



## Financial Incentives Approved for Multifamily Projects in White Plains

By Rick Pezzullo

The Westchester County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) has voted preliminary and final approvals of financial incentives for the construction of a pair of multifamily residential projects in downtown White Plains.

The two projects – 70 Westchester Avenue and 51 South Broadway – represent a total private investment of \$171 million and are expected to create 309 new apartments and nearly 270 construction jobs.

“The financial incentives voted by the IDA Board are another example of how the Westchester County IDA is contributing to the remarkable multifamily housing boom under way in downtown White Plains. These incentives, which are provided at no cost to taxpayers, are helping to create hundreds of new apartments, including affordable units,

as well as hundreds of construction jobs,” said Director of Operations, Joan McDonald, who chairs the IDA.

At its March 24 meeting, the IDA Board voted preliminary approval of financial incentives for 70 Westchester Avenue, a \$123 million mixed-use residential development to be built on a 1.83-acre site that is currently occupied by Chrysler Jeep of White Plains car service and dealership. The project was initially proposed in 2015 as The Collection, to be built as part of a mixed-use redevelopment consisting of multifamily housing, a hotel, commercial space, and new car dealership. However, the car dealership was unable to relocate on a timely basis.

The project at 70 Westchester Avenue consists of three buildings totaling 215,000 square feet of mixed-use development. Two buildings located on Westchester Avenue will feature 52 units and 15,100 square

*continued on page 2*



Rendering of 70 Westchester Avenue project in White Plains.

## ArtsWestchester Receives Grant to Promote Tourism in White Plains

By Rick Pezzullo

ArtsWestchester has been awarded a \$500,000 grant to use the arts to support economic development and promote tourism in the city of White Plains. The Market New York grant from I LOVE NY/New York State’s Division of Tourism was awarded to ArtsWestchester through the state’s Regional Economic Development Council initiative.

The state grant will help ArtsWestchester mount the Serious Fun Arts Festival from October 12-16, a five-day celebration of the cultural community where art and music will take over White Plains.

“The Market NY grant gives ArtsWestchester an opportunity to showcase the vast talent that exists in the Hudson Valley Region,” said ArtsWestchester CEO Janet Langsam. “The Serious Fun Arts Festival is the capstone project of more than five years of work and planning in public art. We know this investment in public art and placemaking will enliven the city for years to come.”

Westchester muralist Daniel Carello said,

“I’m thrilled to hear the news about the arts festival grant. It will certainly help the arts community which has greatly been affected by the pandemic - with financial support and aid in restoring enthusiasm and an esprit de corps among artists during this challenging period.”

The Serious Fun Arts Festival will have a variety of arts activities ranging from concerts to live mural painting, a public art walking tour to dancing in the streets. There will be sculpture, performance art, massive public art unveilings by renowned artists, fun family art making and more throughout the downtown.

Empire State Development Vice President and Executive Director of Tourism Ross D. Levi said, “The Serious Fun Arts Festival will bring the arts outdoors in a fun and innovative way for residents and visitors alike. Paired with local museums and historical sites, outdoor activities on the nearby Empire State Trail, and farm-to-table food and craft beverage offerings, it will make for a great weekend getaway, and we encourage everyone to come be a part of

*continued on page 2*

## Support for Ukraine



A Ukrainian flag was hoisted at Greenburgh Town Hall last week in support of the European country currently under attack from Russia.



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# White Plains Farmer's Market Opens for Season

The City of White Plains, in partnership with Bensidoun USA, is excited to welcome the farmer's market back to downtown White Plains for the season starting on Wednesday, April 20th. The market will be open weekly on Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30pm on Court Street between Main Street and Martine Avenue through November 23.

All of the produce vendors come from local farms located in upstate New York and Connecticut. By purchasing their produce, customers help support the network of local farmers. Additionally, farmers who sell their produce at farmers' markets are able to pick their produce at the very peak of its flavor. The result is fresher and even more delicious produce.

## St. Vincent's Hospital Westchester to Hold Spring Sprint Run/Walk

St. Vincent's Hospital Westchester, a division of the Saint Joseph's Medical Center, will hold its Annual Spring Sprint Run/Walk on Saturday, May 7.

Hosted by the St. Vincent's Hospital Auxiliary, the event start will start at 9 a.m. at the St. Vincent's Harrison campus. Check-in starts at 8 a.m. Participation fee is \$30. The event supports mental health and addiction recovery services at St. Vincent's.

To register visit <https://www.saintjosephs.org/about-us/event/st.-vincent-s-spring-sprintSponsorship> opportunities are available.

St. Vincent's Hospital Westchester division of Saint Joseph's Medical Center offers inpatient and outpatient mental

health and addiction treatment services at its campus in Harrison and at off-site locations in White Plains, Tuckahoe, and Port Chester.

St. Vincent's also provides mobile crisis services for Westchester County, manages residential services for more than 1,200 individuals in Westchester County and New York City and operates three opioid treatment centers in New York City.

"The need for helping people who are challenged by mental illness and addiction has grown even more critical in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. By participating in this event, you are helping us to meet this growing need," said Michael Spicer, President and CEO of Saint Joseph's Medical Center.

## Financial Incentives Approved for Multifamily Projects in White Plains

*continued from page 1*

feet of motor vehicle showroom, retail, and restaurant space. The third building will consist of 123 units on 11 floors with eight floors of residential apartments atop three levels of parking. A total of 295 on-site parking spaces will be provided.

Amenities will include a pool, social deck area, clubroom, and fitness center. There will also be 4,000 square feet of publicly accessible open space including a pocket park along the internal driveway system, a dog park, and a landscaped and lighted walkway with gathering places and street furniture connecting Franklin and Westchester Avenues.

The developer, Saber-North White Plains LLC, is requesting an estimated sales tax exemption of \$4,008,955, a mortgage recording tax exemption of \$817,907 and a real property tax exemption of \$5,404,412. The project is estimated to create 200 construction jobs. In addition, approximately 70 percent of the car dealership and service center jobs will be retained at the new site.

According to White Plains Affordable Housing Regulations, the developer will

pay a total fee of \$1,593,750 in addition to the 11 affordable units to be constructed at 80 percent of the Westchester County area median income. Construction is scheduled to start in August 2023 with occupancy in December 2025.

The IDA Board also voted final approval of financial incentives for 51 South Broadway, a \$48 million, 8-story multifamily building consisting of 134 apartments with a mix of 27 studio units, 59 one-bedrooms units, 48 two-bedrooms units.

Amenities will include a pool, garden terrace, BBQ grills, exterior fireplace, seating area, fitness center, pet spa, bicycle storage, resident lounge, co-working spaces and a conference room. Parking will be on two levels and above ground with amenity spaces along the street frontage and six floors of residential units above.

Project developer RMS Companies of Stamford was approved for \$1.5 million in sales tax exemptions and \$350,000 in mortgage recording tax exemptions. It is anticipated that the project will create 67 construction jobs.

## ArtsWestchester Receives Grant to Promote Tourism in White Plains

*continued from page 1*

some serious fun."

White Plains Mayor Tom Roach and Langsam were on a recent MTA panel to select a major new work of art for the Metro North Train Station, which just completed a \$94 million renovation. Visitors coming to White Plains by train are now welcomed to the city by two major art installations by Barbara Takanaga commissioned by MTA Arts & Design.

"A number of years ago, Janet Langsam and ArtsWestchester articulated to me their vision of weaving art into the city's downtown landscape by incorporating it into mixed use development projects and other public improvement projects occurring in the city," Roach explained. "Since that time, they have pursued making this vision a reality with laser focus and steadfast attention. Clearly, their efforts have paid off and White Plains is the better for it."

In addition to Takanaga's luminescent mosaics at the train station, the 2022 fall arts festival will spotlight new, landmark artwork, including:

- A two-story reflective stainless steel tear drop sculpture by Bulgarian artist Georgi Minchev.
- A nine-story vibrant fabric installation by internationally renowned artist Amanda

Browder.

- A skyscraper-high landmark mural by a celebrity of the street art scene.
- Three sculpture installations by Hudson Valley artists.

ArtsWestchester has been working with multiple major developers such as Ginsburg Development Companies; LMC, a Lennar Company; the Beitel Group and Trinity Financial to incorporate public art into new residential housing projects.

The festival is ArtsWestchester's latest investment in a public art program that since 2020 has provided artists with more than \$700,000 in grants and commissions and delivered two dozen new works throughout Westchester County.

ArtsWestchester's recent public art commissions include:

- A dynamic sculpture entitled Current at the Westchester landing in Tarrytown of the Gov. Mario M. Cuomo Bridge composed of 12 illuminated steel arches by Cheryl Wing-Zi Wong. (part of a series of 10 major works of art on the bridge path)
- Five murals at the Ridge Hill shopping center in Yonkers.
- Six colorful murals around the former Westchester Pavilion mall in White Plains.
- Two murals at the White Plains Housing Authority's Winbrook residences.

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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.

**\$11<sup>97</sup>**

#### 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.

**\$14<sup>97</sup>**

#### 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.

**\$21<sup>97</sup>**

#### 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.

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**Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio**  
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**\$21.97**



**Ruffino Tan Label Chianti**  
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**\$19.97**



# COVID Numbers Rising, But Reporting Change Could Be Playing a Role

By Martin Wilbur

Westchester officials are warily keeping an eye on the persistent uptick in COVID-19 cases and infection rates, but a reporting change recommended by the federal government could at least be partly responsible for the uptick.

The active caseload as of Sunday was reported to be 3,102 in the county, well over three times the total of 925 precisely a month earlier. The infection rate on Sunday was 9.2 percent in Westchester, the seventh consecutive day of it being at least 6 percent and the highest single-day figure since Jan. 20, according to the state's COVID-19 tracker.

County Executive George Latimer said Westchester's Health Department and his administration are monitoring to see not only where caseloads and infection rates are headed but COVID-19-related hospitalizations and fatalities, possibly fueled by the BA.2 subvariant.

"We are looking at a rise in cases," Latimer said Monday afternoon. "That rise in cases is a significant rise but it has not yet reached the point of criticality. When does that point come? That point may come when we break 5,000 or 7,000 active cases, but it is more important when we wind up breaking the number of hospitalizations at a certain level."

While there has been a rise in COVID-19-related hospitalizations during the last month that increase appears minor. As of last



Westchester County Executive George Latimer at a briefing earlier this year.

weekend, there were 52 hospitalizations, up just 15 from a month earlier.

News about fatalities in the county are even better. So far this month there have been just two deaths from the virus.

On Sunday, the statewide positivity rate registered 7.3 percent, but just 5.1 percent on the seven-day rolling average. Westchester's seven-day average through

Sunday was 6.9 percent.

Putnam County clocked in on Sunday with an even higher figure, 10.3 percent, the highest in the seven-county Mid Hudson region, and 7.3 percent on the weeklong average. It is the first time that Putnam has cracked the double-digit mark since Jan. 23.

The state, citing a reporting policy change by the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), recently reported that the most reliable metric to measure community impact is cases per 100,000 data, not positivity rate.

On Apr. 4, HHS no longer required testing facilities that use COVID-19 rapid antigen tests to report negative results. As a result, the state's positivity rate will be computed using only lab-reported PCR results. Positive antigen tests will still be reported to the state and reporting of new daily cases and cases per 100,000 will continue to include both tests.

"Due to this change and other factors, including changes in testing practices, the most reliable metric to measure virus impact on a community is the case per 100,000 data – not percent positivity," the state website stated.

On Sunday, that number statewide was 21.98. By comparison, on Apr. 12 it was 33.50 and on Apr. 6 it was 29.60.

Hochul said vaccines remain the best way for the state and the public to guard against



the virus regardless of the number of positive tests.

"The vaccine and booster are our best tools to protect ourselves from COVID-19 and keep the

numbers down," Gov. Kathy Hochul said in a statement Monday. "As the two new and highly contagious variants continue to circulate, make sure you are getting tested, and if you test positive, please stay home and consult your doctor on available treatments. Be smart, wear your mask if you're around vulnerable family members and think it's necessary, and make sure the friends and family you are spending time with are vaccinated and boosted if eligible."

Latimer said that in Westchester he is not planning any drastic changes or impose mandates.

"We are seeing an uptick. We're watching carefully," Latimer said Monday afternoon. "If we reach some point in the future where future action is taken, we reserve the right to take that action but we have no philosophical plan to close society."

On Monday, it was announced that Hochul had extended the state's emergency for the purpose of allowing governmental bodies to operate in person or virtually. Latimer said that municipalities will be allowed to pass a local law between now and July 1 to make the option allowable on a permanent basis.

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# Mt. Pleasant Traffic, Safety Concerns Remain High After Two Crashes

By Martin Wilbur

Two serious accidents last month on highly traveled roads in Mount Pleasant has renewed a couple of outspoken residents' focus on traffic volume and how development-related decisions by officials is impacting travel in town.

A pair of head-on collisions on consecutive weekends, the first on Bradhurst Avenue on Mar. 18 and the second on Grasslands Road on Mar. 26, may have been unrelated incidents, but that hasn't stopped Valhalla resident Glenn Accocella from continuing to appeal to the town to take steps to make the area's roads safer.

"They just keep passing stuff, not contemplating what they're going to do with the traffic on the roads," said Accocella, a Bradhurst Avenue resident near Blythedale Children's Hospital and not far from Westchester Medical Center.

Speed did not appear to be a factor in the Mar. 18 accident on Bradhurst Avenue, said Mount Pleasant Police Chief Paul Oliva, as one of the drivers of the two cars was unlicensed. The other driver had to be extricated from the vehicle and suffered two broken femurs.

Despite that incident, Oliva said



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

A stretch of Bradhurst Avenue which was the site of one of two head-on collisions last month, has raised the concern of two nearby residents.

Bradhurst Avenue is not a high-accident route.

"We do not have an extensive history of accidents at that location," Oliva said. "To my knowledge, there have not been any accidents at that location in the last five years."

Eight days later on Grasslands Road not far from the entrance to Westchester Community College and where the new Brightview Senior Living facility will be located, police said a vehicle traveling eastbound crossed into the oncoming lane. An investigation later determined that the eastbound driver turned improperly and failed to yield to the right of way while making a U-turn over a double

yellow line.

However, another Valhalla resident, Sean Quigley, said the traffic continues to be "horrendous," particularly west of the Metro-North tracks where much of the commercial development has been approved during the past decade.

With additional approved projects not even on line yet, traffic and safety nightmares will continue to grow, he said.

"The abysmal traffic situation is real and will only get worse with North 60, Amazon warehouse, Brightview Senior Living, (the) new daycare center on Legion Drive and I am sure others in the pipeline," Quigley said.

Other residents have also been concerned not only about what is going on in Valhalla where the three million-square-foot North 60 project is under review and Brightview has yet to be built, but on Route 9A near the Amazon warehouse that is under construction. Residents of Belmont Road and Pythian Avenue want the town to halt cut-through traffic on Belmont between Route 9A and Bradhurst except for local traffic and deliveries.

Town Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi said that he has sought a meeting with the state Department of Transportation (DOT) not only for Bradhurst but also Route 9A. Those are state roads and the town is at the mercy of the DOT regarding improvements.

"(Route) 9A is in desperate need of some upgrades in that road," Fulgenzi said. "Nothing has really been done between Elmsford and Briarcliff Manor. They need a lot of work. They (the state) know. They've heard from us, they've heard from Briarcliff, they've heard from the Village of Pleasantville. Now it's a matter of sitting down and saying let's do it before something serious happens."

He said a requirement of North 60 developer Fareri Associates will require an east-west connecting

road to eliminate traffic using neighborhood streets.

Accocella said closing roads would make the situation worst. Previously, Accocella successfully petitioned the state to get the Bradhurst Avenue speed limit lowered from 40 to 30 miles per hour. He is calling for the state to allow for commercial traffic to be allowed on the Sprain Brook Parkway in the area of I-287 to alleviate the volume on Mount Pleasant's roads.

There are instances when he has trouble getting into and out of his driveway.

"I don't want to see any closing roads; I want to see improving roadways, safer roadways, more enforcement of speed on the roadways," Accocella said. "The more people you bring into the area, the more traffic's there's going to be."

Fulgenzi said Mount Pleasant being at the crossroads of everything is both a blessing and a curse.

"We have mass transportation plus the railroad," he said. "Plus, we have all the parkways that come through the town in Mount Pleasant, and everyone wants to come through this area to go where they have to go."

## Amazing is running a marathon 3 months after shattering your shoulder.

Dan Levinsohn dreamed of running the NYC Marathon. While training, he was hit by a car, breaking his shoulder in three places. Dan met with Dr. William Levine and his orthopedic team at NewYork-Presbyterian, who operated on his shoulder and designed a physical therapy plan to get him to the marathon. Just months after it seemed impossible, Dan crossed the finish line.

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# Greeley Students Organize Bike-a-Thon to Combat Climate Change

By Martin Wilbur

Regina Velasco and Sara Asa are among many in their age group who are distressed at the potential consequences of climate change in the years and decades ahead.

Instead of just talking about it or getting frustrated, the pair of friends and Horace Greeley High School juniors decided to try and make a difference.

This Saturday, they have organized a bike-a-thon that will start in the south parking lot at the Chappaqua Metro-North station and raise money for Earth Guardians, an organization that encourages young people to be leaders regarding environmental and climate justice.

"It's definitely one of the most pressing matters right now, and especially for our generation because we're getting all of this information that climate change very soon will be very irreversible," Asa said. "So, it's so important for us to take the initiative, to kind of put it out there that this is a problem and this is a problem now."

Asa started the bike club at school last year during the pandemic, and one of her earlier ideas was to organize a club event over the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge. While that failed to gain traction from school advisers, she decided this school year to partner with Velasco, who heads the Sustainability Club, on an event where



they can combine their clubs' activities.

Velasco said many students participated in the return of the climate strike this year on Mar. 25, also known as Fridays for Future, which had been inspired by student activist Greta Thunberg. Thunberg had started protesting government policies that she believed disregarded the climate crisis, holding signs along outside the Swedish Parliament, which made

Participation at this year's events, after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, was highly promising including locally, Velasco noted.

"It was very encouraging to see that because it is a generational issue that

maybe people who are older that didn't grow up thinking about (what) their everyday impacts are and how they affect the Earth," Velasco said. "But now it's kind of becoming more clear with the science and the new technology that everyone is contributing more and it's just continuing to grow and this is becoming our problem."

Asa and Velasco settled on Apr. 23, the day after Earth Day for the event when many local communities are organizing spring cleanups and various, they said. The students reached out and worked with Town of New Castle officials to make sure they could use the lot and to provide some security for the cyclists.

Saturday's bike-a-thon will be a continuous three-mile loop from the train station, over the Route 120 bridge to Douglas Road and down to Hardscrabble Road and back. The event begins at 11 a.m. with games, food, music and informational tables in hopes of making it a fun and meaningful event. The bikers will hit the road at 11:30 a.m. and can continue to pedal until 2 p.m. It is a rain-or-shine event.

Participants can sign up sponsors who make donations that will go to Earth Guardians.

Cyclists from throughout the area, not just the immediate community, are welcome to join. For those who don't want to or can't ride, they can come to the train station, lend their support to the cause and make a donation if they wish.

While Asa and Velasco needed to put in more time and effort than originally planned, the pieces are falling into place nicely as Saturday approaches. They plan to do this again next year and hope younger students will pick up the effort once they graduate and head to college.

"It's definitely a lot to put this together," Velasco said. "It's a lot of work and it's been fun to see how it's all coming together."

For more information and to register in advance to ride, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/chappaqua-earth-day-bike-a-thon-tickets-294204051237>.

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# Activists Rally, Meet Cyclists Headed to Albany to Address Climate Change

By Martin Wilbur

Climate activists greeted bicyclists at Peekskill's Riverfront Green Sunday afternoon who are making a week-long trek from New York City to Albany to convince lawmakers and Gov. Kathy Hochul to pass legislation that tackles climate change.

The cyclists left Battery Park in lower Manhattan on Saturday and are stopping each day in communities in what will be a circuitous 250-mile route to rally officials and residents to press for the approval of about a dozen bills. The legislative package would provide meaningful progress in the fight against climate change, according to members of Climate Can't Wait, a coalition of 38 environmental organizations across New York.

"We know that we have the tools available to us to begin to roll back some of the effects of climate change, and we have to do it in the next couple of years and it requires large-scale government investment," said Erin Ashoka of Beacon, who attended the windblown Peekskill rally with the Hudson River in the background while waiting for her husband, Veekas, who was one of the cyclists.

"It's not something that is individuals," she added. "We can make individual choices and not make the type of impact and at the scale that we need to do to save our future."

While only a handful of cyclists will be making the entire journey, they are being joined by other activists for portions of each day's riding schedule. They plan to meet up with a large contingent of environmental groups in downtown Albany on Friday, which

is Earth Day, and march to the state Capitol Building for an 11 a.m. rally.

Earlier in the weekend there were rallies in Manhattan and Yonkers. Before the cyclists reach Albany, there will also be events in Beacon, Newburgh, Poughkeepsie, New Paltz and Hudson.

Marilyn Vasta, from the People's Climate Movement of New York City who will be following the bikers, said while all the legislation is important, funding the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) is perhaps the most critical piece. The \$15 billion initiative would kickstart the transition to a full renewable energy economy, including enforcing timelines for greenhouse gas reductions, ending subsidies to fossil fuel companies and investments in fossil fuel infrastructure and ensuring that 40 percent of the funds are invested in disadvantaged communities, she said.

"What we need to do now is to make sure the state comes up with funding for all of these bills," Vasta said.

Other key measures that have been proposed as part of the package are the Climate and Community Investment Act, which would make large-scale investments such as offshore wind, electric buses and public housing energy upgrades; the New York Build Public Renewables Act to enable the New York Power Authority to build affordable renewable energy to meet the state's climate targets; and the Green New Deal for New York Act, which would tax the wealthy to raise more than \$10 billion a year to help pay for energy efficiency programs and electric vehicles.



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

The group of cyclists heading from Manhattan to Albany this week to highlight the efforts of environmental groups that want state officials to enact a series of bills to address climate change. They stopped at Peekskill's Riverfront Green on Sunday.

Marilyn Elie of the Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition said robust investment in wind and solar power is the best way to gradually transition to 100 percent renewable energy. While there are skeptics, wind and solar can be stored and put into the grid when needed, Elie said.

She also warned the public that the oil and gas industry is exploiting the war in Ukraine because of disruptions in supplies from Russia.

"We need electricity that is cheap, we need electricity that we can put up fast and we need electricity that is clean and that is the sun and the wind, and that's what we need to be doing right now," Elie said.

One of the bikers on the 250-mile trip to Albany, Andrew Wells, an environmental science teacher at NEST+m school on the

Lower East Side of Manhattan, said the comprehensive package of bills is encouraging but the public can't take for granted they will be enacted.

"I really think we need to act in a way that also demonstrates that we can't wait on the government to do things, we have to show up and rally and show them what we care about," Wells said.

Tom Hellmann, of Frankfort, Ky., who was at the rally, said the stakes are high for future generations.

"Hopefully, if we're going to have grandchildren one day the world's got to exist 100 years from now," he said. "So, yeah, it's a cold, windy day right now, but we want a bright future, a warm future and not a hot scalding future for my grandchildren."

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# Police Blotter

## County Police/Mount Kisco

**Apr. 13:** A Knowlton Avenue building owner reported at 7:39 a.m. that she had received information that youths were seen on the roof of her building the previous night. She advised that she would be sending a contractor to inspect the roof and would file an additional report if any damage is found.

**Apr. 13:** Officers responded at 10:58 a.m. to Woodcrest Lane on a report that an elderly resident had been scammed out of money during a telephone call he received. The victim's son contacted police and asked officers to meet him at the residence to sort out what had occurred.

**Apr. 14:** Report of a woman having passed out near the elevator at the Metro-North Station. The woman was conscious and alert upon an officer's arrival and she was subsequently taken by ambulance to Northern Westchester Hospital. MTA police also responded.

**Apr. 14:** Officers responded to Main Street and South Moger Avenue at 10:59 a.m. on a report of a dispute between two men. A deliveryman said he had gotten into an argument on the street with another man who then threatened to punch him in the face. When the deliveryman called police, the other party left the scene.

**Apr. 15:** An officer responded at 11:17 a.m. to Target on North Bedford Road regarding an assault that occurred the previous day. An employee said that a customer struck her with a piece of merchandise, causing bruising to her

wrist. The employee reported the incident to a manager the previous day but decided she should also file a police report.

## New Castle Police Department

**Apr. 9:** The department's Facebook page received a post that reported a suspicious white pickup truck, occupied by two males, in the Chestnut Oak Condominiums. A subject explained that they recently had a catalytic converter stolen from their vehicle and was concerned these subjects may be involved. The subjects left the area prior to officers arriving on scene.

**Apr. 10:** Report of two dogs attacking each other in Gedney Park while walking without leashes on the trail. One of the owners attempted to separate the dogs and sustained bites to their hands and leg. One dog received a significant, but non-life-threatening injury. The matter is being investigated by the department's animal warden. The county Health Department was also advised.

**Apr. 10:** A complainant reported their identity was unknowingly used to purchase a vehicle in Darian, Conn. The subject does not know how their information was compromised or used to buy the vehicle. Darian police is conducting an investigation into the unlawful purchase.

**Apr. 13:** Officers responded to an Overbrook Drive residence because of a verbal dispute. Officers were able to separate the parties involved and mediate the situation.

**Apr. 13:** A Campfire Road caller

reported broken eggs discovered inside their mailbox. The caller believed they know the suspect, but did not wish to share that information at this time.

**Apr. 14:** Two subjects received injuries due to a water main break at the state Department of Transportation site off of Saw Mill River Road. The subjects were transported to Westchester Medical Center for medical evaluations.

**Apr. 14:** Officers received a complaint about a fight involving juveniles that occurred at the multiuse basketball court behind Town Hall. One of the subjects received an injury to their lip, which was documented. The incident will be followed up with at the school to prevent further escalation.

## North Castle Police Department

**Apr. 8:** A male caller reported at 6:29 p.m. that his sons were swinging a bat in the backyard of their Rock Hill Road house and one of them was accidentally struck in the nose. The caller then reported his wife observed the incident and passed out and fell backwards striking her head. His son has a nose bleed and his wife is feeling very dizzy. The call was forwarded to 60 Control for EMS dispatch. Both parties were taken to Northern Westchester Hospital.

**Apr. 11:** A caller reported at 11:12 a.m. that a suspicious party entered LaGravinese Jewelers on Main Street. The subject was described as a white male wearing a suit who identified himself as a Verizon employee. The caller reported the suspicious person showed what appeared to be a fake Verizon ID and appeared to be intoxicated. The responding officers located the party in front of the Wells Fargo Bank, and had his mother respond to the location to pick him up.

**Apr. 13:** A Bayberry Road resident contacted headquarters at 3:47 p.m.

to report losing her house cat. It was described as 9.5-pound black cat with yellow eyes. The resident is requesting to be contacted if anyone sees her.

## Pleasantville Police Department

**Apr. 8:** Report of a suspicious 2002 Lexus on Marble Avenue that was unoccupied with its headlights on at 11:27 p.m. The situation was rectified.

**Apr. 13:** Criminal mischief reported on Lake Street at 9:48 a.m. A subject damaged a camera at the Pleasantville pool. A person is suspected, but no one has been charged.

**Apr. 14:** Grand larceny and offenses involving fraud from a bank account reported at headquarters at 1:43 p.m.

## White Plains Police Department

**Apr. 13:** Adian Joyce was arrested for second-degree burglary in connection with an incident that occurred at 192 Longview Ave.

## Yorktown Police Department

**Apr. 10:** Cornelius Boddie, 24, of Yorktown, was charged with driving with a suspended license and other traffic infractions at 10:21 a.m. after being pulled over on Route 6 for having an inadequate exhaust.

**Apr. 13:** Athalia Brito Mesa, 29, of Putnam Valley, was charged at 12:24 p.m. with driving with a revoked driver's license and other traffic infractions after being stopped on Route 6 for having an inadequate muffler.

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



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## Yorktown to Celebrate Arbor Day on April 29

The Town of Yorktown will hold its 11th annual Arbor Day Celebration on Friday, Apr. 29 in Patriot Garden Park, adjacent to Town Hall, at 363 Underhill Ave. in Yorktown Heights. The celebration will run from 4 to 5 p.m. with a reception to follow.

The highlight of the ceremony is the annual student poster contest, featuring outstanding artwork from fourth- and fifth-grade Yorktown students. This year's winners will be announced at the celebration. Winning posters will be made into banners to be displayed on street lamps around town; banners from previous years are currently on display.

Poster entries will be available for viewing in the boardroom inside Town Hall and winning posters will be on exhibit in the lobby of the Yorktown Justice Court in June. The theme of this year's poster contest is Trees Invite Me Outside, which recognizes

the importance of connecting people – especially young people – with nature.

At the ceremony, town officials, assisted by Girl Scout Troop 1326, will plant a dogwood tree, part of the ongoing process of beautifying the area around Town Hall. As an added treat, Crompond Elementary School fifth-graders will sing SOS from the Kids, reinforcing the message of preserving the environment for future generations. Finally, Yorktown's commitment to the environment will be recognized as the town receives its 11th annual designation as a Tree City USA.

Afterwards, everyone is invited to the reception to enjoy popular, locally-baked tree-shaped cookies and apple cider and view the exhibit of posters at leisure. Attendees are urged to take home a free tree sapling courtesy of Con Edison.



# Committee Proposes Mural for Pleasantville's Jackson Alley

By Abby Luby

Artists starting with a blank canvas consider numerous muses and creative ideas – theme, color, mood and gestural style, even before the brush sweeps the surface.

But consider planning a large public art mural requiring a detailed plan, requisite funding and continued public outreach so community members can weigh in on a planned artistic design.

That's what the Pleasantville Public Art Committee (PPAC) has been doing since last fall when it proposed creating a mural on the Jackson Alley walkway off Wheeler Avenue. Appearing before the Village Board at the Apr. 11 work session was Stuart Vance, a co-chair of PPAC.

"We came up with the theme of togetherness," Vance said. "During the pandemic when everyone was isolated, nobody was around and the downtown village was like a ghost town. We thought wouldn't it be wonderful when everything came back to life to commemorate the spirit of activity and togetherness."

Entitled Walking Murals, the working concept is to have figures of Pleasantville residents painted on the walls on either side of Jackson Alley. The committee's sample drawings reviewed by the board showed building height figures mid-step with vividly-colored geometric shapes creating a vibrant backdrop.

"These would be heroic figures walking beside you to remind you of the heroic spirit of the community in getting through the

pandemic," Vance said.

Artists would be sought from Westchester and beyond to participate in the project.

Joining Vance at the meeting was PPAC Co-chair Marlene Canapi and Pleasantville High School Art Department Chair Gregory Nemec, also a committee member.

Response to outreach to local business owners was positive, Vance said.

"We got buy-in and enthusiasm from everybody including (the) Jacob Burns (Film Center) who is lending the committee their sound stage at the media lab to photograph local citizens that would be on the mural," he said. "Also (Wheeler Avenue restaurant), Fatt Root said they are considering putting money into the project."

Local photographer Chad Kraus has volunteered to snap images of people for the project and local architect Jim Coleman has signed on as project consultant.

The Village Board responded positively last week.

"Jackson Alley is a place that has been wanting for something to happen since it was closed as a through street from Wheeler to Tompkins," Mayor Peter Scherer said.

The project is still in the planning stages and details must still be ironed out, especially the cost of the project since the committee is requesting some village funding.

"I think the concept is great," said Scherer, who also proposed hiring a company that paints murals to possibly save on the cost of insurance. "However, I assume we're talking about tens of thousands of dollars."

Vance said the committee was currently



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Jackson Alley, the pedestrian walkway between Wheeler Avenue and Tompkins Avenue in downtown Pleasantville, could be the scene of a mural to beautify the empty walls.

working on a budget that will include materials and equipment, including harnesses and perhaps a lift instead of scaffolding. Other concerns include obtaining the proper insurance covering those working on the mural, especially if artists were to paint from scaffolding reaching heights of up to 30 feet.

The project would also have to navigate phone and electricity wires in Jackson Alley.

"The ideal time frame would be to have the mural finished sometime this summer," said Vance.

Scherer suggested each wall be painted in different phases.

Concerned about workers painting from a high platform, village Trustee Michael Peppard

suggested the murals be shorter and the painted figures appear as if walking next to pedestrians in the alley.

"If the murals are smaller, say eight feet high for instance, the figures would still be larger than life and would enhance the idea of being participatory," he said.

The committee is expected to present village officials with a budget in the next few weeks for review.

"This will be a great asset to the village," Vance said. "It's a big challenge and it's going to make people who live here feel good. It's going to be a story told, the media will want to be a part of it and it will bring back the liveliness to the businesses in the community."

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Letters to the Editor

There Are Numerous Benefits Associated With Proposed Underhill Farm in Yorktown

When I saw a February 2020 news story that Soundview Preparatory School was closing, I envisioned reimagining the property into a walkable community that included crucially needed homes for seniors.

Now, the project is being considered by Yorktown’s government. This letter is to share the project’s facts – and refute wild misinformation and innuendo.

On July 28, 2020, the Town Board announced plans to create overlay zones for business hamlets for “creation of live/work retail-residential spaces and... construction of diversified housing options and new economic development.”

On Aug. 19, 2020, Soundview Preparatory School filed for bankruptcy. It was advertised for sale and a federal bankruptcy judge, in open court with no secrecy, authorized Soundview’s sale to my company. The overlays were approved by the Town Board in November 2020; we filed our initial project application the next month, and we have just started the approval process with the town nearly a year-and-a-half after the purchase of the property.

Underhill Farm will have 148 townhouse units, condominiums and apartments, including 118 senior-friendly units and retail space. The location, an easy walk to downtown, is next to Yorktown’s future senior center and the Beaveridge Senior Apartments. Underhill Farm’s walking trails, open space and pond will be open to all, and we will partner with the Yorktown Historic Society to preserve the Underhill House.

In addition, we are upgrading traffic signals to mitigate congestion at Underhill Avenue and Route 118, and have offered to contribute to the traffic mitigation work at the intersection of the two roads that will likely not be improved without assistance from new developments in the area.

No aspect of this project has been unduly influenced or fast-tracked. Every government review has been methodical. The Town Board, for instance, unanimously reviewed our initial plans. Next, the Planning Board will conduct a state Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) evaluation that again gives the public an opportunity to comment.

Unicorn Contracting has already contributed to Yorktown: We built the CareMount buildings on Hill Boulevard and Kear Street. We’re fiercely proud of our company’s track record of integrity and respect.

We are optimistic about the potential of this project for both the town and for the new residents of the property, and are disappointed about the continual spread of misinformation about this project. Don’t be misled. See “Facts vs. Fiction” at [underhillfarmsyorktown.com](http://underhillfarmsyorktown.com).

Thank you for supporting our efforts to propel Yorktown’s future.

**Paul F. Guillaro**  
President, Unicorn Contracting Corp.

Westchester Must Act to Preserve Pocantico Park for Generations to Come

As an 18-year-old who has lived in Briarcliff my whole life, I’ve always valued my ability to escape into nature and explore places like Pocantico Lake County Park.

With the possibility of the construction of 31 houses on its shoreline looming larger, it seems like there might be a way of preserving this escape.

Westchester County has the ability to buy the land slated for development. This idea already has the support of many Westchester residents, as well the unanimous support of the county advisory board.

Westchester County must act and seize the opportunity to expand this already magnificent county park. It isn’t just for me and the countless others who currently frequent the park. It’s for future generations of Westchester residents.

I want future generations of Westchester County residents to grow up and have the ability to form memories at this park, and enjoy themselves just as I have. Buying the land is the best way to ensure this.

Growing up during these tumultuous times isn’t easy. That’s alright. It doesn’t need to be. It will shape our youth into adults with strong values, eager to preserve the places of their childhood. Unfortunately, though, if steps aren’t taken today, there will be nothing left for this upcoming generation to preserve, no matter how good their intentions are.

This doesn’t need to be a challenging decision. Let’s take the steps today to ensure that the places that we care about will still be here tomorrow.

**Joshua Linett**  
Briarcliff Manor

**County Should Do What’s Needed to Preserve Pocantico Lake**

Please note my enthusiastic support for Westchester County to purchase the 715 Sleepy Hollow Rd. property without delay. I have lived in this area for 32 years appreciating the natural wonders of our area, which need to be preserved. Our children and future generations deserve to enjoy the beauty of Pocantico Lake. It is priceless and irreplaceable.

We must save Pocantico Lake!

**George Pianka**  
Mount Pleasant

**County Ought to Seize Chance of a Lifetime to Expand Pocantico Lake Park**

I am writing to strongly recommend that the county executive consider acquiring 715 Sleepy Hollow Rd. without delay in order to expand Pocantico Lake County Park.

My family and I believe that it is in the county’s long-term interest to do everything possible to buy this entire property and not miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to expand a Westchester County park!

**Christine Stavropoulos**  
Mount Pleasant

Calendar Submissions

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](mailto:aluby@theexaminernews.com).

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## Column

### A Meal and a Bed, Served with Compassion

The men walk into the First Presbyterian Church in Ossining from the cold March night, brief snow showers preceding their arrival. Their jackets don't look warm enough for the brisk weather.

Many of them arrived from jobs as day laborers, putting up Sheetrock, cutting trees or painting houses and getting paid in cash. Others have been drinking. They're from Ecuador, Costa Rica, Colombia and maybe other countries. They don't speak English, but they're all vaccinated against COVID-19.

William Caruso greets them as they walk in. He's the night supervisor. The men call him, "Mister" or "Bill." He inspects their backpacks to make sure they're not carrying liquor or drugs into the overnight shelter.

"Alcohol is disrespectful to me and the church. I will check them," Caruso said.

The men, and one woman, will find a bed among the 16 air mattresses that are laid out in the church's Fellowship Hall. They will eat a meal of pulled pork, rice and beans and salad and go to bed at 10 p.m. In the morning, they clear out, to try to get another job for the day or to wander the streets.

This is the Emergency Shelter Partnership (ESP) at work, a program that runs from December through the beginning



By Michael Gold

of April for the homeless to get indoors every night during the harsh New York winters, administered by churches, synagogues and mosques in northern Westchester, from Armonk to Tarrytown.

The shelter rotates among different churches in Ossining each month. The House of Refuge Apostolic Church hosted the homeless in January. Star of Bethlehem hosted in February. It was First Presbyterian's turn in March. Other churches in the area, from Mount

Kisco, Bedford Hills and Croton-on-Hudson, to Scarborough, Briarcliff Manor and Chappaqua provide funds, food and volunteers, that buy and bring in supplies and food and cook the meals.

Before the pandemic, the program deployed a van to drive those seeking shelter overnight to various houses of worship in the area, but the possibility of spreading COVID, with all the men crowded in the van, meant that ESP had to stop the van, said Rev. Tim Ives, who helps to run the program.

"We had to change the model," Ives explained, "so people can walk to our doors without getting a van ride."

The partnership began to give people "some kind of option where they weren't

stuck outside in the winter," Ives said.

The local houses of worship were "buildings that we heat anyway, so we said let's see if we can put that together," he said.

"I feel some compassion for these guys," Caruso said. "I feel a kinship to them. I want to get them to stop drinking and get an apartment or a job. I've encouraged them to join AA (Alcoholics Anonymous)."

"One of my guys died on the street in Ossining. He was a really good guy," Caruso explained. "He had a job down in Queens. He was in his 40s. He helped me with translation with the guys. He was out on a street corner and found dead."

Another problem for the homeless, Caruso said, is they often play the state lottery to get money quickly.

"It's a big problem. It's a losing cause," Caruso said. "They're digging a bigger hole."

The men "don't know how to save money," he explained. "They get \$100 in their pocket. They spend it."

"In this world, it's essential that we care about each other," Ives said. "You need all kinds of really good-hearted and wonderful people looking for a way to help and make the world better."

"They're just humans who have gotten caught in a bad situation," said Duna Williamson, a volunteer and member of First Presbyterian who helps work with the

people walking in, three nights a week.

"I go around to each bed and say goodnight, and some shake my hand. Some will give me a hug. They'll say, 'goodnight, Mamma.' They're so sweet. I can't help but love them."

Williamson said she has seen some of them out on the street.

"One of them pushes a cart. Some of them have had some kind of traumatic experience.

Some have seen their parents killed by gangs. One got in a motorcycle accident. Some of them have kids," she said.

Those seeking shelter that night weren't comfortable with a reporter

looking in on them, so I stayed in the hallway and spoke with Caruso and Williamson.

"I don't think anybody wants to be here," Williamson said.

Caruso said he wants to see more job program opportunities for the homeless, health insurance, low-income housing, AA meetings and information for them on what other shelters to go to after the winter months end.

"At ESP meetings, we talk about the limits of the program," Ives said. "We wish we could do more."

*Michael Gold has had articles published in the New York Daily News, the Albany Times Union, The Virginian-Pilot, The Palm Beach Post and other newspapers.*

## On the Street

## Letters to the Editor

### Starbucks Employees Should Be Applauded for Their Attempts to Unionize

I'm writing as a grandchild of a union family, asking all of us who value an honest job to applaud the growing strength of the Starbucks union.

What began as a campaign in Buffalo has grown to more than 160 Starbucks stores during this pandemic across the country.

Their goal? To unionize their stores for the needs of workers.

It is brave – and takes a lot of guts – for these workers to join with each other in advocating for their needs from the bosses. How could any boss say no to worker negotiations, anyway? That sounds to me like part of the job.

Whether it's their pay, benefits or health and safety, the truth is that every worker deserves those from their bosses, and the unions will ensure that they get them.

So, I for one, wholeheartedly support any Starbucks workers who are organizing their workplace.

And I wish every store's effort, big or small, success in obtaining their basic workers' rights.

James Carmody  
Carmel

### Alzheimer's Association Grateful for Volunteers Who Fight to End Dementia

During National Volunteer Week, I would like to acknowledge William Hammond of Edward Jones for his exceptional service to the Alzheimer's Association Hudson Valley Chapter. For seven years, Bill has led the Putnam County Walk Edward Jones Team in addition to being on the Putnam County Walk to End Alzheimer's Planning Committee.

Bill also holds the position of liaison between Edward Jones and the Walk to End Alzheimer's for his Edward Jones District, recruiting and motivating Edward Jones

employees to become involved in the walk. Without volunteers like Bill, we would not be able to accomplish our mission of raising funds and awareness to end Alzheimer's and all dementia. We are so grateful for all that our volunteers like Bill do to advance our cause.

Tina Eckert, Manager  
Putnam Walk to End Alzheimer's  
Hudson Valley Chapter

### Small Steps You and Your Family Can Take to Go Green This Earth Day

If you're like many parents, you want to set a good example for your children and teach them how they can positively impact the world around them. However, when it comes to sustainable efforts, the responsibility of saving the environment can seem like a monumental task.

Going green while parenting might sound challenging, but small steps can make a difference, especially as more companies and brands are getting in on the effort to go green. Get started on the right foot this Earth Day with the following tips and insights:

#### Choose Eco-Friendly Shoes

Children's feet grow fast. That's why you can consider selecting footwear that incorporates eco-friendly features. Here are a few options:

- Teva's signature sandal straps are made from recycled plastic bottles to reduce waste. The brand offers styles for men, women and children.
- Birkenstock's classic and modern footbed sandals, which come in various colors, are made from natural materials such as cork, natural latex and jute.
- The TOMS Earthwise Collection includes an assortment of on-trend

flats with a 50 percent recycled cotton canvas upper and a non-removable insole made with 50 percent eco-content for a seamless fit.

#### Choose Paper Over Plastic

With a bit of creativity, you can replace plastic utensils, sandwich bags and single-use beverage containers at home with sustainable, reusable alternatives. Also, try purchasing favorite household items in bulk instead to limit the amount of packaging you consume.

While individual efforts are important, companies will also need to embrace change. Retailers, such as Rack Room Shoes, are enacting company-wide initiatives. They have begun replacing plastic bags with paper in many locations and will be using only paper bags in the coming months. The company also recycles, utilizes energy efficient lighting and has sustainable flooring at many locations.

You and your children can make an impact by taking a reusable tote when you shop and learning about your local recycling program together.

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# Remembering and Liking to Say ‘I’m a Realtor’

Each Home Guru column I write has the benefit of an excellent proofreader, my wife Margaret. She not only is perfect with spelling and grammar, but she also comments and advises on the subject matter I might tackle each week.

On occasion, she crosses the line between editorial content and commercial promotion by reminding me to inform my readers that, besides my editorial pursuits, I am also a realtor, ready and able to list and sell homes.

I remember the advice of mentors early in my real estate career who would remind me frequently not to be a “secret agent” and to do all I could to promote my role as a realtor.

I have followed that advice in my own way. Having been a writer, editor and public relations practitioner in my earlier careers, I write this column weekly and even wrote a book on the subject called “Musings of the Home Guru,” which I think can be found on Amazon if you probe deeply.

But, besides promoting myself as an agent, I enjoy promoting the profession as a whole to other second-career prospects. Indeed, most of us have done something else as a livelihood, or quite a few things, prior to earning our real estate licenses.



By Bill Primavera

As a group, that makes us a more interesting lot because we bring a broad range of life experiences to our roles. In fact, in all of my years in this profession (I think it’s more than 20 years now), I have met only one realtor who chose this profession as a career before doing anything beforehand.

No one has employed me to recommend real estate as a career choice or to tell why I enjoy the profession so much, but I offer the following reasons for others who may be considering venturing into the field.

First and foremost, a career in real estate is satisfying because it promotes a basic human need of providing shelter.

Secondly, it provides a platform of communication and service with other people whose lives we affect in a meaningful way.

Next, for anyone out there who can’t stand routine, real estate offers something new and different every day. No two transactions are exactly the same, and sometimes the unexpected can be astonishing.

The mechanics of real estate keep changing, so realtors must be willing to remain in learning mode. It’s a good thing to be learning all the time. It keeps us young in spirit, even to the point of old age.



There was a famous woman realtor in Westchester, now deceased, who kept working into her early 90s. Everybody loved her, both her colleagues and her clients. In her later years, there was one caveat: she could show only the first floor of homes. Clients had to venture to the second floor, attic and basement on their own.

Real estate offers the opportunity to run your own business where, following guidelines, you can set your own rules and work conditions, including the amount of time you want to spend doing it. For many young mothers, this offers a wonderful opportunity to set their own hours around

family responsibilities.

And, of course, let’s not forget that it can be a good moneymaker if you work hard.

Can you tell that I love doing what I do? I would be happy to share my experience with anyone considering the possibility of making real estate their chosen profession. Just give me a call. I love talking about loving what I do.

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



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## A (Talented) Man for All Seasons

*New Rochelle's Alvin Clayton leads a busy life with three successful careers as restaurateur, painter, and fashion model, but he always finds time for his family, his patrons — and friends*

By Warren Berger

*You are reading this week's excerpt of an article from our Examiner+ digital newsmagazine. To read the entire article and others like it, visit [www.examiner-plus.com](http://www.examiner-plus.com) and join our community as a member.*

On a recent Thursday night in New Rochelle, it was opening time — 5:00 sharp — at the award-winning restaurant Alvin & Friends. The owner, Alvin Clayton, was taking advantage of the quiet before the storm (no diners had shown up yet but they'd be there soon) to show me around the place. Touring this restaurant is like strolling through an art gallery — dozens of paintings adorn the walls, showing brightly-colored scenes of the Caribbean, Cuba, and Paris. All the paintings were created by Clayton himself, who is a full-time artist

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— that is, when he's not either running his restaurant or posing for fashion shoots with top photographers. Yes, Alvin Clayton has not two but three successful careers: painter, restaurateur, and model.

It's a whirlwind lifestyle that has him shopping at Westchester food supply outlets one day, flying to an exotic photoshoot the next — and in between, mingling with customers at the restaurant or holing up in his home-based art studio in New Rochelle to work on his next painting (Clayton figures he's done upwards of a thousand paintings over the years).

"I lead a charmed life," he acknowledged while handing me one of his famous rum punch drinks and sitting down for a chat about food, art, celebrities, and more.

**Examiner+: Alvin & Friends is now recognized as one of Westchester's top restaurants, judging by all the awards it has received. How did this place come into being?**

Alvin Clayton: I was a professional Ford model for 25 years and I knew I needed something to do after modeling. So I saved the money I was making as a model because I knew I might need to start something of my own one day. Then I really started to think harder about it after a journalist friend, Gail O'Neill, asked me, What are you going to do after modeling? I always



Clayton posing in front of one of his own paintings at his New Rochelle restaurant, Alvin & Friends (photo: Warren Berger)

had an interest in cooking — I learned from my grandmother in Trinidad, where I grew up — and I'd worked as a waiter while modeling, and always liked the kind of interaction with people that happens at restaurants. Then fate stepped in — Gail's boyfriend Brad Johnson was in the process of opening a new restaurant in Los Angeles. He asked if I wanted to invest in it, along with other investors that

included Denzel Washington, Debbie Allen, and [L.A. Lakers star] Norm Nixon. I not only invested in it, but I also went out to L.A. to work there and learn the restaurant business.

**E+: So just like that, you switched from being a New York-based model to being a Los Angeles restaurant manager?**

Clayton: I figured if I'm going to have my own restaurant someday, this was a great opportunity because it was really a top restaurant. It was called Georgia and it became the place for Black Hollywood stars — Denzel, Eddie Murphy, Halle Berry. It had a great run for seven years and then there was a problem with the lease and the restaurant closed in 2000. And at that time, I'm living in L.A. with my wife and three kids. But I was never really a West Coast person, I'm a ...



To read the rest of this article, and others like it, visit [examiner-plus.com](http://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](mailto:examinerplus@theexaminernews.com)

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## Orchestra 914 Presents Concert Geared Toward Children With Special Needs

This Saturday, Apr. 23 at 4 p.m. Barbara Yahr, a music therapist and conductor of the Greenwich Village Orchestra, will join Orchestra 914 as guest conductor to bring the special needs community an inclusive Together in Music family concert at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center.

As a conductor and music therapist, Together in Music has been a deeply rewarding project, and also an important one, not only for me but for kids, families and for the orchestral musicians who have played the concerts," Yahr said.

"Every child should have the opportunity to experience the sound and energy of an orchestra either as a member of the audience or as an active participant playing music on stage with the orchestra. The level of interactive activity in our concerts is what makes Together in Music unique."

This program centers around the theme of music and dance. The New England Academy of Dance will bring students coached by choreographer Christina Fagundes Turner to be a part of the performance.

The Together in Music mission includes offering children, adults and their families the opportunity to be a part of a positive and enriching musical experience; allowing families the chance to attend a

symphony performance as a family in a safe environment; promote the connection between people from the special needs community and musicians in the orchestra; create experiences in which everyone can take pride; bring about opportunities for families to celebrate their children and siblings, no matter what their age; and to expand the horizons of the families, their music therapists and the orchestral musicians.

"We are excited to partner with Barbara and appreciate the support of the Friends of Chappaqua Performing Arts Center and EPIC for making this event a reality and enhancing the lives of people with special needs through the exposure to classical music," said Amy Harter, co-executive director of Orchestra 914. "The benefits of listening to live classical music are exceptional and we look forward to bringing the special needs community together to share in this magic."

Tickets and information for the Together in Music concert can be found by visiting [www.orchestra914.org](http://www.orchestra914.org).

Orchestra 914 is based in Pleasantville with the goal to widen its geographic scope and bring an inclusive and unexpected array of live classical music to audiences throughout Westchester.

## Westchester, Putnam Heart Walk at Kensico Dam on April 30

The American Heart Association is inviting Westchester and Putnam residents back to its premier event to boost physical and mental health through healthy habits while supporting the lifesaving mission.

On Saturday, Apr. 30 at 10 a.m., Westchester and Putnam Heart Walk participants and teams are invited to Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla to celebrate heart and stroke survivors, raise lifesaving funds and encourage physical activity.

This year's theme, Heart Walk Here, invites participants to walk on the event path or to create a path of their own. From parks and parkways to tucked away trails, participants are invited to Heart Walk at any location that inspires their heart health.

"The past year has shown us that no matter where we are, we can come together for a common cause," said Dr. Damara Gutnick, president of the board of directors for the American Heart Association in Westchester County. "The Heart Walk is all about promoting the health and well-being of our community and supporting our lifesaving mission."

The Heart Walk is the signature event of the American Heart Association's Heart Challenge program, which is designed to help companies positively impact employee overall health and well-being. The program is anchored in a series

of customizable workplace events that inspires employees to be more engaged, reconnect with colleagues, get in their physical activity, support a great cause and have a lot of fun doing it.

"When it comes to maintaining good health, every little effort counts," said Jennifer Bello, registered nurse and co-chair of the 2021-22 Go Red for Women movement in Westchester County and senior director of nursing at White Plains Hospital. "Most of us know exercise is a great way to support your heart health, but people often feel intimidated at the idea of starting a workout routine. Remember, you don't need to run a marathon to protect your heart. Even walking for 15 minutes a few times every week is a great way to be active."

Funds raised from the event will go toward research, advocacy, CPR training and to promote better health in support of the Association's 2024 Health Equity Impact Goal, reducing barriers to healthcare access and quality.

To register for the Westchester Heart Walk, visit [www.westchesterheartwalk.org](http://www.westchesterheartwalk.org) or to register for the Putnam Heart Walk visit [www.putnamheartwalk.org](http://www.putnamheartwalk.org). Everyone is encouraged to wear red and post pictures on their social media pages and tag us @AHANewYork.

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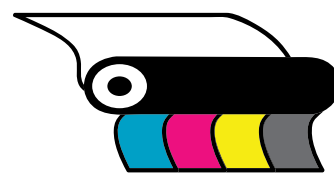


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# Peekskill Schools Hires Bedford Assistant Superintendent for Business

By Martin Wilbur

The Bedford Central School District is losing another member of its central administration at the end of the school year.

On Apr. 5, the Peekskill City School District Board of Education appointed Cynthia Hawthorne as the district's new assistant superintendent for business and will take over the position on July 1. She will be replacing Robin Zimmerman who is retiring from that post effective June 30.

Since 2019, Hawthorne has served as Bedford's assistant superintendent for business and administrative services. Her departure follows the already-announced retirement of Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joel Adelberg and the upcoming exit of Director of Special Education Deborah Dormady.

Bedford will see current Eastchester Superintendent Dr. Robert Glass take over for Adelberg this summer while the district is still searching for Dormady's replacement.

Hawthorne, who graduated from New York City public schools, received her bachelor's degree in accounting from Lehman College. After college, she worked at AT&T for several years and raised her four children with her husband. The family lives in Dutchess County.

Later, Hawthorne completed her master's degree in business administration from SUNY New Paltz in 2011 and her Certificate of Advanced Studies in School District Business Leadership in 2013.

Before arriving in Bedford, Hawthorne began her career in education at Dutchess

BOCES as an office manager and later moved into the business office, serving as a staff specialist. Her first school business administrator position was at Webutuck Central School District in 2014, where she worked for five years followed by her service in Bedford.

In a release from the Peekskill City School District, it stated that Hawthorne was raised by her father, who immigrated from Jamaica to further his education. He worked for most of his career as a teacher in the New Jersey Public School System.

"Ms. Hawthorne and her brothers understood the importance of education, perseverance, and community," the

release stated. "Notably, his life examples instilled in them the importance of leveraging resources and collaborating on care initiatives to benefit the community. In her career in education, Ms. Hawthorne is committed to similar pursuits. She hopes to provide the students of Peekskill with the resources and opportunities they require and that they deserve."

Cynthia Hawthorne will be leaving the Bedford Central School District to become the assistant superintendent for business in Peekskill starting this summer.



## Houlihan Lawrence to Hold Free Seminar on Selling Your Home

Houlihan Lawrence is holding a free seminar on what you need to know when selling your home.

The program will be held on Tuesday, Apr. 26 starting at 5:30 p.m. at CV Rich Mansion, located at 305 Ridgeway in White Plains. The program will feature experienced licensed realtors Ann Bernstein and Diane Dolinsky-Pickar of Houlihan Lawrence.

There will be light refreshments served from 5:30 to 6, a presentation at 6 p.m. followed by a Q&A at 7 p.m.

Topics will include how to approach the downsizing question; what to do and not to do to prepare to downsize; how to prepare your home for sale and photography; how to line up your team; and how to anticipate buyers' objections and prepare for that.

Advance registration is required. For more information and to register, visit [www.homehousebeyond.eventbrite.com](http://www.homehousebeyond.eventbrite.com).

## Putnam County Department of Health RESIDENTIAL HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DROP-OFF DAY Fahnestock State Park, Canopus Beach Parking Lot 1498 Route 301, Kent, NY

### Putnam County Residents only

April 30, 2022

9am-12pm



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- Household batteries(AAA, AA, C, D, 9V)
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- Asbestos products
- Construction debris
- Furniture, toys or clothing
- Medical waste, old medications

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# Yorktown Yoga Therapist Doing All She Can to Support Ukraine

By Susan R. Eisenstein

Marta Shedletsky is a yoga therapist and health coach, operating Mushika Wellness Solutions in Yorktown Heights.

Shedletsky was born in Poland. Most of her family, including an adult son and her mother, still live there. Her grandparents survived World War II, and her paternal grandfather, Jan Wesolowski, survived five years of Nazi concentration camps.

Shedletsky still remembers her grandparents talking about "dary," the gifts from America. She knows firsthand how important help from the outside is.

And so, the horrific events affecting people caught in the Russia-Ukraine war, speaks deeply to her.

"Poland is a country that borders with Ukraine and most of the refugees end up there," Shedletsky said. "At the moment Poland is hosting over two million Ukrainian refugees, mostly women and children. They often don't want to go any further hoping to soon come back to their homes or rebuild their homes and lives. Like most of the Polish people, my family is involved in helping Ukrainians in Poland in various ways."



Yorktown yoga therapist Marta Shedletsky prepares some of the packages that she has been sending to help Ukrainians in the country's war against Russia.

Shedletsky decided to use her talent as a yoga therapist and yoga teacher and schedule a series of donation-based classes, where all proceeds go to help Ukraine. She started this venture last month at the Jefferson Valley Mall, holding donation-based classes on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. in the space next to T-Mobile.

"The mall doesn't charge me for the room, so it's really 100 percent of what people donate," Shedletsky said. "And people are generous."

She intends to continue as long

as it is needed and people are willing to help.

Shedletsky also leads a monthly meditation circle via Zoom. This session is free or by donation, and the donations through the rest of this month have been dedicated to help the war-torn country.

An owner of another yoga studio in town contacted her to do another donation-based class for Ukraine. The Polish community of Putnam County is also going to help in the efforts. A major drive is being organized, and a portion of the donations raised will go to a

hospital in Kharkiv.

Since shipping supplies to Poland is expensive, Shedletsky's initial idea was to send the collected money to Poland or to buy whatever was needed online and have the supplies delivered to Polish Red Cross distribution centers.

However, she soon learned that there were items that were difficult, if not impossible, to get in Poland and Ukraine, such as hemorrhage pressure bands, tactical combat-grade first aid kits, compression bandages, tourniquets and pain medications. She made an Amazon list and started sharing.

"I have to say that my yoga and Polish communities responded beautifully," Shedletsky said.

A friend of hers, Renata Wild-Olszewski, a William Raveis Real Estate associate broker, organized a collection within her company.

"With all these combined efforts, we have been able to send two shipments of over \$2,000 worth of first aid kits, trauma wound dressings and similar items to Poland from where they will be delivered to Ukraine," she said.

Shedletsky recently learned that a Ukrainian friend is also collecting medical supplies for

Hospital #4 in Kharkiv. Her friend's daughter works as an emergency room nurse there. So Shedletsky joined that collection, and everything that she collects will now go to that hospital.

Since Kharkiv is an active war zone, the supplies are shipped to Lviv in western Ukraine, which is still fairly accessible and not being bombed regularly, she said. From there a brave soul drives a minivan to Kharkiv.

Shedletsky recently received a detailed list of what is needed and what cannot be obtained by regular citizens. Only medical professionals and businesses can acquire certain supplies such as Central Venous Catheters Certofix (Central Line Kit); Cricothyrotomy Kits; Tracheostomy Cannulas with cuff, Diameter 8.0; Pediatric Catheters (sizes 2, 3, 4, 5); Foley Catheters with bags (sizes 18, 20) NG; and Nasogastric feeding tubes preferably with Applix pump set.

She is hoping to connect with those who have access to these supplies and are able to buy these life-saving items that are unavailable in Ukraine.

Anyone who would like to help in the donation effort, may contact Marta Shedletsky at [marta@mushikawellness.com](mailto:marta@mushikawellness.com).

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# Singer-Songwriter Blazes His Path Forward Through Trying Times

By Martin Wilbur

When Jesse Kramer was finishing high school, he had to make a decision that some but relatively few might have had the courage to make.

Preforming at cafes, bars and street corners from the time he was 14, Kramer wanted to pursue a music career, that of writing and performing rock n' roll.

Having grown up in a strict religious household outside of Indianapolis, his parents wanted him to have no part of that lifestyle.

So Kramer eschewed college and decided to go for a different type of education – moving to the musical melting pot of Nashville to set out and make his dreams a reality. It wasn't easy, being forced to sleep in his car or on someone's floor, enduring the hardscrabble life of a struggling musician.

But seven years later, including getting waylaid through the pandemic, Kramer has found his footing, buoyed by a large catalogue of original material he's written and networking in Music City that opened the doors to his still evolving career.

"Nashville as a town, being in that environment and having those experiences was going to be my college," said Kramer who starts a month-long, 13-performance tour this weekend in Ohio before coming to The Turning Point in Piermont, Rockland County on Apr. 29 and The Bean Runner Café in Peekskill on Sunday afternoon May 1. "Every guy, whether a fresh face who's been around for a minute, to one that claims a 10-year tenure to the jaded guy, I can kind of get the idea what the experiences are and put it to use for me."

Kramer, 25, has written and released six EPs, all available on his website. But his big breaks were invitations to audition and then to perform on two highly popular television shows – Fox's "The Four: Battle

for Stardom" in 2018, and on "America's Got Talent" just before the onset of the pandemic in early 2020.

"I was getting some traction in that in specific areas and making some friends and getting some pretty good gigs out of it, but (the TV appearances) kind of took me in a different direction," he said.

Kramer's soulful-tinged rock repertoire lasted for five of the eight episodes on 'The Four,' performing covers of "Hallelujah," "You Are So Beautiful" and "Come Together," among other favorites.

The experience got him a run of shows at casinos in and around Albuquerque where he opened for the likes of Steve Adler of Guns N Roses, Slaughter and Skid Row. He was also able to hang out backstage with Jonny Lang and Buddy Guy.

"There were some very cool things, you know what I mean," Kramer said.

He was asked to try out for "America's Got Talent" where he was accepted. In his televised performance, the judges, including Simon Cowell were impressed. He was ready to parlay that into some additional opportunities but COVID-19 soon short-circuited the entire industry and millions of others everywhere.

"It was definitely devastating and left everybody in the industry conflicted with life decisions, with us making this a career," Kramer recalled. "How are we going to come back from this?"

Back in Nashville, he took the time to write and practice and stayed performance-ready whenever the world started to open back up. In some ways, the break separated those who are serious about their musical careers and those who aren't, with experimentation through virtual home performances and other risk-taking moves, Kramer said.

"A pandemic isn't going to stop you from picking up your instrument or writing how you feel or doing what you did in the first



Jesse Kramer, who has performed on 'The Four' and "America's Got Talent" and has been building an impressive catalogue of original music, will be performing in Peekskill on Sunday, May 1.

place," said Kramer.

The upcoming tour that will bring him to Peekskill before he heads to New England has Kramer excited. Those are areas he's wanted to explore for some time. He will play small café-type spots like The Bean Runner and larger venues such as the Angel City Music Hall in Manchester, N.H.

"This market has been the top engaging market without me even being there," Kramer said. "This is going to be my first time. This is my top engaging market for

over four years, so I'm really excited about being able to bring my music to all my New England fans, especially my New York fans because I feel like that's a place I've got to visit."

Kramer's performance at The Bean Runner Café will be from 3 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 1. There is a limit of 40 people allowed.

For more information on Jesse Kramer and to buy tickets and his music, visit [www.toomuchsoulfornashville.com](http://www.toomuchsoulfornashville.com).

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Hudson Stage's final full stage production, "Off Peak," opens Friday evening for the first of nine performances over the next three weekends at Whippoorwill Hall at the North Castle Public Library in Armonk. The show features Kurt Rhoads and Nance Williamson, pictured left, playing two old flames who run into each other during an evening commute. Tickets are \$40, and \$35 for seniors and students. For tickets and more information, call 914-271-2811 or visit [www.hudsonstage.com](http://www.hudsonstage.com).

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continued on page 22

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# Irish-American Writers: One Not So Obvious at First Glance

One truism of the virtual eradication of Ireland's native tongue – a tragedy, given its beauty and eloquence – is that it gave the Irish another language to conquer.

Conquer English they did, whether in Ireland or in any land where fate compelled them to settle as they left their native land in the millions over the course of somewhat more than a century.

For many Americans, mention of the topic brings to mind some of the foremost Irish-American writers, such as playwright Eugene O'Neil or authors F. Scott Fitzgerald and Flannery O'Connor.

But another writer can claim the same mantle, though most would scratch their heads at the thought of John Steinbeck as an Irish-American writer. California-born and raised, with a solidly German surname, few would think of Steinbeck in the same category. Yet to readers of his works, particularly "East of Eden," the label is undeniable.

A huge portion of 'Eden' acquaints us with unforgettable characters: Samuel Hamilton, Steinbeck's Ireland-born grandfather; his wife Liza, the rock of the family; their American-born children, in particular their daughter Olive Hamilton, a teacher, who was Steinbeck's mother. Samuel, a Presbyterian farmer from Ballykelly, County Derry in the North of Ireland, left his hardscrabble homeland during the Great Famine of the 1840s for an equally hardscrabble existence in Monterey County, Calif. There he lived the life of a farmer, a blacksmith, a dreamer



John Steinbeck (1902 - 1968)

and an inventor whose genius at tinkering never translated into income.

Steinbeck himself was clear on the matter. As noted in a December 2018 Irish Times article, recounting his 1952 pilgrimage to his grandfather's birthplace, Steinbeck was quoted: "I am half Irish, the rest of my blood being watered down with German and Massachusetts English. But Irish blood doesn't water down very well; the strain must be very strong." Few could disagree with that statement!

His mother's Irish extraction attracted him much more than any of his other ethnic origins. From her roots, The Times noted, "came the stories, creativity and passion that inspired him to be a writer."

And a prolific writer he was. Over his lifetime Steinbeck crafted 19 works of

fiction, two plays and eight nonfiction works. While many say "East of Eden" is his masterpiece, his renown would stand equally strong based on such classics as "The Grapes of Wrath," "Of Mice and Men" and "Tortilla Flat," his first commercial success, published when he was 32. For "Grapes of Wrath," he won the 1940 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. The movie, directed by John Ford, garnered several Academy Award nominations, including best actor for a young Henry Fonda.

Steinbeck was a champion of the downtrodden, the dispossessed, the down-on-their-luck masses. His characters are multifaceted, and reveal the eternal conflict men and women engage in between the forces of good and evil.

For some of his more radical political views, he was often viewed as "left-leaning." During much of his career he was targeted by J. Edgar Hoover's FBI, surveillance he was well aware of and comically scoffed at. As a war correspondent in Europe during World War II, he actively participated in commando raids against Axis forces in Italy and once handled a Thompson submachine gun while capturing a number of German and Italian soldiers. He was wounded several



By Brian McGowan

times, and suffered what we call today post traumatic stress disorder. Writing was his tonic.

In 1962, he received the Nobel Prize for literature, a bittersweet accomplishment given some of the resultant criticism of the choice, and Steinbeck's own self-effacing view that there were any number of writers who merited the award more than he.

Married three times, and divorced twice, Steinbeck died in New York City on Dec. 20, 1968, at the age of 66. Many of his works remain staples of American public education, including "Of Mice and Men" and "The Grapes of Wrath." He also, according to the American Library Association, is one of the 10 most frequently banned authors in the United States, a distinction he no doubt would relish today.

Pleasantville resident Brian McGowan was born and raised in the Bronx and is a second-, third- and fifth-generation Irish-American/Canadian, as his immigrant ancestors followed several paths to the New World. Reach him at [brian.m.mcgowan1952@gmail.com](mailto:brian.m.mcgowan1952@gmail.com) or on Twitter (@Bmcgowan52M). He is the author of two books, "Thunder at Noon," about the battle of Waterloo, and "Love, Son John," about World War II. Both are available at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

## Irish Eclectic

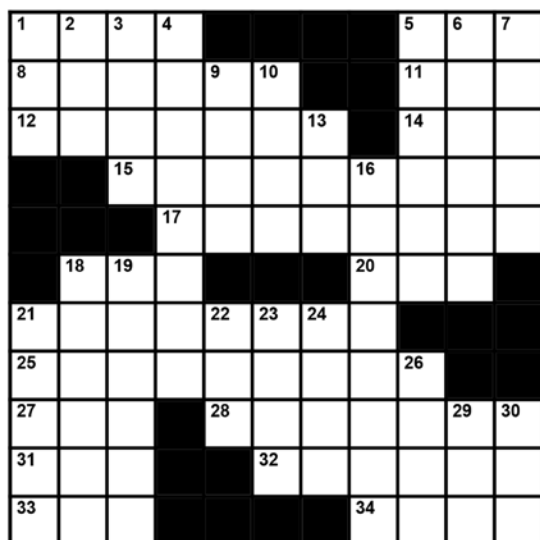
## Crossword

### Across

1. This, \_\_\_ and the other
5. D.D.S.'s group
8. "Three's Company" star or location of the "Elephant hotel"
11. Coffee order, abbr.
12. Where you get fido's food
14. Student score (abbr.)
15. Spa feature
17. Former song holder
18. \_\_\_ rule (usually)
20. Burro
21. Medieval weapon
25. New York waterway
27. Lollygag
28. Armonk ski & biking shop, \_\_\_ & Tweed
31. "The Canterbury Tales" setting
32. Home on the range
33. Bolted things down
34. Adjacent to

### Down

1. 3 in a tbs
2. Dig up
3. Recipe info, abbr.
4. Precedent setter
5. Specialized vocabularies
6. Stops
7. "It's only \_\_\_!"
9. Big South American bird



10. In order (to)
13. Tony Blair and others, for short
16. Arouse
18. Downright
19. Spiffed up
21. Salsa singer Cruz
22. P.T.A. meeting place: Abbr.
23. Enticement
24. It's enough, according to some
26. Easy gait
29. Dinosaur last name
30. Despite this

Answers on page 23

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# Comparing the Evolution of Wine to Human Development



By Nick Antonaccio

There are very few things in life that are not in a constant state of change.

Our lives are in perpetual motion as we traverse through numerous life passages, at times in total control of our destiny and at other times seemingly at

the mercy of the whim of greater forces.

I was ruminating on this recently as I was savoring a 25-year-old glass of an exceptionally fine California Cabernet Sauvignon. I've often stated that wine is one

of the few products in nature that changes its physical character and composition in a manner that is somewhat aligned with human development.

As a living, breathing organism, a fine wine's life cycle can span a long period, as it evolves from a basic fruit juice to a complex, nuanced embodiment of the influence of its maker. This evolution in a bottle, if you will, takes place with varying results. Just as human development is impacted by an individual's history and environment, so too is it with wine.

Certain wines reach their peak early in their life cycle, rarely to improve, while others have an intrinsic potential that evolves and blossoms over time. In many ways this is similar to the developmental stages of a child, who 1) is born into the world with the imprint of his or her genealogy, 2) is nurtured in unique familial surroundings and 3) ultimately matures as a unique representation of his or her upbringing. Or, to quote a line from a William Wordsworth poem, "child is father of the man."

With wine, there are certain aspects of winemaking that affect each stage of its life cycle.

One winemaker will nurture a wine, intending it to mature at an early age, with minimal intervention, releasing the wine into the market to be evaluated on its own merits.

Another winemaker will painstakingly coddle a wine in its youth, intending for the bottled wine to evolve continuously, not

achieving its true expression for decades. So, too, with human development.

What are the physical attributes of a bottled wine that allow for such diversity in the end product? What is the physiological process a wine undergoes in a bottle that determines its level of maturity and superiority? In some respects, they parallel human development.

There are four basic components of wine, each present in varying degrees and exerting varying influences: tannins, acidity, taste and alcohol. The combination of each of these determines the final style and life cycle of wine.

## 1. Tannins provide longevity.

Somewhat harsh and unrefined at first, over time they soften and add a strong backbone and character to wine. Certain winemakers avoid tannins in order to produce a fresh wine that may be enjoyed in its youth. Others seek out high levels of tannins, which may initially be harsh tasting, but will soften over time and add complexity, sophistication and longevity to a wine. So too with human development.

## 2. The level of acidity and 3. the taste (fruit) in a wine.

These factors will determine its balance. Too little acidity and the wine may be lush but without any distinction. Too much and the end product may be acerbic and off-putting. As a wine matures, its acidity

softens and its taste declines, so that the end result may be either a bland wine or a well-balanced, nuanced product with deep-rooted complexity. Each winemaker seeks the ideal balance. At times this is immediately evident; other times it may be years before such balance is achieved. So, too, with human development.

## 4. The level of alcohol.

This remains constant throughout the life of a wine. Early on, it may be evident as a harsh and unbalanced wine. As a wine matures, the alcohol will tend to mellow the overall character of the wine, making it more approachable and pleasant. So, too, with human development.

Just as we observe our fellow humans as they age and mature, developing our own perception of their personality and character, so, too, with wine. But don't overthink either. Appreciate and enjoy them for what they are – products of their environments, for better or worse.

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

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