

Spooky Fun at  
Pumpkin  
Blaze  
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FREE

# The WHITE PLAINS & Examiner

Covering White Plains, Greenburgh, Harrison

COVID-19 Breakdown:

White Plains

1,964 (21)

Greenburgh

1,284 (20)

Harrison

460 (12)

Scarsdale 384 (4)

Elmsford

219 (4)

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September 22 - September 28 2020

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 10, Issue 475

## White Plains Police Reform Committee Established

By Rick Pezzullo



### White Plains Youth Bureau Celebrates Fitness Center

The White Plains Youth Bureau celebrated the opening of its refurbished Fitness Center on September 16. The Fitness Center was originally designed as a boxing facility. With the enhancements, the Fitness Center will be used for boxing, martial arts, yoga, etc. White Plains Mayor Thomas M. Roach, Youth Bureau Director Frank Williams, Jr. and Deputy Youth Bureau Director Dr. Bhavana Pahwa gave remarks. Also attending were White Plains Councilwoman Jennifer Puja, Frank Stefanelli, Director of Facilities and Operations White Plains School District, Youth Board members Elizabeth Mark and Thelma Davenport Tulloch, along with Youth Bureau staff.

A Police Reform Committee has been established in the City of White Plains.

According to Mayor Tom Roach, the committee will review the needs of the White Plains community served by its police department; evaluate the department's current policies and practices; involve the full White Plains community in the discussion; develop policy recommendations resulting from this review; and offer a plan for public comment; and present that plan to the White Plains Common Council.

"This is an opportunity to step back and review our policing policies, enhance the lines of communication between our police department and the community, and make White Plains an even better place for all those who live, work, and visit here," Roach said.

As part of the comprehensive review process, the City of White Plains and the White Plains / Greenburgh NAACP Branch will co-sponsor a series of public listening sessions for members of the Police Reform Committee and the White Plains community. The purpose of the sessions is to obtain feedback in responding to Governor Cuomo's "New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative" Executive Order 203.

"I am pleased to be working in collaboration with the White Plains /Greenburgh NAACP on this important initiative and I am also pleased to announce that the President of the White Plains / Greenburgh NAACP Branch, Ms. Janice Griffith, will be chairing our Police Reform Committee," Roach said. "The White Plains /Greenburgh NAACP is a respected partner and well-qualified to

*continued on page 2*

## Feiner to Propose Law to Forfeiture Drag Racing Vehicles

By Rick Pezzullo

Greenburgh Supervisor Paul Feiner is looking to follow neighboring White Plains' lead by trying to curb drag racing on town streets.

Feiner is planning to have the Town Board review proposed legislation that would give Greenburgh officials the authority to forfeiture vehicles involved in reckless driving.

The main component of the package approved by the White Plains Common Council ear-

lier this month is a local law that would enable local governments to commence a civil action seeking forfeiture of a vehicle used in connection with drag racing (aka: unlawful speed contests) after the registered owner of the vehicle is convicted under or pleads guilty to section 1182 of the New York State Vehicle & Traffic Law. Section 1182 specifically prohibits speed contests and races. A conviction under this section is a misdemeanor.

Feiner stated many residents who live on or near Central Av-

enue have complained about excessive noise at night stemming from drivers using the roadway illegally.

"It is well known that the noise associated with unlawful speed contests creates a nuisance and diminishes the quality of life enjoyed by our residents," Feiner said. "The races themselves are also dangerous, not only to the participants but to bystanders and other vehicles legally using the road."

The supervisor noted the Greenburgh Police Department

has been working with Yonkers, White Plains and New York State Police on enforcement initiatives along Central Avenue, as long as monitoring social media to keep an eye on groups that arrange so-called "pop-up" rallies, such as drag racing.

Drag racing along Central Ave has been an ongoing problem. The Greenburgh Police Department will continue enforcement efforts to address this public safety concern which impacts the quality of life for our residents. We have worked jointly with

our counterparts from Yonkers, White Plains, NYS Police, respectively with enforcement initiatives and will continue to do so. Unfortunately, there are groups originating from jurisdictions outside of the Town who arrange these so called "pop up" rallies via social media. The police will continue to monitor social media to gather intelligence and develop strategies to discourage and prevent this activity within the Town of Greenburgh. We urge residents to call 989 1700 to report these problems.

# Stop & Shop Celebrates Grand Reopening of White Plains Store

By Rick Pezzullo

Stop & Shop officials Friday unveiled a newly remodeled store at 154 Westchester Avenue in White Plains.

"We're excited to share our newly remodeled store with the community," said Harinder Singh, Store Manager of the White Plains Stop & Shop. "We've added more of what our local customers want – fresh produce, specialty cheeses, and seafood – plus lots of convenient meal solutions. We hope that our expanded offerings help to make our customers' shopping experience easier and more convenient."

The updates are centered on delivering fresh, healthy, and convenient options that make grocery shopping easier for custom-

ers. New features include an expanded produce section, hundreds more natural and organic products, plus a hot bar featuring entrees and sides made fresh in store daily to grab and go for meals and entertaining.

With the unveiling of the newly renovated store, Stop & Shop continued supporting the battle against food insecurity by donating \$1,000 in cash and an additional \$500 in non-perishable items to the George Washington Elementary School Food Pantry. Stop & Shop expanded on the George Washington Elementary school food pantry in conjunction with Feeding Westchester this summer to provide donated food to students and families facing food insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Stop and Shop associates outside White Plains store last week.

## White Plains Police Reform Committee Established

*continued from page 1*

help White Plains in this endeavor."

The committee will convene several community listening sessions this fall. The listening sessions will give residents the opportunity to voice their opinions, share experiences, and submit questions to the committee in a public forum. The listening sessions and the subsequent work of the committee will focus on topic areas including Community Policing; Anti-Bias Training; Transparency, Data Collection and

Reporting; Mental Health Crisis Management; and Civilian Complaint Review Board

For those who do not wish to speak during the public listening sessions, questions and comments may be submitted in writing to: [policereform@whiteplainsny.gov](mailto:policereform@whiteplainsny.gov). A public meeting schedule with additional details will be announced shortly.

"Entering into a partnership with the City of White Plains is a terrific opportunity to work with our communities to strengthen the positive elements of the policing cul-

ture, while working on those areas where constructive modifications or additions are necessary," Griffith stated.

"This is a very important issue and I look forward to the feedback from the City of White Plains Police Reform Committee. To me, 21st Century Policing involves a process of continual improvement," Council President Nadine Hunt Robinson added.

Besides Griffith, members of the Police Reform Committee are: Joseph Castelli, Police Chief, White Plains Police Department; Rosemarie Eller, President, White Plains Board of Education; Cheryl Greenberg, My Sister's Place; Wade Hardy, Westchester-Rockland Guardians Association; Brian Johnson, White Plains PBA; Nada Khader, Director WESPAC; Harriet Lowell Chair, Mayor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities; Patrick Macarchuk,

Westchester County District Attorney's Office; Patrick Schelle, Westchester Coalition for Police Reform; Captain James Spencer, Community Advocacy & Strategic Initiatives Division, White Plains Police Department; Minister Donald Stevens,

Resident & Deacon, Little Mt. Zion Holy Church; Bernie Thombs, Security Consultant for WP Housing Authority; Bernie Thombs, Security Consultant for WP Housing Authority; Judy Troilo, Executive Director The LOFT: LGBT Community Services Center; Reverend Erwin Lee Trollingier, Calvary Baptist Church; Isabel Villar/Judith Aucar Executive Director / Deputy Director, El Centro Hispano; Frank Williams, Director, White Plains Youth Bureau; Michelle Jones, Student, White Plains High School; and residents Keyla Garcia, Katrina Jackson, Marie Vitale and Laurette Young.

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# Region, State Hold the Line on COVID-19 Cases Despite Minor Upticks

By Martin Wilbur

Despite limited openings of schools, gyms, bowling alleys and restaurants and recently concluded summer activity, New York State continues to hold a steady COVID-19 transmission rate of close to 1 percent.

Daily numbers posted by the state show that through the first 20 days of September, there has been only one day where the transmission rate statewide has exceeded 1 percent – Sept. 14, when there were 766 coronavirus positive test results from 73,678, or about 1.04 percent. It is the only day since Aug. 6 that the infection rate has been that high.

While Westchester had seen a minor uptick over several days this month – rates exceeded 1 percent in the county from Sept. 7-10 and Sept. 12, 13 and 20 but never eclipsing 1.2 percent – County Executive George Latimer said by hovering near that rate is “a very good indicator” of how the spread is being contained locally.

“Here we are, seven months into it and what we are doing is working,” Latimer said. “That’s the key. It’s pragmatic. It’s what works.”

On Sunday, there were 36 new cases in Westchester from 3,507 test results, according to the state’s statistics. Through the weekend, there were 560 active cases and about 40 hospitalizations,” Latimer said. There were no COVID-19-related deaths during the past week and only two fatalities in the past three weeks, he said.

In Putnam, there were three positive test results recorded Sunday from 343 tests. There were 17 active cases but no hospitalizations in Putnam, the county’s Health Department revealed.

Latimer said the steadiness of the numbers is a testament to citizens adhering to the precautions of masks, social distancing and hand washing.

“We have gone through a period of things that could have spiked us and we would have looked at that and say ‘Well, we weren’t prepared for the high school graduation season, we weren’t prepared for the Fourth of July week or the Labor Day weekend or the summertime vacations, and in each of these cases, because we haven’t had a spread, I think it’s an example of we were prepared in advance, we did the things that were necessary,” Latimer said.

**New Castle Super: Don’t Point Fingers**

New Castle Supervisor Ivy Pool admonished residents in her town last week who took to social media to blame fellow residents for contributing to a recent spike in active COVID-19 cases in the community.

Pool spent nearly 10 minutes at the start of this week’s Town Board meeting as well as posting on social media urging others to “stop playing the blame game” after she received e-mails and texts as well as reading online posts that accused various of community members for the increase.

The active case number in New Castle reached 25 late last week and has been above 20 for about a week. That is an increase in the consistent single-digit caseload for most of the crisis. The only exception to that until now was attributed to the 27 cases stemming from the Horace Greeley High School

graduation in late June.

“We need to stop shifting the blame and start taking responsibility,” Pool stated. “Why is this critically important?

Because when we shame one another, we make people less likely to provide (New York State) contact tracers with accurate, honest and timely information that is essential to stopping community spread and keeping our schools and businesses open.”

The single largest source of the cluster were 10 cases connected with Oak Lane Child Care Center on Memorial Drive in Chappaqua. The center reported to county



## CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

health officials that one individual had tested positive for COVID-19. Families and staff members were notified and the school was closed, but it was determined that

five children and five teachers tested positive.

The facility will be closed until Wednesday, when the 14-day quarantine period concludes.

In a statement to the community, Oak Lane Children Care Center Executive Director Ronnie Weinberger said the center has undergone a deep cleaning and all students and staff will be required to provide a negative COVID-19 test or a Release from Isolation Notice to return.

Pool said that at least another two active cases are a result of college students from Chappaqua who tested positive and are quarantining at their out-of-state schools. Students who are out of state but whose family health insurance traces back to the local area are counted in their home community’s statistics.

Several of the cases are likely due to people having returned from summer vacations or a general loosening of personal behavior, she said.

“After we loosen the precautions the numbers will ramp up,” Pool said. “So it’s incumbent upon all of us to treat this seriously and do all that we can to be vigilant.”

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# Westlake Students Rally for Teacher, Changes in District

By Martin Wilbur

More than 50 students demonstrated last Friday in support of a Westlake High School teacher who touched off a firestorm with a controversial political cartoon but students argued the episode exposed deep divisions within the community.

The rally, held on Columbus Avenue by Carroll Park after classes were dismissed, was organized after a tense Board of Education meeting and a torrent of social media posts last week calling for social studies teacher Christopher Moreno to be terminated. Moreno distributed two political cartoons in a class, one of which showed a KKK member, a slave owner and a police officer on the neck of a Black man.

"I had Mr. Moreno twice and he was a really, really good teacher," said Westlake senior Vada Rios. "People don't understand that a political cartoon is supposed to be exaggerated. It is not supposed to push his opinion on you, it's simply just a handout."

Students of color at the diverse gathering said they have endured racial taunts and microaggressions on social media before this issue arose and little is done by school officials. They are also pressing

for change because there are few minority faculty members and the curriculum largely ignores Black historical figures and even Black History Month, said sophomore Rebecca Last.

"I think a lot of older people, they live in a little bubble, and I think what we're here to do today is to kind of break that bubble and say you can't silence us," Last said. "I heard some of them speak (at the board meeting) and some of their perspectives on it were so far from the actual reality for a lot of us in this town."

Giana Rotondi, an eighth-grader at Westlake Middle School, attended the protest because of the paucity of teachers of color in the district and the avoidance of talking about current social issues in class.

"It's an issue and it needs to be brought up," Rotondi said. "I'm really glad that people are here today screaming about something that's important to me, a person of color, and it's important to be here for other people of color."

The demonstrators were met by periodic honking horns signaling solidarity as well as several pickup trucks that repeatedly sped by with large American flags. There were several Mount Pleasant police cars close by the demonstration, which

went off without incident.

Mount Pleasant Superintendent Dr. Kurtis Kotes said at last week's board meeting the district has apologized to local law enforcement and community. It is also an educator's job to inspire thinking and learning, but the teacher used material that was disrespectful to some, he said. The district concluded the materials should not have been used.

But Evan O'Brien, a Westlake senior, said much of the reaction to the cartoon and the ensuing discussion in the community was an overreaction.

"The whole point of a social studies class and U.S. history is to learn about the current events that are going on in U.S. history," he said. "It's the most pressing issue we've had in decades and it hasn't been solved since our nation was founded in 1776, so we need to solve it now."

Rios said she found the reaction on social media, mainly from parents who linked their defense of the teacher to an attack on police was "disgusting." She read one post, which hoped that a bear would show up at the rally and ended with "can't they find real causes to support."

Henry Cuniffe, who graduated Pleasantville High School earlier



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Westlake High School students and several parents and other community members demonstrated last week for changes in the district in the wake of a teacher's use of a controversial political cartoon in his class.

this year, said he came out for the protest because he's found that many white people don't want to hear that racism and bias may exist in their communities.

"There are huge discrepancies between the Westchester that I as a white person know and the Westchester that they've experienced," Cuniffe said. "I think it's very important to elect the people we want to represent us and represent the experiences of

everybody, not just the experiences of the few."

Last said it's wrong for some community members for trying to link the changes she and other students are seeking at school with denigrating the police.

"I want to make it clear that our message has nothing to do with the police at all," she said. "We're here specifically about Westlake. 'But we're not here talking about police at all.'"

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# Hundreds Pay Tribute to RBG at White Plains Vigil

By Lindsay Emery

Hundreds gathered early Sunday evening outside the federal courthouse in White Plains for a vigil to commemorate the life and legacy of Supreme Court Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Indivisible Westchester organized the event shortly after Ginsburg's death on Friday, and brought clergy members from across the county to mourn. They also encouraged citizens to mobilize and vote in the upcoming presidential election.

Rabbi Leora Frankel from the Larchmont Temple, explained the importance of someone dying on a High Holy day in the Jewish faith.

"And there is a tradition, in fact, that in Judaism, that only the very righteous die on the Sabbath and the most, most, most righteous die on the High Holy days," Frankel said. "How chilling, how perfect that we imagine as we were ringing in our New Year, as our prayers were ascending to the gates of heaven, so too, was Justice Ginsburg's soul."

Frankel ended her remarks by blowing the shofar and encouraging people to think of it as a call to action to continue to live Ginsburg's legacy.

Other speakers, including Fr. Gawain De Leeuw of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in White Plains, who served on the local board of Planned Parenthood for eight years, called Ginsburg their patron saint.

"Every time a new Supreme Court justice has been appointed over the last three-and-a-half years, my heart has died a little bit,"

he said. "But each time, I could see the Notorious RBG there saying what needed to be said."

Rev. Lee Trollinger from the Calvary Baptist Church drew a parallel between the Statue of Liberty and Ginsburg.

"And at one time in the history of the United States, those who came from foreign lands, would take a look at that grand lady in the sea, in the harbor, and knew that they were on safe ground because now they were in the United States of America," he said. "When President Clinton, designed by God's will, to select a grand lady like Justice Ginsburg, New York got another grand lady – not to be in a harbor, but to be in the United States Supreme Court."

Trollinger and others discussed various gender and social rights cases that Ginsburg had argued in front of the court, as well as cases decided when she was on the bench. Overall, Ginsburg tried to ensure that the Supreme Court did what was right for the people of the United States, said Rev. Stephen Pogue of the Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church in Mount Vernon.

"At 5-foot-1, she was a giant," Pogue said. "At 5-foot-1, she broke glass ceilings. At 5-foot-1, she knocked down doors to make sure each of us had the right as United States citizens and we cannot and we shall not allow her legacy to go down without a fight."

At the end of the vigil, Cantor Melanie Cooperman from the Community Synagogue of Rye, led the audience in the Mourner's Kaddish for Ginsburg – something that



LINDSAY EMERY PHOTO

Rabbi Leora Frankel from the Larchmont Temple blows the shofar during a vigil early Sunday evening in White Plains to honor the life of Supreme Court Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Ginsburg was unable to participate in when her own mother passed away in 1950.

"And while RBG was unable to say Kaddish for her mother, I believe she would take great satisfaction in knowing that we are gathered here together today – men and women, Jews and non-Jews alike – to do just that for her," Cooperman said.

The night ended with live music from violinist Deborah Wong and cellist Chris Finkel.

Residents and representatives of organizations from across the county came and participated in the vigil. Robin Price and Jackie Powell traveled from Irvington to pay

their respects to Ginsburg.

"I mean she was one of my heroines," Price said. "I actually met her many, many years ago when I was in law school."

Powell described a hopelessness that she believes can be remedied by coming together and celebrating Ginsburg's life.

"When I heard about RBG's death, I immediately felt really hopeless," Powell said. "Which I'm sure a lot of people here do, and did, and my reason to be here is so that we can all sort of be together in these emotions and these feelings and to sort of feel like we're not alone and to find the strength to get out of the hopelessness."

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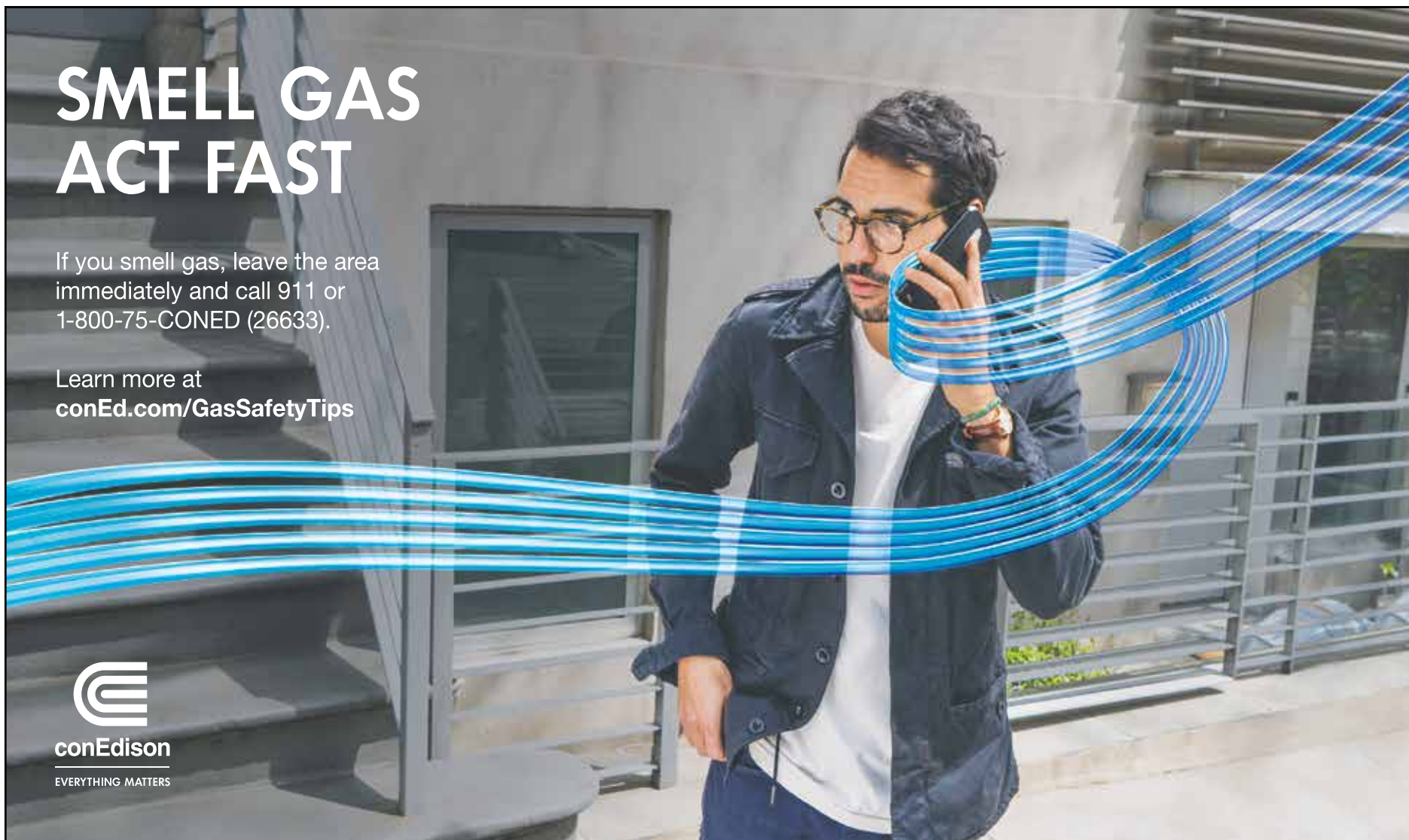
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# Chappaqua Man Arrested for Stealing Black Lives Matter Sign

New Castle Police arrested a Chappaqua man last Tuesday night for allegedly stealing a Black Lives Matter yard sign from a private home off of Bedford Road.

Vincent LaDuca, 57, was charged with one count of petty larceny, a Class A misdemeanor, following his arrest at about 7 p.m. on Sept. 15.

LaDuca's arrest stems from an investigation into a Sept. 13 theft of the BLM sign. He was processed at the New Castle Police Department and released on

an appearance ticket returnable to the Town of New Castle Justice Court on Sept. 17 at 6 p.m.

The alleged theft is the latest in a string of similar incidents. Last month, multiple hate incidents occurred in the area with Black Lives Matters signs stolen from two local churches and another set on fire and anti-Semitic and racist graffiti discovered at the Chappaqua train station parking lot.

The investigation is still continuing into whether this incident is connected to any of

the previous incidents, police said.

Police Chief James Carroll had previously announced the department was offering a \$1,000 reward for information that led to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the recent offenses but the reward has now been doubled.

"Our investigations into the additional thefts and vandalisms of other Black Lives Matter signs and the anti-Semitic graffiti remain active and ongoing," Carroll stated in a press release. "The reward for information

that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person(s) responsible for these crimes has been raised to \$2,000."

The New Castle Police Department is asking anyone with information regarding any of these incidents or anything similar to call the department at 914-238-4422. Tips can also be submitted anonymously online at <https://local.nixle.com/tip/new-castle-police-department/> or by texting 888-777 and starting the text message with TIPNC911.

—Adam Stone

## Former Lewisboro Town Justice Sentenced for Tax Evasion

By Anna Young

A former Lewisboro town justice will spend the next six months in prison after failing to pay nearly \$500,000 in taxes and falsifying information during a roughly eight-year-long tax evasion scheme.

Marc Seedorf, 64, of South Salem, was sentenced last Tuesday in federal court in White Plains to six months in prison, three years of supervised release and a \$55,000 fine. Currently, Seedorf has already paid \$207,219 in restitution to the IRS, according to a statement from the U.S. Attorney's office.

"Marc Seedorf, a member of the judiciary and former assistant district attorney, knew well his obligations under the law to file income tax returns and pay tax when due," Acting U.S. Attorney Audrey Strauss said. "Instead, he chose to conceal assets and provide false information to the IRS. For his admitted crime, Seedorf will now serve a six-month prison sentence and be compelled to pay his unpaid taxes."

Between 2005 and 2015, Seedorf did not file his federal income tax returns, resulting in him incurring about \$487,000 in total tax liability based on income

earned between 2005 and 2013.

During this time, Seedorf had several sources of income, working as an administrative law judge for Westchester County and Lewisboro's town justice, a position he had held for 23 years before resigning in March soon after pleading guilty to the charges. Additionally, Seedorf was receiving income from a private law practice.

In 2012, Seedorf also received over \$1.5 million in settlement money from a civil lawsuit, which was later dispersed into several accounts, not including his personal bank account, per his request. Officials stated Seedorf

split the money between accounts for the law firm, his lawyer and his brother-in-law's personal account to disguise any source of funds he used to make payments to the IRS and other creditors, and the existence of the remainder of the settlement proceeds.

From January 2010 to June 2013, the IRS further attempted to collect Seedorf's tax liability, but he failed to provide records to the IRS or make any payments, the statement said.

In 2013, after the IRS initiated a process to place a levy upon Seedorf's investment account, he instructed his law firm to wire \$400,000 of the settlement

proceeds to his own law firm's attorney trust account to pay his outstanding tax liability from 2005 to 2008.

However, during a conversation with an IRS revenue officer concerning the source of the funds, Seedorf falsely stated that he had borrowed the money from his own law firm's trust account, failing to disclose the lawsuit or existence of the remaining settlement balance of \$540,000 in his attorney's trust account.

In all, Seedorf caused the IRS to incur losses of more than \$200,000, including penalties and interest, according to the U.S. Attorney's office

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# P'ville Requires Masks to Be Worn on Village Athletic Fields

By Lindsay Emery

The Pleasantville Village Board determined last week it would require everyone on all village athletic fields to wear face coverings to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including those who are playing.

"Coaches can offer mask breaks for kids who need to take their masks off for some period of time in a socially distanced way off the field, but if you cannot wear a mask on the field, you cannot be there," Mayor Peter Scherer said during the board's Sept. 14 work session.

The Recreation Department sent out a statement regarding the decision, which went into effect the next day.

The policy was finalized after Pleasantville parents and members of Pleasantville FC and Pleasantville AYSO clarified whether the village previously mandated masks for participants on village fields.

Parent Catherine Kane said she had been unsure about the policy within the village and that she wanted to see children wearing masks on the fields. Children are able to wear masks during school and afterschool activities, so it would make sense for them to wear masks when using the municipal fields as well, she said.

The directive makes sense because even when students are outside for lunch, they have to be wearing masks, Pleasantville Board of Education member Angela Vella said.

"I don't think it's safe as a village, as a town, to allow use of the fields with no

instruction to the public," Kane said.

Trustee David Vinjamuri pointed out that Pleasantville's survey of parents found that 95 percent of parents would feel comfortable with their kids wearing a mask during activities.

Pleasantville Youth Soccer Club Co-President John Vamossy asked whether that meant masks must be worn during physically strenuous activity. Both sides of the mask argument have been voiced by soccer parents, he said.

According to Vamossy, Pleasantville FC

has not heard of any other towns instructing teams to wear masks while competing. Because of this, Vamossy anticipates that the club will be awarded few home games because teams from other communities may not want to play in Pleasantville where masks are required.

Ultimately, Vamossy had been looking for direction over what to mandate when coaching on village fields.

"We're open to anything, but we're looking for that guidance because the only legal standing we have right now is to utilize

that (state guidance)," Vamossy said.

Superintendent of Recreation and Parks Matthew Trainor emphasized during last week's work session that those who see others failing to abide by the mask rules while using the village fields should report them to the Recreation Department.

## Leaf Blower Hearing Scheduled

In another decision, the Village Board scheduled a public hearing for the municipality's proposed leaf blower regulations for Tuesday, Oct. 13 at 7:30 pm.

## Panther Philanthropy

The Pleasantville High School Athletics Department donated \$1,200 to the Pleasantville Rotary for the benefit of the Gullotta House, a local nonprofit that provides food vouchers and other services to Westchester County residents. When the pandemic closed schools, Athletic Director John Bauerlein, right, and coach and Acting Director of Special Education Dan Iorio, second from right, sold Panthers athletic apparel online with the intent of using profits for a worthy cause. Last week, they presented a check to Rotary President Janet DiBenedetto and member Karen Camman at the organization's first in-person meeting since the pandemic began.



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Publisher

**Martin Wilbur**  
mwilbur@theexaminernews.com  
Editor-in-Chief

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## Letters to the Editor

### If You Care About Environmental Issues, Harckham's the Choice

The importance of protecting the environment became clear last spring as the pandemic peaked in our region. Turkey Mountain was jammed, the lot overflowed and hikers' cars were parked along Route 118! The North County bike trail was also very busy, as was the Croton Dam. The crowds enjoying the outdoors were turning to nature as relief from the pandemic's stresses.

We owe gratitude to those with the vision to preserve outdoor spaces in northern Westchester. We also have a responsibility to scrutinize the environmental records of those seeking office today to ensure they will continue these policies. Unfortunately,

Rob Astorino's record as county executive shows neglect for the environment in favor of business interests.

Astorino advocated expansion of the county airport by seeking to increase limits on passenger traffic and sell the airport to a private equity firm. The airport is adjacent to the Kensico Reservoir, which supplies water to more than nine million people. Rainfall washes fuel and de-icing chemicals from the airport into the reservoir. Expanding the airport will further pollute this resource.

Astorino also supported Spectra Energy's plan to enlarge its Algonquin pipeline to carry "fracked" natural gas.

He even arranged for the company to use county parkland at Blue Mountain to stage construction. Astorino fought closure of the Indian Point nuclear plant, ignoring its operational problems and the devastating impact a nuclear mishap would have on Westchester.

Meanwhile, environmental quality has been a priority for Pete Harckham. He's been endorsed by the New York League of Conservation Voters after earning a perfect score on their state environmental scorecard.

**John M. Flynn**  
Yorktown Heights

### Putnam isn't Overrun By Mobs, it Has an Engaged Electorate

I am writing today to express more sadness and disappointment in the leadership of Putnam County. At a recent Back the Blue rally held on the steps of the county courthouse, a speaker, who spoke at length while clutching a Trump flag, painted a very dark picture of Putnam: radical leftist mobs destroying our county, attacking old women and comparing Democrats to radical communists.

She continued by attacking a member of our community who has mental health issues; she bragged about shaming him on Facebook while fully admitting he has his own struggles with mental health. She ended her speech claiming that she and all those in attendance are "Trump's military."

What's worse is that she said all of this as our county legislature's chairwoman. Toni Addonizio stood front and center cheering these radical, fearmongering and, in many ways, false words. Would Chairwoman Addonizio consider herself a

member of "Trump's military?"

I get deeply concerned when we speak of militarizing our citizens against each other based on what party they support. I want it known the speaker is entitled to her opinion, as I am mine. I could not agree with her less, but the First Amendment grants her the right to this opinion.

I do, however, judge local elected officials cheering on the idea of "Trump's military" while listening to this vision of our county that is not true. I look around and I don't see a horde of "leftists" destroying property. Flames from Molotov cocktails don't light our night skies as chaos reigns. I have seen, however, young people becoming more motivated to vote and engage in their own democracy, people asking questions and expecting better of our public officials. I see people engaging at every level of government, and to me there is nothing more American than that.

We should be proud we have people wanting to be civically engaged, we should

be proud that we have people out there fighting for human rights in this county and people who want to get involved. That is what America is meant to be; we should always strive to be "more perfect" in our union, "that shining city on the hill."

Don't give into to all this fearmongering and hate speech. This county and country are better than this. We need representatives in government who know that and don't stay silent in the face of hate and fearmongering.

Finally, the speaker and I do agree on one thing: vote! People have died and have given so much to earn that right for all of us, so vote! Help a friend get to the polls, work the polls, volunteer with a local campaign and yes even run for office – all of which make our county and country better.

**Zach Disador**  
Southeast

### Astorino Will Make Sure to Protect Those That Protect the Public

The onslaught of letters to the editor against Rob Astorino is an organized, targeted attack and not random. The approach is write enough bad things, something will stick.

Rob is a good Catholic man with common sense and values I would like to believe are shared by the majority of us.

Besides the tragic loss, the 9/11 anniversary reminds me of 9/12/2001, what it felt like to be a New Yorker and an American, when your political party or the color of your skin didn't matter. We were united that day and the days that followed. First responders were revered and praised for their service and sacrifice. American flags flew everywhere.

Today there is division, lawlessness and total disregard for our country. Our flag is now a symbol of protest and disdain for some, including many progressive politicians, but not Rob Astorino.

When COVID-19 started, our first responders, once again, were heroes. Yet

only a few short months later, they were attacked, villainized and despised. I'm sorry, but condemning an entire group of men and woman because they wear a blue uniform is discrimination. There are bad apples in every profession and they should be prosecuted, but the overwhelming majority of police officers are good and love our communities. Rob Astorino recognizes this. Who does not have a family member or friend who is a first responder? Well, they are in danger, and so are we as law-abiding citizens.

Sen. Peter Harkham co-sponsored the bail reform legislation that has left our precious state in turmoil. With the recent widespread rioting, looting and protesting, the violence has been unprecedented. This legislation and other political directives have emasculated our law enforcement officers by forcing them not to enforce the law against those who commit violent crimes against our citizens, businesses and our police officers. If they are even

arrested, they are released right back into our communities to offend again.

These same politicians are calling to defund the police, but not Rob Astorino. The ongoing violence and damages are a result of a government that is ineffective. If we don't want New York to turn into Chicago, Seattle, Portland or Kenosha, then we must vote for someone who will defend our safety, support and improve law enforcement, protect all citizens and has common sense. That person is Rob Astorino.

We need to get back to that place of unity in those post-9/11 days, and that won't happen with politicians who continue to allow lawlessness, insecurity and defamation.

I will be voting for Rob Astorino. For all of our sake, I hope you will, too.

**Angela M. Outhouse**  
Croton-on-Hudson

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# Letters to the Editor

## Somers Town Board Has Been Deceitful, Dishonest on Sewer Project

During the Sept. 10 Somers Sewer District #2 public hearing, the Town Board said they had 10 meetings on this issue. That's false. They had five meetings and one informational session in 13 months.

The Town Board restarted this during a pandemic without notifying residents, once again. They said they sent Code Red messages and e-mails, when they know not everyone gets them. The supervisor said mailers are expensive, but had no problem spending \$14,000 on a public relations firm to sell his agenda. He did not publish a notice in the paper 72 hours prior to the hearing, which he is legally supposed to do. Publishing a notice in the paper – on the date of the meeting – is not 72 hours.

The Town Board did not want a resident vote last year, and the supervisor says he is glad everyone will get to vote, when he knows darn well we had to petition for it. Thanks to Gov. Cuomo's executive order, we now have absentee ballots.

The engineer is selling the new revised plan by stating we will not be paying the county buy-in charge and operation and maintenance fees until the sewer line comes

to our homes. That's a lie! It says on pages ES-2 and 4-3 in the Map, Plan & Report "County buy-in and O&M fees to only apply at the time of construction. Very deceitful! As a result, 989 residents would start paying and you may never see sewers come down your street for years, if at all, yet you have to pay forever.

On pages 4-5 in the report, it states the town can borrow more money to proceed "affording district taxpayers full participation." They haven't wanted our full participation now, so how will it happen in the future?

Residents are infuriated. The Town Board created animosity and we are the victims of unjust treatment. Please vote "No" on Nov. 10 and force our Town Board to do the right thing – use the \$10 million to clean up the lake and the septic, which is in the 2015 Shenorock Sewer Study.

Visit [www.SomersSewers.com](http://www.SomersSewers.com) for more information.

**Linda Luciano**  
Shenorock

## Businesses Should Not Be Pressured to Support Political Campaigns

The Yorktown Small Business Association is nonpartisan and nonpolitical, and if you're a small business owner, so should you!

During these tough economic times, many businesses and community organizations are being asked to take a position by supporting a certain political party or candidate. It is selfish and unfair for political parties and candidates to put any group in a position where they feel pressured to make a choice.

Local independent businesses are operated by people who come from a variety of political persuasions, as do the customers upon whom they rely. The same is true of individuals who belong to one or more organizations or members of community organizations who also own a business. Pressuring either businesses or community organizations to post political signs, posters and brochures in their establishments could put them in a difficult position.

If your business or organization is approached by any political party or candidate to display signs, posters and brochures, just say no. But if like many people you feel obligated to do so, simply say yes – say yes to all parties and candidates by displaying opposing campaign literature, too.

Remember, don't risk harming your business or organization by taking a stand that could cause shoppers, donors or clients to take their business elsewhere. It's hard enough running a business or organization without turning off half the electorate – and it's the fair and equitable thing to do.

Do the right thing. Businesses and community organizations need to be inclusive, not exclusive.

**Bob Giordano**  
Founder and President  
Yorktown Small Business Association

## No Cash Bail Law Was a Mistake That Astorino Would Rectify

I write this letter as a 34-year veteran of the Westchester County police. When I talk to any cops still on the job – whether local, county or NYPD – they all tell me how big a problem the state's new "No Cash Bail" law is to maintaining safe streets and neighborhoods. They speak of how demoralizing it is to arrest a criminal who has committed a serious crime, only to see them back on the streets hours later. I've heard of horror stories – domestic abusers, arrested twice in the same day for abusing the same woman.

Our state senator, Peter Harckham, didn't just vote for this dangerous new law – he

wrote the legislation and today says he is "proud" of it. Perhaps crime hasn't spiked in Lewisboro, where Mr. Harckham lives, but it has spiked pretty much everywhere else. The no cash bail law is nothing to be proud of.

Rob Astorino has pledged to repeal the law if elected state senator. For that, and for Rob's excellent eight years as Westchester County executive, he is the clear choice for state Senate.

**Bruce Bellom**  
Peekskill

## Burdick Understands the Need to Properly Fund Education in New York State

I grew up in Mount Kisco and have lived in Bedford for 20 years. I love this community and I want to make sure it continues to offer the younger generation what it has afforded me and my family – a wonderful place to grow up and a great education. That is why I am the board chair for the Foundation for Bedford Central Schools. That is also why I am supporting Chris Burdick for New York State Assembly.

In Albany, Chris would address the root cause of many problems within the educational system: school funding. Many school districts lack needed resources because of the antiquated school funding formula used by the state. Chris will

work to readjust this formula so that no school system falls behind. He is a parent of children who went through the public-school system, and, like you and me, he wants to help create more opportunities and a better future for all of our children.

While it will be difficult to see Chris leave Bedford, I know he will make a positive and powerful impact in Albany for even more adults and children than just those of Bedford. That is why on Nov. 3, I am voting Chris Burdick for state Assembly.

**Fran Hauser**  
Bedford

## Forever Grateful to the Medical Staff Who Helped Me Beat COVID-19

To the Angels of Northern Westchester Hospital:

On Mar. 31, I was diagnosed with COVID-19. As a 91-year-old man, I did not know what that would mean for me or how serious things could become.

Despite being able to stay home to recuperate during the beginning of my illness,

there came a time when I had to be admitted to the hospital because the virus became too much for me to battle at home.

It was 1:30 a.m. during one of my nights there, when I awoke out of a sound sleep and was unable to move any part of my body. I could not blink, I could not move my arms or legs and the pain in my kidneys was unbearable. I pushed the panic

button for the nurses to come to my aid, and before I knew it, they were there by my side. These nurses tirelessly worked

on me for over an hour doing everything they possibly could do to ensure I was alright and that my pain had subsided.

That night I did not know if I was going to make it to see another day, but with the help of God, the spirit of my recently deceased wife Josephine and those angels – those nurses – I was brought back.

I thank God for putting me in Room 613 at Northern Westchester Hospital. I could have not asked to have been in a better place with better frontline workers to help me fight this virus. Those beautiful nurses helped saved my life that night and helped me beat COVID-19 and I am forever grateful to them.

**With Love and Gratitude,**  
**Dominick Surace**  
Pleasantville

## Harckham Has Fulfilled Promises on Key Issues and Merits Another Term

Pete Harckham has been an excellent state Senator and deserves re-election. He has fulfilled promises made during the last campaign: for the environment; tax reduction, including making the property tax cap permanent; and protecting women's reproductive rights. He helped secure increases in funds for education across the state and for our district. Responding to the COVID-19 crisis, Pete has held food drives all over the district and assisted individuals and small businesses.

His opponent, having lost his last two elections, has been busy supporting Trump on television. We can go back to his time in office to see where he stands: he denies climate change. His administration was fined for violating the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, so Westchester County residents were at risk of getting sick and then had to pay the bill. His administration failed to adhere to the

Federal Fair Housing settlement, leaving shortages in affordable housing and losing \$25 million that could have gone to Westchester communities. He cut the budget of the county Health Department 32 percent and froze funding for child care.

The choice is clear. Support Pete Harckham.

**Thank you,**  
**Jeanine Meyer**  
Mount Kisco

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## Guest Column

### The Science is Clear: Sewers Are Needed for Lake Shenorock, Lincolndale

By Stephanie McQuade Geiger

I grew up in Lake Shenorock, but I learned how to swim in Lake Lincolndale. My parents bought their home in a lake community because they envisioned summers by the lake, but it was too polluted by the time I was born to swim in.

We were guest members of Lake Lincolndale growing up. I loved the lake so much that when my husband and I had saved enough money to buy our first home, and one came onto the market in our price range, I insisted that we put in an offer. The inspection revealed that the water was not potable; it was contaminated with coliform bacteria.

My husband was hesitant about the home, but I insisted that the school district was excellent, and I wanted to raise our future family in this community. A community that I felt was made of people who supported each other. And my dream of being able to walk to the lake and enjoy a summer afternoon with my family could be realized. So we bought the home, had a UV filter installed and started saving up to dig a new well.

When I learned about sewers coming to Somers, I was at a DEP water quality

program for science teachers. I have a degree in chemistry and have been a high school science teacher for 12 years. Last summer I was trained as a watershed and forestry expert. Learning about how New York City gets its water from our reservoirs and how they give grants to our area to help us protect our environment because it is more cost-effective to give us money to improve our infrastructure than to filter their water mechanically.

Lake Shenorock was identified as a target community for that money. There are only five communities in Westchester that were included. They were identified because of the incredibly high density of septic systems. When septic systems are this closely packed together, they are not able to filter the water before it is recycled back into the drinking water.

The town requested that Lake Lincolndale could also be included because we not only have septic systems, but we also have wells that pump that water into our homes. The fact that there's bacteria in my drinking water is proof enough to me that we are drinking from our neighbor's septic system.

Septic systems are designed so that the soil filters the sewage that is pumped into

our backyards. We have pushed the limits of these systems and it is frankly unhealthy to continue to live like this. Septic systems also do not filter out other contaminants like pharmaceuticals and cleaning products. Every drop of water that goes down our toilets and drains is recycled back into the water supply.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to take the \$10 million and use it to improve our infrastructure. Some people have recommended that instead of a communitywide, long-term project we burn the money on expensive new septic systems. I have researched these systems and found that since each one would be hooked into the electricity of our homes and since they require a large amount of individual homeowner maintenance this is not the best way to use the money. Having spent time with DEP officials, I asked about our project and was informed that this \$10 million is for a sewer project and that going back to the drawing board would probably mean losing the money altogether.

Some residents have said that the lakes are not affected by the sewage, and that instead the problem is stormwater runoff. The sewer system will divert 325,000 gallons of

water per day from our groundwater. That will allow our soil to recover and absorb stormwater, filtering it before it reaches the lake. There is not one thing that is causing the lakes to become eutrophic and grow blue-green algae, but doing nothing is not a better solution.

The fact is that I am in Phase 2 means that we will be paying \$1,187 a year for the sewer. That includes the hookup fee, the cost for the Peekskill plant to process our sewage and the bond. I have attended every town meeting and asked many questions. I have been appalled at people from my community yelling, cursing and failing to follow basic rules.

I am writing today because the sewer will improve the health of our communities and the health of our lakes. Many have stood up and said that their septic is fine, that they are not the problem, their neighbor is. That is not how a community works, and that is not how the water flows. We are all connected through our water and through our community. We need to come together and vote yes on the sewers on Nov. 10. Our health depends on it.

*Stephanie McQuade Geiger is a Lake Lincolndale resident.*

## Letters to the Editor

### Byrne Has Repeatedly Delivered in Albany for His Constituents

As someone who has lived in Putnam County for 48 years, I struggle to remember the last time we've had a representative in the Assembly who has been as effective as Assemblyman Kevin Byrne.

I have known Kevin for a long time and I saw him as a young man who would represent me in Albany with an enthusiasm long overdue. When Kevin mentioned to me that he was thinking of running for the Assembly from my district, I pledged my support immediately and I've watched him work and grow over the years – constantly serving and delivering results for the people of Putnam County.

Despite being outnumbered by an increasingly radicalized Assembly majority controlled by extremists in New York City, he finds ways to deliver for us here at home.

If you're looking for examples, you don't have to look very far. Start by looking up how many bills he passed in the Assembly since he started serving in 2017. He passed an impressive 19 bills (more than nearly any other state Assembly member with the same length of service regardless of party affiliation), all designed to support various local needs for our region. Each of his bills passed with overwhelming bipartisan support.

These bills included designating

multiple local lakes as inland waterways to enable local municipalities to apply and compete for revitalization grants from the state; dedicating new parkland in the Town of Southeast; assisting towns with legislation to help welcome new prospective businesses like the Alexandrion Group Distillery in Carmel and ProSwing Sports in Southeast; allowing local parks in Yorktown to lease advertisement space to bring in revenue to support local recreation without further using property taxes; and passing legislation to honor military heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice like Maj. Clayton Carpenter.

These legislative accomplishments are only a glimpse at the much larger accomplishments Assemblyman Byrne has made for our area. For years, our region's state roadways were neglected by the state Department of Transportation. Under Assemblyman Byrne's watch, as the sole state representative on the Transportation Committee representing both Westchester and Putnam counties, the repaving sections of Routes 22, 6, 52, 139, 100, 118 and the Taconic State Parkway, in addition to the construction of the Pudding Street overpass, all moved forward.

Kevin is not some hyper-partisan zealot. He works with whomever he has to in order to get the job done. The proof is in his results. Assemblyman Byrne's dedication to his constituents – our neighbors – is refreshing and is quite frankly something we've not had in the Assembly in well over a decade. I am proud to have him representing me and my family, and look forward to supporting him this November. You can learn more about Kevin at [www.Byrne4NY.com](http://www.Byrne4NY.com).

**Jack Hufnagel**  
Mahopac

### Putnam Residents: Keep on Looking Out for Each Other Through Pandemic

Thank you, Putnam County.

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, you have helped neighbors in need, supported food banks and food drives, delivered meals for seniors, made and donated masks and, of course, adapted to wearing masks in public and practicing safe social distancing measures. Because of your vigilance, our communities have been able to reopen safely.

Now that schools are back in session and more people are returning to work, things may appear to be going back to the "old

normal." But we aren't going back, we are moving forward in a new way, and we must keep up our efforts in order to maintain the success we've achieved. The best way to support our businesses, schools, civic organizations and religious groups is by keeping our rates of COVID-19 low.

Students and teachers are returning to school wearing masks, and we can support them by setting the example – wearing a mask when we can't socially distance, washing our hands frequently and staying home if we don't feel well.

By continuing to do our part, we can be a model community that does not invite another spike in COVID-19 cases. A surge in cases could overstress our health care heroes, overwhelm our health care system and devastate more families and local businesses. We have risen to the moment before, and we can do it again now. There is no question these are still challenging times, but we are not only Putnam Strong, we are Putnam Supportive. We are fortunate to live in a community where friends, families and neighbors look out for one another.

Let's support our businesses by dining and shopping locally. Let's continue to offer help to those most in need. Let's mask up and set the example for our children and young people. And let's continue to do the right thing so we can help our friends, families and neighbors to thrive. We will be a stronger community for it.

Stay safe, stay strong, stay healthy.

**MaryEllen Odell, County Executive**  
**Michael J. Nesheiwat MD, Health Commissioner**



# Westchester Launches \$10M Grant Program to Help Small Businesses

By Martin Wilbur

Westchester County officials announced a \$10 million grant program last Wednesday to help sustain small businesses and nonprofit organizations who have been significantly hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Applications for the Business FIRST initiative were accepted starting Monday morning and extending through the end of the month, said the county's Director of Economic Development Bridget Gibbons. Each outfit would be able to request up to \$49,000, she said.

Businesses and organizations with less than 100 employees will be eligible for the program. The money comes from funds the county received from the CARES Act, legislation Congress passed in the spring to provide COVID-19 relief.

County Executive George Latimer said the program's goal is to bring immediate financial relief to businesses that provide thousands of jobs in Westchester.

"All of these organizations employ critical jobs to the extent that we've had a job loss to certain businesses that have had to close," Latimer said. "We want to try to stabilize those that are in difficult situations and we can provide perhaps the bridge to these grants that may make the difference."

In addition to the employee limit, representatives of businesses and organizations must demonstrate that they have suffered a 25 percent revenue loss since Mar. 7 when Gov. Andrew Cuomo declared a state of emergency, were financially viable



County Executive George Latimer announced the launch of Business FIRST last Wednesday, a \$10 million grant program designed to assist small businesses in Westchester deal with financial losses stemming from COVID-19. He is shown with Director of Economic Development Bridget Gibbons, left, and Business Council of Westchester President Dr. Marsha Gordon.

prior to the crisis and are in good standing with the county, Gibbons said. All types of businesses would be eligible to seek the grant.

"We're really trying to work with our businesses to get the money out there and have them use it for what they need to help their businesses get back on track," Gibbons said.

Grant money could be used toward

retaining or hiring employees, paying employee benefits, increasing technology capability and upgrading or buying safety equipment, among other uses.

The county would prefer that businesses who received assistance through the Payroll Protection Program or the Emergency Disaster Program use the money for different purposes if they are approved for the grant, Gibbons said.

Dr. Marsha Gordon, president of the Westchester Business Council, applauded the county's efforts to get money to business owners and nonprofit organizations.

"These are really the engines of our economy, employing so, so many in our county," Gordon said. "These sectors have been especially hard hit and desperately need any financial resources to survive."

Competition for the funds is expected to be fierce. There are about 39,000 small businesses in Westchester, and there's not nearly enough money to fund the likely widespread need, Gibbons said. A survey of businesses in the county found that about 75 percent of respondents have suffered losses since the onset of the pandemic just over six months ago, she said.

Applications are expected to be approved by mid-October with funds disbursed by early November.

Gibbons said businesses that are not approved for the grant would have their applications remain on file in the Office of Economic Development in the event that additional funds become available.

"This is a partnership, this is an effort to work with businesses, in this case businesses of a certain size or smaller that may not have access to some of the capital resources that larger businesses do," Latimer said.

Applications will be accepted until midnight on Sept. 30. To submit applications or for more information, visit <https://westchestercatalyst.com/business-FIRST-programs/>



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# Obituaries

## Alfred DeJoseph

Alfred "Al" DeJoseph died peacefully at his home on Sept. 17 with the love and comfort of his family around him. He was 91 years old.

DeJoseph was born in the Bronx on Mar. 9, 1929, the son of the late Alfred and Blanche (Renzi) DiGiuseppe. After skipping two grades in primary school, he graduated from Evander Childs High School in the Bronx. His studies at NYU were interrupted when he proudly served his country in Korea from 1950 to 1952 with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Al married Thelma (Copeland) in 1954 and they moved to Yorktown in 1963 with their four children. He spent many years working as a patternmaker in Manhattan's Garment District, following in the footsteps of his father and uncle. He later switched careers to become a salesman for Metropolitan Life.

DeJoseph enjoyed being outdoors and working in his yard, building projects in his home, mathematics, puzzles and gymnastics. He especially loved hosting large gatherings at his home, most notably Thanksgiving dinners. He was always the life of the party and he loved his family very much. Al took great pride in his family and was willing to make great sacrifices for them.

He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, cousin and friend. He is survived by his



Alfred DeJoseph

wife, Thelma, of 66 years; children Michael DeJoseph of Yorktown Heights, Linda Haines (Chris) of Ridgefield, Conn., Kathy Orza (Paul) of Pleasant Valley, N.Y. and John DeJoseph (Donna) of Brookfield, Conn; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

Services are private A funeral mass was live-streamed at St. Patrick's Church on Sept. 19. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in DeJoseph's name to the Alzheimer's Association or the Veterans Administration.

## William Otto

William L. Otto, a White Plains resident, died Sept. 11. He was 91.

Otto enjoyed good health until the end. He often laughed at the trials of his early years, where he was beaten up, stabbed and shot. He then went into the Army where he served as a guinea pig through three atomic bombs. In later years, he became a Quaker State oil refinery man, before leaving to go into the building maintenance business. Among his accounts were Manhattan College and New York Law School. He was the only outside contractor for the Spanish Pavilion at the World's Fair in Flushing. In his business, he supervised 64 of his own men and as many as 189 men for a gentleman known as "The Irish Godfather." This man saved his

life three times. These stories are all in his autobiography "The Last of the Dinosaurs." He built and then lost a big estate in Sands Point, N.Y., along with millions of dollars in the bad market.

Otto is survived by his daughter, Tina, of Warrensburg, N.Y.; his two grandsons, Warren and Wesley; and his dear friend, Catherine, of White Plains.

He will be honored at Ballard-Durand Funeral Home and the veteran's honor guard will perform a special service. A few old friends will be welcome to deliver their pearls of wisdom. No flowers are necessary. Anyone feeling flush who would like to contribute to their local church, is asked to speak to the pastor and donate something to a needy family. Do this in his honor because Bill Otto knew what it was to be hungry.

## John Bowdren

John Patrick Bowdren of Cortlandt died last week. He was 90.

Born in 1930 in Peekskill to Mary and Richard Bowdren Sr., he was a lifetime area resident. After graduating from Peekskill High School, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served aboard the USS Ault during the Korean War.

Upon returning home, he married the love of his life, Cecilia Ryan, of Ossining in 1955. He also began working with the sheet metal workers union, work he did for 50 years.

Bowdren was a kind and gentle soul with a helping hand, warm smile and genuine love for all those he met. He was a parishioner of St. Columbanus parish for more than 60 years where he used his talents and love of God in any way that was needed. He helped to construct the school building, and later the kindergarten wing, was a trouble shooter in many situations, ushered at mass, worked bingo and was an active member of the Knights of Columbus.

Bowdren is survived by his beautiful bride, Cecilia; five sons, Brian, Sean, Timothy, Patrick and Terrence; three daughters, Kathleen, Mary Ellen and Sheila and their loving spouses; 13



John Bowdren

grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; two brothers, Laurence and William; and many very loved nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his brothers, Richard Jr. and Kenneth.

## Lillian Henning

Lillian Cost Henning, a Peekskill resident, died this week at 89 years old.

Henning was born Feb. 23, 1931, in Carbondale, Pa. She was preceded in death by her longtime companion, Mike DiBart; her parents, Josephine and Samuel Cost; her siblings, Theresa Mancuso, Viola Goffredo, Sam Cost Jr. and Bertine Bradley; and her former spouse, Melvin Henning.

She is survived by her son, Robert Henning, and her three grandchildren, Jack, Caroline and Courtney Henning, and their mother, Catherine Henning, all of Austin, Texas.

Henning was proud of her close-knit family and loved her nieces, nephews and their spouses: Barbara (Gerard) Caucci, Debra (Dr. Thomas) Oven, Sandra (Joseph) Brady, Suzanne (Dr. Walter) Sassack, Sam (Carol) Cost and David Bradley and their children and grandchildren.

She moved to Peekskill in the 1950s and became a longtime member of Assumption Church, and was especially close with Fr. Vernon. She served as the assistant vice president of the Westchester-Putnam Division of the Bank of New York in Peekskill until

she retired. For more than 25 years, she greatly enjoyed being an active member of the Peekskill Rotary Club. She loved to serve the Peekskill community, travel, cook family recipes and enjoyed spending the winter in Florida with her companion, Mike.

Throughout her time she was blessed with wonderful neighbors and good friends. The family would like to especially thank Jesse Boyd for the friendship and support he provided through the years.

A special thank you to the Drum Hill Senior Living Community for their kindness and care for Lillian, and to New York-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital ICU nurse Maria, who made extraordinary efforts during the pandemic to provide comfort during Lillian's final days.

Henning was an advocate for and personally contributed to the American Heart Association. In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made to the American Heart Association in her name.

Funeral services will be held at Holy Spirit Catholic Church, located at 1969 Crompond Rd. in Cortlandt, led by Fr. Vernon Wickrematunge this Saturday, Sept. 26 at 10 a.m. The family will receive friends on Friday, Sept. 25 from 4 to 7 p.m. at Nardone Funeral Home, 414 Washington St. in Peekskill.

## Richard Mangiaracina

Richard Colagero Mangiaracina, an Ossining resident, died Sept. 15. He was 68.

Mangiaracina was born in Brooklyn to Joseph and Marie (Valenti) Mangiaracina on Oct. 15, 1951, and spent most of his favorite years there with his immediate and very large extended family. He lovingly cared for his parents until they passed in their mid-90s.

Mangiaracina attended Brooklyn College and LIU, but mostly was a highly self-educated man who could challenge any "Jeopardy!" champion. He worked for many years at Publicitas advertising in his beloved New York City. Most recently he enjoyed

working at Mini Storage Center in Ossining.

His was of the kindest of hearts, a very gentle and caring person who always put others' feelings and needs before his own. He was an avid reader of many subjects, a philosopher and a truly gifted self-taught musician. Guitar was one of his favorite instruments. Mangiaracina volunteered at the food pantry and the Friends of the Library in Ossining for many years and found great comfort in helping others. A true humanitarian and mentor to so many.

He was predeceased by his parents and siblings Anthony, Joseph, Maria and Jerry. He leaves behind many adoring nephews and nieces, great-nephews and great-nieces, one great-great-nephew and a large family of well-bonded cousins.



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# Armonk to Celebrate Artists Online at 59th Annual Show

By Martin Wilbur

The first weekend in October should have been the time when one of the metropolitan area's and the nation's top art shows returned to Armonk.

It will still be held but from a distance.

The 59th annual Armonk Outdoor Art Show's in-person activities were canceled earlier this year but that doesn't mean art lovers will be shortchanged. They will still be able to check out and buy beautiful pieces from the 160 juried artists who were selected for this year's event and were set to be on hand this year.

The acclaimed art show, which normally draws thousands of people throughout the tristate area and beyond, has been rebranded the Armonk Online Art Show for 2020. It will be held virtually on Oct. 3 and 4 starting at 10 a.m. instead of at Community Field.

"Fortunately, we planned for and completed our new website, so that the artwork of all 160 juried artists can be viewed, with each artists' contact information," said the show's Executive Director Anne Curran. "This was done so that our audience can see the variety of art represented in our show, connect directly with artists to inquire about their work, and purchase great art."

Patrons are encouraged to communicate directly with the artists, and they may even arrange to visit an artist's studio. Through direct conversation with an artist, they can

ask questions, give preferences for size, color and design and be guided personally by the artist, Curran added.

"I also believe that art viewed in this way, provides viewers the opportunity to think about art in the setting they wish to display it," she said. "In fact, we have been told that this is an advantage to selecting the right piece of art for a room."

What hasn't changed from the previous installments of the show is the sheer variety that will be available. There will be a broad range of categories, including fine crafts, mixed media, painting, printmaking, drawing and pastels, sculpture, photography and digital art and wearable art.

The show's website will feature a "Meet the Artists" page with a relatively brief explanation of each artist and their work.

There will also be a schedule of events posted on the site likely by this weekend so the public can view several montages of the artists' work and other in-depth sessions. Events will include a mix of premiere videos and live programs, featuring the artists presenting their current work and talking about their techniques and inspiration, according to Curran.

In the past, net proceeds from the show have gone to support educational and entertainment programming at the North Castle Public Library along with The Armonk Players theater group. Unfortunately, this year pandemic has cost



The logo for this year's online version of the Armonk Outdoor Art Show.

the show significant revenue from artist booth fees, tickets, sponsorships and food vendors, Curran said.

Over the past five years, the show has raised about \$700,000 for the Friends of the North Castle Public Library.

While there have been fewer expenses this year, the lost revenue and fewer donations has the show currently running at a deficit, Curran said. Organizers are hopeful as the online show draws closer, the community will go to the website, <https://armonkoutdoorartshow.org>, to make a donation.

That will enable the show to reach its

milestone 60th anniversary next year – trusting that everyone will be able to return in person in 2021.

"Our small town, with a big heart and a wonderful community of volunteers, has hosted this show for 59 years," Curran said. "We are asking for community donations to support our independent, nationally recognized show, so that we can return to the field, stronger than ever next year for our 60th anniversary, and resume our mission to fund a broad variety of community programs."

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# Medal of Honor Global War on Terror Monument Unveiled in Mt. Pleasant

Mount Pleasant officials and state Sen. Peter Harchkham unveiled a new monument dedicated to the Medal of Honor recipients during the Global War on Terror Sept. 12 at a special ceremony at Mount Pleasant Town Hall.

The monument, which includes a bronze sculpture of a soldier and a plaque with the names of the Medal of Honor recipients, was funded through a state grant that Harchkham secured for the Town of Mount Pleasant.

He unveiled the monument with renowned television news journalist and author Rita Crosby, who served as the master of ceremonies for the event.

The Mount Pleasant Town Board approved a resolution last year to make the municipality a Medal of Honor Town. The Medal of Honor is awarded to members of the Armed Services for valor in action against an enemy force. Only 3,500 service members have been awarded the Medal of Honor since President Lincoln first bestowed the decoration in 1863.

In the Global War on Terror, 25 service members have been awarded the Medal of Honor, with nine of those having given the ultimate sacrifice and their medals awarded posthumously.

"The Town of Mount Pleasant actively participates in events that honor and support our veterans, and we are proud



State Sen. Peter Harchkham and Rita Crosby at the Medal of Honor Global War on Terror Monument that was recently unveiled outside Mount Pleasant Town Hall.

to have the War on Terror Monument displayed at Mount Pleasant Town Hall," said Town Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi. "This

monument is another way to publicly acknowledge the sacrifices made by our brave men and women throughout our

country's history."

Mount Pleasant's new Medal of Honor monument is thought to be the nation's first commemoration dedicated to service members who have fought in the Global War on Terror, noted Peter Fiumefreddo, commander of American Legion Post 112 in Hawthorne and the chairman of the New York State Medal of Honor Committee.

Several years ago, the town, American Legion Post 112 and the New York State Medal of Honor Committee established the state's first Medal of Honor monument, listing all New York recipients of the award at Mount Pleasant Town Hall. In addition to the monument outside at Town Hall, there is also a display in the lobby of the medals and photos of several of the New York's Medal of Honor recipients.

The new monument does not yet list the name of the most recent recipient of the Medal of Honor, David Bellavia, an Army Staff Sergeant from Buffalo. Bellavia's name is set to be added shortly.

"We appreciate Sen. Harchkham's support for the Medal of Honor Global War on Terror Monument," Fiumefreddo said. "He has been active with our veterans' programs in Mount Pleasant and did not hesitate to do what was necessary to get the state grant for the monument."

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# Burns, Bedford Playhouse Among Indie Theaters Pressing State to Reopen

By Martin Wilbur

More than a dozen independent theaters and art house cinemas across New York State, including three venues in Westchester, have called on Gov. Andrew Cuomo to allow them to reopen.

The group of operators, which includes the Bedford Playhouse and the Jacob Burns Film Center in Pleasantville, sent a letter to Cuomo stating that a list of safety protocols recently released by the National Association of Theater Owners would be followed. They argued that the independent theaters are a crucial cog in their communities and local economy.

"New York's art houses are essential. We bring art – the art of film – to communities, provide arts education to children and adults, bolster our local economies, and act as vital community hubs – especially essential in these times," according to a recent joint statement from the independent theaters. "We fully support and appreciate Gov. Cuomo's efforts to keep New York's reopening safe. We are simply asking for guidelines and a timeline for our reopening so that we can prepare to provide the safest possible experience for our patrons."

Also joining the Bedford Playhouse and the Jacob Burns was The Picture House Regional Film Center in Pelham, among the 16 venues that stretch from New York City through the Hudson Valley and points north and into western New York.

All movie theaters in New York State have been shuttered since Mar. 17. Cinemas were

originally slated to be part of Phase 4 of the state's re-opening plan early this summer but were pulled from the list of approved businesses shortly before that phase was scheduled to begin.

Similar to the commercial movie operators, there has been no communication from the Cuomo administration regarding when movie theaters may reopen or what the guidelines may look like.

Margo Amgott, the interim executive director at the Jacob Burns Film Center, said any determination to reopen theaters doesn't appear to be imminent from Cuomo.

"The indications are he's not eager to open more types of venues," Amgott said. "I think the little bit of rise of COVID infections in New York State has him concerned and has all of us concerned. I think he's been very stringent and judicious about what happens next, so I'm not terribly optimistic. I'm also not pessimistic. I think we just don't know but it's not coming immediately."

The National Association of Theater Owners has devised a plan called CinemaSafe that it urges its members to follow to keep patrons safe. Among the recommended protocols are reduced capacity, face coverings for all employees and patrons in most situations, appropriate social distancing, mobile ticketing, enhancing HVAC systems, modified concessions and cleaning auditoriums between each screening.

Bedford Playhouse Executive Director Michael Hoagland said the theater has agreed to comply with the CinemaSafe



The Jacob Burns Film Center in Pleasantville is one of 16 independent and art house theaters across the state looking to have patrons return soon. They have appealed to Gov. Andrew Cuomo to have their closures lifted with stringent safety protocols.

protocols, most notably having an upgraded air filtration system, a new mobile ticketing system that blocks off all seats within six feet of seats that have been sold and enhanced cleaning.

"I think it will be extremely safe for our patrons to come back into the theater," Hoagland said. "I would not have any qualms bringing my family to a movie knowing all the things that we have put in place, all of the guidelines and procedures."

Frustrating for theater operators have been the re-opening of shopping malls,

bowling alleys, gyms and even casinos, venues that experienced a Phase 4 postponement because they were thought to be problematic.

In interviews, Cuomo has stated that movie theaters are "less essential" and pose a higher risk than those businesses.

Most of the independent cinemas are nonprofit organizations, including the Burns, Bedford Playhouse and The Picture House.

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# North Castle Denies Permit for Popular Haunted House

By Martin Wilbur

What had become a Halloween tradition in North White Plains over the past decade became another casualty of the coronavirus.

The operators of The Haunt at Rocky Ledge on Old Orchard Road were recently denied a special event permit by the North Castle Town Board after town officials were uneasy about having crowds congregate for the themed attraction.

Board members listened earlier this month to The Haunt's proprietor, Marc Mancini, propose capping crowds to 50 people at one time, down from as many as 300 last year. He also proposed advance ticketing only in hopes of controlling crowds and adhering to social distance protocols.

Mancini said he wanted to keep the tradition alive even if he wasn't going to make money on the attraction this year. He had already paid for the non-refundable insurance premium for the event by the time he met with the Town Board on Sept. 9. The Haunt at Rocky Ledge has run throughout October and into November.

By limiting the number of people on the premises at one time and requiring advance reservations, Mancini said he could probably run a safe event.

"So it's more of a control issue, and yet if I have to take a hit, it won't be a banner



year, getting it to keep it alive, keep it going even if I have to take a step back and say this is really not about the business end of it, it's more about my passion for it," Mancini said.

After consideration, officials concluded that they weren't comfortable letting The Haunt go forward this year despite the best efforts by Mancini and his partners. Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto said there was a good reason why officials canceled other longtime events in the town such as the Lions Club's Fol-de-Rol, the Armonk Outdoor Art Show and Frosty Day.

"They're not going to take place this year, and the people who organize, and they're just like you, they put their heart and soul into these events, stepped back and realized it was just too risky," DiGiacinto said. "So I really in good conscience could not support this event this year."

Councilman Jose Berra said he was sympathetic to Mancini's plight but with up to 50 patrons and 30 employees, he wasn't ready to risk what has always been a fun, well-run event turn into a cluster of cases.

"It could spread very, very quickly and widely, and all the progress we made

and the tremendous cost economically and otherwise, a lot of businesses have suffered so far, so this to me seems like a really, really tough one to be able to support," Berra said.

This would have been the 11th Halloween season for The Haunt. For the first year or two neighbors were concerned about traffic, noise and crowds. But the town and residents quickly embraced its return each fall.

Supervisor Michael Schiliro said he thought that Mancini could pull it off this year, but with people's health, livelihoods and even lives at stake he concluded it wasn't right to push forward. He then urged Mancini to return next year when life may be closer to normal.

"In the end we have to do what is best and safe for the public, and not just people who attend the event but people in Westchester and surrounding areas," Schiliro said.

Mancini said after the vote that he realized it would be a challenge to convince the board this year.

"I gave it my best shot to try and make it work and I totally understand," he said. "Hopefully, next year we'll all be on the same page and I'll be in there instead of on Zoom."

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# The Show Will Go on at Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze in Croton

By Rick Pezzullo

The coronavirus pandemic has forced the cancellation of many events, but the Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze at historic Van Cortlandt Manor in Croton-on-Hudson isn't one of them as it returns for a 16th year and a record number of evenings.

The Blaze kicked off on last Friday, Sept. 18 and runs through Nov. 21. Capacity is reduced by 67 percent, allowing visitors to enjoy their time as safely and socially distanced as possible.

All staff and visitors must wear a mask when on site, and there will be no food and beverage available. Visitors are required to agree to Historic Hudson Valley's COVID Courtesy Code, which includes wearing a mask and maintaining at least six feet of social distancing.

"It's going to feel like a private tour," said Rob Schweitzer, vice president of communications and commerce at Historic Hudson Valley.

Last year, 180,000 visitors enjoyed the more than 7,000 jacks and elaborate pumpkin sculptures hand-carved by a small team of artists that are situated along wooded pathways, orchards and gardens of historic sites. Back again are such Blaze favorites as a giant spider web, mammoth sea serpent, Statue of Liberty and spooky house. New creations include a fire truck making a special rescue and witches casting a spell.

The Blaze is operating in strict compliance with New York State-issued low-risk outdoor arts and entertainment guidelines. It is held rain or shine.

Professional musician, radio personality



An illuminated Statue of Liberty is one of the many sights to behold at the Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze at historic Van Cortlandt Manor in Croton-on-Hudson.

and Halloween fanatic Richard Christy created the soundtrack to accompany the visit. "Blaze: The Soundtrack Volume I & II" play throughout the event, making it a multisensory experience. The soundtracks are available as digital downloads and stream from iTunes and Amazon. The Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze Shop offers a selection of Blaze-specific merchandise.

All admissions are by advance purchase-timed tickets. To further reduce staff and visitor touchpoints, no tickets are sold on site,



The giant serpent made of illuminated hand-carved pumpkins is an elaborate Halloween-themed display at the Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze at historic Van Cortlandt Manor in Croton-on-Hudson. Blaze returns for its 16th year despite the coronavirus.

even if a time slot isn't sold out. Blaze Hudson Valley dates are Sept. 18 through Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, 6-8, 13-15 and 20-21. Online tickets start at \$32 for adults and \$24 for children ages three to 17. Children two and under get in for free. Historic Hudson Valley members can attend for no charge.

Tickets can be purchased online at [www.hudsonvalley.org](http://www.hudsonvalley.org) or by calling 914-366-6900. (There's a \$2 per ticket surcharge for phone orders.) More information about The Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze is available at [pumpkinblaze.org](http://pumpkinblaze.org).

The Blaze founding sponsor is Entergy and

its presenting sponsor is Westchester Medical Center. Contributing sponsors are J.P. Morgan Chase and Edge-on-Hudson. Additional support comes from I Love New York and New York State Council on the Arts.

Historic Hudson Valley is Westchester County's largest cultural organization, educating and entertaining more than 325,000 visitors a year through school programs, tours of five national historic landmarks and Halloween-themed experiences, which have earned a national reputation as among the best in the country.

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# Enjoying Home, But Perfectly Situated for a Change of Scenery

As a realtor, I am very aware that many of our city neighbors are traveling north to seek housing that is more distanced from the teeming crowds that make Manhattan one of the most exciting cities in the world.

With the COVID-19 pandemic upon us, those masses are more a threat to be avoided than a welcome opportunity for socialization.

Never have my wife Margaret and I felt so fortunate to call northern Westchester our home, a place with enough open space to meet today's distancing requirements while offering most of the amenities of city life.

These past few months have been a time of reflection about how much we enjoy our home sweet home and how we could be happy forever living here without wandering either near or far. In fact, we haven't been anyplace "away" for a while. We both are perfectly content and indeed lucky to enjoy our immediate surroundings that we consider beautiful and comfortable.

But, since the pandemic showed its tortured face, mask-covered at that, we decided last week that maybe we've had too much of a good thing. I, more so than my wife, was starting to feel too restricted and complained about it. Margaret suffered my complaining for some weeks before agreeing that we needed to stray from

home and go "somewhere," "anywhere" for a change of scenery.

That "somewhere" needed to be within a day's time, both ways, because we didn't want to be concerned with all the safety measures we'd have to take by staying overnight anyplace.

Fortunately, we are strategically located in the lower Hudson Valley, less than an hour from the Big Apple, and only minutes from the most beautiful countryside that God ever created. Rather than visit a congested cityscape, we decided to take the bucolic route to a destination we used to visit

years ago – the Town of Hudson, which my wife researched as exactly 77 miles away from Yorktown, or an hour and 17-minute drive. True, Hudson is "somewhere," but our objective was the drive more than the destination.

However, Hudson is no slouch when it comes to destinations. It's an old whaling town, which at one time was the leading producer of oil for whale oil lamps in the 19th century. Today its main street, Warren Street, is dotted with sophisticated cafes and charming antiques shops.

Our route was almost entirely on the Taconic Parkway, which travel experts have declared one of the most scenic drives in America. Its winding path offers



resplendent natural vistas of forested mountains and open plains. While we had taken this route in the past mainly to enjoy fall foliage, we were venturing out too early to enjoy that but did spy one, and only one, tree turning orange. That was okay, because scenery on the Taconic is great, whether all green or even in the dead of winter.

Our little trip reminded me of how lucky the readers of this newspaper are to live in the area of its circulation. Truly, we have it all – or at least we did have it all until the pandemic greatly restricted our activities. But, that's okay. Things will eventually return to normal.

In the meantime, our staying close to

home is no hardship. Our region is filled with natural beauty, great housing options and employment opportunities, even if they are temporarily remote.

Now all we need is for this pandemic to right itself and, tough New Yorkers that we are, we can get back to the business of enjoying where we are, at home.

*Bill Primavera, while a writer and editor, is also a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc. (www.PrimaveraPR.com). His real estate site is www.PrimaveraRealEstate.com. To engage the talents and services of The Home Guru to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.*



By Bill Primavera



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# Pace Opens New Center to Assist Student Veterans on Campus

Pace University President Marvin Krislov joined state Sen. Peter Harkham (D-Lewisboro), student veterans and campus leaders on Monday for a grand opening and ribbon cutting of the Student Veterans Center on the school's Pleasantville campus.

The new center, which was made possible with the help of a \$200,000 state grant, will serve as a one-stop resource center for student veterans at Pace. The university has hundreds of veterans and dependents enrolled across its campuses, including 60 in Westchester.

The new center is centrally located on the campus inside the Kessel Student Center.

"Pace University has a proud tradition of supporting student veterans and their families, and this new Student Veterans Center, our first space dedicated exclusively to their needs, will help us deliver on that mission," Krislov said. "We are grateful to Sen. Harkham for his support. He shares our firm belief that we must go above and beyond to serve those who have served our country."

The Student Veterans Center will offer a central location for veterans on campus to connect, socialize and use the school's resources. Veterans will be able to obtain information on how to work with, and navigate, the VA, as well as the various educational benefits student veterans are entitled to such as the Forever GI Bill, Post 9/11 GI Bill, Yellow Ribbon Program and vocational rehab.

"The new Student Veterans Center at Pace University's Pleasantville campus will be an important resource for the Pace veterans community, and I am pleased to have supported its creation from the start," Harkham said. "These days, more veterans of our Armed Services are pursuing post-secondary educations, and their needs differ somewhat from typical college students in terms of certain resources and socialization. Pace's Veterans Center is a recognition of this shift in the student body, and will be met with wide appreciation as a result."

"This is a dream come true," said Steven Garcia, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and past president of the Student Veterans of America's Pleasantville chapter. "Bringing veterans together at one central location will be great for the entire Pace community. This space will be essential in helping connect veterans with available resources at Pace and get them the support they need to be successful."

"We are here today because like many others, Sen. Harkham recognizes and believes in the importance of community building," added Sukh Singh, also a Marine Corps veteran and member of Pace University's Class of 2021. "The SVA has

put in countless hours to receive more recognition in our community. So, this is a crucial milestone for Pace's student veterans who finally have a space to grow and support one another in their pursuits of higher education."

Harkham last year joined student veterans and university leaders to announce the project. Construction on the new center began this past winter – delayed slightly because of the pandemic – and was completed over the summer.

Col. Peter Riley (Ret.), director of the Pace Office of Veterans Services said COVID-19 might have delayed the center's opening, but could not prevent it.

"Student veterans contribute to the diversity and campus life here at Pace University," Riley said. "It is terrific that veterans have their own center. It gives them a place to use the computers, study, relax, commiserate and support each other."

Pictured, from left, are Pace University President Marvin Krislov, state Sen. Peter Harkham, student veterans Sukh Singh and Steven Garcia and Dean for Students Rachel Carpenter at a ceremonial ribbon cutting outside the Kessel Student Center, where the new Student Veterans Center is located.



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# BluePath to Hold Virtual Walkathon Oct. 3 for Autism Service Dogs

By Martin Wilbur

Over the last year-and-a-half Kim Rosenbaum has witnessed firsthand the positive impacts that her family's four-year-old Yellow Lab-Golden Retriever mix Autumn has had on her household.

But Autumn isn't really a pet. She was trained and adopted by Rosenbaum from BluePath Service Dogs for her 15-year-old daughter Lindsay, the oldest of her four children. Lindsay is autistic, has been mostly non-verbal and like many others on the spectrum is prone to wandering and elopement.

However, Autumn keeps Lindsay anchored, whether it's in a department store, a restaurant or anywhere else the family may go.

"It's difficult for us to do activities as a family, and when I took Lindsay out, we were always worried about her safety because she tends to wander off, and yet having Autumn has allowed us to do more activities as a family," said Rosenbaum, a Purchase resident. "And Autumn has really become Lindsay's best friend. She's been a wonderful addition to our family, particularly during this pandemic. Not only did she help Lindsay, but at some point, almost everyone in the family."

BluePath Service Dogs founder Michelle Briar said the dogs are particularly effective for children who are smaller. The dog can more block or help guide a child to where he or she is supposed to go or to stay in place.

"Our dogs and kids are connected by a

specialty-designed tether system, and when the child goes to bolt, the dog anchors the child, and each dog has its own anchoring position, that they effectively stop that child from getting into a dangerous situation," Briar said.

But a specially-trained service dog that can offer crucial safety, companionship and a chance at independence for autistic children and young adults takes resources. The Hopewell Junction-based BluePath Service Dogs, which was established in 2016 and has paired 16 people with a canine service companion, breeds and trains its dogs, which costs about \$40,000 each, Briar said. Another 40 dogs are currently being trained, she said.

BluePath charges a relatively nominal fee of \$1,200 for a family who is adopting a dog for a family member, she said. The rest of the cost must be raised through donations and fundraising events.

That's why for the fourth consecutive year, BluePath was scheduled to hold its annual walkathon at FDR State Park in Yorktown on Saturday morning, Oct. 3. Similar to hundreds of other events, though, the COVID-19 pandemic forced its cancellation and turned it into a virtual experience.

There will be a 15- to 20-minute online warmup and introduction and then participants can head out into their neighborhoods or wherever they feel most comfortable to complete one of three distances ranging from a half-mile to three miles, Briar said.

"We encourage everyone to go out and



The BluePath Service Dog Autumn with 15-year-old Lindsay. BluePath breeds and trains dogs to pair with youngsters on the autism spectrum to prevent them from wandering.

walk, and our theme is separately but together, and while at the event there's varying distances that people walk at. It'll be the same thing as the live, physical event," she said.

Rosenbaum said since adopting Autumn in April 2019, the dog has helped Lindsay in multiple ways. Not only does she keep her daughter safe but also provides an important connection with other people. When she is out with Lindsay and Autumn, Rosenbaum said people seem to gravitate to them, ask questions and look to pet the dog. She said it helps her daughter with socialization and

even verbalization.

"It's been incredible," said Rosenbaum, who will be participating in the virtual walkathon with her family. "We're so thankful for BluePath and we like to support them any way we can."

Walkathon registration is \$25 and includes a BluePath event t-shirt. To learn more or to register for the walkathon, visit [www.bluepathservicedogs.org/events](http://www.bluepathservicedogs.org/events). Sponsorship opportunities are also still available. For more information, contact Erica Stanzione at 914-804-4023 or [erica.stanzione@bluepathservicedogs.org](mailto:erica.stanzione@bluepathservicedogs.org).

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# Comparing Similarities and Characteristics of Wine and Olive Oil



By Nick Antonaccio

I am always on the lookout for unique wines from unique locations. And when I find one, I savor it, seeking out its aromas and flavors, its acidity and balance – all of the factors that create a new wine experience.

Over the years, I've developed my palate to a sensory level that instinctively judges a wine based on previous likes and dislikes. And I rarely judge a wine without pairing it with food. All of these factors can be somewhat daunting to evaluate, but instinct always takes over and I easily make a determination.

I use the same technique for another of my favorite (non-alcoholic) liquids. I enjoy its sensory pleasures and appreciate its health benefits as much as I do those of wine. And it is one of the components of the holy trinity of the Mediterranean Diet: grapes, wheat – and olives.

Olives and grapes – more specifically olive oil and wine – have a parallel history in the evolution of diet and society. From the early Greeks and Romans to modern day cuisines and lifestyles, both are enmeshed in European society's basic fabric.

*'Olives and grapes – more specifically olive oil and wine – have a parallel history in the evolution of diet and society.'*

Their life cycles follow similar paths:

1. The source material is abundant: multiple varieties, grown in numerous locales, under different growing conditions.
2. The processing is parallel: the fruit is crushed, pressed, blended and bottled.
3. Their fragility is well-known: the bottled product has a relatively limited shelf life and a limited bottle life once opened.
4. Their respective health benefits are significant and have been well-documented.
5. Thanks to new technology, and a dedicated commitment to quality by artisanal producers, the products are consistently the best ever.

My personal Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO)

favorites? Tuscan and Umbrian oils, with fresh, green and slightly peppery flavors with less than 0.8 percent acidity. I buy small bottles made of dark green glass to preserve their freshness and retard their deterioration from light. The best time of year to purchase EVOO is soon after the fall harvest.

Unfortunately, just as with wine, there is inferior olive oil. Inferior wine results from poor processing procedures, intentionally

adulterated juice or unethical blending of inferior juice. So too with olive oil. A reputable study by the University of California-Davis, sampled over 100 imported olive oils. Not ordinary olive oils, but the highly acclaimed much sought after "extra virgin olive oils" – as printed on the bottle labels.

What they found was startling; 73 percent failed to meet the standardized EVOO criteria established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Per the study: "The oils failed due to being oxidized, of poor quality, and/or adulterated with cheaper refined oils." The problem is that the Department of Agriculture criteria are poorly regulated and abuse is widespread.

What? It can't be. I've relied on bottle labels for years to differentiate the top-graded EVOO from lesser "officially designated" olive oils such as VOO and OO. Be very wary of the terms on those bottle labels. Italian? Much of their EVOO is imported from Spain. Pure? Some contain sunflower and other lesser oils. Fresh? Olive oil does not age well; it begins to noticeably

deteriorate three months from pressing (both flavor and health benefits are affected). A good portion of olive oil pressed in Europe can take up to six months to land on store shelves in the United States.

The answer for consumers?

As is the case with many food products that are not "industrialized," price is a significant deterrent.

The best and most reliable EVOOs offered come from smaller, artisanal producers. The production cost is higher; therefore, the price is higher, which explains why 12 ounces of high-grade EVOO costs about the same as a gallon of lesser, questionable, EVOO.

Seek them out at reliable retail merchants. Taste the difference.

Train your palate to recognize fresh EVOO by starting with domestic offerings that get to market much sooner than overseas brands.

Nick Antonaccio is a 45-year Pleasantville resident. For over 25 years, he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. Nick is a member and Program Director of the Wine Media Guild of wine journalists. He also offers personalized wine tastings and wine travel services. Nick's credo: continuous experimenting results in instinctive behavior. You can reach him at [nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com](mailto:nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com) or on Twitter @sharingwine.



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## Putnam County Unveils New Police Reform Website

Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell announced Monday that a new website has been created where the public can review the county's process on the Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative (PRRC).

"Public service agencies, including police agencies, should always be transparent," Odell said. "This site along with our regular PRRC meetings will allow the public to better understand the policies in place as well as the training mandated for all our police officers."

The site can be accessed at <https://www.putnamcountyny.gov/policereviewpanel>. It will include:

- Upcoming meeting dates and agendas;
- List of panel members for the PRRC;
- Minutes to previous meetings including links to audio archives;
- A Q&A section, including a link to the collaborative's e-mail address ([policereviewpanel@putnamcountyny.gov](mailto:policereviewpanel@putnamcountyny.gov)) where the public can submit questions and provide comments; and
- Links to resources

The panel was formed on Aug. 13 to conform to New York State Executive Order No. 203 – New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative –

signed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo on June 12. Among other things, it mandates that local governments must perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices; develop a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency; and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness and legitimacy and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color.

Odell convened the first meeting on Aug. 13 and brought together the heads of local police agencies along with community stakeholders to begin the process of developing a plan that focuses on evidence-based policing strategies.

"From mental health to legal aid to law enforcement and everything in between, the panel will provide a diverse look at our current practices and provide direction to future practices," Odell said.

Due to temporary emergency orders, public attendance is not permissible; however, the meetings are accessible via an audio webinar. The site will provide a link to the next meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 29 at 10 a.m.

## Woman's Club of White Plains Helps Female Veterans

The Woman's Club of White Plains continues its support of the community with another act of kindness. Over the summer, club members collected new and gently used business apparel to help female veterans returning to the workplace after service.

As part of an initiative spearheaded by the Barbara Giordano Foundation, donations were collected and delivered to the Veterans Service Agency office in Mount Vernon. Several years ago, the Woman's Club became aware of the foundation and its important mission of assisting female veterans who receive very little support once they return from service.

"We are grateful for the support of the Woman's Club and appreciate all of their efforts on behalf of woman veterans," said Virginia Giordano, the chair of the foundation's board of directors.

"The recent donation of professional attire and new undergarments by Women's Club members will help our vets in their endeavors to assimilate into life when they return from service," said Kristen Larkin, the Women Club's president. "Being able to continue our mission of supporting local philanthropies such as the Barbara Giordano Foundation is paramount to The Woman's Club."

Viviana M. DeCohen, a Marine Corps veteran and director of the Mount Vernon Veterans Service Agency, expressed her thanks and said the organization is forever grateful for the generous donation.

The donations will go to Kristyn's Closet, a new resource for women veterans that will be



From left, Viviana M. DeCohen, director of the Mount Vernon Veterans Service Agency, Maryann Martin, vice president of the Woman's Club of White Plains Foundation, and Virginia Giordano, chair of the Barbara Giordano Foundation.

unveiled on Oct. 29.

For more than 100 years, the Woman's Club of White Plains has provided service to the community. All women are invited to join. For more information, visit [www.womansclubofwhiteplains.org](http://www.womansclubofwhiteplains.org)



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# Philipstown Bikes Day Scheduled for This Saturday

The Philipstown Trails Committee (PTC) recently announced the third annual Philipstown Bikes Day, scheduled for this Saturday, Sept. 26. The rain date would be Sunday, Sept. 27.

All are invited to join in the event by cycling, walking or participating in any other non-motorized form. The event will be from 9 a.m. to noon, and participants can join the loop anywhere at any time. Event check-in with COVID-19 safety precautions in place will be in the upper parking lot of the Haldane public school at 15 Craigside Drive in Cold Spring.

Participants will be part of an effort to bicycle 500 miles in the spirit of

encouraging a healthy, active lifestyle and reducing the carbon footprint to help the environment.

To keep everyone as safe as possible, there will be the following precautions:

- The event will take place completely outdoors, with social distancing maintained at all times.
- There will be no official start or closing event to minimize any congestion, with participants allowed to join the loop anytime between 9 a.m. and noon and from anywhere along the loop.
- All participants will be required to wear a mask while checking in and a volunteer will be assigned to ensure

social distancing at the check-in table.

Participants who successfully complete the 1.7-mile circuit at least once will receive a commendation to recognize their participation and support for a more bikeable and walkable community.

The committee's mission is to create a walkable and bikeable Philipstown, where residents of all ages can safely access important local sites and recreational opportunities and to develop a healthier, more environmentally friendly and socially connected community for all.

The PTC is working to achieve its mission by encouraging local municipalities and Putnam County to

adopt a Complete Streets policy, explore the creation of mixed-use trails connecting key community locations and organizing an annual Philipstown Bikes Day. The committee consists of volunteers from the community and welcomes all interested individuals.

For more information or to volunteer to help with Philipstown Bikes Day, contact the Trails Committee co-chairs at philipstowntrails@gmail.com.

The PTC invites potential participants in the Philipstown Bikes Day to register in advance by e-mailing philipstowntrails@gmail.com. Otherwise, check in at the public school on the morning of the event.

## Raise Funds for Oct. 4 Support-A-Walk for Breast and Ovarian Cancer

There's still time to raise funds for Support Connection's 2020 Annual Support-A-Walk, scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 4.

The theme for this year's Walk is "Walk With Us, Wherever You Are." In lieu of gathering by the thousands in the park, Support Connection invites people to walk in their own town or city, neighborhood or even on a treadmill at home.

Participants can create their own online fundraising pages at [www.firstgiving.com/supportconnection/walk2020](http://www.firstgiving.com/supportconnection/walk2020). Pages can be personalized by the fundraiser, then shared with friends and family via email and social media. Donations to these fundraising pages go directly to Support Connection. Fundraising pages remain active after the walk, through the end of the year. Fundraisers can also seek donations by check or cash. People can raise funds even if they won't be able to walk.

The Support-A-Walk was founded 26 years ago by local residents as a way to focus attention on breast and ovarian cancer and to raise funds for Support Connection's free, year-round support services for those living with these diseases.

Direct donations are also accepted from anyone who wishes to help. To learn more about raising funds or to make a donation, visit [www.supportconnection.org/donate-and-fundraise](http://www.supportconnection.org/donate-and-fundraise) or contact Support Connection at 914-962-6402 or [walk@supportconnection.org](mailto:walk@supportconnection.org).

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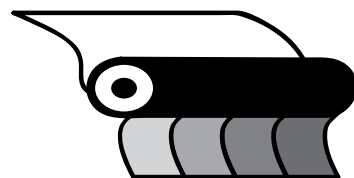
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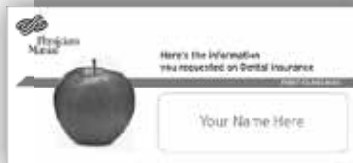
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# Ireland in World War II: Neutral in Name, But Not in Action

What U.S. Army division first put "boots on the ground" in Europe during the second World War, and where did those boots land?

Soldiers of the 133rd Infantry Regiment, a unit of the 34th Infantry Division ("Red Bulls") were the first U.S. troops in Europe following the country's entry into the war in December 1941. They landed in Ireland.

Of course, when they stepped ashore at Dufferin Quay in Belfast on Jan. 26, 1942, a month after Pearl Harbor, they were in Northern Ireland, whose six counties, part of the United Kingdom, had been at war with the Germans since September 1939.

Once landed, the division went into training as a commando unit, as well as doing border patrol between Northern Ireland and the "neutral" Irish Free State to the south. The 34th would go on to fight with distinction in the war, and saw major action in North Africa and Italy.

But what of the other 26 counties who shared the island with the North? Partially independent from Britain since 1921, the Irish Free State adopted a policy of neutrality during World War II. Yet, it was a neutrality

that clearly favored the Allies.

For centuries, Ireland had provided massive amounts of manpower to Britain. In World War I, the last in which Britain could freely count upon Irish manpower, some 35,000 Irish gave their lives in the trenches of the Western Front. This tradition did not end with the partition of Ireland.

Though Irish Free State policy in World War II was to support neither side, actions spoke louder than words. Downed German airmen or ship-wrecked sailors were interred for the duration, while their Allied counterparts were released and allowed to cross back into British territory to continue the fight.

Airspace was granted for Allied flyovers from the U.S. to Royal Air Force bases. U.S. planes flying to North Africa used Shannon Airport as a refueling stop. Irish Free State military shared intelligence with their British counterparts, and even formulated a plan for joint military operations if the Germans ever invaded Ireland.

When the Germans bombed Belfast, within hours firefighting personnel and equipment arrived from the Free State to aid

their brethren in the North. On the open seas, Irish ships were responsible for rescuing hundreds of Allied sailors and soldiers lost at sea when Allied convoys were struck by German U-boat attacks.

But the greatest indication of the "non-neutrality" of the Irish was the number who stepped up to serve in the British armed forces. From 1939 to 1945, 70,000 citizens of the "neutral" Irish Free State, including two relatives of mine, volunteered to wear the King's uniform. Along with 50,000 of their compatriots from Northern Ireland, they gave a major boost to Britain at a time when she seemed to be the last bastion of resistance against Hitler and the Nazis. Even the weathermen helped. Irish weather reports, with predictions based on hours-earlier data, played a huge role in the decisions Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower made regarding when to launch the D-Day landings.

Not all groups were aligned with the Free State's official stance, nor with the "look the other way" actuality of events. The Irish Republican Army, in particular, continually sought a confrontation between Ireland and Britain. DeValera lost no time in interring



By Brian McGowan

some 5,000 IRA members early on in the war, and they remained locked up for the duration.

With the war over, the memory of Irish contributions to the Allies was quickly forgotten, and the common perception evolved that the Irish had somehow "sat out" the war. Ireland's application to join the United Nations in 1945 was blocked, not by Britain, which fully supported it, but by the Soviet Union. It

would be 10 years before Ireland, by then freed of any formal association with the British Empire and known as she is today as the Republic of Ireland, would be allowed to join.

*Pleasantville resident Brian McGowan was born and raised in the Bronx and is a second-, third- and fifth-generation Irish-American/Canadian, as his immigrant ancestors followed several paths to the New World. Reach him at*

*brian.m.mcgowan1952@gmail.com or on Twitter @Bmcgowan52M. He is the author of two books, "Thunder at Noon," about the battle of Waterloo, and "Love, Son John," about World War II. Both are available at Amazon.com.*



The 26 counties of the Irish Free State are shown in white.

## Irish Eclectic

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**Public Notice The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)** has received a Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) application from Larchmont Development LLC, Sun Devil Development LLC, and BCA MK LLC for a site known as 200 East Main, LLC, site ID #C360183. This site is located in the Town of Mount Kisco, within the County of Westchester and is located at 200-206 (East) Main Street. Comments regarding this application must be submitted

no later than October 23, 2020. Access the application and other relevant documents online through the DECinfo Locator: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/data/DecDocs/C360183/>. The documents will also be available at the document repository once reopened, located at Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 East Main Street, Mount Kisco, NY 10549. Information regarding the site and how to submit comments can be found at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/60058.html> or send comments to Mark Domaracki, Project Manager, NYSDEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-7014; [mark.domaracki@dec.ny.gov](mailto:mark.domaracki@dec.ny.gov); or call 518-402-9662. **To have information such as this notice sent right to your email, sign up with county email listservs available at [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html).**

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# How to Make Kids' Birthdays Special While Social Distancing

While some of the traditions of a typical birthday are not possible these days, parents can find new ways to celebrate these important milestones. Here are a few ideas for making your child's upcoming birthday feel special.

- Host a Virtual Party. Use video conferencing tools to host a party for your child. Consider picking a theme

or activity for the event. Start with a meet-and-greet and then dive right in – from painting and pottery to singalongs and science projects, there are many fun themes that work well from a distance. Remember to tell all your guests in advance what they will need to participate or even drop off pre-made goody bags with supplies and

snacks to celebrate.

- Plan a Drive-by Birthday Parade. These days, drive-by celebration parades are all the rage for graduations, birthdays and more – and this is for good reason. What better way to honor a special occasion than by seeing everyone you love? Tell friends and family what time to drive by, encouraging participants to use signs, music, balloons and banners to make a splash.
- Request Cards. Make a secret request to friends and family asking them to send cards in the mail. Children love receiving mail, especially on their birthdays. Alternatively, ask loved ones to create video greetings or other electronic messages.
- Give Fun Gifts. Don't forget the presents! Colorful, interactive toys will brighten the occasion, making your child's birthday and year to come special. Consider Myla's Sparkling Friends from VTech, a new collection of interactive toys that talk, sing and light up with a kaleidoscope of colors.



With flapping wings and tail feathers that wag, colorful accessories and unique songs and sayings, this line is packed with value at a great giftable price.

- Take an Outing. Parents comfortable doing so might consider planning a socially distanced picnic in the park. Bring your child's favorite foods, treats and games for a fun-filled day.
- Birthdays may look a bit different this year, but that doesn't mean your family can't celebrate. Virtual parties, gifts and special greetings can give your child a sense of normalcy and make them feel special on their birthday.

*This article is printed with permission of statepoint.net.*

## P'ville, Byram Hills Seniors Recognized for National Merit Scholarship

Five seniors each from Pleasantville and Byram Hills high schools were recognized last week by the National Merit Scholarship Program for academic achievement.

Current Pleasantville High School seniors Ben Hahn, Carolyn Lee, Lauren Peacock and Sarah Schuster have recently been recognized while Jordyn Bernard, Luke Briody, Talia Dinstein, Jared Ilan and Kathryn Petlyuk from Byram Hills students received the same distinction.

Hahn is one of about 16,000 seniors who has been named as a semifinalist. All five Byram Hills students are also semifinalists.

Isabelle Goodman, who has since moved to Japan, along with Lee, Peacock and Schuster are among the 34,000

commended students.

The students placed in the top 50,000 scorers of the 1.5 million students nationwide who entered the 2021 competition by sitting for the PSAT/NMSQT in October 2019. Students who achieved a Selection Index score of at least 209 qualified for either semifinalist or commended student status.

Semifinalists are designated on a state representational basis because there is a different qualifying score for each state. This year's qualifying score for semifinalist status ranged from 209 to 222, and was 220 in New York State.

The National Merit Scholarship Program, now in its 66th year, will award about 7,600 scholarships totaling more than \$30 million next spring.

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# Fun Games to Play to Make Your Child a Financial Genius

Financial literacy is an important component of STEAM learning and a building block of a comfortable future.

Unfortunately, many schools have limited programs. But there's good news – not only can parents impart money-smarts at home – they can make it so fun children won't even realize they're learning.

"Games and toys have the power to get kids of all ages involved and passionate about any subject, leading the way to joyful, healthy relationships with different areas of learning," said Anna Yudina, spokesperson for The Genius of Play. "Math and financial literacy are no exceptions."

Parents agree, as 67 percent believe STEAM-focused toys are the primary way to encourage development of science, technology, engineering and math in their child, according to a recent survey conducted by OnePoll on behalf of The Toy Association.

To turn your child into a math and money whiz, consider these tips from The Genius of Play, a national movement to educate parents and caregivers about play's vital role in child development:

- **Play Store.** Playing store is easy. First, create the inventory using toy foods or pantry supplies, setting a price for each item. Alternatively, build a fashion store by hanging clothing on a rack for "customers" to browse through. This can also be played

using dolls or action figures as characters, and tokens from a board game as the merchandise.

Have your child be the customer by handing them a set amount of money (real or play bills) to start with, so that they must budget accordingly to buy only what they can afford. Then, swap roles so that your child has a turn tallying the cost of items you bring to the counter. Many toy cash registers even feature functional calculators, giving kids some practice with a vital learning tool.

- **Get Tactile.** Toys promoting hands-on exploration can strengthen numerical processing that's necessary for financial literacy. Try games providing a fast-paced mental workout, such as jacks, Connect 4 and backgammon.

- **Have a Game Night.** Board games offer the opportunity to develop a variety of fundamental skills, including arithmetic and risk management. The next time family game night rolls around, consider breaking out a money management classic, such as Monopoly, to practice counting, saving and budgeting.

- **Make Saving a Game.** Saving may not automatically appeal to kids at first, so create challenges and games offering rewards. For example, propose a one-time doubled allowance after successfully completing a "No Spending Week



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Challenge." Or, demonstrate how quickly money can add up by having kids put all the change they receive in their piggy bank (versus spending it). Then, at the end of the month, have them open the piggy bank and count up their savings.

For more games that teach real life skills, visit [TheGeniusofPlay.org](http://TheGeniusofPlay.org).

With so many fun games available to children – from preschool through preteens – adding math and money into the STEAM-learning mix can be as easy as 1-2-3.

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# Open Door's Virtual Music Fest to Feature Bernie Williams Oct. 3

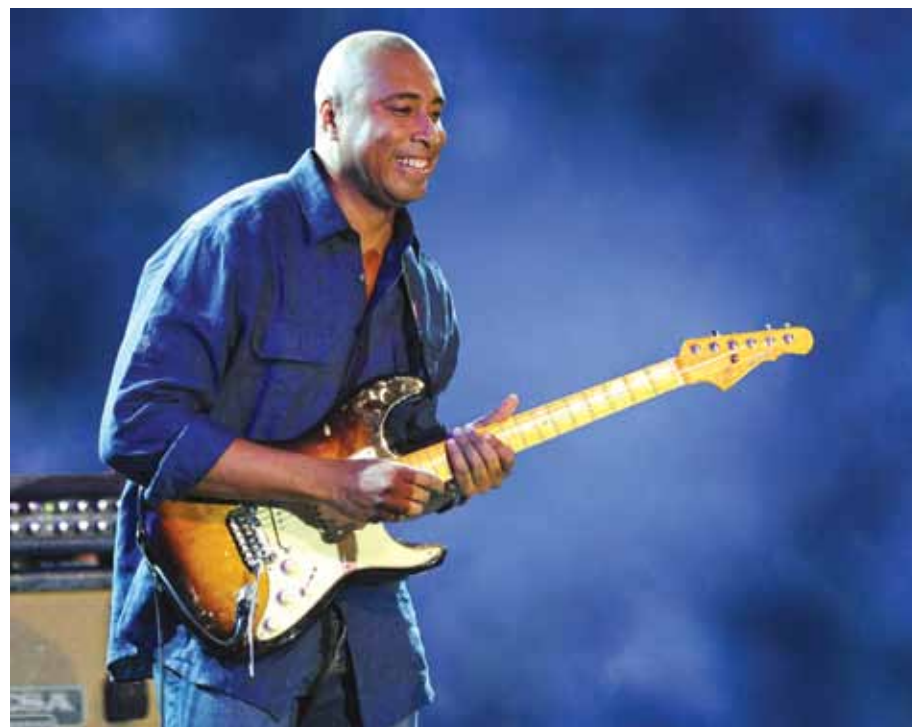
Four Westchester-based charities will be honored at Open Door Foundation's Tune In virtual benefit for the support they have provided throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, a number of talented local artists, including legendary baseball All-Star and Latin Grammy-nominated musician Bernie Williams and American Grammy-nominated rock, blues, jazz and pop guitarist Gil Parris, will make guest appearances. The event is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 3 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Honored at the event will be the Greater Chappaqua Chinese Community, New Castle Meals for Health Care Workers, Rye Moms and Southern Westchester Chinese Community. These local organizations helped provide meals and personal protective equipment for its frontline workers.

"Our four honorees played a critical role supporting our dedicated frontline staff and the nearly 60,000 vulnerable patients we serve every year," said Lindsay Farrell, president and CEO of Open Door. "In light of Bernie Williams' appearance at Tune In, it's fair to say that our honorees really stepped up to the plate during a time of great need in our community."

Williams' resume boasts four World Series Championships, five All-Star games, an ALCS MVP award and an American League batting title. Williams has released two jazz albums and was nominated for a Latin Grammy in 2009. His music blends jazz, blues, R&B and the tropical rhythms of his childhood in



Bernie Williams is the featured musician for the Oct. 3 Tune In virtual benefit. Proceeds go to the Open Door Foundation, which provides funding for Open Door Family Medical Centers.

Puerto Rico. He has also authored a book, "Rhythms of the Game: The Link Between Music and Athletic Performance." Williams is an active crusader for arts and music education and has been recognized for his dedication to philanthropy.

Gil Parris has released six solo albums and played with such artists as Dr. John, Blood, Sweat and Tears and Toni Braxton. His debut CD was released by RCA/BMG to great acclaim.

Vaneese Thomas, a veteran performer

combines the influences of her background and experience – R&B, gospel, blues and jazz – to cultivate a soul-stirring, unique style.

KJ Denhert, a singer, guitarist and songwriter calls her music urban folk and jazz. The Ossining resident's 10 albums have earned her seven Independent Music Awards and she has been named a top female vocalist by Jazz.com.

Rob Wallis is a homegrown Westchester musician with a long career in the music business. He has played Broadway and performed across the U.S. In addition, he has produced numerous award-winning music instruction books, DVDs and online lessons. He has been the music director for the last three years of the Open Door/Tune-In event.

Open Door provides more than 300,000 patient visits annually and serves nearly 60,000 people annually, many of whom might not otherwise have access to medical services. A majority of its patients live at or below the federal poverty line.

Tune In is the Open Door Foundation's signature fall event. It raises funds for critical services that are not covered by third-party reimbursements or government grants and cost more than \$2 million annually.

For tickets, sponsorships or more information, call 914-502-1417, e-mail [egilbert@odfmc.org](mailto:egilbert@odfmc.org), or visit [opendoormedical.org/tune-in](http://opendoormedical.org/tune-in).

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