May 24 - May 30, 2022 SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS Volume 16, Issue 768

### Mt. Kisco Closes Eminent Domain Hearing for Cell Tower, Solar Farm Site

By Martin Wilbur

Mount Kisco officials closed a public hearing last week on whether to obtain a key parcel through eminent domain while hearing continued criticisms from those opposed to the action and siting a cell tower in Leonard Park.

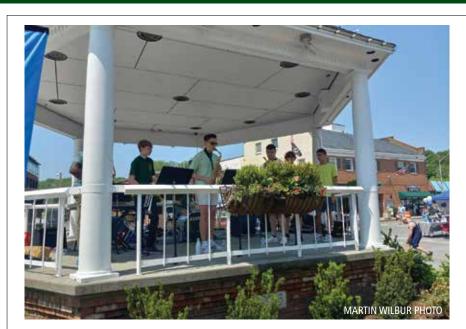
Written comments will continue to be accepted by the village for 20 days following the Village Board's May 16 meeting on the proposal to launch proceedings regarding the 25 acres at 180 S. Bedford Rd. The village's Planning Board has been entertaining applications from Homeland Towers for a 140-foot monopole at the site as well as a solar farm from another applicant for a different portion of the property over the past two years.

While the issues of whether to pursue

eminent domain proceedings and moving the tower to Leonard Park are separate, Mayor Gina Picinch said last week the board will need to make a decision in time for the start of next year's state legislature session on which land it would designate as replacement for using up to 5,000 square feet at Leonard Park in the vicinity of baskets 6 and 7 of the disc golf course. That does not include an estimated 550-foot-long, 12-foot-wide access drive leading to the tower.

The choices to replace parkland is either 180 S. Bedford Rd. or acreage on Kisco Mountain.

Picinich said the board, which voted to move ahead with the extensive alienation process in March, said the next step would be to negotiate a conditional lease with Homeland Towers. Last week, she stressed continued on page 2



#### **A Welcome Return**

Last Saturday marked the return of Pleasantville Day, a celebration of the community that features games, activities, food, music and an overall friendly vibe among neighbors. It was the first time in three years the village held the event, canceling the past two years because of the pandemic. For more photos, see page 15.

### Bedford School Voters Pass \$62M Bonds; Goldman-Klein, Lowry, Shady Win

By Martin Wilbur

Bedford School District voters gave their approval last Tuesday night to more than \$62 million in borrowing for major infrastructure repairs, new learning spaces at Fox Lane High School and improved athletic facilities.

The two propositions passed by margins of just over 2-1.

The \$58.9 million main proposition that will include nearly all proposed work throughout the district was successful 1,391-665. The \$3.65 million second proposition that pay for air conditioning on the second floor of Mount Kisco Elementary School passed by a very similar count, 1,399-651.

Board of Education President John Boucher said the projects that will be funded by the bonds achieved a positive balance between necessary repairs, maintenance and security, combined with innovative, student-based outdoor and indoor learning environments. The focus on wellness was also well-received by the public as was the fact that the propositions were designed to be tax-levy neutral.

He said the strong support was very satisfying.

"I think such strong support is a reflection not only on the strength of the growing academic, athletic, music and arts programs in the Bedford Central School District, but also the innovative student-based vision for our school facilities incorporated into the new learning space and wellness aspects of the bond propositions," Boucher said. "That support from the voters is an important vote of confidence for district leadership."

Key pieces of the main propositions were district-wide infrastructure improvements,

 $continued\ on\ page\ 2$ 

### New Castle Fire Commissioners Weigh Reducing Firehouse Project Scope

By Martin Wilbur

New Castle Fire District No. 1 commissioners are considering a reduction in the scope of proposed work to renovate and expand the King Street firehouse, fearing escalating costs and interest rates could sink a proposition based on the original plan.

Last week the Board of Fire Commissioners was close to reaching consensus to move ahead with the addition that would provide enough room for today's larger apparatus, eliminate safety concerns for firefighters and forego the renovation of the original 1954 structure and the 1979 wing.

In December, the fire district's architect, Mitchell Associates Architects, had put together an estimate of \$16,992,906 for the entire project, but over the past five months inflation and rising interest rates have conspired to increase the price tag.

Commissioner Brian Murphy said those factors could add another \$1 million to the work, a cost that would likely be too steep to gain approval from district voters.

"It's now \$18 million, and as far as I'm concerned, I don't see \$18 million being passed in a referendum or anything," Murphy said. "I think what we really need to think about is what we really need. What we really need is the addition. We don't need to do anything to these (existing) buildings. We need the three bays; we need the addition and we now need to attach it to the '79 building so there's access throughout the whole building. But we certainly need the addition and we need this addition not now, but we needed it yesterday."

The board has discussed scheduling a fall referendum but no firm date had been settled

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### **Local School Budgets Approved as Voters Select Board of Ed Members**

By Martin Wilbur and Nora Lowe

There were few nervous moments last week for local school officials as district budgets throughout Westchester passed easily in most instances while the public made their choices for Board of Education.

In Chappaqua, two incumbents, current Board of Education President Hilary Grasso and three-term board member Warren Messner will both remain on the board, although Messner, who finished third in the six-candidate race, had to settle for the remaining 13-plus months of former board member Victoria Tipp's term.

Grasso collected 1,019 votes while Ryan Kelsey, one of four challengers in the race, finished right behind her in second with 1,014.

Messner picked up 919 votes, outlasting challenger Dana Gorelik by 10 votes.

The official totals, announced on Wednesday afternoon by District Clerk Liisa Elsner, included 14 affidavit ballots.

The race's other candidates, Kristin Miles and Jeffrey Mester, finished with 721 and 576 votes, respectively.

During a Board of Education meeting on Thursday, Messner resigned his seat to take over Tipp's unexpired term. Alyson Gardner, a former board president who filled in for the past several months following the vacancy, was appointed to fill the remaining weeks of Messner's term until Kelsey is sworn in.

The Chappaqua School District's \$133,963,411 budget for 2022-23 was overwhelmingly approved by voters, 1,411-388. Spending will increase by 2.69 percent from the current year.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Christine Ackerman said she was extremely grateful for the "community's support of the school district and everything that we're trying to accomplish for our kids."

On Wednesday, Elsner released the results of the Chappaqua Library Board race. There were no candidates on the ballot for the full five-year library board term. Two other seats, a one-year and two-year term, were also up for grabs after two trustees abruptly resigned last month. Those who received the most write-in votes will serve on the library board.

Brian Cook picked up 673 votes to secure the five-year term. Pam Moskowitz (556 votes) won the two-year term and Jennifer Fahey (425) will serve the one-year term. Rachel LaCoste (292) and Ronni Diamondstein (237) also received votes.

**Byram Hills** 

The four incumbents were victorious in the seven-candidate battle for three full terms and an unexpired term on the Board of Education.

Mia DiPietro (944), Vice President Jason Berland (841) and Melissa Jacobs (746) were elected to the seats carrying three-year terms, while two-term incumbent Lara Stangel finished fourth with 772 votes to serve the remaining year of former board member Ira Schulman's term. Schulman resigned at the end of 2021 after being elected to one of North Castle's two town justice posts last November.

The four incumbents ran as a team and outlasted challengers Scott Meyer (499). Danielle Orellana (442) and Tiziana Didonna (352)

Voters easily approved the district's \$96.9 million budget for 2022-23, 1,039-211.

#### Pleasantville

Pleasantville saw its budget and two propositions easily pass, including the \$2 million bond issue that will help pay for a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning

system at the middle school. The HVAC bond was approved, 1,313-172, while the proposition to establish a capital reserve fund passed by a similarly lopsided total, 1,293-184.

The public also approved the budget, 1.276-212.

In the board race for one seat, Erin Ballard held off Joe McCoy, 819-682. Ballard will replace four-term member Shane McGaffey who opted against running for another term.

"I really did my best to run a campaign that reflected my values and what I want to see in our school district including engagement, kindness, transparency," Ballard said. "I think I did that successfully."

#### Mount Pleasant

The Mount Pleasant School District's \$69.8 million budget was approved by 70 percent of district voters, 420-181. Steven Mastrosimone (454 votes) and incumbent Christopher Pinchiaroli (427 votes) won the two Board of Education seats in an uncontested race.

### Mt. Kisco Closes Eminent Domain Hearing for Cell Tower, Solar Farm Site

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that the lease could only be executed after the village completes the environmental review required by the state and determines whether it can receive the necessary state approvals.

"So all of the things are steps that are conditional and need to come to a successful completion," Picinch said.

Picinich's assurances did little to quell the angst of residents who have been against spending up to an estimated \$3.6 million to buy 180 S. Bedford Rd. and putting a cell tower in the park. Former mayor Michael Cindrich appealed to the board to take Leonard Park off the table from consideration as the home for the cell tower.

"Three, four million dollars can be better spent with curbs and paving roads and not more trails if that's going to be one of your decisions, and I think it's going to be a difficult decision because which is more important, an existing park, Leonard Park, or we're acquiring property (that) may never be used as a park," Cindrich said.

Resident David Grant, who would likely be the closest resident to a tower at the park at about 1,000 feet away, said he found it "noble" that the board is looking to protect one or two residents who would be severely affected by placement of the tower at 180 S. Bedford Rd. However, the answer isn't spoiling Leonard Park, he said.

He urged the village to fight in court, if necessary, since it has already been saddled with two other towers within its borders. Some residents have called on the board to work with the Bedford Historical Society to put commercial carriers on an existing tower for emergency services on land that was deeded to the organization.

"Your citizens want to see you fighting for us, not giving up and sacrificing our park," Grant said. "We want you to spend the money fighting this and either save our park or go down swinging."

Village officials have said fighting placement of a tower would likely be a losing proposition, particularly since Mount Kisco's own telecommunications consultant has agreed with Homeland Towers that there is a coverage gap along the Route 172 corridor.

During a Village Board work session with representatives from Homeland Tower that preceded the hearing, Homeland President and CEO Manny Vicente said there has been a documented coverage problem. Federal telecommunications laws force municipalities to make a decision to site a tower if there's a demonstrated need.

While there may be better sites than 180 S. Bedford Rd. or the park, Homeland Towers needs to be allowed by the property owner to use the land, whether that's a private owner or a municipality.

"We do like working with municipalities. We do think municipalities should be involved in the decision-making process, should have as much control over the decision making as possible," Vicente said. "But it's important for everyone to understand the need, which is what brings us here today. That need is why we're here and is why you need to make the difficult decision."

However, resident Louis Terlizzi, during the regular meeting, continued to plead that it shouldn't be in Leonard Park.

"You're stewards of the park," Terlizzi said. "They can't put it in the park if you say no, so that's what we're asking. Do it for the children, please."

The Village Board has up to 90 days to make findings and up to 36 months to pursue eminent domain proceedings if that's what it chooses, said Village Attorney Whitney Singleton.

#### New Castle Fire Commissioners Weigh Reducing Firehouse Project Scope

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Board Chairman Terence Hoey said he agreed with Murphy that the work likely needs to be scaled back. About a month after the commissioners were given the nearly \$17 million estimate for the project by the architect, inflation, interest rates and gas prices began skyrocketing and the war in Ukraine has also added to those pressures, he said.

Hoey said he doesn't know if there is appetite among the public for the expense, which is disappointing because most of the project is desperately needed.

"We're within one week of getting the site plan done," Hoey said. "(The project) has to be done; it should have been done a long time ago.

Commissioner Christopher Weddle said that by building the addition there would be ample room for the modern fire trucks and reduced risk to firefighters, including risk caused by insufficient space between the vehicles. It would also allow the district to move the items it has in storage at the old Senter Street firehouse to the King Street location, he said.

Among the items the district would be giving up would be the bunk rooms and the fitness center, but with a larger meeting room in an expanded King Street firehouse, the fitness center could be moved from Senter Street

As unappetizing as doing the work piecemeal might be, trimming the size of the bond may be necessary, Weddle said.

"I've talked to nobody that is in favor of this project who thinks it will pass at \$17 million," Weddle said.

By next month, commissioners hope to settle on a revised scope and how much that would trim costs.

Hoey said since the architect's December estimate, the interest rate on borrowing has already gone up a quarter-point with more hikes likely to come.

He called on the board to put out bids for a public relations and communications

specialist to help the board explain the need to the public for an expanded firehouse.

"We need the residents of this fire district to know that we've been working very, very hard on this project," Hoey said, "and just because the vote may be in the latter part of this year, it doesn't mean there's not a lot of work that needs to be done between now and then."

In 2016, a referendum to expand the firehouse and purchase the adjacent land was resoundingly defeated by voters by about a 6-to-1 margin.

#### Bedford School Voters Pass \$62M Bonds; Goldman-Klein, Lowry, Shady Win

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reconfiguration of spaces at Fox Lane Middle School and Fox Lane High School and an investment in improving the athletic facilities at the middle school and high school campus.

In comments during the bond deliberations and before the vote, district officials said the plan is to do most of the work during the summer in 2023, 2024 and 2025. Work will be done during the school year in a minimum number of places where it will not interfere with students.

Meanwhile, in a five-way board race featuring all new candidates for three Board of Education seats, Gilian Goldman-Klein, Blakeley Lowry and Amal Shady were victorious in a close battle. Goldman-Klein finished comfortably ahead with 1,221 votes, but 92 votes separated the remaining four candidates.

Final results released by the district showed Lowry with 1,106 votes, with Shady next with 1,042, followed by Roger Nadel (1,016) and Chris Kramer (1,014). Goldman-Klein, Kramer and Nadel ran as one ticket while Lowry and Shady ran together.

The district's \$148 million budget for 2022-23 was approved, 1,434-636.



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### Latimer: No Plans to Impose Restrictions as COVID Cases Steadily Rise

By Martin Wilbur

There will be no COVID-related restrictions throughout Westchester County despite continued elevated readings of the virus in the community.

County Executive George Latimer said Monday that active cases in the county reached 5,711 as of Saturday, 235 more than the previous week. Hospitalizations remain nearly unchanged at 112 on Saturday, down from 113 COVID-19 patients the previous weekend.

As of now, there will be no establishment of fresh mandates such as requiring mask wearing in indoor spaces, Latimer reiterated. Currently, the only mask requirement in Westchester is on the Bee-Line buses.

"We are trying out best to manage with a restoration to normalcy as the greatest part of our strategy," Latimer said. "We reserve the right if the numbers spike much higher than the are today to look at additional activities that we may need to take, but as of this update we have no plans to do that.'

As a further return to pre-pandemic times, Latimer announced that the County Center in White Plains will cease its COVID testing operations at the end of Friday. In recent weeks, the facility has been administering an average of nine to 10 tests a day as the availability of athome testing kits and at other places have become routine.

Attorneys at Law

Despite the steady increase in cases over the past couple of months, the rate of fatalities is constant to falling. In recent Westchester weeks.

has seen a steady average of about two COVID-19-related deaths a week, down from five a couple of months ago.

Since the start of the pandemic, 2,775 county residents have died from the virus. It appears that the immunocompromised

and the elderly remain largely the most vulnerable population, Latimer said.

The falling hospitalization rate and instances of fatalities is likely the result of Westchester being among the most vaccinated counties in the region, he said.

"We're seeing a lower percentage of hospitalizations and a lower level of fatalities even as we see a steady rise in the number of people who are infected," Latimer said.

Overall, the state saw a 9.1 positivity rate on Sunday and a seven-day rolling average of 8 percent, according to New York's COVID tracker. This month, the daily statewide positivity rate has been as low as 5.1 percent on May 12 and as high as 10 percent on May 15.

Locally, Westchester registered a 10.3 percent reading on Sunday and 9.1 percent on the seven-day average. Meanwhile, Putnam County had a 7.2 percent reading on Sunday and an 11 percent average over



the past seven days.

Beaches, Pools on Track to Open

As of Monday, the county isn't planning to invoke any restrictions to its beaches and pools

this summer.

Croton Point Beach in Croton-on-Hudson and Glen Island Beach in New Rochelle are scheduled to open beginning this Saturday and remain open for the entire three-day holiday weekend. Croton Point Beach will only be open on weekends plus the three Monday holidays, which also include the Fourth of July and Labor Day, this year because of ongoing work on capital projects at that site.

Glen Island Beach will be open daily starting with the last weekend in June.

The county's four swimming pools -Saxon Woods Park in White Plains, Sprain Ridge Park and Tibbetts Brook Park in Yonkers and Willson's Woods Park in Mount Vernon - are scheduled to return on Friday, June 24 and operate daily as well, weather permitting, through Labor

"Our pools and beaches are the perfect destination to spend summer days," said Kathy O'Connor, the commissioner of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation said in a statement. "I'm excited for the season to kick-off and welcome residents back."

Hours for all beaches and pools will be

Westchester residency is required at Glen Island Park and all pools. Proof of residency must be shown with either a Westchester County Park Pass or a New York State driver's license showing a valid Westchester County address.

Admission fees apply at all of the beach and pool facilities and parking fees apply at Tibbetts Brook Park, Croton Point and Glen Island.

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### Prayer Vigil for Buffalo Shooting Victims Fuels Calls to Stamp Out Racism

By Martin Wilbur

An interfaith prayer gathering and vigil attracted about 50 Yorktown and Somers residents and clergy members late Sunday afternoon to remember the victims of the May 14 mass shooting at a Buffalo supermarket.

The event, held outside the First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown and organized by the Yorktown-Somers Interfaith Council and Race Amity of Northern Westchester and Putnam, urged those who assembled to make a difference in their communities to combat the scourge of racism.

A week ago last Saturday, an 18-year-old gunman drove about two hours from his western New York home to target a Tops supermarket because that store has a predominantly Black customer base.

"It seems to kind of keep pouring down and it's very discouraging, yet I'm so glad that people were willing to come out today to think about this, to pray about this and to unite our hearts and our spirit to try and do something about it," said Tami Seidel, co-pastor at the First Presbyterian Church.

In addition to prayers, the names of the 10 victims killed in the latest mass shooting and

a brief bio of each were read by Judyth Stavans, a member of Race Amity of Northern Westchester and Putnam. Those killed were Roberta Drury, 32; Margus D. Morrison, 52; Andre Mackniel, 53; Aaron Salter, 55; Geraldine Talley, 62; Celestine Chaney, 65; Heyward Patterson, 67; Katherine Massey, 72; Pearl Young, 77; and Ruth Whitfield, 86.

All lived in Buffalo except for Mackniel of Auburn, N.Y. and Salter of Lockport, N.Y.

"The people who were lost were doing what so many of us do every day without having to think about it – shopping for groceries," Stavans said. "They said goodbye to their loved ones and never saw them alive again. We must never become numb to this kind of loss."

Marisa Ragonese, a member of the organization Yorktown for Justice, said it was time for meaningful action by all those who want to see racist violence end. While virtually all people across the political spectrum denounced the shootings, not everyone is doing all that they can to put an end to shootings in general and racist behavior in particular, she said.

"I want to make something crystal clear to the community right now, hoping my words will



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

About 50 community members turned out for an interfaith prayer gathering and vigil at the First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown late Sunday to honor the 10 lives lost in the May 14 Buffalo supermarket shooting.

reach the people who need to hear them most: nobody can, in good conscience, denounce murder in one breath and in the next support the ideologies that fueled them," Ragonese said.

"And make no mistake, when you advocated against all of the measures and initiatives that name and address racism, going so far as denouncing academic work that shines a critical light on racism, you might not be pulling a trigger buy you're buying the bullets."

Organizers during the half-hour program urged those in attendance to find meaningful causes and organizations to lend their time to help themselves and others end the cycle of hate. Joining a local chapter of the NAACP, making sure when you hear racist speech that it doesn't go unchallenged, keeping elected officials accountable or if someone belongs to a religious congregation to inquire about its efforts to combat racism are all among the steps that can be taken.

"Let's go out there, separate and together, and make that change," Stavans said.

Several people in attendance said it was critical for them to take time and attend Sunday's vigil and prayer gathering, even on a 90-degree day. Paul Edwards said there are many issues that people feel passionate about but they don't expend the time or energy to stand up and get involved.

"The idea of things going wrong, things go wrong because most people stay silent, so everyone has to voice their vision when they see something wrong because there's an opportunity to support somebody's voice," Edwards said.

Yorktown resident Jennie Sunshine said the town is a wonderful community but like many places there are problems that need to be addressed. She said the town could do more to address racial problems when they occur.

"We have a nice diverse community but there is racism here," Sunshine said. "I know my kids hear things in school and I'm not entirely happy with the leadership of Yorktown. Why aren't they here?"

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### Mount Kisco Movie Theatre Eyes June Reopening

**Bv Nora Lowe** 

After a forced closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Mt. Kisco Movie Theatre may be ready to reopen sometime next month.

That was the word last week from the new operators of the shuttered venue at 144 E. Main St. in the village's downtown.

A spokesperson for AB International Group Corp., identified as the theater's new operator, told The Examiner via e-mail last week that COVID-related supply chain issues and hiring challenges have contributed to preventing the theater from reopening to this point.

"We are working on opening as diligently as possible, and we are targeting sometime in June," according to a statement from the company.

Updates will soon be available on the theater's website, which is currently under construction, according to the spokesperson's e-mail response.

When the facility does reopen, AB International Group hopes to make it not just a movie theater but also an events venue. It is expected to include "a cafe with unique snacks/treats around (the) perimeter of the theater that may include a beer/wine license," plus a possible "rooftop bar with restaurants."

AB International Group Corp. was incorporated in Nevada in 2013 but has ties to the People's Republic of China. Its website describes the company as "an intellectual

property...investment and licensing firm" that is involved in the acquisition and distribution of movies, TV shows, music and related content.

Jon Gordon, president and CEO of Admiral Real Estate, who expedited the lease of the property, called AB International Group "a publicly-traded company that is making a push into acquiring the movie theater" with "the anticipation that there would be a good amount of pent-up demand."

The company is also looking into operating similar venues in the tristate area and elsewhere, according to the spokesperson's e-mail response.

Many area residents were excited to learn last October that the theater, which had opened originally in 1962, would operate again. Seven months later, the building's windows are still papered over with the logo of the establishment's previous operator, Bow Tie Cinemas.

Mount Kisco Mayor Gina Picinich said preparing a facility to reopen after a lengthy closure takes time, especially during a pandemic.

"I'm not operating under the perception that there's a delay, this may just be opening operating procedure," Picinich said.

Given that many businesses throughout the area closed due to challenges created by the pandemic, the theater's return could inject new life into Mount Kisco's downtown. Admiral Real Estate, which Gordon said has "developed a niche expertise in re-renting theaters," was also involved in the leasing



NORA LOWE PHOTO

A spokesperson for the Mt. Kisco Movie Theatre's new operator, AB International Group Corp., said the facility could re-open to audiences as soon as next month. The theater was shut down during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and its previous operator, Bow Tie Cinemas, announced six months later it was closing the site for good.

of the Bedford Playhouse and the movie theater in Bronxville. Gordon emphasized that theaters are crucial to central business districts and "something that needs to be preserved for the synergy of these downtowns."

Picinich concurred, calling the theater "a landmark location in the village" and "a rite of passage" for the town's children for

decades.

Picinich pointed out that at this stage it's in the operator's hands.

"I don't think our Building Department has any additional information at this point," she said. However, the village is "ready and willing to do whatever is necessary to help them move forward."



### Westchester Police Seize Largest Fentanyl Shipments Since 2020

By Martin Wilbur

Westchester County law enforcement have targeted large-scale drug suppliers leading to significant drug seizures, which has sharply reduced the rate of overdoses over the past two years.

Last week, County Executive George Latimer and county police brass last week updated the progress made since the Narcotics Reduction Program was rolled out in June 2020 in response to the opioid epidemic and the rising number of overdoses and overdose deaths.

Many of the overdoses in recent waves involved the use of fentanyl, which makes other drugs such as heroin and cocaine more deadly along with fentanyl-laced pills, said Thomas Gleason, Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Public Safety.

County police have partnered with local, state and federal law enforcement to make the best uses of resources and execute significant busts and seizures by going after the major dealers rather than low-level offenders and people who use the substances, he said.

"Our goal remains the same, to interdict and intercept these products before they reach the streets of our county," Gleason said during a May 19 press conference in White Plains.

During the past 23 months, Gleason said authorities have seized 453,422 bags of fentanyl packaged for individual sale;



Some of the drugs and cash that have been seized by police over the past two years as law enforcement cracks down on large drug dealers pushing deadly fentanyl supplies.

94 kilograms of fentanyl packaged in bulk; 863 fentanyl pressed pills disguised as prescription medication; 66 kilograms of cocaine; 41 vehicles equipped with aftermarket hidden compartments; and 27 firearms.

In the first quarter of this year, overdoses fell by 40 percent in Westchester compared to the same time period last year, said John Hodges, chief investigator for the Westchester County police.

"That's what we're hoping to do on this side of things, by reducing the supply into the area," Hodges said. "We hope that this trend continues and hopefully we can further reduce overdoses and overdose-related deaths due to

fentanyl, which has just been a scourge."

Hodges and Gleason explained that law enforcement have used a strategy referred to as "precision policing strategies," where resources are used to go after the biggest dealers rather than more minor criminals.

Hodges said with the cooperation of local police departments, including the use of the county's Real Time Crime Center which sees multiple agencies provide staff, the FBI, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency and Homeland Security, the crackdown has yielded highly successful results.

State Sen. Peter Harckham (D-Lewisboro), who chairs the Senate Committee on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, said the

work in Albany is on prevention programs and making treatment and recovery programs available to those with a narcotics problem.

However, the police's role to drastically reduce the supply of fentanyl is a major factor in protecting people because of the lethality of the drug, Harckham said.

"Fentanyl is nothing more than a poison that's killing our kids, that is killing our parents and is really ripping a hole in the fabric of our society," he said. "So for the task force to focus on the people who are moving and trafficking fentanyl is essential, and I applaud them for the work they've done."

Latimer said the efforts by police during the past two years have almost certainly been a lifesaver for countless Westchester residents.

"These men have saved lives," Latimer said. "There were individuals who might have died of a fentanyl overdose that didn't because of the work that they did."

In addition to other agencies, the county police work collaboratively with the Westchester County District Attorney's Office on narcotics investigations. Since many of the drug-related offenses involve federal charges, information cannot always be readily shared with the public. However, Gleason said his office wanted to highlight the progress that has been made.

"We wanted to provide this update to the public to ensure them that we are hard at work, and very successfully at work, in the effort to keep fentanyl out of our communities," he said.

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### **Obituary**

# Former Cortlandt Planning Director John Felt Dies at 88

By Rick Pezzullo

Former longtime Cortlandt Planning Director John Felt died May 16. He was 88.

Felt was born on July 14, 1933, in Utica, N.Y. to Ernest and Carol Traver Felt. He had two siblings, E. Porter Felt and Elizabeth Felt Gilman. Felt graduated from New Hartford High School, Amherst College (political science), RPI (architecture) and the University of Wisconsin (planning). He also served in the New York State National Guard and on the Flight 93 Memorial Commission after 9/11.

While he enjoyed a variety of planning positions, including an interesting experience in Baltimore, his final and favorite job was as the director of planning for the Town of Cortlandt. In that role, he advised both the Town Board and the Planning Board.

"It was an honor to have worked with John Felt for many years until his retirement," said former Cortlandt supervisor Linda Puglisi. "As director of planning it was a position he held with distinction and with pride. He was a gentleman and treated everyone fairly. John loved his family very much, his career and his life. He had many interests and I always enjoyed our many talks over the years. John will be truly missed by all who knew him and me."

Felt is survived by his wife, Janice Goldbach Felt, of Kinderhook, N.Y.; his daughters, Marisa Felt Soulios of Calabasas, Calif. and Ginevra Felt Blumenfeld of Croton-on-Hudson and their husbands, Christopher Soulios and Harley Blumenfeld. He was also the proud grandfather of five and step-grandfather of two: Guy Bellingrath, Traver Blumenfeld, Albert Bellingrath, Elijah Blumenfeld, John Blumenfeld, Brady Soulios and Katherine Soulios.

He loved his family, travel, site inspections and long walks. His conversation and quiet humor will be missed by all.

In lieu of flowers, consider planting a tree or contributing to a charity of your choice in his memory.

### Yorktown Launches Baby Formula Drive

Yorktown launched an emergency baby formula collection drive last weekto help local food pantries accommodate demand.

Residents may bring formula donations to collection sites at Town Hall, St. Mary's Food Pantry or the First Presbyterian Church through May 31.

"We have a serious need here," said Supervisor Matt Slater. "When we talk to our food pantries, they tell us that they are completely out of baby formula."

Formula with expired best-by dates will also be accepted.

"We're actually teaching a course on the expiration of food because there is so much food waste based on dates that are actually fictional," said Councilwoman Luciana Haughwout, who works with Yorktown's food security task force.

Councilman Ed Lachterman asked residents who don't have infants to buy formula if they see it.

"It's a tough situation right now and until it gets better, we're all going to have to figure out a way to help those in need," Latchterman said.

Addresses for the collection sites are:

• Town Hall: 363 Underhill Ave.,



Pictured, from left, Yorktown Town Board members Sergio Esposito, Luciana Haughwout, Supervisor Matt Slater and Ed Lachterman.

Yorktown Heights

- St. Mary's Food Pantry: 1836 E. Main St., Mohegan Lake
- First Presbyterian Church: 2880 Crompond Rd., Yorktown Heights

"The problem with the food shortages has shed some light on many of us who really don't realize that there are people that have these shortages or maybe can't afford it," said Councilman Sergio Esposito.

### **Police Blotter**

### Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

May 16: Patrol and Croton EMS responded to Old Post Road North at 9:52 a.m. on a call of a person bitten by a dog. Croton EMS treated the subject at the scene, but the aided refused further medical attention. The dog's owner was issued a summons for permitting a dog to run at large.

May 16: A caller reported at 7:02 p.m. that a hummingbird flew into her residence on Sunset Drive and she was unable to get the bird out. Patrols responded and assisted with removal of the bird.

#### **New Castle Police Department**

May 13: A Hemlock Hills resident reported that an unknown man was knocking at his door. Officers responded, spoke with the subject from Long Island and determined that he was going through a mental health crisis. Chappaqua ambulance transported him to the hospital.

May 19: Town DPW employees reported two instances of damage and graffiti to a wooden fence located along the edge of the Chappaqua train station parking lot.

May 20: Police received multiple complaints from Orchard Ridge Road and Ridgewood Terrace residents of unlocked vehicles being rummaged through during the early morning hours. Some residents also had items stolen. Police are reviewing camera footage.

#### **North Castle Police Department**

May 14: A caller reported at 12:48 p.m. that a car washing operation was taking place in a Main Street parking lot, which is creating a considerable amount of noise and possibly operating against town ordinances. The responding officer reported that the parties were advised of the town ordinance, which requires a permit to conduct any such operation. Parties will be leaving the area. Matter adjusted.

May 15: A caller reported at 11:30 a.m. that she was traveling northbound on Route 22 when a tree fell on her vehicle causing damage. No injuries were reported. However, the caller stated that the tree brought down wires. The responding officers stated that the motorist was able to leave the scene in the car, which still

operated under its own power.

May 17: The desk officer received a call from a Glendale Avenue resident at 7:52 p.m. who was requesting a police response to Sir John's Plaza for an apparent verbal dispute five to 10 minutes in the past. The complainant did not provide further information about the dispute but did state that he is now home. The responding officer went to the location and stated that the dispute was verbal in nature only.

#### **Pleasantville Police Department**

May 15: A complainant reported at headquarters at 11:53 a.m. that \$500 was withdrawn from her account without authorization. Two withdrawals were made – one for \$400 and a second one for \$100. The matter is under investigation.

**May 17:** An individual suffered a dog bite on Saratoga Avenue at 9:57 p.m.

May 18: Report of harassment at 6:23 p.m. A woman was found to have violated an order of protection after sending an e-mail to her husband.

**My 21:** Report of a domestic dispute between a husband and wife on Sky Top Drive at 10:07 a.m. The husband was arrested for assault.

#### **Putnam Sheriff's Department**

May 19: A 29-year-old Nassau County man was arrested following a three-vehicle accident on Route 22 in Patterson. The suspect was driving southbound at a high rate of speed when he drove into another southbound car, which caused that vehicle to collide with a third vehicle that was temporarily stopped along the southbound shoulder. The occupants of the second and third vehicles were transported to Danbury Hospital for injuries.

The suspect, who was uninjured, attempted to flee the scene on foot but was apprehended by sheriff's deputies. He told deputies his actions were intentional efforts to kill himself. The subject was transported to Putnam Hospital Center, where he was examined by a Sheriff's Office Drug Recognition Expert to assess drug and/or alcohol issues and determined they were not factors. He was also evaluated regarding medical and mental health concerns. He was subsequently charged with first-degree felony reckless endangerment, reckless driving, a misdemeanor, and criminally leaving the scene of a personal injury automobile accident in addition to multiple vehicle and traffic violations. He was being held at the hospital for a mental health evaluation and is required to appear in Patterson Town Court for arraignment at a future date.

#### Blood Drive to Address Shortage Set for May 31 in Pleasantville

Blood supplies have dropped to a dangerously low level during the spring for several reasons, one of which is the surge in new COVID-19 cases via the highly contagious Omicron subvariants. Hospitals and patients rely on a steady flow of volunteer donors to receive lifesaving blood donations, but the recent spike in cases along with fewer donors due to spring vacations has resulted in a

serious problem.

Emanuel Lutheran Church in Pleasantville hopes to help by sponsoring a community blood drive on Tuesday, May 31 from 1 to 7 p.m. at the church at 197 Manville Rd. in Pleasantville. Both whole blood and red cells units will be collected from qualifying candidates. All presenting donors will be given a "Local Hero" t-shirt.

Although this drive makes it convenient for Pleasantville residents to participate, blood donors from all towns are welcome to lend their help.

To direct questions regarding eligibility, travel, medications, last donation and more, call 800-688-0900.

To make an appointment, call 800-933-2566 or visit www.NYBloodCenter.org/donate-blood.

#### **Yorktown Police Department**

May 15: Anthony Farroni, 47, of Yorktown, was charged with driving while intoxicated and several traffic infractions at 8:50 p.m. following a report of a one-car accident on a resident's front lawn on Oakside Road.

### 'I'm No Senator's Son': Hen Hud Alumni Memorialize Fallen Classmates

By Nora Lowe

Brian Russell, Hendrick Hudson High School Class of 1968, was killed in the Vietnam War. Now, two of his high school classmates Bruce Fulgum (1967) and Guy Van Benschoten (1970), are embarking on a project to make sure his memory and those of others aren't lost as well.

They are fundraising to construct memorial benches for their fallen schoolmates at Steamboat Park in Verplanck.

The benches will be dedicated to five Hen Hud students who were killed in action during the Vietnam War: Henry Bethea (Class of '67, Army), Frank Guichaud ('65, Navy), Patrick McGuire ('66, Navy), Douglas Mowbray ('64, Navy) and Russell ('68, Army).

A few years ago, Fulgum, a restaurant owner and bus driver, raised money for Bethea's headstone in the Montrose Sunset Cemetery, something he had wanted to do for nearly 50 years. Bethea, who was a foster child, was Fulgum's best friend.

"I've always tried to keep his memory alive because there really was no one to keep his memory alive," Fulgum reflected.

Fundraising for the headstone yielded excess funds, which he then used to erect a memorial bench at Steamboat Park.

"One day I saw that there was a bench dedicated to a West Point cadet that had passed away in a helicopter accident, and I thought that this would be the perfect spot for a bench for Henry," Fulgum recalled.

The ceremony for Bethea's bench was so successful, with emergency services personnel and community members in attendance, that he decided to raise additional funds to install benches for Guichaud,

McGuire, Mowbra and Russell. That's when Fulgum teamed up with Van Benschoten.

Together, they reached out to Sean Murray, president of the William J. Boyle American Legion Post, which agreed to receive donations for the Memorial Bench Project. The pair hope to raise \$8,500, and are currently about halfway to their goal, aiming to install the benches on Veterans Day this year.

Van Benschoten, who retired as an assistant fire chief in 2016 after serving 41 years as a professional firefighter in Ithaca, was classmates with Russell.

"We rode the same school bus together back in the day," he said. "I can still picture him getting on the bus."

Van Benschoten's draft number was high enough that he wasn't called like Russell was. Fulgum also counts himself lucky.

"I went to college, and these guys went to Vietnam. It didn't seem very fair," Van Benschoten said.

He hopes the memorial benches will serve as a spot for "quiet reflection," a place to "think about their commitment; young high school graduates, in their prime of life, who gave their life."

Fulgum said he thinks of it as a way "to memorialize their names permanently for posterity." Keeping the stories of these fallen soldiers alive is the primary purpose behind the project, he said.

One such story was shared with The Examiner by Russell's brother, Mike. He recounted Brian's first deployment to Vietnam.

"Him and his squad got off a helicopter and were immediately ambushed...Brian was severely wounded; he had a hole in his chest



from the explosion."

Brian survived by pretending to be dead, "laying on the ground with his eyes wide open." The rest of his squad were killed by bayonet, but Brian was spared by his ingenuity. He feigned death while "they (the guerrilla soldiers) took off his Hendrick Hudson High School ring." They even opened his mouth to see if he had gold teeth.

He was medivacked to Japan shortly after, seriously wounded, but alive. After returning to the U.S. and recuperating, he was transferred to Fort Worth, Texas, where he struggled with infections before receiving orders to return to Vietnam, orders that Mike later discovered violated numerous regulations. Mike tried to persuade him not to go, but Brian believed that staying behind would jeopardize his dreams of becoming a state trooper. So he went back to Vietnam, where he was killed.

Hendrick Hudson is part of a small, working-class community and the stories of



Hendrick Hudson High School alums Guy Van Benschoten and Bruce Fulgum. They are fundraising to install benches to memorialize five graduates of the school that were killed during the Vietnam War.

these fallen soldiers reflect that.

"The blue-collar kids. Those are the ones who fight the wars and die," said Mike Russell, who served in the Navy Honor Guard. "As the Creedence Clearwater Revival (song) says, 'I'm no senator's son."

Brian earned a Purple Heart, but Mike notes that's not the whole story.

"I want people to know what kind of person Brian was," he said. "I want people to know how heroic my brother was."

One of Brian's high school friends even named his son after Brian.

Mike said "nothing could please me more" than having the benches installed. Memorializing his brother and others will preserve their story.

"And it's a hell of a story."

Anyone interested in donating to the project can make their check payable to the William J. Boyle American Legion Post and send to P.O. Box 726, Verplanck, N.Y. 10586. Please include Memorial Bench Project in the memo.

### Conveying the Veteran's Experience Through the Power of Film

By Martin Wilbur

Before local residents take off for the long Memorial Day weekend, Victor Massick is hoping community members will stop by the Hendrick Hudson Free Library in Montrose on Thursday for what he believes is a film that Americans should experience.

For several years, Messick has scheduled periodic multiweek film screenings with a particular theme at the Hendrick Hudson Free Library in Montrose.

His latest program, scheduled for two showings, one in the afternoon along with an evening screening, offers a timely and impactful story.

Massick has selected the 2009 historical television drama "Taking Chance," starring Kevin Bacon. It's based on the real story of U.S. Marine Lt. Col. Michael Strobl as he accompanies the remains of Lance Corporal Chance Phelps, who was killed near Baghdad during the Iraq War, on his return home to the states and what he experiences along the way.

"I think it's an ideal forum for the library," said Massick.



Victor Massick, left, and Marine veteran and teacher Nick Neuner will present a pre-Memorial Day weekend program this Thursday at the Hendrick Hudson Free Library with the screening of "Taking Chance" starring Kevin Bacon.

"Libraries are available and are an important outreach for our communities, and I thought that this might be an ideal forum to offer a movie that I think has some messages that can resonate."

As part of the program, Massick has invited Nick Neuner, a special education teacher at Hendrick Hudson High School, who served four years of active duty overseas in the Marines, including part of that time in Afghanistan, and several more years in the reserves. Neuner will speak of

his experiences following the screenings.

Massick hopes that between the movie and the post-screening forum, he's able to initiate a conversation between veterans and perhaps community members who have never served in the military or who might not even know anyone who has.

"Sometimes people, when you explain the situation or one's experiences or your experiences, they might get it," he explained. "They may not fully understand it but they get some aspect of it. Others less so. I think that's one of the reasons why I want to show this movie. It's to provide an opportunity for the public at large, the community at large, whether it's the military community or the civilian community, high school students, older generations and everything in between."

Massick, who taught for 30 years at Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES, said when he met Neuner in their education circles, he knew he wanted him to be the guest speaker for the program.

Neuner said being a "behind-the-scenes" person makes talking

to even modest-sized groups something that doesn't come naturally to him. But he found the opportunity intriguing.

"When I was talking to Vic (recently) about everything I experienced coming home, it kind of seems like it did make sense," Neuner said. "It's less about me presenting about me and it's more about the idea of what we need to be moving forward with veterans and this idea of how do you help people reacclimate, how do you help them kind of move forward past these experiences."

He was in combat in Afghanistan but it was getting back into civilian life that may have been the most challenging portion of his service. Upon his return, Neuner went to college, graduating from Pace and becoming an educator. But because his experiences were so different compared to nearly all of his peers, there is always the feeling that you don't quite fit in.

When he came home, Neuner said he felt guilt for having been away from his family while also feeling similarly because others are still serving

Even today, Neuner said he doesn't quite feel as though he

fits in with his teacher, colleagues, although he has grown accustomed to minimizing those feelings.

"Even though I had two beautiful kids I really didn't have a drive to feel like I was doing anything," Neuner said. "You feel guilty on all ends. You feel guilty you're not really setting a good example; you feel guilty for leaving the young ones behind."

Although Massick initially wanted to follow in his father's footsteps of becoming an Army helicopter pilot, he learned that there are other ways that are just as valid to serve the community and society. For him it was the classroom.

"There are myriad ways to give back and if a film like this and others can convey that, then I think that's an important starting point and steppingstone," Massick said.

The afternoon screening of "Taking Chance" and discussion this Thursday will be from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. while the evening program is from 7 to 9 p.m. Both programs are free. The Hendrick Hudson Free Library is located at 185 Kings Ferry Rd. in Montrose.

### Letters to the Editor

### Is Underhill Farm Hiring Politicians Above

It's not just about Unicorn Contracting building megadevelopments, traffic or progress versus preservation arguments. It's much simpler. It's about fairness.

Unicorn hired influential former Yorktown supervisor Michael Grace (a candidate for lieutenant governor) and former state senator Terrence Murphy (a Republican regional director) whose politics have favored Unicorn's developments. If the Underhill Farms development plans were so good why the need to hire so much political muscle? Is having political clout and knowing how to use it at Town Hall a job requirement? What do you get when you hire politicians? After all, the currency of politics is access, favors and influence.

I feel sorry for the chances of any unlucky

developers who can't afford to hire former politicians who know the ropes. It's like a company hiring an outgoing congressman as a lobbyist after they passed legislation favorable to that business. It's wrong when it happens in Washington and it's equally wrong when it happens in Yorktown.

Yorktown (with the help of tax abatements and overlay redistricting) is being carved up into big development chunks. Has lobbying Town Hall on behalf of multimillion-dollar developers created a lucrative cottage industry for a select few professional politicians in between election cycles?

> Stephen Brown Yorktown

#### Critical Housing, Senior Center Among Benefits of Underhill Farm Plan

The Underhill Farm proposal at the former Soundview Preparatory School property continues to build excitement in Yorktown, and its advancement is important for our community.

A senior center has long been a dream for Yorktown. It will be an important amenity for our seniors, create interconnectivity for a growing segment of our community and enhance the quality of life in Yorktown. Our new senior center, to be built at Beaveridge Apartments, cannot move forward without the approval of the neighboring Underhill Farm project. Thirty spaces, essential and required parking, will be designated for the senior center as part of the proposed Underhill Farm plan.

Seniors will also have new housing

opportunities at Underhill Farm. Of the townhouses, condominiums and apartments, 118 units will be senior-friendly. Yorktown's seniors deserve quality housing opportunities within the community where they raised their families. Underhill Farm will create a wonderful environment for seniors, including open space, walking trails and walkability to downtown.

There's more to learn about Underhill Farm at www.underhillfarmsyorktown.com. I encourage my neighbors to keep themselves posted as the proposal advances through its environmental review process.

> **Tony Grasso Iennie Menton Grasso** Yorktown Heights

#### Republicans' Baby Formula Vote Shows Party Cares Only About Power

This week 192 Republican members of the House of Representatives voted against a Democratic-introduced bill to release emergency FDA funds to facilitate an emergency importation of baby formula. This baby formula is intended to meet the demand created by the national shortage caused by the sudden closing of the Abbott baby formula manufacturing plant in Michigan - due to widespread bacterial infection in the plant.

Fortunately, the bill passed thanks to the Democratic majority and 12 Republicans who had the good sense to vote for the bill. Why did 192 Republicans vote against the emergency measure? Because they didn't want to give Joe Biden an apparent victory in the court of public opinion. These are the same Republicans who hypocritically claim to care about the sanctity of life and oppose abortion. Apparently as soon as a fetus is out of the womb and becomes an infant, they don't care anymore whether it lives or dies.

The Republican Party doesn't seem to really care about life, only power. Typical.

> Nicholas Kuvach **Putnam Valley**

#### Lawsuit Fighting Yorktown's Overlay Zoning District Will Stunt Progress

This lawsuit is creating a huge hold on progress for our town. Let's just spend more of the taxpayers' dollars fighting a group of residents who have no vision for the future of our town.

I have been a resident of Yorktown for more than 25 years and I have seen many businesses close or move to another town. I have to say that it is not the town that is so much the deterrent for businesses or development it is more residents' opposition to growth and revitalization.

I believe in keeping my money in Yorktown, but how can that happen when we are so far behind other communities in available options for mixed development, retail shopping, dining, entertainment, a walkable downtown? I find myself

sometimes forced to shop in neighboring communities. Is that what Sullivan-Rothberg's vision is for Yorktown?

I love my town and its history but not the constant opposition to moving forward.

> Marianne Violante Yorktown Heights

#### Calendar Submissions

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

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#### **Guest Column**

### They Were All Heroes: A Firsthand Account of Surviving an Attack in Vietnam

By Jeff Ohlbaum

It started to rain heavily the night of June 19, 1969, at I Corp Thau Thien Province, 17 miles south of Hue and 40 miles from the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), Firebase Tomahawk.

Visibility was two feet at best. You learned in Vietnam that weather and stealth are potent combat components in warfare.

Charlie Battery, from the 2nd Battalion 138th Field Artillery, had a stellar reputation of inflicting heavy losses on the North Vietnamese as they crossed the DMZ along the Ho Chi Minh Trail into South Vietnam. Charlie Battery was a well-trained National Guard unit from Bardstown, Ky. They had trained together stateside for years and socialized with each other at home. I was infused into their unit to help them.

The 155 howitzers at Firebase Tomahawk, 14,500 meters max range, had a primary target: Ruong Ruong Valley, the lower A Shau Valley, a stronghold for the North Vietnamese.

Mountains and valleys covered by an umbrella of trees in full foliage created a perfect landscape to harbor the hardcore among the enemy. They knew the terrain and fought best in darkness. Their mode of transport for weapons were usually elephants; you cannot carry mortars and rocket launchers. Sadly, our 155s had to target the transporter as well as the enemy.

Firebase Tomahawk was in a good location for the artillery pieces to create havoc for the enemy, but not viewed too favorably by the soldiers holding and defending it.

The terrain and sloping hills outside our 360-degree perimeter would be difficult to defend. We later found out our firebase had been defoliated with Agent Orange, which

was common in Vietnam.

In addition to the artillery battery, we had an 18-man platoon from Charlie Company 2nd Battalion, 501st Infantry, 101st Airborne Division sharing perimeter support with us. Our bunkers were heavily sandbagged with mounted M-50 and M-60 machine guns facing outside the perimeter and manned every night with two people inside.

After midnight on June 20, it was still raining hard. I was on perimeter duty that night facing north. The radio telephone rang. We were alerted the artillery firebases to the north and south were under mortar attack. We knew the drill; our base was put on full alert. Those who were off-shift were awakened. The M-16s were loaded, never to the max to prevent jamming, usually 19 rounds.

The playbook was now in enemy hands, no full moon, no visibility, our artillery support bases that had pre-fired grid coordinates to drop artillery rounds outside our perimeter to protect us were under mortar attack. S---, we must be next!

There were incoming mortars at 1:30 a.m. The noise is deafening and the dirt beneath me vibrates. It was too dark to see the enemy flash tubes. I picked up the phone to get info but the phone is dead. A mortar or rocket may have cut the phone wire or was the Fire Direction Center Command Post hit? Our M-50s and M-60s go hot. We can only see the tracers. It is pitch black outside.

At 1:55 a.m., our firebase lights up, a self-illuminating round fired by one of our artillery guns. That means the enemy has breached our perimeter under their own mortar fire and are in our backyard, Firebase Tomahawk. Since they did not penetrate the perimeter from the north side, they were behind us! We were unable to turn around



Jeff Ohlbaum in Vietnam in 1969.

based on our posture in the narrow bunker post and all weapons were hot facing north.

We ignited the pre-set claymores outside our perimeter. There's another deafening sound with metal and debris flying toward us. The enemy had rotated the claymores to fire back at us.

We also had Foo Gas, a mixture of explosives and napalm in 50-gallon drums outside the perimeter as a layer of protection, which was detonated to disperse an explosive fireball over a large area.

We then heard large explosions on the firebase, not mortars. It was satchel charges and hand-held rocket-propelled grenades used by the North Vietnamese to destroy the six deployed artillery guns and anyone around it. It must have been a sapper company specifically trained to destroy and kill with immediacy. For them it is an honor to die in combat.

A flare gun fired a colored round into the air at about 3 a.m. The enemy was retreating. Spooky, aka Puff the Magic Dragon (an AC-47), arrived overhead firing their four Gatling guns, each with multiple barrels as the enemy withdrew. It was immense firepower. Huge trees were destroyed and large rock formations turned into pebbles.

The enemy had nowhere to hide.

The medivacs supported by gunships landed to remove the injured and dead. The less seriously wounded were flown to Phu Bai and the more serious to Da Nang; those with severe burns were airlifted from Da Nang to a naval hospital ship in the South China Sea. The damage and human toll were indescribable.

We later find out through one surviving prisoner that 150 North Vietnamese sappers had amassed outside our perimeter, 75 of them wearing only a loin cloth with satchel charges strapped to their bodies and some with two cigarette filters taped to their chest. (If gas is used it works like a gas mask when inserted into the nostrils.) They were high on drugs as they snaked through the concertina wire to avoid the trip flares. The remaining 75 sappers outside the perimeter waited for a specific-colored flare, which would have doubled the enemy force. They determined enough damage had occurred. We avoided being potentially overrun.

Three of the six howitzers were destroyed, one was disabled, the ammunition storage area eliminated, nine perimeter bunkers were destroyed, the makeshift mess hall, maintenance and ammo carriers gone. Tomahawk was in shambles and everyone was dazed seeking to locate and help their fellow brother.

Nine artillerymen were killed. The 101st Airborne lost four men. Over 50 were wounded. They were young, fearless and served with honor. They had wives, kids, girlfriends, parents and grandparents.

Twenty-three of the sapper bodies were counted

The southern and western perimeter bunker positions had been penetrated by the enemy. Fate had me facing north that night.

Those who proudly served were all heroes at Firebase Tomahawk, but some are not here to tell their story. This Memorial Day, 53 years later, I am proud to be their spokesperson.

After his military service, Jeff Ohlbaum has worked in the publishing industry for over 50 years and is currently an advertising representative with Examiner Media.

### Letter to the Editor

### Rep. Jones Will Be Missed By His Westchester Constituents

I was disappointed to learn that Congressman Mondaire Jones will no longer represent Greenburgh in the United States Congress. Thanks to redistricting, the congressman has decided to run for a seat in a new district in New York City.

Congressman Jones was an exceptional representative who worked hard for our district. Besides fighting for progressive values, the congressman helped the Town of Greenburgh receive a \$1 million grant from the federal government to build a new sidewalk on Dobbs Ferry Road, an initiative that will make walking safer for pedestrians and residents who don't have cars. We asked the congressman for help and he not only tried, but he succeeded in helping our community.

During the Afghanistan crisis last year, the congressman's office did an amazing job helping a refugee I was trying to help escape the Taliban. Unlike many elected officials who go through the motions making you think they are helping, the congressman did much more. The

congressman's office was in constant contact with a military liaison who stayed in touch with the woman trying to escape until she was on the plane in Kabul. Thanks to Congressman Jones' staff a second chance in life was given to the cousin of an Ossining resident who was escaping the Taliban.

Congressman Jones has fought hard for infrastructure funding, which is helping local governments. He has fought hard for progressive initiatives from healthcare reforms, helping the hungry and fighting to change Washington, bringing people together.

I hope that Congressman Jones is successful in winning election to Congress in a new district. I will be happy to spread the word to New York City residents who might not be familiar with what an excellent public servant the congressman is.

Paul Feiner Greenburgh Town Supervisor

### Westchester County Offers Early Bird Discount for Baseball Camp

Westchester County Parks is offering an out-of-the-park deal for HEAT Baseball Camp, which will be held at V.E. Macy Park in Ardsley this summer. Those who register now through May 30 will receive the early bird registration discount and an additional 10 percent discount if booking multiple weeks.

"Summer is right around the corner and now is the time to sign up for the HEAT Baseball Camp," said Kathy O'Connor, commissioner of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation. "This camp provides your child with the opportunity to develop their skills in a fun, safe and cooperative learning environment."

HEAT Baseball Camp will cover all areas of the game including fielding, pitching, hitting, base running, strength and conditioning, game situations and baseball IQ. Camp will run from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for ages 8 to 15.

Four week-long sessions will be held in July: July 5–8; July 11–15; July 18–22; and July 25–29.

The early bird registration fee is \$275 per camper per session. Starting May 31, the registration fee increases to \$300 per camper per session.

For more information, call 914-231-4673 or visit https://parks.westchestergov.com/children-camps/baseball-camp.

### **Obituaries**

#### Carl Schliman

Carl John Schliman died on May 10 at Westchester Medical Center where he'd been a patient for four weeks.

He had put a lot of mileage on that 86-year-old body and had multiple medical challenges. The respirator was causing him a lot of discomfort and his wife, Carol, knew that Carl did not want to live like that, so on May 9 a Catholic priest administered Last Rites and the breathing tube was withdrawn.

Carl's color improved, his breathing stabilized and his blood-oxygen level increased. On Tuesday, he looked more comfortable than he had in weeks and it would not have been a big surprise if he'd awoken on Wednesday morning looking for breakfast. But shortly before midnight he breathed his last.

Carl was born on Feb. 11, 1936, in the home of his parents, John and Constance (Iarriccio), in Yonkers, and was baptized at St. Mary's Church, where he would later serve as an altar boy. He had a brother, Mathew, and twin sisters Kathy and Rose Ann, who preceded him in death. He attended Longfellow Junior High School, and after graduation enlisted in the U.S. Army, doing his bit to maintain the peace in Europe by serving as a military policeman in Germany.

After completing his military service, Carl returned to Yonkers and learned how to repair slate roofs, a job that demands not only a strong back but skilled hands. His parents celebrated his return with a welcome home party featuring traditional Assyrian music, dancing and food. His dad made sure that the twins invited one of their classmates, Carol Ann Manfredi. Carol was impressed with Carl's maturity.

"He was a man, not a boy, maybe because of his time in the service," she said.

She also noticed that he was a pretty good dancer. Carol appreciated dancing, often using the lunch break from her job in midtown Manhattan to sneak into a rehearsal for one of the Broadway productions. After meeting Carol, Carl had eyes for no other woman. They were married on Oct. 5, 1958, in St. Joseph's Church and moved into a small apartment on Park Hill.

After Barbara and Michael were born, Carl left the roofing business to join the meat cutters union and work for A&P supermarkets. In those days, a butcher would put a whole side of beef on his shoulder, carry it into the freezer and spend the day breaking it down. Again, Carl relied on his strong back and skilled hands.

He and Carol kept the romance alive by going out dancing every other Saturday night at the Polish Community Center where they met Pete, who needed a bartender on the weekends. His first night at Pete's place, Carl looked down the bar and told the patrons, "You guys, get outta here. Go home. Get cleaned up, shower,

shave and come back with your wives." Pete was a wreck with his bar empty, but it didn't take long for Carl to fill the joint with couples dancing to the jukebox.

It was the same at A&P. Housewives would come in with their lists, stop at the meat counter to leave their order with Carl and pick everything up, neatly bagged, when the rest of the shopping was done. He was quick with a tip for preparation. He treated everyone like family and ran the busiest meat department in the region.

Carl and Carol had moved into a larger apartment once they had the kids and dreamed of having their own house. On a sunny Sunday afternoon in April 1970, the six-family house in which they lived caught fire and they returned home that day to find everything they owned ruined. The next day Carl went to work and Carol went looking. She found a small house on a large lot in a quiet cul-de-sac in Thornwood. After inspecting the house, Carol found Carl out in the backyard sitting under an apple tree. He looked up and said, "This is it."

When they closed the deal in June, there wasn't enough left over to go out for dinner, so "We went home, boiled some macaroni, buttered it and toasted ourselves with a glass of beer." The fire had taken everything. For the first year the kids had to sleep on Red Cross cots. The kitchen was furnished piece by piece with garage sale purchases. It took almost a year to get the smoke out of the four bureaus which hadn't burned. They just kept working together, building their future.

When not busy at work, Carl could be found on the golf course or out on Long Island Sound in a boat with his dear friend Paul, or sitting around the poker table on Friday night with a bunch of his buddies. He and Carol joined a small group locally to practice square dancing and round dancing. They began traveling a bit, to dance weekends in Connecticut, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas and Oklahoma.

Carl's personality and enthusiasm won lifelong friends wherever they went. "Hey! Here's New York" was the common greeting. At the annual meeting of the Square and Round Dance Federation at Perdue University, Carl and Carol were asked to perform a demonstration for the entire assembly, a rare honor for an amateur couple. They danced the rumba to "And I Love You So." Carol said that they were a little nervous at first but "I took his hand and it was just me, Carl and the music" in graceful harmony. An athlete would call it being "in the zone," and they were. It was pretty much how they did everything - together in love.

Carl is survived by Carol; their son, Michael, who lives next door with his wife, Lisa, and their daughters, Katie and Bella; and their daughter Barbara, who resides in Yorktown with husband Walter and their children, Frankie and Maryann.

#### Joseph Link

Joseph Peter Link received his superhero cape after a lengthy battle with cancer on May 6. Joe passed peacefully, surrounded by loved ones. Throughout his battle, Joe showed amazing strength and determination as he fought courageously to the end.

Joseph was born to Thomas and Josephine (Corso) Link on Aug. 2, 1968, in Pleasantville. He graduated Pleasantville High School in 1986 and Keystone Junior College in 1989.

Joseph's greatest love was raising his two sons, Jakob and Gage. In the last two years of Joe's battle, it meant the world to him to watch his sons start their own lives as young men.

Joe's passion for children was exemplified in his work as a teacher's aide in a special education class for the Hendrick Hudson School District. He especially loved his role as summer camp director for the Town of Cortlandt Recreation Department.

Joseph also spent many years working at Emma's Ale House in White Plains. Emma's was Joe's second family. Joe formed a special bond with his co-workers and customers, all having shown amazing support and love for Joe during the most challenging years. Our family is grateful for the family that Joe so adored at Emma's.

We thank the many doctors, nurses and staff that we met along the way, who always treated Joe with great respect, dignity and integrity, especially his team of physical therapists at Yorktown Rehabilitation & Nursing Center and those at NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital. Joe will forever be known as the patient who never gave up, he always saw the positive and started each day with a desire to survive. He had the blood, spirit and soul of a true superhero. He will always be our superhero!

Joseph is survived by his two sons, Jakob and Gage Link; his loving parents, Thomas and Josephine Link, of South Kingstown, R.I.; his sisters, Kathy Brennan and husband Thomas of Buchanan and Debbie Parish and husband John of Golden, Colo.; his nieces and nephews, Tommy and Emily Brennan, Ryan Brennan, Kevin Brennan, Kelly Brennan and Emily Parish; and great-nephew Tommy Brennan

Joseph's family held a memorial service on May 20 at Beecher Flooks Funeral Home in Pleasantville. Burial took place on May 21 at Holy Mount Cemetery in Eastchester.

#### Angela Carozza

Angela Carrozza, 65, passed away peacefully on May 15 after a long, courageous battle with cancer.

She is survived by her son, Joseph L. Carrozza, of Mount Kisco and beloved cousins who were always by her side through many hardships, always offering their support.

Angela was an extremely talented cook and mother and had a long and successful career at Donnas Hair Design where her loyal clientele always enjoyed her professionalism and friendship. She loved to make people look good and feel good.

Angela was a devoted practitioner of the Catholic faith. Through her warmth, kindness and delicious food, she made everyone feel like family.

Visitation was at Beecher Flooks Funeral Home, Inc. in Pleasantville on May 18. The funeral was held on May 19 at Holy Innocents Church followed by burial at All Souls Cemetery in Pleasantville.

### Yorktown Amends Rules to Limit Solar Arrays

Yorktown has adopted new solar power generation rules to limit solar panel arrays.

The changes to the town's rules include requirements on minimum property sizes, analyses of effects on woodlands and decommissioning plans for large arrays, among other changes.

"We've had quite a robust series of public hearings and discussions on this, and I think our product really struck the balance that we all sought," said Supervisor Matt Slater.

The minimum-property-size rules include requiring at least two acres of land for any system in residential districts, which must also be placed on side or rear yards. Large-scale energy systems must have a minimum lot size of five acres.

The new rules also require annual inspections of approved landscaping that screens the installations. For large-

scale solar energy systems proposed to be installed on protected woodlands, the applicant must provide an in-depth analysis of the functions of the woodlands.

"The Town Board worked hard to find a balance in the solar law that protects our trees while giving us the opportunity to create more solar energy. I am very proud of the work that we did as a team," said Councilman Ed Lachterman.

All applications for a solar farm must be accompanied by a decommissioning plan to be implemented upon cessation of activity, or in conjunction with removal of the facility, prior to issuance of a building permit. The Planning Board will require the applicant to file a decommissioning bond prior to the issuance of any permits in an amount sufficient to cover the cost of decommissioning.

# "SHE SAVED MY LIFE!"

White Plains resident Dawn G. had been experiencing the painful side effects of Peripheral Neuropathy, "my feet and legs were extremely painful and my doctor told me there was nothing they could do. That I would have to take Gabapentin for the rest of my life." Then she met Westchester's very own Acupuncturist Taisha Gonzalez, L.Ac.

Peripheral Neuropathy is the pain, discomfort and numbness caused by nerve damage of the peripheral nervous system. Dawn explained that daily tasks like opening doors and using the bathroom were overwhelmingly painful. "How can you live for the next 30 years when you don't even want to get out of bed to do simple things?"

She was experiencing the burning, numbness, tingling and sharp pains that those suffering with neuropathy often describe. "The way that I would describe it, it's equivalent to walking on glass. Dawn hadn't worn socks in five years and was wearing shoes two sizes too big so that nothing would 'touch' her feet.

#### Unfortunately Dawn's story is all too familiar for the over 3 million people in the U.S. suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy.

If you have the misfortune of facing the same disheartening prognosis you're not sleeping at night because of the burning in your feet. You have difficulty walking, shopping or doing any activity for more than 30 minutes because of the pain. You're struggling with balance and living in fear that you might fall. Your doctor told you to 'just live with the pain' and you're taking medications that aren't working or have uncomfortable side effects.

Fortunately, four months ago Dawn read an article about the local Licensed Acupuncturist Taisha Gonzalez, and the work she was doing to treat those suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy, without invasive surgeries or medications.

Taisha Gonzalez, L.Ac., founder of Signature Acupuncture Studio in downtown White Plains, NY is using the time tested science of Acupuncture and a technology originally developed by NASA that assists in increasing blood flow and expediting recovery and healing to treat this debilitating disease.

"Now when I go to bed at night I don't have those shooting pains. I don't have that burning sensation. I don't have pain coming up my legs," Dawn enthusiastically describes life after receiving Taisha Gonzalez's treatments.

"I can wear socks and shoes!"

Dawn and her sister now operate a successful dog walking business, sometimes covering up to 5 miles a day.

#### "It's life altering. As far as I'm concerned Acupuncturist Taisha saved my life!"

Acupuncturist Taisha Gonzalez L.Ac., has been helping the senior community for over 20 years. She now provides the most cutting edge and innovative integrative medicine. Specializing in chronic pain cases, specifically those that have been deemed 'hopeless' or 'untreatable' she consistently generates unparalleled results.

What was once a missing link in senior healthcare is now accessible to the residents of Westchester County.

If you've missed too many nature walks because of pain or you've passed on going to family events because you're afraid of falling, it's time to call Acupuncturist Taisha Gonzalez and the staff at Signature Acupuncture Studio.

### It's time you let your golden years BE GOLDEN!

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### High School Senior's Project Helps Promote Inclusivity in New Castle

By Martin Wilbur

It's understandable why Horace Greeley High School senior Alexandra McCarthy cares so much about inclusion. For that matter, so does her entire family.

McCarthy's older brother, Brady, has Down syndrome, but that didn't stop him from becoming the school's first student with the genetic disorder to graduate with a Regents diploma.

She credits the acceptance Brady and her family received as perhaps the biggest reason why.

"My firsthand perception is from my brother because we moved here to Chappaqua because inclusion is so important, especially in the schools, and so we know just to be in a place where they can be seen and can interact (with others) is so important," said McCarthy, a member of the ACCESS Student Club, which promotes the inclusion of people with disabilities in the school and the community.

Last Saturday, as part of her Greeley Senior Experience Project, McCarthy organized an event called Celebrate Inclusion located near the new inclusive playground behind New Caste Town Hall and at the town's basketball court.

With the assistance of the Chappaqua PTA and Special Education PTA and the town's Every Person is Connected (EPIC) Committee, there was an afternoon of basketball with Greeley's unified basketball team, which features students of all abilities playing together, a chance to create a superhero mask and to meet Brady.

He and his sister recently completed publishing a children's book, "SuperBrady: A Story of Inclusion," that they signed and sold, with a portion of the proceeds going to the ACCESS Club. Brady contributed the illustrations while Alex wrote the book.

Their mother, Jackie McCarthy, said the acceptance of the schools and the community has made a significant positive difference for Brady. In fact, one of Brady's elementary school teachers refers to him with her current students, and he has become an inspiration to not only differently-abled children but to many others in the community as well.

As a result, many of Brady's classmates treated him as just another student they went to school with, she said.

"That's why we wanted to give Brady's experience to as many other kids and adults as we can



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Alexandra McCarthy, with her brother, Brady, and the book they co-created to encourage inclusivity of differently-abled people.

because that's not the experience for a lot of students out there with disabilities," Jackie McCarthy said.

Ryan Spillane, who coaches the unified basketball team, said commingling students of different abilities celebrates the spirit of inclusion and all students who are involved are helped by the experience. The program, which was created in 2019, may be expanded to include other sports and activities, Spillane said.

He credited Geoff Curtis, the district's director of physical education, health and athletics, for encouraging and supporting development of the team.

"I think everyone can kind of benefit from it," he said. "I've been working and coaching sports for probably around 15 years and this is probably the best display of sportsmanship that I've ever been around in sports, and it's been one of the most rewarding programs for me personally."

It was within the past eight years that the Town of New Castle created the EPIC Committee, which has demonstrated that the entire community values inclusion of all of its residents along with the schools, said town Supervisor Lisa Katz.

Later the EPIC Ambassadors Program was created which actively involved some of the youngsters. The town also plans to start a jobs program at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center, and the members of the Ambassador Program will be involved with that as well, Katz said.

"We think that everyone should be supported and included to the extent that they can, and we really wanted to support that, and then when the EPIC Ambassadors Program was formed, that was able to get kids involved, so that they can really start to experience everything that other abled kids can," Katz said



### What's Dementia and What's Not

Presented by Heather McKay, PhD, OT/L. Heather is an Occupational Therapist, Dementia Care Specialist, and international Trainer/Speaker on topics related to dementia care and caregiver education.

Have you ever walked into a room, forgotten what you came there for, and feared the worst: "Is this dementia?" If you're questioning your memory or interested in maintaining your brain health, you're not alone! We're all aging and have opportunities to care for our brains at every stage of life. Detecting a cognitive problem early could lead to a quick resolution, restore brainpower, or maintain brain function longer—all for the sake of living life to the fullest through old age.

After this program, you'll be able to:

- Distinguish between normal forgetfulness and a memory/thinking problem that does warrant alerting the doctor during your routine brain checkup.
- Describe other conditions that mimic dementia and effective treatment approaches for each.
- Identify three key essential components of a brain health program.
- Explain the top 10 best brain exercises and strategies to grade up or down for your just right challenge.

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### Pleasantville Celebrates a Good Time



It may have been a bit warm last Saturday but no one seemed to be complaining much because it was the return of what had been the annual Pleasantville Day celebration. There was plenty to eat, drink and do for several hours on Memorial Plaza, including a very inviting dunk tank. There was music, vendors and an overall good time for anyone who attended.

















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### Local Memorial Day Events

#### Friday, May 27

- Westchester County Memorial Day Service. Lasdon Park & Arboretum, Katonah, 12 p.m. The ceremony will also be streamed live on Facebook at www.facebook.com/westchestergov.
- Kensico Cemetery Remembrance Service. Soldiers from Westchester County who died in Iraq or Afghanistan will be honored as part of the 15th annual Veterans' Remembrance Service at 2:30 p.m. at Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla. The ceremony will take place adjacent to the administration building at the Veterans Memorial monument dedicated to all who have served in the nation's military.

#### Sunday, May 29

VFW Post 1374 & Auxiliary, Carmel and American Legion Post 270. Sunday, May 29, ceremony at 9:30 a.m. at monument on Terryhill Road in Kent. Ceremony at Post Home, 32 Gleneida Ave. in Carmel



at 11 a.m. Refreshments to follow.

#### Monday, May 30

American Legion Post 1038
 Valhalla Memorial Day Parade.
 Parade steps off at 9:30 a.m. on
 Westlake Drive behind Valhalla

Methodist Church and proceeds south on Columbus Avenue. A ceremony will follow at the Village Green Gazebo at 10 a.m.

 Pleasantville Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony. Line up begins on Academy Street at 9:45 a.m. with a short ceremony at 10 a.m. The parade then proceeds down Bedford Road with an observance ceremony in Memorial Plaza.

- Chappaqua Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade. A monument ceremony at Victory Corners, King Street and Bedford Road, at 10:30 a.m. followed by the parade stepping off at 11 a.m. at Ridgewood Terrace. A ceremony at Memorial Plaza at the Chappaqua train station at 11:30 a.m.
- Mount Kisco Memorial Day Ceremony. Near monuments at 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco at 11 a.m. Yorktown Memorial Day Parade. Stepsoffnear Town Hall, 363 Underhill Ave. in Yorktown Heights at 11 a.m.
- VFW Post 391, Putnam Valley. There will be three short parades with ceremonies on Monday, May 30. Putnam Valley Town Hall, 265 Oscawana Lake Rd., 11 a.m. Post Home, 154 Oscawana Lake Rd., Putnam Valley, 11:45 a.m.

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RECYCLING COLLECTIONS:
Monday collections will be picked up on
Tuesday, May 31st

Tuesday collections will be picked up on Wednesday, June 1st

All other collections will remain the same

#### KITCHEN TRASH COLLECTIONS

#### <u>Monday</u>

Collections will be picked up on: **Tuesday, May 31st** 

#### **Tuesday**

Collections will be picked up on: Wednesday, June 1st All other collections will remain the same

REMINDER: Recyclables in Plastic Bags will not be collected!



#### E-WASTE/TEXTILE/TIRE DROP OFF DAY

FRIDAY, JULY 8th

(Weather Permitting) 7:30AM - 2:30PM

Bring your obsolete computer, T.V., laptop, VCR, keyboard, cell phone, etc. Drop off bags filled with unwanted clothing, shoes, rags, towels, bed sheets, blankets, etc.

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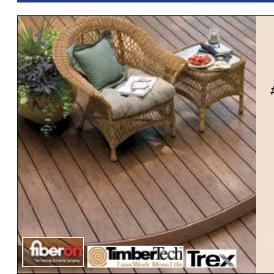
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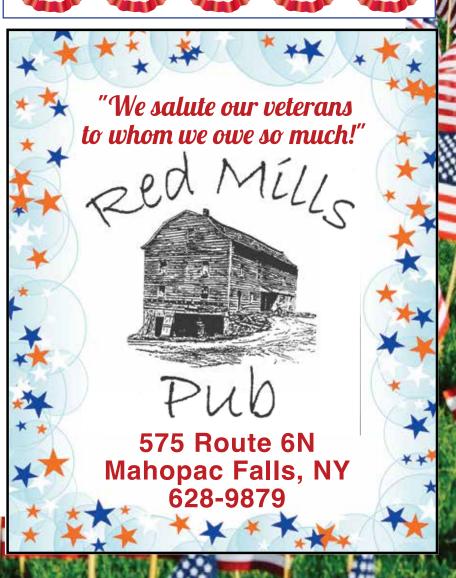
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Flags can be ordered at the Patterson Library. Visit: pattersonrotary.org for information.















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### **Encouraging High School Students to Advocate for Those in Need**

By Jonathan Notis

In 2015, Sue Fuirst and Julie Gerstein formed Spiral Giving, a charitable and educational program that teaches high school students about philanthropy.

Fuirst and Gerstein established Spiral Giving programs in four Westchester high schools – Byram Hills High School in Armonk, Edgemont High School in Scarsdale, Horace Greeley High School in Chappaqua and Mamaroneck High School. (Edgemont High School did not run their program this year.)

Both women, involved members of their community, created a curriculum and reached out to principals and guidance counselors to launch Spiral Giving.

"We want teens to develop a lifelong practice of philanthropic thinking," said Fuirst, who along with Gerstein is helping students to recognize that they can make a meaningful difference when they support those in need.

Fuirst and Gerstein, work directly with students so they can develop an understanding of Westchester's nonprofit community.

Students participating in Spiral Giving are encouraged to identify organizations within Westchester that would benefit from grants. They learn to request and evaluate grant proposals and to fund minigrants based on the submitted proposals. Through these efforts, Fuirst and Gerstein are advocating for students and for those in need within Westchester.

Since Fuirst and Gerstein launched Spiral Giving, the charitable foundation has awarded at least 38 grants, donating more than \$35,000 to Westchester-based nonprofit organizations.

"We want our students to know that by giving back locally they have a big effect, and these teens are capable of doing so much," Gerstein said

In addition to requesting and evaluating grant proposals, students are responsible for helping to fund the grants, hosting bake sales, getting the word out about Spiral Giving's objectives and partnering with businesses that donate a portion of sales to charities.

Aidan Aldea-Lustig, a leader in Byram Hills' chapter of Spiral Giving, said his chapter addressed how many people in Westchester are food insecure, homeless or in need of assistance in some other way.

"We discussed how to raise money for those that need help," Aldea-Lustig said. "Through bake sales, fundraisers and donations sought out outside of a grocery store, we learned about how to achieve our goal of raising money for the grant-awarding process."

Fuirst and Gerstein believe that Spiral Giving is different from other groups because it motivates students to dive deeper into causes that interest them. Students involved in Spiral Giving learn to advocate for issues that they find meaningful.

"I feel that the biggest contribution that I made was spreading information about the need in our area," Aldea-Lustig said.

"We want to enable teens to see and recognize the community that doesn't have access to many resources," Fuirst said.

Charlotte Brodbeck, another Byram Hills Spiral Giving chapter leader, said that she has learned "to advocate for those in need within our community."

"Not only have I been able to experience what youth philanthropy means, but I have also grasped an understanding of the grant application process," she said.

Brodbeck is also proud that she has developed skills that will help her to be an advocate in a wide array of situations. Fuirst and Gerstein taught students about elevator pitches and the importance of spreading awareness about causes



The creators of Spiral Giving, a program that familiarizes students with philanthropic endeavors, hope to expand the program county-wide next school year after starting off with four high schools in 2015.

that are important to them.

Fuirst and Gerstein, who have contributed to multiple nonprofits throughout Westchester County, including the Open Door Foundation, The Pleasantville Cottage School and Impact100, are hoping to expand the reach of Spiral Giving next September by creating a centralized program within the county. Rather than having Spiral Giving chapters in a few school districts, they hope to encourage students throughout Westchester

to apply, participate and learn to advocate for those in need.

"We're excited to expand the program and recruit students from all over Westchester," Fuirst said. "There are many local nonprofits and some communities have one or two they feel connected to. It will be great to see how the students share ideas and discuss priorities."

For more information about Spiral Giving, including how to apply or to donate to future grants, visit www.spiralgiving.org.





### Board of Legislators Approves Food Allergy Safety Training for Restaurants

Food allergies are a major health concern for many Westchester families and people across the nation, especially when it comes to choosing where or whether to dine out.

Every three minutes, a food allergy reaction sends someone in the United States to the emergency room, and about 1 in 11 Westchester residents live with food allergies.

A measure unanimously passed Monday night by the Board of Legislators will give Westchester residents with food allergies a greater sense of security when deciding to eat at county restaurants.

The Food Allergy Restaurant Safety bill will ensure that restaurants have personnel on site who have been trained in food allergy safety, including designated food safety officers during operating hours.

The bill also will require the posting of

signs certifying that employees have the training, and listing the nine major food allergies, as well as symptoms of an allergic reaction and actions to take in cases of a reaction.

Under the bill, the county Health Department will designate one or more acceptable online food allergy training programs - a designation which may include programs that many Westchester restaurants are already using to train employees.

Legislator Vedat Gashi (D-Yorktown), the bill's chief sponsor, said the dangers of food allergies are all too real for many Westchester residents. He said it was heartening to hear that so many local restaurants already take the issue seriously and are using available programs to train their employees.

By codifying the training into law, the health and safety of patrons is protected. It would also help local restaurants by encouraging people with allergy concerns to feel safe and welcome.

"This is not a law that I brought to the community, but one the community brought to me and I want to thank them for that,' Gashi said. "It is a wonderful example of how government can and should work with businesses, with families in the community and across political lines to get things

Legislation co-sponsor and Minority Leader Margaret Cunzio Pleasant), said that as someone who suffers from a food allergy, she is aware of how reluctant and frightened, people can be about going out to eat, especially parents whose children have food allergies.

"Hopefully, this law can give them greater peace of mind," Cunzio said. "In order to assist local businesses with the training, certified online courses will make it easier for food establishments to educate their employees on food allergies."

### Free Naloxone Training Available in Thornwood on June 6

Peter Harckham State Sen. (D-Lewisboro) and Westchester County Legislator Margaret Cunzio (C-Mount Pleasant) will host a free community naloxone training in partnership with the Thornwood Volunteer Fire Department from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Monday, June 6 to educate participants on how to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

During the training, participants will learn to identify the signs of an opioid overdose and learn how to administer naloxone, a nasal spray medication and opioid antagonist often known by its brand name, Narcan®. By the end of the training, all participants will leave with a twoyear naloxone certification and a free emergency kit with two doses of naloxone and other safety equipment.

To RSVP for the June 6 free naloxone training, visit: https:// tinyurl.com/2s3hhhew

If anyone has any questions about the training, call 914-241-4600 or e-mail harckham@nysenate.gov.



#### THERE'S A WORD FOR IT By Edward Goralski A vocabulary-building quiz

Words of the Day. A number of websites feature a "Word of the Day." This week the guiz is com-

	sued	than once; flowering again
8. disjecta membra (n.) A) reduction of investment	B) disjointed parts	C) space junk
7. vicinal (adj.) A) adjacent	B) pulsating with energy	C) conventional
6. deracinate (v.) A) to uproot	B) dispute a claim	C) send off course
5. saturnian (adj.) A) packed full	B) gloomy	C) prosperous
4. pulchritude (n.) A) recognition	B) physical beauty	C) change of fortune
3. remontant (adj.) A) far away	B) flowering again	C) relentless
2. aspire (v.) A) to analyze	B) inhale something	C) strive
1.concord (n.) A) agreement between groups	B) a secret meeting	C) swiftness
more than just a day.	f the day, you may want to use	e some or all of these selections fo

6. A. To uproot; to take something out of its environ-

5. C. Prosperous; happy; peaceful

d. B. Beauty; physical comeliness; allure

2. C. To want to have or achieve something; strive;

1. A. Agreement or harmony between people or

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## Supplemental Summons and Notice of Object of Action Supreme Court Of The State Of New York County Of Westchester Action to Foreclose a Mortgage

Index #: 61376/2020 Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, Not In Its Individual Capacity But Solely In Its Capacity As Owner Trustee For Cascade Funding RM4 Acquisitions Grantor Trust Plaintiff, vs Herbert Gould As Heir To The Estate Of Kathleen Gould, Deirdhre Regina Kavanagh Gould As Heir To The Estate Of Kathleen Gould, Shivaun Rowana Kavanagh Gould As Heir To The Estate Of Kathleen Gould, Gawain Greyland Kavanagh Gould As Heir To The Estate Of Kathleen Gould, Morgaana Rhianna Gould As Heir To The Estate Of Kathleen Gould, Unknown Heirs Of Kathleen Gould If Living, And If He/She Be Dead, Any And All Persons Unknown To Plaintiff, Claiming, Or Who May Claim To Have An Interest In, Or General Or Specific Lien Upon The Real Property Described In This Action; Such Unknown Persons Being Herein Generally Described And Intended To Be Included In Wife, Widow, Husband, Widower, Heirs At Law, Next Of Kin, Descendants, Executors, Administrators, Devisees, Legatees, Creditors, Trustees, Committees, Lienors, And Assignees Of Such Deceased, Any And All Persons Deriving Interest In Or Lien Upon, Or Title To Said Real Property By, Through Or Under Them, Or Either Of Them, And Their Respective Wives, Widows, Husbands, Widowers, Heirs At Law, Next Of Kin, Descendants, Executors, Administrators, Devisees, Legatees, Creditors, Trustees, Committees, Lienors, And Assigns, All Of Whom And Whose Names, Except As Stated, Are Unknown To Plaintiff, People Of The State Of New York, Board Of Managers Of The Grande At Battleground Condominium Association And Fairways At Battleground, United States Of America Acting Through The IRS John Doe (Those unknown tenants, occupants, persons or corporations or their heirs, distributees, executors, administrators, trustees, guardians, assignees, creditors or successors claiming an interest in the mortgaged premises.) Defendant(s). Mortgaged Premises: 94 Greenridge Avenue White Plains, NY 10605 To the Above named Defendant: You are hereby summoned to answer the Complaint in this action, and to serve a copy of your answer, or, if the Complaint is not served with this Supplemental Summons, to serve a notice of appearance, on the Plaintiff(s) attorney(s) within twenty days after the service of this Supplemental Summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within 30 days after the service is complete if this Supplemental Summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York). In case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the Complaint. The Attorney for Plaintiff has an office for business in the County of Erie. Trial to be held in the County of Westchester. The basis of the venue designated above is the location of the Mortgaged Premises. TO Unknown Heirs of Kathleen Gould, Defendant In this Action. The foregoing Supplemental Summons is served upon you by publication, pursuant to an order of HON. Charles D. Wood of the Supreme Court Of The State Of New York, dated the Nineteenth day of April, 2022 and filed with the Complaint in the Office of the Clerk of the County of Westchester, in the City of White Plains. The object of this action is to foreclose a mortgage upon the premises described below, dated December 17, 2007, executed by Kathleen Gould (who died on February 10, 2021, a resident of the county of Westchester, State of New York) to secure the sum of \$1,162,500.00. The Mortgage was recorded at Instrument Number 480580721 in the Office of the Westchester County Clerk on March 6, 2008. The mortgage was subsequently assigned by an assignment executed November 13, 2018 and recorded on November 14, 2018, in the Office of the Westchester County Clerk at Instrument Number 583183325. The mortgage was subsequently assigned by an assignment executed May 23, 2018 and recorded on December 3, 2018, in the Office of the Westchester County Clerk at Instrument Number 583373079. The mortgage was subsequently assigned by an assignment executed September 22, 2020 and recorded on December 22, 2020, in the Office of the Westchester County Clerk at Instrument Number 603573197; The property in question is described as follows: 94 Greenridge Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605 NOTICE YOU ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING YOUR HOME If you do not respond to this summons and complaint by serving a copy of the answer on the attorney for the mortgage company who filed this foreclosure proceeding against you and filing the answer with the court, a default judgment may be entered and you can lose your home. Speak to an attorney or go to the court where your case is pending for further information on how to answer the summons and protect your property. Sending a payment to your mortgage company will not stop this foreclosure action. YOU MUST RESPOND BY SERVING A COPY OF THE ANSWER ON THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PLAINTIFF (MORTGAGE COMPANY) AND FILING THE ANSWER WITH THE COURT. DATED: April 25, 2022 Gross Polowy, LLC Attorney(s) For Plaintiff(s) 1775 Wehrle Drive, Suite 100 Williamsville, NY 14221 The law firm of Gross Polowy, LLC and the attorneys whom it employs are debt collectors who are attempting to collect a debt. Any information obtained by them will be used for that purpose. 71885

### BluePath Walkathon Raised \$185G to Help Children With Autism

On Saturday, May 14, hundreds of walkers helped to better the world for children with autism and their families as part of BluePath Service Dogs' sixth annual walkathon.

The family-friendly fundraiser raised more than \$185,000 to further BluePath's mission to provide autism service dogs, offering safety, companionship and opportunities for independence.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, one out of every 44 children born today will develop an autism spectrum disorder. It is the fastest growing developmental disability in the United States.

"Wesley received his autism diagnosis just before turning two," said Kate Petersen, whose five-year-old son was matched with BluePath service dog Reba. "The first couple years were an extreme challenge. Wesley's lack of communication left us all frustrated to the point of tears several times a day. A cough, sneeze or even laugh left him dysregulated, sobbing or in full meltdown, and sometimes it could last for hours."

When Wesley was nearly hit after suddenly running into the road during a family walk, the Petersens knew they needed immediate assistance.

"That's where BluePath Reba came in," Petersen said. "She is sweet and soulful and intuitive. All business when she is working and a dedicated party girl in her off hours. Reba brings such incredible hope for the future – that we will be able to enjoy a walk on a beautiful day without fear or tragedy, that Wesley can enjoy his favorite things with the grounding presence of his service dog, and that we can finally spend time as a family out in the world, experiencing all life has to offer with this beautiful little dog at Wesley's side."



KARA CERILLI PHOTOS

Ian Farmer cuddles with future autism service dog Peaches at BluePath Service Dogs' sixth annual walkathon on May 14.

Each BluePath dog comes with thousands of hours of training from dedicated volunteers and professional staff. While the cost to train each of these dogs is more than \$40,000, BluePath provides its service dogs – and intensive, ongoing follow up support – completely free of charge. Reduced stress, improved sleeping routines and more meaningful social interactions can allow families to feel a renewed sense of hope and empowerment.

BluePath's walkathon had support from the following sponsors:

Presenting: The Neva and Howard Goldstein Family Charitable Fund, Team Michelangelo.

Platinum: Croton Lions Club, The Goldfarb Makkar and Brown Family

Gold: Amalgamated Transit Union Local 726, Amalgamated Transit Union 726 Family Fund, AvalonBay Communities, Elite



Hundreds of walkers joined the path to bettering the world for children with autism and their families as part of BluePath Service Dogs' sixth annual walkathon.

Carriers, PCSB Bank, Police Benevolent Association of the City of New York, Quinn Law Firm, Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees, Inc., Team Ali Fairhurst.

Silver: Animal Specialty Center, Bedford Hills Lions Club, Bedford PBA, The Bugeya Family, City of Rye Police Association, Cruze and the Frango Family, C.W.A. Local 1180, G.S. Bounce, Guardian Veterinary Specialists, Kolmar Americas Inc., Lions Club of Yorktown, Mesa's Marrathoners, NYS Court Officers Association, Peekskill Rotary Club, Shrub Oak International School, Uniformed Fire Officers Association, Volz Auto Group, When Chaos Strikes.

"BluePath dogs provide safety and

freedom, opening the door to new possibilities for the whole family to thrive," noted the nonprofit's President and CEO Jody Sandler. "This year's walkathon was an incredible celebration of our growing community and our most successful fundraising event to date. We are so grateful for this year's supporters; together we are making a positive and lasting difference in so many lives."

BluePath Service Dogs, Inc. is located at 8 Country Club Rd. in Hopewell Junction. They can be reached at 845-377-0477 or by visiting www.bluepathservicedogs.org.

For the latest news and updates, follow @ BluePathServiceDogs on Facebook and @ BluePathDogs on Instagram.

### Senate Passes Bill to Create Office of Addiction and Mental Health Services

State Sen. Peter Harckham (D-Lewisboro) and Senate colleagues approved legislation last week that will merge two state agencies, the Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS), and create a new state agency, the Office of Addiction and Mental Health Services.

"Not a week goes by that I don't get a call from a family who has lost a loved one, who said their family member was in and out of treatment six, seven, eight, nine times, but because they never treated their underlying mental health disorder, they kept self-medicating until fentanyl caught up to them," Harckham said. "This bill will break down the barriers in treatment programs and follow the federal government's recommendation for integrated care."

While extra resources are now being directed toward the overdose crisis, integrated care is necessary because 70 percent of people who present with substance use disorder (SUD) have an underlying mental health disorder – a figure that rises to 90 percent when a person is in crisis – and 50 percent of people with mental illness have an underlying SUD.

In addition, the newly-passed legislation, which Harckham introduced,

will create a seven-member standing advisory committee on addiction and mental health services to ensure that the state policy for the prevention, care, treatment and rehabilitation of individuals with mental illness and substance use is planned, developed and implemented comprehensively.

Once enacted, this new law would allow the current commissioners of OMH and OASAS to continue in their roles with their respective agencies until the governor nominates a commissioner for the new state agency and the nominee is confirmed by the state Senate. During this time, the governor can appoint someone to run the single agency until a nominee is confirmed.

Last March, Harckham held a press conference in Albany and received strong backing from advocacy groups across the state about merging the two agencies. Earlier this year, Harckham, chair of the Senate Committee on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, and state Sen. Samra G. Brouk (D-Rochester), chair of the Senate Committee on Mental Health, were both instrumental in getting a proposal for the merger into the Senate's one-house 2022-23 state budget plan.

Harckham noted that legislation for

the proposed merger of agencies has been discussed conceptually for years. To address various concerns about the merger, discussions have been held with providers, families, treatment professionals and paraprofessionals, plus participation from the public and private sector unions. Scope of practice issues have been looked at as well.

The new legislation requires that any cost savings that occur because of the merger go toward programs and services benefitting residents served by the agency.

"Creating a robust Office of Addiction and Mental Health Services is an incredible opportunity to develop infrastructure, institute a single license, implement evidence-based and promising practices, ensure training and quality improvement, and provide technical assistance to integrate the entire system of care from prevention, early intervention, treatment, recovery, and housing," said Stephanie Marquesano, founder and president of the harris project.

"This will have a positive and lasting impact for so many New Yorkers and their loved ones who face insurmountable obstacles in their efforts to find appropriate support for their mental health, substance use, and co-occurring disorders."

Her 19-year-old son had co-occurring disorders and died by accidental overdose in 2013. The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on mental health and addiction is staggering, Marqusano said.

"This is watershed moment for the State of New York and a chance to make history by turning the tide on the record number of fatal overdoses, staggering number of alcohol-related deaths and deaths by suicide," she said.

"To many parents and young people suffering from addiction, it's apparent that their substance use and mental health are deeply intertwined," said Paige Pierce, CEO of Families Together in New York State. "Parents are often forced to navigate these systems as if they have two different children: one with emotional pain and one with substance use disorder. Too often, the result is that both needs are left unmet, as each system wastes valuable time deciding who this child belongs to – and the consequences are deadly.

This long-needed merger presents an opportunity to finally improve the way families experience care on the ground so that there is no wrong door. To meaningfully integrate care, we must integrate the entire system and that starts with these agencies."

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continued on page 30e

### Martha Stewart Items at Benefit Shop Foundation in Mt. Kisco June 15

Pam Stone, founder of The Benefit Stop Foundation Inc., never imagined one day partnering with Martha Stewart.

But attending Stewart's tag sale in April at her Katonah estate, the two women began talking and found not only are they practically neighbors but they share a passion for philanthropy.

After buying Stewart's vintage poster collection during the tag sale, Stone came back after the sale ended and took seven truckloads of items back to her auction gallery, which will be crossing the auction block on Wednesday, June 15 at 10 a.m.

Proceeds will benefit the Martha Stewart Center for Living at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, the same charity that Stewart's tag sale raised funds for.

"Martha Stewart's 'Great American Tag Sale' was an iconic event and we are thrilled to transform it into a single-owner auction that expands its reach online to a global audience," Stone said. "A maven of style, Martha had so many wonderful pieces from antiques and collectibles to furniture and decorative arts in her homes. Buyers who missed their chance at her exclusive tag sale, where entry tickets sold out within minutes, have another opportunity to acquire some of these pieces."

Through her many brands, Stewart has designed home decor for every room of the house from bathrooms to kitchens as well as outdoor living spaces. Furniture is perhaps most prominent. Featured in this auction is a trestle-style dining table designed by Stewart for her Bernhardt line. This table was used in her Katonah home as her dining table.

Statement pieces of furniture are sprinkled throughout the auction, including an antique painted two-piece cabinet hutch (\$500 to \$2,000), standing 72 inches tall. It features windowed doors with three shelves. The lower half has two dovetailed drawers over doors opening to reveal a shelf.

Stewart is well-known for her love of bold colors, and yellow was a particular favorite with a cheerful yellow kitchen gracing the magazine cover of the January 2012 issue of "Martha Stewart Living." This cabinet appeared on her television show.

For the DIYers out there, also being offered is a Martha Stewart Living children's craft drying rack that is new in box.

One can never have enough chairs and this auction features a diverse array of seating styles, some personally designed by Stewart. Highlights include a group of five vintage painted chairs with Belgian linen seats (\$500 to \$1,100) having carved center backs with flowers and modern-looking baroque-style forms, 39 inches tall.

There's also a pair of vintage Chinese lacquer chairs (\$500 to \$1,000) designed by Stewart for her Bernhardt furniture line and a vintage Midcentury Modern-style makeup chair (\$50 to \$200) in gray leather and with chrome tubular arms. The chair started at Stewart's TV studio prior to it being moved to her Katonah home. Perfect for outdoor entertaining, about a dozen wicker chairs (and some teak chairs) will also cross the block

Stewart has homes in Maine, New York and Connecticut so the auction items are not just from her Katonah estate. Her Maine home on Mount Desert Island is named Skylands and once belonged to Edsel Ford. It came fully-furnished right down to a collection of vintage posters mostly purchased by him and passed on to Stewart. They ranged from travel themes to products such as Peugeot cycles.



Martha Stewart and The Benefit Shop Foundation, Inc. founder Pam Stone pose for a photo at a recent tag sale.

Stewart kept them on the walls for many years since buying the home in 1997. For vintage poster aficionados, Jules Cheret is well-known as master of Belle Epoque lithography and posters and he is represented here with one of his works, "Halle Aux Chapeaux" (\$600 to \$2,000) depicting a woman and little girl gleefully trying on hats in Cheret's signature Art Nouveau style. Framed, the work measures 53 by 38 inches.

Other expected poster standouts include an American Railway Express lithograph (\$500 to \$2,500), designed by artist Robert E. Lee, 57 by 37 inches, and a vintage Sideo lithograph, France (\$500 to \$1,000) titled "Sideo La Premiere Marque D Huile Pour Autos," 47 by 63 inches.

An obvious nod to Ford is an El Nuevo Ford lithograph made for the Spain market (\$500 to \$1,500) advertising a Model T sedan and a sports coupe.

Also coming out of the Skylands estate is a striking and large collection of carpets, many of the colorful braided oval variety, led by a braided rug (\$200 to \$800) in black, red, yellow and green, 134 by 120 inches, and one having sand, yellow, beige, red and brown tones (\$200 to \$800), 181 by 115 inches wide. There is also a vintage handmade wool Afghan rug with braided fringes (\$150 to \$300) with multitoned geometric details against a red background.

From Stewart's Westport, Conn. estate is a vintage handmade Victorian wool rug (\$200 to \$500) having multitoned floral and geometric details, 138 by 106 inches.

Rounding out the auction will be an antique French tapestry fireplace screen (\$400 to \$500) having an ornately-carved dark wood base and a French tapestry woven in hues of red ochre, marigold and sage, 38 by 22-3/4 by 13-1/4 inches; and an English lead downspout with a gargoyle face (\$100 to \$300), 32 inches tall, that retains its charm even while being well-weathered.

The auction gallery is at The Benefit Shop, located at 185 Kisco Ave., Suite 201, in Mount Kisco. For more information, call 914-864-0707 or visit https://www.thebenefitshop.org.

### Westchester Library's New eVan Team to Promote Digital Inclusion

The Westchester Library System (WLS) is pleased to announce the launch of its eVan Team, and the Digital Equity on the Road Project.

This group of dedicated team members is committed to promoting digital inclusion in Westchester County to help individuals and families that need technology to access and participate in lifelong learning, employment opportunities, health information and other essential services.

The eVan Team will make scheduled visits to community organizations and local events with a table-top display and a 10-foot-by-10-foot tent filled with valuable resources to assist community members with information on how to apply to the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), get loaner hotspots and digital devices from their library, obtain free library cards and get access to online resources. Digital navigators will also provide tech assistance and promote online safety.

In addition to the eVan Team making visits later in June, the launch of the official eVan mobile unit will hit the road and start to make visits around Westchester County as well. This mobile technology and information van will travel to sites throughout the county and is fully equipped with an internet connection, solar panels and digital devices that will allow visitors to connect to resources and receive technology training.

The eVan can accommodate up to 12 visitors with a tent and has 2,500 square feet of Wi-Fi reach.

"This eVan is a doorway to civic and cultural participation for all our community members," said Westchester County Executive George Latimer. "It is vital to provide digital access for education, healthcare, employment essential services. We want Westchester elevate our communities, so everyone is given the resources they need to grow, develop and succeed.'

The eVan will be staffed by two professionals, including a bilingual digital resource trainer, and the eVan Team will dedicate up to 20 hours a week. This initiative received funding from the federal

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocated to the state by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and funds from Westchester County.

"We are excited for the launch of our eVan project as we work to close the digital divide gap present in many of our communities," said Terry Kirchner, Westchester Library System's executive director. "The Westchester Library System is looking forward to providing individuals and families throughout the county access to technology to continue lifelong learning, pursue employment opportunities, and receive other essential services."

The eVan Team has begun breaking that digital divide with visits to Neighbors Link, a nonprofit that helps deliver education, community building, career and legal support to immigrants. The eVan Team also visited the Interfaith Council for Action, a nonprofit organization in Ossining that sustains community, diversity and opportunity through affordable/workforce housing and vital social



The Westchester Library System's New eVan that will help bring digital equity and inclusion throughout the county.

White Plains ComicFest was also on the eVan Teams list for a fun visit to the Galleria Mall, which the White Plains Youth Bureau sponsored, and Westchester County's 54th annual Salute To Seniors is on the list, too, with Wednesday morning visits in May to share this excellent resource with the county's seniors.

The eVan project is actively booking sites throughout Westchester this spring and summer, focusing on Mount Vernon, Mount Kisco, Ossining, Peekskill and Yonkers.

For more information about the eVan or the Digital Equity on the Road Project, contact Joe Maurantonio, director of special projects at the Westchester Library System at 914-231-3275 or by e-mail at dei@wlsmail.org. Visit https://www.westchesterdigitalequity.

org/ to see the eVan schedule or check out the eVan Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/ wlsdigitalequity.

If your organization would like to schedule a complrmentary visit from the eVan Team, contact Katherine Gasparich at 914-218-3968 or via e-mail at KatherineG@ EventsRemember.com.

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#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Village Treasurer of the Village of Pleasantville has received the Tax Roll and Warrant for the collection of taxes for the fiscal year 2022-2023. Tax payments can be made online via the Village website www.pleasantville-nv.gov, sent via mail service or left in the drop box available at the entrance to the Village Police Department, Village Hall, 80 Wheeler Avenue. Payments can also be dropped off in-person at Village Hall, 3rd Floor of 80 Wheeler Avenue, Monday through Friday from 8am to 4pm with the Tax Department at 914-769-1997. Taxes and other assessments, if any, become due and payable June 1, 2022, but may be paid in two installments without penalty. The first installment may be paid without penalty from June 1, 2022 to and including July 1, 2022. The second installment may be paid without penalty from June 1, 2022 to and including December 31, 2022. To all first installment taxes remaining unpaid after July 1. 2022. five percent (5%) will be added for the month of July, and an additional one percent (1%) for each month or fraction thereof until paid. To all second installment taxes remaining unpaid after December 31, 2022, five percent (5%) will be added for the month of January, and an additional one percent (1%) for each month or fraction thereof until paid. On or before February 1, 2022 a delinquent list will be published.

Noreen Regan Village Treasurer Dated: May 24, 2022

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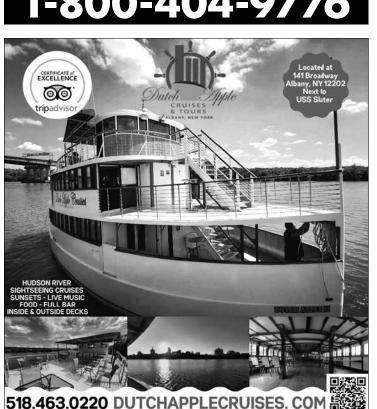
















### The Derivation and Joy of Toasting Each Other



By Nick Antonaccio

"Cheers!"
"Salute!" "Salud!"
"Santé!" "Prost!"
"Echaim!"
"Nostrovia!"
"Sláinte!"

Whatever the language, whatever the occasion, raising one's glass of wine in celebration always seems a most

You Heard It

Through the

Grapevine

appropriate gesture.

The toast is invariably interpreted as "Good Health!" regardless of the occasion. Typically offered by the host of an event and followed by multiple responses, this tradition has changed little since ancient times. The Greeks reveled in it to celebrate

camaraderie and the Romans basked in it to savor battles won.

When Napoleon reigned as emperor of France, he was less interested in toasting than he was in imbibing the wine of choice for an occasion.

"I drink Champagne when I win, to celebrate; and I drink Champagne when I lose, to console myself."

Just as you do, I raise my glass to focus the attention of my guests, to engage them in the meaning of an occasion: to honor a loved one, present or past; the attainment of a status in life or a cordial gesture of welcome and friendship. However, this

# 'this tradition has changed little since ancient times.'

tradition is rooted in traditions dating back to ancient times.

Many societies employed the simultaneous raising of wine-filled glasses or the clinking of those glasses for very practical reasons. Today, the intent of a toast is solely to praise, compliment or celebrate an individual or group of individuals. However, the origins of the toast are secondary to conviviality. The primary reasons were strategic and preventive.

1. A practical reason evolved in ancient Greece and Rome. Poisoning the drinking vessel of one's enemy was an early practice. To protect guests from a diabolical host – or a

host from nefarious guests – wine was served from a common jug, first to the host, and then to the guests. Once the host imbibed, the guests followed, raising their vessels to celebrate the mutual trust earned.

2. The Vikings and early Germanic tribes were notorious for vigorously

banging drinking cups on their communal dining tables to ward off evil spirits they believed were roaming the area. Banging loudly was believed to clear the air and create a more celebratory atmosphere.

3. During medieval times, diners began the

practice of clinking glasses. They intended to achieve the same goals as banging cups; the clinking was thought to sound like church bells and thus would surely drive away the devil and his minions. This also served to unite the dining companions together in a gesture of intimate friendship. Clinking glasses forced close contact and, presumably, enhanced the bonding of all present.

For those of you who enjoy the current trend of historical television series, you've undoubtedly seen the glances of guests as they dined and imbibed with royalty at table.

Which brings me to the origin of the term itself. How did this act of celebration come to be referred to as a toast?

The wine of ancient Romans often reeked of foul aromas or tastes. To mask these unsavory qualities, burnt bread might be added to a vat or jug of wine before serving the wine to guests.

As wine improved over the ensuing centuries, this ritual became a common practice. Shakespeare describes a stale piece of bread immersed in a jug of wine. The practice at the time was to add spices and fruit to the bread, toast it and flavor a jug of wine with it. Over time, this ritual went one step further. The tasty bread was offered to the person being honored at a dinner; the guests would then drink the "toasted" wine.

Other terms evolved from the word



toast. To control the sometimes aggressive drinking at events, an individual was assigned to control the amount of alcohol being consumed. This "toastmaster" was responsible for ensuring a reasonable flow of merrymaking while preventing overtoasting. And, of course, an individual who was the recipient of multiple celebratory accolades or good wishes became "the toast of the town."

The next time you raise a glass to celebrate an event or honor family and friends, remember the ancient rites you are replicating. Cheers to our ancestors!

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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### Springtime Bites and Pieces for Food Lovers to Choose From

A new season of popular chef and restaurateur Michael Symon's cooking series on the Food Network gave me a yearning for Greek food. So, on a recent late afternoon we ventured to Lefteris Gryo IV in Pleasantville.

I have been a fan of the Lefteris Greek restaurants for a long time, starting with their original bustling eatery in Tarrytown, and with later expansions to Ridge Hill, Yonkers, Mount Kisco

and Pleasantville. There may be more sophisticated Greek spots in Westchester, but this casual local chain always puts out a good Mediterranean meal at a reasonable price. Bring a big appetite; portions are very generous.

This was our first visit to the Pleasantville location. Compared to the other spots, we found this taverna to be most comforting. I like their blue checkered table covers and staff is right on the spot. On this visit, we started off with a "small" portion of spanakopita (Greek spinach pie) to taste. No matter how they are described on the menu, portions are never small here, so there was enough for two to share and get our palates going.

We followed with a big gyro wrap, loaded with sliced lamb, lettuce, tomato and onions, all in a pita. Good and plentiful!

The pita wrap does get unruly, but over the years I have resorted to eating it with a knife and fork – with extra tzatziki sauce on the side, of course. My companion went for the halibut kebab, another large platter. The flavorful, firm fish kebab was served on a bed of mixed greens with feta cheese, tomatoes, cucumber, olives and plenty of toasted pita. We took the leftovers and pita home, my yen for Greek food satiated.

Lefteris Gyro is located at 501 Marble Ave. in Pleasantville. Open daily. Take-out available. Info: 914-579-2274 or visit www. lefterisgyro.com.

#### Honoring Vets at Fogo de Chao

On Memorial Day,
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Fogo de Chao is located at 235 Main St. in White Plains. Info and reservations: 914-697-8600 or visit www.fogodechao.

#### Hudson Valley Fermented June 4

A gathering of wine and spirit aficionados will take place at Pace University's Pleasantville campus on Saturday, June 4 from 12 to 3 p.m. Leading craft beer and wine producers, distilleries and cideries will offer tastings. At this writing, there



By Morris Gut

will also be food samplings from local establishments including ShopRite, Tesoro d'Italia Restaurant, Stone Fire Italian Restaurant, Falafel Taco, Dolphin South, Old Village Craft Pizza & Beer and Second Mouse Cheese Shop.

The Pleasantville Rotary Club and Pace University have decided to keep the crowd to an exclusive 250 attendees. VIP tickets are on sale for \$100 per person. No

children are permitted.

For information, call the Pleasantville Rotary Club at 914-310-0739 or visit www. hvfermented.com.

#### **Wine & Food Festival Returns**

Westchester Magazine's popular culinary event has been drawing area gourmands for over a decade. It has returned and will take place from June 6-11. It is marked with by special dinners, contests and tastings at various locations around the county, and feature food and wine personalities. More than 100 restaurants and food trucks and over 150 wine, beer and spirits purveyors will be on hand.

Advanced tickets and reservations are required. For a full list of participating restaurants, events and tickets, visit www. westchestermagazine.com/wine-and-food.

#### Happy Monkey Coming t Greenwich

Internationally renowned uber-chef and restaurateur Jean-Georges Vongerichten will be opening his Latin-American themed Happy Monkey Food & Amigos on Greenwich Avenue in Greenwich, Conn.

Happy Monkey will be a casual yet upscale restaurant and bar featuring sharable snacks, small and large plates,

crudo, salads and tacos. Look for rotating specialties such as arroz con pollo, shrimp tacos with spicy citrus peanut slaw and marinated whole roasted cauliflower with sour cherry mole. There are dessert options such as the tres leches cake.

The chef de cuisine is slated to be Ron Gallo who had been executive chef at The Inn at Pound Ridge as well as other Jean-Georges operations. By the way, the name Happy Monkey is a tribute to Mexican artist Frida Khalo's pet spider monkey and will be artfully represented inside the restaurant.

Vongerichten is the driving culinary force behind 40 restaurants globally, including The Inn at Pound Ridge. He is also a part-time Westchester resident, maintaining a country home in the exclusive Waccabuc section of Lewisboro where he filmed part of his cooking series "Kimchee Chronicles."

Happy Monkey Food & Amigos by Jean-George is located at 346 Greenwich Ave. in Greenwich. Advanced reservations accepted. Info and reservations: 203-405-



The hearty lamb gyro and fries and halibut kebab platter at Lefteris Gyro.



The Pleasantville location of Lefteris Gyro, featuring large, tasty portions of traditional Mediterranean food at reasonable prices.

 $5787\,\mathrm{or}\,\mathrm{visit}\,\mathrm{www.happymonkeygreenwich.}$  com.

### Catrina Taqueria Coming to White Plains

Throwing another Mexican sombrero into the ring in White Plains, Catrina Taqueria has a sign up at the site of the former Splendid Coffee Shop at 106 Mamaroneck Ave. Renovations are underway. More on this as it evolves.

#### Food Trucks Mark National Nurses

National Nurses Week took place May 6-12 and area hospitals celebrated all the sacrifices nurses make. That was the case as I drove by White Plains Hospital on May 12. There were long lines of hospital staff

gathered to indulge in guest food truck offerings. Participating trucks included Pizza Vitale, Westchester Burger Co. and Wanna Empanada.

Officials in New York State and Westchester County are advising the public to wear a mask at indoor public spaces. The pandemic is not over, so be safe!

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

### Five Fun Ways to Keep Kids Busy After School

While television and video games are classic after-school staples, there are better, more fun ways to keep children busy in the afternoons. Here are five fun ideas to try.

1. Bike rides. Cycling is beneficial to strength, cardiovascular health and mental wellness. It's also a great opportunity for kids to gain a bit of independence and explore the world around them, and there is no better

season than spring to encourage them to get off the couch and out for a ride.

2. Music making. Kids don't need to be enrolled in a formal music program at school to experience the joys of making music. With a portable keyboard like those in the Casiotone series, which offer learning and composition tools that grow with a musician's skills, children can use their afternoons to self-direct their musical education. Every model is under 10 pounds and features a battery-powered option, making them the perfect size and design for teens and tweens who want to start a band.

3. Giving back. Children are never too young to learn the importance of giving back to their community. From offering a helping hand at an animal sanctuary



to visiting seniors residing in an assisted living facility, there are many volunteer opportunities perfect for kids.

4. Math fun. Outside the classroom, mathematics can be all fun and zero pressure. Be sure to offer kids tools that will allow them to uncover, on their own terms, the way mathematical concepts work. The basic, scientific and graphing calculators available from Casio are all intuitive and easy to use. Some of

the advanced models even offer Python programming, a great feature for budding coders.

5. Dinnertime/ Knowing how to put together a meal is an invaluable life skill, and one that many kids leave home without having achieved. Have your child regularly help you out with dinner, giving them age-appropriate tasks to complete. It's not only a great way to spend some quality time together during the busy week, but they will also begin to pick up the fundamentals of cooking.

With a little creativity, your child's afternoons can be a time for them to get active, build new skills and try new hobbies.

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### Hudson Valley Honor Flight Celebrates 2,000th Veteran to Fly on Special Day



Friends, family and community members attended the Hudson Valley Honor Flight's Mission 2,000 send-off ceremony early last Saturday morning at Million Air, Hangar M, at Westchester County Airport.

This 26th flight, dubbed Mission 2,000 in honor of the 2,000th veteran who went on the trip to Washington, D.C., attracted crowds who sent the veterans off in the morning and welcomed them home in the early evening.

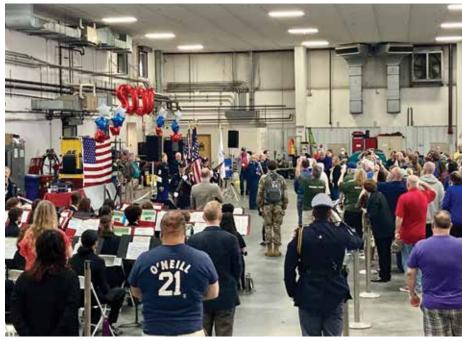
Hudson Valley Honor Flight provides a once-in-a-lifetime flight to Washington, where veterans are transported around the district by bus to visit the various war memorials, attend a dinner in their honor and then return home. Each veteran is escorted by a personal guardian and the flight team for the day-long trip. Honored veterans fly free.

"Every flight is special, but this one is a major milestone. We are so proud to say that we have flown 2,000 veterans since our very first flight in 2012," said Hudson Valley Honor Flight Chairman Frank Kimler. "With our flights being postponed due to COVID-19 concerns just a couple of years ago, it seemed like reaching this many veterans might not happen, but here we are, and we are thrilled.



DAVID ROCCO PHOTOS









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#### You Gotta Have Art

#### ArtsWestchester CEO Janet Langsam talks about the impact and trends of the county's much-loved (and much resilient) arts scene



By Sherrie Dulworth

You are reading this week's print excerbt of an article from our Examiner+ newsmagazine-

style email newsletter. To read the entire article and others like it, subscribe at www.examiner-plus.com to receive all of our bonus content.

is CEOJanet Langsam ArtsWestchester, the largest and highestprofile nonprofit dedicated to underwriting and supporting arts and cultural programs and events in the county. Langsam has been with ArtsWestchester for more than 30 years. Examiner+ spoke with her about her early career and her thoughts on the current direction of the arts and of journalism.

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#### Examiner+: Were there journalists who were early inspirations for you?

Janet Langsam: Not specifically. I wanted to be a journalist. I guess when I was about 16, I got a job at the Rockaway Wave. I didn't get to do very much other than daily look at the police blotter, do some garden parties, and engagements. It wasn't what I thought it would be in terms of being creative, but it did give me a background in knowing how a newspaper is put together.

From there, I got a job as a copy girl at the Long Island Press. I used to sit in a chair near a door that was like a gateway to this dark and eerie place. The typesetting metal plates were being cored for the

newspaper. It was a process. You didn't change anything past a certain point.

It is amazing for me to think today that we can just go online, and design a page, and it's done. I don't know whether that makes the journalism better or not — it's easier, quicker, and easier to get printed out, but what's the future of print?

For many years, I curled up every Sunday with the New York Times. I went through every section. I can't curl up to an iPhone, but even beyond that, I don't put in as much time in knowing the details of a story and I think that we've lost that with the advent of quick journalism.

#### E+: Who were some of your early art inspirations?

Langsam: There are a number of artists that I follow: Kandinsky, Miró, Matisse, and more contemporarily,

Motherwell. These are artists who have influenced my work. You don't stop studying art, you're always looking at art. That's the beautiful thing about it. Training is wonderful but the more you look at art, the more you see and understand

different ways of expressing.

E+: You've spoken about the accessibility to the arts as being important to healthy communities. Can you share more about that?

Langsam: We just went through a pandemic. Most of the people were in their pajamas at home, even if they were working. Once you take care of the food and the medicine, the bulk of people in our community really needed something to do during the pandemic, whether it's virtual art programs or Wordle, something to occupy their minds and their vision. The average person didn't need a psychiatrist, the average person needed to get out of the house, do some artwork, gather with other people. People need to be ...

To read the rest of this article, and

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**CONGRATULATIONS** to our local athletes on a great Spring Season! WISHING GOOD LUCK ON YOUR TEAM'S CHAMPIONSHIP JOURNEY!





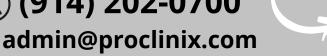
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