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October 26 - November 1, 2021

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 11, Issue 532

Greenburgh Police Chief Leaving to Lead Larchmont Force

By Rick Pezzullo

Greenburgh Police Chief Chris McNerney has informed the Town Board he will be stepping down to become chief of the Larchmont Police Department.

McNerney, who retired as police chief in Greenburgh in 2019 following a 24-year career to work as the lead criminal investigator in the Westchester District Attorney's Office, returned as Greenburgh

chief last fall when Brian Ryan retired.

Greenburgh Supervisor Paul Feiner said McNerney told the board he first learned of the opportunity in Larchmont during the summer and the "benefits that the new position offered made it difficult to turn down."

"We wish Chief McNerney great success and happiness in his new position as Larchmont Police Chief," Feiner stated. "He will continue to work with the Town Board

toward the investigation and resolution of any outstanding issues in the Greenburgh Police Department."

Feiner cited many accomplishments of McNerney's tenure, including: implementing a Body Worn Camera program, the first agency in Westchester with full patrol deployment; reinstituting the Street Crime Unit; creating a Special Victim's Unit; targeting impact crimes of burglary and larceny from vehicles; acquiring nearly \$3 million worth of special operation emergency vehicles from grants and federal programs; and adopting numerous traffic and safety initiatives.

The supervisor noted the Greenburgh Town Board will be meeting this week to begin the process of selecting an interim chief.



Greenburgh Police Chief Chris McNerney

County Board Passes Resolution Declaring Climate Emergency

By Rick Pezzullo

The Board of Legislators last week unanimously passed a declaration of climate emergency in Westchester County, urging state and local governments to do the same.

The resolution cites the catastrophic global and local impacts of climate change, including devastating flooding from extreme weather, as well as many of the recent steps that county government has taken to reduce the county's carbon footprint -- including replacing fossil fuel buses and fleet vehicles with hybrid and electric ones, supporting food scrap recycling, installation of electric vehicle charging stations, and more.

Most importantly, the resolution pledges a revised Westchester Climate Action Plan with new recommended action steps, and an effort at the county level to support action at the local, state and national level to address this life-threatening emergency.

"Climate change is impacting our health, our economy, our future. This resolution formally acknowledges the gravity of the situation," said Legislator Ruth Walter (D/Bronxville, Yonkers), chair of the board's Environment & Health Committee. "With its passage we're pledging to put the full force of county government behind actions to address the crisis and efforts to call attention to it at every other level of government."

Legislator Catherine Parker (D/Mamaroneck, Rye, Larchmont, New Rochelle, Harrison), chair of the board's Planning, Economic Development & Energy Committee, stated the passage of the resolution was the beginning of a stronger effort to make Westchester a leader in sustainability. She noted officials have already approved plans to replace the county's fossil fuel vehicle fleet, supported the transition to electric vehicles and promoted food scrap recycling.

"Many of us have been working for years to call attention to the seriousness of the climate crisis we face here and around the world," Parker stated.

"For too long the debate over climate change has been dominated by false choices -- between economic growth and climate action or even over whether or not climate change exists," said Majority Leader MaryJane Shimsky (D/Ardley, Dobbs Ferry, Edgemont, Hartsdale, Hastings-on-Hudson, Irvington). "With this resolution, we are putting to rest any debate in Westchester over those false choices. The extreme impacts of storms and flooding and the health effects of air and water pollution that we are living with today illustrate clearly that future economic growth and the future health and well-being of Westchester require our action on the climate crisis now."

White Plains Man Who Sexually Abused a Minor Sentenced

By Rick Pezzullo

A White Plains man was sentenced Oct. 19 for sexually abusing a minor between 2016 and 2019.

Frank Perez, 57, was sentenced to five years in state prison, with eight years of post-release supervision, by Judge Susan Cacace in Westchester County Court. Upon his release from prison, he will be required to register as a sex offender.

According to Westchester District Attorney Miriam Rocah, on Sept. 14, 2021, Perez was found guilty of Course of Sexual Conduct Against a Child in the Second Degree, a violent felony, and Sexual Abuse in the Second Degree and Endangering the Welfare of a Child, both misdemeanors, following a week-long trial.

"There were multiple instances where you were confronted and could have stopped, but out of your arrogance, you kept going," the victim stated at sentencing. "You used to always tell me that although I won the battle, you would win the war. Well, despite the many trials and tribulations you put me through, I won the war."

Between Sept. 2016 and Feb. 2019, Perez engaged in sexual acts with a minor on multiple occasions. The sexual abuse began when the victim was 11 years old. White Plains Police arrested Perez on Feb. 15, 2019, following an investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Domestic Violence Acting Deputy Bureau Chief Janelle Armentano and Child Abuse Acting Deputy Bureau Chief Owein Levin.

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Two Administrative Appointments Made in White Plains Schools

By Bailey Hosfelt

The White Plains Board of Education made two new appointments at a Special Meeting in September and its monthly meeting in October. Joseph Onativia was appointed the Assistant Principal of George Washington School and Michael Eaton was named Acting Principal of the Middle School-Highlands Campus.

Onativia joins White Plains from South Orangetown, New York, where he was an Assistant Principal of the Middle School for the last three years. Onativia has 20 years of experience as a teacher, K-6 instructional coach and Assistant Principal.

He has a bachelor's degree from SUNY Oneonta, a master's degree from Johnson State College and holds certification as a School District Leader from Manhattanville College. Onativia's appointment will be effective November 1.

"Mr. Onativia is an excellent choice,

selected from among 150 applicants, and has extensive experience combined with a focus on equity," Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph L. Ricca said in a press release announcing his appointment. "I look forward to working with him."

Onativia replaces Brendan McCarthy who moved to Mamaroneck Avenue School as Assistant principal, in a reassignment of the elementary principals.

Onativia said he is looking forward to using his administrative, classroom and instructional coaching experience to ensure every child can learn, grow and succeed.

"It is with great Patriot Pride that I become invested in all the diverse, equitable, and inclusive community work that propels White Plains," Onativia said. "I have an unwavering commitment to get to know our community and support the school by providing a safe environment where children are engaged in thoughtful, meaningful and challenging opportunities."



Joseph Onativia



Michael Eaton

"I am excited to start the next chapter of my administrative career as a George Washington Patriot and meet the social, emotional and academic needs of our students," Onativia said.

Eaton was previously an Assistant Principal at the Middle School-Highlands Campus since 2018, and, prior to that, he was a Special Education Teacher of History there for three years. Eaton previously taught in Peekskill and the Bronx.

He has a bachelor's degree in history, a master's degree in special education and a master's degree in school building leadership — all received from Lehman College. Eaton

is replacing Ernie Spatafore, who has taken a leave of absence. Eaton's appointment is effective October 19, 2021 to June 30, 2022, or sooner.

"We are thrilled to welcome Mr. Eaton to the role of acting principal," Ricca said. "A lifelong White Plains Tiger and dedicated member of the WPCSD community, Mike will continue to serve our community well during this period. His professionalism and commitment to our children are second to none."

Eaton did not respond to a request for comment on his appointment in time for publication.

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WCC Reaches 97% Vaccination Rate for Students, Employees

Westchester Community College (WCC) announced last week it has reached a COVID-19 vaccination rate of 97 percent among its undergraduate students taking in-person classes and 97 percent among its on-site employees.

The cooperation by WCC's students and employees follows an aggressive outreach program that included a persistent communications campaign, convenient vaccination drives and information sessions featuring Westchester County Department of Health officials.

As a result of enhanced health safety protocols, the COVID positivity rate at WCC has remained at or below 0.5 percent during the fall semester, well below the state average range of 2.4 percent to 3.3 percent during the same period.

WCC allows medical and religious exemptions, and anyone who comes to campus without being vaccinated must participate in a weekly COVID-19 testing regimen at Westchester Medical Center. Everyone indoors while on college property must wear a mask and practice social distancing whenever practicable.

Expanding access to in-person classes is critical for students in courses where hands-on lab work is crucial to the learning process. Being on campus can be a valuable component of the college experience, helping new students acclimate and connect with their peers.

For students who prefer not to be on campus, WCC also offers a wide selection of synchronous courses remotely. All online courses are held to the same academic standards that exist for in-person courses.

Students must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have an approved exemption in order to register for in-person courses. Information on WCC's COVID safety protocols is available at www.sunywcc.edu/COVID.

"I was somewhat hesitant with going back onto campus in the beginning. I didn't know what it was going to be like or what safety protocols would be in place due to

the pandemic," said WCC student Melissa Brown. "I have been back on campus since the very beginning of the semester and am pleasantly surprised with how everything is being run."

"The classes are much smaller, but the learning I am able to obtain is much greater. I am mournful about the commute, but there is truly nothing that can replace in person classes, learning, personal connections and the hands-on experiences I am able to obtain are extremely beneficial."

"With Westchester County being the original epicenter of the pandemic

in New York State, Westchester Community College has been confronting this public health crisis and its life-threatening effects from the start.

Vaccines and protocols to protect our health are helping us confidently return to more familiar in-person educational environments," said Dr. Belinda Miles, president at WCC.

"The evidence is showing that our collective actions are working. We thank our colleagues at the State University of



CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

New York, Westchester County, Westchester Medical Center, and other partners for their tenacity and expert guidance. We especially thank our students,

faculty, and staff for fostering a community of care that creates safe spaces for teaching and learning."

Registration for the Spring 2022 semester begins Oct. 25. Information on the Spring 2022 semester is available at www.sunywcc.edu/spring.

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Mt. Kisco Voters Must Approve Dissolving Police Six Years Later

By Martin Wilbur

There may not be a contested village election in Mount Kisco next week, but if a local referendum on the ballot fails, it could cost the village up to \$1 million a year.

Village officials are asking voters to formally approve dissolving the Mount Kisco Police Department, nearly six-and-a-half years after the Westchester County Department of Public Safety took over policing the community.

Mayor Gina Picinich said the matter is “an administrative housekeeping issue.”

“If the department continues to

exist as an entity, we have to hire some police officers to staff it that are in the employment of the village,” Picinich said. “So to do that for what would be considered enough staffing, we will have to expend approximately a million dollars, which will result in an approximately 7 percent tax increase, which is ongoing because you’re adding recurring costs because it’s staff.”

In order to fund what would be considered a legitimate law enforcement agency would require hiring a minimum of four sworn police officers, she said. There would also be costs for equipment, vehicles and other expenses.

Mount Kisco has had one part-time chief, who is in charge of the village’s school crossing guards and parking enforcement.

Meanwhile, the county police have been embraced by the community since it entered an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) and began its coverage of the village on June 1, 2015. The move has also saved the village at least \$500,000 a year.

The two sides entered a second five-year agreement last year.

During a Village Board discussion last spring, Village Attorney Whitney Singleton said that under state law if a municipality would dissolve a certain service such as its

own police, the public needs to be afforded the chance to vote on it.

If the village maintained the status quo, it runs the risk of being sued by a person or organization.

Picinich said the consequences of a failed vote would result in an unnecessary expense and duplicative services.

“The board at the time passed a law to dissolve the department, but again, in accordance with state law, we must put that out to the voters,” she said.

For Mount Kisco voters, the proposition is Referendum #7 on the ballot.



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Support Connection, Inc. announces a free national educational webinar presented in partnership with White Plains Hospital. Genetic Counseling and Testing for Breast and Ovarian Cancer will be offered on Tuesday, Nov. 9, from 8 to 9 p.m. The webinar is open to people nationwide who have or have had breast, ovarian or gynecological cancer.

This educational webinar will provide information about genetic counseling and genetic testing as it pertains to breast and ovarian cancer.

The presentation will include who should undergo genetic testing; the genetic testing process; new updates to genetic testing; what to do with test results; myths and facts case examples; and discussing genetics with relatives/family members.

Following the presentation, there will be a question-and-answer period.

Pre-registration is required. To learn more or to register, call Support Connection at 914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290 by 5 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 8.



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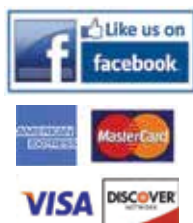
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Our Vanishing Corner Drugstores

By Abby Luby

You've heard this story before. The mom-and-pop pharmacy that's been down the block for decades, whose friendly and knowledgeable pharmacist knows every medication you ever needed, is suddenly going out of business. The community is jolted, years of trust and unique patient-pharmacist relationships gone. How did this happen?

Cash flow in the health care empire is like a swift creeping vine with multiple tentacles reaching for revenue any time money is exchanged between drug manufacturers and insurance plans, doctors and patients or patients and drugstores. The vines have grown into a huge, dark jungle where shadowy profits are made hand over fist without any accountability.

Squeeze From Middlemen

The hands dipping into the till of this \$21 billion industry are those of middlemen known as Pharmacy Benefit Managers, or PBMs, who outwardly serve as go-betweens for health insurers and drug makers aimed at lowering drug prices. But the real goal of these for-profit middlemen is to have complete control over prescription drug prices that benefit some 266 million Americans while undercutting independent pharmacists seen as competition to the ubiquitous big-chain drugstores.

If you look at your prescription card, you'll see the name of the three controlling PBMs: Caremark, OptimumRx, or ExpressScripts. Also listed is your health insurance plan which

might be Medicare Part D, or a government or employee plan. The PBMs act as middlemen and negotiate the distribution of prescription drugs by controlling the money flow between the big pharmacy companies and the public. These three companies control about 90 percent of the medical drug distribution in our country.

When filling a prescription, your cost is calculated by the PBMs, who want a sizeable rebate from the drug manufacturer – usually around 50 to 60 percent of the drug price. PBMs can overcharge insurance companies and underpay pharmacist reimbursement fees. Known as spread pricing, the difference between each of these costs goes into the PBM's pocket. We're talking billions of dollars a year. And the hardships fall to our neighborhood drugstore.

When PBMs first came on the scene, everyone thought having a company manage drug prices to keep the cost down was a good idea.

"Forty years ago, every pharmacist thought it was great when insurance companies came in and said we had to sign a contract with PBMs agreeing to fill all prescriptions at the average wholesale price," said Michael Altman, former owner of Greenleaf Pharmacy in Hastings-on-Hudson.

Altman eventually sold Greenleaf after 10 years and is now the owner and supervising pharmacist of Blend Labs Rx, a veterinary medicine lab in Queens. He recalled a time when independent pharmacies realized a profit, but then it all changed.

"When the PBM contract was up for



The storefront of the now-defunct Pleasantville Pharmacy is seen on its last day of operation in August after serving the village for more than 100 years.

renewal they lowered our profit margin to 17 percent and said take it or leave it."

Pharmacists choosing not to work with PBMs would see their supply of meds dramatically dwindle and risked losing their business. "New drugs are \$70 a pill and you're making \$5 on it. At the end of the day you're spinning your dollars," said Altman.

Pharmacies even reported that PBMs forced them to take a loss on prescription drug sales.

Steering customers away from independent pharmacies and towards PBM-affiliated pharmacies such as CVS, Walgreens, or RiteAid is done by offering medications at half the price at their big chain drugstores compared to prices charged by local pharmacies. Snagging away small drugstore patients is also done by mandating that medicines and supplies be only available

by mail-order, specialty pharmacies, or Medicare-approved supply companies.

"I was forced to order my diabetes medicine and supplies by mail-order," said Marcia Stone, a Shrub Oak resident. "When I was first diagnosed, my insurance covered a certain amount for supplies I needed. But when I went to refill, I could only do it through a specific company approved by Medicare."

Stone ended up buying all new equipment made by an accepted brand. "It was a waste of money and there was obviously a financial agreement between the company who made the equipment and Medicare."

Losing the War

Stone is all too familiar with the world of independent pharmacies. Her grandmother was one of the first women pharmacists to open a store in the Bronx in the early 1900s and her father and uncle opened a drugstore in Long Beach, Long Island, and another in Larchmont called Hughes Pharmacy.

"Eventually, in the late 1990s, the competition from the big chains closed down all the independent pharmacies. That was compounded by insurance contracts that lowered the reimbursement rate," Stone recalled. "My father would get about \$1.50 above the cost of the prescription. It was another death blow to independent pharmacies."

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Chris Hildenbrand's name won't appear on the ballot. To vote for Chris, choose Andrea Sanseverino Galan. When Unite New Castle is elected, Chris will replace her. DO NOT write in Chris' name.

From October 23 to October 31, vote early at Mt. Kisco Memorial Complex at Leonard Park, 1 Wallace Dr., Mt. Kisco.

Two Familiar Names in Town Vie for North Castle Town Justice

By Martin Wilbur

Elections for town justices often don't attract much attention.

This year in North Castle, however, two well-known public servants are facing each other for the right to serve one of the two seats on the local bench.

Incumbent Douglas Martino, a Republican, is being challenged for the first time since being elected in 2013 by Democrat Ira Schulman, a 22-year member of the Byram Hills Board of Education.

Martino, 63, a partner in his own law firm that practices family law, personal injury, litigation and criminal law, said he has the key qualities that are important for a judge to possess in order to serve effectively.

His legal career has seen him appear before judges for about 30 years, before becoming one of North Castle's two justices, he said.

"You have to have the personal knowledge, you have to have the experience as either an attorney or as a judge to have handled these cases before because every case is different," said Martino, who has served as president of the Armonk Lions Club. "But it helps to have the experience and the experience of making decisions. It's not as easy as you think. You have to have a certain temperament."



Douglas Martino

Schulman, 67, said he's dedicated his life to service to the community since moving to North Castle in 1987, and running for town justice seemed like the next logical step. He specializes in construction law and is an arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association.

This wasn't the first time Schulman had considered running for the seat.

"I've been asked to consider running from time to time over the last number of years, but this seemed like an opportune time to do it," he said.

Schulman highlighted the qualities that would make for a successful town justice, including being a good listener, something he's been able to hone from his years on the Board of Education.

"I think I bring integrity, the willingness to listen to both sides of a story, the



Ira Schulman

willingness not to pre-judge anyone that comes before me based on matters that aren't actually relevant to the dispute and I believe I'm a very good listener," he said. "And I also think I have a sense of empathy."

Whether he's faced with a criminal matter, disputes in Small Claims Court or traffic tickets in his courtroom, Martino said he can deftly handle any matter that comes before him. Anyone who appears in his courtroom will have their case adjudicated fairly.

Martino said he was somewhat surprised by Schulman's challenge but is confident in his abilities, and he has the experience in criminal law, both in his eight years on the bench and in his private practice.

"I feel like I'm doing a better job than

someone else in my position could have done," he said. "That, in and of itself, is rewarding, knowing you're doing a good job. I find it very rewarding to dispense what I believe to be the proper justice in any particular case and allow people to be heard."

Schulman said while he doesn't have a criminal law background, he is ready to immerse himself in that area of the law.

"I believe that the criminal law that is applied as a town judge is something that can be quickly picked up by a judge and I have no reason to believe I wouldn't be more than equal to the task," Schulman said.

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Editorial

Democratic Slate Recommended to Move New Castle Forward

Every once in a while, an election comes along that’s about one issue.

In New Castle in 2021, that issue is the Form Based Code.

Introduced as a land development and zoning tool that emphasizes appearance – or form – over uses, it has gradually been introduced in communities across the United States.

Of course, there are many other matters of high importance in town, and certainly there are residents who don’t view the Form Based Code as their make-or-break issue.

But while there may be modest differences, at most, among the candidates on how best to help Millwood, protect the West End, sidewalks and walkability, recreation and building a more diverse and inclusive community, there is a stark divide between the two slates when it comes to downtown Chappaqua and the Form Based Code.

It really comes down to whether a resident believes that the seemingly elusive vibrancy long sought by officials and some residents for downtown Chappaqua requires a new strategy that admittedly has been used far more often in larger communities than Chappaqua.

Or can developers be lured to town to build mixed-use projects with restaurants and attractions through a more measured approach.

Unite New Castle Supervisor candidate and two-term Councilwoman Lisa Katz and running mates Tara Kassal and Vicky Tipp want to negotiate with developers and use overlay districts and special permits, among other tools to help the hamlet.

(Andrea Sanseverino Galan is on the ballot for Unite New Castle but announced she would be moving and will not serve. Chris Hildenbrand is campaigning with them and would be appointed if Sanseverino Galan and the ticket win a majority.)

The Democratic/4 New Castle ticket of Holly McCall for supervisor, Councilwoman Lori Morton and Michael Weinberg for the four-year Town Board seats and Jennifer Bounds for the unexpired term favor the Form Based Code.

While downtown Chappaqua is hardly decaying, in order for it to reach its potential a more dynamic approach is needed. That is why it is recommended that McCall, a former Chappaqua school board member, Morton, Weinberg and Bounds be given a chance to move the hamlet forward while tending to all the other pressing issues.

Each member of the ticket has served the community admirably in different capacities before this run.

They recognize that while a municipality and its officials may have a rough outline of what they want to see, you still need the private sector, which has the capital, and the town’s planning professionals to provide guidance.

The strong push-back to the Form Based Code has proved successful even if opponents dismiss the concessions made by the town. Limiting any initial rezoning to six acres on North Greeley Avenue, rather than the entire 72 acres, is significant. After the reaction of the past year, it will be nearly impossible for a new board to rezone beyond North Greeley for a while – at least. Bringing the Planning Board back for some downtown applications is helpful.

For sure, some of the arguments against the code have some merit. There are those who don’t want to see a hamlet lined with four-story buildings, which is possible. It’s still a large question mark where parking would be located if a fairly significant project is proposed.

However, there have also been gross mischaracterizations. The chances of nearly 1,000 residential units, the maximum build-

out cited in the environmental review, has little to no chance of occurring, according to the town’s planning director. Some Chappaqua School District enrollment projections, including one from 2018 for this academic year, overestimated by more than 450 students.

The pandemic has so far failed to trigger an anticipated enrollment bump from all the families streaming out of the city.

There are large tracts of municipal land and school property that are also unlikely to be built upon anytime soon.

Katz and Tipp, in her 11th year on the Chappaqua Board of Education, have been dedicated public servants. It would have been advantageous for Kassal to have been more visible over the past six months. It is hard to recommend voting for Sanseverino Galan when she will not serve.

There is little doubt that if Katz and Tipp would be elected the town would be in strong hands on most any other issue.

But on the issue that has dominated this campaign and town discussions for more than a year, a more proactive strategy is called for.

Latimer an Obvious Choice for Second Term as County Executive

For a conscientious voter, there are times the night before an election when serious decision-making is in order.

Other elections one candidate is so strong that little thought goes into the process at all.

The latter is the case with this year’s Westchester County executive’s race.

George Latimer, a Democrat, who has never lost an election, should coast next week but also because his party has amassed such a sizeable registration advantage across the county but he has done a superb job in multiple areas under challenging conditions.

He has led the county with a steady hand through more than 19 months of COVID-19, providing frequent updates on testing, vaccines and other services, nearly all of them broadcast over social media, in his reassuring tone.

Latimer has displayed leadership in other situations as well. After the killing of George Floyd last year, he announced the creation of a task force for the county to evaluate areas where the county police can do better. That was nearly two weeks before former governor Andrew Cuomo mandated a similar charge to municipalities around the state.

From toughening penalties for human rights violations to green initiatives to robust county finances and a strong commitment to capital projects, there is plenty of good news.

One criticism of his tenure was how the sales tax increase to 8.375 percent became permanent even though it was portrayed as a two-year hike.

Certainly, there will be new challenges ahead. It would be helpful if Latimer restarted the Westchester County Airport Master Plan early next year as communities surrounding the airport are still plagued by the noise of landing aircraft.

His opponent, Christine Sculti, former county executive Rob Astorino’s chief adviser, has the unenviable task of trying to unseat Latimer. In addition to working for Astorino, Sculti has a background in economic development in Yonkers as well as experience running a business with her mother.

In another year, Sculti would be worth a second look. But Latimer has been a fine steward for the county on so many issues that he overwhelmingly deserves a second term.

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Print Team:

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

Rick Pezzullo
Editor
rpezzullo@theexaminernews.com

Ray Gallagher
Sports Editor
rgallagher@theexaminernews.com

Andy Jacobs
Sports Editor
ajacobs@theexaminernews.com

Annette Van Ommeren
Designer

Paul Cardi
Senior Account Executive
pcardi@theexaminernews.com

Jeff Ohlbaum
Senior Account Executive
johlbaum@theexaminernews.com

Ken Gulmi
Senior Account Executive
kgulmi@theexaminernews.com

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Distribution

Digital Team:

Robert Schork
Digital Editorial Director
rschork@theexaminernews.com

Bailey Hosfelt
Reporter
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Dean Pacchiana
Webmaster
dpacchiana@theexaminernews.com

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Endorsements

Cortlandt Will Be in Good Hands With Becker in Charge

Following someone who has put together the kind of record Cortlandt Supervisor Linda Puglisi has during her 30-year tenure is not an easy task, but Councilman Dr. Richard Becker has an impressive resume himself, and is more than qualified to take over the reins and ensure a smooth transition.

Becker, who has been on the Town Board for 14 years and served on the Zoning Board of Appeals for a few years prior, has the pulse of the community and has always taken a measured approach to issues. He has the managerial skills and background to run the town and lead it into the future. Becker

believes in smart growth but won't give away the store.

Without a doubt, residents will be in good hands with Becker at the helm.

His opponent, Laurie Ryan, recently retired after a productive teaching career and served a dozen years on the Hendrick Hudson Board of Education, where she wasn't afraid to speak her mind. She is certainly community-minded and has been running an active campaign.

However, Ryan has no past experience in local government and has not served on any town committees. Her claim of a lack

of police presence in Cortlandt is puzzling, since the town hasn't had its own police department in more than 20 years and has been served adequately by the state police and Westchester County police. Some of her criticism of Becker is also off base.

Perhaps Ryan should have tried for a seat on the Town Board first to get her feet wet instead of aiming for the top job, which Becker is more than well-suited for.

As for the two available Town Board seats, Councilman James Creighton has earned a second four-year term, and his running mate, Cristin Jacoby, a financial services

professional who serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals, show promise.

The Republican/Conservative/Cortlandt United candidates, Tom Walsh, who is also on the ZBA, and Warren Smith, who has been active in Verplanck, have made some compelling cases and appear prepared to be effective councilmen. If unsuccessful in this race, they should consider making another run.

But this time around, Creighton and Jacoby get the nods to help Becker move Cortlandt Forward.

McKenzie for Mayor; Agudelo, Brown, Fernandez for Council in Peekskill

The Democrats have had a stranglehold on the Peekskill Common Council for the last four years. That's not likely to change with this year's election, but some differences of opinion would do the council and the city some good.

Councilwoman Vivian McKenzie has been a mainstay for the last eight years and has been filling Mayor Andre Rainey's shoes at many functions and events this year as deputy mayor. She is running to replace the exiting Rainey and would make history as the city's first female Black mayor, and only second female in the post.

McKenzie is a lifelong city resident and a downtown business owner. She has seen the city change and grow over the last few

decades. She's going to have to learn to be a bit more patient at council meetings when running the show, if elected, but she certainly offers more experience and know-how on city issues than her opponent, Emiliano Perez.

Perez has achieved a great deal in his time in Peekskill, operating a downtown restaurant and owning several rental properties. His immigrant story is inspiring. He also has good intentions giving voters a choice this year, and has focused on some key problems, but doesn't present a strong enough case to recommend his candidacy.

Meanwhile, in the race for three seats on the council, Councilwoman Vanessa Agudelo, who was wrongly bypassed by

Democratic leaders, faces an uphill battle running alone on a third-party line, but she shouldn't be overlooked at the polls.

Agudelo is the lone councilmember who has demonstrated an independent streak and has fought relentlessly for her principles and beliefs. She has put the housing crisis issue in the forefront and refused to simply sign off on resolutions to go along with the majority. Agudelo has energy and passion and city residents would be well-served to have her looking out for their best interests for another four years.

Another candidate who has shown plenty of fight is Leesther Brown. Whether the mayor was a Democrat or Republican, Brown has consistently attended meetings

to hold officials' feet to the fire by asking questions no other resident would ask, or have the knowledge to back up their claims. On the council, she would be the voice of the people and keep her colleagues in line. Voters should give her a chance to show what she can do.

The third seat isn't as clear-cut, but with the Hispanic population rapidly increasing in Peekskill, it's important to have representatives who understand that constituency's concerns. Councilman Ramon Fernandez can relate, and even though he hasn't been as forceful as Agudelo, hopefully in a second term he'll make it a priority to be more of a leader.

Fulgenzi, Rogers Smalley, Hagadus-McHale the Choices in Mt. Pleasant

Since becoming Mount Pleasant supervisor in 2014, this is the first time Carl Fulgenzi has had any competition to retain his seat.

Democrat Joe Bonanno stepped up for the challenge, and he should be thanked for giving voters a choice, something that hasn't happened often enough over the past 20 years.

But to get elected you have to do more than call the incumbent overpaid. Fulgenzi should be a clear choice to be returned to office for another two years.

There are several initiatives that Fulgenzi

should be given the opportunity to finish, including the long-overdue update to the Master Plan. How a town goes a half-century without an overhaul to the document is a head-scratcher with all the changes that have taken place since 1970, but Fulgenzi deserves credit to have started the process in 2018.

He responded decisively toward a small group of critics of the proposed form-based code. A few, perhaps thinking they have a sympathetic ear because of party affiliation, have been put in their place when suggesting that multifamily housing can attract a

criminal element.

Fulgenzi believes he can close the deal with developer William Balter to provide desperately needed senior housing at the Legionaries property, site of the aborted Baker residential project. If the town can obtain 16 acres for its own recreation center that would be a coup.

On Fulgenzi's watch, the town has emphasized green initiatives with LED lighting and solar panels on various town properties.

Laurie Rogers Smalley has strong command of all the issues having served

on the board for eight years. But she also enjoys helping people on a person-to-person basis. During the depths of the pandemic last year, she and her husband delivered meals to seniors, making a real difference in the community.

For the second council seat, Democrat Francesca Hagadus-McHale gets the nod over Thomas Sialiano, who has served four terms. That's not an indictment of Sialiano, but the board could benefit from an opposing perspective. Hagadus-McHale served for one year when she won a race for an unexpired term in 2018.

Patel, Gilbert Best Choices for Yorktown Town Board

Two seats are up for grabs on the Yorktown Town Board, and voters are fortunate to have four capable candidates to choose from.

One of the names on the ballot, Vishnu Patel, should be no stranger to residents. The retired, award-winning IBM scientist is running for a fourth four-year term and wholeheartedly deserves to be re-elected.

Patel is the kind of public servant every municipality would benefit from as a representative because he is all about helping people in any way he can. His selfless nature is infectious. Patel's only personal agenda is trying to make other's lives better, whether through mentoring high school students, beautifying the gazebo outside the Yorktown Community and Cultural Center and Patriot's Garden behind Town Hall, or providing financial assistance to programs

and causes.

Because of his unique style, Patel is often underestimated by his colleagues, but his appreciation and knowledge of environmental issues is second to none and he has been a stickler on trying to prevent unnecessary spending.

Residents will never be disappointed to have Patel on their side and as their watchdog.

The second choice is not as obvious, but it is strongly recommended that Ilan Gilbert be brought back into the fold.

Gilbert served admirably as town supervisor for two years before losing his bid for re-election in 2019 to current Supervisor Matt Slater, who himself has proven to be a very effective leader under some trying circumstances.

While not the most dynamic communicator, Gilbert has dedicated a good portion of his adult life to public service and has a vast knowledge of all the issues facing the town. He often speaks of the need for Yorktown to improve its infrastructure and has a sound view on how best Yorktown can grow its economic base.

As long as Gilbert can avoid acting as if he is still in charge and follow Slater's lead, his return to the Town Board should be a smooth transition.

Yorktown Chamber of Commerce President Sergio Esposito has certainly run a spirited campaign, and would bring a business perspective to the board. As a small business owner, he understands the concerns and struggles many merchants face first-hand.

Esposito has been an active volunteer in the community and made his presence felt. He said he has a bipartisan nature. However, as a Republican candidate, it's likely he will side most often with Slater and councilmen Tom Diana and Ed Lachterman. Any board functions best with differing opinions.

His running mate, Luciana Haughwout, is the least experienced candidate in the race and is facing a tough field.

She stated she has "a strong heart and desire to offer solutions to create positive outcomes." Hopefully, everyone seeking public office starts off with that mindset.

Patel, Gilbert and, to some extent, Esposito are proven commodities who bring more to the table than Haughwout.

Endorsements

DiGiacinto, Reiter Provide No. Castle With Steady Veteran Leadership

It's hard to find fault with town officials when a municipality has a teeming fund balance, a downtown that is the envy of neighboring municipalities and nearly all of its 93 miles of roads paved with a new smooth surface.

So with councilmembers Barbara DiGiacinto and Barry Reiter facing re-election next week it's hard to justify searching for an alternative. As a result, the pair should return to the board each for a third term.

DiGiacinto has cultivated a good working relationship with residents of North White Plains (who at times in the past have felt left out) because their hamlet is so different than Armonk and Banksville. With her monthly Saturday meeting at the Community Center there is an avenue for those with concerns to bring them to a Town Board member.

She also takes time to do her homework

when faced with the difficult development pressures the town faces, particularly in Armonk. DiGiacinto was accused of flip-flopping when she voted against a rezoning to allow for a 40-plus unit project at the old Mariani Gardens site but then voted for the special permit. As she explained, while that may have appeared to be inconsistent, the standards for each vote were very different.

Reiter is often the least vocal on the board but that doesn't mean he hasn't contributed to the town. He led NC4 and the town's shelter during Superstorm Sandy and has remained involved with the town's emergency services.

While in a town like North Castle there is often pressure against condo taxation, Reiter has explained that is appropriate for age-restricted housing.

That's not to say it's been clear sailing all the time. It appeared the Town Board

should have reacted sooner to quell fears any residents had about potential contamination to their water sources from the storage of road millings at the Middle Patent Road highway site.

Even if the county and the state continually said the groundwater was fine, the town ignoring an outspoken resident made it an even bigger issue.

There is also a sense that for a town that has traditionally been politically divided there should be more contested elections.

That wasn't a problem this year, at least when it came to the Town Board.

The incumbents are being challenged by Matt Milim, who moved to Armonk with his family in 2013. Last year he started participating in Town Board meetings, motivated by what he thought were substandard town fields and playgrounds.

Despite his candidacy he had little contact with town political party leaders, seemingly treated like a pariah simply because he wanted to run.

Milim, an intelligent and engaged resident, made some strong points including the need for hamlet advisory committees, something that should be explored by the board beyond DiGiacinto's monthly North White Plains meetings.

A significant mark against his candidacy was his aversion to condo taxation. There are times when it's warranted, such as with senior housing and when trying to entice young professionals.

On balance, Milim added value to the town's election cycle because he participated in the process and issues were raised. Even if he falls short next week, he should stay involved.

Letters to the Editor

Unite New Castle's Changing Personnel is Confusing, Anti-Democratic

In the election for New Castle Town Board, the "Unite" New Castle slate is posting ads that explicitly tell voters to vote for a candidate – a candidate duly listed on the ballot – who doesn't plan to serve. UNC assures their voters that "when they win," Chris Hildenbrand, who's not a candidate in any accepted use of the word, will "replace" her.

There is no mechanism by which someone who isn't on the ballot "replaces" someone else after an election. The UNC slate, which is

clearly in disarray, with two out of four of their original candidates having dropped out since their original pre-primary announcement, is asking the voters to trust them to appoint a sixth person post-election. In fact, in such a circumstance, there's nothing to prevent them from pulling yet another name out of thin air and making that their appointment (not so far-fetched given their constantly shifting personnel).

In short, they are explicitly asking voters NOT to write in Hildenbrand – a person not

on the ballot – despite that being the only legal way to vote for him. Furthermore, if the UNC candidate who is on the ballot is elected and then drops out, it would be up to the entirety of the newly-seated Town Board to appoint someone to that vacated seat. There is no guarantee that the newly-seated Town Board would, in fact, choose Mr. Hildenbrand.

If one wants a particular candidate, you must either vote for that person, or write them in, which is what was encouraged by UNC during the primary when they also

attempted to replace someone on their slate. Remember also that the last time any appointing was done, it was Lauren Levin who was appointed – an actual candidate on a ballot who had received votes.

This shell game is confusing, duplicitous and anti-democratic. I appreciate your time and attention to this circumstance.

**Daniel Rigger
Chappaqua**

'Langleygate' Proves Sheriff Cannot Be Trusted in Putnam County

It was recently discovered that Democratic Sheriff Bob Langley secretly recorded a conversation between himself and the sitting Republican Carmel town supervisor. Sheriff Langley then released the information about that conversation to his campaign team so they could submit a Freedom of Information

Law (FOIL) request and distribute on social media.

Langley claims his campaign team got the recording through a FOIL request. Langley should be ashamed of himself, hiding behind a FOIL request. Anyone with common sense can see what went on here – Democrat

Langley informed his campaign team of a conversation he had with a Republican supervisor and told them the specific time frame to FOIL so they could retrieve the audiotape to use for political gain. How could anyone know of the private conversation if Langley did not inform them?

This was clearly a political hit set up by Democratic Sheriff Langley to shame and embarrass a sitting Republican supervisor. Shame on Langley. The FOIL request was submitted on Sept. 29 and the audiotape was given to the person requesting it the same day and put on social media by the end of that day. Foiling an audiotape from a law enforcement agency often takes weeks before you get a response. How was this audiotape provided in less than eight hours? This was a scheme set up by Sheriff Langley and his campaign team.

This is despicable and unethical behavior.

Who can ever trust Sheriff Langley again? Sheriff Langley has diminished the credibility and trust of the office of sheriff for political gain. Watergate showed that Nixon could not be trusted and "Langleygate" is showing the people of Putnam County that Sheriff Langley cannot be trusted.

We must bring integrity back to the Putnam County Sheriff's Office.

Please join me in voting for Republican Kevin McConville who has 30 years' experience in law enforcement (retired chief of police at the MTA).

Kevin McConville will restore integrity and respect to the office of Putnam County Sheriff.

**Robert Buckley
Retired Captain, Westchester County
Jail
Mahopac**

Rising Putnam County Taxes a Big Fail Compared to Neighboring Counties

It is unreasonable and unconscionable that Putnam County property taxes may be increasing by 2.3 percent in 2022. In fact, there should be no increase at all.

Looking at neighboring counties illustrates this clearly.

Dutchess County's property taxes are actually decreasing by 10 percent. In addition, sales tax on clothing and footwear (costing less than \$110) will be eliminated. Those two factors should result in a savings of around \$20 million for Dutchess County taxpayers. Lucky them.

Rockland County will have no property tax increase this year. Neither will our neighbor to the west, Orange County. And Westchester County Executive George Latimer is promising the same.

Better yet is Fairfield County, Conn., as they have the added bonus of no county government. None. But, of course, neither do any of the other counties in Connecticut. If only we could eliminate excessive government in New York.

And finally, to add insult to injury, all the aforementioned counties share sales tax with their municipalities. All except Putnam. To generate sales tax, our towns accommodate increased traffic and require more services yet still don't get a piece of the sales tax pie. Just higher property taxes.

It's time for Putnam to be fiscally responsible. At least three candidates running for the county legislature this year would not condone nor vote in favor of the 2.3 percent property tax increase, a refreshing change from consistently passed county budgets. If you're in their district, please consider voting for Scott Reing, Stacy Dumont and Legislator Nancy Montgomery. Let's break the chain of never-ending property tax increases.

We need innovation, we need hard work and we need to keep our taxes in check. Let's get Putnam County back on track.

**Lynne Eckardt
Brewster**

Hyer is a Stellar Choice for State Supreme Court

I am writing to encourage everyone to vote for James Hyer for state Supreme Court. Jim works tirelessly for all members of the community. There is not an event or cause too big or small for him to support. He worked to establish a human rights commission in Putnam, and while that was not successful, he has been undaunted to make sure that the rights of everyone in Putnam were supported and addressed.

Jim bridges the partisan gap and works in the best interest of the community. Jim is ever the optimist and truly the hardest working man I know. On the Supreme Court, I know Jim will be a fair judge and he will continue to be a pillar of our community for years to come.

**Zach Disador
Southeast**

Letters to the Editor

Contested Elections Are Needed to Truly Hold Officeholders Accountable

Give voters a choice! The two-party system depends on contested elections. If you live in the Town of North Castle, you will have only one choice for town supervisor this year: Democrat Mike Schiliro.

Make no mistake. I am not taking issue with Mr. Schiliro, who happens to be a popular public official who learned well how to be a successful politician from his brother, who served in the Obama administration – so popular that it is unlikely any opponent at this time could unseat him. I am not yearning

for his defeat. My point is that both political parties owe the voters a choice, no matter how popular the incumbent. By both political parties picking and choosing the races they make results in bipartisan cronyism. Party leaders are shortchanging the democratic process.

Any incumbent, no matter how tenured or how formidable, should be accountable on Election Day. The only way to do that is for the opposing party to field a candidate who will make the incumbent justify his or her

records. Any other form of challenge, from the press to dissatisfied constituents, holds no substance if voters can't act on it at the polls.

Ironically, Mr. Schiliro is a case in point. He is part of a reform group that, not long ago, seemed to have little chance at cracking North Castle's vaunted Republican machine. Yet he and other reform candidates persisted in their challenge, and today they claim a loyal constituency of their own. Even so, it is Mr. Schiliro's turn to defend his record and

win continued voter support – or at least it should be.

Mr. Schiliro is a tough challenge for any Republican, but political grips can be broken, as Mr. Schiliro has proven in North Castle. How discouraging it must be for North Castle residents when the loyal opposition becomes no opposition at all.

Anthony J. Futia, Jr.
North White Plains

Yorktown Chamber of Commerce Should Be Ashamed of Itself

I attended the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce Fall Festival on Oct. 10, which is normally filled with family fun and good cheer for our local businesses and residents. However, this time I noticed a table that was different. It didn't seem to be a local business, but more of an unknown t-shirt seller with just one phrase on the array of brightly colored shirts. Every shirt said "Let's Go, Brandon."

I found this to be puzzling, and so later, I thought to look up the phrase online. The phrase came from an Oct. 2 NASCAR race at the Talladega Superspeedway, where a

racer named Brandon Brown had won. A sportscaster by the name of Kelli Stavast thought the crowd was yelling, "Let's Go, Brandon." But in fact, the crowd was actually yelling "F--- Joe Biden."

And so now this phrase has a double or "secret" meaning when spoken or printed on something. Basically, yelling "Let's Go, Brandon," or by adding this phrase to a shirt, a person really means it's inappropriate and derogatory counterpart.

So, why was this a booth at our family-friendly Yorktown Chamber of Commerce event? The chamber

cannot say it didn't know; this booth was within crawling distance of their main center console and directly across from the main stage. So it's pretty clear that the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce knew what this meant and allowed this booth to be prominent on purpose.

Look further and you'll see Sergio Esposito is the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce president and he's running for a seat on the Town Board. And what party line is he running on? Yep, Republican. He absolutely knows what this new phrase means. And he knows it's "fun" and snarky and sneaky and

bold to have this booth front and center for everyone to see but not really know what it means.

This is wrong on so many levels. If this booth was at a flea market somewhere, fine. Sure, it's pathetic, but you just walk by and turn the other cheek. But this is our yearly bring-the-kids Fall Festival that draws thousands from all over in our beautiful town square! This is unacceptable, uncouth, crude and NOT family friendly!

But there is another problem: Mr. Esposito wants to be town councilmember, too, which is supposed to be someone that works

for all of us as a public servant. He's already supposed to be our nonpartisan chamber of commerce president, but he has clearly failed at that. And he certainly does NOT deserve to work for you on our town council.

Vote for someone who will work hard for all of us fairly and honestly. Vote for Ilan Gilbert for town council in early voting or on Nov. 2.

Jennie Sunshine
Yorktown Heights

Lucchino Would Be a Dedicated Public Servant for Southeast

I am writing this letter as a longtime resident and as a concerned citizen. I am deeply troubled by the current affairs both locally and nationally, and thus the reason behind my writing.

As someone who grew up with a single parent working three jobs, I know firsthand how important it is to have town leadership work hard for you. During those years, my district was represented by fair and honest community members with a shared belief that laws mattered, doing the right thing was always "right," neighbors looked out for one another and we could agree to disagree. There was leadership and accountability.

Unfortunately, I feel this is no longer the case in the Town of Southeast. This is why the upcoming election is so important to me, and to any other community member, who is as deeply concerned as I am about the complacency of the elected officials currently serving on the town council. Moreover, this is why I am asking all residents of Southeast to get out and vote for Carla Lucchino on the My Vote Counts line. Her line has the ☐ (check mark) symbolizing the importance of your vote.

Our town needs new councilmembers like Carla, who has a strategic plan for improvement that will benefit all of us. Carla shares our concerns about the rising taxes that homeowners face with no solution in sight. It is obvious by the growth in the real estate market that many of our long-term residents can no longer afford to live here. I see this as a big problem in a small town like ours. Proximity to extended family members, along with a sense of community,

is what historically made our community desirable.

Carla is aware of the dogma that exists in the current Town Code. This serves as a disincentive to business owners looking to do business in Southeast. With balance and a more business-friendly code, the businesses that we want to attract will want to make Southeast their home. They will generate non-property tax revenue, which provides a relief to all of us, and allows our seniors to stay in their homes. Carla travels the local roads like the rest of us and experiences firsthand the potholes and deteriorating infrastructure.

Carla has a plan for rebuilding our town that will include a better quality of life for all of us to enjoy, which can only come from accountable elected officials. I have witnessed her energy, passion and commitment to our community. Carla is determined to work hard and ask the difficult questions on our behalf.

As a proud American, I will be casting my ballot for Carla as testimony to my endorsement of her on Election Day. I know that MY VOTE COUNTS. If what happens locally matters as much to you, please exercise your right to have a voice and support Carla Lucchino, who is guaranteed to work for us as evidenced by her years of experience in government public service and local volunteer work.

Stella Malbec
Brewster

Schiliro, DiGiacinto, Reiter Have Been Impressive Stewards for No. Castle

North Castle Supervisor Michael Schiliro, Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto and Councilman Barry Reiter have served our town with dedication, integrity and diligence, thoughtfully attending to the complicated process of running a town government.

The accomplishments during their time in office are many. They include a comprehensive road repaving program, stopping Connecticut's proposed toll on Interstate 684 and renovating the North White Plains Community Center with showers and a generator to be used as a shelter when needed. They have acted on their commitment to town recreation with improvements to our parks, negotiated the running of the town pool and added new bathrooms to Community Park. Armonk Square has added vitality to our town center giving our community a place to gather and shop.

We believe several of their most important accomplishments require special notice. They helped build our general fund balance to more than \$12 million and restored the town's AAA Moody's bond rating.

These many things and more were achieved in an environment of civility and respect. In an age of divisiveness among our government leadership, Michael, Barbara and Barry foster an environment where common ground is found, disagreements discussed and opposing viewpoints shared without hostility.

Supervisor Michael Schiliro and board members Barbara DiGiacinto and Barry Reiter have proven themselves selfless stewards of the Town of North Castle and have our vote on Nov. 2.

Karl and Jeanne Hinrichs
Armonk

Esposito's Chamber Leadership Would Serve Yorktown Town Board Well

I want to commend and congratulate Sergio Esposito and the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce on another successful Street Fair, especially in light of the continued pandemic fears and the inclement weather.

Its success, however, comes as no surprise given the leadership and hard work of Yorktown Chamber President Sergio Esposito. I have known Sergio for a number of years and have witnessed his energy and steadfast dedication to the Yorktown community.

I sincerely believe that Sergio will be a great addition to the Town Board. Sergio, with his years of business experience, together with his energy and dedication to the community, will be the much-needed positive transformative energy so desperately needed in these challenging times.

Mary Capoccia
Yorktown Heights

Letters to the Editor

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**Stella Malbec
Brewster**

Esposito's Ideas, Energy and Leadership is What Yorktown Needs

Yorktown needs Sergio Esposito!

As a small business owner and resident, I have seen politicians come and go but I have never seen a candidate as qualified and as dedicated as Sergio Esposito. Sergio genuinely cares for Yorktown and genuinely cares and listens to your concerns.

I have had many dealings with Sergio and all of them have been pleasant, informative and extremely productive. As the owner of Sunrise Carpentry, I often share some of my ideas for Yorktown and how we could get real revitalization going. Sergio always listens!

Through his many hours of dedicated volunteer work at the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce, Sergio has developed a close and personal relationship with many business owners. He has also helped promote the town and businesses in an unprecedented

way. He has excelled as president of the chamber, and I would say, without question, that he is the best president I have ever seen.

Sergio is the right man for the job. He is a leader that does not shy from making decisions, his bipartisan nature is commendable, his drive to see Yorktown succeed is unquestionable and his knowledge of town issues is astonishing. He is ready to serve and get started on Day 1.

Vote for new ideas, new energy and new leadership. Vote for Sergio Esposito.

**Brian Goc
Sunrise Carpentry
Yorktown**

Cortlandt Justice Touts Record on First Term on Bench

Four years ago, the voters chose me to be the first female town justice in Cortlandt's history. My platform then: Use my legal experience, including 10 years as an assistant district attorney in the Bronx and specialized training in vehicular crimes and violent felony offenses, to modernize our local justice system and to treat everyone fairly and with respect.

Over the last four years I've fulfilled that promise, which is why I'm asking for your vote.

In addition to ruling fairly and impartially on the matters before me, I've worked to bring the court into the 21st century. When I took office in 2017, there was no way to pay traffic tickets by phone or online and no interpreters available for criminal defendants arraigned at night. Working with my co-judge, we made it possible to pay traffic tickets by phone and online and ensured that interpreters would be available for arraignments 24/7 via phone.

I didn't know that these changes would help us to navigate a global pandemic! But thanks to the hard work we'd put in before COVID-19 struck, I was at the forefront of efforts to safely conduct court business and served as acting justice for other local courts until they were approved for local proceedings.

I was called upon to train other judges in the use of technology. I have instituted procedures today to allow the court to safely

serve our community while minimizing health risks. Court has been safely held in person with potential virtual appearances options for those that need it. In addition, I serve as an "accessible magistrate," having volunteered to receive specialized training to handle youth cases and to be on call for nights and weekends as needed for youth cases throughout the county.

I have been honored to be endorsed by many organizations, including the Westchester Putnam Central Labor Body AFL-CIO; the Westchester Putnam Building & Trades; Westchester County Police Benevolent Association; the Affiliated Police Associations of Westchester; Hudson Valley Stonewall Democrats; the Cortlandt Democratic Committee; the Working Families Party; and Vote Mama, among others.

I love our community of Cortlandt and it is home for me, my husband, and our two daughters. I would be honored to continue working on your behalf as Cortlandt's town justice and respectfully request your vote to allow me to do so.

You can learn more about me at www.kimberlyragazzo.com or @[judgekimberlyragazzo](https://www.facebook.com/judgekimberlyragazzo) (Facebook/Instagram).

**Judge Kimberly Ragazzo
Cortlandt**

Democrats 4 New Castle Provide Chance for Positive Change in Chappaqua

Here we are in October, cooler temperatures, changing leaves and campaign signs sprouting like flowers in yards and at intersections. There is little disagreement that the downtown Chappaqua hamlet is not doing well. Since I arrived in Chappaqua, I have seen a diner, a bank, a sporting goods store, a drug store, two restaurants and two ice cream shops all fail or leave.

There are two groups running for Town Board, one supports moving forward with a limited version of the initial proposed Form Based Code. The other has pledged to stop it at all costs.

For me, this choice is personal. I feel lucky and blessed to be a resident of Chappaqua. Growing up, never in my dreams did I think I would have the means to afford to live in a community like this. I was a kid on the free lunch program at school. In the late 1970s and '80s, my parents did not make enough money to be able to pay the 75 cents to \$1.25 that school lunch cost when I was in middle school and high school. We had cars that barely ran, that we fixed in our driveway. We received the free cheese and peanut butter

that was handed out then as well.

So, when a group running for office has vowed to stop a plan that supports affordable housing, they are running a campaign to prevent a family like mine from trying to come here. Running against opportunity for poor kids to do better in a town with great schools.

It is in the message, and the campaign calls, camouflaged in the words like "bucolic." There are no fields of crops, no animal husbandry in Chappaqua. Their message is one of fear. The code is a zoning change not a development plan or specific project and would still require a rigorous review process and town approval of any proposed construction.

Please join with me and vote for Democrats 4 New Castle – McCall, Morton, Weinberg and Bounds. Embrace the opportunity and renewal that change can bring.

**Ashley C. Rose
Chappaqua**

A Vote for Bipartisanship in North Castle

I strongly support the bipartisan re-election of Mike Schiliro (D) for supervisor and Barbara DiGiacinto (R) and Barry Reiter (D) for North Castle Town Board. These three candidates are a breath of fresh air in comparison to the divisive state and federal political climate. After a period of political upheaval in 2012 and 2013 in North Castle, the past few years have been marked by calm and thoughtful leadership that has helped make our town an even better place to live. As a resident for more than 30 years,

I feel that this team has provided outstanding leadership.

In local elections political party affiliation is not important. I urge all North Castle voters to keep these committed public servants in office and vote Schiliro, DiGiacinto and Reiter on Election Day, Nov. 2.

**Mari-Anne Baumann
North Castle**

Mt. Kisco Celebrates Opening of Expanded, Modernized Firehouse

By Martin Wilbur

Four years after voters approved the first of two propositions to expand and upgrade Mount Kisco's three firehouses, village and fire department officials gathered last Sunday morning to celebrate the modernized Green Street facility.

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which was held before the department's open house, commissioners and firefighters as well as Mayor Gina Picinich recognized taxpayers who agreed to open their wallets twice to get the job done.

"So the construction and rehabilitation of this firehouse is an example of the people of our community saying thank you, thank you and we want to ensure that you are in a safe environment," Picinich. "We want to ensure that you can continue to do the job that you do at such extraordinary levels."

The expanded firehouse, home to the Union Hook & Ladder Company and the Rescue Fire Police, contains an additional bay, room for training and a Decon room where firefighters go to clean themselves and their equipment upon returning from a blaze for protection against carcinogens.

In addition, the building is now ADA compliant, said Chief John Hochstein.

"Definitely a great upgrade," Hochstein said. "Something that was in the works for awhile and we're really happy it came through."

The public approved an original \$10.25



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

The four commissioners from the Mount Kisco Fire Department stand with Mayor Gina Picinich and Village Manager Ed Brancati at the ribbon-cutting of the expanded Green Street firehouse.

million referendum in November 2017 to upgrade the Green Street, Lexington Avenue and Main Street firehouses, but by early 2019, after the project initially went out to bid, it was revealed that the architect and engineering company had

miscalculated the square footage and the price.

As a result, the department had to exclude portions of the project and ask voters for an additional \$4 million in 2019.

Former mayor Michael Cindrich said

while he was still in office it was realized that the village needed to improve the facilities to make the volunteer firefighters' jobs a easier as well as safer. He said he was proud of what was accomplished.

"I guess we would say that perseverance is the key word for this project," Cindrich said.

The final price tag for the Green Street firehouse came in on budget at between \$4.7 and \$4.8 million, said Village Manager Ed Brancati.

While the work was being done, the ladder company and the Rescue Fire Police were housed at the village's DPW yard, he said.

The village is expected to go out to bid for the work on the other two houses this winter, Brancati said. It is expected that the village will commence work once the winter ends and it should be completed by the end of 2022, he said.

Similar to the Union Hook & Ladder, personnel from one of the two firehouses that has the construction work will also use the DPW yard as their home base, Brancati said. The other company will share space at Green Street until their facility is ready.

Commissioner Frank Randazzo said the project was a bit of an ordeal but the job, at least at Green Street, is done.

"Most of the thanks goes out to the community because you had to vote on this thing two times," he said. "When you said yes, we felt great and we appreciate that."



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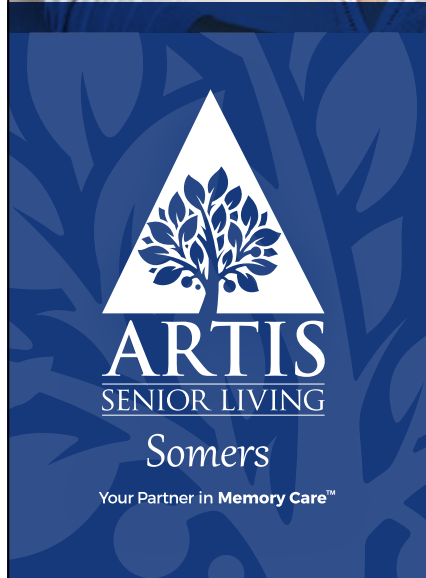
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Yorktown Stage Receives \$100G in State Funding for New Seating

State Sen. Peter Harkham (D-Lewisboro) announced recently that \$100,000 in state funding has been awarded to the Town of Yorktown to replace the seating in the Albert A. Capellini Community and Cultural Center, the town-owned building that houses the Yorktown Stage.

The theater is a year-round hub for arts and cultural events in the community.

Harkham made the announcement on stage prior to the opening night of “Halloween Horror Cabaret,” where he was joined by Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater, councilmen Ed Lachterman and Vishnu Patel, Yorktown Arts & Culture Committee member Bruce Apar, Yorktown Stage Producing Director Barry Liebman and Yorktown Stage Artistic

Director August Abatecola.

“It is important that we support local cultural organizations like Yorktown Stage, which offer opportunities to young people and bring the community together in so many ways,” said Harkham. “I am happy to have secured this important investment for Yorktown from the state, which will also alleviate some of the financial burden on the town’s taxpayers.”

“Yorktown is blessed to have a theater that provides great cultural experiences for our residents and visitors,” said Slater. “It is time for us to reinvest in this gem, and it wouldn’t be possible without Sen. Harkham’s support.”

The awarded funding, which Harkham



State Sen. Peter Harkham presented Yorktown Stage and town officials with a \$100,000 check for new seating at the venue.

secured within the State and Municipal Facilities Program (SAM), will help Yorktown pay for the replacement of the theater seats, which are original to the building and in need of an upgrade.

Besides housing the theater for Yorktown Stage, the Community Center is home to the town’s senior center and a pre-school. The building, donated to the town decades ago, formerly belonged to the Yorktown School District and was named in honor of Capellini, a former town supervisor, in 2018.

Additionally, the state funding will help for the installation of a concession stand so light refreshments can be offered to audience members. The idea is to create a better flow

into the theater from the lobby as well.

Now in its 21st year, Yorktown Stage is funded solely by its own programs. Each year it mounts a number of different productions, including theater, dance, cabarets, children’s shows and musical concerts. Over the years, Yorktown Stage has helped support local restaurants and small businesses as well

“We are so happy that Sen. Harkham has made it possible for Yorktown Stage to receive this crucial funding,” said Liebman. “The seating in the theater is in desperate need of replacement, and it is gratifying to see everyone working together to benefit this community.”

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Q: What is cardiac rehab?
A: Cardiac rehabilitation is a medically-supervised, individualized program of exercise and education that helps you recover faster from heart disease and acquire the strength to resume a full life. Northern Westchester Hospital’s Outpatient Cardiac Rehabilitation Program requires a physician’s prescription, and besides the core training component, includes counseling in nutrition, stress management and meditation, as well as education in heart disease prevention.

Q: Am I a candidate?
A: You’re a candidate if you’ve suffered a cardiovascular event such as heart attack, bypass surgery, angina, heart valve repair or replacement, myocardial infarction, heart transplantation, coronary stenting or heart failure.

Q: What are the benefits?
A: Perhaps surprisingly, a key benefit of cardiac rehabilitation is restored confidence. That emotion has as much impact as do medical issues on a person’s ability to resume an active, rewarding life. Some patients are initially afraid to do anything. A pain in the chest area makes them terrified that another cardiac event is happening. They’re afraid to work, to drive, to leave the area where their doctors practice. These fears typically

go away after cardiac rehabilitation – indeed, even during rehabilitation, as patients see undeniable evidence of their gains in strength and stamina. Activities like walking uphill on the treadmill, riding the bike, or using the rowing machine gives them great confidence.

Q: What happens when you enter NWH’s cardiac rehabilitation program?
A: A personalized exercise regimen is designed based on your health history and your physical condition. You’ll have up to 36 training sessions, depending upon your insurance, during which you receive continuous EKG monitoring and close supervision by physician and exercise physiologists. We’re watching your heart rate and cardiac rhythm the whole time. Your blood pressure is taken before, during and after exercise. Starting off at 30 minutes, you’ll work up to between 42 minutes and an hour of training, with weight training added when appropriate.

Q: How do I choose a cardiac rehabilitation program?
A: Look for accreditation, convenient scheduling, insurance coverage, and the expertise and experience of staff. Whether you’ve had a heart attack, coronary bypass or other cardiac event, you are basically getting a second chance after your cardiac event. It’s wise to take advantage of all the benefits of cardiac rehabilitation.

Survivor of Two Pandemics, Woman Celebrates 103rd Birthday

By Abby Luby

Angelina Friedman just turned 103 and because she is a big New York Jets fan, the centenarian was honored with a special visit by former Jets stars Freeman McNeil and Wesley Walker.

Walker and McNeil joined Friedman last Thursday to celebrate the big day along with about 50 friends, residents and health care workers at North Westchester Restorative Therapy & Nursing Center in Mohegan Lake where she is a long-term resident. The main room was festooned with balloons, Jets flags and a large birthday cake.

To say that Friedman is a survivor is an understatement. Her mother died giving birth to her on a ship crossing the Atlantic Ocean from Italy, although her mother may have contracted the Spanish Flu of 1918, according to Friedman's daughter, Joanne Merolo, of Mohegan Lake.

"My mom's two young sisters were also on the ship and they were joining their father who emigrated from Italy to the U.S. to work as a stone mason," Merolo said.

Friedman overcame breast cancer in 1979 and during the past year-and-half twice survived COVID-19.

Friedman was thrilled to see the two former Jets players, and even though she has difficult hearing, she sang out "Thank



ABBY LUBY PHOTO

Angelina Friedman was joined last week for her 103rd birthday at North Westchester Restorative Therapy & Nursing Center in Mohegan Lake by former New York Jets Wesley Walker and Freeman McNeill.

you! Thank you!"

Merolo said her mother was always a character – in the most complimentary

way.

"And she still is. As a teen my friends felt comfortable hanging out at her house

in the Bronx on Mosholu Parkway because they felt safe with my mom," she said.

When Friedman got sick in 2012, Merolo took to Facebook, suddenly hearing from old friends.

"People I hadn't heard from for 40 years were climbing out of the woodwork asking all about my mom," Merolo said. "They never forgot her."

Merolo recalled her 18th birthday when "one of my friends got wasted and fell asleep on my mother's lap. My mom didn't move for hours."

Friedman would also show up at an after-hours club at 2 a.m. and dance.

"She just wanted to be around us, have fun, but really she was making sure we were alright," Merolo said.

At her birthday celebration, with Walker and McNeil standing behind her for a photo op, Walker looked at Friedman and said "You're 103. That's a milestone."

"Freeman and I have been helping the elderly in their communities for years," said Walker, a former Jets wide receiver. "As we age ourselves and as athletes dealing with head trauma and other health issues, we can relate and we want to help."

"Helping senior citizens, showing compassion and sharing our experiences means a lot to them and to us," McNeil added.

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- Supported our community's first responders, especially through the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Passed nonpartisan solutions to longstanding issues ranging from roadway safety to affordable senior housing and parks preservation.

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Kensico Cemetery to Host Halloween 5K for Alzheimer’s Association

Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla will hold its annual 5K Run/Walk to benefit the Alzheimer’s Association this Sunday, Oct. 31.

“After a tough year that impacted so many people on so many levels, we are delighted that we can host this event for in-person participation, and once again, raise money for the Alzheimer’s Association Hudson Valley Chapter,” said Kensico Cemetery President Matthew G. Parisi. “It will be great to welcome back to Kensico Cemetery our neighbors, our sponsors, our community on – hopefully – a beautiful Sunday morning.”

The event will include features that became popular in past years, along with some new ones.

“We’ll have all the wonderful hospitality features people have come to expect at the Kensico 5K Run/Walk, including the catered breakfast and the incredible raffle prizes,” said Judy Mitchell, public relations consultant for the cemetery. “This year, we’ve added a couple of ‘Welcome Back’ surprises, but you have to come to the event to find out what they are.”

Runners and walkers are welcome to attend, and dogs on leashes are also welcome. Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, soups, muffins, juices and fruit will be provided before the Run/Walk as participants enter raffles, don their commemorative T-shirts and runners attach their timer bibs.

After some brief welcome remarks and a short warm-up exercise with Volunteer Coordinator Jocelyn Roberts, participants will move to the 9:15 a.m. start line, and the 5K through the grounds of Kensico Cemetery will begin.

The 3.1-mile route starts just above Mineola Lake, goes up Seneca Avenue, then up, down and around avenues of trees, circling Minnewaska, past Franklin Montross, Jr., Pond and crossing the Finish Line back at Mineola Lake. Walkers have two options: To follow the 3.1-mile runner’s course, or take a 1.7-mile shorter route, which starts at the same Start Line, goes up Seneca Avenue to the tower and back down on Tecumseh to the lake. There will be route maps available and staff will be available to provide directions.

Following the Run/Walk, participants are invited to gather at the Event Building, where a full breakfast from Fox Catering will be set up, including egg roll-ups and cookies. Awards will be presented to the top three female and top three male runners, and raffle winners will be announced.

The cost to participate is \$50 for adults, which includes \$10 in raffle tickets, and \$15 for children 12 and under. Participants can register online and make an additional donation at that time or during the event.

The 5K was canceled last year due to COVID-19, although the cemetery still sought donations for the organization, raising more than \$41,000.

The relationship between the nonprofit and the cemetery began six years ago, when the Kensico staff were looking for an organization to utilize their historic and beautifully landscaped grounds.

“Our thought was that we wanted to open up our property to a charity so that they could conduct a fundraiser on our grounds. We reached out to the Alzheimer’s Association, since their

mission aligned with ours, with us both being in the memory business,” Mitchell said.

He said the partnership was unprecedented for both parties.

“This was a first for Kensico, and I think it was a first for the Alzheimer’s Association,” Mitchell said. “In our 150-year history, we had never opened to be used in this way. We wanted to do it in a way that reflected our ideas about hospitality. We opted for a hot catered breakfast to offer everyone along with the raffles. We wanted to distinguish ourself in how we conducted an event to be how we conducted our business.”

Money raised by the 5K will go to The Longest Day, an Alzheimer’s Association fundraiser that encourages participants to create their own events to raise money. The event is named in honor of the long days spent by dementia caregivers caring for their loved ones. Efforts are celebrated on the Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year. Learn more about The Longest Day at alz.org/tld.

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The Peanuts Gang Coming to Chappaqua Performing Arts Center

By Martin Wilbur

A professional production of "A Charlie Brown Christmas: Live on Stage" at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center starting in early December could jumpstart an array of future performances at the venue.

Gershwin Entertainment, which presents on-stage productions throughout the United States and Canada, is bringing the family holiday favorite to Chappaqua for 18 performances from Dec. 3 through Dec. 19 featuring the entire Peanuts gang.

Todd Gershwin, the producer of the show, said as a Westchester resident for the last 15 years, he longed to find a regular location to bring productions to local audiences and is confident he has found what he was searching for.

"I have always been looking for a home in Westchester in terms of theater and what I produce," said Gershwin, who lives in Rye. "Obviously, I found the perfect venue."

He was introduced to the theater by a friend, John Fanelli, who has served as in-house general manager at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center and is the founder of Lighthouse Youth Theatre. Fanelli put him in contact with the Town of New Castle, which now owns and operates the 425-seat center on the Chappaqua Crossing property, and Councilwoman Lisa Katz. An agreement was officially reached and made public earlier this month.

Gershwin said it was everything he had been looking for in a Westchester venue.



GERSHWIN ENTERTAINMENT PHOTO

Gershwin Entertainment's "A Charlie Brown Christmas: Live on Stage" is coming to the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center this holiday season. It could be the first of exciting opportunities for the 425-seat theater on the grounds of Chappaqua Crossing.

"The first time I got there I was amazed in a wonderful way how intimate and beautiful it is and how it's right in the middle of the county," he said.

A cast of 11 actors and musicians will be part of 'A Charlie Brown Christmas.' Gershwin hired a jazz trio, which is somewhat unusual for a family production, and they are dressed as three of the Peanuts characters, including Schroeder at the piano.

All of the performers are based in New York City who have extensive credits to their name, Gershwin said.

He's planning on bringing another

production to Chappaqua, "Million Dollar Quartet," early next year along with possibly other productions. Gershwin hopes to draw on the entire county and the lower Hudson Valley.

"The location is great for so many people, there's plenty of parking, plenty of free parking, which is tremendous," he said. "Obviously, Chappaqua is a beautiful town, so I really hope it becomes a destination."

Katz, the Town Board's liaison to the town's Arts & Culture Committee, said the opportunity to work with Gershwin Entertainment presents an exciting opportunity for the town, including future

productions.

"I'm thrilled. Unfortunately, the world has been without theater for way too long this pandemic and it had so many negative implications," Katz said.

They may not be the only outfit to call Chappaqua Performing Arts Center home. Katz said the town is exploring the possibility of a reconstituted Westchester Broadway Theatre to have a permanent affiliation with ChappPac. Westchester Broadway Theatre dissolved last October after more than seven months of being shut down because of the pandemic.

Since the dinner-theater concept would not be feasible, Katz said collaboration with local restaurants to offer dinner and a show is being pursued.

"That to me is going to be a win-win for the community, too, because it will really enhance the use of restaurants and bring people to town," she said.

Performances of "A Charlie Brown Christmas: Live on Stage" will be held Thursday through Sunday from Dec. 3-19. There will be a 7 p.m. show on Thursdays and Fridays. There will also be two shows each Saturday and Sunday, except for Saturday, Dec. 18 when there will be three performances.

Tickets are \$25, with VIP packages available to take photos with the Peanuts characters and to receive merchandise. For tickets and a complete schedule, including show times, visit www.ticketmaster.com or www.chappaquapac.org.

JOE TORRES

FOR COUNTY LEGISLATOR

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Aiming for Eclectic Decor

Friends who know me are aware of my lifelong (well, at least my adult life) interest in antiques, which I have enjoyed since I furnished my first apartment when I moved to New York.

My first apartment, actually, started off with a Danish Modern sofa (with foam rubber cushions no less) and an accompanying multi-slat coffee table. It was pretty ugly stuff, but it was what I could afford at a showroom close-out sale when I set up my apartment in Brooklyn Heights.

Considering that I had just arrived from my former home in Colonial Williamsburg where I had attended the College of William & Mary, you might think that I would have veered to more traditional furnishings, but again, the Danish Modern close-out sale was all I could afford.

That was soon to change as I increased my salary and my desire for a bachelor's pad that would better represent my taste and hopefully impress my guests.

It all started with my meeting new friends with better taste than I, one being the fellow whose job it was to decorate the show windows at Saks Fifth Avenue. His apartment in Brooklyn Heights looked much like a museum with furnishings that were mostly reproductions of original 18th and 19th century pieces but they looked fabulous in a setting guided by his talent for

decorative touches.

As he improved his lot, so did I. As he would discard furnishings and décor for better quality pieces, I would purchase those items he was ready to discard. After more than 50 years, I still own a great tea table, which was my first purchase from him.

By the time my apartment was fully furnished, I was able to nicely impress my future wife Margaret when she visited me. She liked everything I had with the one exception of a sleigh bed. While to me it represented a cozy enclosure for sleep, to her a sleigh bed owned by a carefree bachelor

may have represented something quite different. While we were decorating our first apartment preparing for marriage, the sleigh bed was the first thing to go.

What Margaret brought to our home decorating was a certain practicality that aimed for comfort as well as beauty. A creaky turn-of-the-century settee was the next thing to go, replaced by a modern Lawson sofa that converted to a double bed, suitable for our first studio apartment.

At the same time, I continued my interest in antiques, while Margaret jumped on the bandwagon and soon was more involved in the pursuit than I. While we collected pieces of furniture and wall décor, we always kept in mind that we should select pieces that blended well with both modern and



BILL PRIMAVERA PHOTO

The living room of The Home Guru and the missus, combining both antiques and contemporary furnishings and décor.

traditional furnishings.

Today, I delight in having a visually pleasing home environment with antique and modern furnishings and décor. Our open great room, combining living room and dining room, has our antiques featured alongside a very comfortable Lawson sofa, a Chippendale reproduction settee from the Williamsburg collection from B. Altman of yore (oh, how I miss that store) and both antique and modern paintings adorning our walls.

The question that I sometimes ponder

is whether we have created this visually interesting, eclectic décor more for the pleasure of guests or ourselves. Both, I would say.

Bill Primavera is a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate and founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc., the longest running public relations agency in Westchester (www.PrimaveraPR.com), specializing in lifestyles, real estate and development. To engage the services of The Home Guru and his team to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.

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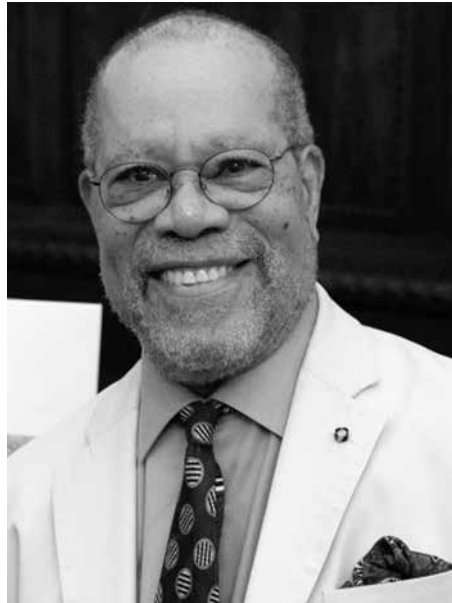
Jerry Pinkney

Jerry Pinkney, a well-known children's book illustrator and author and a resident of Croton-on-Hudson, died Oct. 20 of a heart attack. He was 81.

He was born Dec. 22, 1939, in Philadelphia. He is survived by his wife, Gloria Jean Pinkney, an author and ordained minister, four children (two of whom are book illustrators) and six grandchildren.

Pinkney illustrated more than 100 books since 1964, including picture books, nonfiction titles and novels. His works addressed diverse themes and were usually done in watercolors. He was widely honored, including winning several Coretta Scott King Awards. He illustrated notable Black Americans for the U.S. Postal Service for the first Black Heritage postage stamp series in 1977.

Pinkney also provided illustrations for publications by the National Park Service and National Geographic, both on the



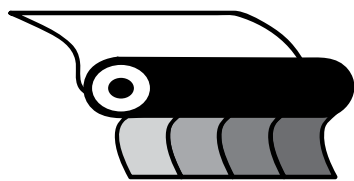
Jerry Pinkney

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Ernest Berger

Ernest E. Berger of Hawthorne and Chappaqua died on Oct. 12.

He was born in White Plains, the son of Ernest J. and Mary (Feldbusch) Berger. He was a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y. where he was a member of the Alpha Chi Rho Fraternity. While at RPI, he was in the Naval ROTC program and upon graduation he commissioned as a naval officer, serving in naval intelligence.

He was co-owner of Berger appliance in Hawthorne and specialized in kitchen design. Berger was a past member of the

Thornwood/Hawthorne Rotary Club.

He was kind, generous, hardworking and loving. He will be greatly missed.

He is survived by his sister, Barbara Berger; brother Bob Berger; two nieces; and one nephew.

A memorial service was held on Oct. 24 at First Congregational Church of Chappaqua.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758516, Topeka, Kan. 66675 would be appreciated.

Police Blotter

Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

Oct. 11: Report of a person cursing and yelling at customers for not wearing face masks at ShopRite on South Riverside Avenue at 11:11 a.m. The party was located inside the store and interviewed. The store manager was notified. No report filed.

Oct. 12: Patrol responded to ShopRite at 9:04 a.m. after a resident reported their property missing from inside the store. The caller thought someone may have taken their shopping carriage. Patrols canvassed the store and located the belongings in the frozen food section.

Oct. 13: A car stop was performed on southbound Route 9 at 1:17 a.m. Patrol took a 30-year-old Mohegan Lake man into custody for vehicle and traffic violations, DWI and reckless driving. The suspect was released on his own recognizance.

Oct. 14: Patrol responded to a commercial area of Maple Street at 3:20 p.m. for a male who was panhandling. The party was located at a bus stop on Maple Street and given a warning.

Oct. 15: Report of a group of disorderly juveniles being loud and obnoxious on Radnor Avenue at 8:58 p.m. The group was dispersed without incident.

Putnam County Sheriff's Department

Oct. 15: At about 4:10 a.m., a deputy responded to a home on Route 301 in Philipstown. An elderly male homeowner reported that he was unable to free his blind and deaf dog from a trapped position. The animal's head had become lodged in the legs of a wooden rocking horse after falling off a bed. The deputy freed the animal, determined that it was uninjured and helped the homeowner rearrange the room to prevent a repeat of the incident.

Oct. 18: Report of a larceny at a residence in Southeast. Deputies responded and spoke with two residents who reported that between Oct. 7 and Oct. 11m they noticed that the front door of the home appeared damaged. The residents

originally believed that the damage was caused by a storm; however, on Oct. 18, they noticed several personal items missing and realized that the front door had been pried open and the screen cut. No arrests were made.

Oct. 19: Report of a property damage automobile accident in the parking lot of JRS Pharmacy on Route 22 in Patterson at 4:12 p.m. The responding deputy observed two vehicles with minor damage.

Oct. 21: A deputy responded to Hudson Valley Hospital at about 5 p.m. on a report of a past domestic related assault. The deputy spoke with a 63-year-old female victim who had a black eye. It was determined that the black eye was caused by the victim's 64-year-old husband at their Putnam Valley home the previous evening when the husband punched his wife with a closed fist multiple times causing the victim to lose consciousness. The husband was arrested at his home at about 9 p.m. after an arrest warrant was issued.

Yorktown Police Department

Oct. 18: Jesus Gonzalez, 55, of Cortlandt, was charged with grand larceny, burglary and criminal mischief, all felonies, at 6:35 p.m. after allegedly unlawfully entering Curry Honda, causing damage in excess of \$1,500 to a doorframe and locks, and stealing multiple items from inside the business, valued at more than \$3,000. He was remanded to Westchester County Jail.

Oct. 18: Sokol Vuktilaj, 49, of Carmel, was charged with driving while intoxicated, criminal impersonation and other offenses following a motor vehicle accident on Route 6 at 8:42 p.m.

Oct. 20: Jonathan Martinez, 28, of Mount Vernon, was charged with aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle at 10:05 a.m. after being stopped on Route 6 in the area of Strawberry Road for changing lanes unsafely. A computer check revealed his driving privileges in New York State had been suspended for failing to answer a summons.

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Local Restaurants to Celebrate Mexico's Day of the Dead

Day of the Dead is a public holiday in Mexico on Nov. 1 and 2, when villages gather to commemorate family members who are deceased. There are costumes, parades and rituals, but it has no relation to Halloween. It is actually a derivative of All Saints' Day.

It's an especially festive time to visit your favorite south-of-the-border eatery and take part in the customs, traditions and good food. It often starts with a good margarita or shot of tequila.

Here are a few suggestions.

Cantina Taco

Owner, host and actor John Solo, of bustling Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar in White Plains, is offering a three-taco lunch for \$9.95, or you can choose one of their tasty quesadillas with steak, chicken or shrimp or a big burrito. A new street bowl is available with choice of protein for \$8.95. It might be a good time for one of their frozen drinks, too.

Cantina is a playful, colorful restaurant. A bright aqua pastel façade attracts along Mamaroneck Avenue. They serve a bouncy menu of reasonably priced south-of-the-border fare. Try the new birria or cheeseburger tacos and house specialties such as carnitas, chicken mole, garlic shrimp and steak fajita.

Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar is located at 166 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Open seven days. Happy hours. Info: 914-461-3959 or visit www.cantinany.com.

El Barrio

Chef and owner Sal Cucullo Jr. and partners have rebranded this vibrant eatery into El Barrio highlighting Mexican street food. There is indoor and outdoor seating.

There are knockout flavors and fine talent at work here, and a playful new design. Specialties at El Barrio ready for take-out, delivery and patio dining include Mexican street corn off the cob; calamares y camarones fritos (arbol aioli); traditional guacamole; wood-fired quesadillas; tacos and tostadas; the El Barrio Burger wrapped in a flour tortilla; and freshly-made south-of-the-border cocktails.

El Barrio is located at 185 Summerfield St. in Scarsdale. Info: 914-723-2600 or visit www.elbarriony.com.

Las Mananitas

This Mexican restaurant offers dramatic views of the East Branch Reservoir in Brewster and an outdoor patio for relaxing and picture taking. There are plenty of window seats and a dining area with a fireplace for comfort, too. They often have



By Morris Gut

mariachi bands, a DJ and dancing and drink specials at their big bar.

Look for kitchen specialties El Aguacate (avocado stuffed with crab meat and shrimp); carnitas, which are three soft pork tacos; sizzling fajitas; and sinaloa (jumbo shrimp wrapped in bacon stuffed with Manchego cheese.)

Las Mananitas is located at 1250 Route 22 in Brewster. There is ample free parking. Info: 845-279-4646 or visit

www.lasmananitasrestaurant.com.

Dining and Entertainment

Live entertainment is making a comeback. Here are a few current venues to check out.

Casa Rina

Casa Rina of Thornwood on Commerce Street is a 40-year-old throwback to the days when the Italian American kitchen reigned supreme. There are Sinatra photos on one wall with Marilyn Monroe pics highlight another.

Proprietor Tommy Stratis took over Casa Rina 20 years ago and has been doing his best to keep the creative juices flowing. The Italian classics include hot antipasto for two; manicotti; rigatoni with broccoli rabe and sausage; chicken scarpariello; a big zuppa di pesce; shrimp scampi; and, yes, veal saltimbocca.

Martinis & Meatballs at Casa Rina is held on Fridays from 7 to 11 p.m. It features \$6 martinis and unlimited complementary meatballs with a DJ to boot.

Casa Rina is located at 886 Commerce St. in Thornwood. Info: 914-769-4515 or visit www.casarinarestaurant.com.

Pete's Saloon

Since 1977, Pete's Saloon in Elmsford has been serving up a hearty tavern menu along with big doses of entertainment. There is Thursday Night Karaoke and a calendar of live band performances and even a trivia night.

New owner Anthony Bartolotta took over from retiring founder Peter Riekstins last year and has promised to continue the popular format. You can continue to enjoy your jumbo pretzels, pizzas and big angus burgers while taking in the ambiance.

Pete's Saloon is located at 8 W. Main St. in Elmsford (at routes 9A and 119). Some free parking is available. Info: 914-592-9849 or visit www.petessaloon.com.

Trattoria 632

This restaurant is just a short drive from SUNY Purchase and Manhattanville College. There is a separate pizza bar with tasty pies and the kitchen serves up



The intriguing dining room at El Barrio, a Mexican restaurant in Scarsdale.



Artwork at Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar in White Plains will help visitors celebrate next week's Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), a Mexican holiday.

hearty Italian food.

Check out house specialties like the fresh beet salad; squid ink pasta; classic veal, chicken or shrimp parmigiana; or the organic roasted chicken. Includes a bar and lounge with Happy Hours. Live entertainment and dancing Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Ample free parking.

Trattoria 632 is located at 632 Anderson Hill Rd. in Purchase. Info: 914-481-5811 or visit www.trattoria632.com.

Curry on Purdy

Westchester's newest Indian restaurant offers karaoke every Wednesday starting at 7 p.m. The vintage bar and lounge



There's music and delicious Italian fare at Casa Rina of Thornwood.

that dates back to the 1940s makes for a fascinating venue to visit.

Curry on Purdy offers a large selection of meat and vegetable curry dishes along with specialties from throughout regional India. There is a Purdy Special goat curry; classic chicken tandoori out of the clay pot; rack of lamb seared in the clay oven; saffron shrimp tikka and vegetable biryani. Don't forget the wonderful house-baked Indian breads like garlic nan or onion kulcha. A daily lunch buffet is offered.

Curry on Purdy is located at 7 Purdy St. in Harrison. Info: 914-600-8500 or visit www.curryonpurdy.com.

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

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continued on next page

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Delving Into the Term Organic: Is a Wine Label Conclusive?



By Nick Antonaccio

Readers of this column are becoming more aware, and therefore more focused, on diet and on the health aspects of the foods and wines we consume.

The government has stepped in to help us identify the ingredients, the nutritional components of those foods and whether the foods were produced organically.

Government regulations continue to fine-tune the definitions of terms allowed to be used on labels. Given these precise and unyielding definitions and regulations, primarily from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, an unintentional conundrum exists for producers. The most confusing and bewildering example of these government labeling requirements involves the term organic.

Over the past few weeks, we've explored the various terms used to describe wines made naturally. But what is organic? In its purest sense, organic products cause no damage to the environment, farm workers or consumers.

Trying to define this more finitely is difficult. We all want a clear understanding that if we purchase a product with an organic designation, this designation is

consistently applied across all products, regardless of whether the product is meat or fish, raw fruits and vegetables, processed foods or bottled wines. Government regulations provide the assurance that specific standards have been followed in the production, handling, processing, labeling and marketing of all organically produced products.

Here is the dilemma faced by wine purchasers. The USDA and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms have issued standards for the use of the term organic. If a producer complies with these standards, which must be certified by the government for each producer, the wine label may state it is organic, and consumers can be confident that the wine has been produced without chemical additives.

That's easy, right? If you want to purchase organic wines, just look at the wine label. If it doesn't state organic, then it's not.

As with all government regulations that attempt to help us, there is a rub. What about wine produced organically yet doesn't meet the narrow, precise definitions of the USDA? What about organic producers who choose not to follow or can't afford the lengthy, intense process of receiving an organic certification? What about wines produced organically outside the United States but don't conform to the USDA requirements? Are these wines not organic?

For example, if a producer administers no chemical fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides

in the vineyard, then uses no chemicals during the winemaking processing, isn't the end product organic? Not necessarily. If the winemaker adds sulfites (in natural form, not chemically derived) to the wine as a stabilizer and preservative, then by definition, the wine is not organic.

Another example: Many European artisanal winemakers farm their land and produce their wines in the pre-Industrial Age method of their forefathers, resulting in truly organic wines. However, if they don't comply with USDA regulations and do not receive an organic certification (which by definition may be difficult to achieve), they cannot label their wines organic.

For informational purposes, the government has established three categories by which wines may be designated as organic. If the definitions are met, the applicable term may be printed on a wine label. Unfortunately, while thwarting unscrupulous producers from improperly using organic terms, the regulations also discourage certain organic-conscious producers. The certification costs can be in the tens of thousands of dollars, the paperwork can be overwhelming for small producers and the approval process can take years.

Look for these designations on wine labels: "100% Organic" (comprised of all organic ingredients – grapes and processing – with no added sulfites); "Organic" (at least 95 percent organic ingredients with no added sulfites); "Made with Organic Grapes" (grapes must be organic; the wine

may contain a limited amount of chemically added sulfites.)

Beyond these regulated definitions, you now know there are many organic wines incognito on wine shop shelves. I encourage you to seek them out.

Next week I'll take you on the road to a California winery I visited recently. We'll delve into the dilemma the winemaker faces in attempting to produce and sell wines aligned with nature's intrinsic order.

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

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continued from previous page

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Watch for Some Distant Star Clusters in the November Sky

This time of year, change comes fast. With the leaves tangling themselves in our shoelaces, we all know that first snow is hiding just out of view.

Changes also come quickly to the nights. As the Zombies take to the streets on their endless hunt for fresh Milk Duds this weekend, let's take a minute in the early evening to spot one of the first signs of winter. In the east around 8 p.m., we can catch the group of stars called the Pleiades lingering above the rooftops. This early in their season, they always catch me a bit off guard, like a spider climbing a wall when you flip on the light. It's a bit of a shock for everyone involved.

Many of us are surprised that we can see deep-sky objects – things outside our solar system other than individual stars – with the naked eye. The Pleiades is one of the nearest star clusters to us, about 450 light years away. That's close as these things go, but far enough that the light we see now left during the Renaissance.

How many can you see? In Westchester's skies, five or six shouldn't cause too much trouble. Through binoculars, the view is remarkable, with hundreds of twinkling gems spilled across the night.

Then, just an hour behind the Pleiades, is another cluster: the Hyades. It's only about a third of the Pleiades' distance but, partly because it's so much closer, it appears much bigger, though it has fewer stars.

I always love the sight of these two as they climb the night. The Pleiades are blue and mellow, with a casual tiny dipper-shape (though not the famous Little Dipper). Meanwhile, the Hyades' V-shaped angles are severe and acute. As it rises, it's almost like a greater-than sign, comparing the left side of the sky to the right.

People have marveled at this pair for as long as there have been people to marvel at them. For ages, that hour-long gap

has been called the Golden Gate of the Ecliptic, named because the ecliptic – the path the solar system's objects appear to follow across the sky – crosses between them. As time goes by, we can even see the planets busily commute in and out through the gate. Unfortunately, none are near enough to it now, but we always have the moon.



By Scott Levine

Starting in November, when these stars join the easy part of the night, our nearest neighbor crosses through the gate once each month. If you have just one night this month to look up, make it Nov. 19. We'll see the full moon smack between the pair in a positively stunning line running toward the horizon. Then, month by month, we can keep an eye on the clusters, and see where the moon joins them. Each time, we'll watch them move westward relative to where they were last time, until they disappear in the still-glowing April dusk, changed into springtime stars. Each time the moon moves through, they'll be in a different place in the sky; each time in a different phase.

The pace is slow, but there are always changes happening in the skies. I hope you'll look this month and let me know how it goes. Clear skies!

Scott Levine (astroscott@yahoo.com) is an astronomy writer and speaker from Croton-on-Hudson. He is also a member of the Westchester Amateur Astronomers, who are dedicated to astronomy outreach in our area. For information about the club including membership, newsletters, upcoming meetings and lectures at Pace University and star parties at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, visit westchesterastronomers.org.

Clear Skies



New Moon
November 4



First Quarter
November 11



Full Moon
November 19



Last Quarter
November 27

November's phases of the moon chart.

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THERE'S A WORD FOR IT

A vocabulary-building quiz

By Edward Goralski

Fall Picking. Fall often means trips to go apple or pumpkin picking. This week the quiz features some words picked to help to increase your vocabulary. Unlike apple or pumpkin picking, there is no traveling involved with these picks.

1. instigate (v.)	A) to stir up	B) impart gradually	C) organize
2. appanage (n.)	A) a necessary accompaniment	B) ship's equipment	C) an unusual sight
3. esemplastic (adj.)	A) limited in scope	B) flexible	C) unifying
4. imbibe (v.)	A) to overlap	B) take in	C) mimic
5. flinders (n.)	A) deceptive nonsense	B) a casual try	C) small fragments
6. butyraceous (adj.)	A) offering little resistance	B) like butter	C) coldly reserved
7. quag (n.)	A) a marshy place	B) a question	C) an edible calm
8. jejune (adj.)	A) remote and unimportant	B) not interesting	C) hastily put together

ANSWERS:

1. A. To provoke or stir up; incite
2. A. A necessary accompaniment
3. C. Molding into one; unifying
4. B. To take in or assimilate (ideas, facts, etc.);
5. C. Small fragments or splinters
6. B. Of or like butter
7. A. A marshy or boggy place
8. B. Not interesting; dull; insipid

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- By working with the Putnam Prevention Council, Communities that Care, Drug Crisis in Our Back Yard, Arms Acres and Hope Not Handcuffs, opioid deaths have been reduced by 50% in Putnam County.
- Combatted auto theft and larcenies from vehicles by implementing task forces
- Partnering with the Women's Resource Center, domestic violence is down 74% according to NYSDCJS*
- Established Community Policing at the Department through community outreach, planned opportunities for citizen input and an active social media presence.
- According to the NYSDCJS,* crime is down 50%.

*New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services, as of 6/30/2021



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for Cortlandt's future.**

- Fiscal Responsibility
- Keep Cortlandt Green
- Smart Development

**VOTE ON DEMOCRATIC
OR WFP LINE**

**ELECTION DAY
TUES., NOV. 2**

**EARLY VOTING
OCT. 23-31**

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PAID FOR BY CORTLANDT 2021



VOTE VEDAT GASHI

FOR COUNTY LEGISLATOR

EARLY VOTING: OCT. 23 - OCT. 31
ELECTION DAY: TUESDAY, NOV. 2

Paid for by Gashi for Legislature



RE-ELECT JUDGE KIMBERLY RAGAZZO TOWN JUSTICE

Four years ago, the voters chose me to be the first female Town Justice in Cortlandt's history. My platform was simple: treat everyone with respect and use my legal experience – including a decade as an Assistant District Attorney in Bronx County with specialized training in vehicular crimes and violent felony offenses – to modernize our local justice. In addition to ruling fairly and impartially, I've worked to bring the Court into the 21st century. When I took office, you had to pay traffic tickets in person and interpreters were not available for criminal defendants arraigned at night. Now, traffic tickets can be paid by phone and online, and interpreters are available for arraignments 24/7. I love Cortlandt and it is home for me, my husband, and two daughters. I would be honored to continue working on your behalf as Cortlandt's Town Justice.

CORTLANDT
 2021
FORWARD

VOTE TUES, NOV. 2
EARLY VOTING - OCT. 23-31
 For more information, visit KimberlyRagazzo.com

PAID FOR BY COMMITTEE TO RE-ELECT JUDGE KIMBERLY RAGAZZO

ENDORSED BY



HUDSON VALLEY
STONEWALL
 DEMOCRATS



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Mahopac, NY 10541



Meet the Seniors

At the Southeast Seniors' October meeting held at Lakeview Manor in Brewster, representatives from the Office for Senior Resources addressed the audience regarding various senior programs, health and safety issues and resources available, including a question-and-answer period. The program was followed by refreshments prepared by volunteers.

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS



- **Proven Leadership**
- **Successful Putnam Valley Business Owner**
- **Smart Community Investment**
- **Accountability**
- **Open Communication**

STACEY TOMPKINS
FOR PUTNAM VALLEY TOWN BOARD

Vote for Positive Change on Nov. 2nd

WWW.PUTNAMVALLEYGOP.COM

Paid for by the Putnam Valley Republican Committee

SUNDAY
OCTOBER
31

HARVEST PARTY

puppet show
ukelele band
trunks of treats
candy & games

Sunday, October 31
1:00-3:00pm

FREE
outdoor
event for
kids

H FORGED IN FIRE
HISTORY

Live Demonstrations!
Forged in Fire TV Finalist:
Brian Evelich

Sponsored by:
Westchester Family Church

27 Radio Circle Drive - Mount Kisco
parking lot
www.westchesterfamilychurch.org



**THE CHELSEA
AT GREENBURGH**

*When they are safe you have peace of mind.
You want what is best for them. So do we.*



Assisted Living & Memory Care
Enhanced Care Compassionate Support

The Chelsea at Greenburgh has been a godsend for our family. This absolutely beautiful venue is such a welcoming haven for our mother and for our family each time we visit. We always wanted our loving mother to transition to a place that is welcoming, caring and safe. We found this at The Chelsea at Greenburgh. The amazing staff members are so supportive. Our mother thoroughly enjoys the variety of engaging events each day plus the social aspect. -Joan B

*Please call for information (914) 275-0010
715 Dobbs Ferry Rd. Greenburgh*

chelseaseniorliving.com

Colin Smith – Fighting for Us!



Paid for by Friends of Colin Smith

RE-ELECT County Legislator



Colin Smith

Cortlandt – Peekskill – Yorktown

- ✓ Passed the **Coronavirus Taxpayer Relief Act** to provide help on their local property tax bills for struggling homeowners .
- ✓ As Public Safety Committee Chair, he led the legislative review of the **Westchester Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force**, with input from advocates and police.
- ✓ Worked with the State and local governments to make sure there was **PPE and testing**, and worked to bring fresh food to hungry families at the height of the pandemic.
- ✓ Fighting to **expand affordable housing** for all, especially seniors, and protecting tenants and homeowners impacted by COVID.





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