



The WHITE PLAINS Examiner

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SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

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White Plains Man Charged for Murder of City Resident

By Adam Stone

White Plains police have arrested a 25-year-old city resident for the murder last week of Deron Strange.

On May 27, Strange, a 35-year-old White Plains resident, had a dispute with the alleged murderer, Brandon Williams, police said. The two had been seen hanging out that day, police maintain. Williams shot Strange in the torso late Wednesday night in White Plains, six minutes before midnight, according to police.

On Friday night, less than 72 hours later, police apprehended Williams in the eight o'clock hour. The suspect had been hiding out at a hotel on Corporate Drive in Harrison, Commissioner David Chong said. Police had learned Williams was hiding in the hotel, and setup a perimeter outside. In

speaking with hotel security and management, police established Williams was inside the hotel. When he tried to sneak out, police apprehended the suspect.

In addition to receiving assistance from the F.B.I.'s violent felony task force, White Plains police also benefited from receiving cooperation from members of the community when gathering information, the commissioner stressed.

"People in the community won't tolerate this kind of violence," Chong said. "I appreciate the community working with us."

Williams, whose last known address is

159 South Lexington Avenue, was known to White Plains police, as was Strange. Both had criminal records, according to police, but people who knew and loved Strange want people to remember all of his positive qualities.

"Deron was a wonderful father and an amazing husband," said a local resident who asked to remain anonymous, also noting funeral arrangements have not yet been made. "Deron was always the life of the party. People always loved him. He was a very wise man and al-

ways helping people."

Police did perform CPR on Strange

Wednesday night. Strange was still alive when rushed to White Plains Hospital but died in the wee hours Thursday morning, at about 3 a.m.

Chong did note how Williams has already "lawyered up," but that police have gathered substantial evidence resulting from a search warrant they executed at the man's home and for the hotel where he was hiding. The evidence does "tie him to the homicide," Chong said.

Williams has been booked on several serious felony charges: Murder Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Weapon 2nd degree, Criminal use of a Firearm First Degree and Reckless Endangerment First Degree. He's also been charged with Criminal Mischief Second Degree.

"My compliments to the community and to detectives on a great job," Chong said.



BRANDON WILLIAMS

White Plains Top Cop Speaks Out About George Floyd

White Plains Police Public Safety Commissioner David Chong, a former commanding officer of counterterrorism for the New York City Police Department just after 9/11, grew animated Saturday afternoon in a conversation with *The White Plains Examiner* as protests continued in Westchester and in cities across the country in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who knelt on the neck of Floyd as he pleaded for his life, desperately explaining he couldn't breathe. Chong, who consulted Ferguson on police chief applicants after the police shooting of Michael Brown in 2014, has been the City of White Plains top cop since 2010.

An excerpt of Chong's commentary:

"Our officers are part of the community, I'm behind our boys in blue but when we see an atrocity like what we saw, that was an absolute atrocity. It sickened me to my stomach. It sickened me to the deepest part of my core. The other officers just let it happen. That's certainly not how we're trained. Everyone has adrenaline and we're trained to intercept, to protect everyone in-

involved. Fellow police officers need to step in. It should be so easy to arrest them. You have the videotape, at least charge them. Anyone else would be charged right away. We can arrest on probable cause. You can't tell me that video is not probable cause. Make an arrest and let the D.A. figure out the charges from there. I can understand the hurt in the community. We did well with the community with our protest in White Plains. My issue is the violence brings us backwards. People have an absolute right to be upset and to demonstrate. My issue is the destruction. The death of George Floyd can get lost. We can't forget about the victims. Police officers are members of the community too and the videotape is just horrific. It sets us back so far in terms of relations with the community. It's just the saddest thing. The destruction has to stop. Ferguson was left with no downtown. We can't have that, it serves no one's interests. Our officer's main job is to protect and serve. We only use force as a last resort during a criminal apprehension. The force stops once the person is under control."



PHOTO BY ANDREW COURTNEY

Rallying for Justice for All

Combe, an international personal care innovator based in White Plains, reached out to lend a helping hand in the fight against COVID-19 by donating \$50,000 for PPE plus 10,000 units of hand sanitizer products to White Plains Hospital. Keech Combe Shetty, Executive Chair, and Akshay Shetty, CEO, made the donation to White Plains Hospital's President & CEO, Susan Fox. White Plains Hospital has treated the most COVID-19 patients in the region and this donation helps support the essential healthcare heroes on the frontlines fighting the global pandemic.

White Plains Farmers Market Opens for Season After Delay

By Bridget Bonanni

The White Plains Farmers Market, one of the most well-attended in Westchester, opened for the season last Wednesday after it was delayed for a month because of the coronavirus.

The market was originally planned to open April 22 at its customary location on Court Street between Main Street and Martine Avenue.

Aside from the late start, the market this year will be different. New guidelines have been instituted to limit the spread of the virus.

Masks are required upon entering, vendors will be spaced at least six feet apart and market personnel will be monitoring the flow of the market to ensure social distancing. On its first day, there were just 10 vendors on one side of the street, far less than in previous years.

Despite the restrictions and



PHOTO BY BRIDGET BONANNI

GREG TOSTO OF MOZZARELLA4U

the challenges, the market's vendors are starting off the season with an optimistic attitude.

Amal Solomon, owner of Irvington Delight market, makes and sells authentic Middle Eastern food. She had to close her business for two months, but is

now handling both takeout and delivery and participating in various markets.

"I think it's just the right time (for the market to open), it's time for people to get out, a lot of businesses have been closed for a long time and are not doing too good,

so this is a big boost. It's definitely helpful for us," Solomon said.

Last Wednesday was her first time vending at a market this season. While opening day was a bit quiet because local offices are closed and not all of the vendors are ready to sell, Solomon said she has seen a few of her regular customers already.

Not all businesses have closed, though. Don Apolito, owner of Kariba Farm, runs a café selling his products in the Galleria Mall down the street, but that operation had to shutter when the shutdown was invoked in March. But Kariba Farm stayed open in another way at the market, where he has been a vendor for three years.

Kariba Farm packages and sells about 170 all-organic and all-natural dried fruit and nuts.

"We're still essential, we supply to ShopRite and Whole Foods... so we're still open and still operating," Apolito said.

He also participates as a ven-

dor in five other markets. This is the only one Apolito in Westchester, since his business is based in Morris County, N.J.

Greg Tosto, the owner of Mozzarella4U, has been operating at various markets that have been allowed to stay open during the harsh times of the pandemic.

Tosto makes and sells mozzarella cheese in about 200 varieties and continues to try to reinvent his business. A veteran of the White Plains market, he can be found on Court Street every Wednesday during this season.

"Believe it or not, I'm not going to say we're doing better, but the business is maintained and it has done well," Tosto said. "In my opinion, it's only because people don't want to sit around and shop, they want to pick up and go, they don't want to stay in the store."

The White Plains Farmers Market will be open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Wednesday through November 25.

Greenburgh to Appeal Edgemont Incorporation Court Ruling

By Rick Pezzullo

The Greenburgh Town Board has decided to appeal a Supreme Court judge's decision to give residents the power to incorporate the Edgemont section of Greenburgh as the town's seventh village.

On May 21, Susan Cacace, Acting Justice of the Supreme Court of New York, rejected and set aside Supervisor Paul Feiner's decision denying the sufficiency of the Edgemont Incorporation Committee's petition and ordered the town clerk to schedule a vote within 40 days.

The next day, the town board, on advice of legal counsel, opted to take its case to the

Appellate Division.

"I remain confident that this decision will also be overturned by the Appellate Division," Feiner stated. "The petitioner must meet the full requirements and obligations of New York State Village Law. I believe that a matter as potentially damaging to our town as the incorporation of Edgemont requires a strict interpretation of the law."

In February 2018, Greenburgh also came up short in court over the same issue. However, in October 2018 the Appellate Division ruled the petition to incorporate Edgemont was invalid.

At that time, the court determined the petition did not include an accurate list of

the regular inhabitants of the proposed village and failed to include a description of the territory to be incorporated that was

sufficient to identify the location and extent of the proposed village with "common certainty," as required by Village Law.



White Plains Hospital Gets a Helping Hand

Combe, an international personal care innovator based in White Plains, reached out to lend a helping hand in the fight against COVID-19 by donating \$50,000 for PPE plus 10,000 units of hand sanitizer products to White Plains Hospital. Keech Combe Shetty, Executive Chair, and Akshay Shetty, CEO, made the donation to White Plains Hospital's President & CEO, Susan Fox. White Plains Hospital has treated the most COVID-19 patients in the region and this donation helps support the essential healthcare heroes on the frontlines fighting the global pandemic.

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SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Westchester Forms Task Force to Help Businesses Reopen

By Martin Wilbur

Westchester County named more than two dozen people affiliated in a wide range of services and industries to a newly-constituted Reopening Task Force on Monday hoping to help businesses successfully transition back into operation.

Led by County Legislator Catherine Parker (D-Rye) and restaurateur Lou Lanza, who are the task force's co-chairs, its purpose is to help re-energize commerce safely and assist business owners wade through guidelines that will have to be followed, said County Executive George Latimer.

"We have to open this society economically, we have to do it in a way that does not add to the contagion and the danger that people may have from this virus, second wave, what's ever coming next, and we have to do it in a cooperative and inclusive way, and by God, we will do that," Latimer said.

Representatives from nearly every sector will be involved, including business groups, nonprofit organizations, healthcare, the arts, construction, labor, real estate, clergy and other areas.

Parker, a small business owner in her home community for 23 years, said the task force will seek to work as a unifying voice.

"I think that this is going to be a way to get Westchester back where we were and probably even better than before because we do know that certainly some aspects of small business in this county have been struggling for many, many years," Parker said. "Maybe we could actually take a look at the issue and come up with some things that give us a sustainable path forward."

Last Tuesday, Westchester and Putnam, part of the seven-county Mid-Hudson region, entered Phase 1 of a four-phase reopening. Phase 1 includes the limited reopening of construction, manufacturing and curbside retail. Provided the metrics tracking testing, infection rates, COVID-19-related hospitalizations and deaths remain within the state-developed thresholds, the region would be able to advance to Phase 2 on or about June 9.

Five of the state's 10 regions have already moved on to Phase 2 and two others, Western New York, which includes Buffalo, and the Capital region, which takes in Albany, are on course to move on this week.

Latimer said he was confident that the local region will do well, although Phase 2, which includes all retail, professional offices and restaurants, will likely be a more significant challenge.

He noted that the metrics in Westchester, the largest of the seven counties, continue to trend in the right direction. Active cases have fallen to 1,229 from nearly 12,000 in early April while COVID-19-related hospitalizations are in the mid-200s.

"I think we do this opening and we can do it effectively and well," Latimer said. "We're also monitoring what's happening in upstate."

Lanza, who owns multiple restaurants throughout the county, said the key to continuing to progress through the reopening phases will be for the task force and merchants to work creatively to come up with unconventional solutions. For example, if a municipality closes down a street to vehicular traffic to promote social distancing, and there

are restaurants on that street, perhaps there can be outdoor dining, he said.

"I think we can do it safely, that's the main thing, so whatever guidelines we have, it's going to be up to the restaurateurs to manage their own staff, take care of the customers, but there are safe ways to do it, especially outdoor cafes," Lanza said.

Even though restaurants are part of Phase 3, he urged his fellow restaurant owners to start preparing. Unless there is regression in the metrics, there will be about two weeks between the phases.

Board of Legislators Chairman Ben Boykin (D-White Plains), who recommended to Latimer to appoint Parker as a task force co-chair because of her experience in business and government, said the group needs to

help small businesses, which is an economic engine.

"This is going to be a very important challenge because we're in a place where we've never been before," Boykin said. "We're on pause, we closed the economy down and now we've got to open it in a more vibrant and in a smarter way so that the businesses can survive, grow and move to the next level."

Despite the progress made in controlling the spread, Latimer urged the public to continue to be vigilant.

"No one can be sure what this virus can do next," he said. "So there's a certain degree of humbleness here, but the trend line shows a continuing management of it and we think we can do it."



County Executive George Latimer announced formation of the Reopening Task Force to help businesses cope with the challenges of restarting.

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Latimer: Working Group to Review Police Policies in County

By Martin Wilbur

Westchester County Executive George Latimer announced Monday that he is assembling a working group comprised of various stakeholders to review police policies and procedures in the wake of the George Floyd killing and ensuing riots.

The group will consist of local and county police professionals, members of the county's Human Rights Commission and Police Board, African-American clergy members and justice advocates who will review in detail all of the guidelines that are used to train new recruits at Westchester's police academy and in-service training for currently working police officers throughout the county.

Latimer said that a report will be due in a month. It will include any changes and reforms needed to ensure that every officer understands how to avoid implicit racism or bias while discharging their duties.

"We assert that this most recent case must be the end, it must be the last time that this happens," Latimer said.

The panel will be headed by Public Safety Commissioner Thomas Gleason, Deputy Commissioner Terrance Raynor, Mayo Bartlett, a prominent African-American attorney based in White Plains, and Leroy Frazier, a former prosecutor and investigator, Latimer said.

"Their work will culminate in a report with specific recommendations within 30 days that we would intend to implement that will help us utilize best practices and send a clear message that our law enforcement community will be at the forefront of reform, that George Floyd shall not have died in vain, that his death will have meaning in the change that it fosters," Latimer said.

In addition, the county's Human Rights Commission will be holding a series of countywide discussions to talk to various Westchester communities about the issues that has led the nation to this point. The discussions will be held virtually for the near-term future and in person when it is possible.

The announcement came after nearly a week of often violent protests in cities across the United States. There were also multiple demonstrations held in communities throughout Westchester last weekend, from Peekskill to New Rochelle and Hastings-on-Hudson to White Plains. Latimer lauded both the protestors and the local police in the county for handling themselves in exemplary fashion.

While protestors were vocal, there were no major incidents reported. Latimer thanked the demonstrators and for the professionalism of the police.

"They conducted themselves with honor, and the police who worked alongside of



Demonstrators in White Plains rallied last Friday following the death of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police. County Executive George Latimer announced a review of police procedures in Westchester.

them did so as well, with honor," Latimer said. "I'm proud of that, Westchester."

Other elected officials in the county came out to condemn the killing of Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer on May 25. The officer, Derek Chauvin, put his knee on Floyd's neck as three other officers stood by.

The Board of Legislators unanimously agreed Monday on sending a letter to Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and members of the Minneapolis City Council, to condemn the killing. It called for swift justice by state and local authorities and federal officials.

"We have no legal authority to act on behalf of justice for Mr. Floyd in Minnesota, but there is a moral imperative that we raise our voices," the letter read in part. "Our ability as a nation to effect the fundamental change that is 400 years overdue, requires all of us to speak out whenever and wherever this kind of injustice and indifference to our common humanity is on display."

Assemblywoman Sandy Galef (D-Ossining) said she will be introducing criminal justice reform legislation and exploring how predominantly minority communities have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

"Racism in the form of police brutality, disproportionate health outcomes and economic inequality cannot and will not persist," Galef said.

Latimer pledged that Westchester will do everything it can to make sure there's justice and fairness in the county.

"We cannot undo the evil that was done in past years, but we can right the ship and do what was right – right now," he said.

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

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Protestors Seek Justice at Rallies in Peekskill, White Plains

By Rick Pezzullo

"No Justice, No Peace!" was the outcry during a peaceful but forceful rally in downtown Peekskill Saturday afternoon.

At least 200 residents of all ages turned out to denounce the killing of George Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American man, in Minneapolis last Monday by a white police officer.

A similar protest took place in White Plains Friday, the same day Derek Chauvin was charged with third-degree murder and manslaughter after being caught on video May 25 kneeling for more than eight minutes on Floyd's neck. Floyd was a minister who was being arrested for allegedly using a counterfeit \$20 bill in a deli.

"This isn't a skin thing, it's a sin thing," Pastor Rob Lindenberg of The Peak Community Church and a volunteer chaplain with the Peekskill Police Department said in a passionate plea to those who gathered in the plaza outside The Field Library.

"The only way we can beat this system is to change it," he continued. "We the people have the power. I still believe America is great. Love conquers hate."

As Peekskill police officers stood silently in the backdrop, several anti-police remarks were made by some

speakers, while others expressed their displeasure through posters that read, "No Racist Police" and "Who do we call when the murderer wears a badge?"

Peekskill Police Chief Don Halmy posted a message on Facebook earlier calling Floyd's death a "senseless tragedy."

"The life-and-death decisions that a police officer makes are often done within a fraction of a second, which is what makes this so disturbing," Halmy stated. "Time stands still during emergencies. Seconds seem like minutes; minutes can feel like hours. For George Floyd, eight minutes was a lifetime. There are no excuses, the time to alter the course of this conduct ticked by in what seemed like an excruciatingly long eight minutes. Action and inaction are equally to blame."

Kwame Madden, one of the organizers of what was billed as a "rally and speak out against white supremacy," maintained "racism and capitalism go together."

"This is a crisis," he said. "We have to fight back. We need allies in this. We can't do it alone. This is going to be a long struggle."

The rallies in Peekskill and White Plains were among the scores of protests across the state and the country since last week.

On Sunday, Gov. Andrew Cuomo



RICK PEZZULLO PHOTO

Protestors gather outside the Field Library Saturday afternoon in Peekskill, one of many demonstrations throughout the country following the death of a black man by a white police officer in Minnesota last Monday.

said he understands the outrage in society in general and the African-American community in particular, which has been made worse by the pandemic and accompanied by massive unemployment and loss of businesses.

"People are outraged and I understand that," Cuomo said. "I'm outraged. It's not just George Floyd's killing. That's enough to outrage a nation. It's George Floyd, it's Ahmaud Arbery, it's Breonna Taylor, all within the last three months. It's 30 years of Rodney King and Amadou Diallo and Sean

Bell and Abner Louima and the same case in states all across this nation, where only the name changes but the color stays the same."

He said state Attorney General Leticia James will be investigating protests that turned violent in New York City Saturday night and that the mayor of Rochester and the Monroe county executive asked for about 200 state police officers for Sunday night.

The governor then denounced the violence that has erupted across the country and called for several

policy changes. Those include bringing police abuse cases to an independent prosecutor, having one standard for excessive force across the United States, releasing the disciplinary records of police officers who are accused and being investigated for abuse and demand that every public school provide the same level of funding for each child's education.

"George Floyd must not have died in vain," Cuomo said. "Mr. Floyd's killing, must be a moment which this nation actually learned and grew and progressed to make this place a better place, and we can do it if we are smart together."

Elected officials in attendance Saturday were Peekskill council members Vanessa Agudelo and Ramon Fernandez, Westchester County Legislator Colin Smith and Croton-on-Hudson Mayor Brian Pugh.

Smith took blame on behalf of representatives and civil servants for letting constituents down.

"We as elected officials have failed you. We have failed our community," Smith said. "The police departments have failed you. What we need is change at every level. We have to work together for the changes that are necessary."

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County Legislator Parker Drops Out of 17th Congressional Primary Race

By Martin Wilbur

County Legislator Catherine Parker officially suspended her campaign last week for the Democratic nomination in the 17th Congressional District primary race, about 10 weeks after putting her bid on hold once the COVID-19 pandemic took hold.

In a statement late last week, Parker said she could not justify asking donors for more money during a health and economic crisis.

"I am officially suspending my campaign operation, Parker stated. "I understand that my name is still on the ballot but I cannot justify the time and expense of this political fight at this moment in history. There is

a lot of money already in this race and I simply will not run about hat-in-hand when I've discovered I have something to give instead."

On Monday, Parker was named by Westchester County Executive George Latimer to the county's Pandemic Reopening Task Force. She is in the midst of her fourth term on the Board of Legislators, serving the communities of Rye, Larchmont, Mamaroneck, and parts of Harrison and New Rochelle.

With as many as 16 Democrats at one point being possibilities to run, Parker's

campaign never appeared to gain traction. She had trouble raising money for the primary, amassing only about \$128,000 as of mid-May, next-to-last of the eight candidates who are on the ballot.

Parker said as the campaign for the primary heads into the home stretch, she will permanently pause from the trail.

"In the last 10 weeks I have been immersed in a crash course on how our world is changing," Parker said. "As a County Legislator in Westchester's 7th District, my days are consumed with a procession of new and unique problems, some dealing

with county finances and services, others revolving around the day-to-day troubles of constituents whose lives and businesses have been upended."

Parker's name will remain on the ballot for the June 23 primary. The rest of the field is comprised of Assemblyman David Buchwald, state Sen. David Carlucci, Adam Schleifer, Evelyn Farkas, Mondaire Jones, Allison Fine and Asha Castlebury-Hernandez.

The filing deadline had been pushed up by two weeks to Mar. 20 because of the pandemic.

Bedford Teachers Union Agrees to Concessions for Three More Positions

By Martin Wilbur

The Bedford Teachers Association (BTA) agreed last Thursday to more than \$300,000 in concessions for the 2020-21 school year that will allow the district to pay for three additional teaching positions.

The agreement followed a series of negotiations between the union and the Board of Education as school officials across the state gird themselves for potential significant mid-year reductions in state aid.

BTA President Michael Groarke said all of its members will contribute to the concessions with about one-third of Bedford's teachers agreeing to a pay cut to save \$307,000.

One of the teaching positions will be reinstated from the list of planned reductions

and two others will be added before the start of the new school year. The administration will determine which two positions will be added later on.

District officials expressed gratitude to the union for providing greater flexibility.

"We appreciate BTA members' commitment to the students in our community and their willingness to consider financial concessions which will allow us to provide support for our students as we continue to plan forward during these unprecedented times," said Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joel Adelberg.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo has repeatedly warned about the possibility of 20 percent across-the-board cuts without federal assistance to the states. He has explicitly stated that the cuts

would include education.

Before the budget was adopted on May 13, the Board of Education factored in nearly \$1.5 million that it could lose in state aid. There were 18 full-time equivalent positions cut to balance the budget and reduce the tax levy increase to 1.85 percent.

"The board very much appreciates everything our faculty, staff and administrators do to educate and support our students – especially during these very challenging times," said Board President Colette Dow. "We are grateful to our bargaining units for providing concessions that will help the district maintain programming while preparing for the many unknowns that the 2020-21 school year will likely bring."

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Merchants, Chambers Hopeful While Looking Forward to Next Phase

By Martin Wilbur

Business communities are encouraged that after more than two months of a coronavirus-induced shutdown, there may be some reason for optimism.

The Hudson Valley region, which includes Westchester and Putnam counties, entered a Phase 1 reopening last Tuesday, allowing for construction, manufacturing and curbside retail.

While there didn't appear to be too much activity in the downtowns last week, a more robust second phase that would feature a full opening of retail could begin next week.

Merchants who adapted to the new reality of moving online or offering a service virtually if they could, represented a lifeline for some.

Miriam Risko, who owns and operates Mike Risko Music in Ossining with her husband, said they moved their music lessons online while their Croton Avenue business was closed to customers since mid-March. They had already been offering sales through their website. While challenging, it proved successful, she said.

"People are really into supporting local business and we have been just really blessed by the number of people who've reached out to just buy something because it was important for them to support us," said Risko, who picked up music students from as far away as Colorado.

Phase 1 has essentially been a starting point for most businesses to prepare for a safe reopening, said Loretta Brooks, co-executive director of the Mount Kisco Chamber of



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

There weren't many shoppers in downtowns across the area last week for the Phase 1 reopening where only curbside pickup was available for consumers who placed an order in advance. Business owners are hopeful that next week there will be a resumption of full retail with restrictions on store capacity and other guidelines.

Commerce.

Brooks said the downtown was still quiet last week and activity was sporadic. However, chamber members have been networking and assisting each other on navigating the state guidelines and best practices, she said.

Most businesses have been busy securing personal protection equipment, developing safety plans for employees and customers, sanitizing and installing social distancing barriers, Brooks said.

"We are optimistic for businesses. It's going to take time for everyone to feel comfortable in the new normal but we feel our community is strong and sees the value in supporting local merchants, restaurants and businesses," Brooks said.

Greg Hoffman, who operates the boutique Whim with his mother on Mount Kisco's South Moger Avenue, said they were fortunate to have their website functional by the time the shutdown hit. Since then,

they've been able to consummate upwards of 500 sales, and not just from local residents, but from customers from 40 states around the country, he said.

Hoffman said if the success of the reopening of their Stamford store is any indication, there will be pent-up demand from consumers that could benefit merchants. Connecticut reopened retail on May 20 with social distancing protocols in effect, which included no dressing rooms to try on garments.

"People are dying to reopen," Hoffman said. "Businesses are barely holding on. We've lost hundreds of thousands of dollars. We want safety to come first but we are dying to reopen."

Last week, the Chappaqua-Millwood Chamber of Commerce launched its virtual Lunch and Learn series, featuring guest speakers updating and informing members on new developments, said President Dawn Dankner-Rosen. She said that most merchants are "in a getting-ready mode."

Dankner-Rosen was confident that many of the businesses in Chappaqua and Millwood will survive, particularly those neighborhood fixture that have been a part of local residents' lives.

"This is a hard time for everybody, and people really appreciate the local businesses really stepping up to the plate, and despite being told they are closing, despite being told that there's only curbside shopping, despite all that, businesses have come up with creative ways to be there for their customers and I think that the customers will be there for them," Dankner-Rosen said.

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Police Blotter

North Castle Police Department

May 22: A U-HAUL employee requested police assistance for an unruly female on Virginia Road at 12:48 p.m. The dispatched officer reported that the matter was adjusted and that the party left the premises.

May 22: At 2:04 p.m., a caller reported a female sitting on a chair in the parking lot of 495 Main St. with another woman coloring her hair. The dispatched officer reported checked the area for the parties with negative results.

May 22: A caller observed a male wearing an orange, yellow and blue-striped shirt attempting to steal items from Stop & Shop on North Broadway at 3:23 p.m. The responding officers were unable to locate the party.

May 25: At 10:16 p.m., a caller reported drag racing on North Broadway in the vicinity of Stop & Shop. About 200 cars were dispersed and the condition was corrected by the responding officer.

May 26: A caller reported hearing what sounded like screaming about every 10 around his residence Stony Brook Way at

1:48 a.m. He did not where the screaming was coming from or whether it was an animal. The responding officer checked the area with negative results.

May 27: County Fire Control reported a person stuck in a freight elevator at Stop & Shop on North Broadway at 11:30 a.m.

The North White Plains Fire Department responded and an officer responded. The officer reported that the fire department was able to free the person from the elevator without incident and that the elevator has been taken out of service until it can be repaired.

Obituary

Judy Hodge

H. Judy Hodge, 70, of Thornwood passed away peacefully at home on May 24.

Hodge was born in Cambridge, Mass. on June 21, 1949, to V. Ann (nee Burbridge) and Thomas Hodge. She grew up in White Plains and graduated from Our Lady of Good Counsel, before earning a bachelor's degree from Southampton College.

Hodge always put others and service as a priority, first as a social worker for the Westchester County Department of Social Services, then as a homemaker, later as a teacher's aide for the Mahopac Central School District and finally as a volunteer for Gilda's Club Westchester. In her free time,

she enjoyed reading, especially Stephen King. She is best known for offering a word of encouragement no matter what the situation, even into her final days.

Hodge was predeceased by her parents. She is survived by her brothers, Peter (Grace), Tom (Gila) and Bob (Bonnie); her sons, Jonathan (Tiffany) and Tim (Mary); her grandson, Eric; nieces and nephews Jesse (Jessica), Rachel, Jenn (Ethan) and Lauren; as well as the many people she helped and whose lives she touched.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Gilda's Club Westchester, 80 Maple Ave., White Plains, N.Y. 10601.

Demystifying Medicare Workshop Moves Online

The Westchester Library System has shifted its Demystifying Medicare workshop online, since a complete understanding of the entire system is key to making the best personal health insurance decisions.

A version of this upbeat and interactive workshop, where people can absorb audio chapters at their own pace and refer to downloadable handouts that are used in the live presentations. You can access all of these at <https://wikis.westchesterlibraries.org/sbic/demystifying-medicare/>.

Demystifying Medicare is designed not only for people currently enrolled in Medicare, but for those soon to turn 65 or helping relatives and friends with their medical decisions and paperwork. Topics include original Medicare, Medicare Advantage Plans, prescription drug plans, Medigaps (supplemental plans), EPIC and cost-saving programs for people with

limited resources.

In a non-COVID-19 universe, Westchester Seniors Out Speaking works year-round in other ways to help people with Medicare. It runs free Senior Benefits Individual Counseling centers (SBICs) at nine libraries throughout the year, where people can get answers to their coverage and billing questions on a first-come, first-served basis.

The roughly 80 volunteers in this program have been trained and updated monthly by the Medicare Rights Center in New York City, an advocacy group.

For questions about Demystifying Medicare online or to sign up for future live presentations, please leave your name and number at 914-231-3236, or e-mail SBICmedia@gmail.com. You can get individual help at 914-231-3260 or by e-mailing SBIC@wlsmail.org. Like the workshops, the counseling is also free.

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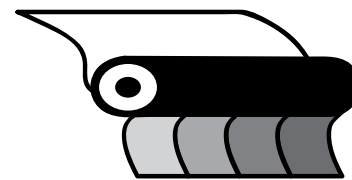
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InterGenerate, Westchester Land Trust Partner to Support Neighbors in Need

Westchester Land Trust, InterGenerate and a private landowner in Bedford have joined forces to grow vegetables for community members in need.

The land trust matched the landowner and InterGenerate, an organization that builds strong communities on a healthy planet through local food production. Vegetables will be grown on the property by volunteers of InterGenerate and distributed through their food justice program.

The match has brought new life to the raised beds at the historic Maple Grove Farm in Bedford, which had been out of production for several years. The farm, which is privately owned and not open to the public, reached out to the land trust offering the use of their property as part of the Hudson Valley Farmlink Network program.

After facilitating several outings to the land with different growers, the match with InterGenerate was made. Alan Keeley of Stone Hill River Farms in Bedford supported the partnership by assisting the groups with soil amendments.

"We are thrilled to announce our new partnership with Westchester Land Trust and are grateful to them for connecting us with landowners who want to help grow much-needed food," said Suzi Novak, InterGenerate's vice president. "The Maple Grove Farm garden is a manageable size and will increase access to freshly-grown vegetables. We are experiencing a surge



The Westchester Land Trust has teamed up with InterGenerate and Maple Grove Farm in Bedford to put the farm's gardens into production for families in need.

in demand for fresh food due to impacts from COVID-19. With this new garden, we're able to provide a weekly bag of fresh produce to 20 additional families in need."

The Westchester Land Trust encourages

and supports connections between land-seeking farmers and non-farming landowners through its Farmland Match Program and has completed land matches that range in size from a few raised beds

to more than 10 acres. Landowners and farmers are encouraged to use the Hudson Valley Farmlink Network online portal. On this website, landowners and farmers create profiles and land trust staff offer assistance with introductions and site visits.

"I'm honored to be part of this partnership," said George Bianco, owner of Maple Grove Farm, "and pleased to offer what I can to ensure that more of our neighbors have access to nutritious food this year."

The Westchester Land Trust works with conservation partners throughout the Hudson Valley to actively explore and refine new conservation tools and techniques that address the issues of farmland accessibility, affordability and sustainability.

"Supporting InterGenerate goes hand in hand with our farmland conservation work," said Kara Whelan, Westchester Land Trust vice president who serves as the Farmlink adviser for the organization. "We know there is a tremendous need for fresh produce this year and we are committed to doing all that we can to address that need by getting more land in production."

Landowners who are interested in having portions of their property farmed, possibly including additional capacity for InterGenerate, should contact Kara Whelan for assistance at 914-234-6992 ext. 12 or at Kara@westchesterlandtrust.org.

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Touro College of Dental Medicine Celebrates First Graduation Virtually

The first class of graduates from Touro College of Dental Medicine, the newest dental school in the nation and the first to open in New York State in 50 years, celebrated their commencement on May 19 along with graduates from New York Medical College.

With the school's campus and clinic closed due to the coronavirus, the 103 graduates in the inaugural class participated

in this historic commencement virtually. These distinguished graduates completed a rigorous four-year dental education rooted in harnessing advancements in digital dental technology to better serve communities. Following graduation, students will begin their residencies or join private practices across the country.

"The Class of 2020 helped our school's faculty and leadership shape the roadmap

for future generations to come," said Dr. Ronnie Myers, D.D.S., the college's dean. "As the first class of students at a new school, they have shown their abilities to be adaptable and work hard even as roadblocks arise. The students graduating today will go on to accomplish great things in their respective communities, but they will forever be remembered as a part of the foundation of Touro College of Dental Medicine."

The virtual commencement was viewed by friends, family and supporters from across the country and included special guests such as Dr. Chad Gehani, president of the American Dental Association, and keynote speaker Dr. R. Bruce Donoff, Walter C. Guralnick Distinguished Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Harvard University Distinguished Service Professor.

During his address, Donoff challenged both dental and medical students to think about the intersections of care delivery.

"Oral health has a real bearing on general

health," he said. "You as dentists must be healthcare providers, not just dentists. Transformation of a profession is difficult, but the status quo is not inevitable. Will the current crisis result in the return of the same way of practicing and learning, or might we reimagine some aspects of oral health care, even considering integrate oral health primary care practices?"

While a date is still unknown, Touro College of Dental Medicine is committed to holding an in-person event for the inaugural class at a later date where they can honor the graduate's accomplishments in a more meaningful way.

"For me, this is not the end, this is just the beginning of their journey and our professional relationship together," Myers said. "Over the course of these four years, these exceptional students have become part of the fabric of our school and many deep connections have been made as we built it together. We all look forward to the day we can embrace them and congratulate them as colleagues."

Last Call to Submit Congratulatory Videos to the Class of 2020

A high school graduation ceremony is a rite of passage that occurs only once in a lifetime for students, as they close a significant chapter in their lives and get ready to start their college careers.

It is a time of accomplishment, a time of reflection, a time of hope for a promising future – and a celebration for all who have worked so hard to earn their high school diploma.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic may have altered graduations plans as we know them, Westchester County wants to make sure that all hopes are not dashed for a 2020 graduation ceremony for Westchester County's seniors.

The county is asking all community leaders, teachers, parents, grandparents and siblings to record a short video on

your smart phone to say congratulations and best of luck to the high school senior in your life. The video does not have to be long, and it is an easy way to get the entire community involved in a "virtual" graduation ceremony. This year's high school seniors deserve to hear words of praise, and know you are proud of all they have achieved.

To participate, send your video to Communications@WestchesterGov.com. Eventually, we will have a string of congratulatory messages from citizens all over Westchester, in honor of the county's graduating class of 2020. The deadline to submit a video is this Saturday, June 6.

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Armonk Art Show Searches for Larger Site to Keep Attendees Safe

By Martin Wilbur

Organizers of the Armonk Outdoor Art Show are searching for a new venue for the popular annual event this fall after their pitch to use portions of two larger fields at Community Park was rebuffed.

For years the show has been held on the smaller track field at the park but more room is needed to comply with social distancing protocols because of COVID-19. The 59th annual show, scheduled for Oct. 3 and 4, has attracted about 185 artists in a broad assortment of media every year, but a larger venue is needed to protect artists, the legions of volunteers and patrons, said the event's Executive Director Anne Curran.

"The show is a little more than four months away, but still requires months of planning," Curran said. "So to us, in explaining the possibility of holding the show with these safety measures, the logical approach was to see if we could move it to the outfield section of Field 1 and between Field 1 and Field 2 on the other side of the tennis bubble."

A recent request was made to the Town Board and Recreation Superintendent Todd Orlowski to use those fields, but Orlowski concluded that he was concerned that it could damage the turf, which is already stressed.

Some parents in the community, who have seen their children's recreation programs and sports leagues canceled for

nearly three months, were upset that a playing field might be taken out of use for a weekend next fall because of the art show, along with potential for damage.

Parent Abby Woodward wrote to the Town Board to express her opposition to the request. Fields 1 and 2 are used for soccer, baseball, softball, football and lacrosse.

"After a few months of being indoors, away from friends and structure, it's imperative that these kids resume the sports they love," said Woodward, who oversees a youth soccer program in town. "As noted by Mr. Orlowski, the fields will be rendered useless should the art show be moved to our sports fields."

Curran said she and the other organizers respect Orlowski's position and didn't want to ignite a battle between different segments of the community.

"We would just like to defuse any negative thoughts or comments that have surfaced in terms of pitting the value of the art show as an art and cultural event versus the welfare or benefit to the kids who want to get back on the ball field," she said.

A search is underway to find another site. Curran said that a location will need to be found by about July 15 in order to have enough time to plan and prepare.



The Armonk Outdoor Art Show will need to find another venue with more space this year to protect artists, volunteers and visitors from the coronavirus.

While the event has been nationally recognized as one of the top art shows in the United States, it is more than a fun weekend for art lovers. Over the past five years it has raised more than \$700,000 for the local library, said Barbara Vircillo, president of the Friends of the North Castle Public Library, organizes the show. Since 2008, more than \$1.5 million has been raised.

The event also brings in about 9,000 visitors for the weekend, helping the local

economy, she said.

"We are proud of our history in making the Armonk Outdoor Art Show a successful event for almost six decades and all that the vendors have contributed to in the library programs and improvements," Vircillo said.

Town Supervisor Michael Schiliro said it's a tough situation but the town will do what it can to see that the show has a home this year that is safe for all to attend.

"Hopefully, they can put on this program if the pandemic allows it in some way, shape or form and figure out the venue to do that," Schiliro said.

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Letters to the Editor

Carmel School Board Failed to React to Difficult Economic Outlook

As a former member of the Carmel Board of Education, I can attest how truly important it is for voters in the district to exercise their right to vote in the annual budget and board member election.

This year, the election will be conducted entirely by mail and the ballots must be received by the school district no later than 5 p.m. on June 9, not simply postmarked by that date. Voter participation in school elections is historically low and thus magnifies the importance of each and every vote.

Unfortunately, the board did not craft a budget that meets our community's moment. While other districts' boards in our region chose to hold the line on taxes because they recognized the grim economic

situation many of their constituents currently find themselves in, the Carmel Board of Education has opted to continue their uninterrupted 30-plus-year history of raising taxes. The board's proposed budget totals more than \$130 million and includes a 2.6 percent tax levy increase and a 2.26 percent budget-to-budget increase. Only in government can they claim to cut spending, when in reality they increase taxes by 2.6 percent instead of 2.61 percent.

Voters will also have the opportunity to vote for two candidates for seats on the school board. I hope that the voters will provide favorable consideration to Paul Collazo, Debra Heitman-Cayea and Gregory Purdy. Even though voters may only choose two of these three individuals, I believe all

of them to be worthy of the public trust. While they may not agree with me on every issue, budgetary or otherwise, they do believe strongly in the Carmel school system and would be excellent stewards of the taxpayers' hard-earned money.

More importantly, they are thoughtful and strong-minded people who will not be rubber stamp board members. It is truly important for our representatives to be free thinkers and to debate the important issues at hand. I believe these candidates would be excellent board members and would make our community proud.

John C. Curzio II
Lake Carmel

Burdick Has the Experience Needed in the State Assembly

If you are not familiar with Chris Burdick, the current Bedford town supervisor, he is a candidate for the New York State Assembly seat being vacated by David Buchwald. His tenacity, vision and broad range of experiences make him the most qualified person for the position.

Through fiscally responsible crafting and administration of multiple years of budgets, Chris has not only enabled the Town of Bedford to keep their spending increases to less than 2 percent annually, but resulted in the ability to complete infrastructure such as affordable housing, sewers and other capital-intensive projects concurrently.

Chris is dedicated to protecting the rights of individuals and denounces discrimination based on religion, race or sexual orientation.

As Bedford town supervisor, he led the passage of a resolution condemning anti-Semitism, bigotry and prejudice. He also advocates for the adoption of a universal affordable healthcare solution, which can integrate with our current systems.

His commitment to the environment is unparalleled. He has worked tirelessly through his town board and in conjunction with many local environmental organizations to achieve a reduction of Bedford's greenhouse gas emissions by more than 40 percent in less than a decade. He is also vice chairman of Sustainable Westchester, an organization which promotes clean energy and its efficient use.

Chris has been endorsed by state Sen. Pete Harcham and over 25 town Democratic

committees, mayors, supervisors and locally elected officials, more than any other candidate by far. He has developed close working relationships with town leaders to create solutions spanning municipal borders.

Due to COVID-19, the state budget has been decimated with many uncertainties lying ahead. Chris' sound fiscal experience will be a tremendous asset in crafting solutions to the many financial challenges the state will be facing.

Chris is uniquely capable of continuing the high standards set forth by David Buchwald.

Kent Thomas
District Leader
New Castle Democratic Committee

Big Thank You to Putnam's Contact Tracers in Sacrificing Holiday

For most of us, this was an unusually slow Memorial Day weekend. But for those working behind the scenes to enable Putnam County to reopen on Tuesday, it was non-stop work.

I want to thank Putnam County Personnel Director Paul Eldridge and his staff, including Angela Aquilato, for their enormous efforts over the holiday weekend getting an army of contact tracers trained and in place so that the county could reopen for business.

I also want to thank the folks who signed up to be contact tracers for taking six hours out of their holiday weekend to complete the online training course.

Because of all of your hard work, Putnam County can restart its economy while putting safety first.

Paul and his staff worked day and night, adapting quickly to shifting guidance from the state; first we were told we needed 30 contact tracers in order to reopen, then the number suddenly jumped to 84. No matter, they didn't hesitate.

They reached out to employees from nearly every county department with the urgent message that the training course had to be completed over the weekend. They got the same message out to the summer PILOT program interns who, pre-COVID-19, had been planning to work in

various county departments. They made calls to community volunteers, as well as skilled healthcare volunteers from the Medical Reserve Corps. I would also like to thank the Town of Carmel for their volunteers.

By Tuesday morning, 97 contact tracers were trained and ready to help stop the spread of the coronavirus.

It is this kind of can-do spirit that gives me faith in the future of Putnam County. I know that, together, we will help our communities rebound.

MaryEllen Odell
Putnam County Executive

Burdick Has Stellar Record to Represent 93rd Assembly District

We in Westchester are facing unprecedented challenges on many fronts, and that was even before the pandemic hit. Luckily, we have strong Democratic leaders in Albany that we can trust to have our backs.

I am voting for Democrat Chris Burdick for state Assembly because he will take his considerable experience of being a successful local elected official and use that to further progressive measures for the 93rd Assembly District and the betterment of New York.

Chris has an unprecedented record of great environmental legislation that I know he will continue to pursue when he is in the Assembly. He not only helped to launch, but also serves as vice chair of Sustainable Westchester, an organization that many others have looked to as a model. As Bedford town supervisor, he was able to reduce town carbon emissions by a whopping 44 percent.

Chris understands the complexity and importance of our infrastructure funding and will fight hard in Albany to obtain

the state funding for many much-needed improvements to our roads and bridges.

Chris's long and impressive career in local politics and his impressive roster of connections on all levels of government will assure that, when elected, he can hit the ground running and immediately get to work for us in Albany.

Justin White
Mount Kisco

Guest Column

Lack of Information on Pediatric Nursing Home During Crisis is Disturbing

By Cynthia Manocherian

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's "just the facts" leadership has included taking real actions and producing tangible results. His timely decisions to protect New Yorkers are commendable and have saved countless lives during this pandemic.

The governor's daily briefings have often focused on the virus's impact on nursing homes for seniors, but the time has come to also share statewide information on the situation at pediatric nursing homes and the medically fragile children who live there.

As the governor stated May 22, "We are still learning about COVID-19. The more we learn, the more facts change. Now children may be affected."

In our town, the Sunshine Children's Home & Rehabilitation Center for medically fragile pediatric patients on Spring Valley Road has continued with an expansion from 17,500 to 142,500 square feet. The result is 54 very sick children are housed in the middle of a huge construction site. There were already grave concerns about the review of this construction project and inadequate consideration of the children's safety.

A pandemic was not on anyone's radar

during the New Castle Zoning Board of Appeals' review of the Sunshine Home's existing license and expansion application – but neither were the children themselves nor the environment.

Radium-contaminated well water test results; inadequate rural roads; lack of on-the-record comments and request for serious review by New Castle fire officials; acceptance of an Indian Point emergency shelter-in-place plan without a request for the actual plan; and no mandate for an Environmental Impact Statement (though Sunshine is located near Teatown, a critical, sensitive reservoir watershed for Ossining and a Westchester biodiversity corridor) are but a few of the under-evaluated concerns swept under the rug in the board's review. Therefore, the granted zoning variances will result in a hugely expanded facility on a rural road and a footprint larger than the Empire State Building in a vital wooded preserve area of northern Westchester.

New Castle first responders are miles away from Sunshine. Timely assistance will range from dangerous to unavailable depending on weather and other factors. And now there are new unanswered and life-threatening questions.

1. Are the county Department of Health

and New Castle fully monitoring what has been happening during construction at Sunshine?

2. Sunshine children regularly require trips to the emergency room. Have any been sent to local hospitals since March? Have they been sick with the virus on the way to the hospital or have they contracted the virus while there? Have they received full medical care during the pandemic?
3. Are nurses and other staff being tested twice a week as required at senior nursing homes? How are they faring?
4. Are the children being tested?
5. Were the children jeopardized during the ventilator crisis from access to resources and staffing expertise at Sunshine?
6. Are nurses and children going outdoors during heavy construction? Sunshine's website states medically fragile children are doing well on their "large bucolic site surrounded by nature." The reality is that dust and debris are flying everywhere and noise is constant at the site.
7. Turner Construction has a number of workers on site. Has their team followed all the COVID-19 safety rules? They share crowded parking options with nurses and staff.

8. Does the approved expansion make sense post-COVID-19? Social distancing on short notice is virtually impossible with the open floor expansion plan.

The children have no access to safe, quality outdoor experiences and, instead, are subject to urban level construction and pollution whether indoors or out. The World Health Organization worries that this deadly pandemic is far from over.

Without serious review, these medically fragile children will once again be subject to inadequate emergency plans and under-supported by local governmental agencies. It is inconceivable that this expansion was approved on the facts. The current pandemic only increases already unacceptable risks that were pointed out.

The sane and compassionate decision at this time would be to issue a stop-work order and reevaluate the entire situation at a higher, more impartial level. The lives of these children and those not yet on site might depend on it.

Cynthia Manocherian is a resident of New Castle's west end and is a neighbor of Sunshine Children's Home & Rehabilitation Center.

Letters to the Editor

With Indian Point Leaving, Hen Hud Has Failed to Live Within its Means

For many years Indian Point nuclear power plant has given the Hendrick Hudson School District tens, if not, hundreds of millions of dollars. That is about to come to an end.

They have been getting millions each year that other school districts in our area have not received.

What have they done with that extra money? The cost to educate a child in the Hendrick Hudson School District is \$5,000 per student per year more than the Lakeland and Croton-Harmon school districts. What do we get for spending more than these surrounding districts? Both Croton and Lakeland have higher rates of graduation and Regents diplomas.

Now that Hen Hud's slush fund is going away, they are looking to the taxpayers to make up the difference. What cuts has the district made? Not only did Henrick Hudson fail to make cuts in the adopted budget, they have actually raised their spending by more than 2 percent. This year Indian Point began shutting down. Hen Hud lost over \$4 million in revenue.

In the 2020-21 adopted budget, they expect the taxpayer to make up for that loss. Why? Why can't they do what other school districts have been able to do and provide the best education with less money? Is that too much for district residents to ask for?

There are many factors as to why Hen

Hud spends more per child to educate. But the simple answer is, unlike Croton and Lakeland, it has had so much money they didn't have to be frugal.

Unfortunately, that frivolous spending did not equate to better results. This is neither the fault of our children nor our teachers. This is the fault of an administration that was drunk on nuclear power. Now, we realize that if our school board did their job and acted as a check on the administration, we might not be in the spot we are today. But to think that you can just turn to the taxpayer and demand a bailout so you can continue your spending spree? Forget it! We can't afford it.

The median annual income in the district

is \$10,000 less than Lakeland, \$26,000 less than Croton-Harmon and \$33,000 less than Yorktown. The money isn't here.

It's time for district officials to sober up and fix their spending problem. Take a look around you. There are plenty of examples for you to follow.

Data was compiled by the grassroots efforts of residents who care about you, the taxpayer, using Hendrick Hudson School District reports and Census Bureau data.

Say no to the status quo!

**Adam MacNeil
Montrose**

Jones Best Understands the Challenges Facing Families Today

I am the volunteer executive director of Sustainable Port Chester Alliance, a former president of my local NAACP branch and a former board member of my local League of Women Voters. I am also a sitting trustee for the Village of Port Chester. There's a thread that runs through everything I do and that is to create a more just and equitable community.

There is one candidate I trust more than anyone to take this fight with him to Congress, and that's Mondaire Jones.

Mondaire understands what it's like to face adversity, and how to persevere when all odds are working against you. He was born to a single mother and grew

up living in Section 8 housing and relying on food stamps. He is running because we need a representative who has the lived experience to fight for progressive policies with urgency.

In recent years, my family and I have relied on my husband's health insurance coverage. But the current crisis is exposing what my family and so many others like ours have known for far too long: this uncertainty is no way to live.

My family has lost coverage before. We know what it's like to make the difficult decisions you face after you lose coverage due to job loss. Not seeking medical help when you're sick or avoiding your annual

physical altogether because you worry about out-of-pocket expenses, or rationing to extend access to prescription drugs.

We need someone in office who will fight to make sure that families don't have to cobble together money for medical expenses. Or worse, go without.

Mondaire will fight to alleviate this suffering, and I know he will, because he's been there himself. At multiple town halls, he has discussed the difficulty he and his family faced affording medical care when he was growing up. He is the only candidate of the top five contenders to call for Medicare for All, which removes the uncertainty of employer-based coverage,

fully covering mental healthcare, vision, dental and at-home care, while also capping out-of-pocket prescription drug costs. This would especially help black and brown communities like Port Chester and Mondaire's childhood home of Spring Valley, which, as we have seen reflected in the COVID-19 death toll, bear the brunt of our current system's failings.

On June 23, I will cast my ballot for the only candidate who has the lived experience to fight for the future I want to leave my kids. I hope you will join me.

**Joan Grangenio-Thomas
Port Chester**

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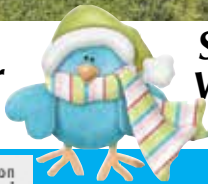
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Stuck in Quarantine? Find a Good Place to Meditate at Home

In her memoir, "Eat, Pray, Love," author Elizabeth Gilbert (and actress Julia Roberts in the movie) travels the world to find spiritual fulfillment, but most of us probably conduct our quiet time for meditation or prayer at home.

We all know the designated places to eat and to make love – although I do sometimes eat in the bedroom and hear that some people make love in the kitchen. But where do we meditate or pray?

Enduring a pandemic is as good a time as ever to think about meditative practices and where to do them.

While enjoying a winetasting one evening some time ago (before being isolated) with some realtor buddies, the subject came up, and we were all quite open, even enthusiastic, about how and where we "go within."

"I prefer doing it outside, observing nature," said one, "and I do it with my eyes open," she added, which surprised me. While Buddha was able to meditate outside under a tree, I lack that capability, finding outdoor sounds and even the breeze distracting.

"I can focus anyplace and anywhere I happen to be in my home," another friend said. That talent also eludes me.

A third friend said he meditates in his office, taking a few moments when the need arises. That is something I did years



By Bill Primavera

ago when I worked a 9-to-5 job in the most dysfunctional office environment imaginable. I would sometimes retreat to the men's room, perhaps two or three times a day, go into a stall and repeat the mantra, "relax, relax, relax." This survival technique was abandoned after my boss asked me if I suffered from gastrointestinal problems.

At home, I suspect that many of us have our own special place dedicated to making contact with our inner selves and the universe. I was reminded of this a while back when I was told of a complaint from a seller who said that an agent left her business card on the homeowner's "altar," which would seem to be a violation of sacred space. The agent, in her own defense, said, "Gee, it looked like a regular sideboard to me."

At the height of my spiritual quest some years ago, I explored an endless and seemingly discordant mix of meditative practices. These included listening to new age and gospel music, the sound of an indoor waterfall and a vibrating chime, all supported with the energies of crystal healing, a very heavy dose of Vipassana meditation and attendance at a then-popular men's group. (God that men's movement was awful, when guys just got together and mostly complained about not getting enough sex.)

It would have been impossible to engage



in such an elaborate other-worldly plan either outdoors or in a public place. So I carved out a space – actually an entire room – for personal meditation. I figured that it could double as a second guestroom. Then, I started collecting crystals (minerals I called them to the outside world), and I became so obsessive about it, not so much for their metaphysical qualities, but for their sheer physical beauty, that at one point my quiet place looked like an outpost of the American Museum of Natural History.

Our first houseguest invited to sleep in that room refused. It seems that she had taken a different path to spirituality than I had, one that would classify any association with crystals as witchcraft. To each his or her own, I say.

Today my meditation room, pared of most of its crystals, has certain features that I would recommend for others who want to carve out their own quiet spaces. And the formula can be quite simple. Whether an entire room or a corner of one, the space

should be uncluttered and capable of being darkened even in the morning or middle of the day. There should be a system for producing sound, preferably through earphones rather than ambient sound for better concentration. Also, depending on one's beliefs, there might be religious or spiritual symbols or a touchstone of some sort to set the mood.

Some can meditate on a floor mat, but some of us are not that agile, so there should be a chair that is comfortable but not too comfortable or there is the risk of falling asleep while meditating. What serves as my launching pad as my mind jettisons into altered time is an old wingback chair that has seen better days. I know I should replace it, but what if a new chair didn't conform just the right way to my back, and what if the height of the seat wasn't perfect for me? This chair and I have spent a lot of altered time together to the point where it's become symbolic of my spiritual growth. So how could I let it go?

The one finishing touch might be signage for the entrance to the space that reads: "Altered state of consciousness within. Please do not enter."

Bill Primavera is a realtor® associated with William Raveis Real Estate as well as a writer, editor and public relations consultant (www.PrimaveraPR.com) specializing in lifestyles and real estate. To engage the services of The Home Guru to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.



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Endurance Biker Set for 200-Mile Journey for Hillside Food Outreach

By Martin Wilbur

Matt McAllister enjoys physically challenging himself in endurance events, whether it be Iron Man competitions, marathon bike rides or long runs.

He also enjoys helping nonprofit organizations that are in need of assistance.

The 33-year-old Mount Kisco resident is once again fusing two of his passions next week when he will pedal 200 miles to his parents' house on the eastern end of Long Island.

McAllister's estimated 14-hour journey on June 12, will raise money for Hillside Food Outreach, which helps more than 2,000 families and seniors each week in Westchester, Putnam and Fairfield counties.

"I think it was pretty obvious for me to whip up the GoFundMe account again," said McAllister, who works for a title insurance company and also has a real estate license. "I'd be doing the rides anyway, so this kind of makes it more serious."

While the trip to his parents' house in Mattituck is a little more than 100 miles, McAllister has mapped a circuitous 200-mile route. Next Friday, he will leave his house shortly after 5 a.m. on his Giant TCR bike, head toward Peekskill, cross the Bear Mountain Bridge, cycle around Harriman State Park, then travel down the Palisades into New Jersey.

He will then cross back into New York over the George Washington Bridge, follow alongside the West Side Highway, travel



Mount Kisco resident Matt McAllister will be on the road for a 200-mile trip from his home to the eastern end of Long Island next Friday.

crosstown into Queens, bike through that borough, then follow the north shore of Long Island to his parents.

About 90 percent of the trip will be by himself. He will hook up with a friend in New Jersey who will join him for about 20 miles.

"It will be very different," McAllister said. "I would say, generally, cycling is easier than running, so I wouldn't compare it to a 50-mile run. It will definitely be longer. It's just easier on the body to ride than to run, in my personal opinion."

The longest bike ride McAllister, a former college lacrosse player at Bryant University in Rhode Island, has tried to this point was 140 miles. To train, he has been hitting the roads for about 150 miles a week. Typically, McAllister completes about three 30-mile rides and one for about 50 miles.

Just before the event, he'll look to stretch out with an 80-mile sojourn. As part of his regimen, McAllister practices yoga with his wife, which he said has been helpful because it increases his flexibility.

"It's always been some sort of training, I guess and working out (for me)," he said. "My dad was a mountain biker, so I used to mountain bike with him a little bit growing up here and there."

To fortify himself, McAllister will pack bananas, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, energy bars, endurance-specific gels and electrolyte drinks.

His wife will drive down to his parents' house during the day and meet him when he arrives, probably between 7 and 8 p.m., and spend the weekend.

Riding or running to benefit a nonprofit organization has become a month-of-June norm for McAllister. In the last couple of years, his efforts have benefited a halfway house that a cousin needed for an addiction problem and last year for the Larchmont-Mamaroneck Community Counseling Center.

This year, he learned about Hillside Food Outreach from a real estate colleague, and concluded that with the pandemic and the growing hunger in the county it made sense to help. He hopes to raise at least \$2,000.

"People who are going to be hurt worst by this (pandemic) are at the lower end of the economic scale and that's who Hillside caters to – the elderly and the kind of working poor in Westchester, Putnam and also in Fairfield County," McAllister said.

To contribute to McAllister's effort, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/ride-for-hillside-food-outreach>.



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Mount Kisco Observes Memorial Day in Digital Ceremony

By Clever Streich

Any other year on Memorial Day, Mount Kisco's residents are asked to gather and pay respects to fallen veterans. This year, they stayed home for the safety of the community.

Last Saturday, Mount Kisco observed the holiday when it typically does, on its traditional date – May 30 – rather than the final Monday in May.

"We didn't have a parade this year, but hopefully everyone saw our ceremony on TV," said Rodger Guest, commander of the Moses S. Taylor American Legion Post 136. "Our post thanks everyone for their continued support."

In normal circumstances, Mount Kisco hosts its annual Memorial Day parade, ceremony and hot dog cookout, drawing hundreds of community members. But due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the village had to modify plans, holding a ceremony that was closed to the public and following strict social distancing guidelines.

Mount Kisco aired the ceremony live on its public access television stations (Channel 40 FiOS, Channel 20 Altice), as well as on the village's Facebook page, where it can be viewed as an archived video.

The 15-minute ceremony took place at the Veterans Monument adjacent to Village Hall, and began with a procession of Legionnaires bearing flags, rifles and donning face masks, some of which featured a camouflage pattern.

Fr. Steven Clark, from St. Francis of Assisi Parish, delivered an invocation and benediction, leading the audience in prayer.



Commander Rodger Guest welcomes viewers to the 2020 Memorial Day ceremony at the Mount Kisco Veterans Monument.

"Today we continue this honorable tradition by taking time to remember and pray for our family and friends who have offered their lives in defense of our country in order to preserve our inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," said Clark, a former Marine Corps major.

Folding chairs were spread across the green at safe distances from one another, and the color guard performed a 21-gun salute under the direction of Sergeant at Arms Don Ford.

Ford noted that the Legion could not invite the public to the Legion Hall for refreshments following the ceremony, but promised that would change once social distancing protocols are relaxed.

"When this disaster is over with, we will have a Memorial Day open house for everyone in the village," Ford stated. "Thanks for coming today."



CLEVER STREICH PHOTOS

Masked members of the Mount Kisco American Legion post look on as a memorial wreath is presented in memory of the village's fallen veterans at last Saturday's virtual Memorial Day ceremony.

The event was also attended by Mayor Gina Picinich, who gave an impassioned speech that commended the bravery of the veterans who protected, served and sacrificed for Mount Kisco.

"Clearly the circumstances – in which we can't bring people together to show our appreciation and honor our veterans – hasn't stopped us," Picinich explained after the

ceremony. "We've used technology to make sure we can duly and appropriately honor all those who have served our community and country."

To watch the video of the Mount Kisco Memorial Day ceremony, visit the village's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/VillageofMountKisco/videos/248524829582683/>



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Critical Hudson Valley Alzheimer's Conference Goes Virtual

By Lindsay Emery

When Meg Boyce finished her schooling for social work, she assumed she would be helping children.

But her first job out of graduate school was as director of social work for the Thompson House, a nursing home in Rhinebeck, where there was a memory care unit for people with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Boyce was drawn to the stories and experiences of the residents and their families.

So when the opportunity presented itself to work at the Alzheimer's Association of the Hudson Valley, she jumped at the chance and never looked back.

In January, Boyce, the vice president of programs and services, celebrated 20 years with the organization. She helped develop the virtual Meeting of the Minds dementia conference.

The Hudson Valley chapter has changed the conference from an in-person event into a series of free webinars from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. from June 15 through June 18.

Although it's not how she initially envisioned the event, Boyce said the change will allow people to join every session instead of having to choose.

"So that's going to be a benefit that we're going to see – participants from

all over," she said. "In fact, this is being advertised statewide. So we're hoping to see people from all over New York State."

The Hudson Valley chapter developed after several smaller chapters merged to support the population across seven counties: Dutchess, Ulster, Orange, Rockland, Sullivan, Westchester and Putnam. All of the services provided are free, and although it's called the Alzheimer's Association, Boyce said support and guidance is provided to people battling any form of dementia.

During the upcoming four-day conference, Boyce said that the topics range from understanding Alzheimer's and dementia, to living with uncertainty and grief as well as care options.

On Monday, June 15, Debbie Disbrow, a Alzheimer's Association support group facilitator and volunteer community educator, will give an overview of Alzheimer's in general. The second session that day, "Making Connections Through End of Life," can count as one contact hour for attending social workers.

On June 16, actor David Hyde Pierce will discuss his challenges when both his grandfather and father suffered from Alzheimer's. After Pierce's talk, attorney Moira Laidlaw will discuss Medicare, Medicaid and long-term care insurance.

Boyce anticipates that the June 17

workshop will be especially helpful for caregivers. It features Vivian Green Korner discussing Alzheimer's care options and when to take action.

"That's probably the most difficult decision – besides taking the keys away from a loved one – is making that difficult decision, that next step of when to place their loved one in a long-term care facility," Boyce said. "So this workshop is really going to help guide family caregivers on what to look for, what questions to ask, how do you know when it's time to place your loved one, how do you go about the process."

Later that day, Viviana DeCohen and Andre Early will cover their perspective of Alzheimer's in the African American community, which is twice as likely to suffer from the disease, as well as the importance of education, getting a proper diagnosis and advocacy.

Additionally, a Spanish-speaking session will be offered on June 17 covering the impact of Alzheimer's in the Hispanic community, whose members are 50 percent more likely to develop the disease.

The conference's final day will feature keynote speaker Tia Powell, director of the Montefiore-Einstein Center for Bioethics. She will be talking about her mother's experiences with Alzheimer's.

"My training as a physician was not

especially helpful to me in trying to help a family member get through dementia," Powell said. "I didn't know enough, and I think in general we physicians should shift our approach. Just because we don't have a cure doesn't mean we can't be helpful."

The last session, "Ambiguous Loss: Living with Uncertain Grief" will be presented by Gillian Rittmaster from Westchester Jewish Community Services. Rittmaster will provide techniques on how to help handle losing a person over time while they are still physically present, Boyce said.

"We always talk about what we call the anticipatory grief, especially with Alzheimer's disease, because the person can live a very long time, but you're kind of losing them as they progress through the disease," Boyce said.

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, the Alzheimer's Association has been able to continue its programs and services virtually. In addition to educational programs, the organization has joy enrichment programs and a 24-hour care consultant's line.

"I think this is going to be a phenomenal four days with really amazing presenters."

For more information about the Hudson Valley chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, visit alz.org/hudsonvalley. To learn more about the virtual conference, visit alzdementiaconference.org.

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Does Your Aging Loved One Have an Estate Plan?

Most people have two versions of their to-do list. The first version is filled with daily maintenance obligations – oil changes, bill paying, grocery shopping. This is the version that usually has the most completed tasks.

The second to-do list is different. It may have aspirational items, such as learning a new language, planting a garden or setting up an exercise regimen. Big picture goals would also be part of this list, including creating an estate plan.

Whether you are 40 or 85 years old, that second to-do list can be a challenge to complete. Up until recently, the routine and momentum of an average day tended to push immediate needs to the forefront. We have not had average days in a while.

One of the rare bright spots during this difficult period is the additional time to think about and work on long-delayed big picture

goals. For the loved ones in your life, this is an opportunity to put together an estate plan. The two main questions to ask: Who are the people in my life and what are the assets that I want to protect and pass on?

The people in your life can be spouses, children, grandchildren, siblings, other relatives, companions and friends. Assets include real estate, financial accounts, stocks, bonds, motor vehicles and collectibles. An estate plan reflects the person who creates it. The simplicity of a will may work well if a family gets along and there are no long-term illnesses. Trusts hold greater value to those people who have more complex financial or family dynamics or who anticipate ongoing health issues.

Aging loved ones have to contend with diminishments both small and great. Though their

legacies have been cemented through decades of hard work and perseverance, the risk of not having an estate plan means that the sum of all that effort could be threatened. Sometimes, pushing one you love to act is the best present. Setting up an estate plan allows a family to remain strong financially and emotionally.

But there can be pushback. “I don’t care what happens after I’m gone,” is a popular refrain. Another familiar phrase is, “Everything makes sense to me now, I don’t want to start making changes.” This type of logic is tried and true, but it is accompanied by the experiences of friends, neighbors and relatives who did not plan and



By Alan D. Feller, Esq.

faced unfortunate outcomes. Such reminders can soften even the most stubborn of family members.

If and when things return to a recognizable normalcy remains to be seen. We cannot plan for every rise and fall on life’s roller coaster, but we can plan to wear a seat

belt so we do not go flying out of our seat. Contact the professionals at Sloan and Feller today for more information on estate planning.

Alan D. Feller, Esq. is managing partner of Sloan & Feller Attorneys at Law, located at 625 Route 6 in Mahopac. He can be reached at alandfeller@sloanandfeller.com.

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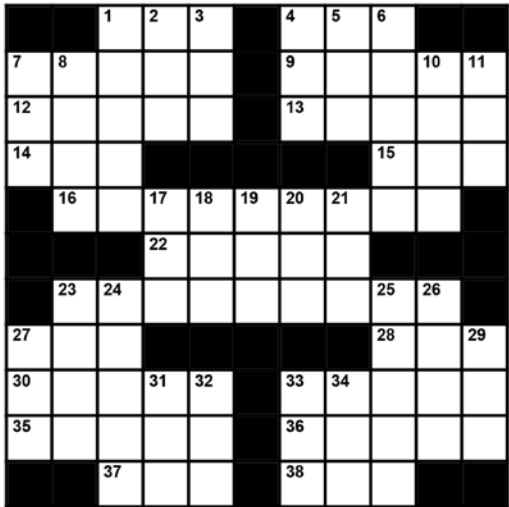
Crossword

Crossword by Myles Mellor
Across

- 1. Bon ____, witty saying
- 4. Tree juice
- 7. Time period
- 9. Took on
- 12. Impressive display
- 13. Top of the line
- 14. A drink with jam and bread....
- 15. Chess piece, in a way
- 16. Best friends, as children
- 22. Kind of cheese
- 23. Alias
- 27. Know-how
- 28. Not at home
- 30. Disappear
- 33. ____ pad, for the computer
- 35. Tarnish
- 36. Analyze, in a way
- 37. Low island
- 38. Store posting (abbr.)

Down

- 1. Fable message
- 2. Wood sorrel
- 3. Yours, in the Bible
- 4. Cow or sow
- 5. Bother
- 6. ____ Time
- 7. Consume
- 8. Get ready, for short
- 10. Sorority letters
- 11. Secluded room
- 17. Historic time



- 18. “____ are the apple of my eye”
- 19. Pie mix
- 20. “Much ____ About Nothing”
- 21. Go brown
- 23. In the ____ imity of
- 24. Impassive
- 25. Complimentary close
- 26. Rumble
- 27. Give it ____
- 29. Golf spot
- 31. Food approvers in the government
- 32. Hardly macho
- 33. Speed, abbr.
- 34. Rowing equipment

Answers on page 26

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Addressing a Public Health Crisis on Mental Health in the United States

Let us remember Tiffany Kingwood and other sensitive souls. Ms. Kingwood was 37 years old. On Oct. 18, 2019, she drove her car into the Hudson River in Verplanck and died, reported as an apparent suicide.

From all reports, she was kind, talented and loved. No one has answers on why she took her life. She represents one among thousands who committed suicide each year. In the United States, an individual completes suicide every 12 minutes. Globally it is every 40 seconds, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

I did not know Tiffany or her family. I live in a nearby community and her death resonated with me. I do know that we have a devastating public health crisis in the U.S. that we are not addressing. Each year, at an increasing rate, we lose close to 50,000 to suicide, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Worldwide, WHO estimates we lose at least 800,000 people each year.

The CDC ranks suicide as the second leading cause of death for people 10 to 34 years old. Yes, age 10. The effects of mental health conditions are devastating for families and for society. Depression, for example, is the leading disability worldwide. Now with COVID-19, the difficulties are greater for all.

The numbers seem so large and the problem of the suicide rate seems insurmountable. Despite the staggering

numbers, we barely report on the cases collectively. There is no consolidated, uniform public health approach. Instead, we tend to view each suicide as an individual tragedy.

Those with mental health conditions do not represent a separate part of the population, but are us. We all have potential for conditions that affect our lives, jobs and relationships. There is still too much stigma, inadequate services, a lack of research and no uniform viable public health approach.

I am not a therapist or mental health professional. I practice education law and advocate on behalf of families and students. I represent vulnerable students, including those with learning and emotional disabilities and advocate for appropriate services.

In my practice, the most complex and under-identified needs arise from students' mental health concerns. From my perspective, while many school districts provide general education for students on mental health, few take the affirmative steps of referring students who need services under federal law as mandated. Due to these devastating issues, I have volunteered on the Board of the National Alliance for Mental Illness in Westchester (NAMI Westchester) for the past four years.

May was Mental Health Awareness Month, and I ask all to consider steps to take to address the issue. WHO notes that

effective and evidence-based interventions can be implemented for entire populations, subgroups and individual levels to prevent suicide and suicide attempts. Advocating to end stigma and to assist those with mental health conditions is a social justice movement to help those disenfranchised, isolated and misunderstood. The work and support are essential.

Each person can make a difference. Here are just five things to do:

1. Speak up. Mental health

affects everyone and is part of the human condition. One in five have a mental health condition and, chances are, each one of us or our family members have experienced debilitating depression and anxiety. We can end the pervasive and undeserved stigma that our society still perpetuates for individuals with mental health disorders by speaking up for others and reaching out to friends and neighbors. Stigma leads to isolation, decline and inappropriate services.

2. Become educated on warning signs and what to do. It is important to know the warning signs of depression, suicidal ideation and what to do. NAMI, through



By Marion M. Walsh

the Ending the Silence Program, educates teens and families on suicide prevention and mental health awareness.

3. Support groups who offer hope and support. There are many programs available to support but all are underfunded and need support. In a fractured mental health system based on community services, there is often no community. Find a group to support. As

one example, NAMI's commitment to build a community helps those in need through support groups and activities, helps piece together and create a community for vulnerable individuals.

4. Advocate. For families supporting loved ones, advocacy is essential but difficult. Advocate with legislators.

5. Join a virtual walk. You can still support NAMI Westchester and donate through June 15 at <https://www.namiwalks.org>.

Marion Walsh is a partner at Littman Krooks LLP in White Plains and New York City. She lives in Cortlandt and has served on the board of NAMI Westchester for two years and volunteered for four years.

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Peekskill Farmers Market's 30th Anniversary Season Opens Saturday

The Peekskill Farmers Market, a staple in the Peekskill community for decades, will open this Saturday, June 6 at 1 Bank St. in celebration of the market's 30th anniversary.

The market, which is presented by the Peekskill Business Improvement District (BID), provides a fresh alternative food source for downtown residents and increases foot traffic for businesses.

Today, the market's mission is even more relevant as the need for healthy food alternatives increases and downtown businesses, closed for three months, start to reopen.

In addition, the market is being managed by Events to Remember, an award-winning Westchester-based event management and public relations firm. Events to Remember, founded by Chereese Jervis-Hill 16 years ago, looks forward to bringing the Peekskill Farmers Market to the community and furthering the Peekskill BID's mission.

"We are excited to cut the ribbon on our much-anticipated 2020 Peekskill Farmers Market," said Brian Fassett, president of the board of directors of the Peekskill BID. "The BID board is delighted to engage the services of a professional event company with strong management ability, creative vision and a refreshing team approach to managing the market."

To start with, in accordance with statewide directives, the number of vendors will be limited to allow proper distancing, but will expand over time. Vendors scheduled for opening weekend include Fi-Dough

Inc.; Healthway Farms; Irvington Delight Market; KDA Seafood; Picklelicious; Rolling Ridge Farm; and Satori Unlimited.

"As we re-open the market for the 30th anniversary season we open under very different circumstances," said Bill Powers, the Peekskill BID's executive director.

"We have implemented a series of protocols including wearing proper face coverings and adhering to proper social distancing. We ask that market-goers be kind, considerate, patient and respectful of the new policies put in place. We are hopeful, as time goes on, that we can ease these restrictions."

The market is introducing numerous COVID-19 precautions, all new this year as market management intends to follow state, county and local directives as well as best practices. An exclusive shopping hour from 8 to 9 a.m. will be set aside for seniors, 60 years old and up, and those with compromised immune systems. The market runs to 2 p.m.

Patrons Care and their Responsibilities

- All patrons must wear a proper face covering before entering the market, and keep it on at all times while in the market. Face masks will be provided to those at no charge should they need one.



- All patrons are asked to maintain six-foot distancing at all times between fellow market-goers and vendors.

- Once you make your purchases, please leave quickly.

- Limit the number of family members to one or two.

- Vendors and their staff will only be allowed to handle products and customers must not touch any produce or products until after they have purchased.

- Please do not shake hands, hug or make contact with others at the market.

- If you are sick, please stay home.

- All patrons should be kind, considerate, patient and respectful of

vendors, staff and fellow patrons.

Market Management Care and their Responsibilities

- Seniors (60 and up) and those with health issues that are vulnerable will be the only shoppers permitted to shop from 8 to 9 a.m.

- Hand sanitizer and face masks will be available free of charge at both entrances.

- Staff will regulate the number of people allowed into the market to ensure safe distancing.

- Use sidewalks as one-way exits only;

please work to keep everyone safe.

- No dogs or other animals (except service animals) will be permitted.

- We will be following state, county and local directives as well as best practices.

- Market management reserves the right to ask any customer to leave for any reason.

Vendor Care and Responsibilities

- Vendors will wear face coverings.
- No bare hands allowed by vendors when touching food items.

- No food sampling permitted.
- Most foods will be pre-packaged.

- All farm stands must use vinyl or plastic table covers for easy sanitizing.

- All vendors will be sanitizing their stands regularly and frequently contacted surfaces will be wiped down often.

- Regulate the number of customers at their booth at one time.

- Contact-less payment methods will be offered if available.

- Farmers and vendors can be temperature-checked upon arrival.

- Vendors who are ill or showing signs of illness must stay home.

For more information about this year's Peekskill Farmers Market, visit www.discoverpeekskill.com or contact market managers Chereese Jervis-Hill or Barbara Gips at EventsCJH@EventsRemember.com or 914-396-7664 or at BarbaraG@EventsRemember.com or 914-844-1890.

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A Spiritual View

By Rev. Beth Graham

Life seems to be hitting us from every side. The coronavirus and its serious effects – isolation, depression, sickness, loss of jobs, economic crisis, the social effect of wearing masks and social distancing – have been bad enough.

Then this week we were faced with images of an unjust and horrific death that made our stomachs turn, and the news reports of the ensuing riots. It can all feel overwhelming. How do we respond?

Words from an ancient prophet, Micah, may help us as a start: "What

does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8).

Let us seek to be agents of justice, let us mercifully weep with those who weep, and let us above all walk with

God, listening to Him every day and every hour. He will show us our next steps.

Rev. Beth Graham is the pastor at Hillside Church in Armonk and is part of the Armonk Faith Alliance. The

alliance also comprises Congregation B'nai Yisrael, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, St. Patrick's RC Church and St. Nersess Armenian Seminary.



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Thoughts on Memorializing Your Appreciation of Fine Wine



By Nick Antonaccio

Many of us have helped mark a special occasion with fine wine. What better way to celebrate and honor a spouse, child, relative or friend than a gift that can be shared by all.

The clinking of glasses filled with the libations of a painstakingly selected bottle of wine symbolizes the camaraderie, the close bond, the emotional connection we feel as we congregate around the dinner table.

I've always felt that this aspect of enjoying wine with family and friends is more fully enjoyed with planning and forethought. I typically purchase a special bottle of wine for these occasions.

One aspect of celebrating special occasions never entered my mind until recently. Why not commemorate a landmark with a bottle of wine from the birth-year of a child or the marriage-year of a relative? It wasn't until our first grandchild was born that I began to think of purchasing memory wines.

A memory wine is a wine harvested in

the year of the birth of someone special, typically purchased at, or soon after, release and then stored away by the bestower until that date in the future when the recipient attains a landmark. It might be the commemoration of the 21st birthday of a family member, a 25th or 50th wedding anniversary or an auspicious occasion that has a special connotation.

But which wine will symbolize the importance of attaining a life-status and will memorialize the gift-giver's generosity and forethought, decades hence?

Here are my thoughts from my research and the ultimate purchases for my grandchildren.

1. Select age-worthy wines. Most wines are produced to be consumed within

a few years of harvest. I sought out wines that were built to last; wines produced in such a manner to improve in taste and character as they age over a 20- to 30-year continuum. A number of wines are noteworthy for

their ability to age: French Bordeaux and Burgundy wines are considered the premier aging wines, along with select Napa Valley Cabernets and Italian Barolos. As one might expect, these wines command a premium price.

While it is not critical to invest several hundred dollars in a single bottle of First Growth Bordeaux or Grand Cru Burgundy (which translates into a significant investment for a case), most age-worthy wines are priced in excess of \$75 upon release.

2. Consider the quality of the vintage. In highly rated years, prices tend to be high and rise in the future; you may have to seek out a lesser – but excellent – wine to match your price affordability range. In less regarded years, the reverse is true, and excellent wines may be more affordable.

3. How many bottles? It's difficult to celebrate with a single bottle. If your budget permits, a six-pack or a case is preferable. A case is the gift that keeps on giving beyond the year of an occasion, building lasting memories.

4. Here's the rub: Investing in age-worthy wines requires age-worthy storage. The top of the fridge or the back of a closet are grossly inadequate. If you don't have the benefit of owning a climate-controlled wine cellar, consider purchasing a modest-sized portable storage unit or renting space at a certified, bonded storage service.

So, what have I selected for my memory wines for my grandchildren? The safest

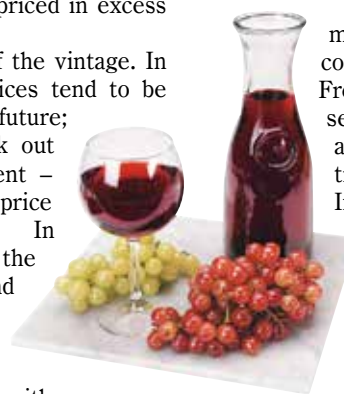
choice would have been a highly regarded Bordeaux or Burgundy. Resisting this temptation, I ultimately decided that I should be patriotic and pass on my patriotic fervor to my grandchildren.

Although there aren't many American wines that compare favorably to high-end French wines, I narrowed my selection to three Napa wines and then chose one of my all-time favorites: Joseph Phelps Insignia Cabernet Sauvignon blend. Several cases of several vintages are now resting comfortably in my climate-controlled wine cellar.

Memory wines can be the perfect legacy gift. If you're so inclined, don't procrastinate.

Fine wines not only improve with age, but their prices increase commensurately. Buy now. You will assure your legacy with family and/or friends.

Nick Antonaccio is a 40-year Pleasantville resident. For over 25 years, he has conducted numerous wine tastings and lectures. Nick is the co-chairperson 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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Yorktown Grange Fair is 'Still Going Strong!' in 2020

The Yorktown Grange Fair is proud to celebrate the strength and resilience of the community with this year's fair theme Still Going Strong.

For 96 years, the Grange Fair has been a showcase of community togetherness, a consistent and beloved event in Westchester County. Although 2020 has presented some unique challenges, fair organizers have decided to move ahead with preparations.

The Grange Fair will run from Sept. 11-13 as planned. Since the communities in



and around Westchester have given so much to the fair over the decades, this year admission will be free. In this unprecedented and stressful time, it is important to stand together, give back when possible and prove that the primary purpose of a community is to create strength as a group.

That is why this year's theme is a testament to the strength of everyone who has been to or participated in the Grange Fair since its inception in 1923.

Westchester's only true country fair is run by an entirely volunteer board,



who personally do all the planning and administration. The board's focus this year is to put together a fair that is fun, entertaining and educational, but most importantly, safe. Therefore, entertainment

and attractions are still to be determined.

It is the hope of everyone involved that the Grange Fair will be able to bring the community as many of the same contests, events and food options as possible while still maintaining a safe, family-friendly environment. More details will be available in the coming weeks.

September will be here quickly, so get ready to stand up as a community, have some free family-friendly fun and prove that despite the obstacles we are Still Going Strong!

For more information, visit www.yorktowngrangefair.org.

Stepinac Honors Class of 2020 Valedictorian, Salutatorian

Stepinac High School, ranked as one of the nation's top 50 Catholic high schools, has named Matthew Halas as valedictorian and Stephen Buckley as salutatorian for the Class of 2020.

Halas, who will attend Wesleyan University, and Buckley, who is headed to Georgia Tech, were both members of Stepinac's groundbreaking Honors Academy, a three-year small, personalized learning program for top-achieving students. The two also earned the prestigious Harvard Book Award for their achievements in academics, extracurricular activities and community service.

Because the pandemic caused the cancellation of Stepinac's 70th commencement ceremonies originally



Stepinac High School announced that Matthew Halas, left, is this year's valedictorian while Stephen Buckley is the salutatorian.

scheduled for May 24, the all-boys school decided to honor the Class of 2020 with a series of special live and virtual events in

the coming weeks.

The first of these will take place this Thursday, June 4 when the seniors will return to the campus to pick up their caps, gowns and yearbooks. On hand to cheer them will be members of the faculty.

To maintain safety, the students will arrive not in mass but individually over the course of four hours, their arrival time pre-determined by their last name.

But the students will also be leaving with something unique that day. It will be a personalized lawn sign comprising their yearbook photo, Stepinac logo and Class of 2020 title. When they return home, the graduates can display the 18-by-24-inch signs on the lawns or affixed to windows for their friends and neighbors to see.

Crossword Answers



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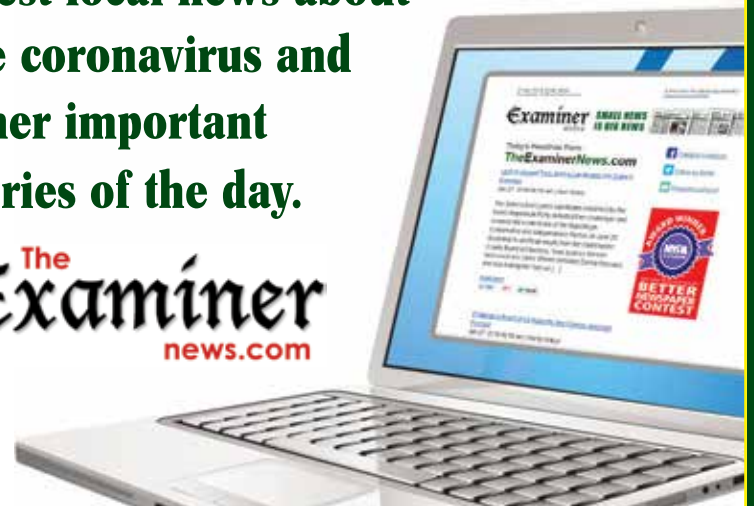
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SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Sports

Athletic Director, Dullea, Departs Carmel for Rye

GHVBL Hopes to Open for Business, Eyes late-June Start



By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports
Editor @Directrays

Man, the Carmel Central School District took a pounding last week, when, on the heels of the official dismissal of former 25-year football Coach Tood Cayea, the Rams are now searching for a new athletic director upon Susan Dullea's departure for Rye High School last Thursday as the Garnets' new Director of

Health, Physical Education and Athletics.

There is no sugarcoating this loss in Ramland; this is a significant loss at a time when Carmel needed stability. Dullea, who departs Carmel with a heavy heart, is widely regarded as a supreme talent on the Section 1 circuit, one who has supported the districts she's served -- Haldane, Croton-Harmon and Carmel -- with a folksy, hands-on approach that makes student athletes feel special while ensuring outstanding educational experiences.

If it seemed like Dullea was everywhere during her time at Carmel, you weren't imagining it. Dullea is heavily involved at the state and sectional levels, serving as Conference One VP, NYSAAA Chapter One President, Section One Football Chair, and on the NYSPHSAA At Large Committee. She is also a member of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association. She wore many hats while serving Carmel in a dignified, respectful manner.

"Moving forward is bittersweet," Dullea said. "I will miss Carmel tremendously... a community with rich tradition and a love for sports, second to none. I will miss so many people, but most especially the kids. I have many fond memories from my first year to the present time. Many days I would drive home with a smile; not necessarily because of a win, but because of a random act of sportsmanship, kindness or citizenship that I witnessed from our kids."

New York born-and-bred, Dullea has served many masters at Ithaca College, SUNY Potsdam and St. Lawrence University before turning those educational opportunities into a cushy gig at Rye, where expectations and pressure are through the roof, perhaps higher than anywhere in the state.

"Timing is everything," Dullea said, "and it's my time to move on to the next chapter. While this is goodbye for now, I will always be a Carmel Ram fan, but I'm also excited to start the next chapter at Rye."

After nearly five years of shining a bright light on Carmel, Dullea was recently thrust into the Coach Cayea debacle, which, since last November, has been nothing short of an albatross for all parties involved, leading up to last week's hiring of Jimmy Nguyen as Cayea's replacement, whom the Cayea's fully support during this unpolished transitional period.

And now, Coach Cayea's wife, Debra, is



Whether it was the cheerleaders or the football players, former Carmel A.D. Susan Dullea-Reid struck a chord with all Ram athletes.

seeking a seat on the Carmel School Board, who's monthly meetings would draw a must-see-TV-type rating should she win the upcoming election. Man, I want Debra Heitman-Cayea, who hails from Ram royalty (the esteemed Heitman football family), in my foxhole should the poop ever hit the fan #StellarMove...

In Other News: David Zaslaw has good reason for wanting the United States of America to re-open its society and be smart in the war on Covid-19, aka Coronavirus. Zaslaw has built a baseball empire within the Greater Hudson Valley Baseball League, the host association of some 220 summer league teams across the counties of Westchester/Rockland/Putnam/Dutchess and large portions of western CT, not to mention GHVBL's spring and fall segments of the association, over 700 teams in sum.

According to Zaslaw, the physical and mental well-being of thousands of players is at stake, and his GHVBL is ready to do whatever it takes to get its belated summer campaign up and running by late June, in accordance with CDC and NYS guidelines.

"We have been cooped up so long, we need

to start America again," Zaslaw said while simultaneously announcing a mandatory coaches meeting for mid-June in an effort to jump-start the process. "We are hoping and planning for a summer season. We are ready to start as soon as our local government allows us to, and I sincerely hope schools and towns allow us onto the fields immediately. The kids need recreation for their physical and mental health."

Frustrated at the state's treatment for baseball, or, "the lack of consideration" by state officials, Zaslaw asserts that baseball (and softball for that matter) is, by design, a different animal. The GHVBL is ready to mandate the necessary changes to ensure additional welfare against the spread of Covid-19.

"Maybe not the same as golf and tennis, but a significant portion of the game is, by design, socially distanced," said Zaslaw, a resident of Yorktown. "We are happy to implement additional rules and regulations to promote safety measures, including no handshakes, no chewing gum or spitting, sanitizing baseballs each half inning, social distancing in and around dugouts, whatever it takes!"

Zaslaw is closely monitoring the efforts in New Jersey where the USABL is a large youth travel league that has the resources to devote to moving baseball up in the queue in NJ.

"A successful effort there in New Jersey will help us in New York and Connecticut," Zaslaw said. "As of now, we are hoping to hold a scheduling meeting in mid-June, utilizing social distancing guidelines & smaller groups, and at that meeting we are hoping coaches will have dates for state and local guidance for baseball start dates. Hoping late June early July for a start in NY and CT."

Pennsylvania has allowed teams to begin to practice already, but recreation is, for now, in Phase 4 of the NY Pause.

"Unfortunately, there are lots of efforts to lobby lawmakers to keep companies and organizations whole during the pandemic," Zaslaw said, "but there's little consideration for getting kids back on the fields to play. That is our interest and focus."

If empirical data is on our side, and sunlight and fresh air help deter the spread of this heinous virus, then perhaps Zaslaw, children and parents across the globe will soon hear umpires on diamonds roar, "Play Ball!"...

In the meantime, I have no cold, hard evidence (other than the pics I see on Insta/Snap) or any insider knowledge on this situation (other than what many friends have reported), but I know for a fact that we'd best figure out a way to get our kids back on ballfields ASAP because the amount of underage drinking I'm hearing about is absolutely chilling. Hell, the amount of alcohol/drug abuse (period!) during this pandemic has been insane #Facts...

Golf, NHL playoff hockey, tennis and lacrosse are slated to begin in the days ahead and Major League Baseball is inching closer to an abbreviated season, so we are one step closer each day to ending the Netflix-style bingeing that has defined many since March 11th, the day sports stood still. Yes, I deplorably loved me some sassy Ruthy Langmore and Darlene Snell on Ozark, but this warped perception of 'new normal' needs to end #BringBackSports. There is light at the end of the tunnel, gang, and let's just pray it's not a lit torch in the form of an oncoming second wave following these senseless riots across the country, so we can get back into our healthy sports routines and some form of rational behavior. Justice for George Floyd (yes, 100 percent!!!), but these street terrorists must be confronted and stopped....

The NYSPHSAA Executive Committee recently approved Middletown High School as the host of the boys' NYS soccer championships from 2021-2023, and this is just great news. Middletown is the perfect spot when you consider the powers that be in NYS soccer. Section 5 (Rochester/Buff area) may not be big fans of this announcement, but Middletown is fairly central to Syracuse/Oneonta/Binghamton regions, plus Long Island, Hudson Valley and Albany/ADK programs. Count me in!

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