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SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

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## White Plains Common Council Debates Retired Firefighters' Health Insurance Payments

By Neal Rentz

The White Plains Common Council debated proposed legislation from Councilwoman Milagros Lecuona that would no longer require many retired White Plains firefighters to pay a portion of their health insurance premiums at a Nov. 25 special meeting.

The issue is on the agenda for a vote at the Dec. 2 Common Council meeting.

For the past several months many retired firefighters have attended the Citizens to be Heard portion of Common Council meetings to seek the policy change. Due to a difficult financial period, the city required firefighters to pay 15 percent of their health insurance premiums beginning in 2010, which

affects more than 100 retired firefighters. In 2015 the Common Council restored the benefit to active firefighters but not to retirees of the fire department.

The draft resolution written by Lecuona stated, "The city has recovered financial stability in this regard and the retired firefighters have respectfully requested the city to reinstitute full healthcare insurance benefits, relieving the retired firefighters of their 15 percent contribution."

The resolution stated firefighters have provided proposals to city officials "to fairly address the concerns of all parties."

The legislation would no longer require all retired firefighters 70 or older to pay a portion of their premiums and that would

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## White Plains Swimmers Have a State Champion



The White Plains High School Girls Swimming and Diving Team has a State Champion. Eighth grader Alexa Reyna won the State title in the 500 freestyle with an All American time of 4.47.80 at the NYSPHSAA (New York State Public High School Athletic Association) meet, held at Ithaca College in November. This is a new Section 1 and school record. Alexa also placed 5th in the 200 freestyle and teammate Claire Weinstein had 5th place in the 500 and 9th in the 200 freestyle. Both were on the 200 freestyle relay team which set a new school record. The team won the League 2 Title this year with an undefeated 9-0 record. Their coach is Patty Gilmartin. Pictured left to right: Alexa Reyna, Annalynn DiMarco, Salma Reyna, Claire Weinstein, Margaux Reyna, Luisa Nierhoff, Ava Iannetta, Coach Gilmartin.

## Greenburgh Town Supervisor Amends 2020 Budget for Zero Percent Tax Hike

By Pat Casey

In a recent holiday message to residents, Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner announced an amended 2020 town budget that includes a tax rate decrease and a tax levy freeze in the 2020 budget.

"Prior to the November election I announced I would propose a budget that included a zero percent tax hike," Feiner said in an email.

"When I proposed the 2020 budget I proposed a tax rate hike of zero percent. However, the tax levy did go up, creating some confusion. If the rate stays the same and if the levy goes up, some residents could have experienced a slight tax hike. We would not know that definitely until March when the tax bills are prepared. The Westchester County Executive has proposed a tax rate decrease. Most communities in Westchester



Rendering of proposed Hartsdale Train Station upgrades showing two elevator towers. See MTA on page 2

are using new sales tax revenues to reduce the size of their tax hike and are not freezing tax levy's or reducing tax rates," Feiner said.

"I feel that it is important for people to have confidence in the integrity of their elected officials. It seems like there was some confusion by what I meant by a zero percent tax hike. People expected a zero percent tax levy increase as well," Feiner explained.

To correct the situation, Feiner asked the Greenburgh comptroller to amend the 2020 proposed budget to include a tax rate decrease of about 3 percent in the A Budget (\$9,321,201) and a 2 percent decrease in the Unincorporated B Budget (\$59,201,693). "The tax levy will remain the same as in the 2019 budget and will enable us to keep the promises made prior to the election," Feiner said.

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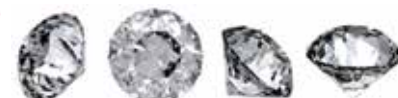
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## White Plains Common Council Debates Retired Firefighters' Health Insurance Payments

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apply to all future retired firefighters when they become 70. The elimination of the premium payments would also be dropped under the legislation for those with financial hardship.

No retired firefighters would be required to pay any past due premiums if the legislation is approved and the city would not be obliged to refund any past premiums previously paid by any retired firefighters.

Under the original legislation, the ordinance would take effect on Jan. 1, 2020.

At last week's meeting Corporation Counsel John Callahan said he reviewed the legislation with Finance Commissioner Sergio Sensi and Budget Director James Arnett. Callahan said in July 2010 the city required union and non-union management employees to pay 15 percent of their health insurance premiums due to the financial difficulties of the city at the time. Those hired before July 1995 were required to pay a portion of their premiums in retirement, he noted.

Callahan said there were several legal challenges to the health insurance premium contribution, which were won by the city.

The 15 percent requirement for retirees hired before July 1995 ended in March 2017 because all city employees negotiated the end of the 15 percent requirement, Callahan said.

The cost of not collecting past owed payments from retired firefighters would cost the city about \$1.5 million, Callahan said. Due to a lawsuit filed by the firefighters' union, the city could not collect health insurance premium payments until the suit was settled, he noted. If the legislation was approved the city would lose an additional \$145,000 in the 2020-21 fiscal year because the retired firefighters hired before July 1995 would no longer be required to pay a portion of their health insurance premiums, he said. The cost of those with financial hardships no longer being responsible for paying a part of their health insurance would cost the city an additional \$55,000 in 2020-21, he said.

Councilman John Kirkpatrick said in 2010 the city had a large deficit that required the loss of jobs through layoffs and attrition. Currently some employees are continuing to pay 15 percent of their health insurance premium costs, while other city workers no longer pay it because they made concessions as part of their contract negotiations to make up for the lost revenue. "We have a very mixed bag since 2010 of who pays what," he said.

Lecuona said she voted for the change to require firefighters, including retirees,



NEAL RENTZ PHOTOS  
White Plains Councilwoman Milagros Lecuona at the Nov. 25 Common Council meeting.

to pay 15 percent of their health insurance premiums because of the budget deficit in 2010, which would have resulted in a tax hike of about 16 percent without spending cuts. The Common Council was told nine years ago that the requirement for retired firefighters to pay 15 percent of their health insurance premiums would not hurt them much because the union would have a different health insurance company. "That was not the case," she said.

Because the firefighters were given incorrect information about the cost of their health insurance, it "is a matter of fairness" to end the policy of having retired members of their union pay a part of their premiums, Lecuona said.

Kirkpatrick said the Common Council should look into potentially ending the requirement that retired firefighters pay a portion of their premiums. But Kirkpatrick said he wanted "a comprehensive picture" of how much ending the requirement would cost the city. Callahan said ending the requirement for retired firefighters would translate into a tax increase of 2.5 percent. "We have to know that our taxpaying public is willing to pay that," Kirkpatrick said.

Retired firefighters have been attending Common Council meetings for several months presenting information to the city. "Your question has already been answered," Lecuona told Kirkpatrick.

Councilman Dennis Krolan said the issue of dropping the health insurance payment requirement for retired firefighters to pay 15



White Plains Corporation Counsel John Callahan at the Nov. 25 Common Council meeting.

percent of their health insurance premium costs has been discussed by city officials for over a year. "I don't think we need any delays," he said, adding the council should vote on the issue before the end of the year.

Krolan said the city would not collect the \$1.5 million from firefighters who did not make payments for their health insurance due to the court injunction unless they were sued by the city. "It's the taxpayers' money," Mayor Tom Roach said. "It's not our money." The Common Council always speaks about taxpayers' money, Krolan replied.

Roach asked council members who supported the concept of ending the practice of requiring retired firefighters to pay part of their health insurance to consider the other city employees who either continue to pay the 15 percent or who have negotiated the end of the requirement by making concessions to pay for it. "It is a question that is not a problem for the firefighters who are here tonight," Krolan replied. No other employees have been asking the city about not having retirees pay a part of their health insurance, Krolan said. The promise of lifetime benefits was made to the firefighters, he said.

Roach said there was a court ruling that the city could have required its municipal employees to pay half of their health insurance premiums. "Is it fair to a police officer in the same circumstance that gets no benefit from this?" he asked, referring to the proposed legislation. The city's other workers have not asked for what the

firefighters are seeking for their retired colleagues and they have not asked for information from the city as the firefighters have. Lecuona replied. "This was unfair," she said.

Roach said court rulings regarding suits from other employee groups sided with the city and employees of those unions had never stopped paying for 15 percent of their health insurance premiums.

Council President John Martin said the legislation, which would go into effect in the current 2019-20 budget year, needs to provide a funding source. Martin said he needed to know what effect the legislation would have on the city's tax cap for 2020-21 before he could vote on it. Lecuona said she would be willing to move the date that the legislation would become law to the start of the next fiscal year on July 1, 2020.

Councilman Justin Brasch also wanted to know how the legislation would impact the 2020-21 budget. "If we give this to the firefighters, what do the others (city employees) do?" Brasch asked.



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## Greenburgh Town Supervisor Amends 2020 Budget for Zero Percent Tax Hike

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The tax levy is the aggregate amount for all property taxes by all property owners in a fiscal year. The tax levy is determined by school budgets, voted independently, state aid and other revenues. Assessments change on a regular basis and are not set until March of each year for the Greenburgh town tax bills.

Feiner apologized for the confusion.

The Greenburgh Town Board must approve the budget by Dec. 20.

According to Weiner, this proposed modification will not impact any services and

the Town will be in compliance with its fund balance policy.

### MTA to Upgrade Hartsdale Train Station

In other Greenburgh news, MTA representatives told the Greenburgh Town Board last week that it intends to upgrade the Hartsdale train station during two construction phases.

The first phase will include the construction of two elevators – one on the inbound side and one on the outbound

side – with new sidewalks and curb cuts to accommodate ADA specifications.

The elevator towers and accompanying mechanical areas will require the removal of five existing parking spaces.

The overpass will also be upgraded with new benches and counters.

Metro North expects to award a construction bid by the end of the second quarter of 2020. Construction is expected to take 20 months. During that time the construction area will be fenced off.

Town Board members concerned about

the removal of five parking spaces from an already overcrowded parking area, asked if anything could be done to replace and even expand on the number of parking spaces.

The MTA does not own any more property on the construction site to be able to add parking, however the Greenburgh Parking District will look at the situation to see if parking could be reconfigured in the area.

Phase two construction in the 2020 to 2024 timeframe will include replacement of the existing platform with a heated platform and the addition of boiler rooms.



# Request Made to Accelerate Decommissioning of Indian Pt. Plants

By Rick Pezzulo

The owners of the Indian Point nuclear power plants and their chosen successors have requested approval to speed up the decommissioning process.

Entergy Corporation and Holtec International, through their affiliates, announced last week they had jointly filed a License Transfer Application with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, requesting approval for the transfer of the NRC licenses for Indian Point to Holtec after the last unit in Buchanan permanently shuts down by April 30, 2021.

Holtec plans to initiate decommissioning at Indian Point, following regulatory approvals and transaction close, as much as

40 years sooner than if Entergy continued to own the units.

"Holtec's plan to accelerate the decommissioning schedule provides the potential for site redevelopment decades sooner than if Entergy continued to own the facility, which is good news for the local community," said Chris Bakken, Entergy Executive Vice President Nuclear Operations and Chief Nuclear Officer. "Holtec plans to begin the decommissioning process promptly upon taking ownership, and as part of the agreement between the companies, will provide job opportunities for more than 300 of our current employees who want to remain in the region and continue to work at the site."

The companies asked the NRC to

approve the License Transfer Application by November 2020 to facilitate a timely transaction closing targeted for May 2021, which will benefit the community, employees and other interested stakeholders.

"This key regulatory filing is an important first step to beginning a new future for Indian Point and the local community," said Holtec's President and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kris Singh. "By beginning decommissioning earlier, Holtec will be able to maintain and create new jobs and work towards releasing the plant site earlier so it can be repurposed and generate replacement tax revenue on an earlier schedule."

In January 2017, Entergy, which purchased the Indian Point nuclear power plants more than 16 years ago, announced, to the complete surprise of local leaders, its plan for the early and orderly shutdown of Indian Point by April 30, 2021 as part of a settlement with New York State and Riverkeeper.

Holtec's plan for decommissioning will result in the release for re-use of portions of the site in the 2030s, with the exception of the Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation – the area where spent nuclear fuel is safely stored in dry casks until the U.S. Department of Energy transfers the spent fuel offsite. As part of its plan, Holtec expects to move all of the Indian Point spent nuclear fuel into dry casks within about three years following facility shutdown in 2021.

Holtec has a pending application with the NRC for a Consolidated Interim Storage Facility in New Mexico, which could eventually store spent nuclear fuel from

Indian Point and other U.S. nuclear power plants.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said he and federal representatives are demanding answers on what exactly Holtec has planned for the site.

"In Westchester, we have residents who rightfully demand clear-eyed answers as to what the next steps Holtec have for the plant in our backyard. Further, we have a workforce already here with the expertise – and on the job experience – needed to safely work on this nuclear power plant," Latimer stated. "The decommissioning process must not be taken lightly nor seen as strictly for profit. I am concerned about how Holtec's plans will impact both the on-site, knowledgeable workforce and efforts to ensure that the cleanup is undertaken while abiding by the highest environmental standards."

In addition to the federal filing, Entergy and Holtec filed a petition with the New York Public Service Commission requesting a ruling disclaiming PSC jurisdiction or abstaining from review of the proposed transaction, or, in the alternative, an order approving the proposed transaction.

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# Newest Candidate Jumps Into 17th Congressional District Race

By Martin Wilbur

Another candidate has entered the race for the Democratic nomination in the 17th Congressional District.

Chappaqua resident Adam Schleifer, most recently an assistant U.S. attorney prosecuting fraud cases, announced his candidacy last week to succeed Rep. Nita Lowey for the seat. Lowey will be retiring at the end of her current term.

A product of the Chappaqua School District, Schleifer helped represent the government in the college admissions scandal that broke earlier this year.



Federal prosecutor Adam Schleifer, a Chappaqua resident, announced last week he is joining the field of Democratic hopefuls to succeed Rep. Nita Lowey.

"I have battled predatory lenders and fraudsters, those who have tried to cut the line and get ahead of hardworking families, criminals that flood our streets with dangerous weapons, and those who think their profits are more important than the health of our children and our planet," Schleifer said through a prepared statement.

After graduating Horace Greeley High School, he earned a degree in philosophy and government at Cornell University and went on to Columbia Law School. Schleifer served as a federal law clerk then went to work as a litigator for Wachtell Lipton, Manhattan law firm.

Before serving in the U.S. attorney's office, he was a special associate counsel for the New York State Department of Financial Services where he helped investigate and lead enforcement efforts against predatory lending practices.

Schleifer, 38, jumps into a crowded field of Democratic hopefuls that is expected to continue to grow. Schleifer is the sixth confirmed candidate vying for the party's nomination in the predominantly Democratic district. There are other candidates who have filed paperwork but have not officially announced their candidacies.

He joins Assemblyman David Buchwald (D-White Plains); state Sen. David Carlucci (D-Clarkstown); Mondaire Jones an attorney from Rockland County; former Obama administration official Evelyn Farkas, also a Chappaqua resident and Horace Greeley graduate; and Sleepy Hollow resident Allison Fine.

All of the candidates that have entered the race have lauded Lowey's contribution to the district in her 16-term career.

However, on Monday, Jones, the only candidate who entered the field before Lowey announced her retirement on Oct. 10, blasted Schleifer's emergence into the race, arguing that neither the country nor the 17th Congressional District needs more millionaires or billionaires. Jones chided the newest candidate for being the son of Regeneron founder and CEO Howard Schleifer.

He said that it's "surreal that a billionaire from California thinks he can buy this election" when the country needs to address issues such as student debt.

"Adam Schleifer was raised by a father worth \$1.4 billion. I was raised by a single mom who needed to work multiple jobs to provide for our family, even as we relied on food stamps and Section 8 housing," Jones said.

The congressional primary will be held next June.

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# MAD DONUTS, WHITE PLAINS

By Neal Rentz

It is safe to say that White Plains resident Matthew Moore is mad about donuts.

He has translated that passion into creating MAD Donuts, which recently opened in The Westchester in White Plains. He co-owns the business with his wife, Aja Whitaker-Moore.

Moore explained last week how he came up with the name of his new business. "MAD is an acronym for my name, Matt, my wife, Aja, and my daughter, Daisy," he said.

Moore said he decided to create his own donuts because he was not satisfied with the donuts that were sold locally, unlike those he bought when he lived in New York City. When he moved to Westchester Moore said that there were no donuts there were even close to the quality of the donuts he ate in the city. Moore, who said he has a passion for cooking and baking, decided to create his own donuts.

After coming up with his own donut recipes he introduced them to the public at farmers markets in White Plains. He has been partnering with local venues such as the Twisted Branch in Valhalla.

The creations sold at MAD Donuts, which opened on Nov. 23, are yeast based and he is planning to sell cake donuts in the future, Moore said.

Moore said he prides himself on using fresh, natural and locally sourced



Two of the "key holder" employees at MAD Donuts, which recently opened in The Westchester in White Plains, are Lukas Villa, right, and Mayelin Ceballos.

ingredients. For example, the grapes used for the jelly in his peanut butter and jelly donuts are purchased from a grape farm in upstate New York.

Moore also seeks to hire local residents for his new business. The 20 jobs he has

created so far have gone to residents of White Plains and other parts of Westchester, he said.

On weekends about 1,000 donuts are created at his business, with about half of that amount made on weekdays, Moore said,

adding he expects to make 1,000 donuts a day when holiday shopping at the mall begins in earnest particularly in December.

Moore explained why he and his wife chose to open his business in The Westchester. "It's a great mall," he said. "It was a good opportunity that came up to do this store in The Westchester. We decided to take it."

He offers a wide variety of donuts, including lemon meringue and strawberry cheesecake, as well as seasonal selections, including the current pumpkin pie donut. Moore is also providing a savory everything donut that is filled with cream cheese and featuring several toppings as an everything bagel does.

Moore said one of his favorite MAD donuts features a brown sugar custard filling.

Moore said he wants his business to give back to the community. Moore will donate a portion of the revenues from the sale of coffee to local non-profit organizations.

"My goal is to make this store a fixture in the White Plains metro area," Moore said.

*MAD Donuts is located on the third floor of The Westchester, 125 Westchester Ave., White Plains. For more information call 914-426-7095 or visit <https://maddonutshop.com/>. MAD Donuts is also on Facebook.*



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# That Guy in the Commercial? He's Going to the Olympics

You may recognize Eric Holtz from the Montefiore testimonial about his shoulder surgery. But the story just got way better.

BY DANA WHITE

**T**he 30-second commercial was in heavy rotation all summer. Closeup on a middle-aged guy, very fit, with a shaved head, a soul patch and serious swagger. He lifts weights, throws pitches, swings a bat, while his voiceover describes the orthopedic surgery that saved his baseball career 15 years earlier: "At 39, I had a SLAP tear and ripped off my biceps tendon. Never pitch again? Yeah, right. I went to Montefiore Orthopedics and begged Dr. Levy to get me back on the diamond. At 41, I was drafted to play pro ball."

While compelling, the TV spot left millions of viewers scratching their heads: Who drafted a regular guy over 40 to play pro ball?

That would be Israel. In 2006, after a year of rehabbing from the surgery with his typically insane work ethic, the 6'1" Holtz was drafted to play for the new Israel Baseball League (IBL). He was a baseball-obsessed married father of three from White Plains with a women's clothing business moonlighting as a hitting coach at Manhattanville College. The IBL lasted a year, but the connections he made in Israel paid off bigtime down the line. In 2017, he was named manager/coach of Israel's national baseball team. In September, the "blue and white" advanced to the Africa/Europe Qualifying Event in Italy—and won it all, earning a berth at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. The *Jerusalem Post* called it a "miraculous accomplishment.... Manager Eric Holtz brought old-fashioned baseball to life, playing games one at a time."

## Life Lessons

Most days you can find Holtz behind his desk at Game On 13, his elite training center in Elmsford. Holtz's big personality is somewhat subdued. The soul patch has grown out to a salt and pepper stubble. That and his shaved head make him a double for Bruce Willis from certain angles. At 54, he's mulling over a big year—the commercial, the Olympics, the wedding of his oldest child Jordan—and perhaps wondering what his present "whole crazy world" holds.

"I had no idea I was going to be on TV every night," he says, mean-



PHOTO COURTESY OF MONTEFIORE HEALTH SYSTEM

While Holtz's commercial was airing last summer, he was leading Team Israel to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

ing it. "I had no idea I was going to be on 11 billboards and in magazines and newspapers. I get it every day playing baseball: Oh, you're the Montefiore guy! But I don't want to lose focus on what I do. I'm just Eric, head coach of Israel baseball. Owner of Game On 13. It doesn't change anything."

His jam-packed office reflects his 24/7 commitment to baseball—and his entrepreneurial know-how. There are jerseys for the Fury and Lady Fury, his 13-team youth league, and one of his signature Holtz wood bats, made in upstate New York. The wall behind his desk is covered in photographs and motivational sayings and a photo of Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth, an homage to his late father, who told stories about watching the two legends play at the old Yankee stadium. Samson, Holtz's massive Bernese mountain dog and "best buddy," is collapsed on the floor like a small mountain to be stepped over. Samson is in the Montefiore footage as well, frolicking with Holtz in the cavernous batting cage area. Dozens of T-shirts and jerseys with college logos hang high on the walls, signifying schools where the kids that train here have gone on to play. Coaching and motivating young people to be their best is his favorite part.

"Not everybody's going to be a professional player, but the game teaches you to work hard and be part of something bigger than yourself—part of a team, a culture. It teaches you about life."

## The Boy from the Bronx

Holtz calls his business Game On 13 because that's his lucky



PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIC HOLTZ

Team Israel celebrates the victory that won the squad an Olympic berth.

number, the one on his jerseys throughout his own playing career. It started in the Bronx, where Holtz was born. He lived in Co-op City with his parents, Philip and Rosalind Holtz, and his older brother Steven. His dad was an accountant who passed his love of baseball down to Eric. He played catch and got on the floor to hold his son's feet in the correct batting stance. But Philip Holtz also suffered from polycystic kidney disease and required dialysis three times a week. "I played catch with my dad until he got too sick to," Holtz recalls. "It was a lot to ask of

a guy to take me to the park and play with me, because he was exhausted. But he always did."

After Holtz's father passed away at age 51, baseball filled a void. Two of his Little League coaches, both Puerto Rican, "almost adopted me as their own," including him in holidays and family vacations, "to make sure I wasn't alone." (His brother Steven, a retired attorney, "is not a baseball guy.") His father had been religious, and at age 13 his mother and a relative took Eric to Jerusalem for his bar-mitzvah at the Wailing Wall "out of respect

for my father." Holtz went onto attend New Rochelle Academy, where he was a varsity shortstop and pitcher.

In college, he butted heads with his coach. During the season, he left school to attend the funeral of a close friend who died in a car accident. "When I came home, the coach told me to clean out my locker. I'd let my teammates down. He didn't want me. I didn't pick up a baseball again until I was 35."

## Back in the Game

Fortunately, there were softballs to pick up. After getting a two-year degree in physical education, Holtz entered the apparel industry in marketing and sales. When he wasn't traveling the world for a women's clothing line — doing well enough to buy his own co-op in Hartsdale at the age of 21 — he was playing in several fast-pitch softball leagues in the city. He showed up for his own wedding in 1991 with three broken ribs from sliding into second. His fiancé told him to suck it up and smile for the photos.

"We should have frequent flier miles at the hospital," says Traci Holtz today. "He's always breaking something, coming home with a big raspberry on his leg." The two met in summer camp as kids and reconnected when working in the fashion industry. Traci now works as an administrator in the Mount Pleasant Central School District, overseeing student support services. "Being his wife is accepting that baseball is a big love of his life; it's part of the package."

Holtz honed his natural coaching talent on his own kids. All three were standouts at Valhalla High



School and have played in college: Jordan, 26, at Bucknell University; daughter Sydni, 22, at NYU; and Brett, 20, at Columbia University, where he's a junior. According to Holtz, all this diamond time kept his kids "away from video games and helped get them into great schools."

For Sydni, a pediatric oncology nurse at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, playing ball was a given. "From the moment I can remember anything, we have been breathing baseball and softball. I don't think we had a choice necessarily. Baseball is important to my dad because of losing his father when he was young.... The bond between us with the sport didn't compare to any other sport we tried."

But Holtz's sour college experience gnawed at him. In the year 2000, at age 35, he signed up for the first of several trips to New York Yankees Fantasy Camp in Tampa, Fla., where regular people pay to play and hang out with real live retired Yankees. The experience "rekindled my love and my passion for baseball." He got into age-group open league baseball and started "killing it" as a third baseman/pitcher. "I'm making the All-Star game every year, playing against kids half my age. It came back quick. I got so enthralled with it, the more I did it, the more I wanted to do it. Before you know it, I was going to Florida and Puerto Rico with travel teams, looking for more and better competition. I was playing so much I hurt my shoulder. I was broken."

## A Stitch in Time

For repairs, Holtz went to a good friend and softball teammate: Dr. Martin Levy, an orthopedic surgeon at Montefiore. "I talked him into fixing me. He said, 'Why don't you just stop pitching and play first base?' And I said 'Marty, I'm not ready for that! I've got a lot more life left in me!'" Levy did the surgery. Little did they know that years later, "I'd be contacted to do a feel-good story for Montefiore," says Holtz. Doctor and patient also starred in "Eric's Story," a short film that ran on the YES Network. "Without that surgery later in life, none of this would have happened."

Sometimes life takes a lucky hop. After his rehab, an old friend told Holtz about this new venture called the Israeli Baseball League. "I said, 'There is no baseball in Israel. None. Zero.'" The IBL was the quixotic dream of a millionaire Boston bagel maker who wanted to bring baseball to his spiritual homeland. They were having tryouts in the Berkshires. Holtz went "on a goof." He made the six-team league as a player/coach for the Bet Shemesh Blue Sox and spent two months playing in Israel, which has only one lighted field.

He got \$2,000 for the season



PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIC HOLTZ

"Eric is one of the most positive people I've ever met," says Team Israel pitcher Jonathan de Marte.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIC HOLTZ

The banner says it all.

and a wise-cracking star turn in a documentary about the league called *Holy Land Hardball*. But his pro debut paid off in other ways. In 2013 he was a hitting coach at Westchester Community College when a former IBL teammate recruited him as assistant coach to America's 18 and under team in the Maccabiah Games (a.k.a. "the Jewish Olympics"). Team USA won gold, and in 2017 Holtz returned as head coach. They won again, this time with son Brett playing first base. The next day, Peter Kurz, President of the Israel Association of Baseball, hired Holtz to coach the Israeli national team. "Eric is dedicated, a true mensch, high energy, a great motivator," says Kurz. "We needed a guy like him."

## Ascending to a New Level

Baseball remains a tough sell in Israel, a country the size of New Jersey with only 1,000 players. "Baseball requires patience, and the Israelis are not a patient people," Holtz explains. "When you're a kid you could wait five innings and not have a ball hit to you. Soccer and basketball are nonstop. Israel is not the baseball mecca of the world, but we have proven a lot of people wrong so far. We can compete with anybody out there."

Most of Team Israel's players are American Jews who played college and professional ball. Because they have to be Israeli citizens for Olym-

pic competition, Kurz arranged for all of them to obtain citizenship in Israel, a process called Aliyah, Hebrew for "ascending."

"Eric and I met a year and a half ago and I laid out the plan," Kurz explains. "I told him how I intended to bring American Jewish players on Aliyah. How we needed to win three tournaments in eight weeks in order to reach the Olympic qualifiers. How we could do well if our pitching held up, and how we could reach the Olympic Games in Tokyo. He looked at me like I was crazy, but immediately bought in because he has that crazy streak as well." Combined with the addition of six former MLB players, Team Israel had never been stronger.

The roster includes local legend Jonathan de Marte, the 2010 and 2011 New York State Gatorade Player of the Year from Yorktown Heights. He played for the University of Richmond and for independent leagues before Holtz recruited him for Team Israel. "Eric calls and says, 'I've watched you play for years, but I had no idea you were Jewish!'" says de Marte, who calls Holtz "one of the most positive, uplifting people I've ever met. He reminded us every day what we were playing for, who we were playing for, how it's on the international stage with all these eyes watching us. Thanked us for the effort we were putting in. He makes you feel your worth."

## Close to the Heart

Throughout their march to

the Olympics—Bulgaria, Lithuania, Germany, Italy—Holtz was flying back home to run Game On 13 and squeeze in his own game time. The training center has become a home base for Team Israel players like pitcher Gabe Cramer, a Stanford graduate who plays on an L.A. Dodgers' minor league team. Cramer says that for what Holtz lacked in professional baseball experience as a manager, he made up for in passion.

"Eric is very outspoken. He wears his emotions on his sleeve. He was able to rally the team and make us feel like we were all chasing a common goal."

Holtz wears his emotions elsewhere, too. In 2011, his mother's death prompted him to leave the apparel business and open Game On 13. "Her journey through pancreatic cancer is what made me change my career and do something I love every day, because you're not promised tomorrow." He pulls down his shirt collar to reveal two faces tattooed on his chest. "My parents are with me everywhere I go."

Philip and Rosalind Holtz were with their son as he led Team Israel to win after win in Europe. Holtz remembers how, "whenever the Israeli national anthem played, my hand was covering both of my parents." His voice breaks, his eyes mist up. "I was thinking of how proud they would be."

## Echoes of History

In early September, Team Israel arrived in Bonn, Germany, for the European Championships days before the 47th anniversary of the 1972 Munich massacre, where Palestinian terrorists murdered 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team. They were the first Israeli athletic team to compete in Germany since 1976. One team member's grandparents had survived Auschwitz.

"The experience transcended baseball," Holtz recalls. "Looking

around and understanding that 70 years prior I would've been killed just for being there. To compete against Germany and beat them on their soil was kind of life changing for me." Israel won a close and emotional game 5-4, before appreciative German fans. Holtz holds up the game ball, the only one he kept.

With a gleam in his eye, Holtz recounts the pep talk he gave on the team bus in Italy, with the Olympic Games on the line. "I pride myself on being incredibly even keeled during the game. Now, pregame? Postgame? I'm a lunatic. Five minutes before we got to the stadium I stood up and said, 'Gentlemen, there's nothing left to say. If you take care of business today, we leave the hotel as a baseball team and we come back as Olympians.' And the bus erupted." They trounced South Africa 11-1.

## Next Stop, Olympic Podium?

Holtz calls himself "a proud Jew, but I'm not religious. My religion is being good to people." He's fallen in love with Israel, and is thinking about living there someday, Traci willing. She is proud of her husband yet unfazed by recent events. "That's the way it's always been with Eric. You never know what's going to happen next." She attributes his success in part to his playful spirit. "He's still that boy on the street, ringing all the doorbells, saying, come on everybody, let's play!"

And doors are opening. Since winning a spot in the Tokyo Olympics, Holtz has met the Israeli ambassador and started a public speaking business, talking to synagogues and men's groups about baseball and life. The Jewish Broadcasting Service has invited him to a menorah-lighting for Chanukah. In November, Westchester Community College gave him an award for his contributions to its team. A few weeks ago, Peter Kurz gave him a call. "He said, 'Hey Holtz, you ever hear of the Washington Nationals?'" The World Series Champions had invited Team Israel to play a training game in Florida in February. With only six baseball teams playing in Tokyo, there's a good chance Holtz could add an Olympic medal to his memorabilia wall. Suddenly, that commercial needs a sequel.

"My whole life I've prided myself on being a good person and treating people the way I'd want to be treated. I think it worked in my favor this year, being hard-working and passionate and helping people set and achieve goals. I think some of mine came to fruition as well."

Writer Dana White lives in Ossining.



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## Obituaries

### Orazio Vassallo

Orazio Vassallo, 93, of White Plains, passed away on Nov. 30.

He was born on March 9, 1926 in Carini, Italy (Sicily) to Girolama Pagano and Giovanni Battista Vassallo.

He married his wife, Rosalia, on Jan. 14, 1956 in Italy.

Orazio was a construction laborer with Union Local 235 in White Plains for 10 years, retiring in 1980.

Orazio is survived by his four children: Mimma (Vincenzo) Pagano of Capaci, Italy; Angela Vassallo of White Plains, Maria (Giuseppe) Laudani of White Plains, and



John Vassallo of Myrtle Beach; a brother, Giuseppe Vassallo; two sisters, Caterina and Elena Vassallo; four grandchildren: Mimma DiMaggio, Rosalba Vassallo, Anna Maria Laudani, and Anthony Laudani; and five great grandchildren: Pietro DiMaggio, Gabriel DiMaggio, Mattia Vassallo, Edoardo Vassallo, and Valentina Laudani.

He is predeceased by his wife, Rosalia, his parents, his brothers Vincenzo and Pietro, and his sister, Maria.



## Non-Profit Groups Seek Higher Increases in 2020 County Budget

By Rick Pezzullo

More than 100 adults and children packed the Cortlandt Town Hall meeting room last week for a mini-public hearing on the proposed 2020 Westchester County budget.

For the first time in nine years and for only the second time in the last 19 years, a reduction in the county's property tax levy is being proposed by County Executive George Latimer in his \$2.1 billion spending plan.

If the proposed cut is approved by the Board of Legislators by Dec. 27, the size of the tax rate decrease would vary based on the equalization rates and assessment roles of each municipality.

None of the speakers who addressed members of the board's Budget and Appropriations Committee last week mentioned the tax decrease or the proposed 52 percent raises legislators are considering for themselves.

Instead, the focus was nonprofit childcare and arts organizations that have contracts with the county and are proposed to receive 3 percent increases. The budget also proposes to reduce the parent contribution for childcare from 27 to 25 percent next year.

Organization leaders from Open Door Medical Center, ArtsWestchester and the



RICK PEZZULLO PHOTO

Advocates for greater spending on child care were among those who attended a public hearing last week on the 2020 Westchester County budget in Cortlandt.

Pace Women's Justice Center, all maintained a 10 percent increase in county funding was needed for them to continue providing their services.

Legislator Catherine Borgia (D-Ossining), chair of the Budget and Appropriations Committee, explained that Dec. 2 was the last day legislators could add items to the

budget. A public hearing before the full 17-member board is scheduled for this Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. at the County Building in White Plains.

"We do try not to give people false hope," Borgia said.

Latimer explained last month a major reason for the county cutting the property tax levy was the Property Taxpayer Protection Act, which raised the sales tax on Aug. 1 from 7.375 to 8.375 percent, equalizing the tax in all of Westchester's municipalities. The action had bipartisan support from local and state governments, said

Latimer, who had pledged to keep property taxes flat for 2020 and 2021 if the county was approved for the sales tax increase.

With the extra funds, Latimer is proposing to add \$10 million to the county's fund balance to bring it to \$79 million, a 23 percent increase over the current year.

## City Lights, Bright Holiday Nights New Day/Time

The City of White Plains will kick off the start of the holiday season on Tuesday, Dec. 3 with its annual City Lights, Bright Holiday Nights Community Celebration from 6 to 8 p.m. at Court Street and Renaissance Plaza.

All are invited to attend and take in the sights and sounds of the season. Guests will enjoy music provided by the White Plains Youth Bureau Chorus, Ridgeway Alliance Chorus, Calvary Baptist Youth Choir, White Plains Chorale Singers, The White Plains Middle School Jazz Band, and the Archbishop Stepinac High School Chorus.

Santa will be making a special visit to Court Street for the occasion with his special guests the White Plains High School Marching Band. Also visiting the event will be Santa's friends Frosty and Rudolph. Other park activities include: A spectacular ice carving exhibit, holiday-themed tattoos, hands-on crafts, the Grinch, snow globe

photo booth (camera not provided), and an opportunity to write your letters to Santa.

Mayor Tom Roach will light the beautiful 24-foot tree in the park, decorated with LED lights to be enjoyed for the season. Complimentary refreshments will be provided.

Sponsors of this free event, open to all White Plains residents, are: Trader Joe's, Stop & Shop and Webster Bank.

WinterFest: The City's 5th annual WinterFest Holiday Market will once again be held on Court Street between Martine Avenue and Main Street (the same location as the Farmers' Market) in downtown White Plains. WinterFest offers a unique holiday shopping experience and is a great place to pick up unique holiday gifts.

WinterFest kicks off on Wednesday, Dec. 18 and runs through Monday, Dec. 23 and will be open Wednesday, Thursday and

Sunday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Monday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

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# Don't Understand Millennials? Maybe Reading This Will Help



By Erin Maher

My name is Erin, and I have a confession. I'm a millennial.

We get a bad rap. And why wouldn't we? Generally, born between 1981 and 1996, ours is the first generation capable of ordering a meal, finding a job, video-chatting with our general physician and securing a date, all from the comfort of our bed. I get it, I'd be jealous of me too.

We vape instead of smoke, love our boozy, bottomless brunches and have become the champion of avocado toast, the ubiquitous

millennial meal, which we probably munch on as we lounge on our parents' couch, as it takes us longer to move out compared to generations past.

By now, we've trashed those participation trophies from our youth, as we must rid ourselves of anything that doesn't "spark joy," under the pretense of cleaning maven/Netflix star Marie Kondo. And we'll probably dedicate a six-part Instagram post or an entire podcast episode

Millennial Matters

on the process, as anything we do in life must be documented as a testament to our "personal brand."

We travel the world in lieu of regular careers, a marriage and a mortgage. Because a one-way plane ticket to a faraway land where Sallie Mae doesn't reside is much more affordable than scrounging together enough cash for the down payment on a house as we struggle to climb out of the oppressive weight of student debt.

Any inconveniences in life we attribute to that pesky mercury in retrograde. Especially if, heaven forbid, our Amazon Prime packages arrive late or that restaurant we just ate at did not match its Yelp review.

Work for millennials is not just confined to the usual 9-to-5. Instead, work permeates into other facets of our life, and more often than not, our employer name can be found in both our LinkedIn and Instagram bios, blurring the lines between professional and personal.

And now, I'd like to officially join that cohort. At 28 years old, I am what I'd like to call a "mid-level" millennial and proud of it, and I think it's time that I give all my Westchester neighbors a glimpse into the millennial milieu.

This is the first of eight monthly columns, exploring various topics, such as money, love, education and other interests concerning the millennial generation. I am here to be the

unwanted, and certainly unasked for, voice for my generation.

It's not like my fellow millennials need me, either, since we have upwards of 280 characters to tweet out into the universe our most inane thoughts.

A bit about me: I'm a native of Westchester and a lifelong resident. I was born in White Plains Hospital and then returned there, 27 years later, to get my appendix removed. What can I say, I'm brand-loyal. I'm a former Valhalla Viking and can confidently say that I led the Lady Vikings tennis team to no league, sectional or state titles. We lost, and we did it well. I worked at the North White Plains branch of the North Castle Public Library throughout high school and college but the Dewey Decimal System still eludes me. It was at the library where I once accidentally locked a member of the North Castle Police Department in the men's room. Consider this a belated "my bad."

So welcome, my Westchester neighbors, to your crash-course in millennialism. Make sure to take notes, and yes, of course you can use your iPad.

Erin Maher is a writer in Westchester County. Find more of her musings at [www.erinmaherwrites.com](http://www.erinmaherwrites.com), or follow her on Twitter and Instagram @erinmaherwrites.

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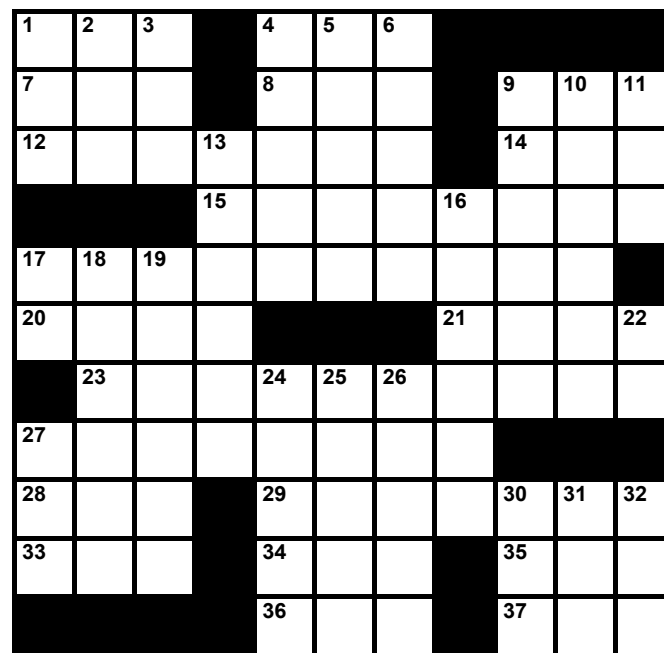
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## Crossword by Myles Mellor



37. Danson of 'CSI'
- Down**
1. Region of India
  2. Dance step
  3. Creature in "The Lord of the Rings"
  4. "Smart" guys
  5. Sphere
  6. "As the World Turns" actress
  9. Travel-guide listings
  10. French, melancholy
  11. Pocket-like structure
  13. Type of eucalyptus tree
  16. Elegant
  17. Topeka's state
  18. Six-legged

### Across

1. Fed's publisher
4. High school course
7. Rower
8. Zodiac sign
9. City map abbr.
12. Really funny
14. "Are you a man \_\_\_ mouse?"
15. Varied
17. The name of this White Plains dentist office is its goal

### 20. Hug and kiss, to a Brit

21. High, in combinations
23. Grouches
27. Mahopac sports bar, \_\_\_ Pub
28. Andes plant
29. A cord worn around the neck to hold a knife or whistle
33. \_\_\_ be nice if ...
34. Airline abbreviation
35. Fall month, abbr.
36. Deer's mom

### critter

19. Gadget
22. Exists
24. Irritated
25. Greek philosopher
26. Arm bones
27. French 'king'
30. Bug in a colony
31. Salmon eggs
32. Commonly rented item

*Solution on page 11*



# Tracking the Evolution of the Closet in the Home

When my wife and I bought our first home in the suburbs, it was an historic structure built in 1734, and indicative of the times, it had no closets.

A makeshift place for us to hang our clothes was in our bedroom where a clothes bar had been placed between the outcrop of the fireplace and the corner of the perpendicular wall.

Considering that in my younger days I was somewhat of a clothes horse, I was concerned. My wife took a larger linear closet, and in my smaller closet, I immediately doubled the hanging space by moving the clothes bar up as far as I could comfortably reach and installing a second clothes bar beneath that.

While today a closet is a little room where you hang your clothes, for much of its history it had served a different purpose entirely.

In the Middle Ages having a bedroom was a rarity, even a bit of a privilege. Most

ordinary people slept either on the floor of the great hall of the manor where they lived or in a single room that served multiple purposes as kitchen, living room, dining room and bedroom. Only very wealthy people had bedrooms, which were not just for sleeping but also for working and entertaining important guests. The bedroom, at this time, was not a very private place, which created a need for another space, to be known as the closet.

By the end of the Medieval period, well-to-do homeowners began adding small rooms adjoining their bedrooms as a place to store treasured possessions, but it was also a place for prayer, reading and quiet contemplation. It was by far the most private place in the house, and to this day the word "closet" can carry a meaning of secrecy and privacy.

In Europe, the closet eventually disappeared as houses grew larger and other rooms afforded opportunities for privacy. But the Puritans took the idea of a closet with them to the New World, although their use of it by then was simply a place to store things.

In older houses, closets are not as prevalent; there might not even be one in every bedroom because people then had a lot



By Bill Primavera

less clothing. It was much more likely that clothes were stored in a chest or armoire rather than hanging them in a closet. In fact, the coat hanger wasn't even invented until 1869. In that year, a shoulder-shaped hanger was invented by O. A. North of New Britain, Conn. An employee of the Timberlake Wire and Novelty Company, Albert J. Parkhouse of Jackson, Mich., has also been credited with the invention.

Today the closet is enjoying a bit of a resurgence, primarily because most Americans own (what would have been considered by the Puritans at least) enormous amounts of clothes. And hangers have diversified. There are shirt hangers, which should have divots or rubber-tipped ends to keep tank tops and silky fabrics from sliding off, pants hangers, sweater hangers, skirt hangers and suit jacket hangers.

The mania for luxury closets, such as those offered by California Closets, has even led to closets outfitted with sofas, vanities or desks, making them a sort of retiring room/boudoir in addition to a storage space.

Which means that these closets have, in fact, come completely full circle.

*Bill Primavera, a Realtor® who writes, or a writer who sells real estate, is associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of*

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**SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS**



# Following Wine from the Vineyard to Your Glass



By Nick Antonaccio

When we are enjoying a glass of wine, we invariably immerse our senses in its particular aromas, flavors, tannins and acid profiles. This is the crux of wine appreciation.

Yet while evaluating and assessing the wine at hand, we instinctively compare it to the same wine from a different vintage, or a different location within the region, or a different region. We discern the unique characteristics of a 2015 French Pinot Noir from a particular producer, as compared to one from the same producer but a previous vintage, as compared to one from a neighboring producer, or a producer beyond the next hill or a producer halfway around the globe. The same grape, grown and vinified in differing environments, may produce a unique wine.

The traits and characteristics of a wine are as much attributable to nature as they are to natural science. In the hands of a talented winemaker, that 2015 French Pinot Noir you enjoy is the result of personal choices made in the vineyard and in the winery.

Wine is a living, breathing organism, and as such, each vintage reacts to the ever-changing climactic environment in the vineyard and the direct influence of the winemaker's application of natural and man-created processes and procedures. It is this interplay between man and nature that

attracts us to one producer over another.

The evolution of wine as it ages in bottle is dependent on a number of factors. The compounds of wine interact with each other throughout its life. The effect of oxygen, tannins, acids and other elements continually change our experience of wine. Should we consume a bottle early in its development? Or let it age for several years, even decades, to provide for the ideal interaction of these basic elements?

There are a number of factors at work that will potentially influence each bottle of wine. Even as you open and pour the Nectar of the Gods, the evolution continues. Many wines improve when exposed to air; the aromas and flavors that have been tightly confined since bottling are released when they come in contact with oxygen. But most do not; they begin to deteriorate quickly.

Wine, in its most elemental form, is a fruit derivative and is perishable. It's just a question of time before oxygen accomplishes its dastardly deed – oxidation and spoilage.

This week we'll explore a wine's evolution from several additional influences.

Soil and climate affect the ripening and maturation of wine in varying manners. Each has an impact on the final product. However, once bottled, the natural chemical

compounds in the juice and skins of crushed and fermented grapes continue to influence the wine.

1. Esters contribute to a wine's aroma. These compounds are created during fermentation from the chemical reaction of alcohol, acid, yeast and hydrogen. For example, the concentration of esters will influence the signature aromas of Cabernet Sauvignon, in its younger years in bottle and then again as it changes in its later years. The black fruit aromas may dominate initially, but over time may dissipate and earthy aromas may come to the forefront. Ester creation

and evolution may differ greatly by vintage, vineyard or producer.

2. Phenolic compounds in the skins of red grapes affect the taste of wine throughout its life. They vary by grape, by fermentation method and by length of aging. One of the most influential is tannin. Simply described as imparting a bitter, mouth-puckering effect in a young wine, tannins change as they age. They combine with other tannin compounds, changing their chemical structure, losing their strength and thus creating a more supple, often silky, taste.

Wine aging is a science. Chemical compounds influence the ageability of a bottle of wine and its evolution. Understanding

their impact on a specific wine – and the artful influence of a winemaker – will greatly assist a consumer in finding a palate-pleasing wine.

We'll explore additional factors affecting the ageability and aging of wine in a future column.

*Nick Antonaccio is a 40-year Pleasantville resident. For over 25 years he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. Nick is a member of the Wine Media Guild of wine writers. 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.*

**You Heard It  
Through the  
Grapevine**





# Happenings

## Tuesday, Dec. 3

**City Lights, Bright Holiday Nights:** New day and time. The City of White Plains will kick off the start of the holiday season with its annual City Lights, Bright Holiday Nights Community Celebration from 6 to 8 p.m. at its new location on Court Street and Renaissance Plaza.

**Pet Adoption:** Everything You Need to Know. Open to anyone interested in or involved with the adoption process, including professionals, community members, expectant parents, adoptive or prospective adoptive parents and adoptees. Come learn about the domestic adoption process and meet the staff of Forever Families Through Adoption (FFTA). FFTA is Hague accredited and authorized in New York and Connecticut. Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library, 1 Haseco Ave., Port Chester. 6 to 7:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-939-1180, visit [www.foreverfamiliesthroughadoption.org](http://www.foreverfamiliesthroughadoption.org) or e-mail [adopt@ForeverFamiliesThroughAdoption.org](mailto:adopt@ForeverFamiliesThroughAdoption.org).

## Wednesday, Dec. 4

**Lunchtime Meditation.** A weekly meditation program. Brief beginning instruction will be followed by meditation. No experience or special equipment needed. A guest instructor will lead the program the first Wednesday of each month; 12:15 to 1 p.m. White Plains Library, 100 Martine Ave., White Plains.

**Noontime Getaway Concert.** Downtown Music at Grace presents Jörg-Michael Schwarz, baroque violin and Dongsok Shin, harpsichord, principals of the internationally acclaimed REBEL Ensemble for Baroque Music continue their survey of the treasures of the high baroque with a concert featuring the works of Handel, Telemann and Mascitti. 12:10 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church, White Plains. Free 30-minute concert, donation recommended. This concert is made possible, in part, with the generous support of Ralph E. Penney, CFP, White Plains.

**Marketing Your Business.** A workshop for business owners seeking an overview of the entire range of options for marketing their business. Learn how to create and build a marketing strategy and develop marketing tactics for your target audience and more. SCORE Headquarters, 120 Bloomingdale Rd., White Plains. 1 to 3 p.m. Free. Registration required. Info and registration: Visit [www.westchester.score.org](http://www.westchester.score.org).

**“The Irishman.”** Robert DeNiro, Al Pacino and Joe Pesci star in master filmmaker Martin Scorsese’s epic saga of organized crime in post-war America told through the eyes of World War II veteran Frank Sheehan (DeNiro), a hustler and hitman who worked alongside some of the most notorious figures of the 20th century. Spanning decades, the film chronicles one of the greatest unsolved mysteries in American history, the disappearance of legendary union boss Jimmy Hoffa (Pacino),

and offers a monumental journey through the hidden corridors of organized crime, its inner workings, rivalries and connections to mainstream politics. Jacob Burns Film Center, 364 Manville Rd., Pleasantville. 2 and 7 p.m. Members: \$12. Non-members: \$17. Info and tickets: Visit [www.burnsfilmcenter.org](http://www.burnsfilmcenter.org).

## Thursday, Dec. 5

**John Jay Homestead Holiday Tour.** John Jay Homestead State Historic Site will offer holiday tours of the historic house. Tour John Jay’s 1820s home in retirement and discover what the winter holiday season would have been like for Jay and his family. Period decorations, historic foods and candlelight help celebrate the season. In the gallery is a specially curated exhibition featuring holiday-themed artifacts used by multiple generations of the Jay family. John Jay Homestead State Historic Site, 400 Jay St. (Route 22), Katonah. 1 and 3 p.m. \$10. Seniors and students: \$7. Members and children (12 and under): Free. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through Dec. 28. Info and tickets: Visit [www.johnjayhomestead.org](http://www.johnjayhomestead.org).

**Gallery Nite Out:** ArtsWestchester Holiday Mixer. Join the merrymaking, enjoy light bites and cocktails, view the Dataism exhibit, shop for holiday gifts and dance the night away to music. Plus, enjoy do-it-yourself holiday crafting. ArtsWestchester, 31 Mamaroneck Ave., White Plains. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. \$25 (includes two drink tickets). Members: \$20. Info and tickets: Visit [www.artswestchester.org](http://www.artswestchester.org).

**“A Hidden Life.”** An advance screening of this film based on real events from three-time Academy Award nominee and visionary writer-director Terrence Malick. Starring August Diehl and Valerie Pachner, it is the story of an unsung hero, Franz Jägerstätter, who refused to fight for the Nazis in World War II. When the Austrian peasant farmer is faced with the threat of execution for treason, it is his unwavering faith and his love for his wife Fani and children that keeps his spirit alive. Premiered at the 72nd Cannes Film Festival where it won the Francois Chalais Award. The Picture House Regional Film Center, 175 Wolfs Lane, Pelham. 7:30 p.m. \$15. Seniors, students and members: \$12. Info and tickets: Visit [www.thepicturehouse.org](http://www.thepicturehouse.org).

## Friday, Dec. 6

**Westchester’s Winter Wonderland.** Celebrate the holidays close to home. A one-of-a-kind holiday experience featuring Santa’s Village, amusement rides, unlimited skating on an outdoor ice rink (skates included), the Winter Wonderland Holiday Circus, food and beverage options and a dazzling light show. Kensico Dam Plaza, 1 Bronx River Parkway, Valhalla. 5 to 10 p.m. \$20. Children (under 3): Free. Fridays from 5 to 10 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays 4 to 10 p.m. through Dec. 22. From Dec. 23 through Jan. 4, 5 to 10 p.m. on weekdays and 4 to 10 p.m. on weekends. Closed Dec.

The Examiner is happy to help spread the word about your community event. Please submit your information at least three weeks prior to your event to [pcasey@theexaminernews.com](mailto:pcasey@theexaminernews.com). For a full listing of the upcoming week’s events, visit [www.theexaminernews.com](http://www.theexaminernews.com) and click on **Happenings**.

24 and 25. Info and tickets: Visit [www.winterwonderland.com](http://www.winterwonderland.com).

**Westchester Photographic Society: Photo Competition.** Members compete in digital competitions of color and “open mind.” Critiqued by a professional judge. For adults 18 years old and up. Westchester Community College’s Technology Building, Room 107, 75 Grasslands Rd., Valhalla. (Use Parking Lot 11) 8 p.m. Free. Info: 914-827-5353 or visit [www.wpsphoto.org](http://www.wpsphoto.org).

## Saturday, Dec. 7

**Holiday Train Show.** Looking for a fun experience this holiday season for you and your family? Enjoy zooming freight cars, flashing bells, tooting whistles and more at one of our most popular events. A thrill for all ages. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Members and children (under 2): Free. Non-member adults: \$10. Non-member seniors and students: \$9. Non-member children (2-12 years old): \$8. Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 15. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit [www.greenburghnaturecenter.org](http://www.greenburghnaturecenter.org).

**Hoff-Barthelson Music School Annual Holiday Music Festival.** A weekend of music and fun for the entire family. Enjoy performances by student ensembles, find a special holiday gift at the holiday boutique or online auction and feast on international cuisine and scrumptious desserts. All welcome. Hoff-Barthelson Music School, 25 School Lane, Scarsdale. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission. Info: 914-723-1169, visit [www.hbms.org](http://www.hbms.org) or e-mail [hb@hbms.org](mailto:hb@hbms.org).

**Margaret Eberle Fair Trade Festival and Crafts Fair.** The WESPAC Foundation, Memorial United Methodist Church, the Walkabout Clearwater Sloop, Inc. and the Westchester Martin Luther King, Jr. Institute for Nonviolence will be hosting this annual event providing an array of unusual and affordable items, created and sold with a conscience. Items sold will benefit the artisans who created them. Some artisans are local, while other artisans are from Asia, Africa and South American countries. Merchandise include pottery, bead work, baskets, fabrics, jewelry, mosaics, aromatherapy and body care products, organic beauty products, quilts, tablecloths, organic fair trade chocolate, cocoa, coffee, tea, olive oils, scarves, ornaments, recycled rice bag products, wallets, totes, tee shirts, linens, sculptures, decorative planters, gloves, shawls, scrimshaw jewelry, and earthenware. Live music performed throughout the day will feature saxophonist Art Bennett, Jenny Murphy, The LOFT Pride Chorus and the Walkabout Clearwater Chorus. Homemade baked goods, hot food, bread and fair-trade coffee/tea will be available for purchase. Some proceeds will go toward supporting the Sunrise Movement, a youth-led climate justice movement. 250 Bryant Ave., White Plains. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Suggested donation: \$5.

**Katonah Museum of Art’s Artisan Jewelry Pop Up Shop.** Just in time for the holiday season, the Katonah Museum of Art

invites jewelry lovers and holiday shoppers to explore and shop this exceptional selection of jewelry, curated by Pam Levine, by nine of the most respected contemporary award-winning artisans, designers and craftsmen. Many of these jewelry designers have work in collections of major museums and exhibit in top galleries worldwide. For those looking to gift themselves or others, there is a wide range of materials and techniques – traditional, high-tech and cutting edge – intricately beaded textiles, handblown glass, custom-cut gemstones, 3-D printing, diamond inlay, brass, bronze, coins, silver and gold. Visitors can meet the artists and learn what inspires them. Katonah Museum of Art, 134 Jay St., Katonah. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission. Also Dec. 8 from 12 to 5 p.m. Info: 914-232-9555 or visit [www.katonahmuseum.org](http://www.katonahmuseum.org).

**Winter Hike.** Join the hike and, if there is snow, look at the animals’ tracks. Cranberry Lake Preserve, 1609 Old Orchard St., North White Plains. 2 to 3 p.m. Free. Info: 914-428-1005.

**Westchester Choral Society Holiday Concert.** A selection of holiday favorites, including Vivaldi’s “Gloria,” “O Magnum Mysterium” by Morten Lauridsen, “Hanerot Halalu, A Song for Hanukah” by Baruch J. Cohon and “Christmas Day, Choral Fantasy” by Gustav Holst. Also featuring the Queens Consort Baroque Ensemble led Associate Music Director David Baranowski. Rye Presbyterian Church, 882 Boston Post Rd., Rye. 3 p.m. \$25. Students: \$10. Info: Visit [www.westchesterchoralsociety.org](http://www.westchesterchoralsociety.org).

**Dickens’ “Christmas Carol.”** After a celebrated fall season performing Irving’s ‘Legend,’ master storyteller Jonathan Kruk, along with musical accompaniment, returns to bring new life to the classic Dickens story of Ebenezer Scrooge, the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future and Tiny Tim in this Historic Hudson Valley production. Old Dutch Church, Route 9, Sleepy Hollow. 3:30, 4:45 and 6 p.m. Adults: \$25. Children (under 18): \$20. (Historic Hudson Valley members receive a \$5 per ticket discount.) Also Dec. 8, 14 and 15. Info and tickets: Visit [www.hudsonvalley.org](http://www.hudsonvalley.org).

Crossword Solution from page 9												
1	G	2	P	O		4	A	5	R	6	T	
7	O	A	R			8	L	E	O		9	H
12	A	S	C	R	E	A	M			14	O	R
						15	E	C	L	E	16	C
17	K	18	I	D	S	M	I	L	E	S		
20	S	N	O	G						21	A	L
		23	S	O	U	R	P	25	U	S	S	E
27	R	E	D	M	I	L	L	S				
28	O	C	A			29	L	A	N	Y	30	A
33	I	T	D			34	E	T	A		35	N
						36	D	O	E		37	T



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### LEGALS

**Town of Putnam Valley Special Meeting Agenda December 4, 2019 5 PM** 1. Pledge of Allegiance 2. Set Public Hearing for De-icer Law as December 11th at the Fire House, 5 PM. 3. Waive permit and building fees for the Fire Department building. 4. Waive all Building fees for the

Kasper Property sale. 5. Authorize the Supervisor to waive the \$17.50 fee for marriage license only for active members of the armed forces.

### MISCELLANEOUS

**WAREHOUSE SAMPLE SALE** up to 80% off. December 6th & 7th from 10 AM to 4PM. Specialty gloves from all famous brands. Dress, skiing, motorcycling, gardening, hunting. Olympia, 500 Executive Blvd., Elmsford, NY. (914) 347-4737 or (917) 608-3738.

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# The WHITE PLAINS Examiner Sports

## White Plains Defeats Stepinac, 5-2, in Fifth Annual Guy Mathews Invitational

By Albert Coqueran

If local fans think that the Thanksgiving Holiday Turkey Bowl in the City of White Plains is an event of the past; they should have been at Ebersole Ice Rink on Saturday for the Fifth Annual Guy Mathews Thanksgiving Hockey Invitational.

The five-day event from Wednesday, Nov. 27- Monday, Dec. 2 (no games on Thanksgiving Day,) features 10 teams vying for Championships in three different Divisions. Nonetheless, the highlight for local hockey fans is the White Plains High School versus Stepinac High School hockey game dubbed the "Frozen Turkey Bowl."

About 1000 fans including students, parents, alumni, teachers and administrators filled the bleachers and encircled every inch of Ebersole Ice Rink for the rivalry contest on Saturday, which faced off at 7:30 p.m. The event is organized with the valuable assistance of the White Plains High School Ice Hockey Parents Association headed by Jerilyn Myers.

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano attended the game with his wife CBS News Anchor Mary Calvi, who despite their demanding schedules hardly ever missed their son



City of Yonkers Mayor Michael Spano flashes his ticket for entry into the Fifth Annual Guy Mathews Hockey Invitational while being greeted by fans. Spano and his wife CBS News Anchor Mary Calvi (not pictured) are ever present for Stepinac hockey games. Their son junior Chris Spano is the second-generation goalie for the Crusaders succeeding his brother Michael who graduated in 2017.



ALBERT COQUERAN PHOTOS

White Plains junior forward John Myers (center) has a big hug for former teammates Maya Lynch-Samant (left) and Justin Schulz after they presented him the MVP of the Game Award after the Tigers beat the Crusaders, 5-2, in the Guy Mathews Invitational. It was Myers third straight year winning the MVP of the Game Award.

Chris Spano's games. Crusaders junior goalie Chris Spano is the second-generation Spano brother in the net for the Crusaders succeeding his brother Michael who graduated in 2017.

"Our sons love goal tending. They were always goaltenders or defensemen in any sport they played. It is a lot of fun and today's game, playing White Plains, is always a lot of



Stepinac Stephen Stackhouse (left) and White Plains Devin Garnett face-off to begin the "Frozen Turkey Bowl" at Ebersole Ice Rink.

fun. It is our seventh game in a row here and we are looking forward to the game," stated Yonkers Mayor Spano, upon arriving for the event.

The WPHS Hockey Thanksgiving Invitational was renamed the Coach Guy Mathews Thanksgiving Invitational Ice Hockey Tournament by Tigers Head Hockey Coach Howard Rubenstein after the passing of WPHS longtime hockey coach, guidance counselor and friend Guy Mathews in 2014.

"It is fantastic, many of the students who are in the school now never got the chance to meet Mr. Mathews but we never let his memory go," acknowledged Rubenstein. "Guy Mathews was White Plains High School Hockey and we play as hard as we can in his memory every single game," stated Rubenstein, who also named the Tigers locker room trailer after his late friend Mathews.

For the third straight year the White Plains Tigers defeated the Stepinac Crusaders in the "Frozen Turkey Bowl" in the Guy Mathews Thanksgiving Hockey Invitational. The Tigers outlasted the Crusaders, 5-2, for the City of White Plains high school hockey bragging rights.

The first period saw back-and-forth goals



Stepinac John Heaney (center) was presented the Stepinac Player of the Game Award. The award was presented by White Plains Hockey alumni Maya Lynch-Samant (left) and Justin Schulz who both graduated in 2018.

by Stepinac and White Plains. Crusaders A.J. Falciglia scored first with a goal at 13:40. Then White Plains stickman Jason Monte came back four minutes later bouncing the puck of the shoulder of Crusaders goalie Spano for a score.

As fans screamed and pounded the protective shield encompassing the Ebersole Rink, the game ended in a tie at the end of the first period. White Plains resident Aidan McDonough scored at 6:22 for the Crusaders and Tigers Devin Garnett responded at 4:38 to tie the score.

However, the White Plains skaters led by MVP of the Game junior forward John Myers scored three unanswered goals in the last two periods to win the traditional ice hockey rivalry game, 5-2.

Myers scored the go-ahead goal in the second period, the only score of that period. Then, after Tigers sophomore forward Daniel Cardozo scored early in the third period, Myers scored his second goal of the game stifling the Crusaders, 5-2. "I think after they (Stepinac) scored that first goal, we knew it was a game and we had to turn things around quick and we did," commented Myers, the Tigers Team Captain.

Besides Myers' two goals, he also had two assists and Garnett had one goal and three assists. Crusaders Stephen Stackhouse assisted McDonough on his goal.



..... EXAMINER SPORTS .....

# White Plains Track Teams Look to Repeat as League Champs

By Rob DiAntonio

Both the boys and girls White Plains indoor track and field teams won league championships last season and winning another title is one of their primary goals during the 2019-2020 season.

“We are trying to defend our title and obviously trying to get our athletes in as many of the quality meets as possible by hitting standards,” White Plains girls track and field coach Fred Singleton said. “We have a good and eager group. Hopefully, we can rise to the occasion and see what we can do.”

The girls team has a deep roster and some of their key competitors are freshman Arianna Allende (distance), senior Amanda Antenucci (distance), senior Guerdyna Gelin (sprints), freshman Sophie Ginsberg (distance), senior Taylor Johnson (middle distance), junior Mia Lueth (distance), junior Winnie Mann (distance), junior Jade Palmer-Johnson (jumps/sprints), sophomore Mia Priore (race walk), eighth-grader Abigail Roman (distance), senior Rebecca Salim (jumps/sprints), junior Raquel Sariq (sprints), sophomore Zeta Soares (sprints), sophomore Rina Stanghellini (middle distance), senior Janai Goodman (sprints/relay), senior Morgan Kind (sprints) and junior Nyah Victoria (sprints).

Ginsberg is coming off a strong season in cross country after being named to the Westchester County first team. Roman was named third team all-county.

“I think they’re going to make a very big impact,” Gelin said. “Although they do run cross country, they’re also very good at track events like the 800 and can run a solid 400. I’m really excited to see what they have in store for track season.”

Gelin competes in anywhere from the 55



Freshman Sophie Ginsberg was first team Westchester County in cross country and will lead the Tiger girls in distance events.



ROB DIANTONIO PHOTOS

White Plains seniors Sebastian Quinn, left, and Justin Baez will lead the boys team in the distance events.

meters to the 400 including the relays.

“This season I kind of just want to start off around the times I left off with last season and just build from there,” she said.

Goodman said she’s setting a goal to push herself harder than the day before.

“When you’re younger, you’re not always the best, but then you push yourself to become better,” she said. “I expect to be better. Last year we won indoor and outdoor league for the girls and I expect us to just bring it.”

Singleton said the girls team is “pretty well-rounded.”

“The distance runners seem to be a strength based on what happened in cross country,” he said. “I’m hopeful they’ll make the adjustment to indoor track and continue their excellence. We also have quite a few good sprinters. Mia Priore is a good walker. And we’re hopefully we can hold our own in the field events with a person like Jade Palmer-Johnson.”

Some of the key athletes for the boys



The Tigers warm up during a practice last Tuesday.

are Tim DuBois (high jump), Saheed Baize (throwing events), Mason Lang (multiple events), Dom Bacchus (sprints), Brian Artis (sprints), Sebastian Quinn (distance), Justin Baez (distance), Jared Villa (sprints) and Xavier Andrade (sprints).

“My expectations are very high,” White Plains boys coach Daniel Furry said. “We have a lot of talent on our team this year and a lot of experienced people coming back. We’re very optimistic. We’re going to have to work hard and stay focused.”

Furry said the Tigers have been strong in the sprints and distance races the past few years, but he said they’ll be solid in the field as well.

“We have several really good jumpers and throwers,” Furry said. “We also have some good hurdlers. We’re really well balanced this year.”

Baez and Quinn, who are both seniors, competed in cross-country this fall and are primed for a big season in the distance events.

“We definitely have a good group of guys,” said Quinn, whose individual goal is to break 9:50 in the 3,200 meters. “We have some serious sprinters, who are looking forward to the season and I think they’re going to perform well. We have a good distance squad coming back from cross country. We have high expectations and I think we’re going to do well.”

Baez, who Furry expects to make the section finals in the 1,000, said he is setting the bar high for himself this season. He also competes in the 4x400-and 4x800-meter relays and the mile.

“I surprised myself last season, especially in the 800 in outdoor,” Baez said. “I’m mainly focusing on the 1,000 and maybe getting under that 2:40 mark. I also found the 400 is one of my favorite events and I think I’m pretty good at it too.”

DuBois, who has eclipsed 6-feet in the high jump, used to always play basketball in the winter but is competing in winter track for the first time.

“We’re excited to have him for indoor and outdoor track,” Furry said. “He worked hard throughout the summer and in the fall he did football. He went to camp and ran on an AAU team. I think he’s going to be pretty good this year.”

Furry expects Baize to thrive in the shot put and weight throw. Lang, a sophomore, is a multi-dimensional athlete who will be one of the top sprinters and throwers. “He can do anything you ask him to do,” Furry said of Lang.

The Tigers have over 170 athletes combined between their freshman, JV and varsity boys and girls indoor track and field teams.

White Plains’ track and field teams will kick off the season at the North Shore Season Opener at the Armory Track and Field Center on Dec. 6.

“I think we feel like we’re the best team in our league,” Furry said of the boys’ squad. “We’re going to have to prove that and work hard every day. Everyone else is looking at us and we kind of have a target on our back. I think we have a really good chance at winning our league again this year.”



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