Mt. Kisco Must Hold Vote to Officially Disband Village Police Department

By Martin Wilbur

Six years after Westchester County was contracted to take over policing responsibilities in Mount Kisco, village officials are likely to hold a referendum this fall to officially disband the local department.

Under the state constitution and Municipal Home Rule Law, if a municipality decides to relinquish a power such as police services, the public is allowed to weigh in on a permanent transfer of function, said Village Attorney Whitney Singleton.

The village and the county entered into an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) to have the Westchester County Department of Public Safety, which started June 1, 2015, to provide virtually all police services to Mount Kisco in a move to cut costs and improve service. A second five-year agreement went into effect last year.

If officials do not opt for a referendum, the village would need to maintain a minimum of four full-time officers and a chief to avoid a potential lawsuit, negating the cost-cutting advantages of contracting with the county. Village Manager Ed Brancati said staffing at that level would cost a minimum of $500,000 a year and perhaps up to $1 million, including equipment and other ancillary costs.

A previous Village Board approved the IMA by a resolution and never scheduled a referendum, but continued to fund a part-time police chief, who oversees the village’s school crossing guards and parking enforcement, Brancati said.

“The question is are you abolishing the

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Tipp, who is in her fourth term on the school board, will take over for Jenni Louis-Jeune on the independent Unite New Castle line. She also intends to run a write-in campaign for the June 22 Democratic primary.

On May 18, Louis-Jeune announced on Facebook that she and her family would be relocating this summer after her husband was offered a new job opportunity that could not be passed up.

“I am running to help build a sustainable and inclusive future for New Castle,” Tipp said as part of a May 25 statement. “We do that by restoring civility to town government, uniting our community to build a common vision for revitalizing our town, and creating opportunities for people of all backgrounds, races and creeds to live in and be part of the community we love. We can achieve these goals without ceding control of our town to private developers.”

She is running for the seat carrying the two-year unexpired term. Her running mates are supervisor candidate and current Councilwoman Lisa Katz and Councilwoman Lisa Katz and continued on page 2

Support for Hotel, Condo Project at North Castle Public Hearing

By Martin Wilbur

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The public hearing on Eagle Ridge, which would also include a 115-unit hotel on another portion of the land on North Castle Drive, resumed last Wednesday evening after nearly two years.

Developer Frank Madonna is asking the Town Board to rezone 21.9 acres from the Office Business Hotel (OBH) Zoning District to the Residential Multifamily Senior Citizen Housing Zoning District to accommodate the luxury condo units. Since 2019, he has been tweaking the proposal in hopes of gaining approval for the zoning change from the Town Board. Concerns about density, condo taxation and sightlines have been repeatedly raised.

The remaining 10 acres where the hotel would be built would retain OBH zoning. It would also include a 135-seat restaurant, a 45-seat bar and lounge and an event space for up to 100 people.

Some of the residents who spoke said living arrangements for those who want to remain in town as they age are slim.

“I just think it’s a win-win to keep our empty-nesters in town continued on page 2

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First responders, veterans and local residents stand at attention as Taps is played during New Castle’s Memorial Day ceremony held near the war monument at the Chappaqua train station.

Communities throughout the region held in-person ceremonies or in some instances went ahead with a parade after all live commemorations were canceled last year due to COVID-19.

For photos from events from around the area, see page 15.

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department or are you supporting the services of the existing department?” Singleton said. “If you’re supplementing the services of your existing department and our department is going to continue to exist, it has to be more than a mere figurehead.”

Mayor Gina Picinich said the county and civil service representatives told the village that a part-time chief is insufficient staffing. The threat to the village of maintaining the status quo could be a lawsuit from a party or entity. Singleton said in that event, legal precedent would likely be against Mount Kisco. The upstate Village of Liverpool was sued by the City of Syracuse in a very similar case. The court ruled Liverpool lost the case.

“Singleton said the choices are clear – staff what could be argued is a legitimate department or take the step to officially abolish it. “The current situation is neither sustainable or tenable, I don’t believe, long-term,” Brancati said. “We need to make a decision one way or the other to strengthen our position and easily defend ourselves, whichever way we go.”

Singleton said to place a referendum to officially abolish the department on this year’s general election ballot, the Village Board must first adopt a local law so the village clerk could have it placed on the ballot by the early August deadline. It could also choose to hold a special election at another time but that would cost additional money and draw a much smaller percentage of the citizenry, he said.

The decision to take the step should not require much deliberation, Deputy Mayor Anthony Markus said. In addition to the Village savings over a year since entering into the IMA, there has been little, if any, complaint about the county police’s performance.

“If we want to increase our budget by $500,000 to a million dollars, which is about a three-and-a-half percent to 7 percent increase in taxes, what decision do we have to make,” Markus said.

Chappaqua Board of Ed’s Tipp to Replace Candidate in Town Board Race

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Andrea Sanseverino Galan and Tara McAdam Kassal, who are competing for the four-year terms.

They are facing the Democratic-endorsed ticket of Chappaqua Board of Education Vice President Holly McCall for supervisor, Councilwoman Lori Morton and Michael Weinberg for the four-year seats while Jennifer Bounds will compete for the two-year seat. McCall and her running mates will also appear on the independent 4 New Castle line in November.

Katz welcomed Tipp to the race, calling her “one of the most committed public servants in our community.”

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“Her experience on the Chappaqua School Board will bring a valuable perspective to town government, especially as we consider the significant impact of our zoning and development decisions on the school system,” Katz said.

It is the latest twist in what has been an increasingly controversial match-up. The four Unite New Castle candidates, all of whom are registered Democrats and opponents of the proposed Form Based Code, jumped into the race and later forced a primary.

Last Tuesday, the Democratic-endorsed slate urged Louis-Jeune to officially withdraw from the race so she could not participate in last Tuesday evening’s League of Women Voters of New Castle’s (LWVNC) live-streamed candidates’ forum. Campaigning without the intent or ability to serve would confuse voters and is misleading, McCall said. The ballot for the primary has been set with Louis-Jeune’s name on it.

Hours before last Thursday’s forum, Bounds informed the LWVNC that she would not participate. Bounds said she would have been put at a disadvantage in addition to potential confusion.

“There’s one viable candidate and there’s one non-viable candidate and it just didn’t seem like an equal playing field,” Bounds said of her decision.

LWVNC President Suzanne Kavic said the organization’s “open chair policy” meant that Louis-Jeune was not permitted to participate in the forum once Bounds withdrew in the race for the two-year seat.

The forum involving the other six candidates went off without incident.

It is the League’s policy that all candidates who appear on the ballot may participate in a candidates’ forum.

Support for Hotel, Condo Project at North Castle Public Hearing

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and keep our housing market robust with young families, keeping up with the demand of young families who want to be here,” said 10-year Armonk resident Kara Scheinler.

Resident Andrew Salow said the units would be for residents 55 years old and up, which should limit impacts on the schools. He also believes that it’s the right location for a new development, near the heart of downtown Armonk.

“To me, this is the type of sensible development that the town should be supporting with local developers,” Salow said.

However, there those with concerns. Resident Matthew Milim said the town hasn’t adequately weighed the cumulative impact of several residential projects under consideration or construction.

“I’m just very concerned about the number of housing units that we’re adding in our town in such a short period of time,” Milim said. “I think it’s really important that we take care and not change the character of the community. I think by adding this many in such a short period of time, you risk doing that.”

Resident Jeremy Jacobs said he wanted to ensure that Madonna builds the hotel since it’s sorely needed in town. Jacobs said he has a fear that the town will approve the project but only the residential component would be built.

Town officials and Madonna have talked about having him set up an escrow-style account to ensure the hotel is constructed.

The town’s Open Space Committee and Conservation Board recently submitted a joint letter to the Town Board expressing dismay at the large number of trees that would need to be removed and the potential impact on sightlines.

A letter from Kerry Kazak, chair of the North Castle Open Space Committee, mentioned that the project is inappropriate.

“We believe that the height of the project and the proposed placement of the hotel and townhouses will change the skyline of Armonk forever,” she stated.

Madonna has raised balloons to help community members visualize the project’s size.

But resident Robert Klein said the project will provide housing for the 55-and-up community and a place for relatives to stay who are visiting from out of town. North Castle does not have a lodging facility since the closure of La Quinta Inn last year.

There have been significant concessions agreed to by the developer, such as $500,000 toward parking, he said. The project is among the town’s least dense proposals in recent years, Klein said.

“The objections raised are valid in terms of sightlines and things like that, but it seems to me that if you have a project that’s going to be beneficial for the community, not a drain on the tax base, contributing to local businesses and stores and giving our community a great new space to entertain, that this should be something that we should be encouraging, this type of development in the community and not discouraging,” he said.

The Town Board adjourned the public hearing until June 9.

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State Offering Free College Tuition Lottery for 12- to 17-Year-Olds

By Martin Wilbur

New York State continues to search for ways to attract people who have yet to get a COVID-19 vaccine to roll up their sleeve and get a shot.

Last week, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that to entice young people between the ages of 12 to 17 to get the vaccine, they will be entered into a lottery where 50 winners will receive free tuition to a four-year public college in the state.

“The percentage stood at 55.5 percent,” said the governor. “The population at least 18 years old, have 72.8 percent of the population at least 18 years old.

Cuomo also mentioned last week that employers must give their workers who have received a vaccination can receive a paid day off if they have side effects from the shot.

A recent Kaiser Family Foundation study found that 48 percent of unvaccinated people said that missing work in case they don’t feel well was the chief reason for not getting inoculated, he said.

While virtually all side effects are mild, the fear is real even if it isn’t grounded in reality, Cuomo said.

“I don’t know anyone who couldn’t go to work the next day because of the side effects of the vaccine, but it is possible that you get mild flu-like symptoms, but it’s not about the reality, it’s about the perception,” Cuomo said.

“Don’t tell anyone who couldn’t go to work the next day because of the side effects of the vaccine,” he said. “Tell your 12- to 17-year-old to go out, get a shot, it protects the 12- to 17-year-old go out, get a shot, it protects the family, it protects the 12- to 17-year-old group who gets their first Pfizer dose, will automatically be entered into the sweepstakes. A drawing with 10 new names will be drawn every Wednesday for five weeks, Cuomo said.

“It’s a significant incentive for students, and by the way, it’s a significant incentive for a parent,” he said. “Tell your 12- to 17-year-old that you get mild flu-like symptoms, but it’s not about the reality, it’s about the perception,” Cuomo said.

The earlier a younger gets a vaccine the better. Once they receive a first dose, they are eligible to be selected in each drawing.

The latest plan to get more people vaccinated comes as the vaccination rate continues to slow. Through Sunday, 8,991,805 New Yorkers, or 56.9 percent of the population at least 18 years old, have completed the vaccine. Through May 26, the percentage stood at 55.5 percent.

In that same four-day time frame, the percentage of those who have received their first dose went up from 64.2 to 65.2 percent, according to the state’s vaccine tracker.

A bit of good news is that 21.6 percent of 12- to 15-year-old are now vaccinated statewide, up from about 5 percent two weeks earlier.

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The state tracker reported on Monday that 499,562 Westchester residents have been fully vaccinated and more than 548,000 have received their first dose.
Mt. Kisco Seeks Public Input on Whether to Permit Marijuana Sales

By Martin Wilbur

Mount Kisco officials want to hear from residents about whether the village should permit within its borders the retail sale of recreational marijuana and commercial lounges to consume cannabis or choose to opt out.

The Village Board has scheduled a public hearing on the issue for its next meeting this Monday, June 7.

Under the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act approved by the state legislature earlier this year and signed into law by Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Mar. 31, each municipality in the state may decide whether they want to allow cannabis sales within the community and/or to have the on-site consumption facilities. Municipalities have until Dec. 31 to pass a local law to opt out of the program, but that decision would be subject to a permissive referendum. A petition containing at least 20 percent of a municipality’s registered voters would be needed to trigger a referendum and must be received by the village clerk within 30 days of the passage of the local law.

If a community decides to opt out, it may reverse that decision at any time.

Mayor Gina Picinich said that roughly 1,000 signatures would be needed for any resident that wants to trigger a referendum.

“This board wants to hear from the community so that any decisions that are made to stay in or stay out, or some variation of, is reflective of the will of the community so that there won’t be a need for a permissive referendum,” Picinich said.

Under the law, anyone at least 21 years old would be allowed to buy or consume marijuana and carry up to three ounces of cannabis and up to 24 grams of concentrated cannabis.

With the establishment of the state Office of Cannabis Management, it is expected to take until at least the end of 2022 before any retail outlets will open.

A state license would be needed to grow, process, distribute, deliver or dispense marijuana.

Picinich said that if the village were to opt out, the state would receive 9 cents of every dollar of marijuana sales generated within its borders, while the local government would get 3 cents. The county would receive 1 cent.

The law states that consumption would be legal anywhere that cigarette smoking is permitted.

Village Board members agreed that the best way to gauge public sentiment is to hold a public hearing and to inform the community that their input is sought to help the board decide which direction to go.

“Let’s make sure that a lot of people in our village know about it so they can come and express themselves,” said Trustee Peter Grunthal.

Municipalities locally and throughout the state are faced with the same decision.

Marijuana supporters have pointed to the creation of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars that could be generated through its sale in addition to correcting racial injustices caused by the disproportionate enforcement of old drug laws against poor people and communities of color.

Opponents have argued that it could add to the state’s drug woes while many police agencies hold the position that there isn’t an effectively accurate roadside test, such as test for blood-alcohol levels, to determine if someone is disoriented from marijuana.

The hearing is part of the regularly scheduled Village Board meeting, which starts at 7 p.m. and can be viewed live on the Mount Kisco Facebook page and through Zoom.
Support Pledged for Mayer’s E-LEARN Bill to End Digital Divide

By Samuel Rowland

The Ossining Community Equity Task Force and various local and state officials threw their support last week behind the E-Let’s Expand Access to Remote Learning Now (E-LEARN) Act.

The proposed legislation, which was introduced by state Sen. Shelley Mayer (D-Yonkers) last Nov. 24, aims to create an E-LEARN Fund to provide free broadband internet access for every student in the state. The initiative would be funded by a quarterly tax on the intrastate revenues of internet service providers operating in New York.

“We used to provide a blackboard chalk in school as part of the essentials. Now the essentials are broadband and a tablet or some other instrument,” said Mayer, chair of the Senate’s Education Committee, at a May 27 press conference at Louis Engel Waterfront Park in Ossining.

The bill proposed that every student will have free 24-hour broadband access wherever they live at 25 megabits per second, which is the quality standard for broadband.

Access to broadband for families in lower income areas and communities of color has been lagging for years, but the digital divide became glaring after the need to switch to remote learning last March because of the pandemic.

New York’s budget for the current fiscal year includes a program, found in Bill S2506-C, Section 117(3), requiring all broadband providers operating in the state to provide $15-per-month service plans to low-income families who qualify for certain government benefits. The plans would have to provide the 25-megabits-per-second download speed outlined in Mayer’s bill.

State Sen. Elijah Reichlin-Melnick (D-Nyack) and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef (D-Ossining) also spoke at the event. Reichlin-Melnick is one of the Senate bill’s co-sponsors while Galef is a co-sponsor of the version in the Assembly.

“This was one of the very first bills that I co-sponsored when I became a member of the Senate in January,” Reichlin-Melnick said. “In 2018, a study found that over 15 percent of students in the U.S. had no access to broadband at home and over 30 percent of children of color have no access to broadband at home. We can’t accept that as the status quo.”

Reichlin-Melnick noted his own experience with the digital divide before the pandemic. His first job was as a teacher at an elementary school in a district comprised predominantly of students of color.

Many families at the time were still struggling to obtain dial-up internet service, he said.

Community leaders recounted the challenges they saw children and families facing during the past year. Ossining Councilwoman Jackie Shaw, a task force member and Executive Director of the IFCA Housing Network, said immediate assistance is required.

“So, we have people choosing between rent and prescriptions and things like that. So broadband access and paying for that is not high on their list. But of course, they want their children educated,” Shaw said. “And we have a lot of kids in shelters who had a tablet or...phone but had no internet access. They were shut out of the educational system for long periods of time.”

On Mar. 2, the Senate bill was approved by the Education Committee and is now being debated in the Finance Committee. The Assembly bill was introduced on Feb. 11 and is still being debated in its Education Committee.

“The digital divide between our students became very evident during the COVID pandemic,” said Sandy McAllister, co-chair of the Ossining Community Equity Task Force and a member of the Ossining NAACP. “We wanted to find a way…of bringing forth this bill that we fully support. And we hope that everyone else will support us as we continue to strive to reduce the division.”

The Ossining Community Equity Task Force is a coalition of local stakeholder groups serving in an advisory role on town policy aimed at addressing systemic racism and other forms of systemic discrimination. The task force was formed after a suspected act of hate crime vandalism in Louis Engel Waterfront Park in 2019 shocked the community. Its relevance and profile increased in the wake of the murder of George Floyd last year.
No. Castle Amends Outdoor Dining Regs, But Won’t Allow Music

By Martin Wilbur

Several North Castle residents last week criticized a town proposal to allow music for outdoor dining, forcing the Town Board to eliminate that provision before amending its regulations.

With the increasing popularity of outdoor dining once restaurants were allowed to reopen after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the board has been looking to revise its regulations to help the establishments attract customers but balance its impact on the community.

Revisions included requiring restaurants to obtain a yearly permit for outdoor dining; allowing it from Apr. 1 through Jan. 2 to keep it a seasonal amenity so it won’t impact capacity limits or parking; furniture must be brought in overnight; and there can be no outdoor lighting other than candles. Restaurants could also remain open until midnight.

However, it was the potential disturbance from music that received all of the attention.

North White Plains resident Ed Lobermann was one of several speakers to object, pointing out there are about 10 restaurants in his area of town. If those establishments allow even recorded music to be played outside, it would have the potential to negatively impact residents’ quality of life.

“Every single one of these locations is contiguous to a residential neighborhood,” Lobermann said. “Why would you jeopardize the peace and quality of life of these neighboring residents for a very small financial benefit for a limited number of restaurants requesting this proposed legislation?”

Furthermore, the proposal referred to unacceptable noise as objectionable but failed to define how much of a disturbance would rise to that level, he said.

Even background music for some residents could be considered objectionable for some, said Nora Kans Manuele, another North White Plains resident.

She said with the likelihood of crowds dining out on weekends, residents’ lives would probably be upended during the evenings from Thursday through Saturday and possibly Sunday with music.

Additionally, Manuele mentioned that since any complaints would likely be lodged in the evening when the Building Department is closed, contacting the police for nuisance or quality-of-life complaints seems like an inappropriate use of their time.

“I just think it adds a lot of negativity and anxiousness that’s not necessary,” Manuele said.

Armonk resident Joe Laporta, who lives near Main Street restaurant Casa Tequila, said when that establishment has indoor music it is disturbing enough.

“While I understand and agree with the goals and objectives of this potential code modification during these challenging times, I’m hoping there can be exceptions made for specific locations that have a long history of complaints,” Laporta said.

After also hearing from other residents via e-mail, board members promptly removed outdoor music of any kind from the proposal.

Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto said that people already enjoy outdoor dining without music or entertainment.

An overwhelming number of restaurants in town near residences, she added.

“I feel very strongly that we, I can support this entire legislation except (for) live or recorded music outside,” said Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto. “I do think it’s a quality-of-life issue.”

Councilman Saleem Hussain said it was apparent that with nearly every comment focusing in on the issue of outdoor music, it’s something the board had to address.

“It’s very clear to me that we really should start going in the direction that you all are saying we should go,” he said.

Town Obtains Armonk Parcel to Increase Downtown Parking

By Martin Wilbur

The Town of North Castle has acquired a key Armonk property that could be used for additional downtown parking after trying for years to secure the parcel.

Last Wednesday, the board approved purchasing the lot at 23 Whippoorwill Rd. East for $50,000 from Verizon Global Real Estate. The land measures just over an acre at 45,481 square feet.

Supervisor Michael Schiliro said efforts to buy the property to help ease the town’s parking crunch in the heart of the business hamlet extend back more than a decade.

“It’s been a long time and we’ve had lots of starts and stops, and the idea is we want to expand parking on the west side of Main Street behind The Bagel Emporium, etc., and this finally gives us the ability to do that in a really, really good way at an extremely reasonable price, finally, so it’s all working out really well,” Schiliro said.

The purchase is subject to a permissive lien, said Town Attorney Roland Baroni. There is a 30-day period where the town clerk can receive a valid petition containing signatures of North Castle residents totaling at least 10 percent of the people in town who voted in the last gubernatorial election in 2018, he said.

If that were to occur then the town would need to schedule a special election.

North Castle has been searching for ways to increase their parking inventory in downtown Armonk for years. Development of Armonk Square includes some municipal parking, and then the town converted an area behind the Hergenhan Recreation Center in 2018. That project more than doubled the number of spaces to about 46, some of which is used for municipal parking.
Yorktown for Justice to Hold Town’s First Pride March on June 12

Rainbow flags, the well-known symbol of the LGBTQ+ community, will be out in abundance as Yorktown for Justice (YFJ), a local grassroots collaborative, marks Pride Month on Saturday June 12 at noon, at Yorktown Town Hall.

“Pride Month is a time for celebration, reflection and recommitment to the work of advancing LGBTQ+ justice,” said Congressman Mondaire Jones (D-White Plains), who will be speaking at the start of the march, along with local religious leaders and community members. “After a long and challenging year, I can’t wait to celebrate Pride with our vibrant and diverse LGBTQ+ community at the Northern Westchester Pride March.”

Following the speakers at Town Hall, the group will march to Jack DeVito Memorial Field, a community gathering area in Yorktown Heights.

Executive Director Judy Troilo of the Loft, Westchester’s LGBTQ+ community center, urges the public to remember the history of Pride.

“Each June LGBTQ+ folks and allies gather to celebrate our community with authenticity and pride but we must never forget that Pride started as a riot,” Troilo said. “June is a time to stand up and speak out. We are proud of Yorktown for Justice for organizing this march in the true spirit of activism.”

Yorktown for Justice co-founders Marisa Ragonese and Rachel Frederick are excited to help bring the event to the community.

“Recognizing Pride Month embodies Yorktown for Justice’s commitment to honoring diversity, equity and inclusivity,” they said in a statement. “We are honored to play a role in amplifying our community members’ voices. And we are, simply, better together.”

This will be the first Pride March in Yorktown and will be followed by an official post-march party at 1:30 p.m. at the Yorktown Grille.

Yorktown resident and post-march party organizer Anthony Calbi captures the spirit of many residents.

“I have lived in this area since 1996. I knew I was gay two years later when I was 10,” Calbi said. “The idea of us gathering for the first Pride March in Yorktown brings so much joy to my heart. It seemed like a pipedream many years ago but it is reality today. This is history and I couldn’t be more excited.”

Yorktown Town Hall is at 363 Underhill Ave. The Yorktown Grille is located at 347 Downing Drive.

Yorktown for Justice is asking local government leaders and businesses to show their support by flying a rainbow flag on June 12.

For further information, visit https://yorktownforjustice.org. Yorktown for Justice is a grassroots collaborative working toward equity and justice in our community through education, advocacy and activism.

HELP WANTED

Logistics Analyst, Purchase, NY. Analyze logistical functions for global supplier of health prods & nutraceutical ingrd. Acquisition, distrib, del, supply chain. BA + exp.

Mail resumes: Maypro Industries, 2975 Westchester Ave, Purchase, NY 10577.
**Marie Donnelly**

Marie Cronin Donnelly, 89, of Hawthorne and formerly of Tarrytown and Boston, died on May 23 at her home.

Donnelly was an accomplished librarian who worked until she was 84 years old. A devoted mother and wife, she always put her family and faith first, and received much joy from her four devoted children and 12 adoring grandchildren. She was a devout Catholic and parishioner of Holy Innocents Church in Pleasantville. She also served as an active member of the Rosary Altar Society and volunteered in the school library for Holy Rosary Parish in Hawthorne.

She was born on Aug. 24, 1931, in Boston to the late John and Marion (nee Noonan) Cronin. On Aug. 11, 1956, she married Robert Donnelly at St. Teresa’s Church in North Tarrytown. They were married for 51 years, until Robert died in March 2008.

She graduated from Girls’ Latin School in 1948 and attended Boston College. She obtained her bachelor’s degree from Mercy College. In 1978, she graduated magna cum laude from Southern Connecticut State College with a master’s in library science.

She began her lifelong career as a librarian working in the Boston Public Library full time at the age of 16. Her love for people and books would take her to the Tarrytown Public Library and the White Plains Public Library, where she retired as head of circulation and technical processes at the age of 60. She was instrumental in modernizing the White Plains library system. Shortly after her retirement, she took a part-time job at the Mount Pleasant Public Library, in the children’s room, and continued working there until about five years ago.

She was predeceased by her husband, Eric Donnelly; her two sisters, Stella (nee Cronin) Reinertsen of Toms River, N.J. and Marian Donnelly (nee Cronin) Meling of Norway; her sister-in-law, Virginia (Meade) Cronin; as well as many loving nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

She was predeceased by her brother, David Cronin, of Yorktown and her daughter-in-law, Rebecca Whitney Donnelly, of Putnam Valley.

The family received friends on May 28. She was buried at Holy Innocents Roman Catholic Church in Pleasantville on May 29.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the SPCA of Westchester, Inc. at 914-941-2896 or visiting https://spca914.org/donate. You may leave online condolences at https://www.mcmahonfuneralhome.com/memorials/patricia-sanderson/4623845/obituary.php.

**Roger Kobee**

Roger S. Kobee peacefully passed away on May 28. He was 82.

Roger will be missed dearly by daughter Wendy (Michael); son John; stepchildren Michaelann, Christine (Greg), Jeffrey (Jennifer) and Keith (Dana); grandchildren Andrew, Hannah, MaryKate, Joey, Serena, Mia, Max, Julia, Emily, Evangeline and Lucy. All admired him and looked up to him very much. He is survived by his wife, Mary Kobee, who will miss him most.

Roger loved every person introduced into his family and was always willing to help whoever needed it.

He was born on Dec. 18, 1938, and attended SUNY Buffalo while studying business. Roger proudly served his country in the U.S. Air Force. Throughout his life, Roger developed his own business and worked tirelessly to create a great life for his children. He is remembered for his humor, willingness to listen and great advice. He touched many people and will be remembered fondly for many years to come.

The family received friends on May 30 at Beecher Focks Funeral Home in Pleasantville. In lieu of flowers, kindly make donations in his name to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

**Patricia Sanderson**

Patty Sanderson, a longtime White Plains resident, died peacefully after a short illness on May 18 at Phelps Hospital in Sleepy Hollow. She was 85.

Patty was born in Bronxville on June 7, 1935, to James W. and Margaret (Lonerger) Sanderson. She grew up in Armonk and attended both the Anderson School in Staatsburg, N.Y. and Greenbrier College for Women in West Virginia. After attending Greenbrier, she became a nurse’s aide and worked at Burke Rehabilitation Hospital in White Plains for 42 years.

After retiring from Burke, Patty continued her calling as a caregiver, volunteering her time to help anyone in need. She was a lifelong animal lover, artist, competitive ballroom dancer and an excellent competitive swimmer. Coached by her father in the same pool as Johnny Weissmuller (Tarzan), Patty won many medals in amateur swimming. She will always be remembered for her caring, warm, compassionate ways for all people and animals alike.

Patty leaves a sister, Carol Sanderson; nephew and niece Michael Cameron and Maya Cameron-Gordon and their spouses, all of California; brother Robert Sanderson and his wife, Susan, of Poughkeepsie and their daughter, Sarah; New York City; and brother Christopher Sanderson of Florida.

**Police Investigate Chappaqua Jewelry Store Burglary**

New Castle police continue to investigate the burglary of a Chappaqua jewelry store that was discovered in the early morning hours of May 22.

Police were alerted to the incident at 9:11 p.m. on May 21 and continued investigating the crime scene throughout the night. The front door of the store, which was closed at the time of the incident, was pried open allowing one or more burglars to enter.

ROCKS owner Tanya Toccher posted on social media early last week that is grateful to have been an employee at the jewelry store for years. The store continues to operate, but Toccher stated in her post that she has installed a buzzer to control who enters the store.

If anyone has information on the burglary, they can call New Castle Police Department at 914-238-4422 and ask for Detective Division.

—Martin Wilbur
Re-Elect No One
Carmel Town Board
Read NYS Comptroller's Report First

Paid For By LL2 LLC

VOTE MICHAEL CAZZARI
On Primary Day, June 22nd
For Carmel Town Supervisor

VOTE
ERIN LEE CROWLEY
Primary Day, June 22nd
Carmel Town Council

"For The Future of Carmel"

Paid For By Michael Cazzari
Paid For By Erin Lee Crowley for Carmel Town Council
Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

May 17: Patrol responded to the area of Croton-Harmon High School at 2:36 p.m. on a report of a protestor with signs. Patrol spoke with the male who reported that a group of youths threw eggs and a water bottle at his vehicle.

May 18: Report of a male worker coming onto a private property on Benedict Boulevard at 9:54 a.m. and urinating. Patrol advised workers to stay off the property.

May 20: Patrols responded to the area of Grand Street at 10:18 p.m. on a report of a drunk and disorderly person refusing to leave an establishment.

May 21: Report of a disorderly group of youths riding skateboards on Bungalow Road at 5:54 p.m.

May 23: Patrol responded to the area of Grand Street at 9:53 p.m. on a report of a domestic dispute.

North Castle Police Department

May 21: Report of an unwanted subject on scene at a Virginia Road business at 9:58 a.m. The caller stated that the subject was on the premises regarding a prior call for service in the past and that he would like the person to be escorted off the property. The responding officers reported assisting the subject from the scene without further incident and provided a courtesy transport to his residence.

May 21: Bedford police report an erratic driver traveling southbound on Route 22 toward Armonk at 10:18 p.m. The driver, about 25 years old, appears disoriented and was operating what was described as a maroon Honda. The responding officer stopped the vehicle at Middle Patent Road and arrested the operator for DWI.

May 24: An Oregon Road caller reported at 7:59 a.m. that she received checks in the mail from two new accounts that she did not open.

May 26: A Terrace Circle resident reported at 4:34 p.m. that his babysitter fell down a flight of stairs and possibly broke her ankle. The call was transferred to 60 Control who dispatched Armonk Ambulance. The responding officer stated that the party was transported to Northern Westchester Hospital.

Ossining Police Department

May 27: Damage to headstones at Historic Sparta Cemetery was reported. A chemical residue was reportedly left behind on stones with the potential to cause severe and permanent damage to the headstones. Detectives conferred with investigators from the Sleepy Hollow Police Department and found an Ohio woman had used modeling clays to create casts of headstones. She then took those castings with her in an attempt to recreate ornamental parts of the stones. Using foreign substances on the stones violates the rules of the cemeteries, but does not rise to the level of a crime.

State Police/Cortlandt

May 22: Police arrested Daniel R. Usher, 31, of Beacon, for third-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance and third-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance with intent to sell, both Class B felonies, and DWI, an unclassified misdemeanor. At about 1:15 a.m., troopers conducted a traffic stop on a 2012 Subaru Impreza on Route 9 in Croton-on-Hudson for multiple vehicle and traffic law violations. The investigation determined that the suspect was driving while intoxicated and in possession of approximately 25.2 grams of cocaine. He was arraigned virtually before the Town of Cortlandt Court and released on his own recognizance.

White Plains Police Department

May 25: Police responded to a burglary alarm at City Hall in the early hours of the morning. A maintenance worker discovered a man, who claimed he was there visiting his uncle, inside the building. The man fled but was apprehended the next day. The suspect, identified as Troy Brown, was arrested for criminal trespassing and was found to be homeless with no legitimate reason to be in the building.

Yorktown Police Department

May 21: Frederick Humphrey, 34, of Port Ewen, N.Y., was arrested at 12:11 a.m. and charged with criminal possession of a controlled substance following a 911 call of an erratic driver who appeared to have been in a recent accident and was now parked at the Sunoco gas station on Lake Road. An investigation revealed Humphrey was in possession of more than four ounces of cocaine.

May 22: Juan Reyes, 23, of Peekskill, was arrested and charged with DWI at 2:53 a.m. after an officer observed a parked vehicle blocking the right travel lane on Route 6.

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By Abby Luby

In 2018, 19-year-old Pleasantville resident Brian Halloran took his own life. The tragedy prompted his family to create Break the Hold (BTH), an organization that brings attention to the pervasive spread of mental illness, especially among teenagers and young adults, and provide educational programming and resources.

That same year, BTH organized its first Into the Light Walk in Pleasantville, stepping off at 4 a.m. This year, the walk is on Sunday, June 13, starting at Pleasantville High School, where Halloran graduated. “Mental health is a dark place and the walk is symbolic of walking out of darkness as a community and into the light,” said Brian Halloran, founder of BTH and father of Brian. The second walk was held in 2019, but last year it was canceled due to COVID-19.

This year, the community has the option of walking in person with COVID-19 protocols in place or participating in a virtual walk on Instagram. Because COVID restrictions have recently been lifted by New York State, the walk can now accommodate up to 500 people. As of last Wednesday, 50 people had registered online.

Shortly after the onset of the pandemic last year, BTH e-mails and phone calls tripled. “With the pandemic things have gotten exponentially worse,” Halloran said. “We hear stories of struggles all the time and people are asking for assistance.” BTH’s website lists resources for families and individuals seeking help. The nonprofit organization’s key contribution has been introducing a mental health curriculum to area schools that is integrated into health classes.

BTH, which operates under the umbrella of the Mental Health Association of Westchester, sponsors instruction known as Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) in Pleasantville High School and Alexander Hamilton High School in Elmsford. BTH pays for certified instructors to teach the classes in the fifth, sixth and ninth grades. “Educators have been super-cooperative,” Halloran said. “We should be teaching mental health and emotional wellness at a young age to prevent future mental care and treatment. If we get to them early, we can help solve lifelong issues.” In 2019 and in 2020, BTH awarded scholarships in Halloran’s son’s name to graduating Pleasantville High School seniors who volunteered their time for mental health advocacy.

Halloran said school districts, including Ossining and Byram Hills, are interested in incorporating DBT instruction. “We’ve also been approached by a number of different schools but the pandemic slowed the momentum,” he said.

The Into the Light Walk is one of two main fundraisers BTH holds, along with a gala typically held in February. Halloran estimated that both events typically raise about $75,000 a year combined.

Last year, the gala was also canceled, but BTH received a grant from the Westchester Youth Bureau for $50,000, an annual sum that runs through next year. Halloran said he hopes BTH becomes an independent nonprofit by the end of the year.

It also receives donations from schools and organizations. After a student suicide at James Madison University a couple of years ago, funds were raised for BTH. In 2019, Knollwood Country Club in Elmsford hosted the Youth Suicide Prevention Fundraiser and raised $100,000.

Halloran said suicide has increasingly captured the attention of the public. For youngsters 10 to 24 years old, the number one killer is car accidents followed by suicide. “People see what the need is and how trends have been negative for some time,” he said.

Registration for the Into the Light Walk and other information about Break the Hold can be found at https://bthbreakthehold.org/event/into-the-light-walk-2021.
Letters to the Editor

Levenberg's Efforts as Supervisor Have Served Ossining Well

I want to let you know how much I respect, admire and support Dana Levenberg as she serves all of us as Ossining town supervisor.

Dana is an excellent manager, and I know that because she was my chief of staff for many years and handled and balanced all the issues raised by constituents, developed strategies and programs for our office to engage in, worked so hard on resolving constituent problems and never gave up even when the issues were very difficult to get done. She also organized an intern program for high school and college students, and so much more.

She is so energetic and forward thinking. In the environmental area, Dana is advancing new ideas such as making the Town of Ossining a walkable community, participating with Teatown to start food scrap recycling, bringing renewable energy projects to the town, being a leader in bringing electric charging stations to the train station, and so much more.

She has reached out to obtain grants for the community buying all tax dollars locally and providing for new services and programs. At one point, I noticed that the town had requested and received more grants than most other communities. Dana is so successful because she has developed a network throughout the county and the state to learn about these grants and knowing to apply for them on our behalf. Writing grants is not easy but Dana is an excellent writer and can do this, and so much more.

You don’t build relationships with other elected officials in other communities or the county or the state overnight. Nor do you build contacts with organizations beyond the town borders quickly. Dana has those contacts and is admired by all for her talents to promote the interests of the town in so many ways, which is good for us as Ossining and Briarcliff residents. As an example of her leadership, she serves as 1st vice president of the Westchester Municipal Officials Association.

Why would we want to replace a person that has served us so well, represented us with knowledge and inspiration and shows her talents and management skills all the time.

Please join me in voting for Dana Levenberg in the Democratic primary on June 22. Your vote really matters.

Assemblywoman Sandy Galef

Ossining

Advocacy for Small Businesses, Environment Sets Levenberg Apart

I am writing in support of re-electing Dana Levenberg for Ossining town supervisor. Her years of hard work and dedication have shown me that she is the right person for the position. Dana truly cares about Ossining and the people who live and work here. She has always been a supporter of small businesses even before the pandemic. Her advocacy for the environment and equity as well as her leadership during the pandemic prove she is the person to lead Ossining out of this crisis.

Disagreement Makes for Better Candidates and Elected Officials

At state Sen. Shelley Mayer’s recent annual Labor Breakfast, Westchester County Executive George Latimer said that having worked with Sen. Mayer for decades, he had deep respect for her intelligence, having worked with Sen. Mayer for decades, I have known Dana for several years. I have lived in Ossining-Briarcliff for over 30 years. I am a grandma to an Ossining High School graduate and senior. Over the years the impacts of severe weather have made me really look at environmental issues. Led by Dana, Ossining has been at the forefront in sustainability. Under her leadership Ossining installed electric car charging stations, started food scrap collections and so many other wonderful programs. We are working toward a more sustainable Ossining for my grandchildren.

I have known Dana for several years. I first met her at the Ossining Matters 5K Run/Walk. We hit it off immediately and have stayed in touch ever since. She supports the efforts of nonprofits and attends more community events than should be possible for one person.

Dana is the right person for the job now and for the future. I strongly endorse Dana Levenberg for Ossining town supervisor.

Patricia Gonsalves

Briarcliff Manor

Carmel Board of Ed Making Another Error With Second Budget Vote

Here we go again. The Carmel school board budget gets defeated and right away the Board of Education wants to vote on it again. Sound familiar?

Once again, they disregard the vote of the people. Again, they want to tell us what’s good for us.

In the real world, successful businesses operate within a realistic budget. They don’t keep pulling money from their profits to operate. If they do, sooner or later they will go broke. It is the school board’s responsibility to operate within the budget that the voters have approved. To keep putting failed budgets up for a re-vote, quite frankly, shows the board’s failure to conform to the voters’ wishes. Remember the bus garage fiasco?

Furthermore, it shows they cannot figure out how to make things work. Successful people figure these things out.

This is a lesson the board needs to learn. While it is not an easy task it is the way it is.

Trying to send the budget for a re-vote is just another attempt to take the easy way out. When are they going to figure out that most people are tired of paying ridiculously high school taxes? Taxes that go up every year. The board needs to figure out what they can do to make things work with what they have. Winners can make things work. Losers cannot.

John Cianflone

Stormville
The Form Based Code in New Castle: There’s a Better Way Forward

By Lisa Katz, Tara Kassal, Andrea Sanseverino Galan and Victoria Bayard Tipp

The Town of New Castle is at a significant crossroads. As the community grapples with the need to create a sustainable vision for our town, revitalize our hamlets and address questions of social equity and housing affordability, a misguided Form-Based Code (FBC) has been proposed as the best zoning mechanism for future development of the 72-acre Chappaqua hamlet.

This FBC is not the answer to tackling those fundamental issues. It is ill-conceived, the result of a flawed process that prioritized input by for-profit developers, denied residents a consensus-building charrette through open debate and dialogue, ignored key stakeholders, including the Chappaqua Central School District, and failed to conduct any economic analysis for the town or tax implications for residents. It also ignores the longer-term impacts of the global pandemic, which we are just beginning to understand.

The proposed FBC serves New Castle up on a silver platter to developers, and relinquishes resident, Town Board and Planning Board control over the future of our community. The proposal would enable private for-profit developers to build up to 1,000 units of primarily luxury apartments in four-story buildings over 50 feet in height “by right” with minimal input from residents or the Planning Board. That’s 40 percent higher than our highest existing downtown building under our current zoning code.

Development under the proposed FBC could result in the displacement of the most socioeconomically diverse and vulnerable residents in the available multifamily housing currently in the Chappaqua hamlet.

It limits the affordable housing requirement to 10 percent of units across the board, hindering future Town Boards from collaborating with developers to secure diverse and increased affordable housing such as the award-winning model of the cupola building at Chappaqua Crossing, which intersperses market rate, affordable and workforce housing.

There also will be a significant increased tax burden on our residents, many of whom are already struggling with the high housing costs and taxes. The town admits that it has conducted no studies on the cost to taxpayers of development under the FBC. Given that town tax revenue is about 0.8 percent of assessed value, $100 million in new development will generate, at best, about $800,000 in town tax revenue (even less if developers receive tax abatement deals).

The Chappaqua Board of Education has indicated that school taxes, the largest component of resident tax bills, will be underfunded relative to per-student district costs as a result of the proposed FBC.

Despite hundreds of residents’ letters and statements to the Town Board opposing this plan, the majority of the board has refused to consider alternatives or scale back the scope of the study area.

The “new direction” recently promoted by board members misleadingly assures residents that only six acres along the North Greeley Avenue corridor will be developed. It is a classic bait-and-switch maneuver. The Town Board is simultaneously studying the full 72-acre zone, from the train station commuter lot to the Walgreens at the top of the King Street hill.

This means that future boards can easily expand four-story development zoning under the FBC throughout the hamlet with a simple majority vote. Furthermore, completing the study on the full 72 acres opens up the town to lawsuits from developers seeking to build anywhere in the study area outside the North Greeley corridor.

There is a better way. The Unite New Castle Democratic slate was founded on the belief that our residents and local merchants are smart, engaged community members who deserve a voice in our town. Our experience maintains that smart towns create a sustainable vision with robust resident input and effectively manage growth by working collaboratively with developers to create compelling residential, commercial and mixed-use projects that enhance a sense of place.

Smart towns do not willingly set the stage for overdevelopment that will negatively impact residents and the environment. Smart towns do not cede control of their future to for-profit developers.

There are ways to achieve revitalization and development by modifying our current legislation and simplifying our approval processes. Our opponents for Town Board favor the FBC. They would have residents believe that the FBC is the only way to encourage economic growth and diversity.

This is simply not true. If anything, the FBC would reduce the potential for true economic growth, displace renters of current affordable housing in town, increase the luxury housing market and simultaneously ignoring a greater tax burden on single-family homeowners. It does not make provisions for workforce or senior housing. It necessitates the construction of multi-story parking garages, remote lots that require shuttle service and/or robotic stacked parking to deal with the potential five-fold increase in the hamlet’s population.

Make no mistake, the FBC is a giveaway to developers looking to make a profit off of our town, and it is not a sustainable path toward improving housing diversity and affordability in New Castle. We believe the town can better achieve economic vitality and diversity by including residents and merchants in the process, rather than muscling through unpopular and ineffective legislation that will eviscerate our community.

The Unite New Castle plan will streamline and accelerate the development process. We will focus development on existing vacant structures and simplify the existing review process to expedite projects using overlay zones, special permits and variances if a particular project makes sense for our community’s vigor and diversity.

The four successive moratoriums on downtown development have effectively made it impossible to develop buildings like the former Rite Aid site. Most significantly, we will forge a truly collaborative process with developers to ensure each and every project is optimized with respect to community outcomes, with a focus on a true mix of uses and increasing affordable and attainable housing options to achieve housing diversity.

Our slate is committed to economically sustainable development, ensuring new projects contribute to the tax base rather than add to the tax liabilities of single-family homeowners, driving out New Castle’s most vulnerable residents and reducing the town’s long-term marketability.

New Castle has an incredible opportunity to set the stage for a resilient future with a sustainable vision that affords the town the flexibility to embrace technological and societal advances that will enhance the quality of life for all residents. Maintaining control over the development of our hamlets will ensure every project is welcoming and inclusive to people of all races, religions, creeds and socioeconomic status. The proposed FBC permanently eliminates these opportunities for collaboration and optimization in favor of a cookie-cutter approach to revitalization. Unite New Castle was formed around our commitment to creating thriving hamlets and a more vibrant and diverse New Castle. We are ready to meet the challenge – not just FOR our community, but WITH them.

Please support us on June 22 in the Democratic primary. Together, and with the best interests of New Castle at heart, we will shape the town you want to live in.

Lisa Katz is a New Castle councilwoman and a Democratic candidate for supervisor. Tara Kassal, Andrea Sanseverino Galan and Victoria Bayard Tipp are Democratic candidates for Town Board. They will also appear on the independent Unite New Castle line in November.

Levenberg’s Unwavering Commitment to Ossining is Impressive

I have been an Ossining resident for 30-plus years, and I am excited to support Dana Levenberg for re-election as town supervisor. Dana’s list of accomplishments and her unwavering commitment to making Ossining the best place to live for all of us. Help keep that commitment going forward by voting for Dana Levenberg on June 22 in the Democratic primary.

Shami Arslanian

Ossining

State Infrastructure Funding Needs to Find its Way to Peekskill

By Dana Levenberg

My name is Jesenia Moroch. I am a 12th-grader in Peekskill High School. We have been discussing certain topics in class and are concerned about Peekskill’s infrastructure, advances in technology and by working with local government.

A recent article that has contributed to this idea was entitled “Infrastructure Projects Worth $306B Will Help NY’s Economic Recovery: Cuomo.” Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s firm focuses on infrastructure, saying that “building with bricks and mortar also builds public optimism and confidence.”

Hopefully, some of this money has been earmarked for fixing the infrastructure in Peekskill.

Jesenia Moroch

Peekskill

I have been an Ossining resident for 30-plus years, and I am excited to support Dana Levenberg for re-election as town supervisor. Dana’s list of accomplishments and her unwavering commitment to making Ossining the best place to live for all of us. Help keep that commitment going forward by voting for Dana Levenberg on June 22 in the Democratic primary.

Dana has gone above and beyond what is expected of a public servant in so many ways because she truly cares about Ossining and all of its residents. For me, the most significant quality is her unwavering commitment to making Ossining the best place to live for all of us.

Dana Levenberg

Ossining
Softball and Pleasantville Make for a Perfect Match

By Michael Gold

The field stretched out and away from the backstop, a carpet of green dividing the Saw Mill Parkway from the Village of Pleasantville.

Two half-circle American flags, red and blue with white stars, hung proudly from the chain link metal fence.

Lime painted the dirt on the first and third base lines a solid white, then continued on into the outfield, marking off the boundaries of fair and foul.

The elements all added up to a night of softball at Parkway Field.

The sun lowered toward the west, and the temperature cooled. Clouds puffing up to the top of the sky, their ragged edges lit orange by the setting sun, hovered overhead, but threatened nothing so terrible as even a drizzle. The brown infield dirt was indented with the impressions of fielders' shoes from pre-game practice.

The Expendables were fighting it out in a doubleheader with the Captain Lawrence Brewing Company in the Pleasantville Men's Softball League.

The league has nine teams. Besides the Expendables and Captain Lawrence, the teams are Foley's, P-Daddy's, the Nomads, the Free Agents, Craft, the Soul Brewing Company and the Moonlight Grahams, which sounds like a really delicious cookie, but is in honor of Archibald "Moonlight" Graham, who appeared in a single game in the Major Leagues without getting an at-bat. It's a story popularized in "Field of Dreams."

An observer could guess every pitch – a sinker. The pitches came slow, but in tricky arcs. The big, fat softballs looked like easy sinkers. The pitches came slow, but in tricky arcs. The big, fat softballs looked like easy sinkers. An observer could guess every pitch – a sinker. The pitches came slow, but in tricky arcs. The big, fat softballs looked like easy sinkers.

For the men on the teams, the game liberate you from your worries, at least temporarily. Mark Markarian, the founder, manager and captain of the Expendables, started the team to have fun and meet some new people.

"From 18 to Way Old to Rock & Roll," announced his hot pink flyer, posted on dozens of houses in the neighborhood a few months ago, when he was recruiting players for the team.

Markarian, who lived in Queens for decades, had a lot of trouble getting into a city softball league. Many of them are closed to newcomers, unless you have a personal connection.

Markarian moved to Pleasantville, in large part because of the sense of community he found here.

"I moved because of the Pleasantville Music Festival," Markarian said. A town that could organize and gather enough people to fill Parkway Field was a big draw, he said.

Pleasantville is "a real home town," he explained. One member of the team said he was there because he'd been dragged into it by a friend," but he seemed quite happy as he went to bat and took the field. Other team members talked about why they joined. The words "fun" and "meeting new people" and "community" came up a lot in conversation.

The Expendables are scheduled to play 16 games, all as part of doubleheaders, throughout the season, which started in late April and ends late this month. The seven-inning games move pretty fast, unlike Major League Baseball.

Alex Lepre, an Expendable, wearing a tee-shirt that said, "I Am the Big Dog," lined a single toward first base. A teammate popped out to shortstop. Markarian turned a grounder he hit down the first base line into a double.

In the third inning, the lights came on from the tall stanchions looming over the field. Gnats swarmed around the players' heads, and they tried to wave them away, unsuccessfully.

Gnats are attracted to people, in part, because of the carbon dioxide we exhale. The gnats seemed to be enjoying a carbon dioxide feast of gigantic proportions.

A Captain Lawrence batter hit a soaring fly far out into the outfield, but the Expendables center fielder, Henry Heredia, plucked the ball out of the air and ran home before it would have fallen for a fly ball over his shoulder at the last possible second. Heredia ran after it and grabbed the ball over his head in deep right field.

As I walked away from the field to go home, a Captain Lawrence batter slugged a fly ball over Expendable Mike "Blatt" Rosenblatt’s head in deep right field. Rosenblatt ran after it and grabbed the ball over his shoulder at the last possible second before it would have fallen for a certain extra base hit.

The score didn’t matter. The real winner was Pleasantville. And the gnats.

The second game started almost immediately after the first game ended. As I walked away from the field to go home, a Captain Lawrence batter slugged a fly ball over Expendable Mike "Blatt" Rosenblatt’s head in deep right field. Rosenblatt ran after it and grabbed the ball over his shoulder at the last possible second before it would have fallen for a certain extra base hit.

The game continued on into the outfield, marking off the boundaries of fair and foul.

Two half-circle American flags, red and blue with white stars, hung proudly from the chain link metal fence.

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The elements all added up to a night of softball at Parkway Field.

The sun lowered toward the west, and the temperature cooled. Clouds puffing up to the top of the sky, their ragged edges lit orange by the setting sun, hovered overhead, but threatened nothing so terrible as even a drizzle. The brown infield dirt was indented with the impressions of fielders' shoes from pre-game practice.

The Expendables were fighting it out in a doubleheader with the Captain Lawrence Brewing Company in the Pleasantville Men's Softball League.

The league has nine teams. Besides the Expendables and Captain Lawrence, the teams are Foley's, P-Daddy's, the Nomads, the Free Agents, Craft, the Soul Brewing Company and the Moonlight Grahams, which sounds like a really delicious cookie, but is in honor of Archibald “Moonlight” Graham, who appeared in a single game in the Major Leagues without getting an at-bat. It's a story popularized in “Field of Dreams.”

An observer could guess every pitch – a sinker. The pitches came slow, but in tricky arcs. The big, fat softballs looked like easy sinkers. An observer could guess every pitch – a sinker. The pitches came slow, but in tricky arcs. The big, fat softballs looked like easy sinkers.

For the men on the teams, the game liberate you from your worries, at least temporarily. Mark Markarian, the founder, manager and captain of the Expendables, started the team to have fun and meet some new people.

"From 18 to Way Old to Rock & Roll," announced his hot pink flyer, posted on dozens of houses in the neighborhood a few months ago, when he was recruiting players for the team.

Markarian, who lived in Queens for decades, had a lot of trouble getting into a city softball league. Many of them are closed to newcomers, unless you have a personal connection.

Markarian moved to Pleasantville, in large part because of the sense of community he found here.

"I moved because of the Pleasantville Music Festival,” Markarian said. A town that could organize and gather enough people to fill Parkway Field was a big draw, he said.

Pleasantville is “a real home town," he explained. One member of the team said he was there because he’d been dragged into it by a friend," but he seemed quite happy as he went to bat and took the field. Other team members talked about why they joined. The words “fun” and “meeting new people” and “community” came up a lot in conversation.

The Expendables are scheduled to play 16 games, all as part of doubleheaders, throughout the season, which started in late April and ends late this month. The seven-inning games move pretty fast, unlike Major League Baseball.

Alex Lepre, an Expendable, wearing a tee-shirt that said, “I Am the Big Dog,” lined a single toward first base. A teammate popped out to shortstop. Markarian turned a grounder he hit down the first base line into a double.

In the third inning, the lights came on from the tall stanchions looming over the field. Gnats swarmed around the players' heads, and they tried to wave them away, unsuccessfully.

Gnats are attracted to people, in part, because of the carbon dioxide we exhale. The gnats seemed to be enjoying a carbon dioxide feast of gigantic proportions.

A Captain Lawrence batter hit a soaring fly far out into the outfield, but the Expendables center fielder, Henry Heredia, plucked the ball out of the air and ran home before it would have fallen for a fly ball over his shoulder at the last possible second. Heredia ran after it and grabbed the ball over his head in deep right field.

As I walked away from the field to go home, a Captain Lawrence batter slugged a fly ball over Expendable Mike "Blatt" Rosenblatt’s head in deep right field. Rosenblatt ran after it and grabbed the ball over his shoulder at the last possible second before it would have fallen for a certain extra base hit.

The score didn’t matter. The real winner was Pleasantville. And the gnats.

The second game started almost immediately after the first game ended. As I walked away from the field to go home, a Captain Lawrence batter slugged a fly ball over Expendable Mike "Blatt" Rosenblatt’s head in deep right field. Rosenblatt ran after it and grabbed the ball over his shoulder at the last possible second before it would have fallen for a certain extra base hit.

The game didn’t matter. The real winner was Pleasantville. And the gnats.

The Diamond Hospitality Group and the Alzheimer’s Association are partnering to present an Alzheimer’s awareness evening event to be held at Grand Prix New York in Mount Kisco on Wednesday, June 9 from 7 to 8 p.m. and broadcast live on The Clubhouse sports radio show on WGCH 1490-AM.

The Alzheimer’s Association will have a table at GPNY during the radio broadcast with staff on hand to talk about the organization’s programs, services and fundraisers.

An estimated 5.8 million Americans in 2019 were living with Alzheimer’s dementia, including 200,000 under the age of 65. Barring the development of medical breakthroughs, the number of people age 65 and older with Alzheimer’s dementia may nearly triple from 5.6 million to 13.8 million by 2050.

Alzheimer’s is the sixth-leading cause of death in the U.S., and it is the fifth-leading cause of death for those age 65 and older.

Local residents can help find a cure by participating in the Walk to End Alzheimer’s, held at more than 600 locations nationwide. The Westchester walk is scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 3 at SUNY Purchase. More information about the walk is available at www.alz.org/walk.

Grand Prix New York to host Alzheimer’s Awareness Evening June 9

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Communities Commemorate Memorial Day 2021

It may not have been completely back to normal, but this year communities throughout Westchester and Putnam found a way to return in person to recognize those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Many towns and villages held only ceremonies, while Buchanan, Montrose and Verplanck combined for the Tri Village parade. There also were parades in Yorktown and in several towns in Putnam.
It is always surprising to me when I meet people who tell me that they have no interest in local politics or voting. Statistics would prove that they are in the majority. In my town, for instance, slightly less than one-third of all qualified voters actually turn out to cast their ballots for local elections.

I must confess that when my wife and I moved to Westchester, we were quite naive about the impact that local government has on home ownership. Since that time, however, I have learned that town government can deeply affect how we enjoy our homes and neighborhoods. And I’ve learned it issue by issue, problem by problem, side by side with the good things our elected officials, department heads and committee volunteers strive to accomplish.

Now politically involved myself on a volunteer basis, I must say that I tip my hat to those brave souls who battle to be elected and to govern, many times dealing with the most contentious issues, as well as to those who volunteer their time and expertise to make our communities better places to live.

There are so many complicated questions to be managed on a local level. Property taxes. Road maintenance. Garbage pick-up. Public safety. Protecting our drinking water. Parks and recreational facilities. Are we hemmed in by restrictive codes, or are they too loose? Do we have a healthy business environment, properly balanced with the suburban lifestyle we all sought by coming to this region?

And what happens when we want to design and construct an addition or a deck? Is the town easy or difficult to navigate in obtaining approvals?

Some of us, perhaps most of us, get involved with town government only when an occurrence affects us personally or just makes us plain angry, while others are involved with the political process from the start.

It might take only one event, small or cataclysmic, that sends a person into the fray of political activism. It can be something as astounding as 9/11, which sent many on a mission to determine whether Indian Point was safe in our midst, to the simple quest of wanting to remove a large tree from one’s property.

The structure of local government may vary somewhat, but most are run by a supervisor or mayor, sometimes assisted by a manager and supported by a common council or board.

In my town, the supervisor is elected to a two-year term and the board members, every four years, on a staggered basis, currently with no term limits. There are many departments involved in local government: planning, building, engineering and sewer, highway, parks and recreation, the clerk’s office, the assessor’s office, police, comptroller, tax receiver, water, senior housing and services, town attorney and courts, library and, sometimes, a museum.

At the same time, there are many volunteer committees and boards whose expertise and interests are focused on supporting town departments, such as planning, zoning, environment, traffic, architecture review, open space, conservation, ethics, senior services, landmarks and, occasionally, a museum committee, among others. There are also clubs which enhance community living, like garden clubs that plant around town in the spring.

Some voluntary boards carry more weight than others. I happen to serve on my town’s Architectural Review Board, and sometimes a disgruntled applicant whose plan has not been received favorably might say, “You have no power.” In a sense it’s true. We serve only in an advisory capacity, while approval is required from similar committees in nearby towns in order for a project to move forward.

A common complaint is that the process for approval takes too long in some towns, particularly with such issues as zoning. But towns have responded to this criticism by saying that they must exercise due diligence, especially when factoring in the environmental impact of larger projects.

The most common complaint we hear in Westchester and Putnam counties is that we pay too much in taxes. There is a rush to assign blame to local governments. While our elected officials remind us that it is our school systems and not the towns that take the greatest bite out of our tax bill, the towns nonetheless must take the abuse since it collects taxes on the schools’ behalf.

A town’s character can depend on the personal style of those citizens who put themselves forward to serve, either through election or volunteerism. And, of course, individual personalities and frailties come into play, which can make any local issue even more interesting.

When I first moved to Yorktown a half-century ago, I was very impressed with one of the town’s most beloved citizens, an owner of large commercial properties named Grace Roma (there’s the Roma Building downtown). She was at Town Board meetings and work sessions every week without fail. She once told me that she’d much rather be there than at a stage play “because the drama in town beats anything on Broadway!”

Grace had a point, a good one.

Bill Primavera is a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc., the longest running public relations agency in Westchester (www.PrimaveraPR.com), specializing in lifestyles, real estate and development. To engage the services of The Home Guru and his team to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.
They Wanted Pleasantville’s Blood – and They Got It!

By Michael Gold

Area residents donated 93 pints of blood, potentially saving 279 lives during the Pleasantville Volunteer Fire Department Blood Drive at the village’s firehouse last Thursday.

The blood drive exceeded the New York Blood Center’s (NYBC) goal of 90 donations, said Elizabeth Hernandez, business development manager for the NYBC, which is responsible for donations in Westchester, Rockland, Putnam and Dutchess counties and New York City.

The nonprofit NYBC offers 1,500 blood products daily to 200 area hospitals, in the tristate area, treating patients who have suffered an accident, a burn, have cancer or require blood for any other reason.

“Each donation can save three lives,” Hernandez said.

After donation, the blood is divided into three parts. Red blood cells go to accident victims and transplant patients. Platelets are for people who have cancer. Plasma goes to burn victims, Hernandez said.

This is a particularly urgent time for the need for blood in area hospitals, she said, COVID-19 has severely cut donations.

“We used to average 500 blood drives a month,” Hernandez said. “Now we’re down to about 100. The gap is 8,000 donations a month that are not being captured. We went down to zero blood drives in February 2020. Most of our donating schools, colleges, government agencies and corporations were closed because of COVID. We’re down 100,000 donors.”

Also, with the summer holidays, “people have cabin fever, and they are leaving” to go on vacation, Hernandez explained. So, donations and the local blood supply drop as people go on holiday.

The need to replenish the blood supply is constant, Hernandez said. Platelets expire after five days, red blood cells expire after 42 days and plasma expires after one year.

“What we need is more donations, sponsors’ drives and donated drive space to help supply our area hospitals,” Hernandez said.

Donors can give blood safely every 56 days. All blood types are needed, but there is a special need for O negative, O positive, B negative and A negative, the four core blood types, which can be safely transfused to a great portion of the population. O negative is the universal blood type because it can be safely given to patients with any blood type.

Hernandez credited the Pleasantville Fire Department and its blood drive coordinator with being “extremely professional, generous, methodical and organized.”

The Pleasantville Fire Department has sponsored blood drives since 1997. It has generated 1,859 total donations, potentially saving 5,577 lives, according to Hernandez.

A steady stream of donors last Thursday was greeted by volunteers who asked for identification. They were then asked to complete a computerized questionnaire regarding their health.

Everyone wore a face mask. After completing the questionnaire, donors were directed to sit in chairs to wait to get their blood tested to ensure there was enough iron in their blood. A phlebotomist, a person professionally trained to draw blood, jabbed fingers with a sharp stick. She also took everyone’s temperature. The room has to be chilly to keep the blood viable.

The phlebotomist said she was taking one pint of blood, about 500 grams. The blood is collected in thick plastic pouches. It takes about another eight minutes to complete a donation.

There were Lorna Doone shortbread cookies and Oreos, as well as apple and cranberry juice, spread out on a table. Blood donors must replenish their fluids, which helps make more blood. Also, the sugar in the cookies and juice helps to keep blood-sugar levels at an optimal level. Donors can also eat a salty snack.

Leaving the site, a volunteer offered a bottle of water. Blood donors should drink at least 32 ounces of water for two days afterward.

It’s also important not to drink alcohol or exercise vigorously for the rest of the day after a donation.

For those interested in donating, you can donate at NYBC’s locations in Elmsford and Nanuet or the Community Center of Northern Westchester in Katonah. There are three NYBC locations in Manhattan as well. Visit the NYBC website at www.newyorkbloodcenter.org to find out more, including locations and times.

Hospital patients’ needs are great and the NYBC wants to borrow your arm for 20 minutes, at the most. And there’s juice and cookies at the end.

He was there for you. Now be there for him this Father’s Day.

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The White Plains Outdoor Arts Festival (WPOAF) is back for 2021. Generations of area residents have enjoyed the treasured annual community event.

The all-outdoor festival will be held this Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. rain or shine in Tibbits Park at North Broadway and Main Street in White Plains. "After the difficulties of the past year and the stress everyone has been under to balance health and safety with a need for normalcy, being able to safely bring back the arts festival is a great feeling; we are very much looking forward to greeting friends from the community that we have not seen in some time," said organizing committee member Beth Roach. The organization is in its 59th year and its mission is to host a vibrant and fun cultural event for the community and to support local young artists who want to pursue their creative passions by studying visual art in college.

Proceeds from the event, including sponsorships by Jackson Lewis and Nick Wolff and the Wolff Team at Howard Hanna Realty, as well as generous donations from Friends of the WPOAF, generate scholarships awarded to White Plains High School seniors. This year, two scholarships of $3,500 each were awarded to Nathaniel Fields and Selena Mendoza. WPOAF is free and is eagerly anticipated by thousands of Westchester residents of all ages. Unique artists of all kinds will set up their arts and fine crafts and visitors will shop at more than 50 booths for beautiful textiles, jewelry, glassworks, accessories and many other handcrafted items. In addition, guests of the show can participate in a popular raffle, with items donated by participating artists. Food vendors will also be on hand.

COVID-19 safety precautions will still be observed and all visitors are requested to follow Centers for Disease Control and New York State guidelines for mask wearing and social distancing.

For more information about the White Plains Outdoor Arts Festival, visit www.whiteplainsoutdoorartsfestival.com or on Facebook at The White Plains Outdoor Arts Festival.
Kennedy Seniors Are Going Places!
Notable 2021 Acceptances to Top Schools

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Justin Veatch Fund Honors Seven Area HS Students With Scholarships

By Anna Young

The Justin Veatch Fund announced last week it will award music scholarships to seven graduating high school students from five Westchester schools this month.

The recipients, selected from a competitive field of applicants, are Taylor Setterstrom and Jacob Krauss from Somers High School; Richard “Jake” Leis and Noah Crosby Solomon from Pleasantville High School; Lexi Ann from North Salem High School; Mia Williams from Westlake High School; and Julia Levin from The Masters School.

Each year, The Justin Veatch Fund awards music scholarships to graduating high school students who live within a 40-mile radius of Yorktown Heights. The scholarships honor the legacy of Veatch, a Yorktown High School senior who died from an accidental overdose in 2008.

The organization has awarded 55 scholarships to students who plan to pursue music in college since the fund was created in 2009.

“We’re thrilled to be able to continue honoring my brother’s legacy by celebrating young musicians and helping them offset the costs of pursuing their dreams,” board member Elena Veatch said.

The 2021 Award Recipients

Lexi Ann is graduating from North Salem High School and plans to attend Belmont University’s Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business to pursue a major in songwriting.

“I know that I’ve just scratched the surface, waiting to unlock so much potential lyric power underneath,” Ann said.

She looks forward to honing her craft and incorporating her vocals, guitar, ukulele, piano and saxophone into a colorful portfolio of original songs.

Jacob Krauss, who graduates this month from Somers High School, is a guitarist and singer who has expanded his talents to other instruments and became deeply involved in producing music through collaborations.

After signing up for a music theory class, Krauss became involved with his school’s jazz ensemble, concert and chamber choir.

He calls himself a music nerd and formed a band with three other friends who held their first live performance just before the COVID-19 shutdown.

Going the virtual route to continue his passion, he organized Quarantine Collab, a YouTube cover series, in which he enlisted other local talent to provide a bright spot in his community.

Richard (“Jake”) Leis of Pleasantville High School and plans to pursue jazz studies and performance at the University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music with the goal of becoming a performer and educator.

Leis is a baritone saxophone performer who has excelled in the WCSDMA All-County Jazz Big Band, the Pleasantville High School Honors Jazz Band and the Lagond Music School.

His introduction to jazz, Latin and funk helped him grow and inspired him to prioritize music in his daily routines.

Lexi Ann is one of seven Westchester high school students who will be continuing their music studies in the fall in college. It was recently announced that they received scholarships from The Justin Veatch Fund.

Julia Levin is graduating from the Masters School and plans to attend the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California in the fall. She is a guitarist who thrives on playing live music and collaborating with other musicians, though she is also an accomplished solo artist.

Her honors include winning the Fender X Splice Loop Contest, being a featured artist on Norman’s Rare Guitars’ YouTube channel and presenting a 2019 TEDx talk on the lack of respect for female guitarists.

Levin received numerous honors while attending the Lagond Music School. Her goal is to tour, perform and collaborate with other artists while working behind the scenes supporting others in the music business.

Taylor Setterstrom is graduating from Somers High School and will attend SUNY New Paltz. Her primary musical interest is drums, but she also plays guitar. Setterstrom said she is generally shy and introverted, and music enabled her to make many friends that she would have never made otherwise.

Since she auditioned for the house band at School of Rock in Bedford, Setterstrom became a key team player in developing new techniques and skills, which she has used in community events and fundraisers. Last year, Setterstrom was a winning finalist in her age group in the international competition “Hit Like a Girl” for female drummers.

She said she may pursue music therapy so she can give back to the community while pursuing her passion for work in music.

Noah Crosby Solomon is graduating from Pleasantville High School with an eye on performance and music production at Berklee School of Music (and later, a master’s degree in music education).

A guitarist, Solomon has excelled in settings such as the Lagond Music School, the Pleasantville High School Honors Jazz Band and the Westchester All-County Jazz Band.

He frequently dedicated his lunch period and free periods to talking about music and jazz in the band room. One teacher said Solomon is “a musical truth-seeker, a strong critical thinker, who has humility.”

Mia Williams is graduating from Westlake High School and plans to pursue jazz and contemporary music with a concentration in voice.

Williams is president and soloist in her high school’s select jazz choir, a leading performer in the Westlake Players and the lead singer of Westlake Rock Band.

One teacher called Williams “one of the top vocalists and most talented musicians I have had the pleasure of teaching in my 34-year career” while another compared her growth with that of established Broadway vocalists.

Across

1. All those in favor
2. Routing word
3. Feature
4. “C’est la ___”
5. “Breakdown ahead” warning
6. “I do” location
7. Busy insect
8. Allude to
9. Film genre
10. Guarded
11. “The Lord of the Rings” character
12. Spark
13. Mom or Dad
14. Earlier style back in fashion
15. Excerpt
16. “Moves like a butterfly, stings a ___”
17. Fish often smoked
18. Tiny
19. Tiny
20. Move, as an eyelash
21. Refiner’s stuff
22. Tiny
23. Undergo a chemical transformation
24. Walking sticks
25. “C’est la ___”
26. “I do” location
27. Tiny
28. Manicurist’s concern
29. Feature
30. Sound of longing
31. “Titanic” setting
32. “Titanic” setting
33. Take care of a bill
34. “Moves like a butterfly, stings a ___”
35. Forest grazer
36. Not be honest
37. Curtain call time
38. Zoo attractions
39. Enter, 2 words
40. Express aloud
41. Listen to

Down

1. Sorority letter
2. Cleansed
3. Stop shop
4. Military award
5. “C’est la ___”
6. “Am ___ the list”-2 words
7. Busy insect
8. Much
9. Pertinent
10. Guarded
11. “The Lord of the Rings” character
12. Manicurist’s concern
13. Manicurist’s concern
14. “C’est la ___”
15. Excerpt
16. Woman’s support
17. Fish often smoked
18. Dine out
19. Tiny
20. Move, as an eyelash
21. Refiner’s stuff
22. Tiny
23. Undergo a chemical transformation
24. Walking sticks
25. “C’est la ___”
26. “I do” location
27. Tiny
28. Manicurist’s concern
29. Feature
30. Sound of longing
31. Workout target
32. “Titanic” setting
33. Take care of a bill
34. “Moves like a butterfly, stings a ___”
35. Forest grazer
36. Not be honest
37. Curtain call time

Answers on page 26

A Spiritual View

By Fr. Nils Chittenden

A couple of days ago, many Christians celebrated a holy day called Trinity Sunday, which focuses on the core Christian belief that there is one God who has three unique aspects of personhood.

When Christians refer to the Trinity, what they are saying is that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But they’re also saying that they believe in one God, not three.

Because, you see, all three “persons” are rational explanation.

Yet, although it might be frustrating not to be able to understand the concept – or to explain it even remotely adequately – there is actually a huge positive side: that God is so far beyond human understanding and reasoning that all we can do is acknowledge this with wonder and awe. Knowing that there is a divine entity so much vaster than us puts everything about our world and our lives into proper perspective. It also gives us the reassurance that we can still believe in things that seem to defy rational explanation.

Fr. Nils Chittenden is rector of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Armonk and is part of the Armonk Faith Alliance. The alliance also comprises Congregations B’nai Y Israel, Hillside Church, St. Patrick’s RC Church and St. Nersess Armenian Seminary.
Butwhatifits: Who Drives Your Chariot?

“...I have always had the ability to attach my demons to my chariot.”

Ingmar Bergman

Butwhatifits.
It's slang for the feeling one gets that despite all the planning and accomplishments, you come to realize you got it all wrong in the end.

One of the advantages of coming to this anxiety-filled realization is that it enables us to become aware of ourselves. Not an easy time for some, especially in our ego-centric world of materialism and consumerism.

What we should consider doing is to accept the notion that the pain of change is milder than the pain of complacency. To achieve this, we will need to rein in our self-discipline and slack surrogate motivations that are merely sense-like emotions, oftentimes fickle. In essence, we do not live until we take control of our self-discipline.

With this said, we should inquire of ourselves as to who is driving our chariot of life. And, have we delegated our destiny to chance and/or apathy?

I will use the analogy of the charioteer as a guide to help bring balance, stability and direction in our lives – in the anticipation it will assist us in regaining control of our reins on life.

Just imagine the chariot as our body, the horses as our driving motive force, our mind as our inner spirit. If we feel and believe we are not finding our essence in life, it may be that we do not rein in our horses with true direction, but merely let the horses follow a lost herd of popular culture, delegating our fate to others.

We may do this unconsciously or for the need to be accepted; finding a false sense of security and happiness by being part of a lost thundering herd. If our inner constitution and moral compass is weak and without direction, our senses will slack the reins to allow us to be dragged to our fate, as opposed to having our mind control our self-discipline and hold firm the reins of our destiny.

For it is those who stand for themselves aside the herd of popular culture who seek the essence of life by taking the reins of their chariot to chart their own destiny. We may consider asking ourselves, why am I in a state of despair and feeling alone in the crowd of humanity? We have the power to be ourselves or to delegate our senses to despair.

To quote Socrates, we must first honestly “Know thyself,” to be achieved by scrutinizing our motives, intentions and our desires – all of which can easily betray us as we fulfill our actions.

For example, take work, which we need for our sustenance, and for some to rank themselves in the hierarchy of social status. In our goal to keep up with the Joneses for bragging rights, we perform work in return for sustenance; a salary functions as a modern-day servitude. This is quite a paradox in that the very means we need to survive and maintain our social standings must be financed at the cost of our own existence in our finite time.

Yet we continue believing we will find our El Dorado. We like to believe that our troubles are due to our environment, and to change our existence to essence all we need to do is change our environment. We erroneously believe externalizing will help us find our internal peace and essence. Or believing our less-than-perfect environment is the cause of our anxiety. Well, let’s test this hypothesis.

Take Adam and Eve. Living in paradise for all eternity with not a worry on their mind. Complete with social distancing, being the only two humans in paradise strutting around au naturel, and never aging. No mortgage, no job, just heavenly bliss, and maybe listening to Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers singing “I'm In Heaven.”

They also had a subscription to Ted Turner’s cable station “Heavenly Classics,” paid for with their guardian angel debit card. Then they just got bored, partook of the forbidden fruit. The devil made me do it! Always looking for a scapegoat. Unfortunately, confessorials had not yet been invented. And within a blink of an eye, they had fallen from paradise to their earthly incarnation, going from fig leaves to face masks and having to social distance with home incarceration. Since they were over 65, they were immediately given their COVID shots. Holy Jehovah!

So now totally bored living with each other, and getting on each other’s nerves, and raising Cain – with no restaurant making deliveries of the forbidden fruit. Shuttered from society, with their iPhone, YouTube, Netflix and all their downloaded apps, not to mention credit card debt and working for bosses at a mindless job in cubicle hell.

Then having the epiphany that Old Jehovah was not so bad after all. As they fall into an existential abyss of despair, they begin to sing:

Swing low sweet chariot
Coming to carry me home
Swing low sweet chariot
Coming to take me home

Let’s not drive ourselves into a hell of existence by turning over the reins of our life to our weaker emotions to follow a lost crowd only to find ourselves as Butwhatifits.

Be well. Be safe. Be Happy. Be nice. Amor fati!

Dr. Richard Cirulli is a published author, playwright and retired professor. His body of works can be viewed at www.demitasseplayers.com. He looks forward to your comments, and can be reached at profciruli@optonline.net.

By Richard Cirulli

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Westchester Officials Look for a Summer of Fun in 2021

By Martin Wilbur

While the weather was horrendous for the unofficial first weekend of summer, there will be plenty for Westchester County residents to look forward to when Mother Nature does cooperate.

County officials announced last week a list of expanded summer activities, including eight drive-in movies at three locations and four live concerts to go along with the previously planned openings of Westchester beaches at Playland and Croton Point Park and pools and Playland amusement park the last weekend in June.

One of two key restrictions will be the continued closure of Glen Island Beach, which remains a COVID-19 testing center, although the park is accessible to the public for walking and biking. Playland Pool will again be closed this summer as it continues to undergo construction.

A year after the COVID-19 pandemic canceled or curtailed most activities, the plunging active caseload and increased vaccinations have given residents of all ages hope that 2021 will be a far better summer than last year.

“We look forward to a really happy and healthy 2021 season,” said county Parks Commissioner Kathy O’Connor at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla.

Starting on Friday, June 11 and continuing on alternating Friday nights through September, Screenings Under the Stars returns drive-in style, with five family-friendly movies at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla, two at Croton Point Park and one at Tibbetts Brook Park in Yonkers.

Each car will be charged $25 through online admission sales in advance only at https://www.showclix.com/event/screenings-2021.

Additionally, there will be four weeknight concerts at Croton Point Park and Kensico Dam Plaza between June 29 and July 20 starting at 7 p.m. O’Connor said the county will be selling spaces for pods that can hold up to eight people each for $10 a person. Attendees must maintain six feet of space on all sides during the concerts. They will not be allowed to combine designated areas or bring pets. Limited tickets are available now at https://www.showclix.com/event/wcp-scs21.

The county has also scheduled the Naturally Essential Challenge, which encourages residents to visit all Westchester parks through October. To enter the challenge, park-goers will log visits by scanning QR codes on posters at each facility to be entered for a chance to win a $50 Westchester County Parks gift card.


### The following is the Screenings Under the Stars schedule for this summer:

- **June 11:** “Pixar’s Onward,” Kensico Dam Plaza.
- **June 25:** “Trolls World Tour,” Kensico Dam Plaza
- **July 9:** “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off,” Kensico Dam Plaza
- **July 23:** “Tom & Jerry,” Croton Point Park
- **Aug. 6:** “Godzilla vs. Kong,” Kensico Dam Plaza
- **Aug. 20:** “Forrest Gump,” Kensico Dam Plaza
- **Sept. 10:** “Pixar’s Soul,” Croton Point Park
- **Sept. 24:** “Disney’s ‘Mulan,”’ Tibbetts Brook

**The schedule of concerts are:**

- **Tuesday, June 29:** High Noon, Croton Point Park
- **Thursday, July 1:** Songs in the Attic, a Billy Joel tribute band, Kensico Dam Plaza
- **Tuesday, July 13:** Back to the Garden
- **Tuesday, July 20:** The Nerds, Kensico Dam Plaza

The county has also scheduled the Naturally Essential Challenge, which encourages residents to visit all Westchester parks through October. To enter the challenge, park-goers will log visits by scanning QR codes on posters at each facility to be entered for a chance to win a $50 Westchester County Parks gift card.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Pleasantville will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, June 14, 2021, 8:00pm via Zoom id: 980 7284 3245 and Passcode: 650072 to hear comments on proposed amendments to Village Code chapter 98 concerning fees for building permit renewals. Eric Morrissey Village Administrator/Clerk, Village of Pleasantville

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How to Make Sure Aging Parents Are Never Taken Advantage Of

There is a moment, as a parent, when you become instantly aware that you are no longer looking down to make eye contact with your child. Your child’s power and strength are growing while yours is slowly ebbing (hopefully very slowly).

Growing up is a time of expanding horizons and finetuning your understanding of the world. Aging is not always an opposite force. In many ways, aging offers a different but still compelling view of the world.

But sharpness, technological proficiency and skepticism may fade over time. Predators, both strangers and unscrupulous family members, may try to take advantage of those who are unable to process activities like they used to.

The first step is identifying what needs protection. Your parents’ assets may include a home, checking and savings accounts, life insurance, retirement accounts, cars and personal property.

Different generations sharing their financial history is not always a smooth process, but a parent who implicitly trusts an adult child should make the effort. Powers of attorney allow a chosen agent to have access to financial accounts, make payments and handle a variety of financial matters. This is a valuable first step to ensure basic oversight.

An adult child must be aware of the people that their parents interact with on a regular basis. We are not talking about hassling their neighbor who stops by with sourdough bread (although we will keep an eye on the loaf). Strangers offering a pricey service that your parents do not need should raise concerns.

Having a checkbook is one form of independence that should not be affected without a serious discussion between parents and adult children.

The question is, do you wait for that first scam payment before you step in or not? Account holds initiated by banks overseeing the holdings of vulnerable adults previously victimized is a legislative action item in New York. Institutional controls may make sense in the absence of responsible family members, but the fear of overreach is always present.

With phone and online scams specifically targeting seniors, adult children who are caregivers and also agents under a power of attorney should try to set up alerts with the bank notifying them of all transactions that exceed a certain amount.

When the concern rests within one’s own family other issues arise. Sometimes a parent may choose the least suitable family member to become an agent under a power of attorney. Having multiple co-agents acting together under a power of attorney may make sense to avert problems down the line.

In many cases, the family member with questionable attitudes may be the sole agent and fail to provide an expedient legal response and avoid a surprise years later.

The best way to protect aging parents is to be involved, speak regularly and understand the legal protections available to your family.

Alan D. Feller, Esq. is managing partner of Sloan & Feller Attorneys at Law, located at 625 Route 6 in Mahopac. He can be reached at alandfeller@sloanandfeller.com.
The Belmont Will Be the Very Best of the Triple Crown

By Charles Palombi

Yes, the Triple Crown series comes to an end this Saturday at Belmont Park. This year there will be no opportunity for a Triple Crown champion. That fell by the wayside when Medina Spirit was beaten in the Preakness by a non-Kentucky Derby starter named Romberau. So, each of the first two Triple Crown races gave us a different winner leaving us with a Belmont that will lack the excitement of a Triple Crown quest. But don’t be fooled as this will be the best of the three races loaded with some really talented horses.

Will there be a third winner after the Belmont Stakes? Most certainly, yes. First, it looks as if Derby winner Medina Spirit won’t run in the Belmont as his connections are still dealing with the complications of their tainted Kentucky Derby victory. Preakness winner Romberau is running in the Belmont but is destined to meet much tougher competition than the field he faced in Baltimore.

The Belmont Stakes is known as The Test of the Champion, and is the oldest of the three American classic races, having first been run in 1867. It is traditionally the last and longest leg of the Triple Crown. Its place as the final leg of the Triple Crown has produced indelible memories, such as Secretariat’s 31-length victory in 1973 to become the first horse to sweep the series in 25 years, widely considered the greatest single performance in the history of the sport.

In 2015, American Pharaoh rocked the stands at Belmont Park when he ended an even longer Triple Crown drought, becoming the first winner of the series in 37 years. And just three years later, a horse named Justify added his name to the elite list of 13 to win all three legs.

So, let’s look at the probable starters. (The actual draw is scheduled to take place on Tuesday.)

Essential Quality: The odds-on favorite in the Kentucky Derby, he went to the Derby with four Grade I stakes victories but somehow got lost in the mix of the race. A four-place finish was disappointing, and his connections decided to skip the Preakness.

Hot Rod Charlie: Another Derby starter to skip the Preakness, even after finishing a competitive third in Louisville. He won the Louisiana Derby and sported a second-place finish in last fall’s Breeders’ Cup Juvenile.

Romberau: The talented Preakness winner did not run in the Derby. So, the question is, will he be able to contend with much stronger competition than he faced in Baltimore?

Rock Your World: He didn’t rock anybody’s world with his 17th-place finish in the Kentucky Derby. But he is surely more talented than that showing. He had three wins in three starts before the Derby and hopes to regain that form. Another runner that opted to skip the Preakness, he represents yet another new challenger for Romberau.

Known Agenda: The Florida Derby winner never really got untracked in the crowded Derby field and finished a disappointing ninth. Yup, you got it, another who skipped the Preakness in favor of the Belmont.

Rebel’s Romance: Here is one of the most talented horses in the field — and he skipped both the Derby and Preakness. But don’t sell him short; he was the winner of the United Arab Emirates Derby in Meydan. That is one of the most competitive and richest races in the world — and he won handily. He’s rested and now comes to claim the Belmont crown.

Promise Keeper: A mystery entry from Todd Fletcher. He impressively won the Peter Pan, a prep race for the Belmont, which was run over the Belmont surface but that five-horse field was not a particularly fast or competitive race. He is lightly raced and eligible to show improvement.

Keepmeinmind: Ran a good fourth in the Preakness, which leaves us to guess just how good he could be. I’ll guess — oink, oink.

Brooklyn Strong: He may carry Brooklyn in his name, but he sure ain’t as good as the Nets! Yet another who was absent from the Preakness after a dismal 15th-place showing in Kentucky.

Bourbonic: Thirteenth in the Derby, his connections also decided to skip the trip to Baltimore. He did win the Wood Memorial, but that was a weak race run in very slow time. Represents wishful thinking by the owner.

France Go de Ina: A horse from Japan that hopes to compete on American soil. I guess he gets his inspiration from the auto industry. But he’s no Lusus, and he’s not competing against your father’s Oldsmobile.

Overtook: A horse that seemingly doesn’t belong. He finished behind Promise Keeper in the Peter Pan and didn’t look particularly good in that small field. But he is sired by Curlin and trained by Todd Fletcher, and that gives him some credibility. Not much, but some.

The Pick

Yes, I know, why even bother. I threw out Medina Spirit in the Derby, and my Preakness pick was nowhere to be found. But here we go again.

I just can’t get away from Essential Quality as the class of the field. I will key him ahead of Rebel’s Romance, Hot Rod Charlie and Promise Keeper.

Enjoy the race!

Charles Palombi is a Cortlandt resident and an owner of thoroughbred horses.

Tips for a Safer, More Enjoyable Summer at the Pool

Pools are great for play, exercise and therapy. However, it is critical that while enjoying ourselves, we take appropriate safety precautions.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 275 children nationwide under the age of five drown in swimming pools annually, and more than 4,100 children receive medical treatment for pool-related accidents, the majority of which occur in backyard pools. Luckily, building codes and standards can help.

“Building codes are life savers, and as the leading building codes and standards developer, we are accounting for every facet of the home, which includes specific provisions to make pools and spas safe,” said Dominic Sims, CEO of the International Code Council.

To drive the importance of water safety home and ensure individuals are having safe pool fun, the Code Council shares the following tips:

• Install fences and protective gates. To ensure the pool area is inaccessible to unauthorized swimmers and children when there is no supervisor, install a fence at least four feet high around pool and spa areas with a self-closing, self-latching gate or door. Make sure all chairs, tables, large toys or other objects away from the perimeter that would allow a child to climb up to reach the gate latch or enable someone to climb over the fence.

• Keep safety devices nearby. Always keep basic lifesaving equipment handy (poles, rope and personal flotation devices) and know how to use them. These aids should be kept on both sides of the pool and should remain stationary — not be misplaced through play activities.

• Install alarms. Install alarms on all doors and windows to detect unauthorized access from the home into the pool area. You can also install a pool alarm to detect accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water. While the alarm provides an immediate warning, it is not a substitute for the barrier fences, door and window alarms or safety covers.

• Remember safety covers: Install an approved safety cover on any pool. For the safety of all individuals, do not allow anyone to stand or play on it.

• Be code-compliant with drain covers and grates. To help identify compliance with current standards, all pool and hot tub drains must have a cover or grate marked with the appropriate product marking, including the service life in years and an information label that is provided to the pool owner. Not having a compliant cover could result in some part of a swimmer’s body being entrapped in the drain — a dangerous situation that could result in injury or drowning. If a cover is broken, missing or noncompliant, the pool should be closed immediately and a replacement should be performed by pool professionals.

• Ensure an existing pool has a certified blockable suction outlet system; a suction-limiting vent system; a gravity drainage system; or other safety features that comply with industry standards.

• Secure the proper permits for a pool installation: If you’re installing a pool, it will be important to contact your local building department first to determine what permits are needed and what requirements you must meet.

“With warm weather here and families spending more time at home, a pool offers hours of fun for everyone,” Sims said. “In addition to adult supervision, safety code compliance helps ensure a safer, more enjoyable pool experience.”

For more building safety resources, visit www.iccsafe.org.

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Crossword Answers

PROSPECT VIA HINT ACTION IDEA PARENT RETRO BEE X ELbow REACT FLARE ALTAR TREE NAILS RHAPSODIES BEASTS GOIN SAY WEED JUPITERIMAGES/ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS
Evolution of American Winemaking By Way of a Glass of Zinfandel

By Nick Antonaccio

For 14 long, dark years in the social and political history of our country, the very fabric of our society was torn and strained. Americans could produce their own homemade wines (limited to 200 gallons a year) and they were able to consume wine at their religious services, but that is where the federal government drew the line.

We all know what transpired during those years. Wineries were driven out of business; terms like moonshine, bootleg and speakeasy were popularized; organized crime grew and profited in the black market; acts of crime grew at historic rates; and police corruption was rampant.

Most of the history of the era centers on distilled spirits, but there was a profound effect on the wine industry as well. Here is a short analysis of the state of the American wine industry before, during and after Prohibition.

Before Prohibition. There were more than 2,500 commercial wineries across America. Americans’ preference for inexpensive, easy to drink, high-alcohol wine. Most of the wine produced was fortified and sweet. Italian immigrants found their way West in the late 1800s and planted Zinfandel, primarily for personal consumption. Grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Merlot were not popular (hence the exclusivity of the 100-years-plus Zinfandel vines still growing). During Prohibition. Wineries were decimated; only 100 survived. Demand for wine increased 100 percent. New religious orders sprang up every day in unconventional venues, “nourishing” the needs of their flocks. The demand for permitted “religious wines” increased by 800,000 gallons in the first two years of Prohibition. The Italian immigrant winemakers who survived during this period continued to produce Zinfandels for their “family” consumption. Post-Prohibition. States assumed responsibility for alcohol-control legislation. “Dry” states and localities continued to proliferate. It wasn’t until 1966 that the last dry state, Mississippi, legalized alcohol sales; vestiges of local laws exist to this day. The wine industry began a slow and laborious comeback.

1. As American preferences changed, varietals such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay were planted. These varietals dominate wine production today.
2. In the 1960s, jug wines came into vogue; entrepreneurs with labels like Gallo, Almaden and Paul Masson began to thrive.
3. In the 1970s, dedicated winemakers began to produce world-class wines.
4. By the late 1980s, American winemakers enhanced their techniques for growing grapes and producing wines. The United States became a highly respected wine nation.
5. In the mid- to late 1990s, Zinfandel made a strong comeback, becoming a highly regarded and uniquely American wine in the world marketplace. Despite efforts to destroy the wine industry less than 100 years ago, the industry has risen from the ashes as a testament to the resilience and entrepreneurial spirit of our young nation. Thankfully, today I can raise my glass of old-vine Zin in honor of those citizens who have toiled before us.

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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