shoes and linens to the Community Center of Northern Westchester; dog and cat supplies to Adopt-a-Dog; adult and children's bicycles in good working order to Danny's Cycles; and gently used small furniture and small appliances in working order to Furniture Sharehouse. Furniture Sharehouse will only accept furniture of a certain size in good condition (no junk). Up to six banker's boxes of personal papers and hardcover books will be accepted for shredding by USA Shred. Rain or shine. North Castle Town Hall, 15 Bedford Rd., Armonk. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Info: Visit www.northcastleny.com and click on the link to Recycling and Sustainability for Zero Waste Day information.

Sahaja Meditation. Led by Peter Simone. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 10 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Saturday. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-864-0137.

Native Plant Sale. Edible native plants will be featured among the hundreds of perennials, shrubs and trees available at The Native Plant Center's 16th annual sale. The Native Plant Center at Westchester Community College, 75 Grasslands Rd., Valhalla. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Members may enter at 9:30 a.m. Info: 914-606-7870, visit www.nativeplantcenter.org or e-mail wcc.nativeplant@sunywcc.org.

Twigs Thrift Shop Garage Sale. Twigs' semiannual garage sale includes small furniture, household bric-a-brac, tools and more. The shop, which raises money for Northern Westchester Hospital, will also be open featuring clothing and accessories, jewelry, books and seasonal items. Twigs Thrift Shop, 449 Lexington Ave., Mount Kisco. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Info (including how to donate items for this sale): 914-666-6557.

Learn and Practice Bridge. With Joel Goren, life master and professional teacher from the Hartes Club. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 10:30 a.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Tai Chi With Larry Attile. Learn specific feldenkrais and chi kung breathing techniques for deep relaxation and apply them to tai chi movement. A hands-on class that is geared to the level of experience of the class. Please wear comfortable clothes and bring a floor mat or towel. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 10:30 a.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Adult Salsa Class. Addie-Tude Performing Arts Center, 42 Memorial Plaza (lower level), Pleasantville. 11 a.m. to noon. Free. \$12. Every Saturday. Also Mondays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Info: 917-215-1720 or visit www.addie-tude.com.

Teaching Trails: A Community Path for Environmental Education. Join guided trail experience through the woodland forest. Discover who left that track, which tree makes the best animal home or which plant makes its own heat to help melt through the late winter ice. Program runs about 30 minutes. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 11:30 a.m. Free. Every Saturday and Sunday. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Pound Fitness Program. A 45-minute full-body cardio and stress relief jam session, fusing Pilates, cardio, plyometrics, isometric movements and poses. Using lightly weighted drumsticks called Ripstix™ and combining constant simulated drumming resulting in working the entire body. TADA Theatre And Dance Arts, 131 Bedford Rd., Katonah. 11:45 a.m. \$20. Every Saturday; also Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. Info: Contact Peggy at 914 960-4097.

Nature Art. From flowers to rocks, join a naturalist on a hike and explore nature's wonders. Using natural materials, create your own piece of beauty to take home and admire. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 1 p.m. Members: \$5 per person. Non-members: \$8 per person. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company. The troupe will present works by Dorfman and other nationally known choreographers. With bold athleticism, dramatic nuance and musical range, the company's high-energy and technically demanding repertory uses movement as metaphor to take audiences on intellectual and emotional journeys. Hailed as a consummate storyteller, Dorfman, the daughter of Holocaust survivors, has also created a celebrated body of work that honors her Jewish legacy by highlighting its trials and triumphs, treasured uniqueness, and universal connections. Westchester

Community College's Academic Arts Theatre, 75 Grasslands Rd., Valhalla. 8 p.m. \$24. Seniors and students: \$22. Children (under 13): \$18. Info and tickets: Visit www.sunywcc.edu/SmartArts.

Sunday, Apr. 26

Gem Hunt. Come discover the treasures of the earth as we learn about notable and local gems and crystals. Each participant gets a geode to take home. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. Ages 5-7: 11 a.m. Ages 8 and up: 1 p.m. Members: \$8 per person. Non-members: \$12 per person. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Learn and Play Mah Jongg. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 1 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

"A Year With Frog and Toad." The Play Group Theatre, theater for children and teens, opens its 2015 season with this story based on the books of Arnold Lobel. Part vaudeville, part make believe, all charm, this is the story of friendship that endures, weathering all seasons. Lively melodies and endless wit make for a fun production for the entire family. The Play Group Theatre, 1 N. Broadway, White Plains. 2 and 7 p.m. \$18. Seniors and children (under 12): \$15. Info and tickets: 914-946-4433 or visit www.playgroup.org.

Future Filmmakers Festival. Drawing students from across Westchester, the festival spotlights short films from narrative, documentary, comedy, drama and musical categories entirely created and produced by the county's high school students. Includes an awards ceremony where the top three film submissions will receive awards. The Picture House, 175 Wolfs Lane, Pelham. 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. Adults: \$7. Students: \$3. Children (under 5): Free. Info and tickets: Visit www.thepicturehouse.org. Tickets also available at the box office.

Monday, Apr. 27

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. Every Monday. Info: 914-769-2021.

Lil' Cupcakes. For children three to five years old. Mount Pleasant Town Hall Tower Room, 1 Town Hall Plaza, Valhalla. Meets Mondays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Info and registration: 914-742-2310 or visit www.MtPleasantNY.com/rec.

Wild Encounters Story Time. Nature discovery for youngsters. Enjoy a nature-themed story and discover the wonders of nature while exploring fields, forests or landscaped grounds. Dress for outdoor activity. Except in extreme weather conditions, a portion of each class is spent outdoors. For children three to five years

continued on page 25

The Restaurant Examiner

Sam's of Gedney Way Introduces 2015 Spring Menu at Bistro

By Jerry Eimbinder

Joe Sasso, the executive chef at Sam's of Gedney Way in White Plains, is finalizing the restaurant's 2015 spring menu, which will take place during the first week of May. The cuisine is mostly contemporary American or "American bistro."

Sasso, who came aboard in March 2010, supervises three kitchens. He is also the executive chef for the restaurant's next-door sister eatery The Great American BBQ Shack and a full-service catering company on the premises. (These operations form the New York Hospitality Group.)

At Sam's of Gedney Way, many of the spring dinner dishes will be new or an updated version of a similar previous dish with different sides, Sasso said.

Boneless Half Chicken Cooked Under a Brick is one of the new spring entrees and conceivably could become a signature dish (\$25), Sasso said. Its cooking technique promotes even cooking, moist meat and crispy skin. It comes with roasted cauliflower, truffle polenta and creamy cucumber mint sauce.

Also new to the spring menu will be

Farm to Pizza, with asparagus, mushroom, bacon, truffle parmesan cheese and cage-free egg (\$15) and Cold Poached Salmon, with marinated vegetables and cucumber dill sauce (\$25).

Dishes returning from last year's spring menu include Thai coconut shrimp with jicama slaw and chili lime sauce (\$12.50); Georgia pecan crusted chicken breast with whipped potatoes, honey glazed carrots and whole-grain mustard sauce (\$23); and Maryland-style crab cakes with celery root remoulade and Old Bay spiced shoestring French fries (\$25).

Salads returning to the new spring lunch menu include Cobb, quinoa Greek and wheat berry/Waldorf.

Spring specials (non-menu items) to be occasionally available are lobster roll, a clambake (shucked clams, shrimp, lobster, corn on the cob, etc.) and barbecue.

Desserts include salted caramel "Ring Ding," the restaurant's most popular dessert. The dark chocolate cake in this treat is filled with vanilla bean mascarpone mousse, covered in dark chocolate ganache and drizzled salted caramel.



JERRY EIMBINDER PHOTOS

Sam's of Gedney Way Executive Chef Joe Sasso at work.

Parties of 15 or more people can order a 30-pound suckling pig roast as the main course of a three-course, prix-fixe dinner. This meal includes a chopped salad, dessert, coffee, tea and soft drinks. The portions of roasted pig are accompanied by corn pudding, cole slaw, biscuits, corn bread, tortillas, salsa verde and pic di gallo. Watermelon and strawberry shortcake are served for dessert. The cost is \$32.95 per person.

A choice of two items from a long list of appetizers (including pizza and chipotle buffalo wings) is offered for an additional \$3 per person. Advance notice of at least two days is required.

Mother's Day (May 10) brunch at Sam's of Gedney Way will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and dinner will start at 4:30 p.m.

Meet the chef

Sasso, who grew up in Mount Vernon asked his father for money to buy a pair of Pro Keds sneakers while in high school. His dad replied, "Joe why don't you try to earn them."

So Sasso took a job at The Village Bistro after school as a dish washer. As time progressed, he eased his way into cooking.

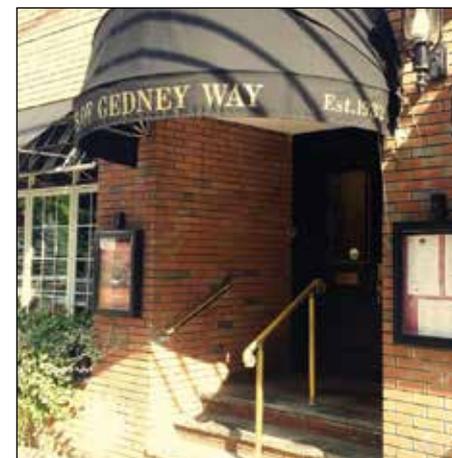
"By the time I was ready to graduate high school, I was hooked. I knew where my future lied," he said.

Although his parents weren't enthusiastic about his career choice, Sasso enrolled at the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) in Hyde Park and went to work for the La Reserve Hotel in White Plains as a Saucier after graduation.

At 23, after having gained experience cooking at country clubs, he joined the Tarrytown's Gallery Restaurant as executive chef.

He opened his own restaurant called JoJo's Fishhouse in Danbury in 2005, and in 2007 was hired as chef de cuisine at Gordon Ramsay's Monteverde Restaurant in Cortlandt, where inspired by Chef Neil Ferguson, his cooking helped the restaurant earn a three-star rating from The New York Times.

He spent two years at the 121 Restaurant Group in North Salem beginning in 2007 as catering chef and retail manager. In 2009, Sasso became director of contract



Sam's of Gedney Way in White Plains.

food services at the Crystal Spoon Corp. in Elmsford.

In 2013, Sasso was listed in the Best Chefs America guidebook.

Favorite recipes

Cold poached salmon with marinated vegetables and cucumber dill sauce.

(One serving, scale up as desired)

Salmon: Seven-ounce salmon poached in court bouillon of water, shallots, white wine, lemon, salt, pepper for eight minutes; remove drain, chill.

Sauce. Peel and slice organic cucumber, chop dill and add to yogurt salt and pepper to taste.

Vegetable. Blanch any vegetable you like--the restaurant uses green beans and artichokes--then add to a vinaigrette or olive oil, red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, chopped shallots salt and pepper to taste.

Plate. Place one tablespoon of the cucumber dill sauce on the bottom of the plate, top with a handful of marinated vegetable and poached salmon with sea salt, fresh cracked pepper and a finishing olive oil drizzle and serve.

The Great America BBQ Company's BBQ corn bread recipe

(Two quarts, scale up as desired)

Ingredients:

Corn muffin mix, 1 quart
Cheddar cheese, shredded, 1 pint
Heavy cream, half-pint
1 Jalapeno, no seed, minced
Chopped cilantro, 8 ounces

Poppyseed (sprinkle 2 tablespoons over cilantro)

Directions

1. Mix all ingredients together
2. Using small corn molds, heat molds first, spraying with pan. Release.

3. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes

Note: if you don't have small corn molds you can use any type of pan. Spray first.

Sam's of Gedney Way is located at 50 Gedney Way in White Plains. Free parking is available in back and is accessible from Pleasant Avenue. For more information, call 914-949-0978.

Happenings

continued from page 24

old; with a parent or caregiver. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 1 to 2 p.m. Members: \$9 per child. Non-member: \$12 per child. Every Monday (except May 25). Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Zumba Class. Open to all. Drop-ins welcome; no membership needed. PFX, 101 Castleton St., Pleasantville. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. \$10 a class. Every Monday. Info: Contact Amy Olin at olin.amyj@gmail.com.

Just Write! A six-week writing workshop. Tonight's topic: What makes a good story--the tale or the telling? Discuss the parts of a story and students will have an opportunity to experiment with voice. Led by Marilyn Johnson. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whipoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 7:30 p.m. Free. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-273-3887 ext. 3.

Tuesday, Apr. 28

Exploring Poetic Forms. Led by Karen Rippstein. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whipoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 1 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Wednesday, Apr. 29

Lil' Cooks. A hands-on cooking class for children three to five years old. Mount Pleasant Town Hall Tower Room, 1 Town Hall Plaza, Valhalla. 12:30 to 2 p.m. Also

Thursdays 10 to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 to 2 p.m. Info and registration: 914-742-2310 or visit www.MtPleasantNY.com/rec.

Art Discussion Series: Domenico Ghirlandaio. Florentine heavy hitter Ghirlandaio wasn't just the master to apprentice Michelangelo, but a talented leader of the Florentine Renaissance and part of a family of gifted and sought after painters. A peer of both Verrocchio and Botticelli, Ghirlandaio's religious imagery and images of everyday life helped to make him one of the most sought after painters of his time. Led by Professor Valerie Franco. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whipoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887 or www.northcastlelibrary.org.

Thursday, Apr. 30

"Strategies for Deer Management in Westchester's Suburban Communities."

This symposium will include an overview of the history of deer populations in New York State; discussions on defining and measuring success of deer management efforts and those efforts in Region 3-S, which includes Westchester; and regional approaches to deer management. Westchester County Center, 198 Central Park Ave., White Plains. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Free. Parking is \$7 in the lots. Advance registration required. Info and registration: Contact Jason Klein at 914-864-7322.

Meaningful Life Discussions at Heart of Death Cafe Meetings

By Janine Bowen

When neighbors get together to chat, the topic of death is often off limits. But a new movement is hoping to change that trend and get people talking about their mortality.

Barbara Sarah is one of several people organizing a "death cafe" in Mount Kisco on May 3. The cafe meetings, which originated in the United Kingdom in 2010, bring small groups of people together for tea and cake in order to discuss all aspects of death, including the loss of loved ones and end-of-life decisions.

"This is sort of an international movement of educating people about death and dying and sort of having more conversations about end of life," Sarah said.

An Ulster County resident, Sarah has hosted more than 20 death cafes in her home county since 2013, as well as four in Katonah and one in North Salem. Some drew as many as 70 participants.

Now retired, she spent two decades working in a hospital and said during that time she was astounded at how many

people had never discussed important end-of-life decisions, including the use of feeding tubes and resuscitation. That would leave doctors and family members to make important decisions under duress.

Sarah said the main reason she became involved with the death cafe movement is because she believes that once people embrace the fact that they are not going to live forever, they are able to pursue a more meaningful and purposeful life.

"The conversation tends to be much more about how you make choices in your life now that you've seen the elephant in the room," she said.

Although the event will be held at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Sarah explained that the death cafe is not affiliated with any religion. She said people often attend because something in their personal lives--the death of a loved one, the diagnosis of a terminal illness or even a news story about a celebrity who has made an end-of-life decision--affects them.

The gathering is not intended to be



Northern Westchester now has periodic death cafes where participants talk about end-of-life issues. Its next meeting is Sunday, May 3 at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Mount Kisco.

a support group, but those who have experienced loss can often use their experiences to help educate others about end-of-life options.

While some may consider the topic macabre, Sarah explained that the death cafe is not mournful or melancholy. The gatherings are often upbeat, empowering people to take charge of their lives and spread the conversation. In addition, it helps people feel more comfortable talking about a subject that is sometimes difficult to address.

"It's amazing that people who don't know each other can come and sit down and have a real deep and meaningful conversation," Sarah said.

Sarah said death cafe participants that she have seen are typically over 50 years old, although there have been some as

young as 18. At the North Salem event in February, several attendees were in their 20s, which led to fascinating conversation between those starting out in life and those grappling to come to terms with the end of theirs.

"[There was] wonderful conversation about the older people and the young people not just about death and dying but...about how do you want to live your life knowing you will have decisions to make as you get older about aging and then about dying," Sarah said.

The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection is located at 15 S. Bedford Rd. The event will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. Registration is not required, but those interested in learning more can visit the Death Cafe Northern Westchester page on Facebook.

Moore is More



Mount Kisco Mayor Michael Cindrich helps the J. Moore Insurance Agency cut the ribbon on its recent grand opening. The independent agency, which is committed to providing excellent customer service by building long-lasting relationships, partners with several elite insurance companies to find the best fit for its clients. J. Moore Insurance, located at 37 Moore Ave., provides auto/car insurance, home insurance, business/commercial insurance and life insurance for all of New York. Call 914-733-7050 or visit www.jmooreinsurance.com for more information.

Youth Theater Group Productions at Chappaqua Crossing

Lighthouse Youth Theatre will be performing "Peter Pan" and "High School Musical" at the Chappaqua Crossing Theater.

"Peter Pan" will be presented during the weekends of May 30 and June 6. "High School Musical" will be performed during the weekends of June 12 and 19.

The opportunity for Lighthouse Youth Theatre, a nonprofit organization, to perform at the Chappaqua Crossing Theater could not have happened without the support and efforts of Chappaqua Crossing, Summit Development, Greenfield Partners and the New Castle Town Board. Town Supervisor Robert Greenstein was also instrumental in working with Lighthouse

Youth Theatre Artistic Director John Fanelli to help facilitate the approval of these performances at the Chappaqua Crossing Theater.

Lighthouse Youth Theatre's home base is at Standing Ovation Studios in Armonk, and produces shows with youngsters from four to 18 years old. Dancing, singing, and acting classes and lessons are also available on a daily basis as well as rock 'n roll and music lessons.

Lighthouse Youth Theatre is excited to bring these two live fun-filled, family-friendly shows to the Chappaqua Crossing Theater this spring. Tickets can be purchased by calling 914-741-4205 or by visiting www.standingovationstudios.org.

'A Celebration of Rwanda' African-themed Benefit Set for May 2

Educating children in Rwanda has its challenges, particularly in rural areas where qualified teachers, facilities and essential resources are scarce.

For the past seven years, Rwanda Education Assistance Project (REAP), a nonprofit organization based in Katonah, has been making great strides in eastern Rwanda by partnering with the Duha Complex School, a regional public school that serves more than 3,000 students from nursery school to 12th grade.

Money raised will go toward teacher training in experiential learning, building nine classrooms, a community center and sanitary facilities and providing scholarships that support students who wish to continue their education.

On Saturday, May 2 at 7 p.m., REAP will be celebrating the organization's progress in an African-themed fundraising event at The Harvey School, located at 260 Jay St.

in Katonah. Local singer/songwriters Lisa Lipkin and Jay Hitt will provide musical entertainment. Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

"From the beginning, we have taken a holistic look at what the children and their teachers need to be successful--from a nutritious breakfast, to training, to a supportive family," said REAP Executive Director and founder Ed Ballen. "We've made significant progress against our plan and our ongoing fundraising efforts will help us develop an effective model that can be replicated in other regions of Rwanda."

Tickets are \$125 per person and can be purchased online at www.ReapEdu.org, under the "Donate Now" tab. (Please scroll down on the page and click the "Register Now" button on the right-hand side)

For more information about REAP, visit www.reapedu.org.

The Surprising Similarities of Wine and Coffee Production



By Nick Antonaccio

There are numerous parallels to winemaking in the natural world, as man has endeavored to extend winemaking techniques to other agricultural harvests. The end results bear the imprint of the winemaking process but are distinct unto themselves.

Cheese, bread, yogurt, chocolate and beer production share certain critical steps of winemaking (fermentation and yeast addition).

So does coffee production. This week, I'll focus on a comparison of the chain of ingredients and processes that result in your morning cup of coffee.

The baseline agricultural environment: Select varieties of wine grapes will only thrive under a very specific balance of soil, climate, elevation and exposure to the sun (in the aggregate, referred to as terroir).

So, too, with coffee beans. The unique terroirs of select regions of South America and Asia are conducive to the best expressions of certain coffee bean varieties.

The core ingredients: The horticultural species that produces the finest wine

grapes is *Vitis Vinifera*. From this species, hybrids have been developed that thrive in specific regions. An example: Burgundy wines produced from the Pinot Noir grape in the Burgundy region.

For coffee beans, two species account for the greatest production of beans. The Arabica species is highly flavorful and relatively low in caffeine and acidity. Its production accounts for nearly 70 percent of coffee sold and brewed around the world. The Robusta species tends to be more bitter, less flavorful and contains double the caffeine of the Arabica.

Coffee bean hybrids are also named after their unique region of origin. Java and Sumatra beans are expressive of the terroir of those Indonesian islands, as Kona beans are of that Hawaiian island. Each region produces coffee beans with unique aromas, bouquet, taste and finish as well as structural elements, including acidic, earthy, tannic, robust and nutty.

The transformation process: Similar to wine grapes, coffee beans--the seed of the coffee berry--are harvested at their peak. They are then extracted from the berry, typically through a fermentation process, dried to 11 percent moisture, bagged and shipped (as "green coffee") to roasting houses.

The final influence: Here wine and coffee productions differ. Once wine leaves the winery, its human intervention

is complete. However, green coffee beans undergo the additional steps of roasting and brewing. Professional roasters coax the internal heat of beans to 400 degrees, until the internal oils begin to emerge. Light, medium or dark roasts refer to the duration of the roasting process. It is through this process, in the hands of a talented, experienced roaster, that the distinctive aromas and flavors of each batch of (now brown) beans are created.

The brewing is a science unto itself; consult your local brew master for guidance.

Cult status: Select wines are highly sought after for their scarcity or the reputation of a particular vineyard; aficionados pay dearly – up to \$5,000 per bottle – to indulge their passion.

Select coffee beans share a similar status. A rare bean discovered in limited quantity in Guatemala was sold at a wholesale auction a few years ago for \$500.50 per pound. A cup of coffee processed from these beans sells for \$50 to \$70, if you can find it.

Recently, another new bean has been marketed. The excrement of the Indonesian Palm Civet mammal contains undigested beans of prized local berries. When roasted and brewed they are

unusually distinctive and flavorful. Sound enticing? Amazon will ship a bag to you – for \$400 per pound.

Need a satisfying fix to energize you in the morning or lower your stress in the evening? A wine bar and coffee café across the railroad tracks from each other in Pleasantville will satisfy both cravings. Batonnage Wine Bar Café offers a diverse menu of wines selected by David and Paul Paljevic. Black Cow Coffee Company offers a deep and broad international selection of fresh-roasted beans and brewed coffee. (For an education in all things coffee related, chat with owner/roaster Michael Grant or his daughters Bailey and Zoe.)

As the popularity of fine wine and coffee grows, the relationship between these siblings assures continued quality of their respective offerings.

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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