



White Plains Unveils Final Segment of Greenway Walking Trail

By Bailey Hosfelt

White Plains officials opened the final section of the Jack Harrison Greenway walking trail during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Mamaroneck-Shapham Garage entrance last Tuesday afternoon.

The Greenway provides city residents with easy access to a tranquil walking path. Originally running from Gedney Way to the Scarsdale border in two segments, the newer portion of the Greenway runs from Gedney Way to the lower level of the Mamaroneck-Shapham Garage.

Now, residents and visitors alike can

enjoy just over a three-mile round trip walking trail in four segments.

"The completion of the Greenway walking trail has been a long-term goal for the city," White Plains Mayor Tom Roach said at the ceremony. "We are excited to add this final section of the trail to our city parks and open space inventory and to provide our residents with this new amenity."

The Department of Public Works, the government entity responsible for maintaining the Greenway, designed the trail and planted native trees and wildflowers along it. Expanding the Greenway from

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White Plains Mayor Tom Roach (center) led ribbon cutting of Greenway Walking Trail.

White Plains Investment Adviser Sentenced for Embezzlement

By Rick Pezzullo

A White Plains investment adviser was sentenced last week in federal court to 63 months in prison for fraud in connection with the embezzlement of more than \$640,000 for three clients.

Gregg Brie, 54, who previously pled guilty to one count of wire fraud, was also

ordered by U.S. District Judge Cathy Seibel to serve three years of supervised release and pay forfeiture and restitution in the amount of \$642,333.33.

According to court documents and information provided by Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Brie embezzled funds

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Anniversary of Chamberlain Death Marked in White Plains



A vigil was held Friday evening in White Plains to mark the 10-year anniversary of the shooting death by White Plains police officers of Mr. Kenneth Chamberlain Sr., an elderly veteran who had accidentally activated his medical alert device. The peaceful event was led by Westchester Coalition for Police Reform (WCPR) to also demand for police accountability and reforms that ensure public safety. "This annual event underscores our ongoing dedication to building a future in which the safety of all those who live, work, and visit our community is paramount. No one should ever have to fear that a call to law enforcement for help may end in violence, or even death," said WCPR convener, Julie Davis Carran.

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Fresh Start Initiative for Offenders Kicks Off in Westchester

By Rick Pezzullo

Fresh Start, a joint initiative of Westchester County Executive George Latimer and District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah, has officially served its first five individuals.

Through the program, the DA's Office identifies qualified first-time, non-violent criminal offenders and provides them an opportunity to avoid prosecution and the potential for a criminal record. The current Fresh Start pilot project serves the Greenburgh and White Plains communities.

"These are the things that collaboration across county government can do," Latimer said. "By working together, we can develop and implement new models, new programs, and new ways to improve people's lives. The end result of these kinds of efforts is safer communities, lower crime rates, and fewer people with lives saddled with criminal convictions."

To complete the program, people who would otherwise have to appear in court and go through the criminal justice process participate in a three-hour facilitated session, provided as an adjunct to the county's Treatment Alternatives for Safer

Communities (TASC).

"We are thrilled to expand our community-based diversion efforts for first-time, low-level offenders by offering an exciting and innovative program that starts with the simple idea that people deserve second chances, and incarceration is not always the answer," Rocah said. "Fresh Start breaks the destructive cycle of recidivism by focusing on rehabilitation instead of incarceration for certain types of crime."

Community Mental Health Commissioner Michael Orth added, "This is a big step in the effort to identify people who can early on be diverted from the criminal justice system. We know that a certain percentage of those who commit lower level criminal offenses, unless they participate in some type of intervention, can go on to commit more serious offenses. Fresh Start identifies those with lower level charges at the earliest possible opportunity, and works to redirect them away from potential criminal behavior. Today a small group of people made that big step for the first time in Westchester County."

While only serving two municipalities now, Fresh start is anticipated to go county-wide in the future.

White Plains Unveils Final Segment of Greenway Walking Trail

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Gedney Way to the Mamaroneck-Shapham Garage has been a priority for the Parks and Recreation Department, especially as the trail's popularity soared in recent years, with more residents enjoying the open space area.

"As with so many of our initiatives, this beautiful Greenway is the result of the can-do approach and hard work of our city staff, especially the Department of Public Works and the Recreation and Parks Department," Roach said.

To further enhance the visitor experience to the Greenway, Patrick Stanton, a junior at White Plains High School and Life Scout in Troop 73, which is chartered by American Legion Post 135, will be working with members of the National Art Honor Society at the high school to create a new map of the Greenway.

The new map will be installed in new

kiosks Stanton and fellow Troop 73 scouts built at the Mamaroneck-Shapham Garage and Gedney Way entrances.

By planning and leading the major service project, Stanton will be eligible to move from Life Scout to the Boy Scout of America's highest rank: Eagle Scout.

"I live right near the Greenway and have been running on it for years," Stanton said. "With the recent extension to the Shapham Garage, I knew there would be more new users of the trail, and I saw the opportunity to help them by developing a map that shows the entire trail and building a pair of kiosks to hold it."

Stanton will also be installing two historical markers along the Greenway, which will allow visitors to learn how the railway was used in the past.

"I know this will be there for a long time and will benefit the users," Stanton said. "And that feels great."

White Plains Investment Adviser Sentenced for Embezzlement

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from three victims, two of whom lived in his White Plains apartment complex. He advised his first victim, a disabled man on a fixed income and confined to a wheelchair, to buy shares in Alaska Air Group, Inc. Bank records show that this victim gave Brie more than \$480,000. Brie told his victim that he had opened accounts for him at a brokerage firm and that his stock had increased in value to approximately \$8 million. When the victim asked for his money, Brie told him that his accounts were frozen because the stockbrokers had done something "sketchy" in order to buy the shares at a lower price. When the victim attempted to contact the brokerage firm, Brie allegedly told him that he would "murder [him]" if the victim attempted to contact the firm again. Brie allegedly repeated this threat at least two more times, noting that he meant his threats to be taken "literally, not metaphorically."

According to written loan agreements drafted by Brie, the second victim made three loans to Brie in a total amount of approximately \$157,000 "for the purpose of producing and distributing a proprietary, composite unimold commode for use within indigent venues of the African nation of Uganda." The third victim loaned \$2,000 to Brie on Brie's representation that he was illiquid because he had put all of his cash into the unimold commode project.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's ("FBI") analysis of bank accounts controlled by Brie showed that he spent the money he obtained from his victims primarily on credit cards and a Mercedes Benz lease. The evidence showed that there was no brokerage account.

The prosecution of the case was handled by the office's White Plains Division. Assistant United States Attorneys James McMahon and Shiva Logarajah were in charge of the prosecution.

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Westchester Medical Center Now Serves as State Vaccination Clinic

New York State COVID-19 vaccination efforts for residents 12 years old and up transitioned from the County Center in White Plains to Westchester Medical Center last Friday.

Also, vaccination for children ages 5 to 11 is available at WMCHHealth's Maria Fareri Children's Hospital. Both the medical center and Maria Fareri are located at 100 Woods Rd. in Valhalla.

Vaccines for ages 12 and older will be administered in the Taylor Pavilion on the campus of Westchester Medical Center Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sundays 8 a.m. to noon. Appointments are necessary, which community members can schedule online at Am-I-Eligible.COVID19Vaccine.Health.NY.gov.

Westchester Medical Center will administer first and second doses of the Pfizer vaccine, Pfizer booster doses for those who are eligible and Johnson & Johnson vaccination and boosters. (Pfizer booster doses are available for eligible community members with completed Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccination series as well as the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 single-dose vaccine.)

Experts in pediatric medicine

are administering Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to children ages 5-11 at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital Monday through Friday from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Appointments are encouraged and parents and guardians can schedule an appointment online at Am-I-Eligible.COVID19Vaccine.Health.NY.gov. A parent or legal guardian must accompany all children and a child's proof of age is required.

In addition to COVID-19 vaccines for children and adults, Westchester Medical Center is offering the convenience of drive-thru influenza vaccines every Wednesday from 12 to 4:30 p.m. by appointment only. For those seeking an influenza vaccine, schedule an appointment at Westchester Medical Center's drive-thru testing and vaccination center by calling 914-202-4530.

New York State selected WMCHHealth to work with hundreds of hospitals, health care organizations, community associations and others to ensure the equitable and efficient distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Putnam, Dutchess, Ulster and Sullivan counties. To date, with WMCHHealth's oversight, more

than 2.5 million doses were distributed throughout the region.

WMCHHealth was also instrumental in the successful operation of state-run mass vaccination centers in Westchester, Rockland, Orange and Ulster counties. WMCHHealth workforce members helped construct the sites, manage public flow and administer over 530,000 vaccine doses across the four vaccination centers.

WMCHHealth was the clinical partner in the administration of more than 347,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses at the County Center. The state ended the County Center as a vaccination site last Thursday.

COVID Cases on the Rise

New York State reported that the statewide positivity rate of COVID-19 cases were above 3 percent for six consecutive days from last Tuesday, Nov. 16 through Sunday.

The seven-day rolling average, according to its COVID-19 tracker, was 3.8 percent. On Sunday, the statewide positivity rate stood at 3.6 percent.

On Monday afternoon, Westchester's COVID-19 dashboard showed that there are now 1,900 active cases in the



As of last Friday, Westchester Medical Center is now the New York State COVID-19 mass vaccination site in the county, providing first-time doses and boosters for residents 12 and up. Maria Fareri Children's Hospital is administering vaccines for children 5 to 11 years old.

county. In Westchester, on Sunday there were 156 new positive cases from 7,707 tests for a 2 percent rate. Westchester's seven-day average stood at 2.1 percent through Sunday.

The Mid Hudson Region, which includes Westchester and Putnam counties, had 3 percent of its tests come back positive on Sunday with a seven-day rolling average of 2.9 percent.

Meanwhile, Putnam County had a 2.7 percent rate on Sunday and 2.8 on the seven-day average.

The only counties in the state that had a lower seven-day average than Westchester were Rockland at 1.5 percent, each of the five boroughs of New York City, which registered from 1.3 to 1.9 percent, and Tompkins County in the Southern Tier at 1 percent.

— Martin Wilbur

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Bill Addressing Plight of Local Newspapers Introduced in Albany

By Abby Luby

Last week two identical bills were introduced in the state legislature in hopes of combatting the growing decline and disappearance of local newspapers.

The New York Local News Act was introduced in the state Senate and Assembly by Sen. Rachel May (D-Syracuse) and Assemblywoman Anna Kelles (D-Ithaca), respectively. The measure proposes support to local news outlets in New York through grants and partnerships with SUNY and CUNY campuses and local non-profit organizations.

It also would create a commission with an executive director and program officers to provide funding to support local news outlets.

"I look forward to see what kind of collaborative efforts can be established between colleges and universities and local news outlets," said state Sen. Shelley Mayer (D-Yonkers). "At the same time the very clear language in the bill is that a grant this commission provides does not include any government oversight over content. This bill is about the expertise at the college and university levels to partner with local news outlets."

The dramatic generational decline in local news has seen the closure of 25 percent of newspapers nationwide in the last 15 years. In the United States, more than 1,700 papers – 60 dailies and 1,700 weeklies – have gone under since 2004, according to a study conducted by Penny Abernathy, a professor at

the University of North Carolina's Hussman School of Journalism and Media.

Roughly half of the remaining 1,283 dailies and 5,829 weeklies are located in small and rural communities. The vast majority, about 5,500, have a circulation of less than 15,000.

The pandemic dealt a serious blow to newspapers through the U.S., shuttering papers mainly in small communities.

Currently in Westchester County there are nine newspapers and only one, The Journal News, publishes in print daily. According to Abernathy's study, New York, Illinois and Texas lost the most weeklies.

"I certainly believe in local newspapers because that's where folks find out what's happening in their communities," said Assemblywoman Sandy Galef (D-Ossining). "Local news covers sports, community activities and board meetings, all are so important. Keeping our local papers going is a must for democracy. We won't have a country if we don't have local news."

The Examiner reached out to Assemblyman Kevin Byrne (R-Mahopac) who did not return messages.

Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti (D-Pleasantville) said he was wary of how corporate media consolidates news to exclude much local news.

"I support this bill and the one caution is that we need to be careful about providing government resources because control follows money," Abinanti said. "Local media is like local roads – everybody uses the highways but those of us who use local roads

are very dependent on those local roads."

The legislation includes requirements for a metric to ensure editorial independence and effective evaluation.

Also co-sponsoring the bill is Assemblyman Chris Burdick (D-Bedford).

"Recognizing the severe financial plight the local press has suffered through the pandemic, I am pleased to co-sponsor this bill which goes to the heart of saving our local press," Burdick said. "A free, independent and robust press is a cornerstone of democracy."

Throughout the country, some smaller and alternative papers that have been able to remain open have shrunk and are almost unrecognizable.

Others, Abernathy's study cited, are merging with nearby publications signaling a rapid decline of news dedicated to local communities and creating an "evaporation of institutional knowledge and the loss of local jobs."

"Vigorous and dedicated local news sources help provide important information to residents while encouraging participation in community life," said state Sen. Peter Harckham (D-Lewisboro). "I fully support Sen. May's bill to establish a state commission on local news to ensure the continued



State Sen. Shelley Mayer is part of the contingent of Westchester legislators who are supporting the New York Local News Act, which aims to provide grants and partnerships to help local news outlets survive.

presence of these vital businesses around New York. Broad access to information is a unifying factor in that it cannot be undervalued, so efforts to maintain its role in our society should be advanced."

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, a former journalist, said local news is a vital resource in a community.

"I understand the importance of its survival during these challenging times," Stewart-Cousins said. "I commend Sen. Rachel May for her efforts, and I look forward to discussing it further with our majority conference when we return to session in January."

Nationally, there has been bipartisan support in Congress

for the Local Journalism Sustainability Act, which proposes a series of tax credits rather than direct grants to financially support local newspapers, digital publications and other local news organizations. The bill proposes a tax credit of up to \$250 for local newspaper subscribers or donors to a local nonprofit news organization; a five-year tax credit for local news organizations for each local reporter on their payroll; and a five-year tax credit that provides small businesses an incentive to advertise with local newspapers, radio and television stations.



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No. Castle to Create Tech Task Force to Improve Communications

By Martin Wilbur

The North Castle Town Board is likely to form a technology task force that will explore ways for officials to more effectively engage residents, respond to misinformation and bolster protection from cybersecurity threats.

Councilman Saleem Hussain, who works at IBM in Armonk, sparked the initiative among his board colleagues to create a five-member committee that would also look how the town uses technology as a communication channel and how it would measure success in the way it uses tech across town operations.

"We should also be clear that this task force is not about building something

from scratch," Hussain said. "We're using technology already and in many cutting-edge ways across the town. The website is a great example. We have so much information on the website, we need to be incrementing what we have and not thinking we're building."

Despite all that information that's available at the public's fingertips, there are still many residents who are unaware that some of their questions and concerns can be answered by using it more extensively, said Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto. Sending out short video to residents to remind them what can be found on the site could be highly valuable, she suggested.

Hussain mentioned that even if efforts entail making access to information easier,

that's a meaningful goal.

Supervisor Michael Schiliro said the board intends to have a public hearing on the matter at its lone meeting next month on Dec. 8 and hopefully create the task force and populate it the start of next year.

"The idea is to have an IT technology task force to study all things that we do in town, to improve upon what we currently do and I think it's a real good initiative that Saleem's bringing to us," he said.

North Castle Councilman Saleem Hussain has pushed for a technology task force to assess and improve communications with the public and how town operations use technology.



Putnam to Participate in Statewide Stop-DWI Thanksgiving Campaign

Putnam County Sheriff Robert L. Langley Jr., Town of Carmel Police Department Chief Anthony Hoffmann and Kent Police Department Chief Kevin Owens announced Monday that Putnam County police agencies and STOP-DWI coordinators will participate in special efforts to bring awareness to the dangers of impaired driving.

This Thanksgiving weekend, millions will hit the roads eager to spend time with family and friends. It's one of the busiest travel times of the year, and unfortunately more people on the roadways means the potential for more vehicle crashes.

In a combined effort to bring awareness to the dangers of impaired driving, prevent injuries and save lives, law enforcement officers across the state and STOP-DWI programs will be participating in special engagement efforts. The statewide STOP-DWI High Visibility Engagement Campaign starts on Wednesday and will end on Sunday, Nov. 28.

The campaign is one of many statewide initiatives promoted by STOP-DWI NY and the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee. It also targets Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day weekend, Halloween, the holiday

season, Super Bowl weekend and St. Patrick's Day.

Highly visible, highly publicized efforts like the STOP-DWI High Visibility Engagement Campaign aim to further reduce the incidence of drunk and impaired driving.

You can help to make a difference by Having a Sober Plan. Download the mobile app "Have a Plan" and you will always be able to find a safe ride home at www.stopdwi.org/mobileapp.

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Nov. 17: Report of a woman sleeping inside a car parked on private property on East Hyatt Avenue at 10:26 p.m. The car was reported to have been running for the last five hours. Officers were able to awaken the woman but she refused to open the car door to speak with officers. The Emergency Service Unit responded to gain entry to the vehicle and the woman was subsequently turned over to EMS for evaluation.

Nov. 18: An East Main Street merchant reported at 10:02 a.m. that the front door to the business was shattered overnight.

Nov. 18: A resident reported at 6:47 p.m. that her teen-age daughter had been assaulted a short time earlier as she sat on a bench near the Fox Senior Center. The youth reported that she was punched and had her hair pulled by two girls that she had a previous dispute with. The victim's mother also provided video of the incident that had been posted on social media. An investigation is continuing.

Nov. 19: Report of a possible domestic dispute in progress at a Barker Street residence at 6:54 p.m. Responding officers determined that the resident had been in a loud conversation on the phone and there was no domestic dispute at the apartment.

Kent Police Department

Nov. 14: Officers were dispatched to Hillside Road at 5 a.m. on a report of a

suspicious male banging on the door of a residence. Responding officers found a 32-year-old Carmel man seated on the steps of the front deck. After canvassing the area, a white Honda Civic was found running on the front lawn of a Sunset Court residence. The vehicle was observed to have front end damage. It was determined that the subject had been driving while intoxicated. The man placed under arrest and charged with DWI (first offense) along with other traffic infractions. The suspect was processed and issued an appearance ticket for town justice court.

Nov. 14: Officers responded to Farmers Mills Road and Gipsy Trail Road at 10:30 a.m. to follow up on a previous report of a fiber glass boat being dragged down the road by a pickup truck. Officers determined the boat was dragged by a green Dodge Ram. After interviewing two subjects, Alex Roosa was charged with reckless driving and other traffic infractions. He was processed and issued an appearance ticket for town justice court.

North Castle Police Department

Nov. 12: A caller reported at 12:02 p.m. observing an unknown black male in his early 20s on Mianus River Road exit the passenger side of a gray Mercedes sedan possibly bearing Maryland plates take several envelopes containing checks from his mailbox five to 10 minutes in the past. The complainant stated that he ran to the mailbox to confirm the

items were stolen, and then followed the vehicle, which appeared to have stopped in front of St. Mary's Church where he was able to take a picture before contacting police for assistance. The suspect in the passenger side was described as wearing a red sweatshirt. The responding officers canvassed the area for the vehicle described, which yielded negative results. The officers were able to secure a witness and an owner's deposition with a report to follow.

Nov. 14: A party arrived at headquarters at 2:36 p.m. to report that she lost a valuable necklace while attending a soccer game at the H.C. Crittenden Middle School field. The necklace is comprised of white gold with a large pear-shaped diamond and smaller diamond chips surrounding it. The party wishes to make this a matter of record at this time and will return in the future if a more detailed report is needed for insurance purposes.

Nov. 17: A caller reported finding a wallet in the area of the North White Plains Community Center at 4:28 p.m. and stated he wants to turn the property over to an officer. The wallet was retrieved from the caller, and the officer subsequently returned the property to its owner at their residence.

Pleasantville Police Department

Nov. 14: An arrest was made following a domestic dispute on Brookfield Place at 2:23 a.m. Weapons were on the premises.

Nov. 16: A suspicious person was seen on Memorial Plaza and Manville Road at 10:15 a.m. flying a drone over the train tracks. The person was gone on arrival.

Nov. 17: A suspicious person was seen at 351 Manville Rd. smoking and loitering on private property. The individual was a resident of the building. No action taken.

Putnam County Sheriff's Department

Nov. 13: Deputies were dispatched to a Putnam Valley home at 12:28 p.m. to assist Putnam County Child Protective Services (CPS) with a welfare check on teenage siblings under the age of 15 who were possibly being abused by their father. After an investigation, the siblings were turned over to a close relative and the 46-year-old father was charged with endangering the welfare of a child, second-degree criminal contempt, criminal mischief and harassment.

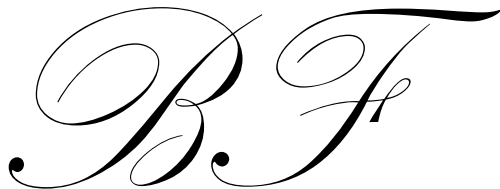
Nov. 17: A deputy responded to the area of Oscawana Lake Road and Peekskill Hollow Road in Putnam Valley at 4:45 p.m. on a report of a possibly intoxicated driver. Upon arrival, deputies observed the vehicle and approached the 59-year-old male driver. The driver stumbled while attempting to exit the vehicle and had an odor of alcohol on his breath. After an investigation, the man was arrested and charged with driving while ability impaired with a combined influence of drugs and alcohol.

Nov. 18: Deputies responded to the Acme supermarket parking lot on Route 22 in Patterson at 7:39 p.m. A female reported that her pocketbook was stolen from her vehicle while she was shopping. An investigation is ongoing.

Yorktown Police Department

Nov. 17: Nikoll Mrijaj, 38, of Putnam Valley, was charged with DWI at 2:16 p.m. after police received a report of a gray pickup truck operating erratically in the area of Route 6 and Mountain Brook Road.

Nov. 19: Rose Montgomery, 42, of the Bronx, was charged with aggravated unlicensed operation at 3:58 a.m. for driving with a suspended license and having no insurance following an accident on Underhill Avenue.



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Obituary

Virginia Enright

Virginia "Ginny" Enright died on Nov. 15. She was the widow of William F. Enright Jr. and the mother of Tracy Enright Taft of South Salem, son Kevin, who predeceased her, and son Christopher of Suffern.

Ginny was born on May 30, 1933, to Joseph E. and Carmen I. Brennan. She attended Ardsley public schools where she played the flute in the orchestra, sang in the varsity choir and assisted in the music department. She was a member for a time of the Yonkers Philharmonic. She graduated from Wheaton College in Norton, Mass. where she served in leadership positions.

After graduation she worked for Compton Advertising in New York City until she had children. She worked for a time for the Town of New Castle and co-owned and operated, for a period, Vanier Real Estate Company in Armonk. Recently she was employed by the Chappaqua Public Library.

She was a communicant of the Church of Saint John and Saint Mary in Chappaqua.

She enjoyed serving as a frequent election inspector in her community. Ginny loved her neighborhood of Castle Road in Chappaqua and continued to follow the exploits of its close families long after they and she moved away. She was an avid sports fan, especially of the New York Giants and New York Yankees, both of whom in some years tended to disappoint her. She could harmonize to almost any song, and she and her sister sang to all who would listen and for their own amusement.

Besides her children, she leaves her son-in-law, Paul Taft; her beloved grandchildren, Jeffrey Taft and Jennifer Enright and Jeffrey's wife Christina; and her sister, Jean Horend, and brother-in-law James Horend.

There will be a private memorial service at a later date. Memorial gifts may be made to Wheaton College, Main Street, Norton, Mass. 02766-0930 or to the Chappaqua Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua, N.Y. 10514.

PCSB Bank Celebrates 150th Anniversary Serving Lower Hudson Valley

PCSB Bank, founded in 1871, is celebrating its 150th anniversary of providing full-service banking to communities throughout the Lower Hudson Valley.

From its first location in Brewster's general store to its expansion to four counties, PCSB Bank has continually met the evolving demands of the region's population and business growth. The bank quickly developed a reputation for understanding local communities and truly caring about the people it serves, a value that remains steadfast to this day. It has attained stature as a leading financial institution with 15 branch offices in Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess and Rockland counties.

"We are proud to commemorate our 150-year tradition of offering the highest level of customized banking services that help families and businesses prosper," said Joseph D. Roberto, chairman, president and

CEO of PCSB Bank. "Our commitment to diversity, access and inclusion for everyone in the communities we serve reflects our core mission: treating customers as caring neighbors and business partners."

Under the leadership of Roberto since 2012, PCSB Bank has made a number of notable expansions and adaptations to serve its burgeoning clientele. In 2015, the bank changed its name from Putnam County Savings Bank to PCSB Bank, following its acquisition of CMS Bancorp. This evolution served as a platform for PCSB's deeper expansion into the Westchester market, meeting the need for a customer-driven bank in the county.

The bank also moved its headquarters from Brewster to Yorktown Heights that year.

During 2017, PCSB completed a conversion from a mutual savings to a stock savings bank. The bank's charter changed from a mutual



The Yorktown Heights corporate headquarters of PCSB Bank, which is celebrating 150 years.

Christmas Tree Sale Returns to First Congregational Church of Chappaqua

The First Congregational Church of Chappaqua is holding its annual Christmas tree and wreath sale each Saturday and Sunday until Christmas or while supplies last. In addition to providing trees and wreaths for local residents to decorate their houses for the holiday season,

money raised through the sale will also help the church.

The sale is being held on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the First Congregational Church of Chappaqua, located at 210 Orchard Ridge Rd.

to a commercial bank in 2019, allowing it to serve municipalities and a wide range of businesses even more effectively. PCSB's optimal size and structure position the bank to meet demand with a high degree of flexibility and responsiveness in its consumer and commercial lending options.

PCSB Bank is also known for its philanthropic contributions as well as its business acumen. In keeping with a recognized tradition of charity and community service, the PCSB Bank Community Foundation, founded in 2017, identifies and provides donations to nonprofit organizations in the region that align with the bank's core

values. PCSB employees and their families also participate in a host of fundraising events each year.

"Our foundation and community involvement, along with our understanding of our customers and their hometowns, reflect our unique standing as 'The Incredibly Neighborly Commercial Bank,'" Roberto said. "While our footprint has greatly expanded, our values remain true to our original mission – a testament to the strength and stability of our institution as well as the unwavering dedication of our employees. We truly appreciate their efforts."

Selling your home in 2022

SAN DIEGO (November 13, 2021) – The outlook for the residential real estate market, which performed exceptionally well during the height of the pandemic, continues to be promising, according to NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun.

Yun delivered the assessment yesterday morning at the National Association of Realtors® in San Diego, California.

"All markets are seeing strong conditions and home sales are the best they have been in 15 years, Yun said. "The housing sector's success will continue, but I don't expect next year's performance to exceed this year's." *

To successfully sell your home, you'll need all of these marketing tools from a full service broker: Comparative Market Analysis • Professional Staging • Professional Photography • Professional Copywriting • Comprehensive Internet Marketing

As a realtor with over 20 years of experience, I can easily help you navigate the complexities of this everchanging housing market. If you, or anyone you know, have any real estate needs, please contact me to take advantage of my expertise.

*NAR 11/13/2021.

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Letters to the Editor

Ignoring Racism Won't Make it Disappear

The racist words used by a Republican activist and district leader directed at Yorktown Councilman Vishnu Patel are only the tip of the iceberg. I raised two black children in Yorktown, and have experienced both acceptance and love, and discrimination and racism in this town, from neighbors, in the schools, in businesses and from civil servants. All this points to the fact that racism in America and in Yorktown is built into our culture and it is going to take active work to change that culture.

There's a lot of resistance to this. There are activists coming to local Board of Education meetings declaring that those of us who want the schools to adopt diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) protocols are creating racism. These folks are mostly white, and some are part of a nationwide right-wing effort with wealthy funders to stop teaching about racism in U.S. history. In some areas of the country, they have proposed banning books, mostly by black authors.

Pretending there is no racism does not make it go away. Only by recognizing its existence and addressing it can we create change and make a better future.

The Republican activist who uttered racist words in complete comfort at the Republican celebration is not a one-off. He has since said he is not a racist and he had been drinking that night. However, alcohol does not cause racism, it causes users to lose inhibitions and say things they might not otherwise say. Sometimes something inside us might come out, something we didn't think was there, and sometimes it's very ugly. The solution to this is not to turn away from it, but look at it long and hard, understand it and try to do something about it.

One thing that we can all do right now is to support DEI in the schools. Another thing we can do as individuals is to understand our biases.

There is a confidential computer test called the Implicit Association Test, the results of which are anonymous and private, which can enlighten test-takers about the unconscious associations we have absorbed from our culture about color of skin (or sexuality, disability and other areas). Go to [implicit.harvard.edu](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/) and take the test privately in the comfort of your own home. Whether or not you do this, please resolve to help address this problem. We can't look away anymore.

Maura Gregory
Mohegan Lake

Croton Must Follow Processes to Ensure Safety on Cleveland Drive

What's important? Is it pedestrian safety (at the famous "dummy light" intersection of Old Post Road South and Grand)? Or other problem intersections? Bicycling on village streets ("Slow Down Croton")?

How about the condition of sidewalks? Or solar installations like at the Hudson National Golf Club? Yikes! As Billy Joel intoned, "it's still rock and roll to me." It's still risk management to me; I just want decisions done right and with clear explanations.

Whether determining the best course of action to take in addressing an issue, or deciding which issue needs attention the most, the process used – whether you are aware of it or not – will be one of comparing gains and losses. Just like risk management. Only it's not risk management because comparisons will likely be haphazard.

Making clear assessments means following a formal procedure, one that includes listing all the factors that make up an issue – things that represent risk or loss – identifying the factors that need attention and documenting the process. Whether everyone agrees with the results or not, everyone can at least see all the steps and all the reasoning for each step taken. Relying on this process will help clarify the actions so everyone can track

the development of an idea and understand what the tradeoffs may be.

And they can do this without being suspicious of individual motives. Really. Well, mostly; nothing is perfect. But because the gains and losses of an issue become the focus, the decision-makers are mandated to look at these things, instead of supporting conclusions based on preconceived notions. In other words, when a formal process is followed, the required comparison of gains and losses is debated, rather than some isolated opinion of an individual.

This is critical, because it helps to shift the assessment of a proposal from the personal to those factors that make up an issue: reducing the influence individual bias can have on the process.

And now, speaking of individual bias, here's mine: pedestrian safety on Cleveland Drive between Gerstein and Jacoby streets. One block that has it all: tight, blind S curves; single lane (legally too narrow for marked lanes); no sidewalks, no shoulders, no street lights; heavy vehicle traffic (serves as a bypass for Route 129); heavily used by bikers, walkers (trail link to Gorge Trail), children going to school (one block from Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School); and a 25-mile-per-hour speed limit.

An assessment needs to be done that rate each of these factors and includes vehicle count, clocked speed and physical observations of conditions at different points of this roadway. Any proposed corrective action will then go through the process of comparing the potential gains and losses of each (including costs).

I think this section of road constitutes a clear and present danger to walkers, bikers, pets and babies in carriages. That's what I think, but let's not just have a discussion; let's follow a formal procedure that will assure a more fair and unbiased assessment. It's the clearer thing to do.

Alan Pakaln
Croton-on-Hudson

Corrections

In last week's article on the expansion of the Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry, the operating hours for Wednesdays were incorrect. It is open from 9 to 11 a.m. on Wednesdays.

Last week, in a letter to the editor titled "Yorktown Has Seen Racist Behavior From GOP Before," it incorrectly stated that two of the town Republican Party's candidates who ran for office this year were on the ballot in 2017. None of this year's Yorktown Republican candidates ran four years ago.

The Examiner regrets the errors.

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Guest Column

Election Scare Tactics Won't Serve the Town of New Castle Well

By Andrew Dorfman

When my family moved to Chappaqua, our decision was driven both by the house we had found and the quality of the high school.

However, while Horace Greeley mostly received very high grades on websites like Niche, we were troubled by its one glaring low mark: diversity. Whereas African Americans make up 14.2 percent of the country's population, at Horace Greeley they total .8 percent of the student body. At the time, I naïvely assumed that New Castle was simply reflective of an unjust nationwide economic system that disadvantages people of color, making housing in the suburbs unaffordable for many.

However, if the recent controversy about the Form Based Code in New Castle has taught me anything, it's that this kind of inequality doesn't just happen, it's the result of a conscious and longstanding effort throughout Westchester to exclude those who can't afford \$1 million-plus homes. It's called exclusionary zoning, and it's foundational to the racial injustice that's been tearing at the seams of our nation.

Here in New Castle, the battle dates back to the landmark 1975 state Supreme Court decision, *Berenson v. New Castle*, in which

the exclusionary nature of our zoning made national news.

There were reasonable discussions to be had about whether a form-based code was the correct choice for revitalization of North Greeley. Would establishing a pre-determined set of universally allowable construction parameters be a better path toward revitalization than the current system, which requires one-to-one negotiations for every developer and every project?

Would mixed-use, which allows retail on the ground floor and residential housing above, create more foot traffic for existing businesses than the current system, which segregates all development by land use? All valid questions, worthy of exploration and debate.

Instead, what transpired was something completely different. Mailers, designed by nationally-known Republican adversarial political consulting firms like BrabenderCox, the firm that previously worked for Mike Pence, arrived daily in the mailboxes of residents warning that New Castle was in danger of "becoming another Westchester city filled with apartment buildings," "urbanization" and our schools being "ruined" by the new students who would be

brought in by the zoning change.

These racist dog whistles, designed by Washington insiders, displayed on slickly produced mailers and funded by a well-financed campaign that, according to its own disclosures, derived 40 percent of its funding from two families in the business of billion-dollar real-estate development, frightened the average resident, who knew little about the actual code change proposed for the six neglected blocks on North Greeley.

The recipients of these mailers weren't racist, of course, but seeing daily apocalyptic warnings about their town, taxes and schools convinced enough of them to play it safe. Unfortunately, given the anemic level of participation in local elections, it didn't take much for this disinformation campaign to tip the scales. Although the election felt like an epic battle to the candidates and their closest allies, it was fought and won with the participation of only 36 percent of New Castle residents.

An ugly line was crossed in bringing national political consulting firms, accustomed to using hardball tactics that value outcome over honesty, into a small-town election. Unfortunately, the success of this cynical strategy carries a very real danger that we could see more of the

same in the future. No matter who we each supported in this election, we shouldn't welcome professional disinformation experts' interference in the ability of our residents to make informed choices on the merits.

One of the most unfortunate ironies of the negative campaign relates to the narrative that a zoning change would've hurt Chappaqua's schools. Experienced college advisers tell me that the negative opinions I had read about Horace Greeley's diversity on websites that review the nation's high schools, such as Niche and U.S. News & World Report, are also shared by admission departments at top U.S. colleges, who make diversity a top priority. Their perception of Greeley's student body as racially homogenous and privileged does our students no favors in the college application process, and yet, some of the loudest voices defending the existing exclusionary zoning use the quality of our schools as a bludgeon to beat back progress.

It's ironic in the worst possible way.

Chappaqua resident Andrew Dorfman volunteered on the recent New Castle Democrats' campaign.

Letters to the Editor

Ossining's 2022 Budget Strives to Make Town a More Equitable Community

I would like to take a moment to express how thankful I am for the opportunity to serve another term as Ossining supervisor. I look forward to continuing to work with all constituencies as we build a more sustainable and equitable Ossining in every sense of those words.

The Town of Ossining's tentative budget for 2022 makes some key investments related to equity, in a few ways.

First, the town recently negotiated a new contract with its CSEA bargaining unit, which contains nearly two-thirds of its

unionized workforce. The new contract adds parity adjustments for some titles that were determined to be underpaid in comparison to similar positions in other municipalities.

Although the Town of Ossining has traditionally been more conservative in budgeting than other municipalities, it is important to ensure our staff is equitably compensated for their work, especially in a unit that is mostly composed of women and people of color. Thank you to the leadership of our CSEA unit for their research on this issue, and for proposing a solution which we

believe to be equitable and also cognizant of our budgeting challenges.

For town employees not represented by a union, the town has applied a similar parity analysis approach to salary increases in 2022. The new contract with CSEA also adds Juneteenth as a paid holiday, and the town intends to provide the same to the members of its Teamsters unit.

We have also dedicated funds to support Ossining's annual Juneteenth celebration, and to support the work of the Community Equity Task Force. For those who do not already know, this task force is composed of leaders from municipal government, the library, local schools, faith communities, student groups and the community at large and is intended to address issues of inequity that persist despite our best efforts.

We want to continue to look at how we can better serve all residents and ensure that our diverse community also enjoys equity, inclusion and justice. Stay tuned for more from this group. If you would like to get involved, go to the Email Alerts signup page on our website, enter your name and e-mail address, then click "Manage Subscriptions" to add yourself to the Community Equity Task Force list.

The statement that "budgets are moral documents" has been made often enough that it has almost become cliché. However, I take this sentiment seriously. It is important to dedicate resources to the things we say we value, if we are to live out those values.

Dana Levenberg
Supervisor, Town of Ossining

We Must Save the Armonk Lions and Fol-De-Rol

One of my favorite aspects of living in North Castle are the many cherished events that bring us together. Events like the art show, Fol-De-Rol and the upcoming Frosty Day on Nov. 28 set us apart and define us as a community.

Sadly, one of these events and the amazing non-profit that sponsors it, is on the verge of dying forever.

The Armonk Lions Club has been running the Fol-De-Rol festival for more than 45 years. Many of us have fond memories attending the carnival and crafts fair with our families. But what is less known is how the Armonk Lions Club uses the money generated to do incredible things for our town. These donations include paying for the NC4 disaster relief trailer, dugouts for Armonk Baseball, the gazebo and Lions Way Bridge at Wampus Park, scholarships for children in our community and donations to

more than a dozen non-profits.

Due to a lack of new volunteer members, the Armonk Lions Club is literally days away from shutting down forever, which would mean the loss of Fol-De-Rol and all the community donations that go with it. While Fol-De-Rol is typically held in June, new volunteers must be identified on an urgent basis if we are to have a chance at keeping it alive.

There will be a meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 30 at 7 p.m. at the Hergenhan Recreation Center (40 Maple Ave.) for those interested in volunteering. Please e-mail matt@mattmilim.com for more information.

Please help save Fol-De-Rol and the Armonk Lions Club.

Matt Milim
Armonk

Farm System Reform Act Would Protect Animals, People and Environment

The Farm System Reform Act (H.R.4421/S.2332) has been re-introduced in Congress by Sen. Cory Booker (D-New Jersey) and Rep. Ro Khanna (D-California). This important legislation would help move farming away from factory farming, also known as Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), and toward more humane and healthful farming practices. The measure would stop the construction of new CAFOs and phase out existing large CAFOs by 2040. This legislation allocates \$10 billion annually to support farmers moving to more

ethical and sustainable farming practices.

Please support this legislation by contacting your senators and representatives asking them to co-sponsor this vital legislation. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand and Rep. Mondaire Jones in New York are current co-sponsors. We can protect animals, workers and consumers, the environment and our health by rethinking our current practices.

Andrea Eisenberg
Mount Kisco

Saying Goodbye to Venerable Journalist and Storyteller Herb Hadad

By Abby Luby

For those in the world of journalism, knowing and working with veteran reporter Herbert Hadad was a special honor.

An award-winning journalist and storyteller, Hadad's news stories always put the reader at the scene with the people involved, backed by solid facts.

Herbert Hadad passed away in his sleep on Nov. 6 at his home in Pocantico Hills. He was 85.

A son of Syrian and Jewish parents, he envisioned vastly different cultures peacefully coexisting. But he was clear-eyed about human nature, learning inequities as a young Jewish boy growing up in a mostly Irish neighborhood in Boston. His youth became a rich source of stories in his two books "Finding Immortality: The Making of One American Family, (iUniverse 2009)" and "Tender and Tough: 60 Years of Storytelling (2019)."

Hadad graduated Northeastern University and cut his teeth in journalism in 1955 as a copy boy through a work-study job in the gritty newsroom of the Boston Globe, where hardworking reporters constantly chased down stories.

In 1963, Hadad's early assignment was riding a bus bound for the Washington D.C. March for Jobs and Freedom where Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his I Have a Dream speech. Hadad spoke to every person on the bus, each one featured in next day's front-page story.

As a young reporter Hadad craved a

surprisingly different goal: to be recognized in the boxing ring. He ventured to a small, shabby building on Friend Street in Boston, half a block from Boston Garden, where he trained as a featherweight. He learned the six-inch right-hand punch and took down a fighter in a boxing class in which he claimed in "Tender and Tough" that he was "too awestruck to be scared."

But moonlighting as a boxer paled to the lure of newspaper reporting where his dogged toughness came in handy.

Always charmed by a pretty face and self-claimed romantic, Hadad remained loyal to his wife Evelyn for 45 years. A chapter in "Tender and Tough" recalled when he first met her in 1972, he "was juggling four affairs, drifting between Nirvana and cardiac arrest."

But Evelyn claimed his heart. They married in 1975 and he wrote how their affection "continues to be contagious." They moved to Tarrytown and had three children, Edward Salim, Charles Aram and Sara Jameela.

As an Arab Jew and a first-generation American, Hadad wrote about embracing his heritage and his religion. He was descended from 40 generations of Arabs in Aleppo and longed to visit his father's homeland, a Muslim country where few Jews, if any, remained.

In 2008, he took Evelyn and their children to Damascus, fulfilling a dream. There he briefly found himself face to face with Syrian President Bashar Hafez al-Assad who just glared at him as Hadad said, "Tasharrafa, Mr. President, tasharrafa" (which means it is an honor to meet you).



Herbert Hadad, seated center, at The Village Bookstore in Pleasantville in 2019 reading his newly published book "Tender and Tough." Hadad, a Pocantico Hills resident, died earlier this month at 85.

Hadad's byline appeared in The New York Times, New York Post, The Boston Globe, the International Herald Tribune and The Keene Sentinel in New Hampshire. He won writing awards from the New York Press Club, Reader's Digest, Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, Folio and Parenting magazines and Poets & Writers. His stories were in several anthologies.

Hadad served as deputy press secretary for Maine Senator Edmund Muskie's 1972 presidential campaign, where Hadad's quick wit supplied Muskie with jokes on the campaign trail, an experience he found exhilarating.

Years later, Hadad was the rare friendly face to any green reporter who showed up at the U.S. Department of Justice for the

Southern District of New York in White Plains where he warmly offered help and guidance. He served there for 18 years as a press officer and his work was highly valued and recognized several times by six U.S. Attorneys, including Mary Jo White, James Comey and Preet Bharara.

That he could easily spin tales into compelling short stories led Hadad to teach at the Hudson Valley Writers Center in Sleepy Hollow where he also served on the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. He was a governor emeritus of the Silurians Press Club, an organization of New York City journalists, and a founding board member of the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve near his home. He started a cable television program called On Writing with his friend, writer Benjamin Cheever.

Hadad's personal essays read like a carnival ride of memories – humorous, touching, each brilliant in revealing the subtleties of character with a nod to human vulnerability. His impressive talent was drawing one into moments of his life, opening a world of introspection and delight for countless readers.

Hadad leaves his wife Evelyn; son Edward Hadad and his wife, Adlin, and their children Evan and Willow of Croton-on-Hudson; his son, Charles Hadad and wife Alice and their daughter Maya of Brooklyn; his daughter, Sara Le Brusq, and her son Damian of Manhattan; and his sister, Sylvia Rosenberg, of Newton, Mass. His extended family includes in-laws, cousins, nieces and nephews.

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Club Looks to Jazz Up Mt. Kisco Music Scene, Nightlife in Coming Months

By Martin Wilbur

For years, Shaul Dover has been hoping to open a jazz club somewhere in northern Westchester that contributes to the county's arts scene.

Dover will finally see his dream realized early next year with the planned opening of Jazz on Main in downtown Mount Kisco.

The intimate 60-seat performance and dining space at 37 S. Moger Ave. is currently under construction, next door to Mimi's Coffee House on the promenade between the avenue and the Shoppers Park lot.

"This is like something that's been cooking in my head for the last more than 10 years," Dover said. "I'm in the music business. I have a recording studio in Katonah for a long time and this is something I wanted to do for a while."

About two years ago, Dover put his plans in motion for a New York City-style jazz club that would attract musicians from throughout the tristate area and beyond. He thought he had found a space on Main Street in Mount Kisco, but a delay with the landlord followed by the emergence of COVID-19 put those plans on hold.

However, Dover, who immigrated to the United States from Israel in the 1980s, said about four or five months ago he found a new space on the promenade and restarted his efforts to bring a jazz venue to the area

by next year. He said he's aiming to be ready in February, although depending on how long it takes to prepare the space, its opening could be pushed to early spring.

Currently, the plan is to operate three or four evenings a week, Dover said. The most likely schedule is Thursday through Saturday evenings and a Sunday brunch is possible, he said.

The remaining days of the week Dover hopes to rent out the space for stand-up comedy nights, poetry readings, magic shows, music video tapings and other types of special events and parties.

"So any type of person who would like to use the space for that purpose, we're going to be able to do that during the other days of the week," Dover said. "But nevertheless, I've always wanted to bring other types of entertainment because we're going to have a stage that's going to have a lighting system and a sound system. They're going to be able to provide a great experience."

"I always wanted to create some type of immersive experience, which is a way to provide all the senses at the same time, to experience more than just hearing or more than just eating," he added.

Plans also call for a modest menu of Mediterranean cuisine, although Dover acknowledges that the music and entertainment will be the primary focal point for the venue.

To that end, Jazz on Main's location

will also be beneficial for performers and patrons coming from the city as well from the surrounding area. Across South Moger Avenue is the Metro-North station, a one- or two-minute walk from where the club will be located. In addition to Mount Kisco, Dover also hopes to attract jazz lovers from the surrounding communities of Bedford, Chappaqua and Armonk.

Mount Kisco Arts Council Chair Lisa Abzun said she was excited to learn about the venture. While this isn't the first jazz club that would call the village home, Jazz on Main is coming at a time when the community and the downtown could use another burst of new activity.

"I think this is going to be just a really great addition to the village, especially because jazz being really an art form that was really founded in the United States," Abzun said. "Without being too provincial, I just think it's a beautiful American art form that is probably more appreciated in other places around the world, so I'm really glad that it's coming."

The Mount Kisco Chamber of Commerce is equally enthused about the pending opening of Jazz on Main. Announcement of its arrival, soon after it was learned that the movie theater would reopen on Main Street, will be a boost to the village's economy.

"An addition of a jazz club would bring a unique vibe and add nightlife to the



Recording studio owner Shaul Dover will be bringing a jazz club to downtown Mount Kisco in early 2022.

village's restaurant scene," a chamber statement read. "This is welcome news coupled with the reopening of the Mount Kisco Movie Theater. The continued positive energy and growth is more good news towards recovery."

For more information and to follow the progress of Jazz on Main as it progresses toward its opening, visit <https://www.jazzonmain.com> and subscribe to the newsletter. You can also follow on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/jazzonmain/>

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On the one hand, it's just one day.

"If you spend the rest of the year eating well and making sure you're physically active then I think on Thanksgiving you can give yourself a break," said Dr. Paula Amendola-Sekinski, family medicine physician at White Plains Hospital Physician Associates. "Don't be crazy in your choices, but everybody deserves a

day off."

On the other hand, Thanksgiving kicks off the holiday eating season, which can have significant ramifications on body weight – and health – for the entire year.

"Between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, it's not uncommon to see a person gain 10 pounds if they aren't careful," Amendola-Sekinski said. "We need to recognize the risks of the holiday season and be thoughtful."

The Calorie Control Council, a food and beverage industry group, calculates one Thanksgiving meal can total 4,500 calories. That's more than twice the recommended number of 1,600 to 2,400 calories per day for a woman.

A 2016 study in the New England Journal of Medicine reported that the average American gains 1.3 pounds during the holiday season, while a 2000 study in Nutrition Reviews concluded that what's packed on during the holidays, accounts for half of weight gain for the year.

"Even if the average weight gain is only a kilogram each year, over a lifetime it adds up," Amendola-Sekinski added.

This year may not be typical, as the pandemic again disrupts the usual stream of holiday gatherings and office parties. But the lessons for curbing the dietary impact of Thanksgiving dinner remain the same. The American Heart Association has put together the following tips.

Prepare. In the weeks leading up to the holidays, be a bit more vigilant about your food intake. Maybe lose a couple pounds

so you'll wind up with a net zero after the holidays.

Tweak recipes. You can treat yourself to special foods but also have control over how they're made. Search the internet for a healthier version of a favorite recipe or a substitute for an unhealthy ingredient.

There's no quick fix for overeating. You can't exercise your way out of gorging at the holiday table. Exercise is great, but it's really more about eating less food. It's calories in, calories out.

Don't come hungry. Have a healthy breakfast or lunch. Some people try to avoid weight gain by eating very little before the big feast or a party, but that ends up backfiring because they're so hungry they're not able to control themselves.

It's not just about eating. Alcohol has calories too and the more you drink, the less you care – not just about the alcohol but the rest of the meal as well.

Pace yourself. It takes time for the brain to realize you're getting full. Eating slowly and waiting a few minutes before you go for seconds or thirds can be very helpful.

Beware of leftovers. The holiday table




may be full of the most calorically dense foods people eat all year. If there's more left over, you may be the one suffering the consequences. Sooner or later, those pumpkin pies do get eaten.

As sound as the advice may be, the culinary temptations this time of year are hard to resist.

"Holiday season can be the time when people just let go," Amendola-Sekinski said. "When there are so many opportunities to eat and so much exposure to high-caloric foods, it's very difficult unless people are really determined to be careful. But we have to try."

This content was provided by the American Heart Association of Greater New York and New York City.



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Holiday Extravaganza Winter Wonderland Returns This Week

By Abby Luby

After Thanksgiving Day, it's time to celebrate the holiday season, and one way to do that is at Westchester's Winter Wonderland Drive-thru Holiday Light Extravaganza at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla.

This is the eighth year the festival has taken place but just the second time the county is hosting the 1.2-mile drive-thru route, which was devised last year as a way for residents to safely celebrate the season while observing COVID-19 precautions.

This year, the myriad displays feature dramatic lights, including the new Elf Discos and Expanded Snowstorm Central.

Joe Stout, executive director of the Westchester Parks Foundation, the organization dedicated to promoting and supporting Westchester County Parks, said 35,000 tickets were sold and at least 125,000 people visited last year.

The drive-thru is more affordable for families, Stout said. It is likely that the foundation will stay with the drive-through lights festival going forward, he said.

"The (drive-thru) festival is so inexpensive for families who are now charged by the car," Stout said. "It used to cost \$25 a person, now it costs \$25 a car."

The Winter Wonderland light show starts this Friday at 6 p.m. and runs for five consecutive weeks to Jan. 2. The event will be open seven nights a week starting at 6 p.m. on weekday evenings and 5 p.m. on weekends. End times vary per night



Visitors to this year's Westchester's Winter Wonderland will once again be treated to a 1.2-mile dazzling display of lights at Kensico Dam Plaza.

and reservations, which are scheduled at 15-minute intervals, are required to avoid additional surcharges. Accompanying holiday classics will be broadcast on FM radio for visitors to listen to while completing the route.

Construction for the festival started in early October.

"It took seven weeks to get it all built, programmed and tested to make sure it all works," said Stout. "I'm sure we will be running another test right before we open."

Stout said hundreds of thousands of LED holiday lights are used for the elaborate and mesmerizing displays. Because room isn't needed for parking, there is more space to accommodate additional displays, which also include a Peace on Earth LED display with animated trumpets and angels and two new 30-foot snowflakes to help illuminate the 40-foot Christmas tree, considered the largest in Westchester.

"We are using a lot less electricity than we



Santa's reindeer are among the many dramatic holiday displays to be seen at Westchester's Winter Wonderland Drive-thru Holiday Light Extravaganza, which opens this Friday and continues through Jan. 2.

used to," said Stout, comparing the drive-through to the original festival that included rides, food, entertainment ice skating and more. "Ninety-five percent of the lights are LED bulbs. In previous years there was a big circus tent that was heated with electricity and an ice-skating rink that ran all day, which also used a lot of electricity."

On opening night this Friday, a child who is a patient at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital and her family will be joined by Santa in an open convertible as the ceremonial first ride to drop him off at his workshop, where he can be seen throughout the entire festival.

Stout said the 15-minute time slots are already being reserved. Cars arriving for the earliest time slots usually take 20 to 25

minutes to complete the loop. More cars usually arrive later, which means waiting longer to enter the festival, which can take up to 45 minutes from start to finish.

Tickets are \$25 for Monday through Thursday and \$35 on the weekend. It will be closed on Dec. 24 and 25.

The founding sponsor of the event is Westchester Medical Center Health Network. Con Edison is returning as a platinum sponsor.

Reservations can be made at <https://www.showclix.com/event/wwinterwonderland>.

Complete information is available at <https://www.wwinterwonderland.com>.

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Frosty Ready to Make a Triumphant Return to Armonk This Sunday

By Martin Wilbur

With a lot of hard work by volunteer organizers and the Town of North Castle, Armonk will be celebrating the return of Frosty the Snowman this Sunday afternoon.

The 12th annual Frosty Day is ready to roll, an afternoon of fun activities for children and families, live music and treats and an overall good time for everyone. The day is set to start at 12:30 p.m. followed by the parade up Main Street at 4 p.m. and the lighting of the town's Christmas tree at Wampus Brook Park at nightfall.

If everything goes off without a hitch, it will mark the first time in three years that the event wasn't either canceled, as it was last year because of the pandemic, or curtailed. In 2019, the parade was called off as a result of a snowfall.

There is a great deal of anticipation for Sunday, said Judy Willsey, one of the Frosty Day organizers and the owner of Framings on Main Street.

"People are just buzzing," Willsey said. "They're so excited, they're so happy."

Among the roving bands that will be on hand to perform this year, will be a kazoo band and a mariachi band, she said.

Most of the same attractions and activities will be back on Sunday including the train ride from Town Hall that makes a loop throughout the downtown and returns, other performers including singers, a clown and a magician, ornament and trinket decorating and a Build-a-Frosty. If you need to go inside to warm up or to sit down for bit, there will be Frosty cartoons shown at the North Castle Public Library.

At 4 p.m., more than 40 local organizations will participate in the parade up Main Street, accompanied by decorated floats and vehicles and marching bands. The parade will turn onto Maple Avenue and head to Wampus Brook Park for the tree lighting.

Willsey said a nice touch this year is that at sundown is the first night of Hanukkah, so in addition to lighting the Christmas tree, the town will also illuminate the first light on its menorah at the park.

Of course, those who attend will be able to see the star of the day, Frosty. He will be on hand throughout the afternoon and will march in the parade and help organizers and town officials light the tree at the gazebo in the park.

Supervisor Michael Schiliro said perhaps because of all the challenges during the past two



The parade up Main Street in the late afternoon is one of the key attractions of Frosty Day.

years, there appears to be an even greater excitement among people in town this year and celebrating the start of the holiday season.

"It does feel like it, and it's outdoors, so that lends itself to more participation (this year) for those who might be reluctant to go indoors or go inside for a prolonged period of time," Schiliro said. "It seems from the organizational side, they're very excited about it, there's a buzz in town, people are talking about

it, people around the county are talking about it, and it's just such a premiere event."

More than a decade ago, Armonk claimed Frosty the Snowman as its own when it was learned that Steve Nelson, the song's lyricist, lived for about the last 30 years of his life in Armonk until his death in 1981. He is believed to have had the downtown in mind when wrote the lyrics.

The song "Frosty the Snowman," was released in 1950



Come see Frosty the Snowman this Sunday during the 12th annual Frosty Day in downtown Armonk. There will be activities for children and families throughout the afternoon.

and originally recorded by Gene Autry. It has been covered by numerous artists during the past 70 years.

For anyone attending on Sunday, some of the indoor activities may require masks to be worn.

For more information, visit www.armonkfrosty.com.



'Tis the Season for Sanity Clause

As we approach the holiday season, the stress level inevitably goes up with making plans, preparing for family and friends, and trying to maintain day-to-day caregiving routines. And this year, we continue to be in the midst of a global pandemic, which means we need to continue to think and act differently to maintain a safe and supportive holiday for all involved. This program will discuss the importance of taking care of yourself during the holidays while being a caregiver, as well as ways in which we can minimize the stressors associated with the holiday season.

Presented by Amy E. Matthews, Amy has worked exclusively in the field of Alzheimer's and related dementia disorders for the past 30 years. Her experience ranges from Adult Day Care and Home Health to working as the original activity director in the very first dementia-specific assisted living community in the country, and later as executive director opening a building in West Orange, NJ. Ms. Matthews also worked for the Alzheimer's Association, Greater New Jersey Chapter, for 14 years, providing both professional and community education and training. Amy currently specializes in professional training and community education. She also consults with professionals and families on best practices and helping them create a plan of care for the future. Amy was a caregiver for her grandmother, who had vascular dementia, and considers this her greatest experience in terms of understanding how these diseases affect families and how families reach out and interact with professionals.

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Thanksgiving and Thoughts of Home Sweet Home

For many years my journalistic moniker has been The Home Guru, a column originally adopted to help promote my business as a realtor, working with home buyers and sellers.

But through the years, this column seems to have developed a life of its own, apart from buying, selling and maintaining, but also closely identified with comfort, love and security.

All of that has been very important to me from a young age.

The first home I ever had on my own was a basement apartment in Williamsburg, Va., where I went to school at the College of William & Mary. In those days, freshmen and sophomores were required to live on campus, but I felt that I qualified for an exception. The dorms there were perfectly acceptable, but to me, dorm life was not ideal. My father had just passed away in my first semester and my mother, having some difficulty adjusting to single life, made a decision to move in with my older sister.

So, for the first time, I really had no home to speak of, and that was quite unsettling to me. Guess I've always been a homebody at heart. That's when I decided to tell a white lie to the Dean of Men, telling him that my mother was moving



By Bill Primavera

to town and we were renting a home together. Instead, at 18 years old, I set up my own first home.

It truly was in the basement, although the windows were at above-ground level. It was very damp. My first purchase, even before a bed, was a dehumidifier, so that I could breathe.

From there, I bought off-white paint to brighten up the walls and set out to create a pleasant setting in which to live, study and host get-togethers for my friends. With a young body, I was able to endure sleeping on a makeshift bed composed of a hollow door topped with a

layer of foam rubber, set up on four cinder blocks. It was quite primitive, but it was my own first home.

After graduation, I immediately moved to New York City to pursue my career ambitions in the communications field. Jobs were hard to come by at that time and I had to take what I could get – serving as a clerk in an office supply company.

My living circumstances were not much better. I shared a studio apartment with two other young men with whom I had little in common. It was my burning desire to set up a beautiful and comfortable place on my own to call home. For a bachelor, I did pretty well at that. I acquired some



good pieces of furniture, wall décor and accessories to set up an attractive place.

When it came time for me to buy a good sofa from B. Altman (remember that wonderful store?), I invited a female friend from work to join me, asking for her opinion. Interestingly enough, that friend who came with me that day developed into a romantic interest and it wasn't too long before she was sitting on that sofa as my wife in our first apartment together.

During this Thanksgiving season, I am grateful for having the desire and means to set up a comfortable home, the setting for all that has happened as my family has grown and prospered.

These thoughts come back to with gratitude as I think about my good fortune in living well in a home I love, surrounded by comfort, beauty and most importantly, my loved ones. And what's better than that?

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). His real estate site is www.PrimaveraRealEstate.com. 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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It's Time to Kick Your Bucket List and Visit That Special Place

After what we've all experienced over what is nearly two years, with COVID-19 and the impact it has had on our lives, my advice is don't wait to take the bucket list trip you've always dreamed about taking.

Now is the time to kick that bucket list and all those trips you've yearned for all these years down the road. My astute travel writer advice to you is Carpe diem! Yes, seize the day!

Start making your plans right now to take that dream trip you've always wanted next spring or summer. Since COVID, we've seen how just how unpredictable and vulnerable our lives can be. So be thankful that you and your family have survived COVID's curse and celebrate by taking the trip you've always wanted. Trust me, you'll be thrilled that you did.

You'll save money on airfare and hotels because airlines and lodging facilities are anxious to start booking



By Richard Levy

2022 business now. When you're ready to book your trip, do what I always do and call The Travel Team at American Express Travel at 716-722-1172 and ask for Mai Provett. She's amazing and will find you the very best fares and connections. Be sure to mention that Richard the travel writer suggested you call her.

After she finds you the best deal for your flight, Provett will help you reduce your airfare with your Amex Membership Award Points on your American Express card. For example, if your flight is \$600 and you have 30,000 points, that will take \$300 off your ticket. You can use your points to book hotels as well. You'll also get membership miles for the new trip you'll be taking.

For my hotel booking, I always use Booking.com because you can cancel your reservation and you don't have to pay the hotel until you check in.

If by chance you're one of the

rare folks who doesn't have a bucket list, here are my suggestions about where you should consider going on a spectacular vacation.

1. A 10-day unforgettable river cruise from Cambodia to Vietnam on the Mekong River. Be sure to book AmaWaterways. It's my favorite.
2. A decadent week in the magnificent village of Bellagio, Lake Como, Italy. The Lake is surrounded by snow-covered Italian Alps.
3. Breathtaking Amalfi, Positano or any coastal village on the Amalfi Coast, Italy.
4. A very romantic week on the captivating Cote d'Azure in Nice or Saint-Tropez, France.
5. If you're a wine lover, take a delightful tour tasting endless, amazing wines through the Loire Valley, France. After a dreadful almost two years, wearing our masks, getting

vaccinated, avoiding COVID-19, being sequestered in our houses, confined to our couches and endlessly watching Netflix, we all deserve a very special vacation getaway in 2022. Start planning your fabulous vacation now.

Since I've been to just about everywhere, if you need any advice about somewhere you've always wanted to go or haven't been, don't hesitate to contact me.

Lastly, make sure your passport does not expire six months from the day you leave or six months upon your return. You'll risk being turned away at the airport, thus totally ruining your vacation plans before it begins.

Bon voyage!

Hastings-on-Hudson resident Richard Levy is a former advertising "Mad Man" creative director and now a travel writer. He's also an inventor of innovative new products and is writing and illustrating a new children's book. You can contact him at RichardLevyTravelWriter@gmail.com.



The Travel Maven

THERE'S A WORD FOR IT

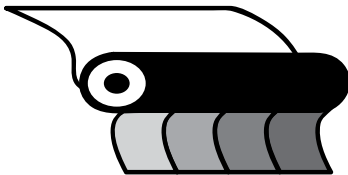
A vocabulary-building quiz By Edward Goralski

A Half-Baked Idea. Those who follow "The Great British Baking Show" on Netflix know the current season is winding down. Of course, viewers and non-viewers of the show know that the holiday baking season is just beginning. So, to note both of these events, the quiz this week is composed of baking related terms. Bakers, you have eight words.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. caramelize (v.) | A) to soak in liquid | B) heat sugar until brown | C) cover with butter |
| 2. crimp (v.) | A) to make slits in | B) give shape to | C) press dough together |
| 3. ganache (n.) | A) a creamy chocolate mixture | B) dry ingredients | C) fermented dough |
| 4. proof (v.) | A) to eliminate air bubbles | B) allow dough to rise | C) mix well |
| 5. scraggly (adj.) | A) irregular in texture | B) tasteless | C) soggy |
| 6. bain-marie (n) | A) a fragrant smell | B) interior of baked goods | C) a hot water bath |
| 7. silpat (n.) | A) a cake stand | B) a mixing bowl | C) non-stick baking sheet |
| 8. ombre (adj.) | A) shinny and smooth | B) having different shades | C) light and fluffy |

ANSWERS:

1. B. To heat sugar until its melted and brown.
2. C. To pinch or press pastry dough together using fingers, a fork, or another utensil.
3. A. A richly flavored creamy chocolate mixture used especially as a filling or frosting.
4. B. To allow yeast dough to rise before baking.
5. A. Used to describe dough which is too dry, hasn't been fully kneaded; rough and irregular in texture.
6. C. A hot water bath used usually used to melt chocolate and butter gently and gradually over a pot of simmering water.
7. C. Non-stick baking sheet made from food grade silicone and fiberglass.
8. B. Meaning "shaded" in French, the gradual blending of one color hue to another, usually moving shades from light to dark.



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Luxury Pet Resort That Treats Dogs Like Royalty Opens in Mahopac

By Martin Wilbur

Gone are the days where a family that's headed out of town is willing to bring their dog to the kennel with cold, hard concrete floors and chain-link fences that encloses their pens.

Laura Laaman, who opened Wiggles Pet Resort in Mahopac with her son Craig this past summer, spared no expense – nearly \$1 million to be exact – to transform the former Stone Meadow Kennel on Baldwin Place Road into luxurious accommodations for the family pet.

"We really feel that today's pet parent wants something more upscale," said Laaman, who had about 25 years' experience in the pet care industry before opening Wiggles. "They want raised beds, which they didn't have before. We give them fluffy blankets like they have at home. We just wanted to emulate what they have at home."

Wiggles provides area dog owners with boarding services should they need to go out of town and can't bring their pet or daily play and training for those who work long hours and want their dog to socialize with other canines.

With the rise in pet ownership during the pandemic since so many people have been home far

more often than before last year, Laaman said the need to help new owners have better behaved dogs surged. Since Wiggles Pet Resort opened, many owners have availed themselves of the training that can last up to two weeks.

"There's so many COVID puppies right now and people got these cute, little fuzzy dogs," she said. "Then they realize they're jumping on the furniture or they're pulling my arm out when I walk them. So we are doing a lot of training."

The sparkling new state-of-the-art facility sets Wiggles apart. Situated on just over two acres, there are nine outdoor play yards for group or private play, Laaman said. For group play, dogs are generally separated by size, with smaller dogs in one area and larger dogs in another.

Each outdoor yard is surfaced with a synthetic canine grass designed specially for dogs. Laaman said it's built to immediately drain so if a dog has an accident, it quickly dries and remains clean. It also can be shoveled or plowed should there be a snowfall.

"The owners are so happy that they're outside or running around because they don't have the time to give the dogs the exercise they need," she said.



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTOS

A dog receives a bath and a blueberry facial at Wiggles Pet Resort in Mahopac.

Inside, where there is capacity for about 100 dogs, the suites where they rest and sleep for the night could be considered five-star canine accommodations. The suites are available in five different sizes and fitted with glass doors and windows so they can see out and staff can easily check on the animals. For a dog that does better by not seeing other dogs, that can be arranged as well.

The area is climate controlled and soft music is filtered in along with television monitors tuned to Animal Planet or dog-friendly movies. There's also advanced



Wiggles Pet Resort owners Laura Laaman and her son, Chris, interact with some of the dogs in their care in one of the nine outdoor play areas.

HVAC air filtration and ventilation systems to not only keep the air fresh but to have the best air quality during the pandemic for the roughly 20 staff members.

Other amenities are baths with blueberry facials and healthy, seasonal dog treats.

Laaman said most of their business is local with dog owners from Putnam and northern Westchester, there are those who come from the city if they're headed out of town.

"They want the country, they want their dogs to get out and

enjoy the fresh air," Laaman said. "I think that's what they're looking for now, plus the training's so popular."

She is expecting that Wiggles will be busy during the upcoming Thanksgiving weekend as well as closer to Christmas and New Year's when traveling is popular.

"We try to do everything we can to make it as fun and as safe as possible," Laaman said.

For more information about Wiggles Pet Resort, call 845-628-0200 or visit www.wigglespetresort.com.

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Places to Dine After Winter Wonderland at Kensico Dam Plaza

The eighth glittering season of Westchester's Winter Wonderland gets underway this Friday and runs through Jan. 2 at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla. The second year of the pandemic-inspired drive-through version of the event is expected to draw thousands for a big dose of holiday cheer.

The 1.2-mile drive begins at 5 p.m. on weekdays and 6 p.m. on weekends and is chock full of festive seasonal attractions. Tickets are \$25 off peak and \$35 during peak times per car.

This year Wegman's Market added Ned & Albert's Holiday Treat Bag as an option, and each carload is promised a personal visit by Santa.

For additional info and reservations: 914-231-4600, or visit www.winterwonderland.com

If all this makes you hungry, here are some nearby dining suggestions for everyone in the family. It's a busy time of the year, so reserve ahead if you can.

Mulino's of Westchester

It is over the top at Mulino's of Westchester in White Plains during the holidays, and it begins with the bright glittering lights at the entranceway. The annual Christmas holiday fest lasts through the season and it's a sight to behold for the whole family. The fountain garden is beautiful as is the lavish dining room and bar and lounge.

General Manager GianLuigi (Gimmy) Cavagna and his staff are keeping the premises as spiffy as ever with Christmas decorations, life-size toy soldiers, bursting colorful floral displays and handsome multilevel seating area. A special holiday menu is served.

Mulino's of Westchester is located at 99 Court St, in White Plains. Open seven days. Valet parking. Reservations advised. Info: 914-761-1818 or visit www.mulinosny.com.

Valhalla Crossing

Personable owner Stan Chelluck and his wife operate this bustling vintage space next to Valhalla's Metro-North station. Over the years, Chelluck has spruced up the railroad cars, facade and sweeping bar.

The kitchen serves an eclectic menu of American tavern specialties – wings, sliders, burgers with choice of toppings, mac and cheese, chicken pot pie and fresh salads and wraps. A children's menu is offered as well. Portions are generous.

Valhalla Crossing is located at 2 Cleveland St. in Valhalla just off the Taconic Parkway and across from Broadway. Open Tuesday through Sunday 12 to 9 p.m. for lunch and dinner. Free parking. Info: 914-682-4076 or visit www.valhallacrossing.com.

Village Creamery & Sweet Shop

Walk down Broadway in Valhalla and stop at the most colorful shop in the hamlet – Village Creamery & Sweet Shop. Owners John and Kristin Caldarola have done an



By Morris Gut

outstanding job decorating the store with charming frontage. It is decked out with a palette of colors highlighting all their tempting homemade ice cream. There are also soft serve, Italian ices, crepes and waffles, candy, espresso, latte and coffees. There are acai bowls now, too, and a few tables out front. It's a good place to cheer up and relax with delicious treats.

Village Creamery & Sweet Shop is located at 32 Broadway in Valhalla. Info: 914-421-1300 or visit www.villagecreamerysweetshop.com.

The Beehive

The Beehive has been buzzing in Armonk for 15 years for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The comforting combination of eclectic specialties sprinkled with a tasty Greek influence keep patrons returning to this diner-esque experience.

Two favorites are the Greek spanakopita, with fresh dill, spinach and feta cheese wrapped in country phyllo, and turkey chop chop Cobb salad loaded with cubed roast turkey, avocado, egg, bacon, tomato and creamy ranch dressing on the side.

The Beehive is located at 30 Old Route 22 in Armonk. Curbside pick-up and take-out available. Open daily. Info: 914-765-0688 or visit www.beehive-restaurant.com.

Alex's Bar & Grille

Proprietor Alex Ahmetaj updated the menu at his restaurant and bar and lounge offering big cuts of aged steaks and chops along with generously served northern Italian/continental fare. The handsome dining room is split into cozy sections with white tablecloths, colorful de Villeneuve paintings and warm candlelight.

Mediterranean clay-colored banquettes and chairs complement wood walls and plush beige curtained windows.

Check out specialties such as pan-fried calamari with hot cherry peppers; linguini alla vongole; a delicious fresh branzino prepared

tableside; classic veal parmigiana; grilled filet mignon; New York sirloin steak, a hefty rib-eye; and pork chops.

Alex's Bar & Grille is located at 577 N. Broadway in North White Plains. Info: 914-358-1444 or visit www.alex577.com.

Freebird Kitchen and Bar

I have been enjoying my visits to Freebird Kitchen and Bar this past year, devouring fried calamari, meaty racks of baby back ribs, Cobb salad, spicy chicken wings and crispy Brussels sprouts. I've had shrimp and grits and braised short ribs, too. The cooking here is quite satisfying, and all done with a friendly southern theme. Portions are ample and shareable.

The seasonal lighting and those artsy birds hanging from the ceiling in the dining room give it a magical atmosphere. There is a seasonal rooftop and Sunday night jam sessions. Happy hours are Tuesday to Thursday from 4 to 6 p.m. and Friday from



The spanakopita at The Beehive in Armonk.



A full rack of ribs with corn on the cob, cole slaw and mac and cheese at Freebird Kitchen and Bar in White Plains.



Valhalla Crossing, one of the many eateries to dine at if you're headed to Westchester's Winter Wonderland this holiday season.

2 to 6 p.m.

Freebird is located at 161 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Open Tuesday through Sunday for lunch, dinner and weekend brunch. Info: 914-607-2476 or visit www.freebirdkitchenandbar.com.

Sergio's Restaurant & Bar

The Argentinian-bred Arias and Pennacchio families have been in the restaurant business for many years. If you follow the family tree, you know that Chef Sergio Arias and his wife Sylvia had operated Piccola Trattoria in Dobbs Ferry.

Sergio's in Valhalla is in a free-standing house on Columbus Avenue. It is a comforting bar and restaurant serving a traditional Italian-American menu. The general manager and partner is the seasoned Jerry Zonghetti.

Fine choices are the P.E.I. mussels prepared with onions, celery, tomatoes, basil and garlic sauce or the breast of chicken Milanese topped with fresh salad. I have enjoyed their sturdy house-made lasagna with ground meat, parmesan, oozing mozzarella, herbs and marinara sauce. There was more than enough to share.

Sergio's Restaurant & Bar is located at 301 Columbus Ave. in Valhalla. Free

parking. Info: 914-946-3580 or visit www.sergiosrestaurantandbar.com.

Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar

Host and actor John Solo of the bustling Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar in White Plains offers some good holiday deals: a three-taco lunch for \$9.95, 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.

You can also try the new birria tacos, cheeseburger tacos and house specialties like chicken wings, carnitas, garlic shrimp and steak fajita. Enjoy one of their frozen drinks, too.

Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar is a playful, colorful restaurant located at 166 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Open seven days. Happy hours. Festive party facilities. Info: 914-461-3959 or visit www.cantinany.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.



Is Our Family (Legally) Safe?

For LGBTQ+ parents, the path to legally-recognized parentage isn't always linear



By Bailey Hosfelt

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Ron Poole-Dayán, Executive Director of Men Having Babies (MHB), had to travel out of New York State to start a family with his husband through gestational surrogacy. Poole-Dayán's twins, now 20 years old, were born in 2001 by a gestational carrier in New Hampshire, which came with its own set of complications.

"There were added fees and costs associated with the fact that we were in one state, she was in another state, and the egg donor was in a third state," Poole-Dayán said.

In the two decades since his children

were born, Poole-Dayán saw no change to the law that made gestational surrogacy illegal in New York, despite significant lobbying from LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations and individuals or couples looking to start families using the fertility approach. In February, then-governor Andrew Cuomo announced that the Child-Parent Surrogacy Act (CPSA) — which would, at last, allow gestational surrogacy in New York State — officially took effect.

Prior to the CPSA, LGBTQ+ couples, single individuals, or different-sex couples struggling with fertility in New York looking to have a child through gestational surrogacy needed to travel out of state like Poole-Dayán and his husband did.

"The bill is going to make it a more civil, better human experience, as well as less financially taxing," Poole-Dayán said.

The cost of surrogacy can range from \$100,000 to \$150,000. In states like California, where surrogates are in particularly high demand, the cost can be even higher. Traveling out of state may put the cost — already out of reach for many LGBTQ+ couples — even further out of their budget.



"A large state like New York being added to this pool should really help," Poole-Dayán said.

Although the law was signed in April 2020 and took effect in February 2021, there are some regulations that have not yet been finalized and the process of approving surrogacy agencies and clinics is going very slowly, Poole-Dayán said.

In fact, there has not yet been a single couple who have been able to take advantage of the new legislation.

Poole-Dayán said the recent change of gubernatorial hands and COVID-19 may be impacting this pace ...

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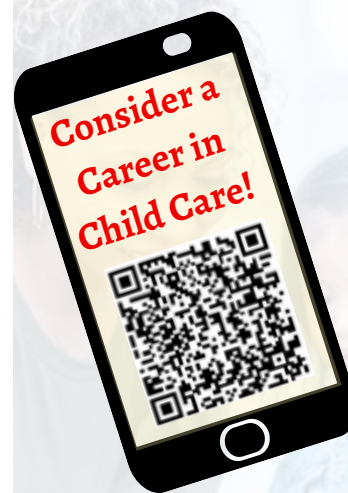
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Exploring the Pairing of White Wine With Your Meal



By Nick Antonaccio

Do you prefer red wine or white wine? This is the universal opening question when the topic of enjoying a glass of wine arises. Be it at home, a party or a restaurant, it helps define us, not only for our choice of beverage, but as a symbol of our diet preferences, even our personalities.

Overall, red wine is generally the beverage of choice with meals, in many cases without regard to what is on our dinner plates.

Do you order red wine at a restaurant before you even look at the menu? Many diners rationalize their pairing of red wine with nearly all menu choices by considering red wine as a "safe" pairing choice over white. The justification is that red wine is more compatible with a variety of dishes. While this is an easy trap to fall into, it is a common mistake many hurried diners make. I find this hard to understand, since many wine consumers have long abandoned the ages-old rules of pairing wine with food.

Do you revert to red wine because your reference point for whites is Sauvignon Blanc? Certainly, Chardonnay is on the wane as a dinner wine, but there are numerous choices that pair excellently with a broad

cross-section of menu choices.

White wine in the last decade has been making slow inroads as a palate pleaser and a natural pairing wine for many cuisines. Its natural acidity is the best foil for spicy dishes and dishes with clean, simple flavors. For some, these dishes have been paired best with a Pinot Noir, typically French or Oregonian. I refer to it as the chameleon wine, compatible with a number of flavors, aromas, textures and levels of heat. But Pinots have limitations when paired with dishes with elevated components of spice and/or heat.

Here, then, are my suggestions for white wines that broaden your wine alternatives and satisfy your taste buds and olfactory senses.

1. My go-to wine for many difficult pairings is sparkling wine. Its acidity, minerality and palate-clearing bubbles consistently complement Asian and Indian dishes. I've even enjoyed it (once, as an experiment) with an unadulterated, unadorned steak and it worked. A soft French Champagne with a copious amount of bubbles

cut the fat that coated my tongue with each bite and kept my taste buds spry rather than muting them as a red wine might.

2. In the last five years an increasing variety of whites from the northern regions of Spain has hit our shores. While perfectly matched for simple fish dishes, they pair equally well with simple pork and veal dishes

or any dish with a light, bright sauce. Try an Albarino, Verdejo or Godello.

3. There is one Chardonnay I indulge in for food pairings: Chablis, from the extreme northwestern area of Burgundy. Its genes are Chardonnay, but that is well disguised. Its crisp minerality is refreshing, in contrast to fruit bombs from other wine regions. Try it with pureed vegetable soups or a hearty fish stew.

4. I would be remiss to pass over Riesling, which has long lived with a bad rap as a sweet wine. I encourage those who feel this way to try one of the drier styles from the Alsace region of France. They will enhance your pleasure quotient in bold, flavorful dishes such as Asian duck rolls or roast goose.

5. The Loire Valley in central France produces fine whites that pair well with a broad spectrum of charcuterie, terrines and cheeses. Sancerre, of course, but also try Vouvray and Muscadet. Both offer unique flavor profiles, with balanced acidity, that are a perfect match for fatty foods.

Do you still feel compelled to take the easy route when deciding on wine to pair with food? Many restaurants have stepped up their game on their wines-by-the-glass lists. The next time you dine out, spend a few extra minutes perusing the whites on these lists. Experiment with an unknown grape, paired with an hors d'oeuvres or



appetizer. You may find a wine that is the perfect accompaniment for your next meal.

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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