

**Illegal Firearms
Seized in
Police Raids...**
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February 1 - February 7, 2022

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 546

WCC to Lease More Space at Cross County in Yonkers

By Rick Pezzullo

Westchester Community College has reached a deal to expand its current space at Cross County Center in Yonkers.

The college will occupy the third floor of the new Target building and is expanding its footprint at Cross County Center by 30,000 square feet to allow for more extensive classroom operations, including additional

degree and certification programs.

"Cross County Center has always been so much more than a top shopping destination," said Craig Deitelzweig, president and CEO of Marx Realty, co-owner of the open-air shopping center. "We are committed to a future-focused approach that fills a need in the region for an entertainment and lifestyle destination with offerings that range from

continued on page 2



Existing location where Westchester Community College operates at Cross County Center in Yonkers.

County Employees Donate to Fire Victims



Westchester County employees came together after learning of the devastating fire in the Bronx on Jan. 9, claiming the lives of 17 people, including eight children. Donation boxes were set up at the Michaelian Office Building in White Plains, district offices of the Department of Social Services and Department of Public Safety Headquarters. The weeklong drive that took place from Jan. 14-21, and garnered more than 800 pounds of donations including diapers, blankets, pillows, clothes, toiletries and non-perishable food.

Former Legislator Wishnie Named Emergency Services Commissioner

Former Westchester County Legislator and current Acting County Emergency Services Commissioner Richard Wishnie has been named as the department's permanent commissioner – removing the 'acting' title after more than a year of service in that role.

Wishnie had held the acting post since November 2020 when County Executive George Latimer named him and Susan Spear to lead the county's emergency services response.

"Richard is a true Westchester public servant. He has dedicated his life to serving the people of this county, and in this past year, has shown how far his service is willing to go," Latimer stated. "As the county worked to combat and mitigate COVID-19, Richard worked closely with the team at DES to ensure all municipalities had supplies, answers and support from our administration."

Wishnie was elected to the Westchester County Board of Legislators for six terms beginning in 1993. He retired in December 2005. Wishnie has an extensive record



Richard Wishnie

of public service in Westchester County. Prior to becoming a County Legislator, he served the Town of Ossining as councilman from 1976-1979 and as supervisor from

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ArtsWestchester Offering \$25,000 Grant to Advance Equity

ArtsWestchester in White Plains is seeking the public's nominations for a \$25,000 grant that rewards exemplary leadership in advancing social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility through the arts.

Members of the community may nominate non-profit cultural organizations that serve Westchester County for programs, projects, or policies which they believe demonstrate

outstanding leadership in advancing social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Organizations may also self-nominate.

The nomination deadline is February 25. Nomination rules and the nomination form are posted at: <https://artswestchester.submittable.com/submit/215631/2022-artswestchester-advancing-equity-award>.

WCC to Lease Space at Cross County Center in Yonkers

continued from page 1

dining and entertainment to traditional retail spaces. We are thrilled to see existing tenants such as Westchester Community College committing to a long-term presence that will ultimately bring added foot traffic to the Center while providing much-needed services to the community."

WCC's expansion comes a year after Marx Realty announced Target's 40-year, 130,000-square-foot lease, the largest retail lease in the tri-state area in 2020. Target at Cross County will be the retailer's first location in Yonkers when it opens in late 2022. The moves are part of a multi-phase plan focused on furthering the center's

'town square' concept.

"Retailer confidence in Cross County Center is bolstered by our efforts to bring a diverse mix of tenants to the location and provide an environment designed for success well into the future," said Jim Stifel, chief investment officer of Benenson Capital, the center's other co-owner "We are committed to giving both tenants and visitors an experience like none other and offering a wide variety of shopping, dining and entertainment options to maintain the high levels of foot traffic we experienced even as the nation was just emerging from the pandemic."

BJ's Wholesale Club Coming to Crossroads Center in Greenburgh

By Rick Pezzullo

Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner revealed Monday town officials were recently informed that BJ's Wholesale Club will be filling the former Kmart space in the Crossroads Shopping Center on Route 119.

BJ's will be the first store in a decade in the center to sell groceries since Waldbaum's closed in 2012.

"Many residents of Fairview who live near the Crossroads Shopping Center have asked in the past for a store that will sell groceries at this location. Having BJ's at this location

will be helpful to seniors who live on or off of Manhattan Ave and who don't have cars," Feiner stated. "The BJ's club should be a quality-of-life enhancement. And will help our residents save money on groceries and other items."

I am pleased that Crossroads Shopping Center is bringing this use to the center and am additionally encouraged by several other vacancies that have been filled or will soon be filled in the center," Feiner added.

BJ's is planning to start construction soon with a targeted opening at the end of this year, according to Feiner.

Former Legislator Wishnie Named Emergency Services Commissioner

continued from page 1

1979-1983. He has served as Chairman of the Ossining Open Door Health Centers, Westchester Health Source, the Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps, and the Ossining Red Cross Disaster Team.

"Working in the Latimer Administration with Deputy Director Susan Spear and the dedicated team at DES has been my utmost privilege. I am thrilled to continue this role on a permanent basis so we can serve the people of Westchester," stated Wishnie, whose appointment must be confirmed by the Board of Legislators.

The Department of Emergency Services consists of four divisions: Fire Services, Communications (60 Control), Emergency

Management (OEM) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The Fire Services division is comprised of four units: fire training, fire inspection, special operations and fire prevention and protection. The division administers, coordinates and maintains the fire training program that is available to Westchester County's 58 fire departments.

The Emergency Communications Center commonly referred to as "60 Control" provides primary dispatch services for 52 fire departments and 32 EMS agencies in Westchester. The center is staffed 24 hours, seven days a week to handle fire and EMS mutual-aid requests going in and out of the county.

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WINE OF THE YEAR

2020 Anne Pichon Grenache Noir



Take what you think you know about Grenache and throw it out the window. As this wine opens, initial dark berry flavors meld into a true jam flavor with floral notes and bitter cranberry. It has such a divine, full mouthfeel that tricks you into not initially noticing that it's more 'dry' than not. While there a lot of wines that showcase the best flavors of their region, Anne Pichon Grenache Noir did it best this year. Cheers!

\$14⁹⁷





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Dan's Wine of the Year

2014 Casa Santos Lima Reserva



The nose on this wine bursts through the seems with dark fruit notes earthy spice-tinged berries that remind you the wine is old school. The palate brings Very complex on the palate with coconut, blackberry, jam and dried fruit, prune and fig. The addition of the Syrah in this blend is what separates this wine from anything ordinary.

\$11⁹⁷

Jason's Wine of the Year

2019 Oak Farm Tievoli Cabernet Sauvignon



Deep garnet in color, this Cabernet Sauvignon is composed of complex aromas of black currant, blueberry, cedar, and floral characteristics. The wine is full bodied with echoing aromas on the palate. The finish is abundant in textured tannins, yet smooth and velvety.

\$14⁹⁷

Suburban's Sparkling Wine of the Year

NV Isotta Manzoni Prosecco Rose



Subtle and fresh aromas with hints of small red berries, rose, and pomegranate. On the palate it is silky and full with elegant flavors of strawberry and crushed violets, finishing with well-balanced minerality. You will have no problem finishing the bottle once it's opened. This is crushable!

\$13⁹⁷


Tom's Wine of the Year

2018 Laurent Combier Crozes Hermitage











Mesmerizing deep dark ruby with dark pink shimmers along the rim of the wine. This Syrah emits a nose of black cherry jam, figs, black currants, and subtle notes of bacon fat, cured meat, and violets. The palate is rich with bright and juicy blackberries, blueberries, and cranberries. Black peppercorns, dried thyme, and subtle notes of river rocks breakthrough the berry medley. A lingering finish of dried blueberries and cacao finalize this wine.

\$19⁹⁷



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State Mask Mandate Remains in Effect Through Feb. 10 as Cases Recede

By Martin Wilbur

Even as COVID-19 cases across the area and the state continue their sharp decline, Gov. Kathy Hochul last Friday renewed the public indoor mask mandate statewide at least through Feb. 10.

Hochul said the state is on the right path but urged New Yorkers to get through the first part of February to make sure the virus has been put on its heels.

"If we continue on this rapid trend downward, we'll be in a good place," the governor said. "If it levels off or something else happens, I need that flexibility and I'm going to continue to reserve that. But

also, people are waiting to hear when some of these restrictions can be lifted. And so we're going to continue with our flexibility."

Statewide cases on Sunday fell to 5,115, a dizzying but welcome fall from the just over 90,000 cases on Jan. 7. The statewide positivity rate was at 5.6 percent, down from 8.5 percent, a week earlier.

Hochul pointed to the COVID-19-related hospitalizations at 7,191, a strong improvement from about 12,600 during the height of the surge earlier in January, but not low enough to start loosening restrictions.

Deaths, which are a lagging indicator, continue to spike with single-day statewide Omicron totals as high as 171 last week.

Continued vocal opposition to Hochul's mask mandate seemed to tick up a notch after early last week when a state Supreme Court justice in Nassau County struck down enforcement of the mandate. However, the state on appeal was able to get a stay of that decision, at least temporarily.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said Monday he believes that sometime during the month of February the mask mandate will be lifted, provided the reduction in new transmissions continues its downward trend.

"The numbers are getting to the point where the mask mandate will most likely be lifted (during February) or modified in some behavior," Latimer said. "It may stay

in effect on mass transit but lifted for everyday indoor settings."

He announced that his emergency order for Westchester will remain in effect through the end of February and likely not have to be renewed beyond that. The order doesn't mandate anything in particular but it highlights the urgency to heed public health officials' precautions to the public, Latimer said.

The sharp decline in cases seen throughout the state has been evident locally. Westchester, which had been over 20 percent during the height of the Omicron surge, fell on Saturday to 3.9 percent before ticking back up to 5.6 percent for Sunday.

Active cases are at 6,000 as of Saturday, just one-sixth of the number that had been recorded about three weeks earlier, Latimer said.

The county recorded 324 COVID-19 hospitalizations on Sunday, just under half the Omicron-fueled high of 677 on Jan. 10.

Like the rest of the state, deaths have been spiraling. From Jan. 3 until last weekend there were nearly 200 virus-related deaths in Westchester, and with an average of five to seven fatalities every night over the past week, it appeared likely the county would reach that number by the end of Monday evening.



By comparison, there were just seven COVID-19 deaths countywide throughout the entire month of November and 60 in December.

Latimer said the best protection is getting vaccinated if a person hasn't already done so, and a third shot, if eligible for a booster.

"I think it's once again reinforcing the fact that the Omicron variant for those who have gotten the disease – I have, (Deputy County Executive) Ken (Jenkins) has, others have – when you're vaccinated it's a mild case; when you're not vaccinated it's as serious as any other variant."

In Putnam County, Sunday's infection rate dipped to 3.6 percent, down from 7.3 and 6.6 percent on Friday and Saturday, respectively.

Hochul said she believes that the downward movement of the caseloads is at least in part due to New Yorkers wearing masks in public.

"That has been a critical tool in driving those numbers down," she said. "They could be even more out of control, but we're going to continue doing this not by months, not by three months, we're going to do it every two weeks now. So we can be ready to suspend, give businesses the notice they've been waiting for."

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No. Castle Denounces Harckham Accessory Dwelling Unit Legislation

By Martin Wilbur

North Castle officials are prepared to fight a local state senator's bill that would allow for as-of-right accessory dwelling units statewide by galvanizing other municipalities to raise opposition to their state representatives and Gov. Kathy Hochul.

Last week, the Town Board unanimously passed a resolution denouncing bill S4547A, a measure that has been proposed by state Sen. Peter Harckham (D-Lewisboro) which would allow at least one accessible dwelling unit on every residential parcel and parcels that have residential uses.

North Castle Supervisor Michael Schiliro said his colleagues from other local governments from around the state have begun sounding the alarm because the possibility of the law being adopted increased when Hochul included the bill in her 2023 fiscal year budget.

The resolution approved by North Castle last week stated that the law would usurp municipal home rule and prohibit communities to craft zoning to protect the environment, infrastructure, school enrollment and emergency services.

"This is probably one of the worst pieces of legislation I've ever seen in my life, since I've been on the Town Board," Schiliro said. "It's just terrible."

Board members argued that they are not shirking their responsibility for providing a diversified housing stock. The resolution pointed to North Castle's adoption of its 1984 accessory dwelling unit regulation, the

"This is probably one of the worst pieces of legislation I've ever seen in my life."

--NORTH CASTLE SUPERVISOR
MICHAEL SCHILIRO

creation of its middle-income unit program in 1994 and passage of its affordable housing ordinance based on Westchester County's model in 2014.

While the law doesn't explicitly mention elimination of single-family zoning, similar to what has been passed in Minneapolis and portions of Oregon and California, Schiliro said the legislation would almost eliminate it.

"We're all for affordable housing, we're all for supporting these where they exist, or if you want to put new ones in," he said. "But it's home rule. We make the zoning decisions. We have choice over parking, sewer, water, septic, setbacks, variances, all those things. It goes out the window."

Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto urged residents to contact their state representatives. The town will be working with officials from other towns who feel similarly to fight the law.

"Every elected official in Albany needs to get this resolution as well as every other municipality that feels as strongly as we do," DiGiacinto said. "We really need to rally the troops all over the state."

Harckham's office pointed to the senator's

statement that was released last Thursday in response to former Nassau County executive and current Congressman Tom Suozzi, who similarly criticized the law last week. Suozzi is challenging Hochul for the Democratic nomination for governor.

Harckham called Suozzi's opposition to the legislation in his quest to win the nomination "shameful."

"This legislation, which I introduced last year with Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, will benefit our communities by providing seniors with added income to pay their bills and gray in place while also making affordable housing available to first responders, teachers, working families and young professionals," Harckham stated. "For Suozzi, the 'single family zoning' that he espouses is actually a dog-whistle for the exclusionary zoning that leads to segregated communities and a lack of affordable housing."

Assemblyman Chris Burdick (D-Bedford) who represents North Castle said while he shares Harckham's concerns about the shortage of affordable housing there are changes that can be made. He said he has proposed to Harckham and Epstein revisions in the law that grandfather in municipalities that have affordable housing ordinances on the books.

"I think we have to be very cautious about taking action where you're going to upend what local municipalities are doing," Burdick said.

For North Castle, one serious issue it faces is the shortage of parking in the hamlet of North White Plains, caused in part by illegal



North Castle Supervisor Michael Schiliro and the Town Board came out swinging last week against a bill introduced by Sen. Peter Harckham in the state Senate to allow for widespread accessory apartments.

apartments and small lot sizes. Director of Planning Adam Kaufman said the law would exacerbate the problem because it allows for the conversion of existing garages into accessory units. One provision allows for relaxing parking requirements unless it's more than a half-mile from a bus stop. Kaufman said.

Another allows for the conversion of empty office space into apartments, he said.

"I think this would fundamentally risk changing our town and towns like ours for the worse in a way that couldn't be fixed," said Councilman Matt Milim.

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Former Peekskill Councilwoman Agudelo Enters Assembly Race

By Rick Pezzullo

Vanessa Agudelo made history in 2017, at the age of 25, as the youngest person ever to be elected to the Peekskill Common Council. She made her presence felt by sometimes clashing with her Democratic colleagues on local, regional and global policy issues.

Her independent stances resulted in her being snubbed by Peekskill Democratic district leaders last year, forcing her to run for re-election on the independent Progress 4 Peekskill ticket where she was the only active candidate following a Democratic primary defeat.

Her re-election bid fell short, but now Agudelo is setting her sights on making a difference statewide.

In an exclusive interview Monday with The Examiner, Agudelo revealed she was launching a campaign for the 95th Assembly District seat being vacated after 30 years by the retiring Sandy Galef.

A first-generation Colombian-American, Agudelo, 29, is the New York Immigration Coalition's Hudson Valley member engagement manager. She said she has her hands on the pulse of issues affecting residents in the district, which currently includes Peekskill, Cortlandt, Ossining, Philipstown and Kent.

"I think what sets me apart are my years of commitment and advocacy and work in the community," Agudelo said. "I've lived and am living many of the struggles that so many families in the district are facing. I'm really excited about the opportunity and potential for

transformative change that we can be part of. We need an advocate who is not going to stay silent and demand that real action be taken."

Agudelo, who has drawn comparisons to Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, is the fourth Democrat this month to announce their intentions to succeed Galef.

Former Peekskill Mayor Andre Rainey, who led the council during Agudelo's term and was her running mate in 2017, was the first out of the gate, followed by Ossining Town Supervisor Dana Levenberg, who served first as Galef's communications director and then chief of staff prior to being elected supervisor in 2015.

Westchester County Legislator Colin Smith, who was re-elected to a second term last year, later joined the fray.

"I think it's really interesting that everyone who is running is an elected official or formerly was an elected official," Agudelo remarked. "I know what it takes to run for office. I know the sacrifices that are made when one is a public official. Twenty-nine years is a long time. I think she (Galef) realizes we're at a moment where we need real change in our district. There is a yearning in our community and our district for change and there is a lack of understanding how to get there."

With the New York Immigration Coalition, Agudelo said she has worked alongside coalition partners to pass the Greenlight bill in 2019, giving all residents in New York State access to driver's licenses regardless of immigration status. She also led the organization's campaign to pass the Excluded Workers Fund, a \$2.1 billion investment to



Former Peekskill councilwoman Vanessa Agudelo will become the fourth Democrat to vie for the party's nomination to succeed outgoing Assemblywoman Sandy Galef in the 95th Assembly District.

provide pandemic relief for those unable to collect unemployment.

She said those and other efforts have made her familiar with some of the pressing issues facing residents throughout the state.

Agudelo emphasized her top priority would be tackling the housing crisis. She has insisted that Peekskill is facing a housing affordability threat that is creating financial hardships for

residents and pricing out many others. She has also maintained six out of 10 residents in the community are living in housing they can't afford and 40 percent are paying half of their income on housing costs.

She also noted Peekskill has the highest rate of foreclosures in Westchester since 2018.

"We have to act urgently and we have to act now," stressed Agudelo, who noted she was only recently able to afford to move out of her parents' home. "We have to guarantee housing as of right. I know the horror it's causing for some of my family and friends."

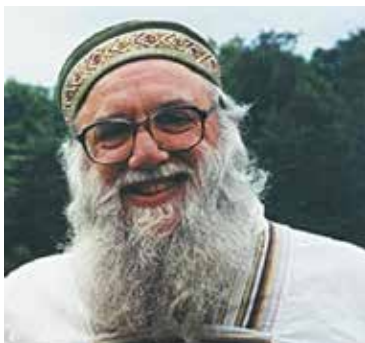
Former Ossining village trustee Omar Herrera expressed his excitement for Agudelo's candidacy, mentioning her support a few years ago in Ossining's fight to pass the Emergency Tenant Protection Act.

"She has been a voice for many marginalized people and also for the community as a whole," Herrera stated. "The 95th Assembly District does not need another institutionalized person from the party establishment, but one who is an independent thinker and unapologetic when fighting towards true equity and basic human rights like housing, water, education and health care."

Agudelo said she has already secured about \$25,000 in financial commitments from supporters as she focuses on winning the June 28 Democratic primary, which likely will decide who will win the seat.

"This is absolutely a people-powered campaign," Agudelo said. "What I'm trying to build on is nothing new. The power lies within the people."

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Tree Mitigation an Unresolved Issue in Mt. Kisco Solar Farm Debate

By Martin Wilbur

The attorney for the applicant proposing a Mount Kisco solar farm appealed to the village's Planning Board last week to move the project forward as questions about mitigating tree loss on the 25-acre property persists.

William Null, representing SCS Sarles in its bid to install a solar array on a portion of the parcel at 180 S. Bedford Rd., called for the board to make a negative declaration under the state Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) because nothing new would be learned by the process.

SCS Sarles is projecting the removal of 546 trees from the site to accommodate the more than 5,000 solar panels. The board must determine how and where it wants the applicant to replace the trees.

"I don't think there's any more information that we can give you regarding such trees in a (Draft Environmental Impact Statement)," Null said. "So there's no benefit to doing an EIS on the basis of a claim that there's a significant adverse impact on the removal of trees."

Over the past several months, SCS Sarles has made adjustments to its plan, including a slight reduction in the size of the array, moving it entirely out of the buffer and cutting down the number of trees that would be lost.

Complicating the situation for the board is the uncertainty surrounding Homeland Towers' proposed cell tower for another

portion of the same parcel. Homeland Towers application has stalled, as their representatives last appeared before the board last February. Over the past year, the company has been searching for a potential alternative site in the area but has also failed to stay up to date on its escrow account.

In September 2020, the board determined the two projects would be considered in tandem.

Last week, at the continuation of the public hearing on the solar farm, residents continued to urge the board to call for a positive declaration to force the most robust environmental review, if not reject the application.

Resident Nigel Sizer, a board member of Marsh Sanctuary, which borders the property, and a forest ecologist, said the board has discretion on the matter. He said the impacts of clear more than 500 trees would be felt for generations.

"Once this impact is done, it's done for many, many decades," Sizer said. "If the solar farm was done, it would take decades, decades, you will still see, a good ecologist will still see impacts of that 200 years later on that landscape."

Sidney Sicignano, a student at Fox Lane High School and a member of the school's Green Team, said she was saddened that the board appears to be on the path of approving the project. Alternative locations to place solar panels can be found in the area, she said.

"There are so many places in and around Mount Kisco where solar panels can be installed without cutting down those trees," Sicignano said. "Once the 500 trees will be cut down, they will be gone for good. Planting saplings in other places will not replace the big beautiful trees and all the soil and animals that depend on them."

Resident Anne Niemann was one of the speakers who called for a positive declaration because there have been countless environmental issues raised during the hearings, many of which have not been adequately addressed because they can't be properly mitigated.

"It is the last remaining open space in the village, something that should be of great pride and should be protected at all cost," she said.

Null said that representatives for the applicant have submitted about 700 pages of detailed analysis in addition to the Environmental Assessment Form, which is required under SEQRA.

"So it's not as if we submitted something and that's all there is on the record," Null said.

Board member Michael McGuirk said there are many issues to consider and tried to assure the public all of those will be given attention.

"I'm going to have a lot of questions," McGuirk said. "It's going to be a very robust process. I think our planner is going to present us with all the various questions that must be determined."

Board Chairman Michael Bonforte said he believes the outstanding issues can be addressed.

"I think there's a solution to be had on an outcome and we'll work toward that," he said.

The hearing was adjourned to next week's meeting, scheduled for Feb. 8.

Mt. Pleasant Library Seeks Public Input for Facilities Design

The Mount Pleasant Library Board is interested in collecting public feedback about the main library in Pleasantville and the branch library in Valhalla. Board members would like to know how you use the libraries and how you think the physical design of our library can be improved to better enjoy the spaces. As the board continues to work on the Master Plan, the goal is to design a multifunctional, resilient and sustainably built environment for the community.

The survey can be accessed through Feb. 20 on the library's website or calendar or by visiting <https://bit.ly/3nnNTyq>.

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School Districts Receive Direction on Acquiring Electric Buses

By Abby Luby

Replacing school buses that run on diesel fuel with electric buses just got a boost here in Westchester County.

Last week New York's chapter of Mothers Out Front hosted a two-hour webinar explaining how school districts could start the process to electrify their bus fleets.

Mothers Out Front is a national movement addressing climate change issues including transitioning from fossil fuels to clean renewable energy. Since 2018,

Mothers Out Front Westchester has been working on campaigns to avoid fossil fuels in new construction, switch from diesel to electric school buses and encourage civic engagement.

Earlier this month in her State of the State address, Gov. Kathy Hochul strongly advocated for having electric school bus fleets. She proposed legislation that would require all new school bus purchases to be electric by 2027 and all school buses in the state to be zero-emissions by 2035.

There are about 1,000 school buses operating in Westchester and most of them run on diesel fuel, which emits carbon loads into the atmosphere, adding to climate change. The exhaust spreads in and around the bus, but it can enter school buildings through air intakes, doors and open windows, which endanger students' health.

The newest research has found that children who ride on diesel buses are at higher risk of lung disease, including asthma,



bronchitis and cancer.

Co-hosting the webinar forum with Mothers Out Front was Westchester County Executive George Latimer and Peter McCartt, director of the county's Office of Energy and Sustainability. Latimer talked about the county's Bee-Line bus system that has 177 hybrid diesel-electric buses and is expecting 106 more later this year.

"What's great about the hybrid buses is you don't get a face full of diesel exhaust," said Latimer. "We have a tremendous opportunity to reduce our carbon footprint."

The school districts can learn from our experience and our mistakes."

Also on the webinar were state Sen. Peter Harkham (D-Lewisboro) and Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti (D-Pleasantville). Abinanti had obtained a state grant for the first electric school bus for the Public Schools of the Tarrytowns, which includes Sleepy Hollow. Their new electric buses are expected to be in operation this school year.

Also, discussing their district's electric bus pilot program were White Plains Superintendent Joseph Ricca and district Transportation Supervisor Sergio Alfonso.

School districts that have already started the process of obtaining electric school buses have found the permitting and

application processes complicated and time consuming. Because of the expense of acquiring the buses, approval from district voters is required.

Explaining some of the hurdles was Croton-Harmon Assistant Superintendent Denise Harrington-Cohen, who focused on state funding. Croton-Harmon was able to purchase three electric school buses with a \$120,000 grant from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

The district worked with Mothers Out Front and Croton100, which advocated for the clean and green buses. Patty Buchanan, co-founder of Croton100 presented an Excel spreadsheet with cost formulas and resources built in to help districts calculate the cost of owning electric buses. The tool is free, easy to use and available on the website of Croton100's umbrella organization, www.CURE100.org/resources.

Croton100 and parents in favor of the purchase emphasized that the electric school buses may cost more than diesel, but maintenance and fuel were less expensive.

The webinar attracted more than 35 participants as well as school district representatives from Elmsford, Ossining, Hendrick Hudson, Chappaqua, Irvington, Mount Vernon, Tarrytown and Scarsdale. Questions were directed to Northeast Regional Director of CALSTART Benjamin Mandel on behalf of NYSERDA's program on how to create successful applications for funds and the permitting process..

Mt. Pleasant Schools to Go Ahead With March 29 Athletics Bond

By Martin Wilbur

The Mount Pleasant School District is moving ahead with its \$9.7 million athletics referendum on Tuesday, Mar. 29 after the pandemic forced a similar vote to be canceled two years ago.

The Board of Education approved a resolution authorizing the vote at its Jan. 19 meeting.

While all five fields at the Westlake High School campus would undergo some improvements, much of the focus would be to upgrade the main

multipurpose field at the high school.

Work slated for the main field includes installation of an artificial surface, a resurfaced track that rings the field, LED lights for night games, a press box at the back of the existing bleachers and a concrete pad for utilities to provide necessary power for food trucks to operate.

There would also be various improvements to equipment and/or the surfaces at each of the complex's four other fields.

District officials have said that

the \$9,777,000 bond would not cause taxes to rise because of debt that is coming off the books within the next two years.

Voting will take place from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Westlake High School gymnasium on Mar. 29.

Legislators Forum

The district, in collaboration with the Valhalla School District, will be holding a virtual forum featuring representatives from every level of government to discuss a wide range of education-related issues on Thursday, Feb. 10 at 7 p.m.

The forum will be held virtually

over Zoom and moderated by the League of Women Voters. Mount Pleasant will be holding an in-person watch party, but the League of Women Voters will be running the forum via Zoom.

Among the topics expected to be addressed are school funding, Foundation Aid, COVID-19 guidance, unfunded mandates, student health, mental health and wellness, extracurriculars and energy and environmental issues.

Scheduled to participate are Congressman Mondaire Jones, state senators Peter Harkham

and Shelley Mayer, Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, County Executive George Latimer, County Legislator Margaret Cunzio and Mount Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi.

To register for the Zoom, visit <https://bit.ly/LegislativeZoom>.

To submit a question, visit bit.ly/LegGatheringQuestion.

To register for the watch party, visit bit.ly/MtPleasantWatchPartyRSVP.

For more information, go to the Mount Pleasant School District's website at <https://www.mtplcsd.org/>

Mt. Pleasant Residents Able to Enroll in Community Solar Starting Feb. 15

Mount Pleasant residents can enroll in the town's Community Solar program beginning Feb. 15.

The enrollment process is an online application. The link to enroll will be made available on the town's website on Feb. 15 and will be e-blasted to all residents at that time. Enrollment in the program is on a first-come, first-served basis and will close on Mar. 15.

The town is wrapping up installation of the solar panels at Town Hall and is in the midst of installing them at the Community Center. The installation has been completed at the Highway Department.

These projects are designated as Community Solar projects, a legislative construct that is implemented in New York by local utilities and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). Community Solar allows consumers to participate in the construction of solar power energy facilities by entering into a subscription agreement with a project developer. For the three projects constructed on town facilities, the local project developer is Con Edison Solutions.

Under the program's rules, consumers who subscribe to the Community Solar projects earn a credit on their utility bill

for their participation in the program. The consumer/subscriber retains 10 percent of the credit as a savings to their utility bill. Participation in the program will be reflected on your Con Edison utility bill. Subscribers can terminate their subscription and participation with 90 days' prior notice.

Enrolled residents will start to receive credits on their Con Edison utility bill about three months following completion on the Community Center and interconnection acceptance by the utility. Completion of the project is expected during the second quarter of 2022.

As a result of the town's commitment to

creating a more sustainable environment for its residents and hosting the Community Solar farms, town residents are able to contribute to an environmental improvement to the community that is equivalent to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of more than three million miles driven; CO2 emissions from the 137,000 gallons of gasoline consumed; or carbon sequestered by about 1,500 acres of U.S. forests, for each of the 25 years the projects are in operation.

Please contact the town supervisor's office with any questions at 914-742-2337.

Eleven Charged in Police Raid, More Than 100 Illegal Weapons Seized

By Rick Pezzullo

A six-month, multi-police agency investigation led to the seizure of more than 100 illegal weapons and the arrest of 11 individuals in Westchester and Putnam counties last week.

Search warrants were executed Jan. 25 at eight locations in both counties by local, county and federal law enforcement investigators as part of an operation dubbed "Operation Casper" since it involved so-called ghost guns, which are weapons without serial numbers that can't be traced.

Rifles, handguns and high-capacity drum magazines, similar to what were used in the recent murders of two New York City police officers, were confiscated, along with several silencers, ballistic vests, counterfeit police shields and quantities of ammunition.

"It's a sobering reminder of what tools exist out there to commit crimes and commit deaths," Westchester County Executive George Latimer remarked at a Jan. 27 press briefing at the Westchester County Police Academy in Valhalla. He was accompanied by a large contingent of police officers from across the region and media were shown tables of weapons.

The probe was launched in June 2021 when police departments in Westchester, along with the Westchester District Attorney's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, created a task force to address an influx of ghost guns and other illegal firearms in the county. Detectives in the multiagency Real Time Crime Center, assisted by the FBI Safe Streets Task Force, New York City Police Department, Putnam Sheriff's Office and the Rockland County District Attorney's Office, were tasked with finding ways to reduce gun crimes and prevent violence.

"This doesn't happen overnight. It is a monumental task," said Westchester District Attorney Miriam Rocah. "There are too many guns on our streets, and they are getting into the wrong hands. We are not immune to gun violence. Any one of these guns could have wreaked havoc."

Of the weapons seized, at least 60 were discovered by North Castle police from a family at 3 Tallwoods Road. Theodore Brois, 67, was charged with first-degree criminal possession of a weapon for allegedly possessing at least 10 weapons. His wife, Helene Brois, 61, was charged with criminal possession of a firearm, while his son, Brandon Brois, 24, was charged with criminal possession of a weapon in the second and third degrees.

In Yorktown, Westchester County police arrested Christopher Canzone, 49, of 1700 Baptist Church Rd., on first-degree criminal possession of a weapon when about nine pistols and revolvers and seven assault rifles were seized.



Putnam County Sheriff Kevin McConville, left, speaks to Yorktown Police Chief Robert Noble at last week's press conference in Valhalla.

Yorktown police arrested Rogers Singleton, 40, of 2191 Crompond Rd., for criminal possession of a weapon and criminal possession of a controlled substance (cocaine).

"We need these criminals to serve hard time," Yorktown Police Chief Robert Noble said. "You just never know who you are pulling over. We live in a very safe community, but in every safe community there are a few bad apples."

In Carmel, the Putnam County Sheriff's Department recovered 22 illegal weapons from four individuals, according to Sheriff Kevin McConville.

"On these tables are examples of when law enforcement cooperate and collaborate," McConville said. "If we are able to continue this, you will see a reduction in violent crime."

The Sheriff's Department and FBI Safe Streets Task Force jointly charged Adam DiMaggio, 43, of 92 Lincoln Drive in Carmel, with the federal offense of unlawful possession or receipt of a firearm or ammunition by a prohibited person.

Meanwhile, the Sheriff's Department charged David Goldberg, 24, of 90 Bullethole Rd., with criminal possession of more than two handfuls of weapons, including an assault rifle; Jacob Rockover, 22, of 170 Dykeman Rd., with criminal possession of more than three weapons, including an assault rifle; and Andrew Lopez, 36, of 189 Fair St., with criminal possession of a loaded firearm.

Two other suspects were charged in Harrison and New Rochelle.

"We didn't just get guns off the street. We got them from people who aren't supposed to have them," Rocah said.



RICK PEZZULLO PHOTOS

A display of some of the more than 100 firearms that were recovered from last Tuesday's multiagency coordinated seizures of guns at eight locations throughout Westchester and Putnam counties.

Raid at Armonk House Unnerving But Public Was Never in Danger: Chief

By Martin Wilbur

An 8,400-square foot home within Whippoorwill Country Club is one of the more exclusive neighborhoods in Westchester County and may be the last place you would expect a police raid.

But on Jan. 25, North Castle police, along with personnel from a host of other law enforcement agencies, descended upon 3 Tallwoods Rd. in Armonk as part of a coordinated operation that seized more than 100 weapons, including many "ghost guns" – firearms without serial numbers for tracking – in eight locations across Westchester and Putnam counties.

The biggest recovery came at the four-bedroom, six-bathroom house where its residents, Theodore Brois, 67, his wife, Helene, 61, and their 24-year-old son Brandon were all arrested and charged with felonies. North Castle Police Chief Peter Simonsen said about 60 weapons were taken by authorities from the location along with various gun parts that could have potentially been used to build additional firearms.

The activity in an otherwise quiet area alarmed residents who saw the road blocked at about 9:15 a.m. and a massive police presence that included a hostage negotiating team and a police helicopter circling overhead.

"I understand people are surprised but we took great measures and great lengths to ensure that the public remained safe through the operation," Simonsen said.

Once the helicopter arrived and the suspects were arrested, North Castle sent out a Nixle message to alert residents of police activity and to reassure them they weren't in danger, he said.

As police were executing the search warrant, one resident on social media believed they heard police calling out a person's name on a bullhorn for them to surrender. The suspects were taken into custody without incident, Simonsen said. There were no injuries.

Simonsen said none of the extra assets that were brought in by police were needed to safely arrest the suspects. He said it was unknown why the family was stockpiling so many weapons.

Theodore Brois was charged with first-degree criminal possession of a weapon. His wife was charged with criminal possession of a firearm and their son faces second- and third-degree criminal possession of a weapon charges.

Police reopened the road at about 10:50 a.m.

Simonsen credited the FBI, the county police and the many other agencies involved for a successful conclusion.

"This was an outstanding collaboration and was very successful," he said. "We live in a world where people and manufacturers can create firearms on something that occurred in the past. In law enforcement, we need to adjust and adapt to obtain those firearms that are part of the problem."

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Letters to the Editor

There’s No Other Way to Put It: January 6 Was a Violent Coup Attempt

The attacks on Pearl Harbor and the World Trade Center (WTC) on 9/11 were certainly monstrous and a serious threat to our nation with significant tragic loss of life. However, the attack on the Capitol Building on Jan. 6, 2021, was an even more serious existential threat to our nation’s democracy and Constitution. Our entire nation was united in opposition to the attackers of Pearl Harbor and WTC. But, amazingly, a portion of our nation’s population was in support of the seditious attempted violent overthrow of

our democratically elected government. Sadly, in his letter to the editor (“Descriptions of January 6 Capitol Rioters Are Exaggerated,” Jan. 11-17), Bruce Kelly doesn’t seem to recognize the traitorous threat posed by the thousands of violent Trump supporters who attempted to thwart the presidential election. And, for the first time in our nation’s history, prevent the peaceful transfer of power. It was an attempted fascist overthrow of a new administration – fairly elected by a more

than seven million-vote majority – aided and abetted by several dozen Republican traitors in Congress. And now the Justice Department has begun to hand down indictments of sedition on the organizers. If this isn’t an existential threat to this nation, I don’t know what is. Mr. Kelley draws a comparison between the violence that has occurred at some BLM and Anti-fa(scist) demonstrations with what he characterizes as the relatively “benign” attempt to overthrow our government on Jan. 6. While I unequivocally deplore any violence by anyone, the BLM and Anti-fa(scist) outrage was directed at the injustice of police brutality where it occurs. The Jan. 6/Trump outrage was directed at the U.S. Congress with an attempt to undermine the

sanctity of our democracy all in the interest of an egotist. My wife and I attended at least two dozen BLM demonstrations in New York City, Westchester and Putnam counties in 2021. And every one of them was peaceful. Mr. Kelly’s letter was full of many other errors and incorrect statements that space won’t allow me to address. But what should be understood was that what happened on Jan. 6, 2021, was the attempted violent overthrow of our government – and by default our democracy and Constitution. A manifestation of the growth of fascism on the right in this country.

Nick Kuvach
Putnam Valley

Opposition to No. Castle Deputy Supervisor Stipend Should Stop

As a third-generation citizen of the Town of North Castle, I was saddened by the vote regarding Councilwoman Barbara DiGiacinto’s stipend as our new deputy supervisor. When Supervisor Mike Schiliro recognized all the hard work Barbara has provided the town during her tenure as councilwoman, I cheered. The town is fortunate to have Barbara on the Town Board and even more fortunate to have her serving as deputy supervisor. I have had the honor of working with Barbara on several North White Plains issues. Since 2018 when I started following the Town Board meetings, I’ve been very impressed by the preparation and work that Barbara brings to every meeting. Barbara has a wealth of knowledge of our town. She is intelligent, kind and open-minded when she

approaches issues that are brought before the board. I don’t know how the town could allow Barbara not to be compensated for all the time and energy she will surely bring to her new position. It is my understanding that historically the deputy supervisor position in the Town of North Castle has received a stipend for his or her service. I can’t think of anyone more deserving of the position and the stipend than Barbara DiGiacinto. I hope those on the Town Board who voted against it will rethink their positions. Barbara DiGiacinto deserves our full support.

Nora Kanze Manuele
North White Plains

Yorktown’s Genie on Overlay Redistricting is Out of the Bottle

Despite the Yorktown Town Board’s assurances, I’m worried that overlay redistricting will negatively change Yorktown forever. If history repeats itself, the arbitrary fashion in which overlay redistricting and approvals will be doled out may ultimately lead to ethical abuses once again. It would be wise to remember that the last time Yorktown’s politicians instituted sweeping revitalization legislation the only clear financial winners arguably were the very

same local elected officials who pushed for it. Those politicians voted approval, then literally days later sold their own properties (which the new law made much more personally valuable) to waiting developers. Are allegations of conflicts of interest that plagued previous administrations now almost inevitable?

Stephen Brown
Yorktown Heights

Free Tax Preparation Services at Hart Library

The John C. Hart Memorial Library in Shrub Oak will offer free tax form-preparation assistance with preference for senior citizens starting Feb. 7. Certified volunteers from AARP will provide tax-preparation services on Mondays from Feb. 7 to Apr. 11 between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. The tax-preparation sessions are by appointment only; walk-ins will not be accepted. No visit is required if patrons are able to scan their documents at home and e-mail them to the volunteers. However, this season

volunteers can also prepare tax returns offsite if patrons come to the library one time for scanning documents and return a week or two later for completing the process and picking up a copy of the finished return. Same-day service is also possible as long as patrons meet with volunteers for an intake interview in the morning, leave their documents with the volunteers for a few hours and return later in the day to finish the process. Call 914-440-3086 to schedule an appointment.

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We’re happy to help spread the word about your community event. Please submit your information at least three weeks prior to your event and include the words “Calendar Submission” in your email subject line. Entries should be sent to Abby Luby at aluby@theexaminernews.com.com.

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www.TheExaminerNews.com

Print Team:

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

Rick Pezzullo
Editor
rpezzullo@theexaminernews.com

Ray Gallagher
Sports Editor
rgallagher@theexaminernews.com

Andy Jacobs
Sports Editor
ajacobs@theexaminernews.com

Annette Van Ommeren
Designer

Paul Cardi
Senior Account Executive
pcardi@theexaminernews.com

Jeff Ohlbaum
Senior Account Executive
johlbaum@theexaminernews.com

Ken Gulmi
Senior Account Executive
kgulmi@theexaminernews.com

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Digital Team:

Robert Schork
Digital Editorial Director
rschork@theexaminernews.com

Bailey Hosfelt
Reporter
bhosfelt@theexaminernews.com

Dean Pacchiana
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dpacchiana@theexaminernews.com



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Guest Column

Pastor Helps Ossining Hispanic Community Navigate Life's Challenges

People are working two jobs yet struggling to feed themselves and their families. Food is expensive. Apartment rents are expensive. COVID-19 is still very much a factor. A few are living on the streets. A trickle of new immigrants is coming in each month.

The Hispanic community in Ossining, sometimes unseen in a sea of white residents, is struggling to pull itself up.

Pastor Jeniffer Rodriguez of the First Presbyterian Church of Ossining is ready to talk with them about what they need.

Rodriguez, the first pastor of color leading the First Presbyterian congregation, devotes her efforts to taking care of the members of the church, both on a physical and a spiritual level.

She has lived with her parishioners' challenges for the five years she has led the church.

"Housing is a major concern. The rent is really high," Rodriguez said.

Rents can scale as high as \$1,700 to \$2,000 a month, she explained. Apartments are difficult to find.

"There's some affordable housing in the area, but not enough," Rodriguez said.

First Presbyterian works with the Interfaith Council for Action (IFCA) to find housing for residents. The IFCA's website



By Michael Gold

states the median rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Ossining is almost \$1,700 per month. That's affordable for a family with an income of \$67,000. The media income for Ossining renters is about \$47,000, IFCA states.

For many families, it's hard to maintain a house with such high rents and put food on the table. Typical jobs family members obtain include working in the local supermarkets and caring for the elderly.

Many people work two jobs, and they still struggle to buy food. Church food pantries have long lines.

This past Thanksgiving, Rodriguez pointed out, requests for holiday meals from the church doubled from the previous year, going from 150 to 300, an indication of the growing problem of food insecurity and hunger in the area.

The demand for housing is very high, in part because a number of families are moving to Ossining from New York City, seeking to leave behind rising rates of violent crime.

"They (the families) don't want to raise kids in the city," Rodriguez explained. "They don't feel

safe."

Additionally, a few immigrant families are coming to Ossining each month, from Ecuador, Honduras, El Salvador and other countries.



Jeniffer Rodriguez, pastor at the First Presbyterian Church in Ossining, helps her congregants and community in challenging times.

"Families come to our church, and they don't know what to do," Rodriguez said. "They know they can speak to me."

To help church members become more comfortable, First Presbyterian refers them to Neighbors Link, which provides bilingual education and cultural awareness training programs, "so they don't feel alone," she said.

For the children, the church, in cooperation with the Ossining School District, offers an early literacy program called First Steps for children up to three years old to get started on reading.

Rodriguez also explained that homelessness is a problem. Many of the

homeless people on the streets are Hispanic, the pastor said. The churches in the area provide shelter and meals to them.

On top of all that, COVID-19 cases until recently were rising. Some parents are not sending their children to school because they are afraid of the virus, Rodriguez pointed out. The majority of people in her congregation are vaccinated, she said, but some family members are resistant to getting the shot. She has a lot to say about vaccine resisters.

"God created humanity," Rodriguez explained. "God gave us science to have a better life. That's part of God's creation, too. Why wait? You need to get vaccinated."

Rodriguez arrived in the U.S. from the Dominican Republic in 2004, after getting her college degree in communications.

"My mom told me I couldn't go to the U.S. unless I graduated college," she said.

She lived with her father in Teaneck, N.J., where she became involved with a church. At a church conference, she met a woman who told her, "We need you."

Rodriguez said at that moment she thought, "There is something God is telling me."

The church holds bilingual worship services. In addition to its Spanish-speaking population, First Presbyterian has congregants from Ghana, Cameroon and Bulgaria.

"We have music from all over the world," Rodriguez said. "We try to sing songs in different languages. We try to encourage members to teach us their songs or dances. We're able to learn together."

Pleasantville resident Michael Gold has published articles in the New York Daily News, the Albany Times-Union, The Virginian-Pilot and other newspapers.

On the Street

WCC, Purchase Sign Transfer Agreement for Students Pursuing Bachelor's

Westchester Community College (WCC) and Purchase College, SUNY have signed a transfer articulation agreement to promote degree completion and facilitate the transfer process, enabling participating WCC students to matriculate into Purchase with junior standing.

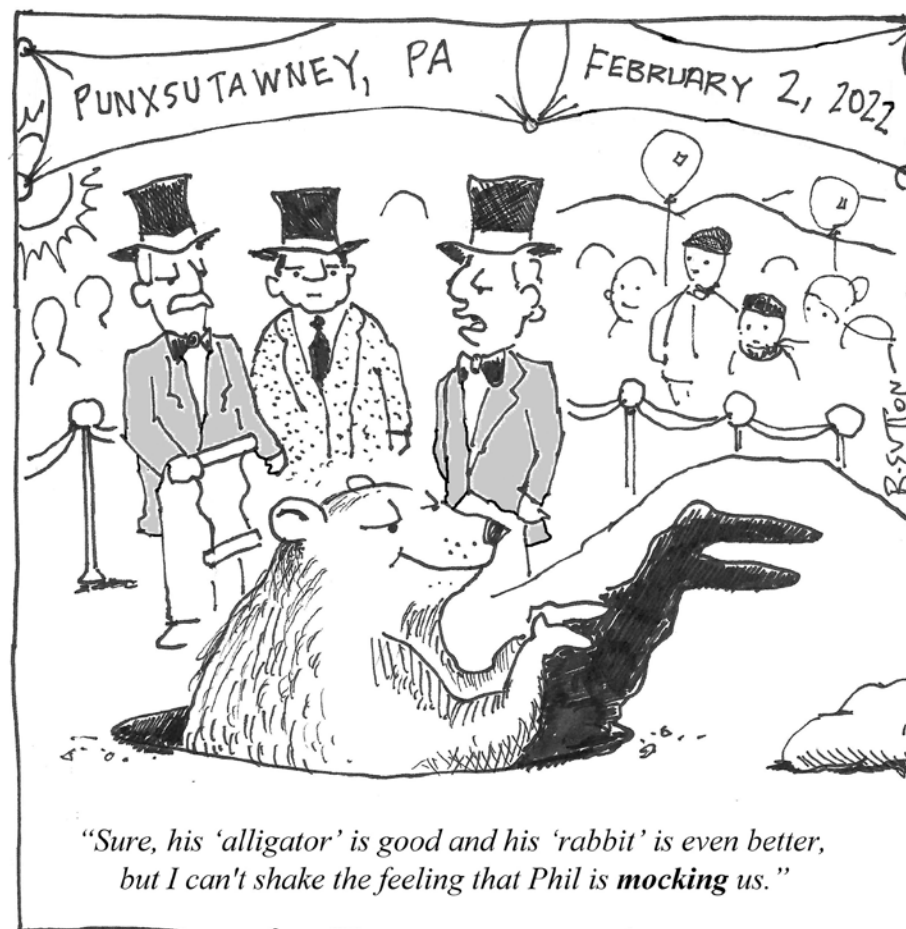
WCC students who graduate with a minimum GPA of 2.5 will be guaranteed admission into Purchase College and will be eligible for a \$1,000 transfer scholarship good for up to two years, which will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

WCC students who earn their associate's degree in the following liberal arts and sciences programs will have program-to-program pathways available into the following bachelor's programs at Purchase: anthropology, biology, economics, English, psychology and sociology. Currently, more than 50 WCC students transfer to Purchase College each year.

"WCC is committed to helping students succeed in their pursuit of academic

and career goals," said WCC President Dr. Belinda Miles. "This agreement with Purchase College provides our graduates with the opportunity to seamlessly transition to another high-quality SUNY institution where they can continue studies in their chosen field. Agreements such as this allow our graduates to maximize their investment in themselves and enter the local job market well-prepared to meet the needs of our regional economy."

"We're pleased to announce this agreement with our close neighbor, Westchester Community College, with whom we've had a longstanding and fruitful relationship," added Purchase College President Dr. Milagros Pena. "Over the years, we've been proud to welcome students from WCC, to watch them thrive during their time at Purchase and to witness their success as alumni. We look forward to making this path even more seamless and to providing additional funds and resources to support WCC students as they take the next step in their academic journey."



Police Blotter

Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

Jan. 21: A resident arrived at police headquarters at 11:15 a.m. reporting that his landlord has been harassing him due to an ongoing court case over a landlord-tenant issue. The tenant reported earlier this morning that the landlord called his boss indicating the local police department was about to have his work truck towed from his parking space if he did not move it. The tenant was advised to make a report with state police because he lives in the Town of Cortlandt.

Jan. 22: A Finney Farm Road resident reported at 5:22 p.m. finding a black fanny pack containing a green wallet with a New York State driver's license, medical health documents, two credit cards and \$656 in cash. The owner was notified and responded to police headquarters to claim her property.

Mount Pleasant Police Department

Jan. 21: Two people were observed on the surface of the ice at Opperman's Pond in Pleasantville at about 9:30 p.m. The responding officer escorted them off the ice and counseled them on the potential danger.

Jan. 21: A person employed in Hawthorne advised that they were a victim of an internet scam. The person was contacted by e-mail allegedly from PayPal regarding a suspicious charge on their account. The victim allowed remote access to his computer and

supplied his credit card number. The victim discovered that the call-back number was not in service. The subject was advised of the proper procedure, including canceling the credit card involved.

Jan. 23: A Thornwood resident received an unwanted text message and photo from an unfamiliar number. The resident was advised to block the number from future communications. An investigation determined that the number from where the message originated was untraceable.

North Castle Police Department

Jan. 21: A complainant reported at 2:40 p.m. that her partner informed her that a larceny had occurred at their store, Luxe, on Maple Avenue. The complainant was not on scene at the time. The responding officer reported two unknown female parties, both described as Black with braided hair and one subject wearing a camouflage coat, entered into the store and stole a designer hand bag. Depositions were secured; a report will follow.

Pleasantville Police Department

Jan. 19: A car accident involving a 2017 Dodge Caravan and a 2019 Subaru at Washington Avenue and Manville Road resulted in the arrest of one of the drivers for having a suspended license. The suspect was released pending a future court date.

Jan. 22: Report of a group of youths yelling and screaming on Clinton Street. An officer was dispatched and dispersed the youths without incident.

White Plains Police Department

Jan. 21: White Plains police responded to 77 Ferris Ave. on a report of a landlord-tenant dispute. On-scene units determined that the tenant, Logan Martin Badin, had physically menaced another tenant with a boxcutter. Badin subsequently barricaded himself in the residence and refused to come out. The White Plains Police Mental Health Outreach Unit and White Plains Police Crisis Negotiations Team were deployed to support ongoing communication with Badin. After almost three hours of speaking with him, Badin voluntarily exited his residence and was taken into custody. He was charged with menacing and criminal mischief.

Yorktown Police Department

Jan. 23: Manuel Lazo, 33, of Yorktown, was charged with driving while intoxicated following a two-vehicle accident on Underhill Avenue near Route 118 at 7:38 p.m. It is alleged Lazo crossed the double yellow line, disregarded a traffic control device and struck another vehicle.

Jan. 24: Robert Nugent, 47, of Manhattan, was charged at 4:30 p.m. with criminal contempt for violating an order of protection on three separate occasions.

Jan. 27: Steven Santiago Jr., 39, of Ossining, was taken into custody at 7:40 a.m. on an arrest warrant for criminal mischief for slashing two tires on a vehicle on Aug. 12, 2021. Yorktown police were notified by Ossining police that they had Santiago in custody following an unrelated traffic stop.

Editor's Note: The policy of providing names for people who have been arrested varies between each department.

Obituary

Joan Anelli

Joan C. Anelli (nee Connors) was born in the Bronx on July 9, 1933, and passed away on Jan. 23 in West Harrison.

She was the loving mother and mother-in law of Deborah and Dominick Ardino of White Plains and Valerie Anelli of Palisades, N.Y.; devoted grandmother of Mathew (Stephanie) Ardino of Stamford, Conn., Robert (Nicole) Ardino of Armonk and Michael Anelli of Palisades, N.Y.; and great-grandmother to Emilia Clare Ardino. She is predeceased by her parents, Anna and Charles Connors, her husband, John Anelli, and son Michael Anelli.

Soon after Joan married her "Johnny," they moved from the Bronx to Northvale,

N.J. where she devoted her life to raising her family. She also volunteered at Northvale Library, loved playing tennis and mahjong and spending time with her many friends. But her grandsons were the loves of her life and they all were so grateful that Joan was able to meet and spend time with Emilia before she passed.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at Our Lady of Sorrows Church at 920 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains on Jan. 24.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her memory to the Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., 17th floor, Chicago, Ill. 60601.

Mother, Daughters Busted for Presenting Phony Vax Cards to Nursing Home

Westchester County District Attorney Miriam Rocah announced Monday that a mother and her two adult daughters were charged for providing fraudulent COVID-19 Vaccination Record Cards to maintain and obtain employment at a Croton-on-Hudson nursing home.

Poughkeepsie residents Antoinette Clarke, 48, Dzjara Clarke, 27, and Jajvia Clarke, 22, were each arraigned on Monday in Cortlandt Town Court. They were charged with second-degree criminal possession of a forged Instrument, a felony.

The Westchester County District Attorney's Office and members of the state Department of Health's Vaccination Complaint Investigations Team made the arrests following a collaborative investigation.


Antoinette Clarke, a nurse employed

at the nursing home, and Dzjara Clarke and Jajvia Clarke, applicants for nursing assistant positions, each submitted a copy of a forged COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card to the facility. In New York State, health care workers must be vaccinated as a condition of employment.


"People who create fraudulent vaccination cards and pretend to be vaccinated to enter workplaces, businesses or facilities, particularly ones with vulnerable populations, are putting others at increased risk of the serious effects of COVID-19," Rocah said.

The defendants are scheduled to appear again in Cortlandt Town Court on Mar. 14.

Anyone with knowledge of someone breaking the law with fraudulent vaccination cards are encouraged to call the district attorney's office at 914-995-TIPS.




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Nonprofit Tries to Help American Legion Post Recover From Flood

By Martin Wilbur

Four months ago, the members of the American Legion Gilbert Rauh Post 1574 had prepared to say goodbye to their longtime building on Garrigan Avenue in Thornwood.

The remnants of Hurricane Ida that swept through the region on Sept. 1 caused the nearby watercourse to overflow its banks and flooded the lower level of their facility they've called home for more than 65 years with more than four feet of water.

Faced with a prohibitively expensive deconstruction and renovation project, the post was considering selling the building back to the Town of Mount Pleasant for \$400, a stipulation in the agreement from 1955, when the American Legion acquired the structure from the town.

Thanks to the Fuller Center for Housing of Greater New York, a nonprofit organization that focuses on building adequate housing for people in need, the Legion could have their building back someday.

On Sunday, volunteers from the Fuller Center's Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) and several students from Manhattanville College began gutting the interior of the lower level. Since September, DART has seen more than 2,000

volunteers rehabilitate more than 100 homes in the county, mostly in Yonkers and Mamaroneck, said its Executive Director James Killoran. That labor has saved homeowners an estimated \$5 million.

Killoran said helping veterans in need with housing-related issues is also a focus of the organization. He hopes within a month their work at the Legion building, scheduled for weekends, will be complete.

"It's a great building, and I always thought if walls could talk, what stories, what lives have been shared about what happened and that's pretty amazing," he said.

Post Commander Drew McFadden said in the time following the storm and flood, the post's members had all but given up on using the building again. Then, last month, word of the Legion's dilemma got back to the Fuller Center and the organization scheduled several weekend days of work for the disaster response team to tear apart the moldy, unusable lower level.

Cadets from West Point were initially supposed to help last weekend, but they ran into some difficulties with the weather. They will be rescheduled for another weekend this month, Killoran said.

McFadden said he spoke to Mount Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi on the attempts to salvage the



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTOS

The American Legion post in Thornwood that was heavily damaged on the lower level by flooding during Hurricane Ida last year.

building.

"Right now, we don't know whether we're going to keep it or (the town) is going to take it over, but his intent has always been to save the building if he can," McFadden said. "These guys who are helping us, they say the upstairs is fine, 90 percent fine, that if we can clean this up and just not use it, the idea is if it floods it floods (downstairs) and just have a one-story building."

In order to do that, the Legion will need money to hire an architect and a contractor that can design moving the utilities upstairs from the ground level and installing a small kitchen and bathroom on the upper level, he said. They will also need new



Volunteers from the nonprofit the Fuller Center for Housing of Greater New York help strip away the interior of the Thornwood American Legion Post 1574 on Sunday.

McFadden said.

The Thornwood American Legion has also hosted local organizations' functions, including the local Italian American and German American clubs and the Young Marines.

In order for the Legion to use their building again, they will need to raise money for the necessary work to make it inhabitable. It will be expensive but the cost was lowered significantly with the help of the Fuller Center, McFadden said.

"It looks very hopeful," he said. "Everybody, so far, is very positive and willing to help."

For anyone who would like to donate, checks may be made payable to the American Legion and sent to American Legion, P.O. Box 92, Thornwood, N.Y. 10594.

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Three Ways to Make it a Do-It-Yourself Valentine's Day

As the third most expensive holiday on the calendar, according to Wallet Hub, Valentine's Day expenses can quickly add up. With a little planning, however, you can design a memorable, do-it-yourself date that truly shows that special someone how much you care, while saving time and money in the process.

The experts at Dollar General are here to help with budget-friendly Valentine's date essentials to gush over!

Devoted Decorations

Adding just a few small romantic details around the house can create an intimate ambiance. Place flowers on the dinner table and light candles for a fresh aroma. Give the candles a festive touch by adding burlap and heart pendants around the sides using these crafting instructions from Dollar General (dollargeneral.com/inspiration).

Create mood lighting by turning off all main sources of light and spreading tea light candles throughout the space instead. Dress up the rest of the house with red, pink or white banners on the walls and mantle or with homemade crafts such as a puzzle frame or cards.

Be Mine Meals

Next, plan a romantic dinner and sweet treats to follow. Homemade

food can mean more than ordering an expensive meal at a restaurant or takeout, especially when the meal is delicious, nutritious and doesn't break the bank. Consider using Dollar General's "Better for You" recipes, such as the pecan-crusted salmon, steak and veggie kabobs or slow cooker pork chops to serve a tasty meal that is also affordable. Finish the feast on a sweet note with a dessert that can be shared between a couple or a group of loved ones, such as Valentine's Day Truffles.

Gush Over Gifts

Smaller, affordable self-care gifts are a great way to make loved ones feel loved and appreciated without going over your budget. Consider a new razor or cologne or create a gift basket full of candy, beauty products, a gift card and candles. Additional gift options can range from a lovable stuffed animal or candy they can munch on.

Regardless on how the love-filled holiday is spent, consider visiting Dollar General's Tips & Hacks page at dollargeneral.com to find more helpful DIY projects, recipes and more.

From the decorations to dessert, you can show your love and appreciation on Valentine's Day by creating an unforgettable, affordable date at home.

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The Art and Fun of Picture Hanging and Arranging

Growing up, my family was not much into wall art. In our living room was just one big gold-framed mirror measuring about four to five feet wide and three feet high.

Just to the left of the interior of our front door was one watercolor of a vase of lilies, painted and given to my parents as a gift from my Aunt Helen who never took any lessons but was a natural artist. Somehow, I inherited Aunt Helen's lily painting and it has hung proudly in every apartment I've ever rented and every home I've ever owned to this day.

Other than that, I remember only blank walls in my family home. One exception was in our dining room where my dad had painted stenciled cabbage roses just below the ceiling in each corner of the room. It's amazing, now that I think of it, that my dad was a skilled flooring specialist and yet possessed an artistic bent, demonstrated, for instance, when he carved out of linoleum the shape of a teapot in a contrasting color to our kitchen floor.

I never thought much about picture hanging once I went off to college because I had no pictures to hang. The one exception was the large oil painting of a clown, given to me by an artist who was a friend, looking as though it might have been painted by Picasso in his blue period.

Once graduated from college and living



By Bill Primavera

in the city, I got hooked on antiques, perhaps because of my college experience at William & Mary in the restoration city of Williamsburg, Va. Actually, my first apartment was furnished with a Danish Modern sofa and coffee table that I got at a close-out sale. But once I started earning a decent salary, I ditched those for furnishing and accessories, mostly from the late 18th and mid-19th centuries. Wondering about the past lives of these pieces was very pleasing to me.

My wall art collection started with the purchase of the portrait of a woman from the late 19th century that I acquired for what I considered to be a bargain: \$35. A close friend thought that I had gotten rooked.

For a while I lived in Greenwich Village, but once I discovered the historic neighborhood of Brooklyn Heights, I felt that I had found a place to lay down roots. One of my first friends there was a gentleman who owned an antiques shop where I bought some of my first pieces of wall art. I was so impressed when he invited me to his home for dinner and I discovered that most of his walls were covered floor to ceiling with art. It was like living in an art gallery. That is what I wanted my home to someday be, I thought, something interesting to look at on every wall.



It took me some years to accomplish that goal, aided and abetted by my wife Margaret who became even more astute at collecting than I. We leaned toward two categories of painting – portraits and landscapes. When we moved to the country (upper Westchester), our first home was an early 18th century farmhouse. Perhaps it was overreacting to more cramped accommodations in the city, but our new home was much too big for our small family of three, but we were still rather naïve in those days about space and maintenance issues.

Be that as it may, we found ourselves with more room – and rooms – that we ever could need. However, we filled that space by opening a country antiques shop in part of the three-winged house, and we rented one

of the wings to a tenant for extra income, which we sorely needed at the time.

Now, with plenty of wall space to fill, we continued our quest for wall art and, scouring the countryside in shops and through auctions, eventually acquired many pieces in our collection to cherish.

As far as the actual hanging, there are many hardware options to choose from, but embarrassingly, I admit that I usually used just common nails with a big head, rather than standard picture hooks. In some areas of living, call me basic – or lazy.

On each wall with multiple pieces of art, I choose to arrange pieces according to subject matter, portraits together and landscapes together, so it doesn't appear jarring from one painting to the next. Also, I consider size and how each piece fits into a pleasing arrangement on the wall when considered as a whole.

Especially in these days of COVID-19 where we tend to spend more time within the confines of our four walls, the use of art, nicely arranged on those walls, serves to bring the outside world to us in a satisfying way.

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). 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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Chronicling one local family's chance of a lifetime on Family Feud



By Rick Pezzullo

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For more than 70 years, game shows have been a captivating part of Americana.

From the debut of Truth or Consequences to The Price is Right, which holds the distinction of being the longest-running

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game show in history at 50 years and still going strong, television viewers have been seemingly intrigued by others having a chance to win thousands, and, sometimes, millions of dollars, and other prizes, by just spinning a wheel, answering questions, or knowing prices of products.

And how often do viewers remark to others or themselves as they watch these shows how dumb a contestant was or how they could easily have been a winner if they were on television?

Well, my family and I had a chance of a lifetime to find out first-hand just what it's like to be chosen to be on a game show — not just any game show, but one that was ranked by TV Guide in 2013 as the third greatest game show of all-time: Family Feud.

Family Feud has been on the air since 1976, starting with host Richard Dawson, the kissing bandit. Since 2010, it has gained in popularity with Steve Harvey, one of the original Kings of Comedy, bringing his own unique flair to the program that airs each night on Channel 9, and in reruns on

both the Game Show Network (GSN) and Buzzr.

Our journey to achieve our 15 minutes of fame and attempt to have a shot at winning up to \$100,000 and a new car began innocently enough in the summer of 2019 when I stumbled upon a post on Facebook about auditions being held in Stamford, Connecticut for Family Feud. While it piqued my interest, it wasn't something that drew my immediate attention. That is until I mentioned it to my family.

Little did I know that my wife Jacqueline had always dreamed of being on a game show, and Family Feud perfectly fit the bill since our immediate family of four, plus my fun-loving son-in-law, Mark, could share in the experience.

The first of many steps in the process is submitting an application, which includes the option of adding a video. As we discussed how best to sell ourselves on FaceTime, my wife became entertainingly animated, which Mark opted to secretly record, and add to our Aug. 16, 2019 application package.



The Pezzullo family is ready for action.

Shortly thereafter, we were given a September 15 audition at a hotel.

The Audition

So away we went, without any idea what to expect, wearing our Sunday best with cautious optimism that perhaps we had what it takes to be in a select group of chosen ones. I remember thinking, "Is this really happening?"

What we encountered was a sea of other hopeful families c...

To read the rest of this article, and others like it, visit examiner-plus.com and click subscribe. We hope you've enjoyed this week's excerpt from Examiner+. We love honest feedback. Tell us what you think: examinerplus@theexaminernews.com



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Westchester Pauses to Recognize Holocaust Remembrance Day

Westchester County and municipalities commemorated Holocaust Remembrance Day last week honoring the memory of six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and millions of other victims at the hands of the Nazis.

"This is so important to bring awareness and we are grateful to the county executive for supporting proper Holocaust education in Westchester County," said Millie Jasper, executive director of the Holocaust and Human Rights Education Center.

Locations across New York State were painted in yellow, including the County Center in White Plains. Other locations that were painted included the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge, One World Trade Center and Niagara Falls.

"It's important to know the horrors inflicted in the Holocaust, which have been well-documented, must never be forgotten," said Westchester County Executive George Latimer. "This story must be told from generation to generation so we never repeat the acceptance of hatred and genocide. We must make sure this never happens again."

The Board of Legislators issued a statement to remember those who perished and to prevent hate from escalating.

"Today, we bow our heads in memory and sorrow," the statement read in part. "We will never forget the six million Jews and the other victims who perished in that reign of terror. But we must do more than just remember. We must also vow to confront anti-Semitism, racism, religious bigotry, persecution relating to sexual orientation, and other kinds of hatred in the here and now."

Two nights earlier, New Castle residents



The County Center in White Plains was one of the venues and landmarks throughout the state that was painted in yellow last Thursday to commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day.

gathered via Zoom for its second annual International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration. The event, which featured the screening of the 18-minute HBO documentary "The Number on Great-Grandpa's Arm," was co-sponsored by the Horace Greeley High School student club ENOUGH (Educate Now on Understanding Genocide and Hate) and the Town of New Castle Holocaust and Human Rights Committee.

Following the screening, Congressman Mondaire Jones moderated a conversation with Amy Schatz, director and producer of

the film, animator Jeff Scher, who won an Emmy Award for his work on the film, and Elliott Saiontz, a Horace Greeley High School sophomore and vice president of ENOUGH who was featured in the film.

"On Thursday we commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day and we honor the millions of lives lost including six million Jews and the horrific tragedy that was the Holocaust...the millions who perished at the hands of anti-Semitism and baseless hate," Jones said.

The HBO documentary film was created as a way to create greater awareness about

the Holocaust. While created as a film to educate students, it has been used for adult audiences as well. Since its premiere in 2018, the film has been shown in more than 500 classrooms across the world.

"I think it is really important to use the film because it is a very good introductory piece that is heartfelt and meaningful, but allows you to take away the basic lessons of the Holocaust as a young child without feeling the harsh impacts and realities yet, accepting that the Holocaust did happen," Saiontz said. "After viewing the film, children and adults will understand that these things can happen in our world but each individual can take steps to stand up against hate."

Last week's program was viewed by more than 200 community members. In the wake of the events in Colleyville, Texas, the town's Holocaust and Human Rights Committee and the students from ENOUGH are reminded that hate continues to grow.

"This event helps our club fulfill its mission to educate our community to recognize the dangers of hate and create a more accepting community," said ENOUGH Co-President Jack Rosenberg.

"More than seven decades after the end of the Holocaust, not only are memories of the Holocaust fading, but anti-Semitism and hatred against the Jewish people are on the rise," said New Castle Supervisor Lisa Katz. "On International Holocaust Remembrance Day, we must call out anti-Semitism and bigotry in all its forms, make sure to educate our children, and vow never to forget."



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Wishnie Tapped as Westchester Emergency Services Commissioner

Westchester County Executive George Latimer announced last week the appointment of former county legislator and current Acting County Emergency Services Commissioner Richard Wishnie as the department's permanent commissioner.

The action would remove the title of acting commissioner after more than a year of exceptional service in that role. Wishnie had held the acting post since November 2020 when Latimer named him and Susan Spear to lead the county's emergency services response. His appointment must be confirmed by the Board of Legislators.

"Richard is a true Westchester public servant," Latimer said. "He has dedicated his life to serving the people of this county, and in this past year, has shown how far his service is willing to go. As the county worked to combat and mitigate COVID-19, Richard worked closely with the team at DES to ensure all municipalities had supplies, answers and support from our administration."

Wishnie was elected to the Westchester County Board of Legislators for six terms beginning in 1993. He retired in December 2005. Prior to becoming a county legislator, he served the Town of Ossining as councilman from 1976 to 1979 and as supervisor from 1979 to 1983. He has served as chairman of the Ossining

Open Door Health Centers, Westchester Health Source, the Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps and the Ossining Red Cross Disaster Team.

"Working in the Latimer Administration with Deputy Director Susan Spear and the dedicated team at DES has been my utmost privilege," Wishnie said. "I am thrilled to continue this role on a permanent basis so we can serve the people of Westchester."

The Department of Emergency Services consists of four divisions: fire services, communications, emergency management (OEM) and emergency medical services (EMS). The Fire Services division is comprised of four units: fire training, fire inspection, special operations and fire prevention and protection. The division administers, coordinates and maintains the fire training program that is available to Westchester County's 58 fire departments.

The Emergency Communications Center commonly referred to as 60 Control, provides primary dispatch services for 52 fire departments and 32 EMS agencies in Westchester. The center is staffed 24 hours, seven days a week to handle fire and EMS mutual-aid requests going in and out of the county.

The OEM works with the local, state and federal governments to prepare Westchester for disasters. During a major emergency, OEM may activate the



Former county legislator Richard Wishnie is set to become Westchester's permanent Emergency Services commissioner.

county's Emergency Operations Center, a state-of-the-art facility where the county, local municipalities, hospitals, utilities work together to keep the county safe.

The EMS division collaborates with local,

regional and state agencies to enhance the effectiveness of the county's Emergency Medical Services system, by providing emergency preparedness training, mutual aid coordination and incident management assistance during large scale events.

Wishnie currently volunteers as a director with several health care and business organizations. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Westchester Medical Center, chairman of the Bon Secours Charity Health System Board of Directors, vice chair and treasurer of the Health Alliance Board of Directors, serves on the Board of Directors of the Westchester County Association, vice chair of the Mid-Hudson Ambulance District and chair of the Westchester County Police Board.

He has also served as an officer and director of the Ossining Chamber of Commerce; president of the Ossining Jaycees; director of the United Way of Northern Westchester; a member of the Briarcliff Manor Volunteer Fire Department; and a Town of Ossining auxiliary police officer. He is the former Director of Operations of the New York State Workers' Compensation Board (from 1983 to 1988) and served by appointment of the governor to a Temporary State Study Commission on Workers Compensation Special Funds.

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Estate Planning: What's New for 2022

Each time optimism attempted to take hold in 2021, new challenges arose.

A new year brings a renewed hope for the future. Estate planning during a time of great uncertainty involves both the practical and the aspirational.

Being practical in 2022 means knowing the changes in estate tax exemptions and understanding the new power of attorney law. The aspirational not only refers to long-term planning goals that will outlive the pandemic, but it touches on the technological revolution that is changing how legal documents are executed.

First, the practical. In 2022, the federal estate tax exemption rises to \$12,060,000 for individuals and the New York State estate tax exemption increases to \$6,110,000. Many New Yorkers experienced a rise in net worth due to stock market and real property value growth. This year may be the first time that thinking about estate taxes is more than just an academic exercise.

If this is the case for your family, then your estate planning would be characterized by the merging of asset protection with estate tax planning.

In June of last year, the new Power of Attorney form was released replacing a longer and more confusing form that was widely dishonored by

financial institutions. Banks or other entities that refuse to accept the new power of attorney form and insist on only using their own form will be held accountable under the law.

The new Power of Attorney allows for a disabled person to direct another person to sign the form. For those suffering from illnesses or injuries that limit motor skills, this new provision makes it simpler to execute a power of attorney. An unnecessary second notarized signature for the form creator was eliminated as well. New power of attorneys will also contain digital asset provisions that allow for the agent to transfer and manage another person's devices and content.

The execution of wills in New York still remains tethered to a past century. Elsewhere, pen and paper wills are being joined by electronic wills. Nevada, Florida, Indiana and Arizona (with Utah and Colorado following behind) recognize the validity of an electronic will. Electronic wills are wills that are created, signed, witnessed and filed in an electronic or digital format. Gathering all parties under one roof at an



By Alan D. Feller, Esq.

appointed time is becoming more difficult due to pandemic realities and the illnesses accompanying aging. Electronic wills can be executed with witnesses from different locations watching the testator sign via video feeds like Zoom or Teams.

Whether 2022 is a turning point for the acceptance of electronic wills in New York remains to be seen. What is important about the electronic will movement is that making them will become easier, allowing more people to create a will. That, in turn, should lead to estate planning results that match

the person's intent. Dying without a will means the state's law governing intestacy will direct where your assets will go and who has the right to be in charge of your estate.

A new year brings new opportunities to fine-tune your estate planning. Speak to the professionals at Sloan & Feller today to review the changes and trends for 2022.

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

Assistance of Counsel

THERE'S A WORD FOR IT

A vocabulary-building quiz By Edward Goralski

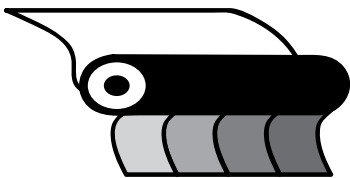
Once Removed. The Oxford English Dictionary contains more than 170,000 words. But, as language evolves, words that have fallen out of favor are continually revised, retired, and sometimes, removed from smaller dictionaries. The quiz this week is based on the Word Genius feature, "9 Words Removed From the Dictionary."

1. **aerodrome (n.)**
A) a landing field for airplanes B) a hot air balloon C) a cockpit
2. **alienism (n.)**
A) astronomy B) hypnotism C) psychiatry
3. **brabble (v.)**
A) to progress B) squabble C) take heart
4. **charabanc (n.)**
A) a rope bed B) a wagon with benches C) a folding chair
5. **deliciate (v.)**
A) to amuse oneself B) describe in detail C) give enjoyment
6. **frigorific (adj.)**
A) frilly B) fragile C) frigid
7. **supererogation (n.)**
A) something superficial B) an exaggerated boast C) going above and beyond
8. **yunker (n.)**
A) a young man B) a new arrival C) a clever joke

- ANSWERS:
1. A. A term referring to a landing field for airplanes and related structures. The word "airport" has replaced it.
2. C. An obsolete term for psychiatry, which is the study and treatment of mental illness.
3. B. To squabble, quarrel, argue, or fight.
4. B. From the French, meaning wagon with benches. This combination of a bus and a motor.
5. A. To amuse or please oneself by indulging in revels.
6. C. Causing cold; chilling; frigid.
7. C. Going above and beyond what is required by duty, obligation, or need.
8. A. A young man or a child.
9. The ninth word is "fruticose" an adjective that means having the appearance of a shrub.

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Orchestra 914 to Present Interactive Concert for Children March 5

Orchestra 914 will present its first family concert of the season, Music is Science, on Saturday, Mar. 5 at 3 p.m. at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center (Chappac).

The program will be presented by Dr. Patrick Herak, senior lecturer, Department of Engineering at Ohio State University and guest conductor Douglas Droste, the director of orchestras at Ball State University in Indiana.

The interactive concert, geared to children six to 12 years old and introduces them to the orchestra and how scientific principles apply to the mechanics and sounds of musical instruments. It answers the question: What does science have to do with music?

So many times in school – elementary, middle and high (school) – our learning and understanding of the world is compartmentalized into 45- or 50-minute blocks limited to one subject,” Herak



Orchestra 914 will hold its Music is Science interactive concert for families in March.

said. “Unless you become a teacher, the world does not fit into that mold. Sure, we have meetings, but they are often in

interdisciplinary teams and only a fraction of our day. Professional musicians like Orchestra 914 are not only great musicians

but a different kind of scientist in their own right.

“The data they take in each moment of a performance has to be analyzed in real time. They use tools like tuners and metronomes to collect data and inform what they do. However, data and science are not the end all be all or we’d be listening to computerized music. It’s so important that we use science to inform decisions because, as we’ve seen with COVID, science is not just the content base we are often meant to believe, but just as much the process that informs what we do.”

Orchestra 914, formerly The Chappaqua Orchestra, seeks to expand the classical music experience for diverse audiences in the Hudson Valley through creative, educational and community programming with the highest level of artistic integrity.

Orchestra 914 is based in Pleasantville with Russell Ger as its new music director as part of its goal to widen its geographic scope and to bring an inclusive and unexpected array of live classical music to audiences throughout Westchester.

Tickets for the Mar. 5 concert and information about the program and the orchestra are available at www.orchestra914.org.

Following New York State COVID-19 guidelines, all guests must provide proof of vaccination and are required to wear masks in the theater.

Putnam Chorale Looking for New Singers

The Putnam Chorale has opened its membership to new singers, particularly for the tenor and bass sections.

If you like to sing and have experience singing in a choir or chorale, we’d love to have you join us. Learn about our program for the spring semester and meet our talented group of singers.

The chorale rehearses weekly on Monday evenings from 6:45 to 9 p.m. in the sanctuary of the United Methodist Church, located at 83 Main St. in Brewster. Tuition is \$125 per semester.

This year, the chorale will be performing a number of opera choruses from famous works. Auditions are not

required. All singers must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 and wear a mask during rehearsals. Zoom options are also available.

If you have an interest, e-mail contactus@putnamchorale.org for more details.

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LEGAL NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the tax year 2021 Tentative Assessment Roll will be filed February 1, 2022 with the Village Clerk, 80 Wheeler Avenue, Pleasantville, New York, where it may be seen and examined by any person at all times during business hours (8:00am-4:00pm). The Tentative Assessment Roll may also be viewed online at <https://www.pleasantville-ny.gov/assessors-office>. The Board of Trustees and the Assessor will meet for the purpose of completing such assessment roll and of hearing and determining grievances in relations thereto by any person(s) conceiving himself

aggrieved thereby on Tuesday February 15, 2022, between the hours of 5:00pm to 9:00pm, at the Clinton Street Senior Center, 1A Clinton Street, Pleasantville, New York and via Zoom Id: 95976657611 and Passcode: 345755. The last filing date is February 15, 2022. As a reminder, the following should be completed to grieve your taxes:

Complete form RP-524:
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The original signed copy of the RP-524 must be received by the Village Assessor no later than Tuesday February 15, 2022. A postmark date of February 15,

2022 does not fulfill the deadline requirement. Completed RP-524 forms can be mailed to or dropped off at Village Hall, 80 Wheeler Avenue, Pleasantville, NY 10570 (hours of operation Monday to Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm). Completed forms may also be brought to the Tentative Assessment Grievance Night, Tuesday, February 15, 2022 from 5:00pm to 9:00pm at the Clinton Street Center, 1A Clinton Street, Pleasantville, NY 10570

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PUBLIC HEARING

LOCAL LAW OVERRIDING THE PROPERTY TAX CAP

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Pleasantville, Westchester County, New York will hold a public hearing on Monday, February 14, 2022, 8:00pm, prevailing time, via teleconference, Zoom Id: 94935181081, Passcode: 385879 to hear comments as it pertains to a Local Law pursuant to subdivision 5 of General Municipal Law Section 3-c which expressly

authorizes a local government's governing body to override the property tax cap for the coming fiscal year by the adoption of a local law approved by a vote of sixty percent of said governing body. All persons interested in speaking on this subject will be heard.

Alyssa Hochstein
Deputy Village Clerk

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Valentine's Day: A Time to Romance Over Food and Wine

Amore! The coupling of good food and wine with the sensual is the aphrodisiac of literature and verse through the ages.

Valentine's Day is Monday, Feb. 14. While not all eateries are open on Monday, warm things up a bit and celebrate a little early over the weekend.

Restaurants and nightspots throughout Westchester are gearing up to serve some of their most titillating specialties. Take-out and delivery remain a good option.

Here is an eclectic round-up of delectable dishes and romantic dining venues for you and your loved one. Don't forget to make reservations early.

The Arch

European-trained chef and proprietor George Seitz has maintained high standards at The Arch for 40 years. His restaurant is one of the longstanding culinary destinations in the Hudson Valley.

Be seated in the lovely stone hearth dining room and consider such eclectic global classics as house cured gravlax with all the trimmings; sizzling escargot; black angus Beef Wellington; roasted king salmon; and crisp honey orange roasted duckling. For dessert, try the Grand Marnier souffle. A fine dose of seasonal flourishes, too. Elegant, but not stuffy.

The Arch is located at 1292 Route 22 in Brewster. Info: 845-279-5011 or visit www.archrestaurant.com.

Kanopi

I have enjoyed Chef Anthony Goncalves' culinary prowess for years, an enticing mix of his native Portuguese and worldly French eclectic.

He is now putting his talents to work at Kanopi, on the 42nd floor of the Ritz-Carlton in White Plains, with dramatic panoramic views of the surrounding Hudson Valley.

The restaurant is planning a special seven-course shared tasting menu for Valentine's Weekend, from Friday through Monday. Featured specialties include oysters, ceviche, truffle tortellini, prime aged rib-eye steak and banana flambe with



By Morris Gut

Chantilly cream for dessert. An alternative vegan menu is available. It's \$175 per person before drinks, tax and gratuity. Reservations are a must.

Kanopi is located at 1 Renaissance Square in White Plains. Info and reservations: 914-761-4242 or visit www.kanopievents.com.

Macelleria

This high-end Italian steakhouse with locations in Pelham and Armonk recently premiered a third location in Greenwich offering classic cuts of prime beef and chops along with a hearty helping of Italian-American specialties. Tony Lala and his crew will take good care of you.

Be seated in the handsomely renovated dining room with its warming stone hearth and peruse the menu over a good glass of wine. Choose from diver scallops; steak tartare; slabs of Canadian bacon; spaghetti carbonara; pappardelle with short rib ragu; zuppa di pesce; meatballs; and even a classic burger. Carnivores should consider the lamb chops, veal chop, New York strip steak or Porterhouse for two.

Open seven days for lunch and dinner. Macelleria is located at 111 Bedford Rd. in Armonk. Info: 914-219-5728 or visit www.macelleriaarmonk.com.

Tesoro D'Italia

Heading Tesoro D'Italia's day-to-day operation is hospitality veteran Peter Lucaj and his family. The restaurant is divided into a main dining room for 100 guests, a semi-private fireplace room for up to 40 guests and a lovely glass-enclosed wine room seating up to 25.

There is an inviting bar and lounge area for networking and spirited conversation as well as casual dining. A dramatic wine wall highlights the dining room along with smoked glass dividers and white tablecloths. Grey and white hues help polish the space.

Check out delightful specialties such as chicken paillard topped with salad; eggplant rollatini; rotelli melanzana; fresh salmon; and broiled veal chop. There's weekday prix fixe lunch and happy hours.

Tesoro D'Italia is located at 160 Marble Ave. in Pleasantville. Info: 914-579-2126 or visit www.tesoroditaliany.com.

Dive Oyster House

Kenny Neziraj, one of the originals at KEE Oyster House in White Plains, has opened his own restaurant with a focus on fresh fish and seafood. There is enough meat, poultry and pasta options to satisfy all comers.

A dozen pristine oysters is a good way to start your meal, served with three delicious house-made cocktail sauces, including tangy horseradish. Additional specialties to consider: fresh salads; tuna tartare; two-pound lobsters; lobster rolls; linguine with clam sauce; lamb chops; and filet mignon. Open seven days for lunch and dinner. There's also a Sunday brunch and happy hours.

Dive Oyster House is located at 1201 Pleasantville Rd. in Briarcliff Manor. Info: 914-236-3911 or visit www.diveoysterhouse.com.



The fresh salmon is one of many fine specialties cooked up at Tesoro D'Italia in Pleasantville.

Alex's Bar & Grille

Proprietor Alex Ahmetaj offers tasty surprises. The handsome dining room is split into cozy sections with white tablecloths, colorful de Villeneuve impressionist paintings and beautiful sconces. Mediterranean clay-colored banquets and chairs complement wooden walls and plush beige curtained windows.

Chef Nick Deimant's specialties include 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. The house-made smooth ricotta cheesecake (available for take-home) is top-notch, as are the cannoli. There's a bar and lounge.

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

Rooting and Romancing: This year the Super Bowl is played the day before Valentine's Day. Here's how to combine the two.

Jack's Bar

Owner Shane Clifford and his friendly crew have all the TVs and finger food you want. Generous specialties coming out of Chef Brendan Donohoe's kitchen include the double-stacked smash burger; decadent short rib mac and cheese; Jack's meatballs; seared scallops; chicken curry; shroom pizza cooked in the wood-fired oven; the Berkshire pork chop; and grilled lamb sliders.

Jack's Bar is located at 219 Main St. in Eastchester. Info: 914-652-7650 or visit www.jackseastchester.com.

Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar

Host and actor John Solo offers good deals. There's a three-taco lunch for \$9.95 all season long, or you can choose one of the tasty quesadillas with steak, chicken or shrimp or a big burrito. They serve reasonably priced south-of-the-border fare. Try the new birria tacos, cheeseburger tacos or ongoing house specialties such as chicken wings, carnitas, chicken mole, garlic shrimp and steak fajita. Televisions line the long bar.

Cantina Taco & Tequila Bar is located at 166 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Info: 914-461-3959 or visit www.cantinawhiteplains.com.

The Barley House

The wrap-around bar area with its



Eggplant meatballs is a delicious choice at The Barley House in Thornwood.

barnwood accents and high tops are inviting as are the ample TVs. There is a good craft beer selection posted on the wall.

This eclectic American kitchen serves generous, nicely plated specialties. Try the giant homemade soft pretzels with dipping sauce, tasty wings, eggplant meatballs or overstuffed sandwiches. Their burgers are prepared with a blend of short rib, brisket and chuck, served on a croissant-brioche bun.

A special pre-Valentine's Day Champagne brunch featuring Perrier-Jouet will be served on Saturday, Feb. 12 from 1 to 4 p.m.

The Barley House is located at 665 Commerce St. in Thornwood. Info: 914-495-3333 or visit www.thebarleyhouseny.com.

Wings at Wegman's

Visit the wing bar at Wegman's Market in Harrison. One of several hot and cold food stations are now open. It's a good place to stock up for your Super Bowl party. Info: Visit www.wegmans.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 gutreactions@optonline.net.



Dive Oyster House in Briarcliff Manor offers more than seafood. For the Sunday brunch, try the fried pork chop, eggs and home fries.

White Plains/Greenburgh NAACP Reaffirms Commitment to Voting Rights

The White Plains/Greenburgh NAACP branch announced last week that despite its profound disappointment with the defeat of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and Freedom to Vote Act the by the U. S. Senate on Jan. 19, it remains determined to carry the battle forward with every available resource from its branch and the communities within its branch territory.

The first bill is named for the late congressman and Selma March victim John Lewis. It is intended to return key elements of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which were abruptly dropped by the Supreme Court in 2013. That decision eliminated the powerful section requiring communities with a racial discrimination track record to satisfy the Justice Department that discrimination was ruled out before permitting any voting rules modifications.

The second act would increase absentee and early voting opportunities as well as adopt a new national requirement for automatic voter registration. Incarcerated individuals would have their right to vote restored once they have served their sentence and also facilitate compliance with state

voter ID laws.

Lastly, a national holiday would be established for Election Day designed to eliminate the obstacles encountered when casting a vote on a work day.

"Martin Luther King Jr. reminded us that 'the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice,'" said branch President Janice Griffith. "Our branch has long understood that a dependable democracy is critical to the NAACP's work in dismantling discrimination. Our democratic privileges begin and end with the act of voting. This initial setback from the Senate will only fuel our advocacy for voting rights reform and keep us moving forward on Dr. King's long arc. No one should be surprised when the unity and power of the NAACP and its supporters helps to bring voting rights across a winner's finish line, although it may resemble a marathon more than a sprint.

"Our branch is very appreciative of the efforts from those elected officials who stood up for voting rights, and likewise remain committed to delivering the results the majority of voting Americans expect," Griffith added.

Former Mahopac Student Makes Forbes 30 Under 30 List

Katherine Grille, who attended Mahopac schools and whose mother, Teresa Curtin, still works in the middle school, has been chosen as one of Forbes 30 Under 30 for 2022.

Grille founded Neolth, an online platform that provides stress and mental health support to students. A neuroscientist who worked in therapy before founding her company last year, Grille said the Mahopac community and her mother's work in education influenced her.

"I am really proud of the work she has done, especially with children who have special needs," said Grille, who attended Fulmar Road Elementary and Mahopac Middle School. "I remember Mahopac having a really well-rounded curriculum and so many diverse

activities to get involved in – the arts, twirling, dance, soccer. I had a lot of opportunities inside and outside of the classroom to learn interpersonal and other skills that translate into business."

Neolth's website gives students personalized on-demand access to relaxation practices created by doctors and therapists and offers a video library, where students explore topics like managing academic stress and watch their peers talk candidly about their own mental health struggles.

"Mental health is a priority in schools now," Grille said. "Now digital health resources can help students manage the stresses they face."

Board of Legislators Pursues Food Allergy Safety Law

A new bipartisan proposal at the Board of Legislators will help restaurants protect families dealing with food allergies in Westchester.

The measure introduced Monday by Legislator Vedat Gashi (D-Yorktown) and co-sponsored by Minority Leader Margaret Cunzio (C-Mount Pleasant) would provide free online training for food service personnel in basic allergy safety. It also would provide restaurants with signs to hang that contain information about common allergens, symptoms of reactions and actions to be taken in case of food allergies.

"Anxiety about food allergies makes many families reluctant to dine out," Gashi said.

"This law will give them peace of mind. Removing that reluctance will encourage diners to get out and enjoy a meal at our local, small business that are still struggling. Many restaurants are already working hard to address the food allergy needs of customers. Our desire is to help every restaurant do the same."

Under the proposal, the online training and signs would be provided by the County Department of Health.

Similar provisions to the new proposal exist in cities like New York and states like Virginia, Michigan, Maryland, Massachusetts and California.

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Thoughts on Your Wine Glass Choices for Shape and Size



By Nick Antonaccio

I just emptied the dishwasher this morning and started storing the wine glasses. I began to ponder, once again, as I have in earlier columns, the difference in the sizes and shapes of the glasses. Do the characteristics of a

wine glass really matter? (After all, wine doesn't spend enough time in a glass to warrant deep analysis.)

The answer is an emphatic yes. It matters. From enhancing the appearance of a particular wine to enhancing the appreciation of its aromas, it matters. Here are three of my immutable axioms that warrant discussion:

1. The proper drinking glass is one with a stem.
2. The proper shape of a wine glass is bowl-shaped.
3. The proper proportion of wine in a glass is one-third full.

Stems. When I was growing up, at Sunday dinner I was served a bit of wine in a small, stemless, straight-walled glass. Now that I'm a grown-up, I drink wine from a larger, stemmed, bowl-shaped glass. Although I enjoyed my dad's homemade wine in my youth, that glass hindered my appreciation of the finer elements of his wine (even at a young age).

Today, there is a trend to stemless glasses. I'm not a big fan. To me they are

counterintuitive to the principles of enjoying wine, which I've outlined below.

Wines are intended to be consumed at the temperature they are served. Without stems, we hold the glass with our fingers – or palms, or both – around the wine, transferring our body heat to the wine; this changes the temperature and therefore our appreciation of the wine. And our sauce-stained fingers cloud our view of the color, which has a sensory influence on our anticipated experience of the wine.

Bowl-Shaped Glasses. Wine glasses generally should have a chimney shape – broader at the bottom, tapering to a smaller opening at the top. The broader bottom will allow you to swirl the wine, releasing its essence. The narrower top will capture the essence of the aromas and flavors of the wine, channel them upward and better transfer them to your nose and mouth.

The typical classification for wine glasses is four-fold: red, white, champagne and fortified. There are shapes and sizes of glasses for a multitude of wines. One of the more famous glassware producers, Reidel, sells over 20 different glasses, touting the uniqueness of each one for a particular varietal.

Red wine glasses tend to be the most pronounced in shape and largest in size.

Why? Red wines have the strongest aromas and flavors. More surface area and volume of the glass allow the wine to breathe more



openly and provide a bouquet directed to the top of the glass. Of course, different red wines have unique characteristics, so there are many styles (shapes) of glasses.

White wine glasses tend to be smaller, narrower and more tulip-shaped than red wine glasses. The smaller size requires refilling sooner, minimizing the exposure-time to the ambient temperature. The narrower bowl has less surface area, quickly forcing the aromas to the top.

Champagne glasses tend to be small, very narrow, with long stems and a narrow bowl. This allows the carbonation to continue in the glass, allowing us the visual pleasure of a continuous stream of bubbles. The narrow top directs the bubbles to the tip of the tongue and the delicate aromas to the nose.

Fortified wine glasses are typically for port, sherry, aperitifs and liqueurs. The shape tends to be tall but narrow, with a

slight bowl shape. This focuses the aromatic flavors toward the top of the glass and the nose, while suppressing the scent of the high level of alcohol.

Proportion. The volume of wine should not exceed about one-third of the capacity of the glass. This allows the glass to concentrate the aromas and flavors over a greater surface area within the glass and then transfer these to the top of the glass toward your nose and mouth.

If selecting the "proper" wine glass seems daunting, or intimidating, don't fret. Just follow the basics. You'll find that the right glass for the right wine will increase your pleasure and enhance your wine palate.

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.

*You Heard It
Through the
Grapevine*

How Physical Therapy Prevents the Need for Surgery

Seeing a physical therapist is often the first step taken following an injury thanks to DirectAccess. Even if it isn't, your doctor will most likely prescribe a certain amount of physical therapy before looking into non-conservative options.

Physical therapy is very successful in treating common injuries, and with the right amount of patient motivation, surgery can be avoided by following a regimented program.

Many people sustain injuries throughout their lifetime, and if not treated or addressed appropriately, symptoms may become so severe that you'd think the only option would be having surgery. You'd be surprised to learn that by going through a physical therapy program, quality of life and overall physical condition may improve without the need for surgical intervention.

Physical therapy can help prevent further degeneration or damage that naturally and consequently occurs as a result of normal wear and stress on the body. This gradual breakdown of body structures could lead to increasing pain and disability.

Physical therapy utilizes different manual therapy techniques such as joint mobilizations and soft tissue mobilization, which are used to improve circulation and range of motion that help eliminate

inflammatory substances that build up as a result of many arthritic or degenerative conditions. Your physical therapist will also prescribe different forms of exercise to keep these joints mobile and lubricated, thus reducing stiffness and pain.

Strengthening exercises that aim to take pressure off of your joints is one of the many important factors in decreasing the stress that is put on already vulnerable soft tissue structures. Increased pressure or stress to otherwise healthy structures can happen as a result of many years of using improper lifting or bending techniques or using the same group of muscle groups over time, leading to overuse and repetitive stress injuries. These injuries can be prevented when given proper information about form or technique when performing certain activities.

Many injuries or conditions that develop from overuse or prolonged muscle weakness may lead to torn muscles, tendons or ligaments. Depending on the situation, surgery may be warranted, but if caught early enough, physical therapy can often help prevent surgery.

Overuse injuries typically arise from training mistakes or repetitive demands over time. Training errors can occur when you take on too much physical activity too quickly, as recently seen by many people

trying to return to the gym after being away for a prolonged period of time due to COVID-19.

You may be unaware of the errors you are making or how your body would respond after not being active for a certain amount of time. That is why going to see a movement expert such as a physical therapist would be beneficial to you.

Your therapist can perform a postural assessment to see if you are sitting, standing or moving a certain way that promotes poor posture or form, which, over time, can also lead to further soft tissue damage. They will be able to test your strength and point out important muscle imbalances or weaknesses that need to be addressed in order to recognize the compensation that is being made that may lead to further stress or strain on your body.

Range of motion measurements and mobility tests are also a part of their evaluation. This information is used to form a custom treatment plan aimed at reducing pain, improving movement patterns, correcting posture and



By Amanda Notley-Kim

offloading structures that are already vulnerable due to increased pressure over time.

By correcting common movement and postural errors through the use of different manual therapy techniques and prescribing strengthening, stretching and stabilization exercises patients will be able to improve their quality of life. They will prevent further damage to their bodies, avoiding the need for surgery.

Surgery is not always the answer.

Contact our clinic today and schedule a consultation with one of our physical therapists to see how they can help you understand your body better through their in-depth customized programs. It will ultimately help improve your quality of life and overall physical condition without the need for surgery.

Dr. Amanda Notley-Kim is a doctor of physical therapy at ProClinix Sports Physical Therapy & Chiropractic in Ardsley. For any questions regarding this article or about ProClinix, please call 914-207-7337 or e-mail at admin@proclinix.com.

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