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December 22 - December 28, 2020

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 14, Issue 694

Armonk Residents Worried Condo Project Would Draw Down Wells

By Martin Wilbur

Several residents demanded North Castle officials and representatives of the Summit Club golf residential community last week take steps to protect their wells as the developer searches for an alternate water supply for the project's residential component.

A special live-streamed Town Board meeting last Wednesday evening to discuss potential test drilling on a town-owned parcel on Willow Pond Lane came two nights after the applicant appeared before the Planning Board for the first time for site plan review of the proposed 73 luxury condominium units.

Irrigation for the redesigned golf course, which is scheduled to open in the spring, is supplied by on-site wells. The entire property is 156 acres.

Willow Pond Lane and Blair Road residents near the proposed drilling site said they wanted to guard against having the quantity and the quality of their well water diminished. They urged the developer to post a bond before drilling begins and for the town to hire an independent hydrogeologist to represent the residents' interests.

The Summit Club, which is part of the town's Water District #2, needs to find a water source of at least 100 gallons per minute to sustain the 73 condos. However, it was unable to reach that threshold at sites on portions of Windmill Farm, located across Route 22 from the Summit Club, which was formerly referred to as Brynwood.

Will Minkin, a 51-year Willow Pond Lane resident, said routine mitigation in the

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Capturing the Holiday's Meaning

The United Methodist Church of Mount Kisco held an outdoor living nativity last Saturday, the last weekend before Christmas. Church leadership decided to move ahead with the celebration, a popular annual tradition, although there were some changes made to keep people safe. For more coverage, see page 19.

Use of Force, Racial Bias Focus at P'ville Police Reform Meeting

By Abby Luby

How police officers are trained to use force or exercise restraint was the key topic last week at the third Pleasantville Police Reform meeting.

The live-streamed forum also addressed the culture of law enforcement, specifically inclusion and racial bias.

Pleasantville Police Chief Erik Grutzner said during his 50-minute presentation on the department's use of force, racial bias and communication skills that the George Floyd killing prompted his department to embark on new training modules. The system hasn't always been fair, he acknowledged.

"It's not an individual officer, it is about systemic issues that are out there," Grutzner said. "After the George Floyd killing, I put out a memo that said 'This might not be your fault,

but it is very much your problem.'"

Anti-bias police training includes implicit and explicit bias.

"Micro aggression is a term we hadn't heard in law enforcement but has now taken center stage as far as equity, efforts and fairness in policing and procedural justice," Grutzner explained. "We need to put aside our implicit biases and find a way to recognize them, discard them and treat everyone the same."

At the beginning of the meeting, Mayor Peter Scherer mentioned the tragic killing 10 years ago of Black Pace University student athlete Danroy "DJ" Henry Jr., 20, who was unarmed and fatally shot by former Pleasantville police officer Aaron Hess. The case resulted in a number of lawsuits but a grand jury did not bring criminal charges against Hess or the other officers at the scene.

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New Castle Takes Stock of Form Based Code With Break in Hearing

By Martin Wilbur

New Castle officials pledged last week to collaborate with the community on a version of the Form Based Code that invigorates downtown Chappaqua but also respects the public's reservations about the plan.

After more than two months of hearings and passionate arguments from community members about various aspects of the proposal, Supervisor Ivy Pool said the current draft will be revised and the Town Board will continue to listen to residents to eventually adopt a code that is effective and has wide support.

"The Form Based Code is still a draft," Pool said. "The town is fully committed to taking the time to get it right. We are listening to the input, to the feedback from all of the members of our community and from all of our interested agencies, and we are taking all of this to heart."

The comments came during a portion of the board's final work session and meeting of the year last Tuesday where officials assessed the sentiment of the public on the issue. It came several weeks before a scheduled Jan. 13 joint meeting with the Chappaqua Board of Education where potential impacts of the Form Based Code on the schools, including enrollment and tax dollars, is the anticipated focus. A fifth session of the public hearing has been scheduled for Jan. 19.

Officials said a key task is balancing a code that is outdated for the current-day hamlet but doesn't sacrifice the best features of the town. Councilwoman Lisa Katz said the board wants to diversify housing stock and enhance downtown Chappaqua without jeopardizing the town's bucolic nature and what residents like most about the hamlet.

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Armonk Residents Worried Condo Project Would Draw Down Wells

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event of excessive drawdown, such as the installation of pumps or drilling a deeper well at the developer's expense or getting connected to a municipal water supply, is inadequate.

"How am I going to be indemnified if my gallons per minute goes down or if the pond turns into a mosquito-infested swamp, if the value of my home goes down because of these factors?" Minkin said.

Blair Road resident Eric Goodison said the posting of a bond by the applicant should be done before any work begins to protect the homeowners. Unlike Windmill Farm, whose costs to repay a \$10 million water infrastructure improvement project bond several years ago would be proportionately reduced with the inclusion of the project

into the district, there is no benefit for the property owners on Willow Pond Lane and neighboring streets, he said.

"It shouldn't be difficult to post (a bond)," Goodison said. "If it's that important for that project, then they can look out for this neighborhood."

The applicant had drilled on the southern and northern portions of Windmill Farm. However, both sites fell short of the required 100 gallons per minute set by the town, including a disappointing three to 20 gallons per minute at the northern location, said Thomas Cusack, a hydrogeologist for the Summit Club.

While it was hoped that enough water would be found at Windmill, Cusack said he is more optimistic that the Willow Pond parcel will produce high-yielding wells because it

has two critical hydrogeological features – a fault line and fractured trace patterns.

"Wells built on faults and fractured trace patterns, particularly when they intersect, which is what is exhibited here on these study parcels, where the faults and fractures intersect, it means it increases yield capacity or the likelihood of drilling a high-yielding well by 80 percent, which is actually very dramatic," he said.

Another advantage of Willow Pond Lane is the Summit Club wouldn't need a permit from the state for disturbance to a state-regulated wetland, which takes at least eight months to obtain, Cusack said. The parcel, though, is in a town wetland.

North Castle's consulting hydrogeologist William Canavan said drill tests don't necessarily reduce a nearby well's water

depth, and if a 200- or 300-foot well loses five or 10 feet, that isn't a significant reduction. If the drawdown is closer to 100 feet, it would never be approved by the regulatory authorities, he said.

Last week Town Board members said they weren't prepared to make a recommendation to allow for tests at the site.

Supervisor Michael Schilero said that the Town Board in its role as North Castle's water commissioners represent all residents, including those on Willow Pond Lane, and would not permit an applicant to jeopardize a neighborhood's water supply. It was a sentiment echoed by Councilman Jose Berra.

"We all take very seriously our obligation to the residents, all the residents, but also particularly residents that can be impacted," Berra said.

Use of Force, Racial Bias Focus at P'ville Police Reform Meeting

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"That obviously is an event that was a tragedy for everyone involved," Scherer said.

But he cautioned against residents focusing on that or any particular incident.

Later in the evening Pastor Susan Chupungco of Pleasantville's United Methodist Church not only mentioned the Henry killing but also Pleasantville police officer Peter Burns. In 2014, Burns was suspended after he posted racist posts about President Barack Obama on his Facebook page.

Chupungco called for reconciliation and

healing between the police department and the community.

"It seems like there are still open wounds around two very major specific issues and that people do not feel like there has been transparency," Chupungco said. "I do not want to go through this process and not create a space where those can be talked about."

Village trustees Nicole Asquith and David Vinjamuri, along with Scherer and Grutzner, invited Chupungco and the public to speak in smaller, break-out groups to address specific issues of concern.

Grutzner said when he spoke to the community there were issues raised about officers using inappropriate force, using force when they weren't authorized to do so and when there was no need to use force.

"We do everything in our power to train officers to respond appropriately," he said. "When an officer uses too much force, we do have reporting and review standards in place."

If an officer is accused of using unwarranted force, Grutzner encouraged the public to come forward.

"In general, we do have a great deal of faith in the officers we have out there and we try to put them in situations where they realize their actions are important and carry a lot of weight," Grutzner said.

Pleasantville resident Erin Ballard, citing the George Floyd and Eric Garner cases, asked if officer training includes de-escalation or practicing physical restraint after force has already accelerated.

"We train our officers to constantly reassess,

to be judicious and move down as quickly as possible," Grutzner said. "Tragically, around the country there are places where it was the lack of stopping the use of force (where) problems really happen."

Pleasantville police are trained online and in-house in small groups of four or five officers, the chief said. Updated logs and rosters record all training sessions.

Chupungco told The Examiner she understands the community is still building a relationship with Grutzner and Scherer regarding the village's department.

"I want to see them succeed in this, but there are gaps," Chupungco said. "There is a language among those doing anti-racism and anti-bias work. I would like to see them speak that language. There's more work to be done."

The next police reform meeting in January is expected to cover how police complaints are handled and the department's review process.

The public is invited to submit comments to policereform@pleasantville-ny.gov/.

New Castle Takes Stock of Form Based Code With Break in Hearing

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Much of the opposition to the proposed Form Based Code centered around the maximum buildout scenario, which the town is required by the state to show in its proposal. It stated that a future full buildout on the 72 acres of municipally and privately owned land in the study area would trigger development of nearly 1,000 one- and two-bedroom apartments but generate less than 100 school-age children, a number that has been intensely disputed.

Deputy Supervisor Jeremy Saland said that the draft is the first iteration of the plan but also the downtown needs change.

"I don't think anyone in the community wants to see that maximum buildout of 1,000 units as depicted in what we've seen of the design, but nevertheless, it's not going to happen to that extent, and we want to, for the lack of a better way to describe it, shrink it back," Saland said.

However, pace of approvals and construction has also been a source of frustration for many in town, said Councilwoman Lauren Levin.

The proposed code would help expedite some approvals if builders conform to the zoning by having their application evaluated by the town's Development Department.

"I think what people have to understand is we have a current zoning ordinance that is incredibly obsolete," Levin said. "People don't want to read that document, and because it is dense and we want to provide a mechanism so it is straightforward and we can preemptively set guidelines so that people understand what our residents want this town to look and feel like."

Board discussion last week also included potential strategies to have more affordable and workforce housing downtown.

Director of Planning Sabrina Charney Hull said the town has to work on writing a code that encourages that type of development on an appropriate scale for the hamlet. Also, various incentives can be offered.

"We have some work to do to really flush out what is meaningful between the goals of the community and the code," Hull said.

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Cuomo Sounds Alarm on New Reported Virus Strain in UK

By Anna Young

As Westchester and Putnam counties begin to see a downward trend in active coronavirus cases, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced on Monday a stronger, more contagious strain of COVID-19 has been discovered circulating in the United Kingdom.

With foreign health officials claiming the new strain is 70 percent more transmissible and the United Kingdom currently under lockdown, Cuomo implored the federal government to consider implementing travel restrictions before it's too late. He mentioned regulating mandatory testing and a new travel ban from Europe.

Currently, 30 nations have banned travel from the United Kingdom, with 120 European countries requiring passengers traveling from there to test negative for the virus prior to boarding.

"And the United States has done nothing," Cuomo said during his Monday briefing. "When you do not require U.K. flights to be tested, you are allowing thousands of U.K. passengers to arrive here every day. I believe intuitively, it (the new virus strain) is already here."

With three airlines – British Airways, Delta and Virgin Atlantic – flying daily from the United Kingdom to New York airports, Cuomo requested the state be placed on the list of 120 countries requiring travelers test negative for COVID-19 before boarding.

As of Monday, British Airways and Delta agreed to Cuomo's request. The pre-board



County Executive George Latimer reported a slight decrease in active cases in Westchester on Monday.

testing will begin on Tuesday, he said, adding if Virgin Atlantic doesn't agree other measures will be taken.

"I would not be doing my job as governor of New York if I sat here and let the federal incompetence create another emergency and disaster that costs the lives of New Yorkers," Cuomo said. "I know and I believe my intuition is correct that this is another disaster waiting to happen."

Cuomo stressed that if the federal government opts to do nothing, the same mistakes will continue to be made and place millions in danger. History has taught us it only takes one person to spread the virus,

he said.

Statewide there were 9,007 new positive cases on Monday, according to the state tracker. The daily positivity rate was 5.75 percent.

The state recorded 109 additional COVID-19-related fatalities, bringing the death toll to 28,709 since March.

Total hospitalizations are at 6,331, an increase of 146 over the previous day, according to state data. Across New York there have been 857,049 positive coronavirus cases since the start of the pandemic.

While deaths have risen in Westchester County over the last week, active cases have decreased in recent days. But cases are still high compared to last month. Coronavirus cases increased by 433 on Monday, bringing the total number of positive cases to 63,373 since the start of the pandemic.

There are currently 8,186 active cases, another slight decrease from the previous day, with the daily test positivity rate at 5.26 percent. That percentage is based on 8,236 tests taken on Sunday. Overall, there have been over 1.3 million COVID-19 tests administered in Westchester since March.

"The numbers that we're reporting have gone down since the peak of Tuesday," County Executive George Latimer said on Monday. "Five days is not enough of a period of time to really assert that we have a longer-range trend."

On Dec. 15, active cases reached a high of



8,771. While Latimer said it's the first time there's been a decrease in active cases in roughly two months, he said several factors could attribute to the change in cases,

including a decrease in the infection rate, which remains just above 5 percent.

As of Saturday, there were 353 virus patients in Westchester hospitals, a number that has remained relatively consistent over the last two weeks. The county's hospitalization rate is 4 percent, Latimer said.

The county reported five more deaths, bringing the number of COVID-19-related fatalities to 1,611 since March. The county has recorded 82 deaths since Dec. 7, a sharp increase from the summer months when there were just 11 fatalities in July and August.

"The fatality factor is concerning," Latimer said. "These are human lives that are affected by each of these situations."

Putnam County's total caseload has reached 4,168, according to the state, with 41 additional positive cases recorded on Monday. The county's daily positivity rate is 5.43 percent, with 755 tests administered Sunday, state data shows.

Putnam currently has 800 active cases, a significant decline compared to Dec. 14 when the county had 954 active cases.

There have been 66 coronavirus-related deaths in Putnam. No new deaths were reported on Monday.



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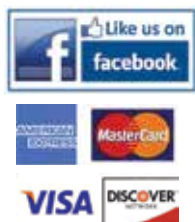
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Ronald McDonald House Launches COVID Relief Plan

By Anna Young

Ronald McDonald House of the Greater Hudson Valley recently launched a COVID relief plan to allow the organization to continue providing critical services to families experiencing medical emergencies during the pandemic.

Donations will allow the nonprofit organization to provide immediate needs,

such as food and shelter, to families with children receiving medical treatment at the Maria Fareri Children's Hospital in Valhalla and other local pediatric medical facilities. Other needs, such as continued support through ongoing programs, will also be prioritized.

Of the programs highlighted is Meals that Heal, which offers families one less thing to worry about during their stay at the Ronald

McDonald House. The organization also provides personal protective equipment for staff and families, remote education resources for young students and their parents and mental health support.

"The stress and uncertainty that we all experienced this year reminds us of what families with critically ill children face every day," said Anthony Trimarchi, a Ronald McDonald House board member. "The COVID Relief Plan will enable us to continue to support these families as we fully re-open our house in the upcoming months."

With ongoing restrictions resulting in a limited number of volunteers permitted onsite, the necessary work volunteers do for families, including donating, preparing and serving meals, have stopped. However, children are still getting sick or injured.

While Ronald McDonald House was

forced to close its doors at the height of the pandemic, critically ill children and families in need still required support. The organization covered accommodations costs as families were stationed offsite at local hotels and Airbnb homes so they could remain close to their child's medical care facility.

The house did reopen in July but enforced several restrictions to assure safety for all.

For almost a decade, Ronald McDonald House has provided a home away from home for more than 2,000 families with hospitalized children in critical condition, saving them more than \$5 million in lodging and meal costs.

Donations to the Ronald McDonald House COVID Relief Plan can be made at <https://give.rmh-ghv.org/campaigns/16693-covid-relief-plan>

Northern Westchester Hospital to Provide Free COVID Tests

By Anna Young

As Westchester County continues to experience a surge in coronavirus cases, Northern Westchester Hospital will be offering free COVID-19 diagnostic tests to the public.

The tests are available to community members at the Center for Healthy Living, located at 480 Bedford Rd. in Chappaqua, next to Whole Foods. With maximum safety measures in place to prevent exposure, health officials are only requesting residents schedule an appointment prior to arrival.

No prescription will be required during the no-cost appointment, and results will be given within one to three days of taking the test.

Health officials are asking those to be aware of any symptoms relating to the virus,

including fever, chills, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache or new loss of taste or smell. Other symptoms include, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.

State law also requires those traveling out of the state for more than 24 hours to test for the virus upon their return. The mandate requires that travelers obtain a test within three days of departure, prior to arrival in New York, and must, upon arrival to New York, quarantine for three days.

On the fourth day of quarantine, the traveler must obtain another COVID test. If both tests come back negative, the traveler may exit quarantine.

Call the Center for Healthy Living at 914-223-1780 for more information and to make an appointment.

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7	Visit TheExaminerNews.com and click the Columns/Puzzles tab to play today's crossword!							11
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5 Questions Women Should Ask About Breast Cancer Surgery

Ask the Doctor

Ranjana Chaterji, DO
Breast Surgeon
Northwell Health Breast Care Center
Northern Westchester Hospital

Learn more about
Dr. Chaterji, visit
[nwh.northwell.edu/
chaterji](http://nwh.northwell.edu/chaterji)



Q: What stage is my cancer?

A: Breast cancer stages are represented on a scale of 0 to 4, with 4 being the most serious. Stage 0, also called ductal carcinoma in situ, means that your cancer is contained in a milk duct and has a low risk of spreading. Stage 4 breast cancer means the cancer has spread to other parts of your body. If your cancer is stage 4, seeking treatment immediately may improve your outcome and ultimate quality of life.

Q. How do I decide whether a lumpectomy or mastectomy is the best option?

A: More often than not, you will choose the type of surgery you feel most comfortable with. The survival data of lumpectomy with radiation is equivalent to that of a mastectomy, so we've learned that more surgery is not necessarily better.

Q. How soon does surgery need to be done?

A: Typically, we try to operate within a month of a diagnosis – you don't have to decide immediately. You can learn about breast cancer, understand your options, and then make a decision you're comfortable with. A woman's gut feeling is most important. My patients often ask me, "What would you do?" But it's not about me – it's what the woman wants and what makes sense for her, her family, and her life.

Q: How do I choose a surgeon?

A: Seek a fellowship-trained breast surgeon. These are surgeons who, after their residency, do a fellowship specific to oncologic breast surgery. At Northern Westchester Hospital, we work as a team to care for you through surgery, medical oncology, radiation oncology, genetics and plastic surgery.

Q: How can I find support during this difficult time?

A: Northern Westchester Hospital's Bruce and Andrea Yablon Cancer Health and Wellness Program provides supportive care and holistic treatments that complement medical treatment. You can choose free integrative medicine services, including reiki, acupuncture, massage, nutrition planning, fitness and exercise plans, mindful wellness and emotional support, and a survivorship program.

We also partner with Support Connection, a group that offers free emotional, social and educational support services to women and their families and friends affected by breast and ovarian cancer. I encourage my patients to take part in these programs. The support enables women to help each other and empowers them to become their own health care advocates.

Jones, Advocates Press for Government to Step Up Child Care Commitment

By Martin Wilbur

Congressman-elect Mondaire Jones renewed calls for universal child care and pre-k and called on federal, state and county lawmakers to do more to make child care more affordable for working families.

Attending a virtual Child Care Council of Westchester town hall last Wednesday, Jones listened to the concerns of those working in the industry locally, representatives of the business community and other advocates who argued that the expense of caring for children not only hurts families but makes for less productive employees and extends inequality in society.

Jones pledged that after he is sworn into Congress on Jan. 3, he will make affordable child care a top priority. In more than half of the nation's 50 states, a full year of child care costs more than a year of in-state college tuition, he said.

"I hope to make a strong case for universal child care to both my colleagues and to the American people that is rooted in my own personal experience, and I think I'll be joined by a lot of folks who are already there and have been doing this important work," said Jones, who grew up in Section 8 housing in Spring Valley and recalled having to accompany his grandmother to work when school wasn't in session.

Under a plan that Jones supports, if the government provides child care and early learning services for families, then those families would pay a subsidized fee based on their income. Subsidies would extend for



Congressman-elect Mondaire Jones stressed the urgency for universal child care during a virtual forum last week.

families who have income that is less than 200 percent of the poverty line.

In addition, Jones supports paid parental leave and introducing regional cost-of-living guidelines for different areas of the country.

The incoming congressman said affordable child care is a key to diminishing income, wealth, racial, gender and digital inequality that has worsened because of the pandemic. He pointed to statistics showing that for 60 percent of Westchester parents child care impacts their work while 75 percent of employers report child care issues contributes to absenteeism and productivity loss.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare many of the deficiencies in our existing safety net, our social safety net," Jones said. "There are deficiencies that have made our public health crisis worse than it would otherwise be. Child care is a key part of that, and as schools close, many parents are faced with the choice of missing work to care for their children or having their children at home alone."

Dawn Mayerski, executive director of the Mount Kisco Child Care Center, said many families with children at her facility are essential workers who earn too much to qualify for subsidies but who struggle to afford the high cost of child care.

About half of MKCCC's parents pay the full cost while the remainder receive subsidies. For every child that receives a subsidy, the center needs \$1,000 to cover the expense, Mayerski said.

She also said there needs to be recognition that child care workers perform critical work.

"We are a major part of the economic development in our communities," Mayerski said. "Teachers and child care programs and child care centers have never been treated with the respect they deserve and the important work they do."

Jones said he would support similar pay and benefits for child care workers who have earned comparable accreditation as elementary school teachers.

Adrienne Harper, owner of Jump for Joy Day Care & Learning Center in Peekskill, said the pandemic has put a strain on families and centers like hers who struggle to maintain favorable staff-to-child ratio. She said that the

federal government must do more for those working families and the facilities that need to keep pace, including addressing digital inequality.

"Parents and children need support with new virtual learning that we are now faced with," Harper said. "Headsets and school supplies and WiFi support to accommodate the many students who now participate in daily virtual learning are very much needed."

John Ravitz of the Business Council of Westchester said he supports Jones' child care initiatives and expanding eligibility for subsidies. Doing that will help families and the business community, but more education is needed on its importance.

"Our goal and our challenge now is to continue to get businesses to understand that they need to be engaged on this," Ravitz said. "Employers have to know that in real life, and I'm sure that these last 10 months, have really clarified that for many of them, that child care is a daily burden on the shoulders of their employees."

Bringing parents, advocates and the business community together is essential to making child care more affordable and accessible, said Kathy Halas, executive director of the Child Care Council of Westchester. Almost no one who needs child care can afford it in Westchester, she said.

"Child care only exists because of abysmally low wages paid to those in the field who have been real heroes during this pandemic, and there will be no economic recovery without a healthy child care section," Halas said.

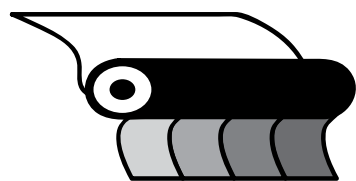
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Obituaries

Andrew Panken

Andrew Joel Panken of Ossining passed away on Dec. 13 at his residence.

Andrew was born in Mount Kisco on May 14, 1993, and is the son of Marc E. Panken and Carole Simonetti.

He came into this world on a Friday along with his brother Daniel John. Andrew was born and raised and lived his large life in Ossining. He was a graduate of Ossining High School, Class of 2011, and Westchester Community College, Class of 2017. He loved his five years of varsity wrestling, as well as his years playing football, lacrosse and golf at Ossining High School.

Andrew was a dedicated, active member of the Ossining Fire Department, where he held many positions, most recently as foreman of Washington Hook & Ladder Co. # 2 (Tower Ladder 42). He enjoyed his volunteer work at the fire department and the brothers and sisters it brought into his life. He so loved his volunteer firefighting, that he aspired to be a full-time firefighter and dedicated the last few years of his life toward that end.

He was a friend to many, and his warm, loving smile, generosity of spirit and his embraces were legendary to all who received them. Andrew lived his short life by the words "It's a beautiful day," which were tattooed on his ribs. This would be the first of many tattoos, all added with meaning and love.

Andrew is survived by his parents; his grandmother, Rita Simonetti; his brothers, Evan (and wife Tianna) and Daniel; his Uncle



Andrew Panken

John and Aunt Marjorie; and a large loving family and a wide circle of friends, as well as the love of his life, Zoe Fendrich.

Fern Yerks

Fern A. Yerks, of Carmel and formerly of Thornwood, died Dec. 15. She was 94.

Yerks was born in White Plains on July 2, 1926, the daughter of William and Katherine (Johnson) Bogert. She was the wife of the late Frank Yerks. Fern is survived by her son, Frank T. Yerks; her daughter, Catherine Brady; her loving grandchildren, Christine Marrone, Kathleen Damo, Michael Brady and Steven Brady; nine great-grandchildren; and her nieces, Gail Rich and Joanne Fennesey. She was predeceased by her sister, Ann Scofield, and brothers Peter and James Bogert.

Visitation was on Dec. 19 at Beecher Flocks Funeral Home, Inc. in Pleasantville, followed by services at the funeral home. Burial followed at Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla.

In lieu of flowers, donations to Gilbert Rauh American Legion Post #1574, 52 Garrigan Ave., Thornwood, N.Y. 10594 would be appreciated.



Fern Yerks

Daniel Doran

To God be the glory. Into your loving hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.

These words express the life – the driving force for Daniel A. Doran from beginning to end. Dan was born May 28, 1939, in Yonkers and passed into God's loving arms on Dec. 17.

He died peacefully, as he had lived,

surrounded by family. Now he receives the reward of a faithful servant.

Dan is survived by his wife, Jackie; his sons, John Doran of Chappaqua and Daniel Doran and his wife, Lorraine, of Wilton, Conn.; and his six grandchildren, Colleen Cahill, Claire Cahill, Christine Cahill, Aidan Doran, Daniel Doran and Avery Doran. His beloved daughter Ann-Christine Doran Cahill, wife of Thomas Cahill, passed away on Dec. 9, 2017.

Due to the ongoing health crisis, the Doran family will plan on celebrating Dan's amazing life by way of a celebratory mass in the near future. Details will be determined.

The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to the Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at mariafarerichildren.org in memory of Dan.



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Mt. Kisco Stores Charged for Selling Alcohol, Vaping Products to Minors

By Martin Wilbur

Three Mount Kisco businesses were charged last week with selling alcohol or vaping products to people under 21 years old.

Smoking of Chen, Inc., which is known as The Smoking King, at 32 Main St., was cited for selling vaping supplies to a minor, Westchester County police said. The two other businesses, Henry's Deli at 351 Lexington Ave. and Mount Kisco Snacks located at 540 Main St., were charged with selling alcohol to an underage individual.

County police and the county Department of Health sent underage individuals into multiple stores in Mount Kisco on Dec. 10 that sell beer, tobacco or vaping products. The action came at the request of the village.

Mayor Gina Picinich said the village will look to advocate for the suspension of the three businesses' licenses.

"It had been some time since the last formal compliance check," Picinich said. "Additionally, concerns have been raised by residents who observed underaged patrons."

Selling vaping supplies to anyone under 21 is a violation of the state public health law

while selling alcohol to an underage person violates the Alcohol Beverage Control law.

This is the second time in less than two years that Smoking of Chen and Henry's Deli have run afoul of the laws relating to illegal sales to minors. In February 2019, Smoking of Chen was cited for selling vaping supplies to someone under 21 while Henry's Deli sold cigarettes to an underage person.

Public Safety Commissioner Thomas A. Gleason said in a statement that the county police look to deter underage use of alcohol, tobacco and vaping products through enforcement and public education.

"We continually conduct these compliance checks and work in partnership with community organizations and the municipalities we serve to encourage young people to make safe and healthy choices," Gleason said.

Police said the charge against Smoking of Chen will be adjudicated by an administrative law judge before the county Department of Health. The owners of Henry's Deli and Mount Kisco Snacks will be required to answer the charges in Mount Kisco Village Court.

known to have a feast prepared at a moment's notice. Rosalie was devoted to her family, and always made time to catch up with her many siblings, cousins, nieces and nephews. Her family could always count on her for advice, honesty, wisdom and many, many laughs.

Rosalie was preceded in death by her husband, Fernando. She is survived by her three children, Sam (Cathy), Elizabeth (Mickey) and Frederick (Suzanne); her six grandchildren, Anthony, Gina, Amanda (James), Paige, Alana and Frederick; and her great-grandson, Julian.

A private, family-only Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, Dec. 23 at 10 a.m. at Holy Innocents R.C. Church on Bedford Road. Entombment will follow at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Putnam Valley.

In lieu of flowers, kindly make contributions to the Parkinson's Foundation.

Obituary

Rosalie Faustini

On Friday, Dec. 18, Rosalie Faustini, loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away at the age of 88.

Rosalie was born on July 22, 1932, to Ciro and Josephine Grasso. She grew up on the Lower East Side of New York City with her six sisters, Catherine, Theresa, Elizabeth, Beatrice, Anna and Sarah, and two brothers, Nicholas and Joseph. On July 1, 1956, Rosalie married the love of her life, Fernando. Together they raised three children, Sam, Elizabeth and Frederick.

Rosalie raised her family in the Bronx. In 1994, she moved into a beautiful home in Pleasantville that was built by her husband Fernando. Those who visited Rosalie would never leave hungry; she loved to cook and was

It's Definitely Winter



HENRY FERLAUTO PHOTO

Snow from Winter Storm Gail covers the main entrance of Westchester County Airport on Dec. 16.

Police Blotter

State Police

Dec. 11: State police from the Brewster barracks arrested James Buser, 46, of Southeast, for second-degree strangulation, a Class D felony, and fourth-degree criminal mischief, a Class A misdemeanor.

On Dec. 10, an August 2020 domestic incident was reported to police. An investigation revealed there were several past domestic incidents in which Buser choked the victim in 2019 and broke the victim's television this year. Buser was arraigned in Town of Patterson Court and released on his own recognizance.

Dec. 15: A 25-year-old Carmel man was arrested and charged with fourth-degree grand larceny and fifth-degree criminal possession of stolen property, both Class E felonies; petty larceny; fifth-degree criminal possession of stolen property; seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance; resisting arrest; and obstruction of governmental administration.

At 4:28 a.m., troopers received a call of a suspicious person on Ridge Road. They found and attempted to interview a male subject in the area. The subject, later

identified as Michael S. O'Connor III, fled on foot from the approaching troopers. After a short pursuit, O'Connor was located in a nearby wooded area and placed under arrest without further incident. He was issued an appearance ticket returnable on Dec. 28 to Town of Cortlandt Court.

Dec. 15: A 55-year-old Poughkeepsie man was arrested at about 3:40 p.m. following a complaint of a stolen vehicle. The suspect, was charged with third-degree criminal possession of stolen property, a Class D felony, and second-degree aggravated unlicensed operation, an unclassified misdemeanor.

State troopers in Westchester, cross-monitoring Putnam County 911 radio transmissions, overheard the Putnam County Sheriff's office investigating a complaint of a stolen 2017 Chevrolet Silverado. Troopers patrolled to likely locations the suspect may have fled to and subsequently located him on Route 9 and Highland Avenue. The suspect, Derek Sloane, was taken into custody without further incident. He was issued an appearance ticket returnable to Town of Cortlandt Court on Jan. 21, then turned over to the Putnam County Sheriff's Department for further investigation.

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Guest Column

Fast Drug Approval: The COVID-19 Vaccine and Your Role

By Randi Oster

On Dec. 10, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) gave the green light to a COVID-19 vaccine. After nearly a year of scary statistics, economic downturn, isolation, separation and, worst of all, heart-wrenching loss, this is great news.

Not so fast. Emergency Use Authorization, or EUA, from the FDA is not the same as full approval. An EUA allows products to be used under special circumstances before all the evidence is available for evaluation. For an EUA, the agency considers whether a product's "known and potential benefits outweigh its known and potential risks."

The use of the new COVID-19 vaccines might seem like a fast drug approval, but to be clear, the FDA continues to evaluate the vaccine once launched. Your experience matters. If there are adverse events from the vaccine, your information can help determine if it is a trend and if further testing or labeling changes are needed.

Right now, the existing data for the EUA approval shows at least 90 percent efficacy and minimal side effects. Your experience with the COVID-19 vaccine should be part

of that data and can help validate these numbers.

I am not a doctor. I am a mother whose son underwent multiple operations for Crohn's disease. During his illness I discovered that our health care system needed an overhaul.

On my quest to impact the health care system, I became the consumer representative on the FDA's Pediatric Advisory Committee. This position taught me the steps, timing and testing size required for FDA approval. It is part of the process to continue evaluation once a product is launched.

Since 1990, the FDA incorporated a process to capture adverse events for vaccines. It is the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Many people are unaware of its existence. But with COVID-19 we can use the system to ensure that the data used to receive EUA approval is being replicated by consumers. VAERS is an online tool that allows patients and doctors to submit their experience. Visit <https://secure.vaers.org>.

Even if you are not sure that the vaccine caused an adverse event, the FDA asks you to report: .

1. If you are hospitalized
2. Any disabilities that may be a result
3. If a loved one died after taking the vaccine
4. Any adverse event that happens after getting the vaccine

If you are not sure that a certain type of adverse event should be reported to VAERS, talk with your health care provider.

The good news is "all hands are on deck" to combat this pandemic. The good news is scientists and doctors are discovering ways to keep us safe. The good news is we have existing platforms to capture the information needed to determine if new vaccines work effectively. The good news is you are not alone. Your experience counts and can make a difference.

For more information, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyVUGUsc9BU&feature=youtu.be/>

Fairfield, Conn. resident Randi Oster is a nationally-known catalyst for health care reform and a passionate patient advocate. She is the author of "Questioning Protocol," is the FDA's pediatric advisory consumer representative and is a founding member of the Patient Safety Action Network.

Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus

"Is There a Santa Claus?" was originally printed on Sept. 21, 1897 in The New York Sun.

Dear Editor

I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, "If you see it in The Sun, it's so." Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?

Virginia O'Hanlon

115 West Ninety Fifth Street

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and

knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence.

We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The external light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if you did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The

most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! He lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Letter to the Editor

Redevelopment of Soundview Property Would Be Boon for Yorktown

Last week, small businesses in Yorktown Heights received an early holiday gift. With the COVID-19 pandemic taking a severe toll on our small businesses, news of a plan to transform the Soundview Preparatory School property into a new mixed-use development is cause for optimism for Yorktown's business community and taxpayers.

Mixed-use projects that combine historic preservation and environmental beautification with a combination of residential and commercial development are a proven way to strengthen communities and their downtowns. With the promise of a welcoming new gateway to our central business district and new customers, this is an exciting plan that has

the ability to make a real difference for the future of our town and the dedicated men and women working every day so their business can succeed.

Sergio Esposito
President, Yorktown Chamber of Commerce

Examiner Media is now accepting internship applications online from high school and college student journalists. Visit the following link to apply: <https://www.theexaminernews.com/examiner-internship-program-application/>

No. Castle Kicks Off Police Reform Sessions as Part of State Initiative

By Martin Wilbur

North Castle held its initial police reform meeting last Tuesday, a low-key forum that included comments from three town residents with suggestions for the town's law enforcement agency.

The 32-member police department covers about 26 square miles in the hamlets of Armonk, Banksville and North White Plains, said Chief Peter Simonsen. It is one of 160 accredited police agencies out of 514 departments in the state that must adhere to 108 standards, rules and regulations to achieve that distinction. The North Castle Police Department was first accredited in 2000.

"I look forward to what we learn through this initiative, learning from residents and the stakeholders committee," Simonsen said. "If there's any way for us to improve and provide better service to the community, I'm all for it."

Resident Michael Alter made a series of recommendations for the town to consider such as having the department closely mirror the racial makeup of the town, which is about 22 percent non-white, and to have more women officers.

Alter said town officials should introduce mandatory implicit bias training, ban chokeholds and be open to having a police safety board where citizens can help oversee the functioning the department, similar to how a board of education sets policy for a

school district.

"Why don't we think about public safety the same way?" Alter asked. "Just because the town is small, (it) only has 12,000 residents, only has about 30 officers, it still requires us to think about public safety in a different way."

North White Plains resident Ed Lobermann advocated for the use of body cameras for the town's officers. Simonsen had requested funds in the 2021 budget to introduce the technology, but was not included in next year's spending plan, he said.

Body cameras would help increase transparency and build public trust and confidence in the department, Lobermann said.

"A major enhancement to the relationship between the police department and the residents of North Castle would be a program to fund the cost of body cameras for each and every North Castle police officer," he said. "Benefits derived by the use of body cameras for both police officers and to the public have been well-documented in other communities."

The third speaker, Jerry Ioveno of Armonk, praised the North Castle police for their performance and urged the town to refrain from making changes.

"The professionalism, the respect, the courtesy that we get as residents in this town is unbelievable," Ioveno said.

Co-chairs of the 20-member committee are Anne Bianchi of the Westchester Legal Aid Society, and Lara Stengel, a Byram Hills Board of Education member. The stakeholders did not announce a date for the next meeting.

In June, Gov. Andrew Cuomo mandated a review of all police department's policies and procedures in the state and for each community to submit a report that includes potential reforms by Apr. 1.

For residents who want to submit questions and comments regarding the North Castle Police Department as part of this process, e-mail tncpolicereform@northcastleny.com.

Guiding Eyes Makes Key Promotion

Elena Consalvo, Guiding Eyes for the Blind's former senior director of development, has been promoted to chief development officer. In this role, Consalvo will be responsible for leading the organization's fundraising efforts.

Consalvo is a senior marketing professional with more than 25 years of leadership experience in the direct marketing industry. She

has spearheaded significant growth across multiple markets, products, channels and integrated media through her expertise in product and offer development, promotion strategy, customer retention, database marketing and P&L management.

Prior to joining the Guiding Eyes team, Consalvo spent 10 years at Guideposts, a nonprofit organization.

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Student's Drive Helps to Lead Greeley as No Place for Hate

By Martin Wilbur

Last December, William Brandes was part of an initiative with faculty members and an assistant superintendent to try and address his fellow Horace Greeley High School students about the issue of racism.

Starting with that effort, Brandes, now a senior and the student government president, wanted to have a more lasting impact on the school.

"In one of my English classes we read the book 'Heavy' by Kiese Laymon and that really brought my attention to this issue, and while I didn't see explicit racism at Greeley, I knew it was something that implicitly was affecting each student and needed to be taught and addressed more thoroughly," Brandes said.

Since early this year, he and fellow students have been working toward having Greeley designated as a No Place for Hate school, a year-long process to join more than 1,600 schools throughout the United States in a program run by the Anti-Defamation League. It is student-driven and tailored so each school may decide what is important to improve the climate in their community.

Brandes said once they signed on to start the process by providing demographic information about Greeley, a roughly 20-member student council was created to help oversee the effort. Then a student



Horace Greeley High School senior William Brandes, the driving force behind the effort to become a No Place for Hate School.

survey needs to be completed followed by three schoolwide events, such as speaker forums addressing various issues related to racism. Given the realities of the pandemic those can be conducted virtually.

All students must also sign a pledge of respect, which reinforces the values

outlined in the No Place for Hate mission, Brandes said.

Thus far, the effort has been well-received by the student body.

"I feel that the majority of students are very happy with this work," Brandes said. "Some students wanted to do other things as well but we're including this in our work to improve the school climate and educate my peers and myself on racism and bias."

Principal Andrew Corsilia said he was approached by Brandes about having Greeley participate in the program. Corsilia had been somewhat familiar with No Place for Hate during his time leading Seven Bridges Middle School, and was impressed with the ongoing accountability and flexibility afforded to each school.

After many e-mails between Brandes and the principal, the school was able to commit to the program and start the process. Corsilia wanted to clear the initiative with central administration so it didn't duplicate other efforts the school and district have been taking.

"It was really Will's passion and persistence," Corsilia said. "He was like we've got to do this. It was that energy that got this off the ground, and it's still going to be the Student Council's focus and energy and work that brings this around. I said if you guys are willing to do the work, I said that's great, we're going to move forward on approving it."

A key component to having students buy in was to bring aboard a diverse population of students, said Matthew Friedler, the school's student life director and mentor to the students involved in this effort. Brandes reached out to the Black Student Union, the Alliance for Equality, ENOUGH, which tackles hate and genocide, the Spanish Club and many other groups.

"He has such a diverse group committed to making this work and following through with the work," Friedler said. "It's going and it's student-led, so obviously it's in good hands."

Corsilia and Brandes noted that the process began well before the racist TikTok video made by a few of the school's students surfaced last spring. While a shock and upsetting, it helped to raise the passion and urgency for those involved to have Greeley become a No Place for Hate school, Brandes said.

He pointed out that it's not just upper classmen but there are students involved in each grade, so after this year's seniors graduate, others will be able to carry on the effort.

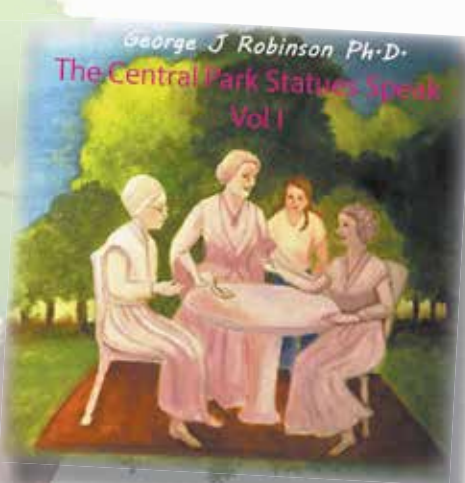
He said the process will be completed by April after the school's three events are held.

"I'm fully confident that they will bring on the same momentum and continue with such a great passion for these issues," Brandes said.

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Feeding Westchester Continues to Meet Challenges of Pandemic, Holidays

By Martin Wilbur

It was a difficult decision for Stephanie Graham Taylor to sign up for Feeding Westchester's monthly food bank distributions.

In June, the South Salem resident went through her first drive-through food bank after her spouse became unemployed. Matters were also complicated because Taylor has a compromised immune system and was fearful of going to crowded supermarkets as the pandemic's onslaught continued through the spring.

Taylor, a pre-K teacher, said one of her co-workers who lives in Elmsford talked about Feeding Westchester's program. Given her own health condition, she still had to overcome what she described as her own shame to accept help.

But it has been the right decision. There has been enough food to assist her and her family get through each month since.

"I broke down in tears when I came home and opened the packages to see the massive amount of food in the package," said Taylor, who has a five-year-old son. "Unbelievable. It was overwhelming and unbelievable."

While Feeding Westchester and



Since the start of the pandemic, demand for Feeding Westchester's food distribution has been double to triple compared to before the onset of COVID-19, says its President and CEO Karen Erren, pictured above. Volunteers continue to pack millions of pounds of food to distribute each month.

its roughly 300 partners throughout the county are always busy, the past nine months has highlighted just how many families there are like Taylor's in every community. Before COVID-19, the organization would typically help about 150,000 residents each month, said Feeding Westchester President and CEO Karen Erren.

That number has been holding steady at nearly twice that number, which equates to between 1.8 million and a little more than two million



pounds of food each month. At the height of the pain in spring and into the summer, more than 400,000 residents needed food monthly, she said.

In Westchester, with its reputation for affluence, a spiraling number of people who never thought they would need assistance found themselves registering with Feeding Westchester.

"We had an increased awareness that this can happen to anybody, that there are circumstances that impact

us, that you don't have to be living on the edge to be living at or above your means," Erren said. "So as spouses become unemployed, as children are at home and needed to be cared for, and that led to increased struggles and juggling at home as these factors unfolded, many, many, many organizations and corporations realized hunger is a community challenge."

While hunger has been an issue locally for many years, to see long lines at pantries, food banks and soup kitchens during the holidays has been particularly heart-wrenching. But Erren said Feeding Westchester was prepared to meet the challenge because the holidays are historically a time of increased need.

During Thanksgiving week, it distributed 192,900 meals, including 8,040 turkeys. By the time December concludes, Feeding Westchester expects a 62 percent increase in holiday meal distribution this year.

"We were grateful and gratified to not only distribute great food in preparation for Thanksgiving and Christmas, but in preparation for Thanksgiving we also distributed literally twice as many turkeys and chickens as we did last year, providing that stability to families,"

Erren said.

Feeding Westchester procures the millions of pounds of food it distributes each year through a variety of sources. Erren said it receives donations of excess food from area retailers, monetary donations enable purchases from the Hunts Point market, there are food collection drives as well as federal and state assistance programs.

Of its 300 partners, there are about 100 pantries that Feeding Westchester supplies throughout the county, along with shelters, community organizations and soup kitchens.

Erren is certain that the change to a new year won't diminish the need — at least not initially.

"The one thing that we do feel, unfortunately, we're pretty confident about is increased need will remain," she said.

For Taylor, Feeding Westchester has been the assistance needed for her family where they can have a balanced meal every day and not be forced to ration.

"I feel like it was a gigantic lifeline for me to have that resource to tap into because it was so much food," Taylor said. "It was definitely a lifeline."

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Mt. Kisco Church Maintains Tradition With Outdoor Living Nativity

By Martin Wilbur

The pandemic has caused so many events to be canceled this year but congregational leaders and parishioners at the United Methodist Church of Mount Kisco found a way to keep a popular Christmas tradition alive.

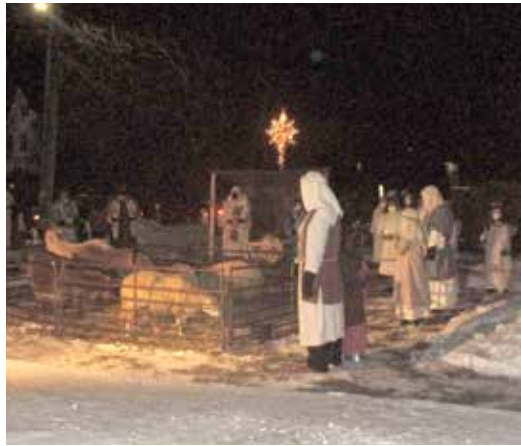
With some ingenuity and reconfiguration, the church held its living nativity early last Saturday evening, telling the story and re-enacting the birth of Jesus with music, live animals and narration by Pastor Elaine Pope-Joffrion.

The socially distanced event on the church's grounds – luminary candles were placed six feet apart to help families adequately separate – was a welcome sight for many after nine months of COVID-19 that has forced services at the church and most houses of worship to be held virtually.

"It's just a way that we can come together and really understand the meaning of the season, and that's just so special, especially this year," said parishioner Bobbie McCann, who helped organize the event.

With a fresh layer of snow on the grounds from last week's storm on a crisp, cold evening that added to the seasonal feel, the roughly 40-minute event featured a pen set up that contained a few donkeys and sheep as well as a goat.

Pope-Joffrion said the congregants worked hard to make the event a reality after much uncertainty.



A portion of the United Methodist Church of Mount Kisco's living nativity that included a pen of animals, music and a very seasonal feel.

Previously, portions of the living nativity were held inside but that wasn't feasible this year.

The pastor mentioned that she was "absolutely ecstatic" that the church was able to hold the event because it's important to maintain tradition during difficult times.

"I think it means everything to be able to continue the tradition in spite of the circumstances," Pope-Joffrion said. "The congregation worked meticulously to make sure that this could continue

this year and to do so very safely. I'm so proud of them. It's just amazing."

Having the entire event outdoors allowed members of the community to stop by if they wished and take in the festivities. Pope-Joffrion also said that there is more to a church than the building where weekly and holiday services take place.

"This was just an incredible labor of love, a love of community, a love of church, love for God," Pope-Joffrion said. "But I will tell you this, it was important for us to be able to show that churches aren't just four walls and that community and being of service to the community is critically important to us. We just went all out to make sure we were able to do that tonight."

McCann said she was pleased with the turnout, which appeared to approach about 100 people. It has been one of the few ways people can celebrate together.

"I think we really enjoy being together and singing outside a little bit," she said.

The church will hold two services on Christmas Eve online. A family gathering is scheduled for 7 p.m. and the second service with a candlelight vigil will begin at 11 p.m.

For more information, call the United Methodist Church of Mount Kisco at 914-666-5014 or visit www.mountkiscochurch.org.



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Handmade Holiday Memories to Last a Lifetime or Two

Before I married, I had a roommate named Tom who was an excellent artist and craftsman, a fellow who added more taste and style to our place than one normally would expect to find in an apartment occupied by two bachelors.

We shared living space for little more than a year, but when the Christmas season approached, he suggested that we have a tree, fully decorated. I was somewhat surprised, even resistant to such an idea (I was not what you would call domestic when I was young), but he insisted. And because he was really into crafts, he suggested that we make our own ornaments. I was definitely not interested in that prospect, so I suggested that he make the ornaments, and I offered to buy the tree.

Because he worked in the garment district, he had access to shops where he bought spools of ribbons, many kinds of different glass beads, sequins, buttons and feather plumes. With a supply of different sized Styrofoam balls and lots of straight pins, he had assembled all the makings of a home industry for ornaments.

As artistic as he was, he crafted ornaments that were indeed sensational. Impressed by his artistry, I thought I'd try my hand at it and must confess, while I'm not at all crafts oriented, I enjoyed it, but hoped that I wouldn't want to take up knitting next!



By Bill Primavera

When I moved out, I didn't get custody of the handmade Christmas balls. But soon after I was able to bring the concept to my wife and, as newlyweds, we had our first project to share.

In the days before crafts stores, not to mention Martha Stewart, the place to get the wildest stuff for ornamental projects was in Manhattan's hat district, west of Fifth Avenue on 38th Street. On my way home from work each day, I'd pass through and buy interesting hat decorations from the time when women still wore hats.

Then, immediately following dinner, my wife and I would sit in the living room, spread out my finds on our large coffee table and get to work.

We came up with the idea of each making one elaborate tree ornament every year throughout our marriage, but we got so much into our new hobby that it became an obsession the first year. The balls became more and more elaborate as we practiced our skills, and many were themed with their own names.

One ball, completely covered in pink ribbon ruching, was named our Baby Girl ball, even though we didn't have a baby yet. There was the Grace Kelly ball with pale blue and yellow ribbons and pearls; the Swan Lake ball with white ribbons, white feathers and crystals; the Can-Can Girl



BILL PRIMAVERA PHOTO

The Home Guru's Christmas tree, decorated in hand-made ornaments fashioned out of Styrofoam balls, straight pins, ribbons, beads and feathers.

ball with black and red ribbons, beads and a black feather plume on top; and our real piece de resistance, a large Faberge ball with semiprecious gems all over it, taken from old pieces of jewelry.

The tips of our thumbs had developed calluses from pushing in the pins until we got smart and used thimbles to aid our obsession.

We decided it would be safer to buy a large artificial tree so that there would be no threat of sap staining the balls, and we kept producing our little gems until we ran out of space on the tree. We had become Christmas ball addicted.

During that first holiday season, we magnanimously allowed any visitor to select one of our creations for their own trees, and still the tree seemed overlaid. The bottom line, however, is that we must have OD'd on our first year's attempt because we haven't made a single ball since then. We did, however, add antique and specialty ornaments over the years, as presents to each other.

To this day, couples with whom we are still in contact from our first year together, remind us annually that they think of us when they take their gifted ball out of its box.

As we have gotten older, our tree has become smaller, and our daughter, who was predated by that pink ribbon ball in her honor, is now the recipient, one by one, of our early Christmas ornament binge.

I guess that's the kind of stuff newly-married couples do together, projects that can be appreciated later in life when there's time to do so. And that's exactly what has happened.

Bill Primavera, while a publicist and journalist, is also a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc. (www.PrimaveraPR.com). To engage the services of The Home Guru to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.

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Westchester Artist Explores the Amazing World of Gumballs at Mall

By Lindsay Emery

Rye Brook artist Marla Beth Enowitz's new self-described "happy art" installation brings colorful exuberance to the third floor of The Westchester Mall.

But it likely would have never been created if not for the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Gumballs" is meant to appear like a massive gumball machine with the painted windows acting as the bowl of the machine, filled to the brim with brightly colored gumballs.

When the crisis hit in March, Enowitz went back to her self-described medicine: painting.

The heartening response Enowitz received after posting her paintings on social media encouraged her to develop her company, Marla Beth Designs.

The Westchester initially approached Enowitz about a potential pop-up show in the mall, but due to COVID-19 restrictions, it couldn't be arranged.

Instead, Enowitz was able to tour the vacant stores and pick a site for a mural. When she started looking for inspiration, she thought about how she could fill the vacancy with the most cheerful scene that could entertain all ages.

"Originally when I was painting, the

interest was that people are stuck at home in their four walls and it's gloomy and they wanted something to brighten up their space," Enowitz explained. "So I wanted to apply that to a public art display where you could take a photo, you could take a selfie and just have something cheerful to look at."

Enowitz, who recently moved back to Rye Brook to raise her children, said she remembers when the mall opened during her junior year in high school and finds it upsetting that there are so many vacancies.

"It's a little haunting to see the one-way street that they have taped out and everyone in masks," Enowitz said. "So I just thought, what would be friendly, what would make someone smile even beneath their mask, and I just thought candy is so happy."

Despite COVID precautions preventing Enowitz from adding a real gumball machine near her mural, she was determined to create something positive and upbeat.

"In a non-COVID world, I wanted to have a huge gumball machine outside the store and kids could actually put in the quarter and get the old-fashioned gumball, and that was my vision," said Enowitz, who is currently searching for a suitable spot

to create her next mural. "So, of course, there were no real gumballs to eat, but it did turn out looking like a big glass jar of gumballs."

Over two weeks, Enowitz prepped and painted the windows of the 600-square-foot storefront that had been last occupied by Justice, a fashion store for girls. She worked seven-hour days for six consecutive days to complete the work. Instead of her typical acrylic paints, she used children's washable tempera paint so that she could use similar materials that kids would use. It also didn't hurt that it could be easily washed away.

As Enowitz painted from inside the store, she was able to see the positive reactions to her installation firsthand. Children ran up to the glass and adults started taking pictures.

Enowitz is offering a giveaway to those who take a selfie in front of "Gumballs." Follow @marlabeth_designs on Instagram and tag a photo with #MBDGumballs for a chance to win a custom Marla Beth Designs splattered hat, neon pink mug and an original 4" x 4" mini art canvas through Dec. 31.

The mural can be viewed until the storefront is leased.

To learn more about Marla Beth Designs,



JULIE BROMBERG PHOTO

Marla Beth Enowitz's colorful "Gumball" mural at The Westchester Mall in White Plains.

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Westchester Swears in Eight New Police Officers Into its Ranks

Eight new police officers were sworn into the ranks of the Westchester County Police last week by County Executive George Latimer and Public Safety Commissioner Thomas A. Gleason.

The eight officers have previous police experience and transferred to the Department of Public Safety from three municipal police departments in Westchester.

The new officers are: Clinton Boxhill, Abdu Lawrence, Conrado Builes Ramirez, Alberto Ramos, Rasau Romeo, Nicholas Smith, Thomas Hagan and Kristin Reilly.

"This is a diverse group of officers who bring significant experience and talents to the Westchester County Police," Latimer said. "We are pleased to have them in our ranks and I wish them much success in their careers with the county police."

Latimer also noted that a civil service exam for police officer positions is tentatively planned for May 2021, but might have to be delayed because of COVID-19 concerns. He encouraged those who are interested in a police career to watch for announcements from the county early in 2021.

The civil service exam, administered by the Westchester County Department of Human Resources, is used for hiring new police officers for the county police, the police departments in the cities of Rye and Peekskill and all town and village



Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins, far left, County Executive George Latimer, second from left, Deputy Police Commissioner Terrance Raynor and Police Commissioner Thomas A. Gleason, far right, flank Westchester County's newest police officers last week.

departments in Westchester.

You must take the civil service exam to become eligible to be hired as a police officer and be admitted to the Westchester County Police Academy," Latimer said. "We will be working hard to publicize this opportunity and will hold recruitment events across Westchester to try to ensure that a diverse

group of people take the exam. We want our local police departments to reflect the entire Westchester community – and that begins by having a diverse group of applicants take the test."

When exam details are finalized, the county will post the information on westchestergov.com and its social media

channels. To receive notifications of all upcoming civil service exams, people can sign up to receive e-mail notifications at <https://exams.westchestergov.com/webexam/emailSubscription/subscribe.htm>.

As for the county's newest officers, Gleason said they have been assigned to the uniformed Patrol Services Division and will begin field training immediately. During field training, each officer is teamed up with a field training officer to become familiar with county police policies, procedures and all patrol posts, including parkway patrols, county parks and facilities, the Westchester County Airport and municipal precincts in Mount Kisco and Cortlandt.

The new officers will be given a permanent patrol assignment upon completion of their field training, Gleason said.

The eight new officers were sworn in Dec. 14 following a promotion ceremony at the Westchester County Police Academy attended by Latimer and Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins. Promoted from sergeant to lieutenant were Vincent Antonecchia, Robert Ess and Anthony Morizio. Promoted from police officer to sergeant were Kyle McCarrick, Isai Moreira, Francis Pagliuca and Mark Shkreli.

"I welcome our newest officers ...and congratulate those we have promoted," Gleason said. "We are expecting great things from all of them."

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Yorktown Enters Solar Power Pact to Save Money on Electricity

By Rick Pezzullo

The Town of Yorktown will save an estimated \$25,000 annually under an energy credit purchase agreement recently signed by Supervisor Matt Slater. Slater signed the pact with Lodestar Energy, which has installed a solar panel array in Nichols, N.Y. that is expected to go live this Wednesday. The solar panels are located on farmland and is projected to produce 2.7 million kilowatt hours of electricity in the first operating year. "This agreement puts Yorktown at the vanguard of carbon neutrality in Westchester County and it shows our community's commitment to the environment and concern for climate change," Slater said. "This agreement isn't an isolated gesture; we are transforming Yorktown. Just this week we saw Arcadia Farm activate its solar panel array, which will provide power to 40 local homes." The Lodestar agreement is a result of Yorktown's growing partnership with Sustainable Westchester. Residents, houses of worship and qualifying businesses have been offered a unique opportunity to participate in community solar, which provides similar benefits to individual homeowners. "We're so pleased to partner with the Town of Yorktown to bring the benefits

of clean solar power to residents, and now to the town itself," said Nina Orville, director of solar programs at Sustainable Westchester. "Yorktown has clearly demonstrated its commitment to accelerating the transition to renewable energy through all its recent actions and we applaud the town for its leadership." Some of Yorktown's recent efforts to promote solar power include the November approval of the installation of a solar panel array in the parking lot of the Granite Knolls Sports Complex; the September adoption of new laws regulating solar panel arrays and solar power storage devices; and the August agreement with Sustainable Westchester to educate residents about vetted solar power enrollment opportunities. "The beauty of a community solar project is that anyone can participate, which helps combat climate change and receive the financial benefits, all without the worry about the cost of installing solar panels or damage to their roof," Slater said. Unlike traditional solar, where an array is installed on a roof or property, community solar is installed at an offsite location. Homeowners and businesses can subscribe and receive credits on their electric bills for the clean energy produced.

Croton Declares Public Health Emergency as Coronavirus Cases Rise

By Anna Young

With COVID-19 cases reaching a cautionary point in Croton-on-Hudson, village leaders have officially declared a public health emergency last week. The declaration, which was made by Village Manager Janine King on Dec. 14, will be in effect for the next 30 days unless otherwise lifted or extended. With the village in a state of emergency since Mar. 16, officials have the authority to issue emergency orders addressing the COVID-19 outbreak without a formal meeting to preserve public safety. A village law requiring face masks or coverings be worn on public, private and commercial properties when unable to maintain a six-foot distance from another person who is not a member of the same household will now be enforced. Residential property is exempt from the law. The mandate was passed by the Village Board last month and goes into effect only if a public health emergency is issued. The Croton-on-Hudson Police Department will be responsible for enforcing the law, with violators subject to a penalty of up to \$100 for the first violation, and up to a \$250 fine for any subsequent violations occurring within a one-year period.

While Gov. Andrew Cuomo already has an executive order imploring folks to wear face masks, Mayor Brian Pugh has previously said it benefits the village to have its own law with specific regulations and fines authorized. New Castle and Yorktown also have emergency mask mandates in place. As of Dec. 11, the village had 48 cases, a number that has doubled since the Village Board agreed to pass its mask mandate. Westchester County had 8,089 active cases, as of Sunday. Other exemptions to the law are children under the age of two or anyone who is unable to medically tolerate a face covering; drivers traveling alone or exclusively with members of their households in a car; and persons playing sports or participating in a fitness class or recreational activity who are unable to tolerate wearing a mask during physical activity. A mask must be worn as soon as the physical activity has ended, the law states. Additionally, individuals are not required to wear a mask or covering when eating, drinking or seated at a restaurant. Police officers, firefighters, ambulance personnel and other first responders are also excused from wearing a covering when engaged in an emergency. The legislation ceases when the public health emergency expires.

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

THERE'S A WORD FOR IT

A vocabulary-building quiz By Edward Goralski

Old Christmas. The text of "Old Christmas" first appeared as five chapters in Washington Irving's "Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.," published in 1819-1820. Irving's "celebration of the celebration" preceded Charles Dickens's "Christmas Carol" by nearly a quarter century. Here's to celebrating this holiday season with words from "Old Christmas."

1. **envince** (v.)

A) to show envy B) bring about C) display clearly
2. **retinue** (n.)

A) a group of attendants B) restraint C) a new version
3. **predilection** (n.)

A) a preconceived idea B) fondness C) forecast
4. **coeval** (adj.)

A) having the same age B) close fitting C) kindly
5. **erudition** (n.)

A) an act of despair B) blunder C) extensive knowledge
6. **arrant** (adj.)

A) overly proud B) extreme C) hard to climb
7. **flurry** (v.)

A) to agitate B) wash out C) ebb and flow
8. **cant** (n.)

A) a warning B) a slow pace C) jargon

- ANSWERS:
1. C. To display clearly; reveal
2. A. A group of retainers or attendants
3. B. A preference or special liking for something; fondness
4. A. Having the same age or date of origin; contemporary
5. C. Extensive knowledge acquired chiefly from discipline, or social group; jargon
6. B. Being notoriously without moderation; extreme
7. A. To cause to become agitated and confused; agitate; perturb
8. C. The special vocabulary of a profession, discipline, or social group; jargon

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continued on page 26



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Where and How to Celebrate the Holidays, Part II

Here are more suggestions for your holiday pleasure, dining in, out or at home. Follow COVID-19 protocols and stay safe.

Ace Endico to Go

The Ace Endico story began years ago out of a small grocery in the Bronx. Today, after nearly four decades under the guidance of co-founders William Endico and Murray Hertzberg, the company has grown into a major wholesale food supplier and distributor to the food service industry in the tristate area. Now they also offer home delivery to Westchester and Putnam.

Ace Endico Marketplace accepts retail customers at its state-of-the-art headquarters in Brewster, just off I-84, and their smaller outlet on West Lincoln Avenue in Mount Vernon. After the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, Ace Endico to Go was launched with a small fleet of new vans for home delivery. They sell a wide line of products: meats, produce, dry goods, dairy, fish, poultry, cheeses, canned goods, imported items and beverages.

During the holidays, free home delivery is available with a \$100 minimum order. Deliveries are made Monday through Saturday. Their daily flyer is posted on the website and is customer friendly.

We took a drive north to Ace Endico's 200,000-square-foot main warehouse and market on the outskirts of Brewster for some alternative shopping. I had to see this for myself. It turned out to be a fruitful road trip.

The retail marketplace is on the side of the facility and offers plenty of parking. We got a rolling cart, and once inside, started combing the aisles. It was well-stocked with assorted merchandise – fruit and produce, meats and fish, frozen foods, paper goods, gourmet items and kitchen supplies. Many items were packaged in large quantities for wholesale buyers. There were plenty of goods also sold in smaller quantities. You could pick your own apples or potatoes, for example.

The best part was that most prices were very reasonable compared to mainstream markets. On a follow-up trip, we bought fresh mussels and halibut from their fish counter,



By Morris Gut

which made for delicious meals. In each case, by the time we got to check out, we had filled our cart with more than we had anticipated, which was fine. Some spur-of-the-moment buys had found their way into our order.

Ace Endico is located at 80 International Blvd. in Brewster. Info: 914-347-3131 or 1-845-230-9886. Ace Endico in Mount Vernon is located at 188 W. Lincoln Ave. Info: 914-699-5592 or visit www.aceendicotogo.com.

Pristine Seafood at KEE Oyster House

Here is a treat you may want to take advantage of this holiday season. Kenan, Ekren and Elvi, owners of KEE Oyster House on Court Street at the corner of Route 22 in White Plains, continue to serve a delightful seafood-rich menu. I watched not long ago as staff helped shell a tempting lobster prior to serving. A pristine selection of oysters is served every day with all the trimmings.

I recently enjoyed a loaded lobster roll with a side of Old Bay chips at lunch. Their version of fried calamari teases my palate while a taste of their pan-seared scallops with seafood risotto and brown butter sends me into foodie heaven. There are dramatic hot or cold seafood towers, too.

For you carnivores out there, a hefty 16-ounce dry-rubbed prime sirloin is on the menu. There's also good beer and wine.

KEE Oyster House is located at 126 E. Post Rd. in White Plains. Open Monday through Saturday. Info: 914-437-8535 or visit www.keeoysterhouse.com.

Italian Latin Fusion

Mother and daughter Miguelina Martinez and Gabriella Suriel opened Gabriella's Italian Fusion at the former Ernesto's space on West Post Road. The enhanced kitchen has been serving a hearty mix of classic Italian and colorful Latin fusion specialties.

I recently indulged in their plump chicken wings and fries. There's a Cuban sandwich on Italian bread, which includes mustard, pork, ham, Swiss cheese, pickle and mojo, and burgers served on a brioche bun. Pastas include fresh salmon farfalle (sliced smoked salmon, dill and alfredo sauce) and lobster ravioli, which includes parmesan, butter and sage sauce.

Gabriella's big, hearty 24-ounce Tomahawk steak, prepared with portobello mushrooms, truffle oil sauce and yucca fries, comes with a complementary bottle of house-selected wine. A Spanish-style Paella Valenciana for two is served with rice mixed with seafood and meat. Traditional Puerto Rican Mofongo combinations served with mashed plantains come with choice of Frutti di Mare, skirt steak, shrimp, pork skin, chicken or cheese.

Gabriella's Italian Fusion is located at 130 W. Post Rd. in White Plains. Open seven days a week. Cocktail bar and lounge. Happy hour from 4 to 7 p.m. Sunday brunch. Take-out and delivery. Info: 914-358-4416 or visit www.gabriellasitalianfusion.us.



The antipasti platter at La Bocca Ristorante.



One of the vans from the fleet of Ace Endico to Go, the six-day-a-week delivery service Ace Endico Marketplace launched shortly after the start of the pandemic.

Antipasti Platters at La Bocca

Tony Spiritoso has nearly 40 years as a chef and restaurateur under his belt in Westchester. A meal at La Bocca Ristorante usually begins at his signature antipasto bar loaded daily with tempting cured imported meats, cheeses and appetizing house-made salads. Spiritoso has brought his vintage bright red slicing machines wherever he's been, and they sit ready to roll on the antipasto counter. Some consider La Bocca the most authentic Italian kitchen in the area.

The wine selection is among the best in the county. The dining room is filled with artistic columns and serving pieces. There is a new wine room for private events. Spiritoso and his veteran staff will take good care of you.

La Bocca Ristorante is located at 8 Church St. in White Plains. Open seven days. Info: 914-948-3281 or visit www.laboccaristorante.com.

Irish Cheer at Dunne's Pub

Dunne's is a neighborhood treasure, an authentic Irish tavern with all the traditional Gaelic accoutrements intact. New owner Declan Farrell, who also operates Vintage on Main Street in White Plains, has upgraded the premises but has taken great effort not to get caught up in the modernist mode. It is a friendly, homey place with a good kitchen dishing out generous servings of traditional



The delicious oysters at KEE Oyster House in White Plains.

Irish-style fare at prices that will leave some money in your wallet.

Farrell and his staff know how to pour that pint of Guinness while keeping the crowd in spirited conversation. Among the kitchen favorites are the corned beef Reuben sandwich; Plain Jane Burger served on a Kaiser roll; beer battered fish and chips; grilled Irish bangers; and cheddar cheese meatloaf served with Irish beans and mashed potatoes. Their sizzling steak is a tasty eye-catcher. Oktoberfest is celebrated the first Thursday of every month all year.

Dunne's Pub is located at 15 Shapham Place in White Plains. Open seven days for lunch and dinner. There's also a Sunday brunch. Municipal parking available. Info: 914-421-1451 or visit www.dunnepubandrestaurant.net.

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



An order of the plump wings with fries at Gabriella's Italian Fusion, which combines Italian and Latin cuisine.

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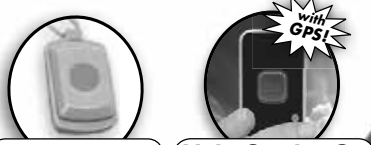
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is subject to a permissive referendum, that authorizes the issuance of \$275,000 serial bonds of the Village to finance the purchase of a new sanitation truck (the "Project") at a maximum estimated cost of \$275,000. The period of probable usefulness is fifteen (15) years and the bonds are payable from amounts to be annually levied on all the taxable real property in the Village. Pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder ("SEQRA"), the Village has determined that the project is a Type II Action requiring no further action under SEQRA. Eric Morrissey Administrator/Clerk, Village of Pleasantville Westchester County, New York

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Lose Weight and Keep it Off During These Stressful Times

If you've gained weight during the COVID-19 pandemic, you're not alone. High-calorie, high-carb comfort food recipes are a hot trend online. So many folks are baking, supermarkets are sold out of flour.

Now, as sheltering-at-home restrictions ease, you probably want to lose the "COVID 19" – those unwanted extra pounds.

The good news? Northern Westchester Hospital's Center for Weight Management offers weight-loss strategies geared to your lifestyle now – being home much of the time, with added responsibilities and stress, maybe still not able to go to a gym. And just a few steps from the kitchen.

Strategies tailor-made for you

Your weight gain doesn't have just one cause, right? That's why the center offers you a range of services to help you succeed at weight loss. From medical screening and nutritional counseling to individual and group classes, possible referral to our surgical weight loss team and optional sessions with our exercise physiology team, plus a personalized exercise plan, we help you put all the pieces together to take off the pounds and keep them off.

Today's new normal

Enjoy virtual dietician visits.



Discover ways to be physically active without a gym membership. Learn the secrets of cooking up healthy meals. Snack without sabotaging your progress. (It's possible!) Discover new ways to release stress that don't involve eating. Plus, enjoy access to the center's exclusive videos on eating mindfully, making snacks that are low in calories yet big on flavor and much more.

Winning weight-loss tips

1. Prepare meals for the week on Sunday. Prep a big salad that can be varied each day with different additions. Cook up big portions of healthy comfort foods like a hearty soup, stew or chile.
2. The gym is still closed? Discover other ways to exercise that you enjoy. Run on a track, walk in the neighborhood, get into free online exercise classes, put together a home gym. Build activity into your routine. It's a terrific stress-buster!
3. Develop a consistent sleep pattern. Aim for seven to eight hours sleep with consistent



By Rachel L. Goldman

bedtime and wake times. When you're overtired, you tend to eat more.

He's Dancing Again!

One patient at the Center for Weight Management is a 55-year-old man who was a ballroom dancer when he was more physically fit. For the last 15 years, he struggled with weight, which peaked at 238 pounds.

By August 2019, when he came to the center, the dancing had fallen away and he felt anxious about returning to the ballroom community. We worked with him in many ways. He worked with our nutritionist, ditching prepared foods and learning how to incorporate more vegetables

and fruits into his daily menu. He exercises in his home gym. Now he's down to 210 pounds – and dancing again.

Oh, does it feel good to get back to his old self. He's so much happier now that he's doing what he loves. And he has lots more endurance when dancing. His target weight is 190. He knows he'll get there. So do we.

Rachel L. Goldman is clinical coordinator of Northern Westchester Hospital's Center for Weight Management in the Center for Healthy Living in Chappaqua. To make an appointment for a consultation, call 914-223-1780.

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Fox Lane Senior Recognized By New York's Italian Heritage Committee

Just before the school year ended last June, Fox Lane High School Italian teacher Vittoria Buzzetto told her advanced classes about an essay competition for students in the tristate area.

The annual contest is sponsored by New York's Italian Heritage Culture Committee and required students to write about one of Italian director Federico Fellini's films.

Kaitlyn Hardy not only took up the challenge, but she was recognized for her excellence.

"I want to applaud Kaitlyn for taking the time to attempt this task and showing such motivation during the end of a stressful school year," Buzzetto said. "Aside from her responsible work ethic during the entire year, Kaitlyn's willingness to take part in this shows the maturity and determination of a thoughtful young lady who was willing to delay the start of her summer break to devote time to a task she considered important and meaningful."

Passionate about film and intrigued by the prize, Hardy, a senior, knew she had to take part in the contest. She decided to write about Fellini's 1963 film "8½."

"I wrote about his use of the oneiric film theory, which interprets films as a parallel of one's dreams and uses dream-like visuals, concepts and themes," Hardy said. "Throughout my essay, I analyzed the ways in which Fellini displays this and how he parallels his visuals with the plot and themes of his story."

"8½" is about Guido Anselmi, a self-absorbed filmmaker who is trying to make his latest movie, which seems to be based on his

life. The film splits between scenes of his life and daydreams, demonstrating his growing rift between reality and fantasy as well as truth and lies.

The topic would be impressive enough in her native language, but Hardy wrote her essay in Italian.

"I've been taking Italian for seven years, since the sixth grade," she said.

Described by Buzzetto as "sweet, humble and responsible," Hardy said she was pleasantly surprised to be recognized by the committee.

"I am sometimes reluctant to be proud of my achievements because I think that, in the greater sense of things, they're trivial or unimportant," she said. "However, this accomplishment is one I am truly proud of because it reflects my passions."

A film lover, Hardy is also enamored with Italian culture, both past and present.

"It's extremely interesting to see the similarities and differences of our culture and theirs," she said. "I love learning about the different ways in which Italians express themselves and their culture, whether that's through food or extravagant celebrations. Everything seems so lively and vibrant."

While Hardy is taking AP Italian through her final year at Fox Lane, she plans to continue studying Italian in the future.

"The Italian language and culture has such a rich and deep history," Hardy said. "While we've delved into many facets of it in my classes, I'm excited to see what else I can learn."



Fox Lane High School senior Kaitlyn Hardy, right, with Italian teacher Vittoria Buzzetto, finished second in an essay competition sponsored by New York's Italian Heritage Culture Committee. Hardy wrote the essay in Italian.

Ballard-Durand Honors and Pays Tribute to Families and First Responders Affected by COVID-19

WHITE PLAINS, NY, December 4, 2020 –As a tribute and memorial to those whose lives have been affected by the pandemic, we present the Ballard Hope Tree; a living symbol of hope and will.

"Adorned with 15,000 shimmering green lights and flying dove ornaments we designed the Ballard Hope Tree to provide a feeling of calm, reflection and encouragement to those who need it." – Owner, Matthew Fiorillo

Our desire is for the community, families, and individuals to view the Hope Tree as a beacon of peace and renewal in the midst of their heaviness and to experience comfort and healing.

"The Ballard Hope Tree will let our communities know that they are not alone, that their families and loved ones will not be forgotten, and that we greatly appreciate our community members who put their lives at great risk to assist others during the height of the pandemic."

Together, may we continue to support each other with the hope and will to move forward to a brighter future.

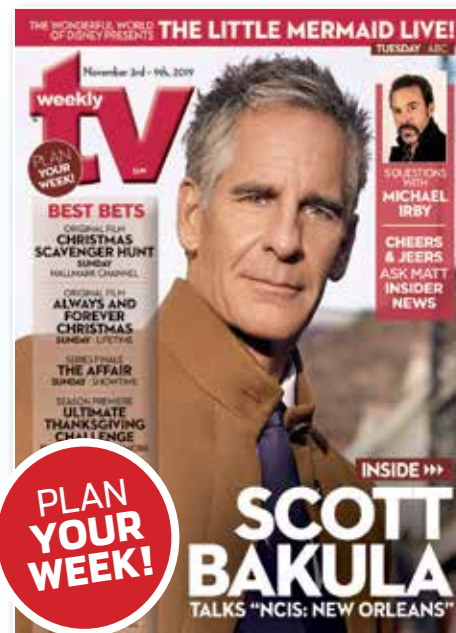
The Ballard Hope Tree will be displayed outside Ballard-Durand's White Plains location on Maple Avenue at the corner of South Broadway.

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An Adventure in Ordering a Glass of White Wine



By Nick Antonaccio

In the United States, white wine is as popular as red wine, and has been so for a number of years. The five best-selling white wines in the United States are, in order, Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc, Moscato and

Riesling.

Chardonnay has been much maligned by the wine media. The acronym "ABC" – Anything But Chardonnay – has become the rallying cry to taste alternative white wines. Just as there is a perception that Chardonnay is a stodgy, out-of-favor wine – while the reality is that it is very popular – so too are there perceptions of the other top-selling wines that don't correlate with the reality of sales.

In particular, Pinot Grigio, which has also been much maligned, continues to sell strongly – and for good reason. Much of the Pinot Grigio sold in the United States is aimed at consumers who drink wine socially and are satisfied to hold a wine glass filled with anything that is mild, indistinct and easy to order. "I'd like a glass of Pinot Grigio" is not likely to receive a follow-on question from your

server; many establishments offer only one.

However, order a glass of Chardonnay, or Sauvignon Blanc, and the choices are numerous. "Would you prefer California or New Zealand?" "A dry or fruity style?"

Generally speaking, Pinot Grigio was not always such a vapid, industrialized wine. In its natural settings in the Friuli region of Italy, it is bright and crisp, with a floral bouquet and hints of melon or honey. It has only been in the last 10 years that these limited quantity Italian Pinot Grigios have found their way to our shores. Wine store shelves and restaurant and bar wine lists still offer the light, indistinct Pinot Grigios, but seek out those from Friuli, made by small producers, and your senses will be aroused.

Speaking personally, I was never an admirer of Pinot Grigio. That changed about three years ago. I was at a wine tasting and was cajoled into trying a Pinot Grigio in disguise. It impressed me with its complexity and excellent balance of

fruit and acid. Although offered to me as a Pinot Grigio, the bottle label stated that the wine was Pinot Gris, from Oregon. From that experience, I learned quite a bit about Pinot Grigio lookalikes – and wannabes.

Pinot Gris is Pinot Grigio in disguise. They are the same grapes genetically; in



fact, they are both mutations of the Pinot Noir grape. Beyond genetics, the wines are very dissimilar in style. Pinot Gris does best in Oregon and the Alsace region in France. In Oregon, the terroir produces a wine that is complex and full-bodied, with notes of pears, apples, even mangos. All in all, a very distinctive white wine.

For something even more distinct, try a Pinot Gris from Alsace. It is a powerful wine with a long finish and crisp acidity. Mushroom aromas and vanilla, peach, even earthy, flavors dominate the wine, making it enticing.

Those are the lookalikes. The wannabes? Another Pinot Noir mutation is Pinot Blanc (Pinot Bianco in Italy).

Grown predominantly in France and Italy, its flavors are similar to a complex Chardonnay, with soft notes of honey, pear and spice.

The above grapes are all Pinot Noir clones. What about the mother grape? White Pinot Noir wine (the white juice without the red skin) is being produced in Oregon, Italy and Germany, although in very limited quantity. This is a very unique wine. Redolent of fragrant, ripe peaches, it is almost creamy on the palate. Its underlying structure is more complex than its sister Pinots. A number of consumers have been drinking white Pinot Noir for years as Blanc de Noirs French Champagnes.

The next time someone says they like Pinot Grigio, find him or her a Pinot Grigio-style alternative glass of Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc or white Pinot Noir and see how they react.

Do the same for your favorite Pinot Grigio-averse wine snob. You may get two converts for the price of one bottle of wine.

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

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Alzheimer's Association to Offer Virtual Educational, Social Programs

The Alzheimer's Association Hudson Valley Chapter will host a series of free virtual events via Zoom this week through Dec. 31.

The Hudson Valley Chapter serves families living with dementia in seven counties in New York, including Putnam, Westchester, Dutchess, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster, and leads the way in ending Alzheimer's and all other dementia. The organization strives to admonish it by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection and maximizing quality care and support.

To register for any of these programs, which are supported in part by a grant from the New York State Department of Health, call the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900 or click the link in the program name to register online.

Memory Cafe will be held 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 22. Memory Cafe is a social program for people with early-stage dementia and their family caregivers. This program will feature holiday music with Melinda Burgard, a music therapist who has worked with people for dementia for more than 30 years, including leading Alzheimer's music socials and sessions at wellness retreats. Pre-screening is required for this early-stage group.

Something for Alz: Musical Mornings will be held 12 to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 23. This music program is for people with dementia and their family caregivers. Led by music therapist Sharon Pelcher-Rao, MA, LCAT.

Living with Alzheimer's: For Early-Stage Caregivers will be held 3 to 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 23. This educational program will provide practical answers to the questions that arise in the early stage.

AlzWell Social Club will be held 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 26. This social program is for people with dementia and their family caregivers and features movement to music, a support group with art therapists, dance and other activities.

Something for Alz: Musical Mornings will be held 11 a.m. to noon on Monday, Dec. 28. This music program is people with dementia and their family caregivers with music therapist Sharon Pelcher-Rao, MA, LCAT.

Something for Alz: Musical Mornings will be held 12 to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 30. This music program is people with dementia and their family caregivers with music therapist Sharon Pelcher-Rao, MA, LCAT.

To learn more about the programs and services offered locally, visit alz.org/hudsonvalley.

Putnam Chorale to Launch Spring Rehearsals Jan. 4

Putnam Chorale Music Director Douglas Anderson is pleased to announce the singing group's spring 2021 season, beginning online on Monday, Jan. 4 at 7:30 p.m. Rehearsals will begin using Zoom and later transition to in-person sessions as conditions allow.

The program includes an outdoor concert at Boscobel House and Gardens on Saturday, May 1 for the mansion's season opener and a rescheduling of the Bannerman Castle Trust musical production of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame."

The Boscobel program will feature a curated selection of 19th century popular music to reflect the time of the mansion's occupants and Boscobel's emphasis on period authenticity. Selections include items by Stephen Foster and pieces reflecting the genres at the time – parlor music, industrialism, nature, etc.

"The Hunchback of Notre Dame" features the chorale as the church choir with both featured numbers and music supporting the cast and storyline. Plans are for two church performances as fundraisers and three performances on Bannerman Island with a smaller ensemble choir.

We will be learning new music online and practicing at home until it is deemed safe to gather. The date of the May concert is tentative and will be pushed back until it is safe to sing together. Meanwhile, the chorale will have learned a new repertoire and have kept busy and connected during the winter.

All current members and new singers are cordially invited to join. Anyone can join using the Zoom link for free during January. The Zoom meeting ID is 992 8508 8777 and is the same each week. More details are available at putnamchorale.org.

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Sports

Fingers Crossed for High-Risk Sports



By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports
Editor@Directrays

What I wouldn't give to be at a high school basketball game right now in any gym in Section 1, or up at the Brewster Ice Arena. And what I wouldn't give for NYS Gov. Merry-Andrew Cuomo to make an informed decision regarding the initiation of so-called 'high-risk' prep sports like basketball, which are currently being played safely across much

of the country, despite the nine-month-long coronavirus pandemic.

High-risk sports, including boys' and girls' hoops, cheer, ice hockey and wrestling, continue to remain on hold as the New York State Public High School Athletic Association awaits further guidance from the Governor's Office. NYSPHSAA originally designated Jan. 4 as the start date for all winter sports, but with high-risk sports placed on hold for now, it's beginning to look less and less likely that we see a basketball dribbled,

a cross check or an ankle-pick in Section 1 this winter on account of the recent COVID-19 spikes.

Remaining positive is difficult with the current infection rate in New York hovering around 5%. Executive Director Robert Zayas and NYSPHSAA officials are monitoring the numbers and basing decisions on the data and recommendations presented by the New York State Department of Health, which deems the aforementioned as high-risk winter sports. These particular sports are not permitted to compete until the governor's office grants the go-ahead, which seems highly unlikely given the political climate surrounding the issue. Essentially, the reinstatement of high-risk sports awaits the authorization of a highly politicized office.

The question arises as to how many cases of COVID were contact traced to playing games?

A recent study from the University of Wisconsin-Madison suggests that the state's high school sports have not caused an increase in COVID-19 infections among athletes.

The UW School of Medicine and Public Health recently released the study. Researchers led by Dr. Andrew Watson surveyed 207 schools that restarted fall sports in September, representing more than 30,000 athletes, more than 16,000 practices and more than 4,000 games.

The survey found 271 athletes contracted the virus overall compared with 2,318 Wisconsin children aged 14-17 over the month of September. No sports were found to have a higher incidence rate of COVID-19 overall than 14-17 year-olds. None of the cases among the athletes resulted in hospitalization or death.

Of the 209 athletes who knew where they contracted the virus, only one case was attributed to participation in sports.

But, for now, we'll get a major dose of low-risk sports, including skiing, bowling, gymnastics and indoor track and field this winter until Cuomo shows his cards again. We all know the most important thing is getting our kids back in classrooms before we can initiate prep sports. High-ranking administrators are not inclined to offer high-risk sports until infection rates and hospitalizations significantly decrease, allowing students to get back in school.

Their decisions have been met with scorn by many parents and athletes throughout the state, and Zayas respects their frustration. In recent interviews, he points out that the priority of NYSPHSAA is to provide safe opportunities for athletes after we get students back into their classrooms on a consistent basis.

All that said, local athletes and parents point to the fact that AAU basketball games -- ages 7U to 19U -- have been safely contested nationally for months now, with absolutely no evidence of increased COVID-19; so there's that information to put on Cuomo's plate. College hoops are being played, and safely I might add, across the

country in semi-fanless arenas. Put that on Cuomo's platter of enlightenment, too.

And the NBA season is tipping off this week at Madison Square Garden where my beloved but beleaguered NY Knicks will, hopefully, turn the corner in 2021. So, why can't high school athletes compete for the honor of their respective basketball programs in a regional-type setting that limits travel, promotes safety and in-game protocols, follows proper masks guidelines, ensures pre-game temperature checks and

provides some sense of normalcy for our student athletes?

Yes, this particular take is a slippery slope, but it's one I'm willing to cross if it provides our student athletes with, perhaps, an abbreviated six-week hoops season (with limited spectators) starting in early February, providing an emotional and physical outlet they desperately need. They're still going to gather for pick-up games and training sessions anyway, they're still going to meet at every McDonald's parking lot from Mahopac to White Plains and places like Cameron's Deli in Brewster. They need to live their lives safely and cautiously because they can't stay in their bedrooms forever, having heated exchanges on Xbox until the summer of 2021 when the vast majority might be vaccinated for a virus that reportedly has between a 97% to 99.75% recovery rate, even higher for school-aged children.

In recent exchanges between several local administrators, all have agreed that it's not looking good for high school hoops in NYS due to an abundance of caution, some said an overabundance. They concur that school officials won't budge on high-risk sports until Cuomo issues guidance.

I don't have the answers, but I know that under normal circumstances I'd engross myself in a Putnam Valley girls' basketball game this week, watching with great anticipation as Pace-bound senior F Arianna Stockinger, junior G Amanda Orlando and sophomore point guard Eva DeChent begin their title defense and near-certain trek to the Section 1 Class B County Center Final 4. But instead of watching DeChent's development as one of the most promising stars in NYS, this sports junkie will be seeking an alternative fix to cure my hoops addiction. So I reckon I'll have to saddle up and head off to the local ski trails and bowling alleys to capture Section 1's finest.

After several decades of utter futility and failure, the ever-loving optimists in me thinks Jim Dolan's NY Knicks may finally be headed in the right direction with a top-notch coaching hire in Tom Thibodeau, two sound first-round picks in F Obi Toppin and G Immanuel Quickley, to go with G RJ Barrett and C Mitchell Robinson. That's not a 'Big 4' by



Coaches like Somers girls' hoops boss Marc Hattem are chomping at the bit to get their teams back on the court safely this winter.

any stretch, yet, but if the Knicks can find a consistent fifth piece -- perhaps a distance-shooting wing that can play on both ends -- this ensemble just might entertain the heck out of me this winter #Stoked.

If the Knicks don't luck out and get the No.1 pick in 2021 -- whereby they might snag 6'8" Oklahoma State freshman point guard Cade Cunningham -- they might have to settle for a top-ranked player like Gonzaga G Jaeln Suggs, who looks every bit the part of a sweet-stroking menace from behind the arc. If the Knicks are gonna suck again, which has been an ongoing theme for 20+ years, I'd like to see either of these kids in blue and orange come the draft of 2021. I'm not a professional talent evaluator by any means, but these two kids pass the eye test. That said, I also saw then-freshman Corey Maggette play one game alongside Elton Brand at Duke in 1999 and dubbed him the next Michael Jordan, so there's that. At least I owned up.

Kills me to admit it as a Fightin' Irish fan, but Notre Dame football is #AllMythNoLegend. Consistently embarrassed in big games. So much for me lucky charms.

Another recent survey I saw by OnePoll Market Research suggested that more than 50% of those surveyed who are working from home during the pandemic have begun their virtual happy hour well before the end of the work day. From what I can gather during this nine-month pandemic: Booze hounds have graduated with increasing honors; beer drinkers became wine drinkers while wine drinkers became bourbon drinkers.

The results of these statewide lockdowns are catastrophic: 32% of Michigan businesses CLOSED; 30% of Pennsylvania businesses CLOSED; 27% of Washington businesses CLOSED; 26% of New York businesses CLOSED. So much for the American Dream #SoDoneWithThis. It's time to open up. If you'd rather stay home, enclosed in a bubble, then do so, but many of us are inclined to wear the damn mask, move about wisely and safely, support mom & pop businesses and restore economic greatness. Merry Christmas and happy New Year, gang!



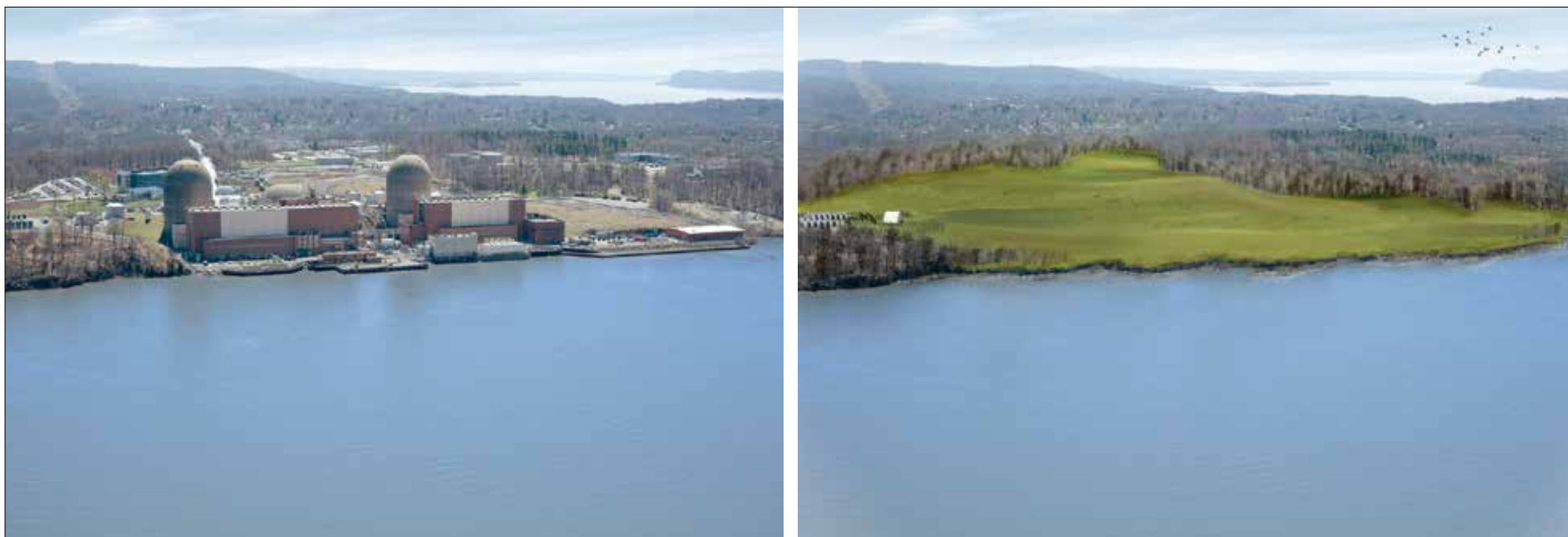
EXAMINER FILE PHOTO

White Plains freshman PG Aliya Mclver and the Tigers are hoping their 2021 season pans out.



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

Student athletes like Putnam Valley's Eva DeChent are yearning for a 2021 hoops season as they await guidance from Gov. Cuomo.



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

Indian Point Energy Center

