

Mount Pleasant Updates Comp Plan, Hamlet Zoning Despite Objections

By Martin Wilbur

The Mount Pleasant Town Board unanimously approved the municipality's Comprehensive Plan and Hamlet Zoning Code last week amid criticisms from several residents disturbed that the decision could inundate the town with new residents and congestion.

After more than four years of analysis and discussion, the board took the action in hopes of revitalizing the commercial districts in Thornwood and Hawthorne along with portions of Valhalla. It is the first time since 1970 that Mount Pleasant has updated the document, previously referred to as the Master Plan.

Town officials have said that the primary focus of the update was to make the hamlets more attractive, particularly along Route

141 between Thornwood and Hawthorne. It was also to allow property owners in the Commercial Neighborhood Retail (CNR) District to build up to three stories as of right with apartments on the second and third floors, if they choose, above commercial operations as a financial incentive to renovate their buildings.

"That Hawthorne-to-Thornwood corridor is not attractive, and for anyone looking to move into the town, if they were to take that entrance, let's put it out there, would you want to live here if you took that entrance into the Town of Mount Pleasant?" Councilwoman Laurie Rogers Smalley asked.

The new code would also allow for four-story structures on about 10 parcels on Broadway, a stretch of real estate on the street behind the Hawthorne train station.

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Recognizing the Veterans

The Horace Greeley High School Veterans Club stopped by Northern Westchester Hospital last Friday to drop off cards the school made to give to patients who are veterans. They visited Eugene Cauvin, a 20-year veteran who served from 1977 to 1997, a retired captain and missile launch officer in Montana. Cauvin was in the hospital undergoing diagnostic tests due to chest pain but was later cleared to return home. The students who visited him are Diego Velasco, Luke Nordberg, Kai Luecherath and Lucas Duran.

McCall Defeats Hildenbrand in New Castle Board Special Election

By Martin Wilbur

A year after coming up short in her bid for New Castle supervisor, Democrat Holly McCall decisively won her race last week for the three-year unexpired term for a seat on the Town Board.

McCall defeated Unite New Castle candidate and current Councilman Christian Hildenbrand, 4,573-2,844. It won't change the balance of power on the board as Unite New Castle will still hold three of the five seats next year, but the result gives the Democrats a second seat on the board in 2023. The other four board positions will be on the ballot next year. Both candidates are registered Democrats.

"We ran a campaign that was positive and focused on future planning and accountability, and I think that message really resonated," McCall said last Friday.

It had been known that there would be a special election once Election Day 2021 was over and Unite New Castle swept all four seats on the ballot. Hildenbrand, who had campaigned with the slate after Andrea Sanseverino Galan announced about two months before last year's election that she was moving from town, was appointed by the remaining majority in January. He will serve for the remainder of the year before McCall is sworn in.

McCall said a compilation of factors influenced her victory. A much larger turnout in a gubernatorial and congressional mid-term election compared to off-year contests helped her as the Democratic Committee nominee in a town where the party enjoys a sizeable registration advantage.

But with two of the four candidates on last year's victorious Unite New Castle's ticket having resigned from their seats and



Holly McCall

the manner in which former councilwoman Tara Kassal's seat was hurriedly filled last

month did not sit well with portions of the electorate, McCall said.

"I definitely think that was not unnoticed by a lot of people," she said. "A lot of voters came up and talked to me about how it felt that things were happening behind closed doors without the transparency and the openness that they expect from their leaders."

Hildenbrand declined to analyze the reasons behind his defeat but was pleased he participated in the process and made the decision to become active last year to oppose the controversial Form Based Code. He said he enjoyed his time on the board, helping to set the town on a solid path forward.

"I'm happy with what we've accomplished this year, and I'm happy that the Form Based Code, I think everyone agrees, is, quote, dead," Hildenbrand said. "It still doesn't mean that development is still not very

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However, the fourth story would only be allowed if the property owner obtained a special use permit from the Town Board.

Despite repeated assurances from the board, about a half-dozen speakers told board members they risked changing the character of the hamlets. Kensico Road resident Gloria Newman said that the town shouldn't be focusing on rental apartments but encouraging development of smaller single-family houses that would maintain the current look and feel of the town.

"What you should be addressing is first-time homebuyers," Newman said. "You've got all this land and quarter-acre subdivisions and make little houses instead of McMansions. I

don't see you doing that. I see you putting up apartment buildings."

Frequent Comprehensive Plan critic Jim Russell of Hawthorne called the board's vote "a sad day for the Town of Mount Pleasant." He has repeatedly criticized officials for failing to complete a full build-out analysis, as other communities who have undertaken an update and zoning code change have done.

Russell also warned that with 287 parcels included in the CNR District, that could result in another 5,000 residents moving to town, flooding the schools in the next five to 15 years.

But Councilwoman Danielle Zaino said that the significant change, other than potentially allowing four stories on a limited number of

parcels on Broadway, is adding another half-story.

"People can put up a two-and-a-half story apartment building in any of these hamlets today without anything," Zaino said.

Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi added that the town has also provided property owners with a tool to improve their properties by incorporating design standards. Owners are not obligated to redevelop their land.

"I hope we see some improvement in the next 10 years," Fulgenzi said. "That's what I would like to see, some improvement, but to actually believe and to try to mislead people and tell people that 5,000 people are magically going to appear in the Town of Mount Pleasant, that's not right to say that

to people."

Mount Pleasant Board of Education President Michael Horan reminded town officials that a recent district study determined that space is tight at Hawthorne and Columbus elementary schools. Last year Hawthorne was at 103 percent capacity, with projections ranging from 96 to 105 percent over the next decade.

He asked that the town keep the district in the loop as soon as development proposals are in the pipeline.

"We really don't have any more room to put any more students," Horan said.

Columbus is currently at 87 percent capacity and is forecast to remain relatively stable in the next 10 years, he said.

McCall Defeats Hildenbrand in New Castle Board Special Election

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much in play. I think that people with the right attitude about that, I hope, continue to serve on the board. I think that's an important piece about the future of our town, but at least that particular policy won't be resuscitated."

He said he has no intention of running for office again.

McCall, a former Chappaqua Board of Education member, said despite potential disagreements, she hopes that there will be less animus and more cooperation next year on the Town Board.

"I'd like to think that my presence on the

board as well as my history of working with (Councilwoman) Vicky Tipp on the school board will help to foster a more collaborative environment on the Town Board and hopefully get to a point where there's a little less tension in some of the discussions and a little bit more collaboration," she said.

Mount Kisco Propositions Pass

In another vote of local interest, Mount Kisco voters overwhelmingly approved an increase in the maximum Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) benefits from \$400 to \$750 a month for members of the volunteer fire department and ambulance corps.

In separate propositions, 88 percent of

voters approved the increase for eligible firefighters and 86 percent did the same for the eligible ambulance corps members.

The program, which is used as an incentive to attract and retain members, provides a \$30 benefit for every year that a volunteer earns at least 50 service points once they reach 60 years old. Service points are earned by answering calls, attending meetings and training and taking on other responsibilities.

The Mount Kisco LOSAP benefits had lagged most area volunteer departments by several hundred dollars. The current state maximum is \$1,200 a month.

The village's Finance Committee found

that a \$750 maximum benefit would have no impact on taxes until 2035 based on money that is in accounts dedicated to each entity's program and an average annual rate of return of 4.5 percent. After 2035, the debt on the firehouse renovations will expire, potentially freeing up more money, if needed.

In an uncontested election, Deputy Mayor Lisa Abzun won her first full term on the Village Board and Trustee Karen Schleimer will serve a sixth two-year term. Abzun was appointed last December after former Trustee Anthony Markus won a seat as village justice.



DID YOU KNOW? PHELPS HOSPITAL IS A REGIONAL LEADER IN STROKE CARE.

An interview with Ramandeep Sahni, MD, Stroke Director, Phelps Hospital

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How does Phelps deliver faster emergency stroke treatment?

Phelps aims to treat eligible stroke patients with clot-busting medication within 30 minutes of arrival—a speed unmatched in Westchester. This drug, together with the thrombectomy procedure gives stroke patients their best shot, so patients don't lose precious time travelling out of the area for the highest-level care. It's right here. Phelps Hospital, a part of Northwell Health, brings the high standards of this nationally recognized health system to the community.

How does Phelps Hospital's connection to Northwell Health ensure stroke patients even more advanced care?

While most stroke patients brought to Phelps can be treated here, a tiny fraction of hemorrhagic stroke patients are seamlessly transferred to Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan, also part of Northwell Health, for advanced critical care. Stroke experts at Northwell's Westchester regional neurosciences program, which includes Phelps and Northern Westchester Hospital, collaborate on care that continuously meet the highest standards set in the region by Northwell Health.



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Incumbents Have Easy Time in Area State Senate, Assembly Races

By Martin Wilbur

There were no surprises last week in the area's state Senate and Assembly races, which were won by incumbents and clear-cut favorites.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D-Yonkers) easily beat back a challenge for her seat from Republican Kristen Kerr by a nearly 2-to-1 margin. It was Stewart-Cousins' first challenger in an election since 2014.

Stewart-Cousins picked up 55,306 votes to Kerr's 30,165 in the 35th Senate District, according to the Westchester County Board of Elections. The majority leader's newly-drawn district once again includes Mount Pleasant and the following redistricting earlier this year.

Also victorious was incumbent Sen. Shelley Mayer (D-Yonkers) who won a third full term in the 37th District, defeating first-time candidate Frank Murtha by 22 percentage points, 65,900-42,174.

Sen. Peter Harckham (D-Lewisboro) comfortably won a third term representing the 40th Senate District despite trailing Republican Gina Arena of Somers for much of Tuesday night. Arena won the Putnam County portion of the district as well as the vote from Stony Point, the lone community that is part of the district in Rockland County.

By Wednesday morning Harckham had captured 60 percent of the vote in Westchester (52,216-35,175), which propelled him to victory. In Putnam County, Arena led 18,300-11,155 and in Rockland



The towns of Ossining and Yorktown will get new supervisors next year as both Dana Levenberg and Matt Slater were victorious in their first runs for the Assembly last week.

County 3,730-1,958. Districtwide Harckham received 53.3 percent of the vote.

"I truly appreciate all of the support I have received during this campaign, and thank all of the voters in Senate District 40 for participating in this important election," Harckham said on Wednesday. "The confidence and trust that residents have placed in me once again will continue to guide my intentions. These are challenging times, though, and I look forward to being engaged in the hard work necessary to ensure a better future for all."

In the race for the newly-configured 39th Senate District, which includes Putnam



Valley and Philipstown and portions of Dutchess and Orange counties, Republican Poughkeepsie Mayor Robert Rolison comfortably defeated Democrat Julie Shiroishi 57,125-49,937, according to the New York State Board of Elections.

Two northern Westchester towns will be getting new supervisors next year as Matt Slater and Dana Levenberg each easily won their first races for the state Assembly in the 94th and 95th districts, respectively.

Slater, the Republican Yorktown supervisor, defeated Carmel attorney Kathleen Valletta 35,037-20,805, about 62.7 percent of the vote.

"I believe our message resonated strongly with voters because they know New York State is entirely too expensive to live in and Albany's cashless bail system and pro-crime policies have made us less safe," Slater said the day after his victory. "I am proud of the campaign we ran, the broad coalition of support we built and I am ready to hit the ground running on Jan. 1."

Slater wins the seat currently held by Kevin Byrne, who opted to run for Putnam County Executive, which he won in an uncontested election. Levenberg, a former chief of staff for longtime Assemblywoman Sandy Galef, will succeed her former boss who is retiring from the seat after serving for 30 years.

Levenberg won by similar 62 percent margins in both the Westchester and Putnam portions of the 95th Assembly District, winning by a 28,055-16,957 count.

Also in her first run for Assembly, County Legislator MaryJane Shimsky (D-Dobbs Ferry) coasted to victory in the 92nd District over Republican Carlo Valente by a nearly 2-to-1 margin, 33,766-17,461. Shimsky will take over for Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, who she defeated in the June primary.

Assemblymembers Chris Burdick (D-Bedford) and Amy Paulin had few concerns Tuesday night, each winning their races in the 93rd and 88th Assembly districts, respectively, by a little less than a 2-to-1 margin.

All districts were included in vote counts but the results do not reflect absentee ballots.

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Lawler Holds on to Defeat Maloney in 17th Congressional District

By Martin Wilbur

Assemblyman Mike Lawler posted a historic victory last week over five-term congressman and Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) Chairman Sean Patrick Maloney in the 17th Congressional District, a result with national implications.

Lawler hung on to defeat Maloney by a little more than 2,600 votes (141,721-139,082), according to the state Board of Elections. It was the first time since 1980 that the head of the DCCC lost his own re-election bid.

Having spent the last six months on a focused message of fighting inflation and reversing the surging crime rate in areas of the state, the Rockland County Republican reaped the benefits in a district that has about 70,000 more registered Democrats than Republicans.

"Through it all we were able to put forth a message and a vision for the future of this district and this community," Lawler said on Wednesday afternoon, a few hours after Maloney called him to concede the race.

The election was considered a bellwether contest with more than \$20 million spent by the two parties combined. The national Republican Party saw an opportunity to defeat a leading Democrat in its quest to reclaim the House of Representatives, while the Democratic Party poured in money when polls indicated the race was tight. As of early Monday, Republicans had clinched 211 House seats to the Democrats' 204 with 20

races nationwide still undecided.

For Lawler, who had served as an adviser to former Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino before winning the 97th Assembly District seat two years ago, the race was about connecting with the people of the district and talking about a 41-year high inflation rate, crime, skyrocketing energy prices and a porous southern border that also was allowing drugs into the country that have killed thousands of Americans.

"That is what this election was about, that is why I ran and that is why we won," Lawler said. "Folks throughout this district, regardless of where they come from, regardless of their race, their ethnicity, their gender, their religion, regardless of their political beliefs, folks understand that we need to restore balance and common sense at every level of government, and I am excited by the opportunity to go to Washington on behalf of this community and this district and stand up for our families."

Throughout Tuesday evening Lawler held a comfortable lead of about eight to 10 points. Shortly after midnight, his camp at the Hilton in Pearl River was preparing to declare victory. But the advantage narrowed dramatically when a large batch of votes came in from Westchester County, the newly-drawn district's Democratic stronghold. The district also includes Rockland, Putnam and a small portion of Dutchess County.

The results put a damper on the evening for Democrats in an otherwise better-than-expected showing in races across the U.S. on Election Day. It also will put a close to the



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Assemblyman and Congressman-elect Mike Lawler speaks to supporters early last Wednesday morning. Later that morning, Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney conceded the 17th Congressional District race.

10-year congressional run by Maloney, who remained in Washington in his role as DCC chair.

Maloney has been representing the 18th Congressional District but ran this time in the 17th District, which included his Cold Spring home, following redistricting.

Lawler said when he spoke to Maloney, the congressman was "extremely gracious" in his concession.

When asked whether he would support various investigations into Hunter Biden or the FBI raid on Mar-a-Lago if the Republicans secure a House majority, Lawler said an inquiry would have to be warranted.

"I am not looking to immediately commence investigations," he said. "I think at the end of the day, if there are incidents or information that warrant oversight or investigation, that is, of course, the role of the House of Representatives and it should be utilized. But we've seen what happens with these partisan food fights, and I don't think it necessarily serves the country well to just go from one to the other and back and forth, and so my commitment is when warranted, absolutely; if political, I'm not looking to do that."

Lawler said his initial priorities is to rein in spending, which has contributed to high inflation, shore up programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, look to restore the state and local tax deduction and help the families of the district.

"This is a very humbling experience, but it is also a responsibility, and I will live up to that responsibility and do everything I can to serve all of you the best way I can," Lawler said.

Bowman Easily Wins 16th District

Freshman Rep. Jamaal Bowman (D-Yonkers) won his first re-election bid last week over former Scarsdale mayor and pediatrician Dr. Miriam Flisser.

With 99 percent of the totals in, Bowman collected 131,185 votes to Flisser's 72,238.

The district includes the northern Bronx and the southern half of Westchester, up to White Plains.

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Groups Gear Up in Fight Over Westchester Flavored Tobacco Ban Debate

By Martin Wilbur

Battle lines have been drawn in the debate over whether Westchester County should enact a flavored tobacco product ban, including menthol cigarettes, as the Board of Legislators held a public hearing Monday night.

Last week, some activists in Westchester's Black community harshly criticized the proposed legislation calling it racially biased because an estimated 80 to 90 percent of Black smokers use menthol cigarettes while only about one-quarter to one-third of White smokers favor those cigarettes.

Damon Jones, the New York representative of Blacks in Law Enforcement of America, said as a result, the black market for cigarettes will grow even larger, negatively impacting communities of color that will be under greater scrutiny and become targeted by police.

Jones and others at a press conference last Thursday outside the county building in White Plains contended that if the proposal became law, it would become the new stop and frisk.

"We're not promoting cigarettes, but we're saying we want fair legislation, and if you're going to pass (legislation), then ban all

cigarettes," Jones said. "They're not going to ban it because White people smoke non-menthol. They're not going to have that."

"This is a biased piece of legislation," Jones added. "I don't care if Black legislators put it together. That doesn't give it credibility."

Also attending the press conference was Gwen Carr, the mother of Eric Garner, whose high-profile death at the hands of police in Staten Island in 2015 came after police cracked down on him selling loose cigarettes.

"They target the people in the Black and Brown communities and this will also be a target because all they'd have to do is see you smoking a cigarette now from a distance, a Marlboro or a Newport looks exactly alike," Carr said. "How can you tell which is which?"

She said if those who back the legislation want to help protect the health of communities of color then there should be money spent on education efforts.

Last month, County Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson (D-Greenburgh), the Board of Legislators' Health Committee chair who sponsored the bill, said she backed the prohibition because the tobacco industry tries to entice youngsters to start using their



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Gwen Carr, the mother of Eric Garner, speaks out against Westchester's proposed ban of flavored tobacco products, along with other activists. They fear that communities of color will be unfairly targeted.

products with fruit, candy and mint-flavored products. Billions of dollars are spent each year in New York State on smoking-related illnesses, Johnson said.

Under her proposal, there would be no enforcement by police, only the county Health Department, she said.

But those who spoke out against the legislation said they don't believe that will be the case. Former Mount Vernon mayor Andre Wallace called it "the new stop and frisk" that puts residents and the police in harm's way.

Instead, officials should concentrate on improving substandard health facilities in Mount Vernon and other minority communities.

"If you really want to save lives in Mount Vernon, fix our hospitals," Wallace said. "If you really want to save lives, help us get the guns off the street."

Kevin O'Flaherty, director of advocacy in the Northeast Region for Tobacco-Free Kids, an organization that educates against the dangers of tobacco use, said Massachusetts approved a similar

law in 2020 and California will see its prohibition soon go into effect. About 200 municipalities around the country have also passed legislation.

He said the Westchester law does not criminalize possessing or using flavored tobacco making the fears unfounded.

"There's no basis for any law enforcement officer to stop anyone and ask what are you smoking, where did you get it or anything like that because none of these things are actually violations of the law," O'Flaherty said.

Late Monday afternoon, advocates on both sides of the issue will rally outside the County Building to promote their positions.

At 4 p.m., Johnson along with Board of Legislators Chair Catherine Borgia (D-Ossining), Majority Leader Chris Johnson (D-Yonkers) and Hazel Dukes, president of the NAACP State Conference, will lead those who are in favor of the legislation.

An hour later, the New York Association of Convenience Stores will protest the proposed law, which will impact about 450 retailers in the county, including some near the Bronx, Putnam or Connecticut borders that its members contend will lose customers to those jurisdictions.

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Group Advocates to Make Peekskill Streets Safer for Pedestrians

By Rick Pezzullo

Pedestrians are being struck by vehicles at an alarming rate in the City of Peekskill.

Since Oct. 7, there have been six incidents at different intersections throughout the city where individuals have been severely hurt or escaped serious injury by reckless, distracted or hit-and-run motorists, according to Peekskill Walks, a resident-led group working since 2019 to make the city's streets safer.

"There should be no serious injuries on our streets and that is achievable," said Conor Greene, a co-founder of Peekskill Walks and a former mayoral candidate. "We like to say we're a friendly town, but our streets are not friendly. This is a public safety issue. This is not just a quality-of-life issue."

According to Greene, the first of the six most recent mishaps occurred on Oct. 7 when a person was hit at the intersection of Nelson Avenue and Paulding Street, the site of another serious pedestrian injury in 2020.

On Oct. 27, a pedestrian was struck at the intersection of South Street and Union Avenue. That same day, the driver of a large truck drove onto a sidewalk at the corner of Broad and Main streets near the Central Firehouse, hitting a person standing on the corner and destroying a signal pole.

On Halloween night, two people were crossing Lincoln Terrace at dimly-lit Broad Street when a driver turned left and hit one of them. The driver was ticketed by police for failure to yield.



North Division Street near Highland Drive in Peekskill, one of six locations where pedestrians have been injured by speeding motorists in a little more than a month.

A hit-and-run accident with injuries took place Nov. 1 at Highland Drive and Division Street when a car and scooter collided, while on Nov. 2, a single mother was hospitalized with serious injuries after being hit while attempting to cross Albany Post Road at Welcher Avenue.

"Not everyone owns a car. People need to be able to cross every intersection safely," Greene said. "You're more likely in Peekskill to get hit by a car than be the victim of a

crime. If we had six residents getting assaulted on our streets, the city would take action. We're probably fortunate that we haven't had more people killed on our streets (in accidents), but we've had many incidents that have been life altering."

The recent accidents have caught the attention of some members of the Peekskill Common Council, which discussed the dangerous conditions at last week's meeting.

"I do believe the number of pedestrian

accidents we had is serious," Councilman Dwight Douglas remarked.

Councilman Brian Fassett asked his colleagues to consider establishing a working group to review the growing trend of pedestrian accidents, while City Manager Matthew Alexander said he would be asking the police chief to prioritize intersections that need special attention.

Deputy Mayor Patricia Riley said motorists passing school buses was also a problem that needed to be addressed.

"That makes me insane. We have to crack down on this," Riley said. "A red light no matter where you go in the world means stop. It's something we really need to look into."

Greene said it's impossible for police to be at every corner, but suggested Peekskill consider investing in street light cameras to catch drivers speeding and running red lights and stop signs.

"Drivers need to know they can't speed through Peekskill and get away with it," he said. "Drivers need to be held accountable. There really is a bad culture of dangerous and reckless driving on our streets. Speeding and running stop lights has become so commonplace."

Greene said he is confident the council is taking the issue seriously and will take steps to make streets safer.

"They're recognizing there is a problem," he said. "This is an issue that requires planning and engineering and DPW to be involved. This has to be a priority."

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Police Blotter

County Police/Mount Kisco

Nov. 6: At 4:04 p.m., the Real Time Crime Center broadcast an alert that a vehicle wanted by the NYPD for a menacing with a handgun incident was operating on the Saw Mill Parkway in Mount Kisco. Officers determined that the vehicle, a white Honda Pilot with Georgia license plates, had exited at Kisco Avenue and was traveling in the village. Officers canvassed the area in an effort to locate the vehicle and were then alerted to a traffic accident at West Main Street and Maple Avenue involving a white Honda Pilot. No one was injured in the accident but the Honda fled the scene.

The vehicle was then observed traveling at a high rate of speed on Lexington Avenue but county police officers did not

attempt a traffic stop because of the danger that a pursuit would have posed to other motorists. County officers reported that the vehicle was last observed traveling south on Route 117 into New Castle.

A short time later, a resident of Ruxton Road in New Castle reported that the driver of a white Honda Pilot had abandoned his vehicle on the street and run off into the woods. New Castle officers, the county police and New York State Police responded to search the area, but the driver could not be located. The vehicle was impounded and taken as evidence to county police headquarters in Hawthorne.

Nov. 6: Officers responded to New Castle Drive at 10:05 p.m. on a report of a domestic dispute. It was determined that the dispute was verbal in nature. The

community resource officer was notified to conduct a follow-up visit to the residence the next day.

Nov. 7: A resident came to the Green Street precinct at 12:10 p.m. to report that a fraudulent \$5,000 transaction had occurred on her bank account. The matter is under investigation by the woman's bank, which requested she also report the matter to police.

Nov. 7: Officers responded to an East Main Street laundry at 2:34 p.m. after the owner reported that a person was drinking on the premises and refusing to leave. The man was gone upon an officer's arrival.

Nov. 9: Officers responded to the Mount Kisco Public Library on Main Street at 10:55 a.m. after the elevator emergency alarm sounded. It was determined that alarm had malfunctioned and there was no emergency.

Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

Nov. 7: Two people were arrested in connection with a string of recent car break-ins and thefts in the village. Police received a call that two males were seen trespassing on private property and attempting to enter locked vehicles in the upper village. Officers responded and located two male suspects, who were discovered to be in possession of suspected stolen property, including two credit cards. During the investigation, it was found that the suspects had stolen a vehicle that had the key fob left inside. The vehicle was found abandoned a short distance away. Earlier the same night, the suspects were observed being dropped off on High Street, getting out of a black BMW.

The suspects, a juvenile and an adult, were apprehended and both charged with second-degree grand larceny, a felony. The juvenile defendant is also charged with three counts of third-degree grand larceny, two counts of fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property and one count of third-degree unauthorized use of a motor vehicle.

New Castle Police Department

Nov. 7: A resident reported that a check was stolen from their mailbox and later

cashed by an unknown person.

Nov. 7: A credit card was stolen from an employee at a local business and used in several transactions. The incident is under investigation.

Nov. 8: Several political signs were stolen from a resident's yard on Seneca Drive. A suspicious vehicle was also reported to be in the area at the time of the larceny.

Nov. 10: Officers responded to a report of several juveniles making graffiti on Hunts Place, where they located the subjects involved. The incident is being investigated.

North Castle Police Department

Nov. 4: A Nichols Road resident reported at 3:29 a.m. that she heard someone downstairs in her residence. Once she went downstairs, she heard parties exiting through the basement door. The caller then reported her husband and son got into their vehicle in an attempt to chase after the vehicle in which the parties fled. The responding officers reported no signs of forced entry; everything appears normal in the residence.

Nov. 7: Report of a raccoon in the dumpsters on MacDonald Avenue at 8:09 a.m. The animal control officer responded and reported that the animal was released from the area.

Nov. 7: At 8:35 p.m., a caller reported at about 1 p.m. on this date he parked his Ford F-150 on Lafayette Avenue, and when he returned to the location this evening, the vehicle was gone. The responding officer reported that the vehicle was parked on private property without the property owner's permission. The truck was towed to Golden Towing. The party was able to make contact with the tow company. Matter adjusted.

Pleasantville Police Department

Nov. 5: A suspicious white sedan was reported parked in front of a house on Brentwood Drive at 8:23 p.m. The subject, a 27-year-old Long Island man, was approached by an officer, and it was learned there was a warrant for his arrest out of Suffolk County.

Nov. 9: Report of a crime in progress at the Mavis on Marble Avenue at 3:45 p.m. Two men attempted to leave the premises without paying for new tires. One of the men, a 28-year-old Lynbrook, L.I. resident, was arrested. Their vehicle also turned out to be stolen out of New York City.

Nov. 10: A large group of youths was reported to be congregating at the high school parking lot at 10:03 p.m. The group was dispersed after an officer arrived at the scene.

Nov. 11: A 51-year-old man arrived at headquarters at 1:30 a.m. to report that he's been receiving annoying phone calls from a subject, a 28-year-old woman. The woman agreed to cease making contact.

Obituary

Gerardo 'Jerry' Magnotta

Rocco Gerardo Antonio Magnotta, "Gerardo" in Italy and "Jerry" in America, passed away peacefully at home with family on Nov. 5. He was 96.

Jerry was a master barber with an 81-year career. He was the town barber of Andretta, Italy, his hometown. He also worked on an allied airbase near the end of World War II, in Rome, and throughout New York after immigrating to America in 1966. Jerry had an unparalleled number of apprentices, including brothers and sons. Nearly 200,000 people sat in his chair.

Jerry's longevity is due to how he viewed barbering as a tether to interaction, and in later years, to family when he traveled to his last shop, the Pleasantville Barber Shop, with his oldest son. It can also be attributed to his strength of will and social nature, and perhaps, a true Mediterranean diet. (Sometimes in abundance! But true nonetheless.)

Prime among Jerry's many endearing qualities was his full, unguarded heart. He extended his love to Vicky, his beloved wife of 46 years, progeny, siblings, the Barbering Guild and the paisanos, friends and extended family he interacted with. He will be sorely missed, but the affection, fun and memories Jerry provided will be forever etched on the hearts of those who cared for him.



Gerardo 'Jerry' Magnotta

Jerry is predeceased by his daughter, Michelina (Lina). He is survived by his wife, Vicky (nee Woods); children Alfonso (Charlotte), Toni (Frank) and Michael (Adrianna) with his former wife, Felicia; son Patrick (Katie) with Vicky; six grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.



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SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Pleasantville Focuses on Social-Emotional Issues Throughout District

By Abby Luby

The post-pandemic era has educators dramatically pivoting to focus on the social and emotional growth of students.

For two years, many students experienced academic performance loss coupled with fear and isolation from school closings, all contributing to a widespread mental health crisis among children.

Like many districts, the Pleasantville School District realized that it had a critical role to play in helping students cope with not only regaining their academic footing but learning about themselves and their role in the community now and in the future.

Last year, a full-time districtwide K-12 Social and Emotional (SEL) counselor position was created and Joyce Connell was hired to be the coordinator of counseling and guidance. The growing program has included home visits for students experiencing school avoidance issues, connecting youngsters to needed resources, parental support and a stronger connection to the school community.

Connell spoke about educating the whole child at the Nov. 1 Pleasantville Board of Education meeting and updated the board on the district's Comprehensive Counseling Program. She was joined by the district's teams of counselors for all grades. Currently there are four counselors at Pleasantville High School, three in the middle school and one at Bedford Road School.

The current approach to helping students uses three general levels of support, or domains, each tailored for specific grade levels, according to Connell.

"The three domains we use in the program are college and career, academic and social and emotional," she said.

Programs range from classroom instruction to parent and community presentations and advisory forums to small, group and individual interventions based on students' immediate needs, which can include home visits. The program also collaborates with private therapists, psychologists and outside agencies.

"We use colorful tools to identify emotional literacy and coping strategies," said

Mary Ann Flatley about counseling youngsters at BRS. "We meet in the little theater and talk about general themes of emotions, celebrating differences and identity and how words and actions have an impact on others."

Flatley, a licensed mental health counselor who has worked in Pleasantville schools for about four years, said she addresses specific needs, especially for those who are new to the district.

"We talk about where they come from and what's different about their former setting," Flatley said.

Middle school counselor Pam Roth explained how staff speaks to students about social, emotional and academic issues.

"The sessions with students are fun and help foster a sense of community among the students and counselors and can form meaningful connections with all students," Roth said.

Specific to pre-teen students in fifth and sixth grades, Roth said healthy relationships, identity, self-image and celebration of differences are addressed.

"We also address the transition to middle school and the growing pains they go through as well as academic and career interests, hobbies and self-advocacy skills," Roth said.

Solving emotional problems and learning coping skills is the focus for seventh- and eighth-graders. The program also prepares them for the transition to high school and involves discussing academic careers, time management, academic planning and using resources.

Pleasantville High School Counselor Rebeca Castellano detailed the needs of specific grades.

"We focus mostly on the transition into high school and getting to know the building for ninth-graders," Castellano said. "Using

mentors from the 11th and 12th grade creates a sense of community."

Connecting with 10th-graders are counselors and teachers discussing college and career development and focusing on plans after high school for 11th-graders.

"That can include work, a gap year, the military, tech programs or college," said Castellano, adding that parents attend the in-person and Zoom meetings. High school students needing more time and attention have scheduled times working directly with counselors and consulting with outside providers.

At the end of the presentation, Connell projected future targets for the program,

including developing elementary school counseling, growing a more robust transition from elementary school to middle school and adapting to a more diverse population.

Pleasantville Superintendent of Schools Dr. Tina DeSa said the program was creating a positive climate and culture among students.

"There is so much conversation about how we are supporting kids in this new phase of a post-COVID era," DeSa said. "I think of our district in the realm of being whole-child focused, looking at students holistically, supporting them academically and addressing their emotions and growing pains by telling them that it's okay and we are going to get through it."

Homeless for a Night



Stepinac High School students recently slept overnight outdoors in cardboard boxes on the school's athletic fields and raised more than \$30,000 to help the unsheltered homeless in their communities. They continued what has become an annual tradition of supporting the Cardboard Box City Campaign, organized by the school's campus ministry.



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Letters to the Editor

With Election Over, Assemblymember-elect Ready to Serve All District Residents

Thank you to all of the voters and volunteers who contributed to my successful campaign for the New York State Assembly. It has been a long year, but our message – following the science and data, fixing our infrastructure, working on effective solutions to our challenges and upholding the dignity of all people – strongly resonated with the people of the 92nd District.

To those who did not support my candidacy, I assure you that I take very seriously my obligation to represent all of the people in my district, whether

they voted for me or not. That is how I have conducted myself in my 11-plus years on the Westchester County Board of Legislators, and I fully intend to continue working in the same way in the Assembly. And while we may not agree on everything, I promise that I will do everything I can to make our communities the best communities they can be.

New York is a great state, and we have actually withstood the challenges of recent years better than most of the country. That being said, we have major problems, ranging from climate change and housing

affordability to combating hate and gun violence. We also have to plan for the future by continuing to foster investment in 21st century industries, fix and update our infrastructure and human services and prepare for the new challenges awaiting us. I look forward to working with my new colleagues, and with all of you, to help us move forward.

I am already in the process of meeting with stakeholders in our communities, so that I can hit the ground running when I take office after the new year. If you have any ideas that you would like me to

consider, please feel free to reach out to me at shimsky4assembly@gmail.com.

Thank you again. I hope to talk to you and learn about your thoughts and needs in the months ahead.

MaryJane Shimsky
Westchester County Legislator, 12th District
New York State Assemblymember-elect, 92nd District

Pleasantville Development Has Complied With Village’s Master Plan

Slater’s Common-Sense Governance Paved the Way to Victory

On Nov. 16, the Village of Pleasantville will hold a public meeting on development in the village. Some residents have expressed concern regarding mixed-use residential development in the Central Business District (CBD), specifically the apartment building under construction next to the post office and proposed development that would incorporate the empty storefront formerly used by Chase Bank.

I’ve lived in Pleasantville for over 40 years. At that time, The New York Times compared Pleasantville to an “old shoe,” worn and dated, but still comfortable. Except for Vinny’s Pizzeria, dining options were slim pickings. There was no farmers market. The former movie theater space, where the Jacob Burns Film Center currently stands, was gutted and converted into office space. While some people may harken back to those bygone days, I do not.

It’s important to recognize that mixed-use development in the CBD is consistent with the village’s adopted Master Plan update. From the beginning of the

update process, the village facilitated and involved community participation, which was significant, by outreach efforts and numerous public meetings. The updated Master Plan recommends easing some of the restrictions to development in the CBD because of “several key assets,” including the train station, the film center, restaurants and Pace University. It also states that promoting downtown as a place to live could benefit local businesses. (There are currently nine vacant storefronts on Wheeler Avenue alone.)

I don’t mean to imply that the village should just accept a developer’s initial proposal carte blanche. When confronted with a CBD development proposal from a builder, the village should be guided by the development parameters and guidelines specified in the adopted Master Plan update, in accordance with the village’s established planning and development review and approval processes.

I wish to congratulate Matt Slater on his election to the state Assembly! Several years ago, when he decided to run for Yorktown supervisor, I was somewhat skeptical. Councilman Lachterman asked me to talk to Matt and to give him the opportunity to lead Yorktown government. Supervisor Slater brought to Yorktown government a common-sense approach to governance along with an appreciation for practical politics. He has done well.

When Matt decided to run for the Assembly, he brought with him the same common-sense and practical approach to the political theater. Matt also brought with him a sense of modesty that I had

not seen before. He was endorsed by the groups that one would anticipate should endorse him.

However, he was also endorsed by one of the largest labor organizations in New York State, the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). It is not a usual occurrence that NYSUT endorses a Republican. This endorsement further demonstrates Matt’s common-sense approach to governance and practical politics.

Congratulations Assemblyman-elect Slater.

Howard Zane
Pleasantville

Jay Kopstein
Yorktown Heights

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Car Sharing, Less Parking Proposed for Chappaqua Mixed-Use Plan

By Martin Wilbur

Representatives for the owner of the vacant Rite Aid property in downtown Chappaqua are expected to submit a parking study as an official review of the 50 N. Greeley Ave. mixed-use project is set to begin.

The development team for property owner Don Feinberg returned to the Town Board last Wednesday for the first time since June, pitching a net-zero carbon emissions four-story, 45-unit building with ground-floor retail that would include a restaurant.

In its proposal to the town, the applicant signaled it will be looking for relief from the town's parking regulations because of its car-sharing plan that will enable residents to rent an electric car by the hour, said Jeffrey Davis, a member of the development team.

There would still be one parking space per unit, but a resident would be able to comfortably live at the site without owning their own vehicle, he said.

"This is a building, built and developed for people who want to live in a net-zero carbon building that they don't need to have a car; they want to hop on a train to go to the

city, they want to rent a car-sharing car," Davis said. "They don't need a car here."

Communities throughout the United States, including several in Westchester such as New Rochelle, Mamaroneck and Pelham Manor have all successfully lowered parking requirements for projects that including car sharing, according to Davis.

The applicant's attorney, Philip Karmel, said his client will be seeking a targeted rezone, that would consist of any property of at least 33,000 square feet on North Greeley Avenue. It would also require a special permit from the Town Board in addition to site plan approval before the Planning Board, he said.

Karmel predicted it would have a limited impact on the town's infrastructure and schools because the largest units would be two bedrooms. Current plans call for 21 one- and two-bedroom units and three studios, and would likely draw young professionals and empty-nesters.

"We don't think it's going to be a family-oriented-type development," Karmel said. "Sure there will be some people, I'm sure, with schoolchildren, but I think the target

market is people who live in the town that want to downsize, maybe their kids, or much younger people who are just starting out and are not ready for the whole shebang, a single-family house in the Town of New Castle."

Town Board members requested the parking study be submitted in advance. They expressed some skepticism about whether the car-sharing proposal would be effective and if there would be enough parking in the area for residents who have cars and patrons of the restaurant and retail.

"Being realistic, I think those other towns like Mamaroneck and the other ones you've mentioned have a lot more infrastructure and retail around them," said Councilwoman Victoria Tipp. "We just have a small town and a small hamlet, so people would have to get to other areas."

Karmel said there is ample data they will provide outlining how the shared car approach limits the need for traditional parking space counts. Under the current plan, at least half of the spaces would have electric car charging stations, he said.

Supervisor Lisa Katz asked whether the developer would be amenable to building a structure on



A digital rendering with an aerial view of the proposed mixed-use building with 45 units and retail on North Greeley Avenue.

the municipal lot across the street on North Greeley Avenue. While that could be discussed, a parking structure does not promote the type of green construction that the project promotes, Karmel said.

There is also the possibility that the applicant would reduce the originally proposed 6,600 square feet of ground-floor retail to quell concerns about parking, he said. However, there would still be a diner or some type of restaurant to satisfy that demand.

The building will be composed of a mass timber construction that will allow it to be net-zero carbon, Karmel said.

Feinberg said with his family

having owned the property for more than 50 years, they want to build something the town is proud of.

"We're really not interested in building an apartment building. We're interested in building a green building that will challenge the way people build and helps people to live in a different way," Feinberg said. "I just don't want to lose sight of what our goal is here, and our goal here is to do something that isn't being done now."

Officials could discuss the proposal again as soon as the Nov. 22 Town Board meeting provided the parking study is submitted to the town in time.

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Elementary School Program Helps Students Listen, Learn From Veterans

By Martin Wilbur

In 1965, Chet Baranowski didn't have a choice whether he would go to the military or not. More than a half-century ago, during the Vietnam War, it was one of the periods in American history where young men at that time were eligible to be conscripted into the service.

Baranowski would spend two years in the Army, the second of which was in Vietnam.

That wasn't lost on Columbus Elementary School fourth-grader Jacob Gomez, who with his classmates in teacher Carrie Mayer's classroom, listened last week to Baranowski, a Pleasantville resident, and another veteran, Jim Leviness of Yonkers, talk about their experiences serving in the military.

"They had to say goodbye to their families," Gomez said. "It was sad but they had to go. They had no choice."

Baranowski and Leviness were among 65 veterans who came to Columbus Elementary last Thursday as part of the school's seventh annual Take a Vet to School Day, a program held around Veterans Day where the guests speak to third- to fifth-grade students about what their time serving the nation.

The program was the idea of teacher Christine Galbo, who approached Principal Michael Cunzio and staff about eight years about its value. Cunzio said the program is consistent with the school's and the district's mission of creating a culture of community service and giving back to your school, community and country. Part of that



The Wall of Honor that was dedicated last week at Columbus Elementary School during the Take a Vet to School Day program.

is honoring and learning from veterans.

"It's obviously something that we feel very strongly about, and it's a tradition that we want to keep on going with and providing that opportunity for students to know what's going on in our country," Cunzio said.

While Leviness did have a choice – he enlisted in the Army in 1980 at the time when more than 50 Americans were being held hostage in the U.S. embassy in Iran for 444 days – he tries to relay to students some of the advantages of military service.

The opportunity to learn a valuable and marketable trade, travel the world, which helps an American appreciate their home country, and, of course, giving back and doing one's patriotic duty are all benefits, Leviness said.

He was impressed by the students' engagement and gratitude.

"When I see these kids, and they're very appreciative, and I don't know how many other schools are doing it throughout the country, I think it's a great program, I think every school should probably do it every Veterans Day, every year," Leviness said.



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTOS

Veterans Chet Baranowski, left, and Jim Leviness speak to the fourth-graders in teacher Carrie Mayer's classroom last Thursday during the annual Take a Vet to School Day program at Columbus Elementary School in Mount Pleasant.

Last week's program also was an opportunity for the school to unveil its Wall of Honor, which pays tribute to each branch of the military. It is displayed outside the gymnasium, where a ceremony was held for the veterans last week.

Galbo said the Mount Pleasant School District also participates in a state program where a local school can provide a veteran who had left high school before graduating in order to serve in the military a diploma.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Peter

Giarrizzo said he hopes students when they listened to and looked at the veterans who filed into the school's gymnasium, they understood that those men and women served their country and didn't ask for anything in return.

"What I hope they take away from this today is a lasting impact, the lasting important impact of service and something that's bigger than them," he said. "There's something bigger than any of us, and that's our nation."



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Making Life a Little Sweeter for Men and Women in the Service

A team from ProHEALTH Dental in Mount Kisco dropped off more than 75 pounds of donated Halloween candy to United for the Troops in Carmel on Veterans Day last Friday.

The collected candy was donated from ProHEALTH's dental patients across the tristate region, and then packaged in about 125 sandwich-sized bags filled with

tasty treats. Those bags will be included in care packages sent to deployed service members by United for the Troops.

"Each year after Halloween, people wonder what to do with all that leftover Halloween candy that's just sitting there in their house tempting them," said Judy Levin, marketing director at ProHEALTH Dental. "The team at ProHEALTH Dental



Jim Rathschmidt, co-founder of United for the Troops, and Judy Levin, marketing director at ProHEALTH Dental in Mount Kisco, had their organizations collect excess Halloween candy to be sent to deployed servicemembers.

Honoring Westchester's Vets



Westchester County paused last week to honor military veterans from around the county and the nation in a ceremony at Lasdon Park Arboretum and Veterans Memorial in Katonah. It was one of dozens of ceremonies held across Westchester. The county's annual ceremony last Wednesday, typically held a day or two before Veterans Day, serves as a unique chance to bring veterans and veterans groups together from across Westchester before the many local commemorations.

partnered with a wonderful nonprofit organization to help send the donated treats to troops overseas, while at the same time ensuring that our patients' teeth and overall health remain intact through moderation."

Levin added that the company hopes to make the shipment of excess Halloween candy an annual donation program that will expand in the years ahead.

Jim Rathschmidt, co-founder of United for the Troops, said his organization's goal is to make life a little bit better for the brave men and women that are deployed

around the world by collecting food, toiletries and other items that are not necessarily provided by the military.

"Through speaking with the troops, even though the military provides them with the essentials for day-to-day life, many of them miss the extra amenities that they receive while at home," Rathschmidt said. "Our goal is to show them that we are proud of them and appreciate all of their efforts while they're deployed."

Since 2007, United for the Troops has distributed more than 28,000 care packages to the troops, he said.

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Con Edison Warns Customers About Scammers' Plots

Con Edison reminds its customers to beware of scammers and the methods and lies they use to trick them into giving up their money.

The company is among more than 150 U.S. and Canadian energy and water companies that are marking International Fraud Awareness Week by providing information on how customers can avoid being scammed.

The companies are members of Utilities United Against Scams, which has declared Wednesday, Nov. 16 to be Utility Scam Awareness Day.

Scammers contact Con Edison customers every day and tell them they

must make an immediate payment to avoid a service turnoff.

Any customer who is asked to make an immediate payment to avoid a service turnoff should regard that as a scam. Con Edison does not contact customers and demand immediate payment.

Here are some common scams that target residential and business customers in New York City and Westchester County:

- Scammers call customers and instruct them to buy a pre-paid card. These callers sometimes point the customer to a store that sells pre-paid cards. Once the customer puts money on the card and provides the scammer with the card number, the scammer steals the money. Con Edison does not accept payment by pre-paid debit cards, MoneyGram or similar transfers.
- Scammers contact customers and demand payment via apps like Cash App, Venmo and Zelle. Con Edison does not support these platforms for payment. The company also does not accept payment via Paypal or bitcoin.
- Some impostors who knock on a residential customer's door try to talk their way inside to steal or even commit an assault. Con Edison urges customers to ask anyone who claims to be from the company to show a company ID. If you are still unsure whether the person is from Con Edison, call 1-800-75-CONED to check. Customers should never provide callers



with personal information, such as social security numbers. Anyone who thinks they have been the target of a scam should call their local police department.

Scammers who call customers by phone can even make a Con Edison phone number appear on a customer's caller ID display.

When a customer gives money to a scammer, the scammer will often claim that the payment did not go through and demand another payment. The company has gotten reports of customers providing

multiple payments totaling thousands of dollars to a scammer.

Con Edison's website, www.coned.com, offers approved options for bill payment.

This is a lightly edited press release provided by Con Edison. As a community news organization, we share various updates to keep our readers informed. The releases are published in this section of our site exclusively, separate from our reported pieces.



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Holiday Train Show Makes its Return to Greeley House for the Season

By Martin Wilbur

It appears that a holiday tradition created last year may now be an annual fixture in Chappaqua.

For the second year in a row, the New Castle Historical Society is presenting its Great Holiday Train Show, a collection of about 10 replica trains that are set up to operate, each in a different room of the Greeley House on King Street. The 19th century farmhouse, which served as the famous newspaper publisher's second home, is beautifully decorated for the season.

While historical society members thought it might be an excellent choice to present something different for the holiday season last year, no one was prepared for the onslaught of visitors, not only from the local area but throughout the entire tristate region, said Georgia Frasch, president of the New Castle Historical Society.

Its popularity compelled the organization to reprise the exhibit for this year. The show opens this Saturday, Nov. 19 and runs primarily on weekends through Jan. 8.

"It was such a really, really lovely event, and I don't know who was more excited, the grandparents or the children," Frasch said.

She said historical society board member Richard Diefenbach, who has a

replica train collection along with his son, suggested the show.

Most of the replica trains are relatively modern but there are some important historical tie-ins between New Castle and the railroads, she said. The New York Central Railroad came through the town in the 19th century, which was instrumental in changing the future course of the community.

Frasch said one part of the show will be a room dedicated to the New York Central, curated by Jamie Comstock, a direct descendant of its founder and owner, Cornelius Vanderbilt. That railroad was one of the largest in the nation during its heyday.

"(Comstock) is going to be curating the room with memorabilia that has been passed down through her family, train memorabilia, Frasch said.

One day to look forward to is Saturday, Dec. 3, where the historical society is partnering with the town and the Chappaqua-Millwood Chamber of Commerce to hold its Christmas tree lighting outside of the Greeley House shortly after sunset, she said. The custom jewelry store, Desires By Mikolay, across King Street from the Greeley House will have Santa Claus, sculpturing and refreshments.

Last year's demand to see the show

prompted the historical society to schedule its hourly train show time slots during the week between Christmas and New Year's, Frasch said. With schools closed, it might be a way for families and provide extra time slots for, she said.

Frasch noted the train show can be comfortably viewed in about 40 to 45 minutes, leaving some time for visitors browse through the gift shop.

Tickets for each time slot are sold for every hour on the hour from late morning through much of the afternoon.

"I just want this to be a very wonderful community come-together, and there are so many new families in town with little children, and I want them to know that this is a great place to grow up, to raise your children and the community does come together," Frasch said.

For more information on The Great Holiday Train Show and to purchase tickets, visit www.newcastlehs.org. Tickets are \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members and \$8 for children from two to eight years old. There is also a small processing fee.

The show is open every Saturday and Sunday starting this weekend through Jan. 8 with the exception of Christmas Day and New Year's Day, in addition to Dec. 26-30.

The Greeley House is located at 100 King St. in Chappaqua.



There are 10 different replica trains that operate as part of the Great Holiday Train Show at the Horace Greeley House in Chappaqua. The show attracted large throngs last holiday season.

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A photograph of a ballet performance. A line of ballerinas in white tutus and crowns are performing on stage. The background is dark with falling confetti. Large gold letters spell out "NUTCRACKER" and "WORLD BALLET SERIES:" above it.

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Why 'For Sale by Owner' (FSBO) Signs Should Raise a Red Flag

Almost every day, on my way home in my car, I pass a property with a big "For Sale by Owner" sign, (known in the real estate game as a FSBO – pronounced FIZZ-bo) – and it always prompts a mental response from me.

If I'm in a good frame of mind, I say to myself, "Oh my, the owner is really in for some heartbreak." If I'm more in an unfiltered mode, I think, "What is the owner, nuts?"

And I think this, not so much because I happen to be a realtor but rather from the experience I have observed from those sellers (and buyers too) who have taken this route in trying to sell (or buy) a home.

A FSBO is the process by which a homeowner tries to sell directly to a buyer. There is only one possible advantage to this process, and that is simply that there is no commission to pay to a realtor. However, there can be lots of drawbacks to take the glow off saving (just sometimes) money allocated for real estate agents' fees.

Despite the initial cost savings from eliminating commission fees, this DIY approach can end up being more costly overall, particularly for inexperienced sellers.

The most common – and seductive – reason for going the FSBO route is the potential for cost savings. When selling a home with an agent, a homeowner can typically expect to pay 5 to 6 percent in



By Bill Primavera

commissions – 3 percent to the listing agent and 3 percent to the buyer's agent. But with a FSBO, the seller is responsible only for the buyer's agent commission, thus reducing the commission owed at closing.

One of the negative aspects for a FSBO is that the seller normally does not have at his or her disposal the sophisticated tools needed to conduct a competitive marketing analysis.

Pricing is never easy, but self-pricing a home by the seller without an agent's use of the Multiple Listing Service is a totally different story, which is why it's hardly a surprise that

pricing consistently tops the list of FSBO challenges. Because public access to market data is limited, homeowners have no clear way of knowing which homes are (or aren't) selling. And because selling prices are not required to be publicly disclosed until the closing, there's no precise way to compare one home value to another.

A listing agent is better qualified to price a home utilizing the tools at his or her disposal and based on neighborhood expertise and real-time data.

With a FSBO, the buck stops with the seller on the home's listing price, what improvements are made to prepare the home for listing, to whom the home is shown and ultimately to whom the house is sold. That can be a lot of responsibility, and mistakes



can be made by a homeowner who, after all, is normally not an expert in real estate.

From my experience, having conducted many conversions from FSBOs to one of my listings, sellers who start out listing as FSBO like the idea of maintaining control. It can be hard for them to relinquish that.

But FSBOs usually stay on the market longer for a couple of reasons. First, buyers expect to save money when making an offer on a FSBO, since they are aware that the seller is not paying a listing agent's fee. Negotiations can be tainted by this fact. Second, it's more difficult for the homeowner to pull together all the necessary facts and documents required for the sale.

The hardest challenge FSBO sellers face is reaching the maximum number of potential buyers for the home for sale. Some start out

by promoting on Facebook or just planting a For Sale by Owner sign, but research shows clearly that FSBOs fail to reach their optimal number of prospective buyers and normally sell for less money. So, armed with this information, where is the rationale?

I would note that the FSBO sign I pass every day has been there for a very, very long time!

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 williamprimavera@gmail.com or called directly at 914-522-2076.



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A Sweet Tooth Delight: Dessert Bakery Opens in Peekskill

By Abby Luby

A chocolatey sweet aroma wafted out onto Main Street in Peekskill from Blondery, a newly-opened dessert bakery.

Auzerais Bellamy, founder and CEO of Blondery, has had a growing and dedicated following who crave her scrumptious blondies, savory cookies and 11-layer cake jars via her e-commerce business started in 2018.

Bellamy has taken the plunge and shifted her e-commerce business to a brick-and-mortar retail store as a hub to run her e-commerce business and to sell her goods directly to customers.

Her team of two pastry chefs can be seen baking cookies and blondies in the well-lit and remodeled 2,500-square-foot space with a stainless-steel oven, cookie racks and work table.

"We wanted the oven to face the street because once you see it baking it's beautiful," said Bellamy, who launched the store last week. "It's something people don't typically see."

Bellamy was born in northern California's Bay Area, graduated from Johnson & Wales University's culinary arts program and worked as a chef de partie at Bouchon Bakery in Yountville, Calif. She moved to New York City to become a demi sous chef for Bouchon in Rockefeller Center.

While taking on various jobs, Bellamy made blondies for friends and family. Word of mouth made her delectable dessert bar widely popular, and in 2016 she started Blondery, an online business she operated out of the well-known

bakery Ovenly in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

Blondery blossomed and attracted clients such as JP Morgan, Hulu and Hearst, and more recently, was an item in the Netflix swag bag for Emmy nominees.

But when Hurricane Ida hit last year, Ovenly was flooded and Bellamy was forced to move quickly and re-establish her business for the holiday season.

"We had eight days to move and I cast a wide net to find a new space," she recalled. "First we found a temporary kitchen at the Division Street Grill (in Peekskill) but we were still looking."

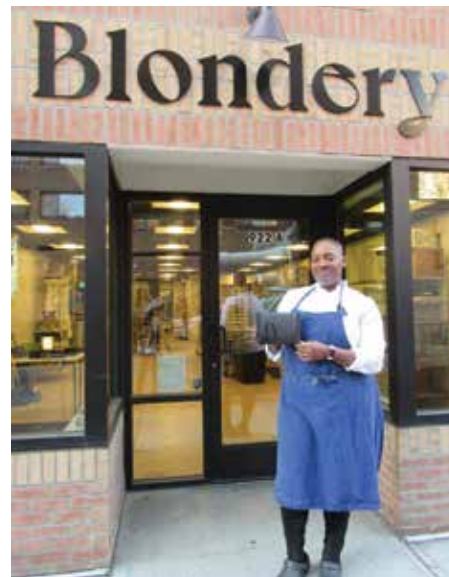
Bellamy said she was lucky to find the Main Street storefront, which had previously been a bakery. She was helped by Peekskill's Kecia Palmer-Cousins, CEO of Aero-Ba-Soul Inc., who helped negotiate a lease with the landlord.

"I wasn't sure we would stay in Peekskill but I wanted to because I liked the area," Bellamy said. "I like that there were people who looked like me here."

Bellamy, who lives in Yonkers, was able to purchase high-end bakery equipment by raising \$20,000 from supporters.

Fresh-baked cookies and blondies at Blondery use all-natural ingredients. Blondies come in pecan and salted caramel, strawberry rosé, s'mores, cinnamon sugar, red velvet (made with beet juice) and a gluten-free Brooklyn blackout. For Thanksgiving there will be apple pie, peach cobbler, chocolate bottom pecan pie and pumpkin pie blondies.

Blondery cookies will be sold under Bellamy's sister operation Peekskill Cookie Company using DoorDash and UberEats.



ABBY LUBY PHOTO

Auzerais Bellamy, founder and CEO of Blondery, a new bakery that opened last week in Peekskill known for its blondies and savory cookies. Blondery will be a hub for her e-commerce and retail business.

She carries chocolate chip, snickerdoodle and s'more flavored cookies. Cookies and cake jars are sold at the bakery along with oat milk-based hot chocolate, along with vanilla and strawberry oat milk. The bakery also sells dog treats.

Trying out new tastes and combinations is mandatory for Bellamy. Special blondies

include a coquitos blondie created by her Puerto Rican pastry chef, a tamarind blondie and one with guava and cheese, which was created by her other pastry chef, who is from the Dominican Republic.

"Since I'm African American I've come up with a peach cobbler blondie for this month," Bellamy said.

Her staff also includes a personal assistant and she is looking to hire a dishwasher, a cashier and a barista to make the milk drinks.

Prospects on Blondery as a community space is another idea of Bellamy's.

"I've seen that the young people, the teenagers in Peekskill, don't have a lot of activities that don't involve drinking," she said. "We can utilize this creative, fun space for kids' cooking classes after hours, dance classes or artists' presentations. I will listen to the community and see how I can be of service."

Her blondies and cookies sold at the store are less expensive than online: four blondies in a box sell for \$35 online but are \$15 at the store. The 24-piece box that runs \$75 to \$125 online costs \$65 at the store.

"I'm hoping to either create a new memory you might have or expound on a memory you already have by eating my cookies and blondies," Bellamy said. "That's the nurturing part of being a baker. We bake to see people smile. That's what we do."

Blondery is located at 922 Main St. in Peekskill. It's open Tuesday to Sunday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, call 914-488-6168 or visit www.blondery.com.

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Arc Stages Brings Popular Storyline to Audiences With 'She Loves Me'

By Martin Wilbur

If you go to Arc Stages in Pleasantville this weekend, you may recognize a story with a familiar theme.

The theater is presenting the remaining three performances of "She Loves Me," a story that has had multiple adaptations on the screen and on the stage.

For director Ann-Ngaire Martin, the story and the music make for a popular combination that drew plenty of actors to audition for the 12 characters in the show, making for a very strong cast for the Community Stage production.

"This is one of those shows that I think you have like a little sweet spot in your heart for it and a lot of actors came out and said 'I just want to be in it,' and that's how we got four ensemble women who are so amazing," Martin said. "(They said) 'I don't have to be the lead. I just want to be in it.'"

The show is based on the original production "Parfumerie." For those, who may not recognize that title or "She Loves Me," there have been three on-screen adaptations over the decades, starting in 1940 with "The Shop Around the Corner" starring Jimmy Stewart and Margaret Sullivan, followed by "In the Good Old Summertime" and most recently in 1998 with "You've Got Mail."

Playing the lead, Amalia, is Stacey Bone-Gleason, who directs and teaches at Arc Stages and periodically heads back to



A scene from Arc Stages' current Community Theater production of "She Loves Me." There are three more performances at the Pleasantville theater this weekend.

the stage to act.

While the story is timeless – Amalia gets hired at a perfumery and she doesn't know that her pen pal love interest also works there – the music provides everyone in the cast an opportunity to shine, Bone-Gleason said.

"I love the music, I love this piece,

I love this role, but I think the best part about this show is the fact that it is such an ensemble, is so beautiful with all the characters in it," she said.

Martin said that she knew Bone-Gleason could act, but was "floored" when she heard her beautiful soprano voice that is perfectly suited for the role.

The show is enhanced with music from a five-piece band.

Moving back and forth between, teaching, directing and acting allows Bone-Gleason to refresh herself with her different responsibilities and perspectives, which not only rekindled her enthusiasm for acting but makes her better in each of her roles.

"I've always said, as soon as I found teaching and directing, I found I had a better sense of myself," Bone-Gleason said. "I started feeling better about the world of the arts in general, started acting some again, and then it's vice versa, there are times when you're teaching non-stop for long time and you start acting and you're like now I can bring what I'm remembering about acting and the craft to my students because I'm acting as well."

For Martin, the auditioning and rehearsing for "She Loves Me" emphasizes the best of local theater. There's a classic story line with great music and having enthusiastic actors having fun.

"That's what community theater is about for me, having people walk in and they say, 'Let's do a show together,'" she said.

After opening last Friday, the cast will do three more shows this Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.

For more information about Arc Stages, visit www.arcstages.org. Arc Stages is located at 147 Wheeler Ave. in Pleasantville.



Office of the State
Long Term Care
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Long Term Care Ombudsman Program: Serving Residents and Seeking Volunteers

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 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/>

Photography Education and Exhibit Center to Open in Yorktown

The Capa Space has landed! Yorktown's new photography-based education and exhibition center will open on Dec. 10.

The nonprofit organization has secured a lease from the Amawalk Friends Meeting to rent the property at 2467 Quaker Church Rd. It is located a short walk from the graves of internationally renowned war photographer and Medal of Freedom recipient Robert Capa and his younger brother Cornell Capa, founder of the International Center for Photography in New York City.

Founded by Yorktown residents Elise Graham and Tim Hartung, The Capa Space is a venue where people can gather to create, view and learn about photography. It is dedicated to continuing the legacy of the Capas and their work as socially conscious photographers.

The first exhibition in the new space will be "Empathy and Empowerment: The Documentary Photography of José Alvarado Jr.," opening on Saturday, Dec. 10.

Alvarado is a New York-based Puerto Rican photographer, and is a graduate of Yorktown High School and the Fashion Institute of Technology. His photographs have been published in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Time, The New Yorker and many other publications.

The exhibition runs through Feb. 25, 2023.

Prior to securing its current location, The Capa Space presented an inaugural exhibition earlier this year at the Bethany Arts Community in Ossining. That show, "This Far and No Further," featured photographs included in a book of the same title by William Abranowicz depicting ordinary places that shaped the Civil Rights movement.

This past June, The Capa Space presented an outdoor screening of the documentary "Mr. Soul!" produced and directed by Peabody Award-winning Yorktown resident Melissa Haizlip. Before the film, Haizlip spoke to the audience about the film, which profiled her uncle, Ellis Haizlip, creator and host of the first nationally broadcast all-Black variety show on public television.

Upcoming exhibitions include a retrospective of the work of Robert Capa, dubbed by the press "the greatest war photographer in the world" for his searing photo records of five wars: the Spanish Civil War, the Sino-Japanese War, World War II, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and ultimately the French Indochina War, where he lost his life to a landmine in 1954. He was the only civilian photographer at Omaha Beach on D-Day, and his photographs, which appeared in Life Magazine, brought the



The home of the Capa Space in Yorktown, a new photography-based education and exhibit venue that will open on Dec. 10.

horror and reality of war to the American public for the first time.

"The Capa Space will be a 21st century arts center that embraces photography as a means to draw the community together in common purpose and to strengthen the

bonds that exist between neighbors," said Mark Lubell, former executive director of the International Center of Photography.

For more information about The Capa Space and the upcoming exhibition, visit thecapaspace.org.

Ballard-Durand Acquiring Hawthorne Funeral Home

This fall, ownership of Hawthorne Funeral Home will transition to Matthew Fiorillo and his team at Ballard-Durand Funeral & Cremation Services, which currently serves families from its locations in White Plains and Elmsford.

Current Hawthorne Funeral Home owner Ernest J. Carpentieri, who was once a funeral director at Ballard-Durand, will continue to be involved in the funeral home as the licensed manager.

"I chose Matthew and the team at Ballard-Durand because I trust them to continue caring for families with professionalism and to uphold our outstanding legacy of service," Carpentieri said. "We believe the families of Mount Pleasant deserve nothing but the best, and we made this decision because we know it will have a positive impact on them. It feels great to be coming full circle and to be in the Ballard-Durand family once again."

Hawthorne Funeral Home has been an institution in the community for 30 years and has built a close bond with the residents of Mount Pleasant in that time. It is imperative to the new owners that the connection be maintained while bringing the high level of service and quality that families of Westchester County have come to expect from Ballard-Durand.

"We plan on being heavily involved with the families we serve at our Hawthorne location," Fiorillo said. "I want to get to know the community and find out what we can do to provide them with a meaningful, healing experience. We are so excited about the opportunity we now have to



Matthew Fiorillo, of Ballard-Durand Funeral & Cremation Services, shakes hands with Ernest Carpentieri, the longtime owner of Hawthorne Funeral Home, which Ballard-Durand recently acquired.

support families all over Westchester County."

For more information, contact Matthew Fiorillo at 914-949-0566.

This is a lightly edited press release provided by the business. As a community news organization, we share updates about local businesses as a way to support their efforts and keep our readers abreast. The releases are published in this section of our site exclusively, separate from our reported pieces.

Simple Steps for a Happy, Heart-Healthy Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is about enjoying time with family and celebrating with traditional foods we know and love.

While many classic holiday dishes are high in fat and calories, making a few simple swaps in your Thanksgiving dinner and dessert recipes can make the meal much healthier for your heart.

"Using smart substitutions in your holiday baking and cooking can have a positive impact on keeping your health in check over Thanksgiving," said Dr. Gary Gabelman, a cardiologist at White Plains Hospital.

These simple tricks make your favorite holiday recipes better for heart health.

Baking:

- Use cinnamon-flavored, no-sugar added applesauce instead of butter.
- Use a lower-calorie sugar substitute.
- Choose low-fat or skim milk instead of whole milk.
- Swap out half of your white flour for whole-wheat flour.
- Swap chocolate chips or candies for dried fruit, such as cranberries or cherries.
- Add flavor with extracts like vanilla, almond and peppermint instead of sugar or butter.

Cooking:

- Instead of butter, try vegetable oils, such as olive oil – even in your mashed potatoes!

- Flavor dishes with herbs and spices, like rosemary and cloves, instead of butter or salt.
- Use whole-grain breads and pastas.
- Bake, grill or steam your vegetables instead of frying.
- Use low-fat or skim milk instead of whole milk or heavy cream.

"Now that you've prepared some of your Thanksgiving meal with healthy substitutes, prepare yourself a balanced plate – starting with a salad and vegetables," Gabelman said. "Eating vegetables will ensure you get the nutrients you need and will help fill you up so you don't overload on other, less healthy foods, such as rolls, stuffing and pie."

The American Heart Association advises increasing physical activity over Thanksgiving and throughout the holiday season to combat the extra calories and stress. Play catch with your kids, walk your dog or carve out 40 minutes in your schedule to hit the gym for an endorphin boost. Make exercise a family affair by taking a walk together after each meal or gathering.

To find more ways to live healthfully, visit www.heart.org.

This is a press release provided by the American Heart Association. It has been lightly edited and is being published by Examiner Media as a public service.

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Thanksgiving Fire Safety Tips as Peak Home Cooking Season Nears

Thanksgiving and the holiday season are almost upon us, and historically, the arrival of cooler weather and more home cooking – especially for the holidays – lead to an increase in home cooking fires.

Ahead of 2022’s peak home fire season, New York State has already experienced 118 home fire fatalities, compared to 85 at this time last year.

The Firefighters Association of the State of New York (FASNY) is reminding everyone of basic cooking safety tips that could prevent a fire from ruining the holidays.

“Our state’s volunteer firefighters hope that all New Yorkers have a safe and happy holiday,” said FASNY President Edward Tase Jr. “When preparing your Thanksgiving feast and other upcoming holiday meals, remember to take important safety precautions, such as not leaving your cooking unattended. Unattended cooking is a leading cause of home fires that can easily be prevented.”

According to the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA), Thanksgiving is the leading day for home cooking fires, with 1,630 breaking out in 2018 – 250 percent above the daily average. The second highest day for home cooking fires was Christmas Day, with 740 incidents. Following safe cooking practices this holiday will ensure an accident or a preventable fire does not occur.

One safety risk often taken on Thanksgiving is deep-frying turkeys.

It is extremely dangerous to deep-fry a turkey, which can lead to serious burns and property damage. It is integral that the turkey is completely thawed before frying and that the cooking occurs outside and away from flammable objects.

FASNY and the National Fire Protection Agency provide the following tips:

- Remain in the kitchen while cooking. Whether you’re frying, grilling, baking or broiling food, it’s always a good idea to supervise cooking directly.
- Most cooking fires involve the stovetop, so keep anything that can catch fire away from it, and turn off the stove when you leave the kitchen, even if it’s for “just a second.” A second is all it takes for a house fire to start.
- If you’re simmering, boiling, baking or roasting food, check it regularly and use a timer to remind yourself that you’re cooking.
- For homes with children, have the kids remain outside the kitchen area while food is being prepared. Pets should also be kept out of the kitchen while cooking. The safest chef is an undistracted chef.
- Make sure your smoke detectors are functioning by pressing the “test” button. If needed, replace the batteries – and if not functioning after testing, install brand-new smoke alarms. (If you have smoke alarms with sealed-in batteries that do not function when tested, replace the entire unit.)



- Clothing ignitions lead to approximately 16 percent of home cooking fire deaths. It is important to wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves as loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners or gas flames and catch fire. Keep the cooking area clean and combustible materials away from your stove top; built-up grease as well as oven mitts, food packaging, wooden utensils, towels, curtains and other materials on or near the stove can catch fire.
- Deep-frying turkeys is extremely dangerous, especially when done without care.
- If a turkey fryer must be used, follow these tips:
 - Turkey fryers can easily tip over spilling hot oil across a large area. Use your turkey fryer only outdoors on a sturdy, level surface that is well away from things that can burn.

- Make sure to have a “three-foot kid- and pet-free zone” around your turkey fryer to protect against burn injuries.
 - An overfilled cooking pot will cause oil to spill over when the turkey is placed inside. Determine the correct amount of oil needed by first placing the turkey in the pot with water.
 - A partially frozen turkey will cause hot oil to splatter. Make sure your turkey is completely thawed before you fry it.
 - Turkey fryers can easily overheat and start a fire. Check the temperature often with a cooking thermometer so the oil won’t overheat.
 - The pot, lid and handles of a turkey fryer can get dangerously hot and cause burn injuries. Use long, insulated cooking gloves that protect hands and arms when you handle these items.
- This is a press release provided by the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York (FASNY). It has been lightly edited and is being published by Examiner Media as a public service.*
- Founded in 1872, FASNY represents the interests of about 85,000 volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel in New York State. For more information, visit www.fasny.com.*

Crossword

- Across**
- Land of opportunity
 - Brass
 - Wks. and wks.
 - Spacecraft
 - Sculptures and paintings
 - Witnesses
 - Thornwood restaurant meaning “House of Joy”
 - Quality of being true
 - “Ben-Hur” studio
 - Galway native
 - End ____
 - Cries of regret
 - Noah’s mountain
 - Founding Father Franklin or White Plains steakhouse
 - Impassive
 - Parts of finan. portfolios, abbr.
 - Overwhelming panic
 - Mock, in a way
 - Small road
 - Slangy turndown
- Down**
- “Kill Bill” star
 - Black magic
 - Garland and Streisand film
 - Thug
 - Team, selected from the best of the best
 - Legal scholar’s deg.
 - Part of U.C.L.A.

1	2	3				4	5	6	7
8					9	10			
11				12					
	13		14						
15						16	17	18	
19						20	21		
22					23				
		24	25	26					
27	28						29	30	
31							32		
33							34		

- Eagle’s nest
- Sorority letter
- Shower alternative
- A sib
- Prefix with “duct”
- Old-timer
- Denver clock setting, abbr.
- Orenburg’s river
- “Casablanca” pianist
- Slightly open
- Dublin’s home
- Officer, abbr.
- Caps on Cardinals’ caps
- Crumpet’s accompaniment
- Produce duds

Answers on page 31

Business Council of Westchester to Celebrate Innovation at Showcase

The Business Council of Westchester (BCW) will celebrate businesses that participated in the Westchester Innovation Network (WIN) at a Nov. 29 Showcase.

The WIN Showcase at the Westchester Marriott Hotel in Tarrytown will recognize innovators and companies that the BCW paired to drive economic development, innovation and growth within the county.

The BCW will award \$25,000 in prizes to four of the WIN program’s top performers and there will be an announcement about the program’s international expansion.

“WIN is concluding a successful first year thanks to incredible innovators from around the world who were matched with leading Westchester organizations,” said Dr. Marsha Gordon, the council’s president and CEO. “Together, these companies have logged great achievements, and now it’s time to showcase the WIN successes with the public.”

The event highlights the results of WIN’s Innovation Match Program, which attracts innovative companies to Westchester and pairs them with local companies to test their products and services in real-world settings. The

program’s goal is to provide the local host companies with an opportunity to understand innovation within their industries and to provide valuable feedback to innovators who need to pilot or beta test in a prospective customer setting.

The Nov. 29 WIN Showcase runs from 4 to 7 p.m. For tickets and information, visit www.bcw.org.

The Innovation Match Program is one of WIN’s multidimensional approaches to transforming the county into a center for new ideas and businesses. The WIN program’s two other components are:

- The City Labs Project, which is a program that spotlights a host community and teams that municipality with individuals focused on identifying projects to assist in delivering immediate economic benefit to that community and its residents through innovation.
- The WIN Implementation Guide, which will provide information to assist with the policies and infrastructure of the county to better attract and retain innovators, including funding, zoning, job training, incentives and more.

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Fantastical, Reimagined Artwork on Exhibit at Mt. Pleasant Library

By Abby Luby

Inspiration springs from many things such as literature, music, nature or travel. Visual artist David November is inspired by all of the above but is especially drawn to work by famous artists.

In his comprehensive art exhibit currently at the Mount Pleasant Public Library in Pleasantville, viewers are treated to his version of lively and lyrical reimagined paintings.

In “500 Years of Apple Paintings,” November brings together Rene Magritte’s “Son of Man,” Paul Cezanne’s still life of apples, a colorful striped apple by Sonia Delauney and Steve Jobs’ Apple image on computers.

“I also used ‘Adam and Eve’ by Lucas Cranach the Elder (1526) and Eve is holding an apple in such a way that I could incorporate other apples in a bowl,” November explained. “I had so much fun with that painting.”

In 2011 November started “tweaking” old masters’ works by Matisse, Picasso and Bonnard as springboards.

When he wasn’t fantasizing working off of notable artists, November kept busy as a professional graphic designer. November held prestigious positions such as creative director at CBS Television and he was a graphic designer for Esquire magazine in the 1960s. He has lived on Hardscrabble Road in Pleasantville since 1967, where he and his wife Barbara raised their daughter



Artist David November’s reimagined work “500 Years of Apple Paintings” is part of a 135-piece exhibit at the Mount Pleasant Public Library until Dec. 1. At right is painter David November.

Tania.

Close to 20 years ago November built a studio near his house.

“I continue to work there and I’m still doing design work,” November said. “But I wanted to do something in my spare time so I started taking classes at the Katonah Art Center.”

When November’s wife passed away last year after almost 60 years of marriage, he



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAVID NOVEMBER

reflected on the bonds between mother and child.

“I wanted to create something that would capture the feeling of love, so I researched works of Madonna and child,” he said.

The resulting piece is “Mother Eternal,” which combines the Madonna and child by 16th century Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbaran with an electrifying child

image by American artist Keith Haring. It’s a striking and intriguing pairing, which only could have come together under November’s deft hand.

November takes daily walks around Hardscrabble Lake or near the stream in Mount Kisco’s Leonard Park that feed his creative appetite to paint a variety of landscapes, several of which are in the show.

The painting “At Hardscrabble Lake, Pastel” captures a swirl of color in a felt wind that creates angular, mirrored edges.

“It’s a grove of trees that’s not cubist but it’s not realistic either,” November pointed out. “If you shatter the space, it becomes more abstract.”

November’s solo show in the library’s downstairs community room is expansive with about 135 paintings and drawings created over the last 14 years. Subjects range from colorful flowers in bloom to captivating portraits and paintings of friends and art class models to highly imaginative landscapes called fruitscapes, shoescapes or pies in the sky.

The month-long show, which runs through Dec. 1, is not only engrossing and enjoyable, but fun for all ages.

The Mount Pleasant Public Library is located at 350 Bedford Rd. in Pleasantville. For more information, call 914-769-0548 or visit <https://www.mountpleasantlibrary.org/index.php/en/>

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The Emerging Industrial Revolution in the Wine Industry



By Nick Antonaccio

It's becoming palpable. Not a day goes by that I don't witness the marvels of evolving technologies and their influence on business, productivity and society.

But until recently, I hadn't taken a step back from this ever-changing landscape to contemplate the impact of technology on our personal lives. Too immersed in gauging the technological impact as it revolutionized manufacturing industries, service industries and my personal productivity, I lost sight of the evolving, some might say devolving, role of humans in the future fabric of industries and society.

We've all come to realize that technology, in its many forms, now dominates our lives in numerous ways. Hard technology, such as sophisticated robots on production lines, is replacing human labor. Soft technology manages the operating systems of factories, replacing engineers. Complex business and scientific applications, controlled by self-contained programs, are accelerating the imbedded presence and influence of software, reducing – at times even eliminating – the

need for human intervention.

I've previously reported on an article I read with considerable interest. It appeared in The New York Times, written by Eduardo Porter. In it, Porter reflected on the role of the workhorse prior to the invention of the combustion engine and the sea change it created that brought on the Industrial Revolution.

For centuries, workhorses were the mainstay and the backbone of economies, from transporting mail across long distances to performing many agricultural and industrial chores. The invention of locomotives, autos and farming machines brought about an unintended consequence: the demise of the role of the workhorse.

Porter posited that, to a certain extent, the invention of the computer chip may have created a similar dilemma for human labor. Robots, artificial intelligence, software programs and smartphone applications have eliminated the jobs of many middle-age workers.

The new jobs being created every day from advanced technology capabilities cannot be filled by these workers. There is a misalignment of skills.

In 2022 we speak of a full-employment economy. Yet, workers have dropped out of the workforce (and the reported unemployment statistics) due to the pervasive usurpation of human jobs by

technology. Ironically, thousands of newly-created technology jobs are unfilled due to a lack of trained professionals.

Pardon my rant. Allow me to focus on the impacts to the wine industry of the current trends.

Notwithstanding the benefits of biodynamics, the shortage of migrant workers and the multitude of political self-interests in the United States, I believe we are immersed in the evolving surge of a new Industrial Revolution.

Of all the costs of managing a winery, beyond capital costs, labor dominates. For centuries, workers have plied their skills in the vineyards and the winery. Slowly at first, but recently accelerating, technology has been creeping into wineries. Here are several examples.

--Science is developing new grapevine clones utilizing DNA advances and sophisticated modeling programs. These grapevines are more heat and drought tolerant, disease-resistant and better suited to specific soils and microclimates. The consequence? Fewer field workers needed to manage the crops.

--Mechanical equipment is increasingly sophisticated, able to plant, prune and harvest grapevines more efficiently than the army of field workers previously required. The consequence? Displaced field workers.

--Sophisticated drone technology enables winemakers to survey the progress of grapevines during the growing season, providing vital statistics to ensure optimal

crops. The consequence? Old-line oenologists, with many years of trial-and-error-developed skills achieved in the vineyards, have been replaced by computer reports (which must be interpreted by a smaller group of new-breed oenologists).

--New diagnostic tools analyze the growing environment of vineyards in real time, enabling cost savings in soil conditioners, fertilizers and water – all meant to increase yields and wine quality. The consequence? Higher quality wines, at the cost of displaced workers and field oenologists.

Where is technology leading us? How will history record this new Industrial Revolution? Several economists have forecast that a significant number of today's jobs will be replaced by technology during the lifetime of millennials and Gen Z workers.

The consequence? Let's not wait to find out. Rather, let's find ways to optimize technology and stay ahead of the seeming inevitability of advanced technological dominance.

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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All Fired Up: Q&A With Groundbreaking Woman Volunteer Firefighter, EMT

By Robert Schork

In October, Cortlandt resident Angela Outhouse was sworn in as the first female president in the 116-year history of the Westchester County Volunteer Firemen's Association (now firefighter's association — more on that later).

A career nurse who volunteers as an EMT for both the Buchanan Fire Department and the Croton EMS, Outhouse answered the call of duty even at her swearing-in celebration when she treated an attendee who suffered a medical emergency just before the ceremony began.

We caught up with Outhouse to discuss what it's like to be a volunteer firefighter/EMT in Westchester — and a female one at that — and what she hopes to accomplish as she assumes leadership of the organization representing more than 1,200 of the county's volunteer first responders.

Where in Westchester did you grow up? And what did you want to do for a living when you were a kid?

I moved to Hastings-on-Hudson when I was five years old; that is where I grew up before moving to Cortlandt. I wanted to be a police officer, a nurse and the first female baseball player on the New York Yankees! (laughs)

What's your "day job?"

Right now, we are raising our granddaughter, who turns three years old this month. I am a retired registered nurse.

Are you both an EMT and a firefighter?

I am both an EMT and a firefighter at Buchanan Engine Company No. 1, Inc. I was not the first female firefighter there, but I was the first female trustee. At Croton EMS, Inc., I am a volunteer EMT and chairman of the board.

When/how did you first have the idea to become a firefighter/EMT?

I grew up around fire department members in Hastings. My father was in the fire department. Whenever the siren sounded, I stopped what I was doing and started counting, then ran to the chart to find out where the call was. I was so excited! But that's where it ended for me. I wanted to join the fire department and ambulance corps, which was literally right at the bottom of my driveway. I could see the fire trucks racing up the street. But to be a member of the ambulance corps, you had to be in the fire department, and back in the 1980s, there were no women in the fire department, it was very much a men's club. I was dissuaded from trying to join. Sometimes I regret not trying, but I was young. The woman I am today would have tried.

What steps did you take to accomplish this?

I didn't; I let it go. At 22, I moved up to Cortlandt and started a family. By the time my children were in school, and I had some time, I inquired about the fire department. Like Hastings, that fire department had no women, either. So, I was guided to the ambulance corps. The ambulance corps was independent and not a part of the fire department, so I joined the ambulance corps and became an EMT in 2005. In 2008, I joined Buchanan Engine Company No. 1, Inc., and there were a few female members there. I joined Croton EMS, Inc. in 2015.



Last month Angela Outhouse became the first female president in the more than 100-year history of the Westchester County Volunteer Firefighters Association.

Stereotypically, firefighting is seen as a male-oriented field. Did you encounter any such sentiments from others along your journey to becoming a firefighter? Did such feelings ever concern you?

By the time I joined Buchanan, I was 39 years old, I joined as an associate member and I quickly transferred over to the active list as an exterior firefighter/fire police. I wasn't physically able to be an interior firefighter due to some injuries. The thing about the fire department is that no matter your physical ability, your mental ability, your gender or your age, there is a job for you.

As I said, I was not the first woman to join the fire department, and this was now 2008. I was welcomed by most, and there were some old-timers that I think I was able to win over. Did the idea of a good ole boys club bother me? Yes. Did it bother me that I wasn't able to join when I was younger? Yes, but honestly, I didn't try because I was told not to. So, I'm not sure what bothers me more — that I was told not to join or I didn't try.

Do you have any other female firefighters/EMTs in your squad? Are there many in Westchester?

Fire departments are still male-dominated. No, there are not a lot of women compared to men, but there are more than there were. There are a handful of women in our department now; two are in the fire police with me, and another is an interior firefighter. My daughter Danielle is an EMT and also an interior firefighter. My older daughter Melissa joined as an associate member. As far as Hastings Fire Department, times have changed. There are several women in the fire department now.

What's the most rewarding aspect of what you do?

I enjoy helping people. It's in my nature.

It's why I became a nurse; it's why I wanted to join fire and EMS. There is just something walking into someone's house and seeing the relief on their face when they see someone they know or just seeing help in general. Whether it's an ambulance call or a fire call, the alarm sounds, and something inside just pops you into high gear...someone needs help, let's go!

At Buchanan, it is a family affair, and that is personally rewarding. My son Michael is an EMT, a firefighter and an officer; my daughter Danielle is a firefighter, EMT and sergeant-at-arms; my husband is an EMT and assistant chief. He was a trustee and was the president for 17 years. My nephew is an ex-chief, and my great-nephew is the captain!

It is great to have something in common that we all do together. My husband, son and daughter are also members of Croton EMS. So, emergency services is very much something my family does together.

I enjoy the friendships I have made in various fire departments across Westchester County. There is a camaraderie in the fire department. It's a brotherhood, a sisterhood and a family.

What's the most challenging aspect of what you do?

You never know what you're walking into. Every call is different. Right now, the most challenging thing is COVID-19; it's scary putting yourself and your family at risk.

As the WCWFA's first female president, have you considered changing the organization's name?

Done! My first goal was to change the name! I researched the process and presented it to the board, who approved it at our reorganization meeting. The name has been officially changed to the Westchester County Volunteer Firefighter's Association.

What else is on your agenda?

My second goal was to change our website to a more user-friendly and eye-catching platform. This was approved by the board and formalized last week and went live this past Saturday. I wanted wcvfaweb.org to be a place for firefighters to go to learn about our association, to see where we have been and where we are going. In the digital age, we now have an online form to join our association. Departments can now submit their members for awards at our conventions now online, and we now have a "donate now" button to make it easier to donate. Another goal is to (create) PayPal and Venmo (accounts) to make donating easier. We will be working on putting together a golf outing, which I hope to be the first of many to fundraise.

Through fundraising and donations, we will be able to sponsor training events for fire departments in Westchester County, continue to support the Firemen's Home in Hudson, N.Y. and work on ideas to recruit and retain members. I hope that being the first female president of the Westchester County Volunteer Firefighter's Association will encourage more women to not only join the fire department but to strive for positions of leadership, as well.

In addition to that, one of my focuses is on the mental health of first responders. This is not anything we have ever addressed in our county association, but I would like to see that change. Firefighters, EMTs, emergency service dispatchers, etc., die more by suicide than by line-of-duty deaths. It is unnatural to experience traumatic events on a regular basis, and the incidences of mental health issues in first responders are high and have recently been studied.

I researched and looked for legislation on providing peer support programs for first responders and presented (a proposal) this past weekend to the Hudson Valley Firefighter's Association's Legislative Committee for submission to FASNY (Firefighters Association of the State of New York) to be on their (legislative) scorecard. Broken ankle and all, I dragged myself around because it was important to me to be able to present this personally, explain it and answer questions about it. It was voted on by the body to be included, but, unfortunately, the sponsor of the bill (in the state Senate) just lost her election, so we are going to have to find a new sponsor for it.

Anything you'd care to share about your personal life?

I am married to the love of my life and my rock, Robert Outhouse. We have a blended family of six children. My children and my grandchildren are my pride and joy and I enjoy spending time with them. We are raising one of our five grandchildren, a granddaughter who will be three at the end of this month, and although it was an unexpected and drastic change in our busy lives, we adore her. And we are animal lovers. Our family includes four dogs and three cats.

Are you a fan of any medical/fire TV shows?

"9-1-1," "9-1-1: Lone Star" and "The Resident."

Examiner Wins Spot in Google News Initiative-Sponsored Program

Let me say right out the gate, the remnants of uncertainty remain over whether it's right to be updating our readership on The Examiner's internal story.

For a good dozen or so years, I was largely quiet and believed the entire shine of our spotlight should be directed at the newsmakers we cover, and not the news journalists who produce it.

But once COVID hit, and we faced an existential crisis, I began to see how the story of a dying community news industry intersected with the story of the communities we cover.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. In fact, sharing our story played a significant role in our relative rebound.



By Adam Stone

It started with a reader-supported COVID-19 Local News Fund in 2020 but didn't end there.

We piggybacked off that experience to build a deeper relationship with you, our audience. The question was how to strengthen our content in a way that also strengthened our business – so we can stick around for the long term.

In 2021, we secured a spot in the Substack Local program and learned how to utilize newsletters to enhance our local journalism.

We later gained entry into the Facebook Accelerator, where we gathered insight on how to use digital tools to enrich the Examiner reader experience. (And hopefully, generate much-needed revenue

in the process to invest further in our small team of journalists.)

Simultaneously, we participated earlier this year in The Trust Project initiative. The program spurred us to incorporate more transparency and best practices in our processes, especially when it comes to strengthening public credibility in our digital journalism.

And sorry to bury the lead but that's how headlines help long-winded writers — we're now one of 25 local news organizations picked for the final 2022 cycle of a Google News Initiative-sponsored program designed to help independent publishers improve their organizational sustainability.

Taking the steps advocated by the program feels like the final building block to the rebuild we've been working on over the past two-and-a-half years.

The details aren't sexy. I mean, I won't bore you with administrative options we're looking at with our CMS or CRM or any of that other obnoxious alphabet soup of business lingo.

But the steps we're taking do impact you.

Despite our little business's startup feel and grassroots culture, we've been banging around now for 15 years. The way we'll endure for at least 15 more is by modernizing our operations. And that modernization will allow us to produce better products across our print and digital local news platforms — newspaper, website, newsletter, social media and whatever comes next.

Anyway, if you want to learn a little bit more about the Google News Initiative-sponsored program, just search for the official announcement using the following headline search words: "25 news businesses selected for the final cycle of LION-GNI Sustainability Audits in 2022."

The program's sustainability audit is facilitated through the good folks at Local Independent Online News Publishers, better known as LION.

A professional journalism association for independent news publishers, it's the type of organization that has played a pivotal role in recent years in helping small outlets like

ours survive the tidal wave of challenges brought on by industry disruption.

So, with all that in mind, thank you LION, thank you Google (although very mixed feelings about you guys, to put it politely and

look a gift horse straight in the mouth, you almost killed many of us, now throw old dogs some bones), and, most importantly, thank you, readers, for passionately supporting our local news mission.

You're the reason we're here in more ways than one.

We have a free, partial access newsletter option if you'd like to subscribe or, if you want to support The Examiner as a member to receive full web and newsletter digital access along with bonus perks, visit www.TheExaminerNews.com and click on one of the join buttons.

Stone's Throw

Using Family Volunteer Day to Deepen Children's Civic Engagement

This Saturday, Nov. 19 is Family Volunteer Day, a global day of service that empowers families to work together to support their communities.

Increasingly, parents of young children are placing a larger focus on civic engagement and giving back, and this annual event is a great way for your family to get started or strengthen your involvement.

Need some guidance? The following actions draw upon Points of Light's Civic Circle, a framework that helps people understand the many facets of civic engagement and provides an opportunity to show children the variety of ways they can support causes they care about this Family Volunteer Day. Combine these ideas to engage your whole family, strengthen your community and amplify your efforts.

1. Volunteer. Hands-on action is always an impactful way to get involved, especially on Family Volunteer Day. Whether you find time to volunteer at a local organization or use one of Points of Light's DIY project guides, there are plenty of options for families of all ages and abilities. Consider projects that focus on issue areas that children can easily understand and get involved with, such as food insecurity, animal welfare and climate change.

2. Donate. Most organizations need

financial support to continue their operations and deliver on their missions. Having a family fundraiser can be a great way to support an organization or cause. Whether you run a lemonade stand, plan a virtual fundraiser, sell friendship bracelets or do something else creative, activities like these help youth learn planning skills and the value of supporting organizations financially.

3. Purchase Power. With the holiday season quickly approaching, gift giving is on many people's minds. Have young people help you select gifts from small local businesses or BIPOC- or women-owned businesses. You can also find and support companies that give back — either with a percentage of proceeds or by working sustainably.

4. Listen and Learn. A critical element of civic engagement is listening to and learning from the community you hope to serve. Before taking action, learn about what's really needed. If you can't talk to those directly impacted, ask a local nonprofit organization if they have suggestions or more information. You can also read books, listen to podcasts or watch documentaries about the causes you wish to support.

5. Use Your Voice. Helping children find their voice is important because they can use it to harness their power in bringing awareness to important causes. Kids can share information by telling friends and family what they learned over a dinner, sharing a report at school or providing information for others with an action item to take.

If you're looking for tactical ideas, Points of Light's website has family-friendly toolkits for youth of all ages that incorporates some of these elements. Visit www.pointsoflight.org/familyvolunteerday/ to find a project that's right for you.

Family Volunteer Day can be a starting point. Taking action and understanding the impact of your work can lead to a lifetime of civic engagement and service.

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Crossword Answers

1	U	2	S	3	A					4	G	5	A	6	L	7	L
8	M	O	S						9	A	10	P	O	L	L	O	
11	A	R	T					12	B	E	H	O	L	D	S		
				13	C	A	S	A	R	I	N	A					
15	V	E	R	I	T	Y						16	M	G	M		
19	I	R	I	S	H				20	U	S	E	R	S			
22	A	Y	S						23	A	R	A	R	A	T		
				24	B	E	N	J	A	M	I	N					
27	S	T	O	I	C	A	L					29	C	D	S		
31	T	E	R	R	O	R						32	A	P	E		
33	L	A	N	E								34	N	A	W		



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