

Schiliro Decides Against Run for Sixth Term for North Castle Supervisor

By Martin Wilbur

Five-term North Castle Supervisor Michael Schiliro announced late last week that he will not seek re-election next year, marking the end of a 16-year run on the Town Board.

Schiliro, who served as a councilman for six years before starting what will be 10 years leading the town, said the decision is based on work and family commitments. He cited the upcoming merger between PCSB, where he serves as vice president, and CMS Bancorp as placing more demands on his time.

"I've accomplished most of what I set out to do, but my life has become increasingly busier with the bank and especially going through the changes we're going through now with the merger, and honestly, with my kids now grown, oddly enough, more time commitments there," said Schiliro, a Democrat.

With the start of petitioning for the two major parties moved up several years ago to late February or early March, Schiliro said he wanted to make his announcement early enough so potential candidates who may

be interested in running for the seat have ample time to make their decisions to have themselves available for consideration.

"This is not a two-week notice," he said. "I'm going to be on there for 14 more months and there's plenty of work to do and I look forward to working with this board and my colleagues."

Schiliro said he was proud to have worked with various board members to keep the town on strong financial footing, improving infrastructure and protecting and preserving open space. He also pointed to having had smart development in town, including seeing how Armonk Square has become the centerpiece of the downtown.

North Castle Democratic Committee Co-chair Linda Fernberg said she was somewhat surprised when Schiliro indicated to her last week that this would be his last term on the board. Since 2008, and even more so over the past nine years as supervisor, Schiliro has given a lot of his life and available time serving the town, she said.

Over that time, Fernberg said, he earned the mutual respect of residents regardless of political party. After defeating then-supervisor Howard Arden in the first of his

five campaigns to lead the town in 2013, Schiliro never faced another challenger in the general election.

"I was praying he would change his mind because he's a steady hand on the board," Fernberg said.

Schiliro's board colleagues had words of praise for Schiliro, ranging from his skill at leading a municipal government to his temperament at handling tense issues. Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto, who Schiliro appointed as deputy supervisor even though she is a Republican, said she was "extremely saddened" by his decision to bow out.

"I have learned a tremendous amount about the workings of municipal government and working relationships with the goal of doing what is best for North Castle," DiGiacinto said. "Admirably, Supervisor Schiliro is leaving office on his own terms and as a winner in every sense of the word. It is impossible to measure all he has accomplished for the betterment of the town."

She pointed to Schiliro proposing a

continued on page 2



North Castle Supervisor Michael Schiliro will bow out at the end of his current term. When he leaves the board at the end of next year, Schiliro will have served for 10 years as supervisor following six years as councilman.

Hola!



DONNA MUELLER PHOTO

The Pleasantville Chamber of Commerce and the Village of Pleasantville delivered a friendly neighborhood hello to Eduardo Maldonado, the new owner of The Don Juan Mexican Restaurant, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony last Thursday.

Mt. Kisco Fire Dept., Ambulance Corps LOSAP Increase Goes to Voters

By Martin Wilbur

Voters throughout New York State are being asked to flip over their ballots during early voting or on Election Day next Tuesday so they don't forget to weigh in on the \$4.2 million Environmental Bond Act.

For voters who live in Mount Kisco, there are two additional propositions that merit voters' attention.

The village has asked the public to decide whether the maximum Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) benefit for members of the Mount Kisco Fire Department and the Mount Kisco Volunteer Ambulance Corps should be increased from \$400 to \$750 a month.

Currently, fire department members

become eligible for the maximum benefit once they reach 60 years old and have at least 20 years of service where they've accumulated 50 service points. Points are earned by going on calls or participating in training or a variety of other tasks.

If the proposition is approved, it would take 25 years to reach the maximum threshold.

The proposition for the ambulance corps lowers the age for beneficiary eligibility from 65 to 60 years old as well. A separate proposition is needed for the ambulance corps because there are separate funds to pay for the program for each outfit.

If the propositions are approved, the village will put in \$30 a year for each member of both services.

continued on page 2

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continued from page 1

strategy to replenish the town's fund balance by dedicating budget surplus to the fund during the Great Recession. At that time the town's fund balance had nosedived to about \$400,000.

Councilman Saleem Hussain, who was elected in 2019, said in his nearly three years on the board he has also learned and has been impressed with how easily Schiliro engages with residents, whether it be while he's walking his dog downtown in the morning or more formally at a board meeting.

"I think the people he has engaged with like that really understand how much he's

dedicated to this place," Hussain said. "I have seen that so thoroughly. I would never be able to question his dedication."

Councilman Matt Milim said he was surprised by Schiliro's announcement but trusts his judgment to leave on his own terms.

"Anybody who has done this job recognizes how much of a time commitment it is, and Mike has done this, has served the town wonderfully for a long time and he deserves our thanks," Milim said.

Councilman Jose Berra said Schiliro has displayed tremendous dedication to North Castle.

"I definitely honor Mike's years of service to the town, he said. "But I think it's

important not to have anyone in power for too long. I think change will be good for the town, especially now since we have a deep bench on the Town Board."

Hussain and Berra's Town Board terms will expire next year. Both councilmen said they hadn't decided whether to run again.

The process will begin for the town Democrats to find another candidate for supervisor, she said. While the committee was prepared to shore up its choices for the other posts on the ballot, Fernberg said she and co-chair Joe Rende were not necessarily expecting to have to make a decision about a nominee for supervisor.

"We had a couple of people here and there that we asked about timing and things like

that, so I won't say that we don't have some people in mind," Fernberg said. "But that was for Town Board."

This is a whole different ballgame. So my job just got exponentially harder."

A call to town Republican Committee chair Anita Cozza was not returned.

Schiliro said he has no regrets about serving or his decision to leave. He also plans to stick around North Castle.

"We're not planning to move from town anytime soon, if ever, so we're committed to this community," he said. "I'm proud to have served, and I feel honored that people have actually felt that they could trust me to be in the position that I was in. I'm really, really honored and grateful for that, truly."

Mt. Kisco Fire Dept., Ambulance Corps LOSAP Increase Goes to Voters

continued from page 1

David Kuritzky, president of the Union Hook & Ladder Co., said the fire department's membership asked the LOSAP Committee several years ago whether an increase was feasible. Originally, they explored the state maximum of \$1,200. However, it was later lowered to \$750 when it was learned that that benefit level would not cost village taxpayers.

"It was designed for retention, recruitment and reinvigoration of our membership and to provide a thank you," Kuritzky said.

Mayor Gina Picinich said the

membership for both the fire department and the ambulance corps are completely comprised of volunteers who receive no remuneration for their efforts. The longer a member serves accumulating the requisite number of points in a year, the greater the benefit.

"They are not paid for their services," Picinich said. "This is for the people who are literally getting up in the middle of the night to make sure that others in the community are safe."

Picinich enlisted the Finance Committee to crunch the numbers and determine whether the village could afford to provide the higher benefits without impacting

taxes. At the proposed level of funding the committee concluded that the accounts would be solvent without affecting taxes until at least 2035, assuming a 4.5 percent annual return on the account where the money is held.

Historically, the funds have earned an average of about 5.5 percent annually, she said.

In 2035, the debt for the renovated firehouses expires, so there would be some additional money that would be freed up for the village at that time, Picinich said.

As of July, there were 59 current or former fire department members receiving a benefit and four ambulance

corps beneficiaries, according to Village Manager Ed Brancati.

Kuritzky said the \$400 LOSAP benefit is one of the lowest in the area. Several other departments in the vicinity provide at least \$600 to \$800.

He said the department would be grateful for village residents to consider the proposition.

"Thank you for taking the time in turning over the ballot," Kuritzky said. "The net costs, there will be no additional cost to provide an expansion of benefits to your volunteers that serve your community."



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An interview with Ramandeep Sahni, Stroke Director, Phelps Hospital

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Mt. Pleasant Poised to Approve First Comp Plan Update in 50 Years

By Martin Wilbur

The Mount Pleasant Town Board is expected to approve its first updated Comprehensive Plan in more than a half-century next week and introduce the new Hamlet Zoning Code to help reinvigorate its commercial centers.

Officials decided to hold off on a vote last Tuesday on the Comprehensive Plan, titled Envision Mount Pleasant, and the new code along with two additional resolutions to adopt the findings statement and to amend the town's zoning map to allow time to edit language in the document.

Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi said board members also wanted to clarify an affordable housing reference in the plan, stressing that one of its goals is to offer more housing choices that are more affordable. The town does not have an affordable housing ordinance on the books that qualifies under Westchester County's definition.

Fulgenzi said he expects the four resolutions to be voted on at the board's next meeting on Nov. 7.

Council members are moving ahead despite some criticisms from residents, particularly on social media, that adoption of the new Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated in 1970, and the Hamlet Zoning Code could ruin the town's character. The changes focus on 287 parcels in the Commercial Neighborhood Retail (CNR) District in Thornwood, Hawthorne and Valhalla.

"We all live in town. I'm born and



Mount Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi

raised here, and in 50 years I've seen no improvement in town, downtown Hawthorne and Thornwood," Fulgenzi said. "I believe if everyone would take a walk down Commerce (Street) and Elwood (Avenue) and come back and tell me they think everything looks great, then I'll give you the name of my eye doctor because it's sad the condition these areas are in."

In a presentation by Town Attorney Darius Chafizadeh before the board's announcement that it was postponing a vote until next week, part of the goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to introduce design standards to improve aesthetics and expedite the approval process for applicants.

It would also allow for apartments upstairs provided there is ground-floor retail. However, the maximum three-story height of the buildings would not change, except potentially on Broadway behind the Hawthorne train station. In that area, applicants could request a fourth story but must obtain a special permit, Fulgenzi said.

"Why change the Hamlet Zoning Code that we've been talking about for Valhalla hamlet, Hawthorne and Thornwood? Because we're getting a hodgepodge of properties there," Chafizadeh said. "The old properties built in the '50s and '60s are getting old-looking and they need to be revitalized."

The Hamlet Zoning Code is nearly identical to what the town originally introduced as a form-based code. But in the spring the board switched its name because some residents could confuse it with the outcry last year in New Castle against that town's Form Based Code.

The most outspoken opponent of the Hamlet Zoning Code and updated plan has been Hawthorne resident Jim Russell. Russell has consistently criticized officials for being secretive about their intentions and taking shortcuts to complete the process.

He said the town failed to adequately involve the Mount Pleasant School District and that the town's population could explode given the number of parcels that will be eligible for redevelopment. There was also no full build-out analysis completed for the 287 parcels, which cover about 135 acres, Russell said.

"That's why most towns will do a full build-out analysis, to see what can happen over the next five, 10, 15 years," Russell said. "We're not just concerned about what this board intends, but this will govern (the town) for years to come and we have to be careful."

But a few other speakers applauded the board for trying to help the town. Hardscrabble Road resident Steve Willard said he attended the envisioning meetings that drew several hundred residents at the Town Pool in summer 2018, where many of the issues were discussed.

"Now, here we are more than four years later and there's only a handful of people in here. Why is that?" Willard asked. "Because they're satisfied with the process. I want to thank you for the process, by the way. I think you did a great job."

Councilwoman Laurie Rogers Smalley criticized some of the misinformation that's been circulated online. She said that over time the code will hopefully provide some diversified housing stock to attract new people and retain existing residents.

"It's time for Mount Pleasant to look at ourselves and really see who we are," Smalley said. "We're an aging town. It's time to move forward, make improvements and not look back."

"The old code is 52 years old. It's obsolete, it's difficult to understand," added Councilman Tom Sialiano. "This would clarify it, simplify it and will be easier for the applicant to know what they can and cannot do."

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Board of Legislators' Plan to Ban Flavored Tobacco Sales Draws Ire

By Martin Wilbur

An organization representing the interests of convenience store owners called on the Board of Legislators last week to abandon a proposed law that would prohibit the sale of flavored tobacco products and menthol cigarettes in Westchester.

Members of the New York Association of Convenience Stores, which represents about 450 businesses in the county, warned of the potential sharp decline in sales that could threaten those establishment and the livelihood of the roughly 5,600 employees who work there.

Association President Kent Sopris said while the stores were able to navigate the pandemic, this proposal could be more detrimental to their survival. To make matters worse, there are 906 establishments in neighboring counties that are easily reachable, he said.

He said each convenience store in Westchester generates about \$92,000 in revenue a year on average.

"After COVID starts to abate, we were hit with historic inflation," Sopris said. "My members are working hard to stay afloat and serve

the public. The county legislature is doing nothing more than adding to the burden of small businesses in Westchester County."

The organization held a press conference last Thursday at Chestnut Market on Route 6 and Baldwin Place in Somers, across the street from two other gas stations and convenience stores. However, the two other stores are in Putnam County, which would not be affected if Westchester County lawmakers approve the measure.

Faheem Jamal, the director of c-store operations for Chestnut Market, said the company has 30 locations in Westchester, employing nearly 200 people. He estimated that at least 25 percent of its staff would likely be laid off because of the hit the stores would take in revenue.

Furthermore, it would invite bootleggers to bring in cigarettes to the county and sell them illegally, defeating the purpose of the law, which is to protect people's health, Jamal said.

"With that being said, the ability to drive across county borders is abundantly clear, especially at this location with two gas station-convenience stores sitting in Putnam County less than 200 feet



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Kent Sopris, at podium, president of the New York Association of Convenience Stores, outside Chestnut Market on Route 6 in Somers criticizing the proposed Westchester County law banning the sale of flavored tobacco products.

away from us," he said.

County Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson (D-Greenburgh), who introduced the bill as chair of the board's Health Committee, said she was motivated to propose the legislation after hearing Dr. Philip Gardiner speak on the scourge of tobacco use. Gardiner is co-chair of the African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council, a group of Black professionals dedicated to fighting tobacco's use in communities of color.

But it is children who are often targeted the most by the candy, fruit or mint flavored tobacco and get hooked.

"The most eye-opening thing for me was how flavored tobacco is used as an enticement and the National Youth Tobacco Survey indicated that over two million kids throughout the country are using tobacco products, and that a very high number of them started and are attracted because of flavored products first," Johnson said.

She also cited statistics from New York State estimating that tobacco is responsible for more than \$17 billion a year in healthcare expenses and productivity loss.

The bill was recently released out of the Health Committee and a public hearing has been scheduled before the full Board of Legislators on Nov. 14 at 7:30 p.m.

County Legislator Margaret Cunzio (C-Mount Pleasant) said she is torn over the proposal. As a fitness professional, she understands the health dangers of tobacco use, yet she has concerns about the bill.

First, Westchester has the lowest percentage of adult smokers in the state, Cunzio said, at only about 7 percent. Therefore, it may not make much of a difference.

Another issue is the law does not cover internet sales, which could defeat the intent of the legislation, she said. Cunzio mentioned that she can see both side of the issue. She will listen to the public with interest in about two weeks.

"I will tell you one thing – this is not a partisan issue because I do know for a fact that there are people on both sides that are seeing the value that both sides bring," Cunzio said.

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Mt. Kisco Solar Farm, Cell Tower Site Gets Positive Declaration

By Martin Wilbur

A positive declaration was issued for a proposed Mount Kisco solar farm due to the potential for significant environmental impacts in tandem with a possible cell tower at a 25-acre site in the village.

The Planning Board unanimously voted in favor last Tuesday evening of having applicant SCS Sarles St., LLC undertake the more extensive environmental review at 180 S. Bedford Rd. Homeland Towers has also sought to build a cell tower on the same parcel, although the Village Board continues to explore the possibility of moving it to Leonard Park. The proposed site of record

currently remains at 180 S. Bedford Rd. for the tower.

Board Chairman Michael Bonforte outlined several factors that forced the board to decide on a positive declaration, including visibility, aesthetics and community character.

"Personally, I don't think we'll see the solar (panels). I don't think the neighbors will see the solar, but when you put the cell tower in there, I think it's a moderate to significant impact on a cumulative effect," Bonforte said.

In reviewing the areas of potential significant impact under the state Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), Bonforte also said that the parcel, which bumps up against the Bedford border, will suffer significant tree

removal in what is one of the gateways into the village from I-684.

"All of a sudden to have a site that's cleared of trees for a cell tower and then the solar site up above the hillside there, it becomes, to me, more than just minor," he said.

Bonforte also mentioned that community character would be impacted. At its closest point the cell tower would be within 138 feet of Marsh Sanctuary's amphitheater.

While the board's vote last week made the longer environmental review official, it did not come as a surprise. In September 2020, the board decided that the two projects be considered in tandem for the purposes of SEQRA.

Then in April, the Planning Board signaled that the cumulative effects of the two applications made it likely there would be positive declaration.

No representatives from SCS Sarles St. or Sunrise Solar Solutions attended last week's board meeting.

ShopRite Re-approved

The board also voted to issue an amended site plan for the ShopRite supermarket to be built at the Diamond Properties complex at 333 N. Bedford Rd.

Over the summer it came to light that there were several changes with the plan, such as an existing tenant who will remain in a building on that site that had been slated for demolition until the expiration of their lease in August 2027.

Since demolition of that building will not happen at least until then, the developer

is unable to align the southern and northern driveways with two condominium communities located across North Bedford Road.

Diamond Properties had also announced in the summer that it had acquired the Kohl's property, which would provide a third access point to the property.

The board had expressed concern about making waiting until at least the latter portion of 2027 to align the intersections to enhance pedestrian safety on the busy North Bedford Road corridor.

However, Diamond Properties CEO Jim Diamond and his representatives successfully persuaded the board to postpone aligning the driveways because few people are walking to the site. With the supermarket now likely not to be constructed until sometime in 2024, that would mean there would only be about three years from the time ShopRite opens until the alignment can be done.

"It's actually a limited group of people who walk to the site because it's really too far to walk from the train station," Diamond said. "I know it can be done, but it's not a lot of people who would want to do that on a daily basis, especially in the middle of the winter."

Under the agreement Diamond Properties has with ShopRite, developer must complete and open the supermarket no later than Dec. 31, 2024.

The board also granted approvals for a special use permit, change of use and steep slopes and subdivision approval.

A New Clubhouse



The Hub at Hotel MTK in Mount Kisco now hosts the sports radio show "The Clubhouse." It recently held a live broadcast on WGCH with guest Joe Egan from Forged Iron Golf in Mount Kisco.

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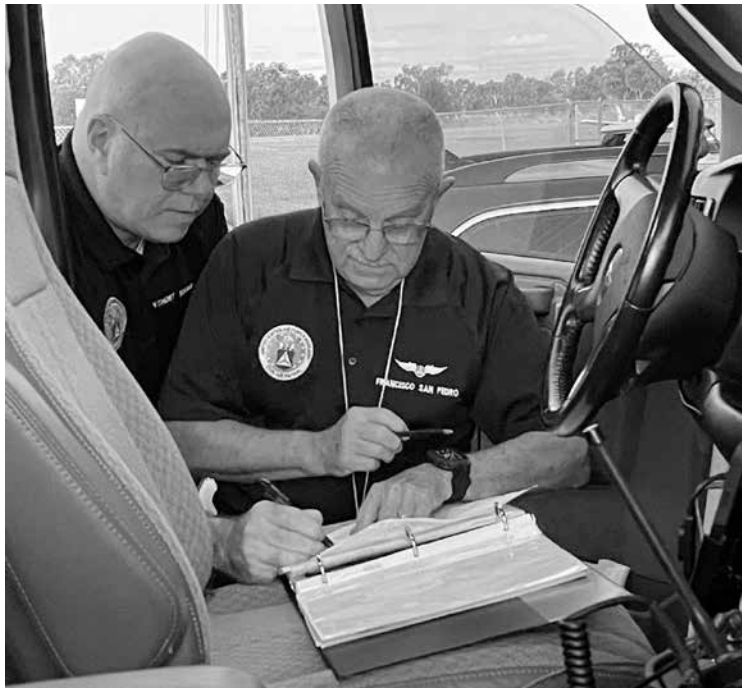
By 2nd Lt. Allison Sywyk-Hanson

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) had been requested by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to support its ongoing natural disaster relief efforts for the hard-hit state of Florida.

CAP members from all over the world, including the Putnam and Westchester squadrons, have been stepping up to support the disaster relief efforts. As the auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, our well-trained volunteers are ready, willing and able to help those in need get back on the road to recovering their homes, businesses and lives.

With the largest fleet of Cessna airplanes in the world, CAP trains pilots and photographers for missions from search and rescue to disaster photography. Using CAP aircraft our well-trained photographers are taking aerial oblique photographs of the areas giving a more dimensional image rather than a nadir, satellite straight down image. This photography is providing post-disaster images for the use in assessing the damaged areas for photo comparisons with pre-disaster images.

Second, CAP has sent ground teams trained in using a ESRI QuickCapture app created by the Geospatial Team to collect



1ST LT. CRAIG HORMES PHOTO

Senior Member Anthony Young, left, and Lt. Col. Frank SanPedro are part of Civil Air Patrol personnel assisting in Hurricane Ian disaster relief efforts in Florida, including members from Westchester and Putnam counties.

High Water Marks (HWMs) for accurate ground-based flood depth measurements.

The third task is being handled by CAP members who have FEMA training as Geospatial Information Systems analysts trained to

remotely use software for image-based damage assessment. For this hurricane the mission needs evolve daily but primarily the analysts are looking for wind and flood damage in Florida structures.

All of this is in support of FEMA

so that the resources for recovery can be distributed quickly and restoration and rebuilding can begin earlier. The goal is to support those who are working to help people rebuild their lives the best they can.

CAP volunteers are both cadets and adult senior members who receive training in various areas including emergency services. In the case of Hurricane Ian, cadets are working on ground teams as part of the high-water data collection tasking and with teams that are taking 3D, 360-degree photos using CAP ground vehicles. Cadets are also working on radio communication teams and as part of the Florida CAP Command Incident Management Team (IMT) as mission staff assistants. The IMT runs on a virtual platform and supports all aspects of the mission tasks taking place in the field.

In addition to the volunteers working locally in Florida, CAP youth cadets 12 to 18 years old across the country have been trained to work virtually on the specialized software which breaks down Florida's neighborhoods into grids with layers of different photography sources and mapping images to put together pre-incident and post-incident images to assess the severity of the damage.

Within Putnam and Westchester counties we have family, friends and neighbors living in these hard-hit areas of Florida. We are proud knowing that Civil Air Patrol is making strides to get help for those we care about.

Although we don't know exactly which lives we are touching, we know that we are making our best effort to support the recovery of communities.

More information about this program and other Civil Air Patrol programs can be found at www.GoCivilAirPatrol.com or contact the Putnam County Composite Squadron directly at 033@nyw.cap.gov.

Established in 1941, Civil Air Patrol is the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force and as such is a member of its Total Force. In its auxiliary role, CAP operates a fleet of 555 single-engine aircraft and 2,250 small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) and performs about 90 percent of all search and rescue operations within the contiguous United States as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center.

Second Lt. Allison Sywyk-Hanson is with the Putnam County Composite Squadron and serves as a public affairs officer for the Civil Air Patrol.

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Endorsement Editorials

Levenberg, Slater, Burdick, Shimsky, Paulin Clear Choices for Assembly

Westchester and Putnam counties are fortunate to have a strong roster of candidates running for Assembly this year. Two of the strongest are current supervisors Dana Levenberg of Ossining and Matt Slater of Yorktown in the 95th and 94th Assembly districts, respectively. Both candidates have served their very different communities admirably and effectively in addition to having honed their skills as staffers for state legislators before being elected to their current posts. Levenberg has had a finger on the pulse of Ossining. She recognizes the need to promote green practices and

prepare communities to bring in the jobs of tomorrow. Support for common-sense gun legislation and having an economic recovery all can share are other priorities for Levenberg. Slater has been impressive skillfully presiding over an exciting commercial expansion in Yorktown, bringing in new businesses led by the popular Trader Joe's. He has also attracted an electric school bus company to move from Long Island and the board rezoned for a boutique lodging facility in downtown Yorktown Heights. Despite the growth, the town

has seemingly been able to handle any increased congestion except during peak hours, which have always been rough in Yorktown. The town is also in strong financial shape despite uncertainties that many municipalities have faced related to the pandemic. Another former supervisor, Chris Burdick of Bedford, has had a successful first term in office in the 93rd Assembly District representing a wide array of communities from portions of White Plains to North Salem. He has been responsive to the needs of the municipalities and

constituents while navigating Albany for the first time. County Legislator MaryJane Shimsky in District 92 is a prohibitive favorite to make the leap to Albany after 11 years on the Board of Legislators. She has all the qualities to serve her district of Mount Pleasant, Greenburgh and a small portion of Yonkers effectively. Assemblywoman Amy Paulin has been a smart and savvy legislator in Albany for 22 years and is an obvious choice to continue her service.

Hildenbrand in New Castle, Smith in Cortlandt in Special Elections

Over the past month, since the controversy about the resignation of now-former councilwoman Tara Kassal, there has been plenty of political sniping in New Castle. Councilman Christian Hildenbrand, who was appointed in January following another board vacancy by the Unite New Castle ticket, is facing last year's unsuccessful Democratic supervisor Holly McCall. The winner will serve the final three years of the unexpired term. It is difficult to evaluate anyone's

performance with 10 months on the job, but residents would be better served if Hildenbrand gets the benefit of having the full two-year cycle to see what he and Unite New Castle can accomplish. While there doesn't seem to be much diversity of thought displayed by the majority, a victory by McCall won't tip the balance on the current board, now that its members appointed Kassal's replacement. Furthermore, the four other seats will be up again next year, and if change is warranted, the public can make that decision in 2023.

McCall previously served on the Chappaqua Board of Education and would be a capable board member if successful. **Cortlandt** Since losing a year ago in his first attempt at elected office for a four-year term on the Cortlandt Town Board, Warren Smith has fully immersed himself in learning about town government by being a fixture at meetings and being a member of a few volunteer committees. The native Verplanck resident has well-thought-out opinions on town issues and

offers a lot of potential as a board member for the one-year term. His election is encouraged over Councilman Robert Mayes, who was appointed to the board in February to fill a vacancy but hasn't stood out in any noticeable way. While the Town Board seemingly hasn't missed a beat with Linda Puglisi retiring and Dr. Richard Becker switching seats from council to supervisor, it could use an infusion of enthusiasm and a different point of view that Smith possesses.

Fleming Gets Nod in Putnam Legislature Race

It's not often that a Democrat wins an election in Putnam outside of the usual strongholds on the western side of the county. That didn't stop Maureen Fleming from winning four terms as Kent supervisor as the only Democrat on that Town Board. Now Fleming returns to the political fray in running for the open seat in District 5 against Greg Ellner. The seat is being vacated by outgoing Legislator Carl Albano.

Fleming's straightforward approach and strong record in Kent, particularly on fiscal matters, should hopefully earn her some attention elsewhere in the district. She managed to offer residents eight consecutive budgets with no tax increases while also improving services. It is commendable that she is putting herself out there to bring a fresh voice to the county legislature and to rein in what she described as "out-of-control spending."

One thing is clear: she will not tow any party's line. "We need people on the legislature who are more interested in serving the people rather than a political party," Fleming told The Examiner. Ellner, a business executive and the Republican nominee, would also be a solid choice if he were to win next week's election. His top issue is keeping Putnam affordable, which has been hard to

accomplish. He promised to be accessible to his constituents, planning to hold monthly talks with the public. While Ellner appears to be capable, the edge goes to Fleming who has a proven track record in local government and who can work well with others of any political stripe. The county legislature would be well served by her presence.

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Endorsement Editorials

Despite Reservations, Maloney, Bowman Best Choices for House

It's a bit unusual to find a five-term congressman in this part of the country crisscrossing the district in the waning stages of the campaign hoping to win over voters.

But as the 2022 campaign hits its final week, that's what Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney has been forced to do as he looks to hold off a driven and unrelenting challenge by Republican Assemblyman Mike Lawler in the newly-configured 17th Congressional District.

Optimists might look at Maloney as prudently taking nothing for granted, which may turn out to be true. Or point to the 10-point advantage that President Joe Biden registered in his 2020 victory in the same territory that is being contested by the two candidates and believe the district's makeup will carry Maloney home.

But for a congressman who had tens of thousands of new voters to familiarize himself with, particularly in the Westchester portion of the district, and in a congressional mid-term where historically the party in power loses seats, Maloney was noticeably absent from the local campaign trail until recently. Call it arrogance, miscalculation or that he was busy doing his job, one sure-fire way to blow an election is failing to connect with ordinary citizens.

Meanwhile, Lawler, elected to the Assembly two years ago, has done an impressive job of presenting himself as the

type of Republican that can be trusted in a party that on the national level has gone off the rails too many times in the past six years. He's stressed issues that undecided or swing voters can easily understand, including the spiraling price of groceries and gas and how residents are less safe in New York since the introduction of bail reform.

Campaign strategy aside, when examining who would be a more effective representative in Washington for the 17th Congressional District, the nod solidly goes to Maloney. He has shown himself to be a pragmatist and interested in finding solutions to the problems of the day, whether it be helping seniors by capping out-of-pocket Medicare and drug costs or providing local police departments with the resources needed to do their job.

He has also supported a major commitment to improving infrastructure and 21st century businesses, including some areas in the Hudson Valley that have seen billions in fresh investments.

For those who believe that a woman has a right to choose what is best for herself along with her family and doctor, Maloney correctly wants to codify Roe in federal law and not depend on the vagaries of a particular election cycle.

Although neither party has provided answers to the vexing problems with illegal immigration over many years, the congressman hopes to prevent people from crossing illegally while still adhering

to the nation's ideals by following its asylum laws.

In a different time, Lawler might be an acceptable alternative to those who are frustrated or struggling in the current economy. That economic pain for many families and seniors on fixed incomes is real and the assemblyman has articulated that well. He also backs red flag laws and universal background checks for gun owners, which seems to be at odds with others in his party elsewhere in the country.

But much of his other views, particularly on crime and New York's bail reform, are worrisome. No matter how one tries to spin it, crime in Westchester and Putnam counties is down in recent years, including through the pandemic. Even more concerning is his idea to strip states of their federal funding if they are unable to protect their citizens, exactly the wrong step to take if there is a crisis. Invariably, that would strip cities of crucial resources at the wrong time.

While Lawler said he would be against a national abortion ban and believes the issue is a matter for each state to decide, it's unclear whether he would support something else, such as Sen. Lindsey Graham's proposal for a federal abortion ban at 15 weeks.

Sometimes change for the sake of change is needed. That is not the case in the 17th Congressional District. Maloney's 10 years in Congress and prior service in

the Clinton administration provides the New York congressional delegation, which has seen its share of turnover in recent elections, with much-needed experience.

16th Congressional District

Unlike Maloney, freshman Rep. Jamaal Bowman, making his first re-election bid next week, has positioned himself solidly with the progressive wing of the Democratic Party. While that is not necessarily problematic, he has taken some curious votes such as opposing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, as well as more funding for the Capitol police following the insurrection. In addition, he voted against the Israel Relations Normalization Act.

Perhaps because he's new he's trying to stand out with protest votes. But we would hope in a second term, Bowman has a natural maturation process.

He does correctly identify the effects of climate change, particularly in the Sound Shore communities that get ravaged with flooding. Bowman also understands the challenges that people of color face that would be difficult to fully understand unless one has experienced bias.

He is being challenged by Dr. Miriam Levitt Flisser, the former Scarsdale mayor and current medical director for Bronxville schools, who does have some standout qualifications. But too many of her talking points read from the Republican script.

Stewart-Cousins, Mayer, Rolison, Harckham Right Choices in Area State Senate Races

For the first time in eight years Andrea Stewart-Cousins has general election competition. In that time, the Yonkers resident has become Senate majority leader, the first woman to attain that post in New York State.

Her district has also shifted northward to once again include Pleasantville and Mount Pleasant, communities Stewart-Cousins represented before the last redistricting.

Although Republican Kristen Kerr should be commended for forcing a contested election, there is little reason to believe that Stewart-Cousins should be replaced in the 35th state Senate District.

One could always make arguments, as virtually all Republicans are doing, about how inflation and crime are problems. But much of the legislation that has been passed since she became leader has helped

make New York a leader, including climate and resiliency measures, gun-related laws such as the red flag law and voting reforms.

It should also be concerning that Kerr is a proponent of cutting the minimum wage from \$15 to \$10 for small businesses.

37th Senate District

Sen. Shelley Mayer represents a district that includes a piece of her home community of Yonkers, the Sound Shore communities, a portion of White Plains and North Castle.

As chair of the Senate Education Committee, Mayer, a Democrat, heads one of the most important committees in Albany and has done a fine job in that role. There will be full restoration of foundation aid by next school year, which was an effort that many school officials had undertaken over the years. But it occurred on Mayer's watch.

Mayer unsuccessfully tried to increase connectivity for all students, particularly those in underserved communities, a move that was beaten back by the telecommunications providers. She pledged to renew efforts to bring that service to those families that do not have internet access.

She recognizes that to ensure greater housing affordability, there must be greater protections for tenants in housing that is not subject to rent regulation in Westchester.

Her opponent, Frank Murtha of Scarsdale, a counselor, entrepreneur and author, is a sharp, well-spoken candidate. However, he has no previous experience in government and repeats many of this year's Republican talking points.

The one proposal that he raised that Mayer and other lawmakers should seriously consider is introducing financial literacy into the curriculum, particularly at the high school level.

39th Senate District

In the newly-drawn district that takes in Putnam Valley and Philipstown in Putnam County as well as communities in Dutchess and Orange counties, the choice here is Republican Poughkeepsie Mayor Robert Rolison.

Rolison served for 12 years on the Dutchess County Legislature and the

last six years as mayor of Poughkeepsie, a wealth of experience compared to Democrat Julie Shiroishi. Shiroishi was chief of staff to Assemblyman Jonathan Jacobson.

Rolison supports the \$4.2 billion Environmental Bond Act and recognizes that the need for infrastructure investment, including roads and bridges, is critical.

40th Senate District

Sen. Peter Harckham, in a bid for a third term in the Senate, has been one of the most prolific lawmakers of the last two years. More than 50 bills that he sponsored have passed this year. Others talk about helping those suffering from substance abuse, but Harckham has passed more than 20 bills to help those with substance abuse issues.

He helped secure \$3 million to fund a Route 9A study and is planning to do the same for Route 35.

Although unsuccessful, Harckham had the courage to recognize that housing affordability in the state and the Hudson Valley will not solve itself. He proposed unpopular as-of-right Accessory Dwelling Unit legislation, and while it was overwhelmingly panned, he has vowed to come up with other solutions to address the housing dilemma.

Calendar Submissions

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

Letters to the Editor

Fleming's Record on Taxes, Services and Freedom of Speech is Impressive

I recently received a negative mailer about Maureen Fleming, who is a candidate this year for Putnam County legislator in District 5. The mailer, which is from a political committee, severely distorts her record as Kent supervisor, and I find it disappointing that these dirty tricks have found their way into our local politics.

Maureen Fleming was town supervisor for eight years. During her tenure, she delivered eight consecutive budgets with 0 percent tax increases. This is a truly remarkable achievement, which helped

to alleviate the local burden on our hard-pressed taxpayers. This was done while still ensuring that the town provided services in an efficient manner.

Fleming ensured that the town was always responsive to the needs of its citizens. Under her leadership, Kent supported our police department, opened an all-abilities playground at Town Hall, improved transparency in town government, eliminated the time limit on citizens wishing to address the Town Board and made town departments more accessible to the people

they serve.

Supervisor Fleming consistently defended and upheld the Constitution, including the right to freedom of speech against those who tried to silence dissent. These are the reasons why Supervisor Fleming was elected and re-elected four times to the office by landslide margins.

I've known Maureen Fleming for the past nine years. She is a friend of mine. I know that her character is beyond reproach. She is an honest, dedicated and extremely hard-working public servant who consistently

delivers for her constituents.

I am a proud Republican and I know that Maureen Fleming will be a true asset to our county legislature. I hope your readers will provide her candidacy for county legislator with favorable consideration on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 8.

John C. Curzio II
Lake Carmel

Let's Keep Hildenbrand on New Castle Town Board

My wife and I are 27-year residents of New Castle. We are now empty-nesters, having raised two sons here, one of whom has returned to town with his young family, which gives us great joy as we get to be very hands-on grandparents.

It's fantastic to see how wonderful our town looks. Our local hamlet needed work for many years and the update is a very welcome change. It's really great to see the renewed energy and activity around town.

We were both very concerned about the Form Based Code plan last year and were very pleased that our local elections stopped

its passage. Thank you, Supervisor Lisa Katz, for your leadership in this effort along with the rest of the Town Board.

We know that one of those new board members is up for election this year, and wanted to state that Chris Hildenbrand has our full support in the upcoming election. Thank you for your continued service to our community. We urge all members of the community to vote for you on Election Day.

Scott M. Berman
New Castle

Warren Smith's Commitment to Cortlandt Means Everything

Warren Smith is a lifelong resident of Verplanck in the Town of Cortlandt. It is upsetting to see other candidates being lifted up as being more prepared for this position than he. I read a letter posted recently by a town employee singing Robert Mayes' praises. How unfair that a town employee even do this!

Warren has been a tireless servant for Verplanck and for all Cortlandt residents. I also point out that Warren strives to reach

ALL people on both sides politically. This is the way our town should be run. Running our town in a one-party system is not good for anyone, let alone our town.

I hope Cortlandt residents will recognize all the great work Warren Smith has done and will do if he is elected to our Town Board. He certainly deserves the opportunity.

Michele Croft
Cortlandt Manor

Now is the Time to Take Silly Season Seriously

The term silly season originated in England and used to refer to the summer in journalism when frivolous stories dominate for lack of "hard news."

Today, the term is more often used referring to the political campaign season when it seems anything goes regardless of facts and common decency. It seems that this season, activists of all stripes seem to agree on one thing: This year elections will probably have far-reaching consequences for our nation.

But how does the typical U.S. citizen find the facts in this era of false news and seemingly contradictory narratives. You can speak to your Uncle Joe, a devotee of Fox News and get one set of "facts," or your niece Krystal, who loves Rachel Maddow, and shake your head wondering if they live on different planets or dimensions. It tempts one to say, "I'll just sit this one out."

The problem is, if you exclude yourself from the political process and 2022 is truly a transformative one, what will you tell your grandchildren when they ask you how you contributed to the re-envisioning of our future society. As a partisan, I won't assume

you share mine, but I ask you to research your facts and then vote your values.

Researching has become more difficult in this digital world as facts and statistics are often manipulated to conform with pre-existing beliefs. All I can offer is to pay close attention to the source of your facts and statistics. Does the writer have an obvious interest in proving a one-sided perspective. You should focus on statistics from reliable sources. For instance, since crime seems to be on everyone's mind these days, look at the information available from the FBI or the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services.

While some may scoff saying you should not trust agents of the "Deep State," it seems that nothing and no one can overcome that bias as their minds are made up. You, however, can seek the truth, determine what your values tell you and vote accordingly. Bottom line, please make the effort to discover the facts and vote!

Melvyn Tanzman
Mohegan Lake

Slater's Credentials Make Him an Impressive Candidate for Assembly

Matt Slater and I have been great friends since grade school. As we were growing up together, I always knew he was a special leader. Therefore, I enthusiastically support him for the state Assembly's 94th District, and urge everyone to vote for him on Tuesday, Nov. 8.

His professional credentials are impressive. As Yorktown supervisor, his record is one of accomplishments. He has actually cut taxes! Matt Slater is about action and getting things done. Couple that with his experience as a staff member both in the Assembly and state Senate, Matt is very qualified to represent us in Albany on Day One of his term.

Important, too, is his high character and commitment to our community. Seen almost daily are Matt Slater's values, work

ethic, perseverance and dedication to his community and family. He and his wife are raising their two wonderful children here and have a vested interest in the future of our state.

I'm convinced that Matt will work tirelessly for us. He's dedicated to fighting crime, fighting against the criminals who threaten our families and to keeping our community safe and affordable.

Matt is not only my childhood friend, but he also represents the qualities I so admire and want in government – intelligence, integrity and loyalty. Join me in voting for him on Nov. 8 for New York State Assembly.

Jesse Nunes
Mohegan Lake

Harckham's Legislative Victories Make for Impressive Record

Sen. Pete Harckham deserves to be re-elected because he kept his promises to voters.

During his current term he's delivered bipartisan results for his constituents, including securing an additional \$3.2 billion in Foundation Aid to school districts; passed the Reproductive Health Act, ensuring women in New York can make their own health choices; passed landmark legislation to require zero-emissions vehicles by 2035; protected clean drinking water sources and passed the toughest climate protection law in the nation; held 11 food drives, delivered

PPE and handled thousands of requests for assistance during COVID; continued the middle-class tax cuts for over \$4 billion in savings; and kept our communities safe with increased funding for law enforcement and gun violence interruption.

Keep Pete working for all of us by voting for him on Election Day.

William Meyer
Chair, Sierra Club Lower Hudson Group
Mount Kisco

No Demonstrable Evidence That Humans Alter the Climate

The letter by Ms. Melillo in the Oct. 25 edition ("What Our Children Need Most From Us is Action on Climate Change") is more revealing about her mental health than anything else. There has yet to be demonstrable proof that anything we do as citizens or inhabitants of this Earth has anything to do with the now "climate change" or the former "global warming" or "global freezing." The unobjective

reporting of various incidents always relying on the same "experts" fuels and reinforces a false narrative of human responsibility. How presumptive and arrogant it is of people to think they can alter nature's inevitable and sometimes irregular course.

Paul Jaffe
Chappaqua

Letters to the Editor

Putnam Republicans' Mailer on Former Kent Supervisor Was Full of Lies

As a candidate for Putnam County Legislature's District 5, I was disgusted to find the postcard from the Putnam County Republican Committee attacking me and my record as Kent town supervisor in the mail last week.

That my opponent would allow this libelous campaign material to be sent on his behalf is shocking. The postcard included a "Fact Check" section, as if the bullet points

were indeed facts, instead of lies. There are only two statements that the public can actually fact-check with the references given. The first is that I "voted to make the Town of Kent a sanctuary town." If you go to the minutes of the Town Board meeting referenced, you will see that that is a bald-faced lie. There was never a vote taken to make the town a sanctuary town.

The second statement you can fact

check with the reference provided is that I "Strongly supported the Kent Truck Stop despite resident outrage." If you go to the Town Board meeting minutes of Oct. 22, 2019, as provided in the "Fact Check" portion, you will find this:

"Announcement Supervisor Fleming said many in the room are opposed to the truck stop portion of the Route 52 Project. She said after hearing what the public had to say she spoke to a member of the developer's team about the concerns. She said this afternoon she was advised the truck stop portion of the Route 52 Project has been removed and there will be a public statement released by

the developers."

Quite the opposite of the "fact" listed on the postcard.

I have run a clean campaign based on real facts, not fake news. I am proud of my record and accomplishments as Kent supervisor. Having been re-elected three times, I believe the voters of Kent were as well. I always worked hard for the residents of Kent and I will work hard for the residents of my district and of Putnam County.

**Maureen Fleming
Kent**

Public Can Be Assured New York State's Elections Are Secure, Reliable

November 8 is a very important Election Day. As president of the League of Women Voters of Westchester County, I would like to reassure voters that New York State elections are secure and reliable.

New York's election process is administered by a bipartisan team of election workers. Workers representing both major parties oversee ballot counting, a common practice nationwide to provide checks and balances in the election process. Election administrators, board employees and election inspectors/poll workers are required to be residents of your county. The people who run our elections are not strangers. They are members of our communities – neighbors, friends and family.

Every step of our election process is monitored and secured from the voter registration process to the post-election audit. The voter registration process in New York State ensures that only those meeting state eligibility requirements are able to vote, and it helps keep track of who has cast a ballot. Registered voters can vote early in

person, or on Election Day in person, or by absentee ballot. All absentee ballots must be returned by mail, or in person during early voting or on Election Day at any poll location in our county, or at the Westchester Board of Elections in White Plains. Secure drop boxes are posted at every poll location, and are monitored by trained election inspectors.

Ballots are submitted to election machines that have been pre-approved by the state Board of Elections. Each piece of election equipment is tested before being used on Election Day and all voting machines are barred from connecting to the internet. Finally, all county boards of elections must conduct post-election audits to further verify results.

Whichever way you choose to vote this year, know that by doing so you are making democracy work.

**Kathy Meany
President, League of Women Voters
of Westchester County**

Hildenbrand is the Right Choice for New Castle Town Board

I am a 34-year resident of New Castle and an empty-nester who has enjoyed living in Chappaqua. Over these many years, I've witnessed many changes and proposals for our town but was never more disappointed than by the attempts of the previous Town Board to transform downtown Chappaqua into something it was never meant to be and certainly not built to handle.

I'm very grateful that last year's election results gave us our current team of smart leaders. They implemented a wise and sensible approach of incremental growth downtown. They listened to and respected the input of their constituents. After the recent upgrades, our town looks beautiful and is an inviting place to spend time shopping, dining and meeting friends for coffee or wine. We need ethical leaders with creative visions for our town's future

who can make it happen through good ideas and consensus building.

Town Board member Chris Hildenbrand is one of those exceptional leaders and he's back on the ballot on the Unite New Castle line – on the last line – Row F, Column 16. He brings all the right skills, focus and mindset to help keep our town moving forward.

Growth and change are inevitable, but we need responsible and wise leaders to guide us. Please make sure to get out and vote on or before Nov. 8 to make sure Chris can continue to serve the common good for all of us.

**Arlene Adler
New Castle**

Guest Column

New Castle Democratic Committee Has Lost Touch With Town's Residents

By Susan Comey, Robert Greenstein, Roger Klepper and Michael Zuch

New Castle is a leafy suburb known for high-quality schools, home of the Clintons and a population that leans overwhelming Democratic.

Those elected to be town supervisor during the past 10 years have all been lifelong registered Democrats (inclusive of the current two-year term of Lisa Katz). Yet in all but two of those years – in four of the last five elections – the elected town supervisor ran against the party-endorsed New Castle Democratic Committee (NCDC) supported candidate. Why is this predominantly Democratic town choosing to elect candidates outside of the mainstream Democratic Party?

Based on last week's op-ed published here from local resident Andrew Dorfman, the cause must surely be some kind of fifth column in our midst, "a small group within our community that has come to value winning over honor and civility." Mr. Dorfman doth protest too much, methinks. Way too much.

Simply put, the NCDC has devolved into an insular breeding ground for the worst form of partisan politics, one that only

knows political opportunism for the sake of its chosen candidate. Mr. Dorfman will have you believe it is the "other side" that only cares about winning, but that makes it even more abundantly clear that they still just don't get it.

What the opposition slate – under the banner of the recently-formed independent Unite New Castle – cares about and focuses on is the community, with candidates pulled reluctantly into the political fray from among our wonderfully informed, intelligent and engaged population. This is not done by choice; this is done purely out of necessity. This is what has been happening here in New Castle and, unfortunately, what continues to happen.

What has transpired in our community has been truly stunning, with the NCDC crowding out all attempts by the broader community to engage in a decent and informed manner that puts community interest first. Upon the occurrence of an MLK holiday, for example, or a Pride Month celebration, or even something so tragic as a school shooting, it is typical to see the customary unifying messages from our town supervisor.

But nothing is routine here in New Castle, as those most closely aligned with

the NCDC often view this through the lens of political opportunism and use it as an opportunity to go on the attack against the "fake Democrats." Everything is politically charged.

In 2021, the community was immersed in the analysis of the Form Based Code, a proposed zoning change that would have been truly transformative to our downtown hamlet. The pushback was strong, from people of all political stripes, against a plan that would most certainly have resulted in a proliferation of luxury housing in our downtown hamlet. Yet it somehow became a proxy for diversity, and the leadership of the NCDC soon accused all of the proposal's opponents of being racist.

In the current election for the remaining three years of a single Town Board seat currently held by candidate Christian Hildenbrand, we have experienced more of the same. Mr. Hildenbrand has been attacked publicly by way of a completely false, manufactured claim that he is the subject of an investigation by the Westchester County Board of Ethics. The Town of New Castle's own Ethics Board (a bipartisan group chaired by a member appointed by the previous board) unanimously rejected even an appearance of impropriety, and the county

has confirmed twice in writing that it simply has no jurisdiction in the matter.

No matter, the claim, and its endorsement by the NCDC and Holly McCall's campaign, continues. No acknowledgement, no apology and one can only infer that this is only a slight departure from their view of "business as usual." It is not. It is horrendous. It deliberately and malignantly smears a 24-year resident and his family for nothing but political gain, and it continues a pattern of win-at-all-costs politics that our community does not want.

The election results we have recently seen here in New Castle would not have happened without wide swaths of registered Democrats feeling alienated, essentially abandoned by their own party. There are no easy answers, except to keep doing what the community has been doing: reaching out to unite in a shared vision and shared values, one that cares more about our town and the people in it than it does about your political party affiliation.

Susan Comey is a six-year New Castle resident; Robert Greenstein is a 19-year town resident and served as town supervisor from 2014 through 2019; Roger Klepper is 20-year town resident; and Michael Zuch is a 34-year town resident. All are lifelong Democrats.

Letters to the Editor

Mayes is a Steady Hand to Help Continue Guiding Cortlandt Forward

It's political silly season again, where the only thing that outnumbers fallen leaves on the ground are candidate lawn signs, and most of the commercials we fast-forward through on our DVRs are candidate attack ads.

The good news is it will all be over soon, and since the McRib is back for its annual farewell tour, those mouth-watering commercials will once again dominate the airwaves.

I'm not sure about you, but I find the state of political discourse at the federal, state and even local level to be increasingly disheartening. It seems the days of civil dialogue and compromise are slipping further and further away. As Cortlandt residents, we're fortunate to bear witness to a Town Board campaign that has defied today's norms, and remained civil, respectful and issues-based.

On Election Day, two of our neighbors are running to replace now-Supervisor Becker's seat on the board. His seat was vacated when he was elected supervisor, and Councilman Robert Mayes was appointed to fill the seat until the upcoming election.

I am proud to support Councilman Mayes to continue his role on the Town Board. I have known him for many years as a fellow parent at Lincoln-Titus Elementary School, a fellow Cub Scout leader, an active PTA member and as a member of the Lakeland Central School District Board of Education. Rob's integrity is unimpeachable, and his dedication to our community is unquestionable.

During his tenure on the school board, which included the search, hiring and ultimate resignation of a superintendent, COVID school closures and other complex and emotionally-charged issues, Rob never wavered. He was the sole board member to

stand up to the superintendent and fiercely advocate for the reopening of schools. His decision put him at odds with certain powers within the district, but he remained resolute in his commitment to return children, faculty and staff safely to in-person learning. Where others spoke only of the challenges, Rob, like all good leaders, sought solutions.

Do I always agree with Rob? No. I don't always agree with anyone. But what I know about Rob is that he is always an honest broker. I have enjoyed many thoughtful discussions and debates with him. One of the qualities I find most admirable is his ability to see areas of grey when others see issues as strictly black and white. Compromise isn't a dirty word, and Rob understands that we can work together to seek common ground without compromising our integrity and values.

At a time when politics are deeply polarizing, I appreciate knowing that our town can count on Rob to be steadfast in his commitment to find solutions not just for today, but for the future.

Rob's experience as an assistant district attorney, his tenure on the Planning Board and his service to various community-based organizations focusing on children, mental health, housing, family services and other key issues provides him a unique perspective on things that matter to all of us. Rob's past experiences make him the right person to help lead Cortlandt into the future.

On Nov. 8, I hope you will join me in voting for Robert Mayes.

Daniel Wright
Cortlandt Manor

Environmental Bond Act is Crucial for Residents' Health, Storm Resiliency

Election Day is fast approaching, and this year, for the first time in over 25 years, New Yorkers have an Environmental Bond Act on the ballot to consider.

After voting for candidates, I urge readers to turn their ballots over and vote Yes on Proposition 1: The Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022.

Voting Yes will do much to protect our threatened biodiversity and natural areas, make our communities more resilient in the face of worsening storms and rising water levels and secure our aging water systems.

Voting Yes on the Environmental Bond Act will authorize New York's state comptroller to issue \$4.2 billion in state bonds. This money would then be distributed to a variety of crucial projects:

- \$1.5 billion in climate change mitigation (including funds for zero-emission school buses)
- \$1.1 billion in flood restoration and risk reduction.
- \$650 million in open space land conservation and recreation.
- \$650 million in water quality improvement and resilient infrastructure.

Climate change has ravaged New York over the past decade. Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Irene, along with the remnants of Hurricane Ida, caused billions of dollars in flood damage and killed hundreds of New Yorkers. These storms severely damage crucial infrastructure and show no sign of stopping. Voting Yes will

give New York the tools we need to protect ourselves from future storms, while also creating economic opportunity; analysis by the infrastructure consultant AECOM shows that the bond act would create over 84,000 jobs.

New York's water infrastructure is also aging rapidly. Recent studies by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers indicate that our wastewater and drinking water systems are in mediocre to poor condition; over 35,000 miles of our wastewater systems are more than 60 years old and roughly 10 percent were built before 1925. Our drinking water systems suffer from severe unaccounted for water. In some places, as much as 40 percent of water processed by these systems is unaccounted for, meaning decreased overall system capacity and increased costs for taxpayers.

Over 300 community organizations support the Environmental Bond Act, including Green Ossining, Westchester County, the Putnam County Land Trust, the Putnam Highlands Audubon, Riverkeeper and the Sierra Club. The Ossining Town Board, which I lead as supervisor, has also passed a resolution in support of the bond act.

I thank your readers for their consideration, and hope this crucial measure will pass.

Dana Levenberg
Supervisor, Town of Ossining
Dana Levenberg is also a candidate for the 95th Assembly District seat.

Levenberg's Practical Public Safety Approach Would Be Valued in Albany

Contrary to the rhetoric being spewed by right-wing radicals, the facts are clear. After years of Democratic leadership, crime is down in Westchester County. That's one reason why I'm supporting Dana Levenberg, who's running to represent us here in the 95th Assembly District.

Westchester's overall crime rate is 68 percent lower than the national average; violent crime is 61 percent below the national average; and property crime is 70 percent below the national average, based on data released by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program.

In fact, violent crime in Westchester has dropped every year from 2017 to 2021 as compared to each prior year. Total crime (property crimes and violent crimes) are all down when comparing 2017 to 2021, with a brief spike in property crime in 2020. But even this spike was still lower than 2017's numbers.

Westchester County's Department of Public Safety looked back at all crime committed from 2017 to 2021; there was a significant decrease across the board:

- Property crime decreased by 16.7 percent
 - (Burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft)
- Violent crime decreased by 22.9 percent
 - (Murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault)
- Index crime decreased by 20.4 percent
- I'm supporting Dana because she supports practical, evidence-based strategies for promoting public safety, like police and community partnerships. She's also been a strong supporter of remedial education programs for incarcerated persons, which are a tried and tested way to reduce the likelihood that someone will commit crime again after they've served their time.

This year, we need to look at the cold, hard facts and ignore the typical election-year Republican rhetoric.

Colin D. Smith
Westchester County Legislator,
District 1

Managing Putnam County Spending Would Be Top Priority

Having deep roots in our community and being civically and charitably active, I entered the race for Putnam County Legislature's District 5 to give back to a community that has offered much to my family and me. Knocking on some 2,000 doors I have had the pleasure of speaking with many of you and it is clear that rising costs and inflation are of major concern to us all. It is no secret that government must manage spending and I pledge to do this to

the best of my abilities.

I'm not a politician. I'm a husband, a father, a taxpayer and a businessman with deep roots in the community and I hope that I have earned your vote.

Greg Ellner
Candidate for County Legislator
District 5

Pleasantville HS to Host Blood Drive Nov. 3

Pleasantville High School, located at 60 Romer Ave., will once again host a blood drive in anticipation of a decline in donors as the holidays are approaching. It will be held inside the school's gymnasium from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Whole blood and red cells units will be collected from qualifying candidates.

For questions regarding eligibility such as travel, medications and last donation, call, 800-688-0900.

For appointments, which are preferred although walk-ins are accepted, call 800-933-2566 or visit https://donate.nybc.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/307986.

All donation sites can be viewed at www.NYBloodCenter.org/donate-blood/

The blood drive is co-sponsored by Pleasantville High School and the Pleasantville Volunteer Ambulance Corps.



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On November 8th

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Proposition #1 MKVFD LOSAP
Proposition #2 MKVAC LOSAP

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Frequently Asked Questions

What is the LOSAP Program?

- A. LOSAP is a Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP). The program began in 2003 after a referendum vote by the Village taxpayers.
- B. The program allows Mount Kisco Volunteer Firefighters (MKVFD) and Mount Kisco Ambulance Corp (MKVAC) members to attain 50 points during the calendar year which would give them a benefit of \$20 per month for each year that 50 points were attained for a maximum of 20 years. **This is not a Pension Plan.**
- C. The maximum monthly payout after 20 years would be \$400 per month once entitlement age has been reached. (60 years of age for the Fire Department and 65 years of age for the Ambulance Corps).
- D. The program was created to recruit new members and retain existing members for both organizations.
- E. The MKVFD and MKVAC are seeking to increase their benefit from \$400 per month to \$750 per month. Surrounding towns currently have a similar program with benefits ranging from \$800 to \$1200 per month.
- F. The LOSAP program will go from \$20 per month to \$30 per month and from 20 years to 25 years before the maximum benefit can be attained. It will also offer parity between the fire department and ambulance corps with entitlement at age 60 for all.
- G. No additional taxpayer funding will be required if projections hold true for this increase in benefits.
- H. The Village of Mount Kisco Treasurer and the Village Manager created investment accounts in 2003 to ensure the program for the MKVFD and the MKVAC would be funded.
- I. Financial models project that the current budget allocations for these accounts growing at a rate of 4.5% will cover the cost of the increased benefit through 2035 with no current tax increase to the residents of Mount Kisco.

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Lake Mahopac Rotary Provides Grants to Local Organizations



At its Oct. 5 dinner meeting at Four Brothers, the Lake Mahopac Rotary awarded eight nonprofit organizations \$13,500 with checks based on their grant applications.

Those organizations were the Prevention Council of Putnam for its opioid emergency rescue bags; the Putnam Community Action Partnership for food pantry donations; My Brother Vinny for new bedding and pillows for 300 veterans; the Putnam County Children's Committee for school

supplies and holiday gifts; the Cove Care Center for a holiday celebration event; Putnam Service Dogs for service dog training and medical care; the Putnam Humane Society for its sick and injured animals' fund; and Second Chance Foods, which helps provide food for St. John's Food Pantry.

Pictured, left to right, are Pat Miller, Lauren Johnson, Earle Bellows, Brandon Lillard, Emily Napolitano, Tracey Walsh, Marisa O'Leary, Nancy Teague, Lillian Jones and Martha Elder.

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P'ville Music Festival Plans Move Forward Despite Shortfall in Return

By Abby Luby

The organizers of the Pleasantville Music Festival plan to search for additional funding sources and ways to hold down expenses after last summer's 16th annual festival ended in the red by \$36,000.

In July, the popular all-day music event returned to Parkway Field after a two-year hiatus and was greeted with enthusiasm by a large audience craving live music. COVID-19 crowd restrictions had forced the festival to cancel in 2020 and 2021.

Last week, Bruce Figler, the festival's executive director, spoke of the successes and shortcomings of last summer's event and his plans for next year.

"It was an odd year and COVID put a damper on a lot of things," Figler said at last Monday's Town Board work session. "COVID was raging in July and staff people got hit as did ticket buyers who asked for their money back. With two years off, there was an added difficulty of getting it all done."

The biggest loss was when the band 10,000 Maniacs canceled a week before the festival because of health-related reasons. "Our ticket sales got hurt at the door," Figler said. "The band was the biggest draw of ticket buyers the week before and the day of the festival."

At the last minute, Figler managed to attract the Canadian alternative rock band



Several thousand music fans turned out last July at Parkway Field for the 16th Pleasantville Music Festival. Soaring expenses and the late cancellation of the band 10,000 Maniacs contributed to a \$36,000 loss for the village.

Crash Test Dummies to perform. The village has presented the annual festival since 2005. For its 2022 renewal, it budgeted \$253,500, and final revenue was \$276,966. However, expenses totaled \$313,358, so

the net loss was \$36,392.

"The goal with the festival is not to make money or to lose money but to break even," said Pleasantville Mayor Peter Scherer at the work session. "Even though we lost money, by any measure it was a successful day."

Expenses that spiked higher than expected included electricity, catering, overtime for village staff and the cost for tents.

"As we start searching for bands for next summer, we will be looking for new revenue sources and ways to cut down on expenses," Figler said. "We will check into the Westchester Council for the Arts, state and national endowments."

Figler also plans to work with the village grant writer to seek additional funding sources.

"Some years we ended up in the black and in this case, we ended in the red," Scherer said. "We keep a general sense of that over the life of the festival for these many years. It's a big venture that's worth doing and is a big feather in Pleasantville's cap."

Figler also suggested that the village consider changing the date for next summer's festival, but after a short discussion with the board, it was decided that it should remain the second Saturday in July.

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Mt. Kisco Celebrates New Courts in the Park and Fusing of Two Cultures

By Martin Wilbur

Last Saturday was a beautiful day to be outside, and community members in Mount Kisco had extra reason to celebrate.

The village unveiled its latest recreation enhancements, opening a new bocce court and volleyball court at Leonard Park that represented more than new surfaces for residents to play on.

It was a collaboration between municipal government, the local organization Legado Latino and members of the Italian-American Club of Northern Westchester, which partnered to bring a favorite activity from both cultures to the park.

"These two groups, in a stroke of genius, have come together in support of this community, celebrating their cultural heritage," said Mayor Gina Picinich. "They do it with strength and with pride and they bring so much to this community."

At first glance, the volleyball surface may look similar to what many American-born residents might be used to seeing. But the court is equipped with a net that reaches 9 feet, 2 inches above the ground, 14 inches higher than what is typically found on the court.

Its enthusiasts call the sport Ecuavoley, a variation of conventional volleyball that was created in Ecuador more than a century ago. It is played with a harder ball, usually a soccer ball, with only three players from each side on the court at a time, said Village Trustee Kaine Patino, a daughter of Ecuadorian immigrants.



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Village officials and members of Legado Latino and the Italian American Club of Northern Westchester celebrate the opening of a new volleyball court and bocce court at Mount Kisco's Leonard Park last Saturday.

The size of the court is the same as volleyball.

With Mount Kisco having a growing population of residents of Ecuadorian heritage, players would often be found playing on an uneven patch of dirt or grass. The new court is a permeable surface that needed to be installed because the New York City Department of Environmental wouldn't allow impervious pavement in the park.

"Spraining our ankles was part of the game, so seeing this beautiful court is amazing," said Mount Kisco resident Edison Venegas.

Patino said for those who grew up in the

village, Leonard Park was an oasis for them, especially on Sundays after church. To have a facility that is new and with an activity that is part of their heritage is of particular importance to the community, she said.

"This park was and continues to be a second home and a support system for our immigrant communities, which has the power of strengthening our community as a whole," Patino said. "They will enjoy several games, those enjoyed by the old-schoolers, those that you typically see already playing, those played by women groups, which we hope to

start again."

Most of the funding for the two courts was brought by Assemblyman Chris Burdick (D-Bedford), who contributed \$125,000 in state money. Village Manager Ed Brancati said there was room for a bocce court, a popular activity among the sizeable Italian population in the village.

The cost of the entire project, which includes some seating and lights, so it could be enjoyed in the evenings in good weather, was about \$170,000, Brancati said.

Burdick said he was thrilled to contribute to a project that unites different segments of Mount Kisco.

"One of the great things about what has happened here is to bring the community together," he said. "Look at how we have everyone working together to a common goal, and I have to say some of the most gratifying work that I do, is the work that I do to try and make that happen."

Anthony Cerretani, of the Italian American Club of Northern Westchester, said the alliance with Legado Latino has benefited both communities and the village. The two organizations have jointly held previous events together.

"They're so happy to be part of this and we're happy to be part of them," Cerretani said.

"We give thanks to everybody who helped us with everything," added Claudio Bermeo of Legado Latino. "Now, it's a dream come true."

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Can a Flu Shot Protect Your Brain From Dementia? Research Suggests Yes

October was the official start of flu season, and the time when many people consider getting a flu shot. In addition to offering protection from the flu, the shot may also help protect your brain.

A study released this summer found that getting an annual flu vaccination was associated with a 40 percent decrease in the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease over the next four years. The same researchers, who are from the University of Texas' McGovern Medical School, conducted an earlier study presented at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference that found that a single flu vaccination could reduce the risk of Alzheimer's by 17 percent. Additional vaccinations during a lifetime reduced it even more.

"Our study suggests that regular use of a very accessible and relatively cheap intervention – the flu shot – may significantly reduce risk of Alzheimer's dementia," said Dr. Albert Amran, who was involved in the research at the University of Texas.

The newer study included more than two million people over age 65. Previous studies were smaller and often focused on people with chronic health conditions. By including a more general group of older adults, the new study's results add weight to the idea that a flu shot could reduce Alzheimer's risk.

Know Your Risk

Prior studies have found that infections – including the flu, pneumonia, urinary tract infections, gum disease and COVID-19 – are associated with the onset and worsening of memory and thinking problems.

It's not surprising then that researchers have also found an association between vaccinations and a decreased risk of dementia. A study at Duke University's Social Science Research Institute found that getting a vaccination against pneumonia between the ages of 65 and 75 reduced Alzheimer's risk by up to 40 percent. Similar results have been found in recent studies of people who received tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap), hepatitis or shingles vaccinations.

"These findings are important because anything we can do to decrease the number of people with Alzheimer's has vast benefits," said Doris Saintil Pildor,

the New York Health Systems director at the Alzheimer's Association. "Preventing or delaying the progression of Alzheimer's lowers the burden on family caregivers and on our state's health systems."

To learn more about risk factors for Alzheimer's and ways to reduce your risk, visit www.act.alz.org.

This is a press release provided by the Alzheimer's Association's Hudson Valley chapter. It has been lightly edited and is being published by Examiner Media as a public service.



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DISTRICT 5

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ABOUT MAUREEN:

- An Attorney for over 30 years
- Bachelor of Arts Degree in Biology from New York University
- Juris Doctor Degree from Antioch School of Law
- Held 2 Teaching Certifications - one in Biology and one in Elementary Education
- Former Substitute Teacher in the Carmel Central School District
- Former Town Supervisor in the Town of Kent
- Balanced 8 Town of Kent Budgets with no tax increases
- Created and built first all-inclusive playground in Putnam County
- First Chairwoman of the Town of Kent Stormwater Committee
- Eucharistic Minister
- Member of the Putnam County Bar Association
- Member of the Lake Carmel Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
- Member of the Sons and Daughters of Italy, Fr. Donald B. Licata Lodge #2435
- Former member of the Hill & Dale Property Owners, Inc. Board of Directors
- Supporter of our Veterans (both my father and husband served in the Army during times of war)

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DISTRICT 5**

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Exterior Paint Colors Can Do Wonders for a House

It's almost too late in the season to write about the consideration of exterior paint colors, but with some unseasonably warm weather, it's not quite too late.

House painting experts say it should be at least 50 degrees when applying exterior paint and temperatures shouldn't drop below freezing at night for several days after. If you had been planning an exterior paint job and don't have time to sneak it under the wire this late in the season, you can save the information here for the spring. (As it happens, I have always planned home projects much further in advance than most people, almost to the point of obsession, but that's just me.)

I decided to write about this subject when I was passing through my old neighborhood and was surprised to find that my former home, an 18th century farmhouse, had been freshly painted with a new color. When I first found that house, it was painted a barnyard brown all over, including all trim. I decided to lighten it up by painting the siding a "griege," a cross between grey and beige, and I painted the trim off-white. And it stayed that way for nearly a half-century. Well, almost.

Without my realizing it, the paint had oxidized, if that's the right term, and turned a pale green. I wasn't really aware



By Bill Primavera

of the change – you know how it is when changes happen slowly – until people started complimenting my "lovely green house."

But, now, I find that its new owners have painted the house a bright, cheery yellow. It's not an option I would ever have considered, but I must confess that it's a winner. Suddenly, this old home "pops," and as a consequence seems larger than it really is. I texted the owners and congratulated them on a good choice.

Paint is the easiest way to effect monumental change, either inside or out. A forest green for the exterior may blend a house into the landscape, while a fiery red can stop traffic.

In my hometown there were two houses that were distinguished merely by paint color. There was one woman who was fascinated with all shades of purple, and everything she touched was chosen in that color, from her clapboard siding to the gravel in her driveway. (Now that was really an accomplishment, to find lavender gravel to mark a path to her garage.) She even found purple eyeglass frames.

The second home of distinction was painted so bright a shade of marigold that it almost hurt one's eyes to look at it. It was rumored that this color was chosen to spite the next-door neighbor. When I was writing an article that included this instance, I



of light than dark colors, tricking the eye into perceiving the home as larger than it is.

As regular readers of this column would know, I now live in Trump Park, a condo community where I had no control over the exterior color paint. Interestingly, when the project was first proposed to the town, as I recall, it was presented as an ultramodern exterior with an off-white color, which made it seem larger than it

called the owner to ask if this were true.

"No," she said, "I just like yellow as bright as it can be."

Each year, the paint manufacturers have fun promoting particular colors of the year.

One of the most popular exterior colors for 2022 is Alabaster by Sherwin-Williams. Alabaster (SW 7008), described as "both timeless and on-trend, a warmer off-white color with some beige undertones, without looking yellow; the perfect exterior neutral tone, best suited to brighten up homes that get lots of shade. The versatile shade can be comfortably used as a siding or body color as well as a contrasting house trim color." How could you go wrong with that?

Making the exterior of your home a light color is the best way to make your home look larger, brighter and more inviting. Light colors such as white, ivory, pale gray and sage green reflect higher amounts

really was.

After some back and forth with our town's Advisory Board on Architecture and Community Appearance, the final plan offered a look that was more like a Tuscan villa, painted a pale, beautiful yellow, which softened its presence in the landscape, yet "popped" well enough to distinguish it.

So, even though I had no control over its choice, I'm quite happy with the end result. Sometimes things work out, even if you don't have control over them.

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

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The NYS Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is a dedicated advocacy program available to anyone residing in a nursing home or other long term care facility. It advocates for residents to address their quality-of-life and quality-of-care issues, along with their rights.

Locally, the Tri-County LTC Ombudsman Program serves Westchester, Rockland and Putnam counties, and is sponsored by the Long Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC). If you or a loved one are in need of an advocate in long term care, please call (914) 500-3406.

Now, more than ever, we need dedicated volunteers to advocate for nursing home and other long term care residents. Please consider volunteering in your area and advocate for these vulnerable residents. As a volunteer certified Ombudsman, you can help ensure that the voices of long term care residents do not go unheard.

To learn more about making a difference as a volunteer with the Ombudsman Program, please visit: <https://nursinghome411.org/ltcop/volunteer/>

A Taste of Europe Comes to Mahopac at Stone House Grill & Market

By Jessie Jafet

Mediterranean food lovers can rejoice at the opening of a new and uniquely authentic restaurant in Mahopac.

Stone House Grill & Market, which held its ribbon-cutting ceremony on Oct. 18, brings the flavors of Albania and the surrounding region in Europe, to Putnam County.

"The cuisine is pretty much similar to Greek, Turkish and a little bit Italian – in that we share culture, the same sea and the same area – but we use fewer herbs and mostly ingredients like garlic, onion, salt and pepper," said Skender Ademi, the proud co-owner of the new eatery.

Ademi, a native Albanian who grew up in Kosovo and has been in the United States for 20 years, had his eye on the location since 2016, which was formerly a deli on Route 6 in Mahopac and had recently become available. As a resident of the hamlet himself, he envisioned an inviting and cozy local restaurant where he could showcase his beloved cuisine and offer fresh, "old-fashioned" meals.

"We dry and age steaks and cuts right here – and we make sausages, pies, bread, cakes and more," he added.

The proprietor who rose through the ranks in the restaurant business over the past two decades, knows plenty about meat preparation, having run a steakhouse in Somers and an Italian restaurant in New Jersey.

"At Stone House Grill, we will bake



The new Stone House Grill & Market in Mahopac bakes its bread and pastries onsite.

whole lambs and whole goats in special ovens to perfection for like three hours," Ademi explained.

Many of the items on the menu are the chef's own recipes and include specialties like his famously braised goulash with chunks of beef and veal and Albanian-style stews, along with rib-eye steak, filet mignon, pasta and burgers. As for seafood, there is a Mediterranean grill that features calamari and octopus, salmon, branzino



Skender Ademi and Kreshnik Demaj, co-owners of Stone House Grill & Market, which brings the flavors of Albania and the surrounding region to local foodies.

and more.

Carmel Supervisor Michael Cazzari was on hand to welcome the new establishment to Mahopac's business district, while guests mingled around the restaurant's fireplace before checking out the market that is located next door.

The small, European mom-and-pop-style shop has smells of fresh bread baking, cured meats that are hanging, a bakery case full of homemade desserts like

baklava with walnuts and various cakes and refrigerators stocked with fresh items and an assortment of imported dry goods from the region.

In addition, Ademi and his partner, Kreshnik Demaj, said they plan to offer the delicious sauces and dressings found on their menu for customers to purchase at the market.

"My partner's mom is over 70 years old and she knows Albanian specialties like pepper and tomato sauce and we will prepare them so people can take them home," Ademi said.

The accomplished restaurateur said what is most important to him in this new venture is maintaining consistency in the experience that his customers can expect when they come to dine at Stone House Grill – consistency in the quality of the items they order and in providing them with an authentic atmosphere and warm feeling.

"I never been happier or more prepared," he said. "I'm very excited, and especially Mahopac residents, whether they are Albanian-Americans like my kids or the new generation, they will all be happy with the dishes and the food."

Stone House Grill & Market is located at 562 Route 6 in Mahopac. It is open from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday; and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday. For more information, call 845-628-0616.

KATHLEEN VALLETTA

AFFORDABILITY

Sky high taxes coupled with high real estate prices and out of control energy costs have forced many of our friends, family members and neighbors to move out of New York State. Kathleen will work to ensure we can all stay in the place we love.

ACCESSIBILITY

It is crucial that we all have access to a strong economy, clean air and water, and equitable healthcare.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The New York State Assembly must be accountable to all residents of the 94th Assembly District. Just as she has as a member of the legal profession, Kathleen will continue to ensure accountability in the Assembly.

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DEMOCRAT FOR THE 94TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



As a practicing attorney for 35 years, I have listened, negotiated, mediated and produced solutions to the most difficult issues involving finances, property matters and relationships. In this work, I have seen it all and know that success comes from being tough, compassionate, thoughtful and committed to the best outcome; solutions where both sides can move forward.

As your advocate in Albany, Kathy will use her experiences and professional skills and advocacy to support a woman's right to reproductive autonomy, responsible gun ownership and to combat the climate crisis.

As your Assemblywoman, I have the tools to apply to the issues of the larger community and the desire to focus on issues rather than politics or soundbites. **Public service is a calling, not a photo op.**

AS A LAWMAKER IN THE ASSEMBLY, KATHLEEN WILL CONTINUE HER IMPORTANT WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

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Thanksgiving is a Time for Annual Fiduciary Re-Evaluation

With COVID loosening its grip and families resuming their normal holiday schedules, it is time once again to trumpet the arrival of Annual Fiduciary Re-Evaluation Day, also known as Thanksgiving.

While Santa has proven his bonafides as an arbiter of a person's naughtiness or niceness, a certain turkey holiday has become the proving ground for the reliability of one's fiduciaries.

Just to refresh, your fiduciaries include your agent under a power of attorney, your executor and your trustee. These people will be making financial decisions concerning your assets while you are alive or after you have passed away.

Their fitness to serve, loyalty and good sense must be evaluated to ensure that your planning meets your expectations.

Officially, I want everyone to enjoy their Thanksgiving. The fourth Thursday in November is a special day full of delicious food and wonderful

company. Unofficially, if Cousin Mike takes an extra piece of turkey, I am not saying there is a problem, but you have to wonder.

Though non-equitable turkey and stuffing portions are troubling, other warning signs may impact your fiduciary choices. Document creators who choose fiduciaries from the same generation may run into issues as both individuals age and deal with illness and decline simultaneously. Thanksgiving often brings together family members who do not see each other regularly.

Assistance of Counsel

As a snapshot in time, it allows you to compare and contrast your loved one's health and well-being with remembrances from previous years. Adding

a successor or alternate agent, executor and trustee from a younger generation makes sense to guard against a lack of capable fiduciaries.

Aging is a certainty. Family upheaval may be anticipated, but its onset is still unsettling.

Holidays present new family

realities. The residual effects of divorce, child estrangement and sibling fights not only diminish attendance, they alter fundamental family relationships. Brothers who were not particularly close, may pull closer following one's divorce. The super competent adult child who handled everything may be experiencing difficulties, which may limit their future effectiveness.

Recalibrating an estate plan may appear to be an afterthought in the face of seismic family changes, but asset protection with intelligent planning avoids worse outcomes.

Family holidays also offer glimpses of seldom seen relationships. Subtle interactions between family members who rarely interact may hint at future problems. Sarcasm, defensiveness, silence and uncomfortable body language are all indicators of trouble.

Of course, not every shrug is a Level 10 emergency, but if you search your



By Alan D. Feller, Esq.

memory bank you can piece together details which foreshadowed conflict. Fiduciaries are intimately involved with family finances, and if an underlying relationship is rocky, money will add more stones.

Hopefully, by the time the pumpkin pie and ice cream cake are ready to be served and the coffee is brewing Annual Fiduciary Re-Evaluation

Day can be quietly converted to post-Thanksgiving meal football watching.

The goal is not to make the other guests uncomfortable. You simply want to ascertain the status of the people you are entrusting with your life savings. Staring and note taking is not encouraged. Happy Thanksgiving!

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.

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continued on page 28

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Police Blotter

County Police/Mount Kisco

Oct. 25: A business owner reported at 10:41 a.m. that more than \$9,000 in fraudulent checks have been written against his account. His bank is investigating and asked him to report the matter to police.

Oct. 25: A Beverly Road resident reported a possible "paving scam" at a neighbor's residence at 6:31 p.m. Officers spoke with the contractor who had paperwork showing he had been hired by the homeowner to do the work.

Oct. 26: An officer on patrol observed a man looking in the windows of T.J. Maxx on Main Street at 1:17 a.m. and stopped to investigate. The man said he had just been released from the hospital's emergency room and was looking around the property for discarded cigarettes.

Oct. 26: At 9:42 a.m., a woman arrived at the Green Street precinct to turn in a wallet she had found on the street. An officer was able to return it to its owner.

Oct. 26: An officer responded at 1:26 p.m. to a medical office on South Bedford Road. Staff had called to report that a patient was too sick to drive home but wanted to do so. An officer spoke with the patient and determined that the man would be able to safely drive the short distance to his home in the village.

Oct. 27: Officers responded to Lexington Avenue at 9:21 p.m. on a report of a dispute involving a group of men. Upon arrival, officers were met by a man who said he was threatened by another person that he has had an ongoing "beef" with. The complainant said he only knows the first name of this person. Officers canvassed the area for the other parties but could not locate them.

Oct. 28: Officers responded at 12:12 p.m. to an activated fire alarm at a North Bedford Road business. It was determined that a small child apparently pulled the alarm not knowing what it was. The Mount Kisco Fire Department also responded to make sure there was no fire condition.

Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

Oct. 20: A caller from a South Riverside Avenue business reported at 3:37 a.m. that a male was driving through the parking lot honking the horn and harassing employees.

Patrols responded and checked the area with negative results.

Oct. 21: A Palmer Avenue caller reported at 2:36 p.m. that a white vehicle was repeatedly driving up and down the street and she thought it was suspicious. Patrols responded and checked the area with negative results.

Oct. 21: Patrols responded to the Croton-Harmon train station for a possible overdose at 4:57 p.m. Upon arrival, patrols located a subject, who was conscious and alert. The scene was turned over to EMS.

Kent Police Department

Oct. 23: Officers on patrol observed a person next to a vehicle in the parking lot of Chris Automotive at 1:40 a.m. When approached, the man said he was picking up a friend from a bar. He said his name was William McCarthy, but he appeared to be intoxicated. After being questioned again, the man ran away and fell into a tall grassy area, where he was apprehended. When searched, his college I.D. was located identifying him as William Ratajack, 21. He was charged with second-degree obstruction of governmental administration, resisting arrest and trespassing.

New Castle Police Department

Oct. 22: Two unregistered vehicles were reported to have been damaged with rocks and vandalized with spray paint while parked on private property on Spring Valley Road.

Oct. 24: A complainant reported that their car was broken into while parked outside DeCicco's in Millwood. The car's passenger window was broken in order to take the victim's wallet, which was left on the front seat.

North Castle Police Department

Oct. 21: A Bedford Road resident arrived at headquarters at 10:12 a.m. to report losing her watch at the listed location sometime after Apr. 21, 2018. Rolex advised her to file a police report so they could list the item as lost if it is ever turned in to one of their stores. The watch is a Rolex Datejust with a black face and a Roman numeral dial with serial

#9148A864. The complainant believes that the watch may have been stolen from her residence and wishes to make this report a matter of record at this time.

Oct. 21: A complainant reported at headquarters at 12:28 p.m. stating he is a victim of fraud. The complainant sent cryptocurrency to a website that resembled the site he uses to exchange that currency and the website will not return what was sent. Depositions were secured.

Oct. 22: A caller reported at 9:38 p.m. that she heard a female scream from a vehicle at the end of Kensico Knoll Place, "Help me please, if you can hear me, help me, please." The caller stated that a man got out of the vehicle, then got back in and left the area, driving toward Nethermont Avenue. No further description of the vehicle or its occupants was provided. The responding officer reported the listed location and surrounding areas checked negative for the vehicle or any disturbance.

Oct. 24: A caller reported at 4:02 p.m. receiving two counterfeit \$10 bills from a self-checkout machine at the North White Plains Stop & Shop on Oct. 21. A witness deposition was completed.

Pleasantville Police Department

Oct. 21: The manager of a Pleasantville Road business reported at 1:26 p.m. that

he has been receiving unwanted phone calls from one of the store's employees.

Oct. 24: Report of a disturbance on Edgewood Avenue at 8:13 a.m. A contractor stated that two of his employees got into an altercation. One party was sent home for the day.

Oct. 24: Report of graffiti on the overpass on Sunnyside Avenue at 1:47 p.m. MTA police were notified because it is their property.

Yorktown Police Department

Oct. 22: A 41-year-old Yorktown resident was arrested at 12:45 a.m. and charged with third-degree assault, a Class A misdemeanor, following a domestic dispute at home. After an investigation, it was determined while a victim was sleeping her husband allegedly went through her cell phone and allegedly punched the victim several times in the face, causing injuries.

Oct. 23: Jamal Maher, 33, of Mahopac, was charged at 2:49 a.m. with DWI with a previous conviction within 10 years and aggravated driving while intoxicated, both Class E felonies. An officer on patrol observed a vehicle idling in a parking lot on Commerce Street with a male asleep in the driver's seat.

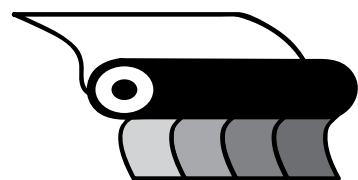
White Plains Youth Bureau Establishes 'The Nest'

The White Plains Youth Bureau will be launching its newest program for local high school students, Safe Space, "The Nest" with an informal event this Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022.

The event will take place in the Youth Bureau's Teen Lounge at 11 Amherst Place starting at 5 p.m. The aim of "The Nest" is to provide a gathering place for local youth to connect and communicate about the daily stressors they experience. Topics may include the COVID-19 pandemic, the college application process and other pressing relevant issues.

Select sessions will revolve around a structured activity, such as yoga or art, while general sessions will provide an open forum for teens to take a break, participate in mindful or calming activities or talk with peers and Youth Bureau staff in a relaxed setting. White Plains High School students are welcome to attend the weekly sessions on Wednesday nights from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Food and refreshments will be served.

For more information, contact Gina Covington at 914-422-1378 or gcovington@whiteplainsny.gov.



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continued from page 26

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Sealed Bids will be received and publicly opened at the Office of the Purchasing Director of the Town of Cortlandt, Town Hall, One Heady Street, Cortlandt Manor, New York at 2:00 PM, November 14, 2022, for the bidding of Croton Park Road Water Main Bid #22-25. Those interested in submitting bids may secure copies of the specifications at the above address during business hours weekdays. Anyone who wishes to attend a bid opening should make an appointment. If you are a reporting agency, kindly email the Town of Cortlandt and we will forward you a copy of the bid results.

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continued on page 30

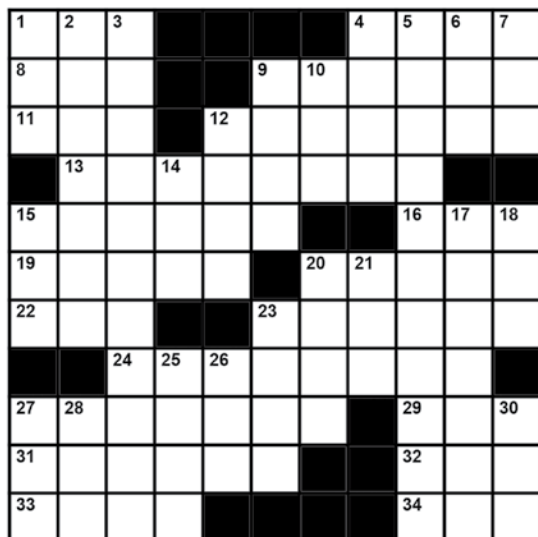
Crossword

Across

1. Land of opportunity
4. Brass
8. Wks. and wks.
9. Spacecraft
11. Sculptures and paintings
12. Witnesses
13. Thornwood restaurant meaning "House of Joy"
15. Quality of being true
16. "Ben-Hur" studio
19. Galway native
20. End
22. Cries of regret
23. Noah's mountain
24. Founding Father Franklin or White Plains steakhouse
27. Impassive
29. Parts of finan. portfolios, abbr.
31. Overwhelming panic
32. Mock, in a way
33. Small road
34. Slangy turndown

Down

1. "Kill Bill" star
2. Black magic
3. Garland and Streisand film
4. Thug
5. Team, selected from the best of the best
6. Legal scholar's deg.
7. Part of U.C.L.A.



9. Eagle's nest
10. Sorority letter
12. Shower alternative
14. A sib
15. Prefix with "duct"
17. Old-timer
18. Denver clock setting, abbr.
20. Orenburg's river
21. "Casablanca" pianist
23. Slightly open
25. Dublin's home
26. Officer, abbr.
27. Caps on Cardinals' caps
28. Crumpet's accompaniment
30. Produce duds

Answers on page 30

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How Best to Pry Yourself Free of the Toxic Parent Trap

"I sent a letter to paradise...it was returned address unknown"

-R. Cirulli

By Richard Cirulli

As often mentioned in this column, life is a lottery with the first drawing at birth. Where looks, health, intelligence, social status and our parents are determined by chance.

Children between the ages of one and 10 are dauntingly receptive and infinitely attuned to their environment. That proves to be one of the most difficult things about being human, how easily we are influenced by our childhood via our parents. A toxic father and/or mother may be all that it takes to breed an elevated degree of anxiety or self-hatred that colors one's life throughout adulthood.

And, yet these parental imprints may be very hard to spot with many adults in denial, thus making it difficult to overcome. Many adults today would be surprised to believe that they invited a parent or two to live inside their heads well into adulthood that still pull their emotional strings like a chorus of toxic marionettes.

It is bad enough to suffer with things

outside our control; it's even worse when we suffer from self-inflicted emotional wounds that haunt us as memories from numerous toxic micro-moments from the past, which we elect to recreate to torture ourselves needlessly.

To free ourselves from these toxic marionette strings, we may consider taking a stoic approach. There is a difference between trying to control everything in your life and taking charge of your life.

Taking charge means taking ownership of our lives and adding respond-ability to our lives. This raises us above the foolish thinking that we are unable to take charge of cutting those self-imposed marionette strings that we allow to control our mental health for the worse. Our free will offers us much slack even though it is more circumscribed than we would like to admit.

To make a point, ancient philosophers compared human beings to "a dog tied to



By Richard Cirulli

a cart." This is not to imply our life and actions are predetermined or to insist our thoughts and actions are totally chosen for us. It is quite the opposite. Constraints do not compromise us of our agency, they merely direct it.

How we handle our life's micro-moments is a test for our respond-ability. In essence, our free will should be carried along under the law of logical necessity to a valid and healthy conclusion – in this case, to exorcise toxic parents who are still living

inside our heads to permanently get them out of our head.

It's also important to understand that our parents, too, were also children who may have been influenced by toxic parents. We need to be strong, honest and free of denial to break a toxic chain. We all have the ability to choose if we will resist this logical necessity, or take the respond-ability path to go with it.

Philosophy teaches us only fools believe they can prevent life's misfortunes from occurring through worry or endless work. The wise, on the other hand, take

responsibility for themselves by knowing how to respond to life's adversity.

If we fail to cut the strings of toxic parents who still manipulate us like marionettes, like the dog tied to the cart, we will be dragged to an unwanted destiny, not by fate but by choice.

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 profcirulli@optonline.net

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continued from page 28

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Attention to and Influence on Alcohol Levels is Changing



By Nick Antonaccio

Last week's column focused on truth in advertising on the labels of a wine bottle. Readers have asked how they might navigate through the maze of contradictory terms and definitions. There is no easy way. The granular information consumers may seek is included on a bottle at the whim of winemakers.

Several wine importers have addressed this issue. In their efforts to provide truth in advertising, they affix their own labels on the backs of many of their bottles. One such importer is Serge Doré Selections here in Westchester.

Back labels typically inform the consumer of the blend and composition of the wine, details on the terroir of the source vineyards, descriptive terms on the wine's aroma and taste and other information to assist in making an educated choice. I find this practice very helpful in navigating the caveat emptor landscape.

Last week I promised additional information on the labeling for the alcohol content of wines. I read a highly cited study, published in the Journal of Wine Economics, which focused on the legitimacy of the stated

alcohol percentage on bottles of wine from around the world.

After analyzing government data on measured alcohol in nearly 100,000 bottles of wine produced over an 18-year span, and then comparing these against the stated alcohol content on the bottle labels, they reported that there are discrepancies between the two sources. The major findings:

1. Over the timeline of the wines analyzed, the average level of alcohol rose from 12.7 percent to 13.5 percent.
2. The advertised alcohol content, on average, understated the actual levels by 0.42 percent.

What conclusions did they reach?

As for rising alcohol levels:

1. A natural conclusion is to blame the increase on climate change. But the researchers rejected this popular notion as it applied to the specific wines and period analyzed. Warmer temperatures tend to result in sweeter grapes, and sweeter grapes tend to result in more alcohol. However, according to the researchers, "...it would take a whopping 20-degree increase in the average temperature...to account for a 1 percentage point increase in the average alcohol content of wine."
2. The researchers concluded that the reason for the higher levels is winemaker preferences. It's not nature, it's man.

Winemakers are able to refine their alchemy (length of fermentation, tweaking of blending formulas) in order to successfully achieve a consistent flavor and aroma profile – and alcohol level – from one year to the next. The trending consumer preference for more fruit-forward wines has driven certain winemakers to manipulate their wines.

As for winemakers understating alcohol levels:

- The study concluded these misstatements were, and continue to be, deliberate – and legal in many cases. In the United States, regulations permit a 1.5 percent allowance for wines at or under 14 percent alcohol. This provides a margin within which winemakers may market to consumers who perceive that certain levels connote greater value and refinement. Ironically, winemakers freely admit to this legal practice, all in their efforts to preserve market share.
- The federal excise tax may be another reason. In the United States, winemakers are taxed on their wine production. Historically, the tax rate was \$1.07 per gallon for wine with 14 percent alcohol or less, and \$1.57 per gallon for wine with 14.1 percent to 21 percent alcohol.

However, in this era of tax increases and decreases, both temporary and permanent,



the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 lowered many taxes, from corporate to individual – and to the alcoholic beverage industry. For winemakers, the temporary, excise-taxing structure was a game-changer in two ways.

The threshold for the increased tax rate was raised to 16 percent.

A tax credit was enacted based on levels of production.

The impact of these changes on a typical winery (about 5,000 cases), producing wines of up to 16 percent alcohol, reduces the excise tax by a whopping two-thirds, from \$1.57 to \$0.57. These new formulae were made permanent last year, significantly increasing the financial incentive for alcohol manipulation.

Just as with many aspects of consumer products in the United States, the truth is whatever the regulators say it is. And as always, caveat emptor rules the day.

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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Westchester Sports Hall of Fame's Awards Dinner Set for November 10

The inductees into the 2022 Westchester County Sports Hall of Fame will be recognized at a dinner on Thursday, Nov. 10 at the Glen Island Harbour Club in New Rochelle.

The class of '22 will have a plaque on display in the first-floor gallery at the County Center in White Plains.

"Westchester always has an outstanding pool of athletes to choose from, so making the final decisions can be quite challenging," said County Executive George Latimer. "All of these candidates should be proud of their accomplishments and well-deserved recognition."

Below are brief descriptions of this year's inductees:

- Thomas Avezzano Sr. has spent over 65 years working at Sprain Lake Golf Course in Yonkers, where he introduced countless people to golf through junior golf camps, clinics and private lessons. Avezzano is also one of the longest-tenured pros in the Met PGA and the National PGA.
- Ric Beardsley's lacrosse career began at Lakeland High School in Shrub Oak. The high school All-American made Syracuse University's Division I team, was the USA U19 team captain and world champion, spent two years playing Major League Lacrosse and four years with National League Lacrosse. After playing professionally, Beardsley began coaching and led the Syracuse Christian Brothers Academy to a state championship in 2017. In 2021, he entered pro coaching with the Premiere Lacrosse League. Since 2005, he has run lacrosse camps and clinics throughout the U.S. and has become one of the top trainers in the country.
- Frank Becerra Jr. has been photographing high school, college and professional sports for The Journal News for over 40 years. He has covered Major League Baseball (including eight World Series); the National Football League (including three Super Bowls); the National Hockey League (including three Stanley Cup Finals); and the National Basketball Association (including numerous NBA championships).
- Ron Berlingo's athletic career began as co-captain of the White Plains High School varsity football team, but a knee injury ended his football career at Springfield College in 1965. He then became an amateur boxer and was selected to represent New England in the National Golden Gloves. In 1978, Berlingo was involved in professional boxing as an assistant to promoter Momentum Enterprises and as a manager and trainer. Ron's most prominent boxers were heavyweights Renaldo Snipes, Carl Williams and Tony Grano. All three fought at the County Center and lived and trained in White Plains early in their careers. Williams' 1984 main event in the County Center

was for the largest purse in the facility's history.

"These spirited and dedicated individuals inspire everyone around them to be high achievers. Their enthusiasm is contagious, which makes them true leaders in their fields," Westchester County Parks Commissioner Kathy O'Connor said.

Since 1968, the Westchester Sports Hall of Fame has honored more than 200 outstanding professional and amateur men

and women, living or deceased, who have gained prominence in their fields and who made substantial contributions to sports in Westchester County.

Nominations submitted to the Hall of Fame Committee are solicited from the public. The nominees are reviewed and the committee selects those who best meet or exceed the Hall of Fame's criteria.

The Sports Hall of Fame is sponsored by Westchester County Parks with support

from the Westchester Parks Foundation. For tickets to the awards dinner and more information about the Westchester County Sports Hall of Fame, contact Kevin Cook at 914-231-4564 or kdc2@westchestergov.com.

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

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Below is a list of participating businesses *

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Bennett Conservatory of Music	La Villetta Pizza & Pasta
Chris Caulfield—CruiseOne	MCAS Roofing & Contracting
Cortlandt Farm	Nella's Nutri-Bar
Croton Car Club	Pronto Printing
Croton Corners	Reasonable Locksmithing
Croton Running Company	Robbins Pharmacy
Envy Hair Salon	Simon Boyar School of Drums and Percussion
Deprez Wines & Spirits	Universal Healing Arts
Feed the Birds!	Valvoline Instant Oil Change
Hudson River Dental	Zio's Italian Deli
J.Y. Moon Taekwondo	

*Additional businesses may be added. Please visit townofcortlandt.com/Shop&Dine, our Facebook page at facebook.com/TownOfCortlandt and Instagram @townofcortlandt for details and updates.

If you have any questions or your business would like to participate, please call (914) 734-1002.



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November 2022

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Local Diners Have Top-Notch Choices for Cultural Culinary Celebrations

Day of the Dead is a public holiday in Mexico from Oct. 31 through Nov. 2, when villages gather to commemorate family members who are deceased. There are costumes, parades and rituals, although with no connection to Halloween. It is a derivative of All Saints' Day.

It's an especially festive time to visit your favorite south-of-the-border eatery and take part in the customs, traditions and good food. It often starts with a Margarita or shot of tequila. Even if you can't make it by Wednesday, here are several suggestions for Mexican dining.

Catrina Taqueria

Throwing another Mexican sombrero into the ring in White Plains, brothers David and Richard Zavala have premiered Catrina Taqueria at the corner of Mamaroneck Avenue and Quarropas Street, site of the former Splendid Coffee Shop. Extensive renovations have given the space a delightful atmosphere with counter and dining room seating. Colorful Mexican artifacts are strewn throughout. There is a bustling open kitchen. The brothers also operate Excelencia Mexicana in Mahopac.

Catrina Taqueria is located at 106 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Info: 914-368-8470. (The website is under construction.)

Excelencia Mexicana is located at 551 Route 6 in Mahopac. Info: 845-628-3767 or visit www.excelenciamexicana.com.

Salsa Picante

Catch the skeletons climbing the rooftop! David Dolores and partners have brought their casual Mexican dining concept to White Plains. The original Salsa Picante has been operating in Port Chester for nine years.

Dolores has taken the former three-story Esposito's Ristorante space along Mamaroneck Avenue and given it a colorful burst of south-of-the-border pizzazz. At street level, there's a blackboard menu of popular specialties, the middle level a more formal dining experience and the dramatic rooftop have signature cocktails and events. There are special events like taco days and fajita nights.

Salsa Picante is located at 359 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Info: 914-358-1880 or visit www.salsapicantemex.com.

Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar

Owner, host and actor John Solo, of the bustling Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar in White Plains, is offering a three-taco lunch for \$9.95, or you can choose one of their tasty quesadillas with steak, chicken or shrimp or a big burrito. A new street bowl is available with choice of protein for \$8.95. Might be a good time for one of their frozen drinks, too.

Cantina is a playful, colorful restaurant with a bright aqua pastel façade along Mamaroneck Avenue. They serve reasonably priced south-of-the-border fare. Try the new birria tacos, cheeseburger tacos and ongoing house specialties like the carnitas, chicken mole, garlic shrimp and steak fajita.

Open seven days. There are bustling happy hours.

Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar is located at 166 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Info: 914-461-3959 or visit



By Morris Gut

www.cantinawhiteplains.com.

El Barrio

Chef/owner Sal Cucullo Jr. and partners have created a vibrant eatery, El Barrio, highlighting Mexican street food. There are knockout flavors and fine talent at work here, and an intriguing design.

Specialties at El Barrio include Mexican street corn off the cob; calamares y camarones fritos; arbol aioli; traditional guacamole; wood-fired quesadillas; tacos and tostadas; the El Barrio Burger wrapped in a flour tortilla; and fresh cocktails.

El Barrio is located at 185 Summerfield St. in Scarsdale. Info: 914-723-2600 or visit www.elbarriony.com.

Los Mananitas

This Mexican restaurant near the northern terminus of I-684 offers dramatic views of the East Branch Reservoir and an outdoor patio for relaxing and picture-taking. There are plenty of window seats and a fireplace for comfort.

They often host mariachis, a DJ and dancing and drink specials at their bar. Look for kitchen specialties such as el aguacate (avocado stuffed with crabmeat and shrimp); carnitas (three soft pork tacos); sizzling fajitas; and the Sinaloa (jumbo shrimp wrapped in bacon stuffed with Manchego cheese). There's ample free parking.

Los Mananitas is located at 1250 Route 22 in Brewster. Info: 845-279-4646 or visit www.lasmananitasrestaurant.com.

Where to Celebrate Diwali

Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Lights, is a major holiday throughout India and the rest of the globe. It has passed, but you can enjoy the sights, sounds and flavors of Indian cuisine anytime.

Here are some local spots to take in those vibrant flavors, for in or take out.

Tandoori Taste of India, 223 Westchester Ave., Port Chester. Owner Bharat Patel will be marking Diwali on Thursday, Oct. 27. Info: 914-937-2727 or www.tandooritasteofindia.com.

Indi Q Indian Bistro & BBQ, 61 Old Route 22, Armonk. Lovely setting operated by the owners of Tandoori. Info: 914-273-5931 or www.indiqarmonk.com.

Jaipore Royal Indian Cuisine, 280 Route 22, Brewster. A lot of local history coming out of this historic mansion. Info: 845-277-3549 or www.jaiporenyc.com.

Chutney Masala, 76 Main St., Irvington. Chef Navjot Arora runs a creative kitchen as recognized by the Michelin Restaurant Guide. Info: 914-591-5500 or www.chutneymasala.com.

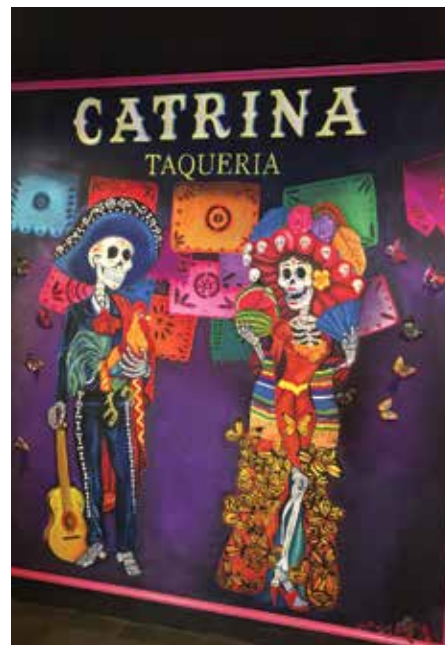
Mughal Palace, 16 Broadway, Valhalla. A staff that is consistently accommodating. Info: 914-997-6090 or www.mughalpalace.com.

RaaSa Fine Indian Cuisine, 145 E. Main St., Elmsford. A solid kitchen and front-of-the-house team recognized by the Michelin Restaurant Guide. Info: 914-347-7890 or www.raasany.com.

Ambadi Kebab & Grill, 141 E. Post Rd., White Plains. Indian and halal cuisine from the owner of Mughal Palace. Info: 914-686-2014 or



The saffron paneer tikka at Curry on Purdy in Harrison.



A wall mural at the colorful Catrina Taqueria, a delicious Mexican restaurant in White Plains with a delightful atmosphere.

www.ambadiusa.com.

Curry On Purdy, 7 Purdy St., Harrison. A vintage location for regional Indian cuisine. Info: 914-600-8500 or www.curryonpurdy.com.

Royal Palace, 77 Knollwood Rd., White Plains. Owner Jagdish Mitter has been operating this sprawling Indian eatery for over 20 years. Info: 914-289-1988 or www.royalpalacecuisines.com.

If you are an intrepid home cook, you may want to visit these local Indian markets for authentic ingredients:

Bhavik Grocery, 130 E. Main St., Elmsford. Info: 914-592-8086 or Facebook.com/Bhavik-Grocery/

Surya, 589 Central Park Ave., Yonkers. Info: 914-969-7651 or Facebook.com/suryayonkers.

Fall Hudson Valley Restaurant Weeks This popular dining promotion, originally created and sponsored by Valley Table magazine, will include about 140 restaurants, past participants and some new establishments from through the Hudson Valley from Nov 7-20. Patrons are always anxious to cash in on the seasonal bounty at reasonable prices.

There are added price options this year. Restaurants are expected to offer three-course luncheons for \$24.95 or \$39.95 and



Skeletons climbing the walls at Salsa Picante

three-course dinners for \$29.95 or \$44.95. Beverage, tax and tip are not included. Dine in or take out. Sometimes there are caveats, so be sure to verify the hours and the menus. Reservations are advised.

For additional information and an up-to-date list of participating restaurants, visit <https://valleytable.com/restaurant-week/>

La Dolce Vita Trivia Night

The Westchester Italian Cultural Center in Tuckahoe is presenting the La Dolce Vita University Trivia Challenge, especially for food aficionados, on Friday, Nov. 11 at 6:30 p.m. The MC will be author and lecturer Carla Gambescia. Antipasti and wine will be served. There will be prizes, too.

The center is located at 1 Generoso Place in Tuckahoe. Info: 914-771-8700 or visit www.wiccnyc.org.

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

My Friend Deserves Your Vote; ‘Supremely’ Qualified

It was more than 20 years ago, and I was at a local restaurant/bar, about to meet my wife's (then girlfriend) old high school friends for the first time.

Alyson introduced me to her Pleasantville classmate Amy, a young lawyer with the Westchester County District Attorney's office.

Moments after our introductory chit-chat, I whispered to Alyson some variation of, "Amy's gonna be D.A. one day."

While my forecast hasn't technically materialized, it'll prove true in spirit next on Election Day if the voters see in Amy



By Adam Stone

what I and most everyone sees in Amy even with just a brief encounter – she's intelligent, fair, tough, honest and proudly ambitious.

I texted Amy a number of months back, saying I'd refrain from commenting on her social media posts.

In fact, not long ago, I told our editors I'd avoid interfering with any possible news coverage of the Ninth Judicial District race, given the personal friendship.

But then I realized it would be a disservice to readers to keep quiet about Amy's unique abilities.

More is gained from transparency than

contrived objectivity or neutrality.

Voters get more with additional information and insight, not less.

And hey, as a journalist with opinions – not a contradiction in terms, and I'll debate anyone on that – what would be the benefit of keeping my strongest opinion of the 2022 election season a secret?

I could tout and emphasize Amy's resume.

She spent 15 years with the D.A.'s office and has served as the principal court attorney for Westchester County Court Judge Helen Blackwood since 2016.

But while all of her achievements are more than reason enough to pick Puerto when you go to the polls, it's Amy's integrity I can speak to best.

Amy delivers as a loving wife, a thoughtful mom, a dedicated daughter and a loyal friend, and I've seen it all firsthand.

She will bring her common-sense, non-ideological approach to the bench.

And yes, at our next get-together of Alyson's high school friends and their spouses, we're all looking forward to calling her Judge Amy.

I just couldn't recuse myself from this one.

The Ninth Judicial District covers Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Rockland, and Orange counties. To learn more

about Amy and her background, visit <https://amypuertoorsupreme.com>.

Stone's Throw

Annual Peekskill Turkey Trot to Help Food Insecure Families

Caring for the Hungry and Homeless of Peekskill (CHHOP) will hold its Annual Turkey Trot Race on Saturday, Nov. 19 at 9 a.m. at the Gazebo located in Downtown Peekskill at the intersection of Division and Park streets.

The Turkey Trot Race is a mile race where all participants donate a frozen turkey in lieu of a race registration fee to benefit Fred's Pantry and help individuals

and families who are facing food insecurity have a Thanksgiving to enjoy.

"We look forward to once again having our annual Turkey Trot Race," said CHHOP CEO Cynthia Knox. "This event is always a highlight of the year as our community comes together to help our neighbors in need enjoy their Thanksgiving holiday."

The Turkey Trot Race is open to all ages

with registration and check-in starting at 8 a.m., followed by remarks from local elected officials at 8:45 a.m. There is no fee to register, but all participants are asked to donate a frozen turkey, which will be distributed to those in need at the Peekskill City Hall parking lot following the race.

In anticipation of a possible turkey shortage, CHHOP will also be accepting

donations of ham and whole chickens to distribute following the race. At this year's race, prizes will be made available for heaviest frozen turkey, best costume, funniest costume, largest team and most enthusiastic. New this year for the Turkey Trot Race will be the release of CHHOP's Turkey Trot Socks, which are complementary to anyone who makes a minimum \$20 donation.

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