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June 21 - June 27, 2022

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

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Elmsford Woman Charged in \$10.5M Disability Loan Fraud Scheme

By Rick Pezzullo

An Elmsford woman was charged last week with orchestrating \$10.5 million loan fraud scheme that included stealing physician identities and falsifying disabilities while working as a nurse practitioner.

A criminal complaint against Catherine Seemer, 42, was unsealed Friday by Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, charging her

with wire fraud, federal financial aid fraud and aggravated identity theft. If convicted, Seemer could face up to years in prison.

Williams alleged Seemer stole the identities of more than a dozen medical doctors and falsified the disabilities of more than 100 borrowers to earn approximately \$1 million from the scheme.

"The Total and Permanent Disability Discharge Program is designed to help ease the financial burden of those who suffer from

permanent physical or mental disabilities, including military veterans who endure service-related disabilities, by relieving them of their student loan obligations," Williams stated. "As alleged, the defendant defrauded this program for her own benefit."

According to Williams, from June 2017 through March 2022, Seemer orchestrated a scheme to cause the fraudulent discharge of millions of dollars' worth of student loans for borrowers who did not qualify for relief under the federal Total and Permanent Disability Discharge Program and its private analogue. As part of the scheme, Seemer deceived borrowers into believing they qualified for various forms of student loan relief and charged them fees—often between 10% and 20% of the loan amount—to facilitate their loan discharge process.

She then allegedly used the personal identifying information of the unsuspecting

borrowers to submit fraudulent applications for student loan discharge on the basis of non-existent permanent physical and mental disabilities. In support of these applications, Seemer used the stolen identities, medical license numbers, and forged signatures of medical doctors to falsify medical diagnoses and disability certifications. The scheme resulted in the wrongful discharge of approximately \$10.5 million in loans under the disability-based relief programs.

Terry Harris, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Eastern Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General, said, "Tracking down those who cheat the federal student aid programs is a priority of our office. The OIG is committed to fighting student aid fraud in all its forms and we will continue to pursue anyone who participates in these types of crimes."

Retirees, 25-Year Educators Recognized in WPCSD

By Bailey Hosfelt

Retirees and those with 25 years of service in the White Plains City School District (WPCSD) were honored with a special presentation and certificates at the Board of Education meeting on June 13.

"Tonight, we want to express our gratitude and appreciation to all of our retiring educators who spend most of their

lives in public service to the students in the greater White Plains community," Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Scott Pepper said. "As stated in our mission statement, they have educated and inspired students, nurtured their dreams, taught them to think continually, think critically and pursue their aspirations so they could contribute to a diverse and dynamic world."

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White Plains Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Ricca presented retiring longtime district clerk Michele Schoenfeld with a plaque last week.

Man Sentenced for Armed Attack at a Greenburgh Bus Depot

By Rick Pezzullo

A Brooklyn man was sentenced last week to 10 years in state prison for an armed attack on a group of workers at the Royal Coach Lines' bus depot in Greenburgh in 2018.

Tony Mauro, 41, was sentenced June 17 as a second violent felony offender with five years of post-release supervision by Westchester County Court Judge Robert Neary.

According to Westchester County District Attorney Mimi Rocah, on Nov. 16, 2018, at approximately 4 a.m., Mauro ordered three victims at gunpoint onto a bus that was parked at the depot. He then fired a shot that struck the car of a fourth employee whom he had ordered out of the car.

During the incident, which occurred during a blizzard, one of the victims was able to send a text for help, and Mauro fled the scene on foot as Greenburgh Police arrived.

The Greenburgh Police Department arrested Mauro following a pursuit and investigation, with assistance from the Greenburgh Towns and Villages SWAT Team and the Westchester County Department of Public Safety.

"Gun violence in our community will have consequences," Rocah said. "No one should have to face the barrel of a gun while doing their job, let alone our transportation workers. We are grateful to all of the law enforcement who helped ensure the victims were physically unharmed."

Mauro pled guilty to Criminal Use of a Firearm in the First Degree, a violent felony.

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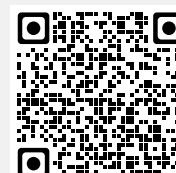
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County Music Fest, Fireworks Returning to Valhalla July 3

Fireworks will light up the night sky during the Westchester County Music Fest and Fireworks at the Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla on Sunday, July 3.

"I'm thrilled to welcome back thousands of people from Westchester and beyond to celebrate our nation's independence with live music and one of the area's most stunning fireworks displays at Kensico Dam Plaza once again," said Westchester County Executive George Latimer.

Pre-concert entertainment begins at 5 p.m. with a guest DJ followed by the FDR Drive Band at 7 p.m. Spectacular fireworks, with the historic Kensico Dam as the

backdrop, will follow at about 9:15 p.m.

Admission and parking are free. Carpooling is suggested. Concert-goers should bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating as well as a picnic supper.

The Music Fest is presented by Westchester County Parks and sponsored by Captain Lawrence Brewing Company and the Westchester Parks Foundation with support from radio station 100.7 WHUD.

Kensico Dam Plaza is located at the north end of the Bronx River Parkway in Valhalla. For more information, call 914-864-PARK or visit parks.westchestergov.com.

Retirees, 25-Year Educators Recognized in WPCSD

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Pepper said the retirees' combined body of work has included interacting with and educating thousands of students as teachers, administrators, coaches, club advisors, mentors, chaperones and counselors.

Pepper highlighted that — in addition to the retirees' job responsibilities — they have also mentored incoming teachers, presented at conferences, chaired committees, written grants, provided professional development, drafted curriculum, served on task forces, initiated community service projects, been community liaisons and led numerous extracurricular activities.

"On behalf of the Board of Education, superintendent, your colleagues, students and parents, we salute you," Pepper said. "We thank you for making a positive difference in the schools, and we want you to know that you have left a legacy of excellence."

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Ricca noted that it is invaluable when you look at all of the time, effort and attention the retirees have invested in the district's children over their careers.

"You have truly touched the lives of so many kids and made so many kids' lives better," Ricca said. "On their worst day, so many of you were there to pick them up and move them along for years and years and years."

Board member Sheryl Brady highlighted that among the retirees and those observing 25-year anniversaries, they have dedicated more than 1,000 years combined of dedicated service to White Plains schools.

"Not only have you all been touching the lives of our students, but you've also touched the lives of our parents," Brady said. "We are very, very appreciative."

Board member Randy Stein added that, as a district, White Plains is incredibly lucky to have both extraordinary educators and caring people.

"That teaches our children how important it is to be caring and what is so valuable,"

Stein said. "Thank you so much because you've enriched all of us as well as our students."

Board President Rosemarie Eller said that the retirees' commitment to the district will forever be remembered through the students' lives they touched and the stories they tell.

"Know that out there there's someone who will tell the story about their favorite teacher, their favorite teaching assistant, their favorite person who worked with them," Eller said. "On behalf of all of us here, thank you all so much."

Among the retirees were Ernie Spatafore, Lisa Panaro, Sue Adams, Karin Cabral, Teresa Cristiano, Christine Ciofolo, Wendy Sue Dale, Karen Day, Jane Iacobellis, Jody Kennedy, Caren Levant, Susan Levin, Spencer Mayfield, Abbas Nuridden, Ted O'Donnell, Evelyn Alicea-Santiago, Joseph Spedaliere, Daniel Stiel, Deborah Williamson, Mary O'Connor, Julia Prober, Rosana Arras-Ron, Aura Zelaya, Catherine Mahoney, William Krebs, William Braswell and Poppy, a therapy dog.

Those recognized for 25 years of service were Shelly Adlman, Vito Scirocco, Emily Conrad, Teresa Cristiano, Joan DiSanto, Michelle Goodman, James Johnson Jr., William Krebs, Liza Lanos, Jacqueline Miller, Sungho Pak, Christine Pasquale-Hertel, Brian Reed, Ronda Saylor, Lucius Scala, Glen Setterstrom, Maureen Sharkey, MaryBeth Stefano, Monica Sultan and Anna Turturro Burns.

Longtime district clerk Michele Schoenfeld was also presented with a plaque at the meeting to officially rename the Education House Assembly Room at 5 Homeside Lane after her. Schoenfeld will be retiring at the end of this year after four decades with the district.

"Thank you all very much," Schoenfeld said. "It's been a long ride and a lot of fun. I really appreciate all these honors."

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Strong Support Shown for Healthcare Facilities Law at Hearing

By Martin Wilbur

An overwhelming majority of speakers last week voiced strong support for a proposed county law that would make it a crime to prevent a healthcare provider or patient from entering a facility.

The Westchester Board of Legislators held a June 13 public hearing to gauge sentiment on the Reproductive Healthcare Facilities Access Act. In all, 37 speakers lined up for nearly two hours to contribute their thoughts during the hearing, with several offering their views at the open comments portion of the meeting.

"We need to provide legal protection for any patients seeking abortion care," said Kim Izzarelli of Briarcliff Manor. "A patient should receive the care they need without fear of hitting, kicking spitting or being the target of harmful threats."

The law would require protestors to be at least 25 feet away from a facility's property. Violators, if found guilty, could receive a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to six months in jail for the first offense and up to \$5,000 and/or up to one year in jail for each subsequent offense.

The measure has gained momentum in recent weeks after the conviction in March of three anti-abortion activists who entered the All Women's Health and Medical

Service in White Plains last November in an attempt to prevent healthcare services from being rendered, specifically abortion-related care.

Some speakers also referenced the likelihood of the U.S. Supreme Court overturning *Roe v. Wade* since a draft decision from the high court was leaked this spring.

Cortlandt resident Elizabeth Bonilla said she was a high school senior in 1995 when she went to All Women's Health for services. Even then, there were a group of protestors that were vehemently shouting at her for entering the building, a reminder that the proposed legislation is essential to protect women and healthcare professionals.

"That day was difficult enough for me, but the fear, harassment and intimidation I experienced when trying to access basic healthcare services were forever imprinted on my mind," Bonilla said. "I did not experience what those distressed and defenseless patients and staff did on Nov. 27. I can only imagine how terrifying that was. If I had to suffer what these patients did on that day, I don't know if I would have had the courage, strength or means to return another day and my life would have been very, very different."

There were four speakers who spoke in

opposition to the Reproductive Healthcare Facilities Access Act, mainly on grounds that it would violate their First Amendment rights. Vincent Malfetano, who identified himself as an attorney, said that legislators are under immense political pressure, a likely motivation for moving forward with the proposal.

However, he said it infringes on free speech because there is a minimum distance that protestors would have to stand from a facility.

"Does it violate the First Amendment? Of course, it does, but I'm wondering if you care because people who oppose this law will have to sue you and you will justify it with other people's money, meaning mine, the taxpayers, to defend it," Malfetano said.

Another opponent, Thomas Byrne, said the legislation would engage in illegal repression of freedom of speech.

"The text of this proposed legislation reveals that the purpose is to deny sidewalk demonstrators and sidewalk counselors their First Amendment rights and is illegal," he said. "Repression of the people by a harmful government body must be corrected by the court system. This legislation is doomed to failure, and failure means exposure of dishonesty."

Elise-Ann Konstantin, a Choice Matters

board member, strongly disagreed with the freedom of speech argument.

"Anti-choice zealots are allowed to do that, and as much as I disagree with the content of their protest, I support their right to do so," Konstantin said. "But what they are not allowed to do is to prevent or to interfere with others' ability to access healthcare services for whatever reason they may have."

Other speakers argued that as long as abortion and related services is legal in New York State, that right must not be curtailed by the potential for harassment and threats. Eileen O'Connor, a nurse practitioner for 40 years, said that accessible healthcare, whatever kind of care that may be, is a human right.

With the increase of threats to clinics around the country, the legislation is essential, she said.

"This law will better protect patients, staff and providers by specifically limiting how close protestors can get to them and/or the healthcare facility," O'Connor said. "If someone says no to what the protestor is saying, they need to back off. Never should they be allowed to get inside the building where the potential for harm increases exponentially."

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Westchester Holds Rally to Stand Up and Combat Hate

By Martin Wilbur

As incidents of hate continue to fester in Westchester and across the nation, a diverse gathering came together last Wednesday afternoon on the plaza outside the county courthouse in White Plains to call for love and understanding.

County and state representatives, clergy and members of various community organizations led the second annual Gathering Against Hate, an hour-long program organized by the county where speakers looked to inspire the crowd against feeling hopeless in the face of mass shootings that have sometimes been fueled by hate or individual acts of violence against local residents, particularly people of color.

"If we are going to erase hate in the County of Westchester, we've got to sing together, we've got to work together, we have to walk together, we have to stand together and we can't get weary," exhorted Rev. Dr. Stephen Pogue, pastor of the Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church in Mount Vernon. "No matter how many times hate raises its ugly head, we have to come together and stomp on that ugly head of racism."

Last week's event came a month after the racially-motivated killing of 10 people at a Buffalo supermarket but also after several hate incidents in Westchester, including Yonkers, Ossining and Yorktown. District Attorney Mimi Rocah pledged that everyone would be treated equally under the law and protected in Westchester.

"As your D.A., as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, I am here to reiterate my

commitment to you in fighting all forms of hate and securing justice for everyone in our community no matter their background, no matter where they live, no matter who they love," Rocah said.

State Attorney General Letitia James said her office has been taking steps to monitor and investigate social media platforms that have been used to promote hate while making it easier for the public to report incidents to authorities.

James read off a list of mass shootings that were motivated by hate, but said society can't let that be the norm.

"All of us, all of us must speak loudly and reject hate and stand arm in arm without space between us, stand in solidarity in peace and with respect for one another," she said. "We know that any act of hate against one of us is an act of hate against all of us and we must move forward with everything in our hearts and collaboration on our minds to craft a better future because we all recognize that love will always overcome hate."

Jirandy Martinez, executive director of the Community Resource Center, spoke of the fear that has gripped some in local communities, not just of the possibility of violence but those in the immigrant community who are harassed or taken from their family because of immigration status.

"That's a very real fear, that even in this county, we have people who are so afraid to report a crime, who get their wages stolen because of their immigration status, who are afraid to pick up their kids if there's a rumor of an ICE raid," Martinez said.



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

About 300 people assembled last Wednesday outside the county courthouse in White Plains for Westchester's second annual Gathering Against Hate. The hour-long program featured speakers with messages that only love, and not hate, will be accepted.

are dying at an incredible rate, and we need to protect our sisters, we need to protect each other."

While several speakers noted that the plaza contained a statue of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., County Executive George Latimer channeled the words of Nelson Mandela, who was imprisoned for 27 years in his native South Africa during apartheid.

Latimer said Mandela could have had hatred in his heart every day, but he understood that the power of love is greater.

"We are going to overcome," Latimer said. "We are going to succeed with a different strategy."

The array of speakers at Gathering Against Hate in White Plains last Wednesday featured County Executive George Latimer, state Attorney General Letitia James and other dignitaries, clergy and representatives of various community groups.

Like many of the speakers, The LOFT Executive Director Judy Troilo, whose organization advocates for the LGBTQ community, said she was impressed by the size and diversity of the turnout. But away from rallies and marches, Troilo urged everyone in society to look out for one another to overcome today's challenges.

"The LGBTQ community is part of all your families; we're everyone and everywhere," Troilo said. "This year is harder than most. I never thought we'd be in 2022 fighting for our lives the way we are. Trans women of color

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Permit Application for New P'ville Pool Nears; Village Eyes 2024 Opening

By Abby Luby

As the 2022 pool season gets underway, last week it was confirmed that final drawings for the new Pleasantville village pool will soon be completed.

Steve Rimkunas, of Rimkunas Engineering, the firm overseeing the project for the village, said the drawings

will be submitted at the end of this month to the Westchester County Department of Health to obtain the permits needed for construction. It is expected to take about 12 to 16 weeks before the permits are received, he said.

Rimkunas anticipates the new pool, which will be installed at the current Lake Street site, to be ready for the start of the

2024 swim season.

"The Department of Health always has comments and it takes time but you can expect to go out to bid and award a contract by the end of January 2023," Rimkunas said during an update he provided to the Village Board at its June 13 work session. "We want a shovel in the ground by Labor Day 2023 with a projected opening date on Memorial Day 2024."

The drawings will be posted on the village website when they are completed.

Supply chain issues and rising costs of materials are concerns.

"Many municipal projects are coming in at 50 percent over cost estimates," Rimkunas said. "However, labor costs have been fairly stable."

Original estimates for the pool project were about \$3 million, but with the price of materials escalating, projections are now closer to \$4 million, he said. The village plans to fund the project with a bond and a modest increase in pool membership fees.

"We're not doing anything extravagant or unusual for this project," said Rimkunas when asked if current costs could be scaled back. "There's not a whole lot we can take away."

Mayor Peter Scherer asked about lining up a contractor as soon as possible once a construction bid was accepted.

"This would allow a contractor to buy supplies early, which should improve our chances of finishing on time," Scherer said. "Perhaps the village could provide the contractor with storage space."

There had been a delay in the process because village officials were considering a parallel project to protect the new pool from flooding by preventing stormwater from streaming from Nannahagen Pond. Estimates for that mitigation ranged from \$650,000 to more than \$1 million, significantly adding to the project's cost. Since then, a rainfall analysis completed by de Bruin Engineering determined any mitigation would not be cost-effective.

"Based on de Bruin's advice, the big expense would not mitigate the risk," Scherer said. "We've had (major) floods twice in the last four years where silt and mud has ended up in the kiddie pool, the main pool and the pump house. Recovering from a similar storm would cost the village somewhere between \$50,000 and \$70,000, which is a small fraction of what a flood mitigation project would cost."

Originally, the village had hoped the new pool for 2023, but delays on determining a final scope of work pushed the projected opening to 2024.



Out of the Darkness

DONNA MUELLER PHOTO

More than 450 people supported this year's annual Break the Hold - Into the Light sunrise walk for suicide prevention and mental health wellness in the early morning hours of June 12 in Pleasantville. The BTH Foundation was formed in honor of the late Brian Halloran by his parents to provide resources for those struggling with mental health issues and to remove the stigma associated with mental health challenges while honoring those lost.

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New Castle Fire Commissioners Hire Firm to Help Message Potential Bond

By Martin Wilbur

The New Castle Board of Fire Commissioners has retained the public relations firm Thompson & Bender to help it communicate to the public the need for a referendum to pay for an expanded King Street firehouse.

By a 3-1 vote last week, the board approved paying the Briarcliff Manor-based company \$6,000 a month through December unless a referendum is held before then. Commissioners are looking to decide on a final scope of work this summer in hopes of presenting fire district voters with a referendum, potentially before the end of the year.

Board Chair Terence Hoey said commissioners recognize they need assistance in communicating with the public the need for the larger facility. Late last year, project architect Mitchell Associates Architects provided the board with a nearly \$17 million estimate for the expansion and to renovate the original 1954 building and the 1979 addition. However, the cost of that proposal has almost certainly skyrocketed perhaps by as much as \$1 million due to high inflation, rising interest rates on borrowing and the escalating cost of materials and labor.

Commissioners are concerned that asking the public to approve a bond issue for anything more than what is absolutely necessary might not receive voter approval.

“Less public relations and more communications because we know what the message needs to be here,” Hoey said of the need to hire Thompson & Bender at last Thursday’s board meeting. “We need to build the new building now. We needed it yesterday. It’s not a want, it’s a requirement and I am absolutely confident we can take what we learned last year with Wise Oak Strategies and couple it with a highly respected and reputable communications firm to get the message out.”

Two commissioners questioned whether it was a wise move to spend that amount of money on a communications specialist. Commissioner Brian Murphy said he needed some assurances that Thompson & Bender will be money well spent.

“I just want some kind of guarantee that every month they’re going to do something and every month they’re going to come back and show us the progress,” said Murphy, who voted to hire the firm.

However, Commissioner Christopher Weddle dissented without explaining his vote to the board.

“I think it’s the wrong decision,” Weddle said.

The board agreed to schedule a work session for next Tuesday, June 28 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the scope of work and to try and pin down a price point that it believes the community can support. Weddle has said that if the board decides to forgo the renovations to the 1954 and 1979 buildings

that could reduce the price of the project by roughly \$5 million.

“I would just want to remind the board what we want to do is find that cap, find the restrictions and the we can move forward,” Hoey said.

Some of the desire to trim as much as possible from the referendum could be that a similar vote in 2016 to expand the firehouse and purchase adjacent land was badly defeated.



Nice Vibes DONNA MUELLER PHOTO

The Mount Kisco Chamber of Commerce held its Summer Vibes member barbecue last Wednesday at the Saw Mill Club. In addition to food and drink while poolside for those who attended, the event included discussions about marketing and advertising to help the member businesses.

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LEGAL NOTICE

The resolution, a summary of which is published herewith, has been adopted on the 15th day of June, 2022, and the validity of the obligations authorized by such resolution may be hereafter contested only if such obligations were authorized for an object or purpose for which the Mount Pleasant Central School District is not authorized to expend money or if the provisions of law which should have been complied with as of the date of publication of this notice were not substantially complied with, and an action, suit or proceeding contesting such validity is commenced within twenty (20) days after the date of publication of this notice, or such obligations were authorized in violation of the provisions of the constitution.

A complete copy of the bond resolution summarized herewith is available for public inspection during regular business hours at the Office of the School District Clerk of the School District for a period of twenty days from the date of publication of this Notice.

District Clerk

BOND RESOLUTION DATED JUNE 15, 2022 OF THE BOARD OF EDUCA-
TION OF THE MOUNT PLEASANT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT AUTHO-
RIZING NOT TO EXCEED \$9,777,745 AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF
SERIAL GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS TO FINANCE THE RECONSTRUC-
TION OF VARIOUS DISTRICT BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTION OF AND RE-
CONSTRUCTION OF ATHLETIC FIELDS, TRACKS AND RELATED FACILI-
TIES, INCLUDING SITE WORK, AT A MAXIMUM COST OF \$9,777,745, LEVY
OF TAX IN ANNUAL INSTALLMENTS IN PAYMENT THEREOF, THE EXPEN-
DITURE OF SUCH SUM FOR SUCH PURPOSE, AND DETERMINING OTHER
MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

Class of objects or purposes:

the reconstruction of various District buildings and the construction and reconstruction of athletic fields, tracks and related facilities, including site work, and the acquisition of original furnishings, equipment, machinery or apparatus required for the purpose for which such buildings, athletic fields, tracks and facilities are to be used

Maximum Estimated Cost:

\$9,777,745

Period of probable usefulness:

Thirty (30) years

Amount of obligations to be issued:

\$9,777,745

Survivor of Two Pandemics Dies Peacefully in Her Sleep at 103

It could easily be said that Angelina Friedman lived a full life. A survivor of both the Spanish Flu and COVID-19 pandemics, Angelina died peacefully in her sleep at the North Westchester Restorative Therapy & Nursing Center May 11.

Angelina was born Oct. 18, 1918.

Angelina married Harold Friedman July 5, 1939, in a civil ceremony and again in 1942 in a church. She was known as the life of the party and always took pride in how she dressed. She also was a longtime New York Jets fan and even was visited by former Jets Freeman McNeil and Wesley Walker when she celebrated her 103rd birthday last fall. Despite such famous guests, Angelina stole the show with her colorful Jets-themed outfit, pennant waving and raucous cheering.

Angelina was a survivor of two pandemics. Joanne Merola, Angelina's daughter, said she was born onboard a ship in the middle of the Atlantic as her family traveled from Italy during the Spanish Flu pandemic. Her mother died on board, but Angelina was cared for by her two sisters, allowing the



A photo of Angelina Friedman last October with former New York Jets Wesley Walker and Freeman McNeil, who visited Friedman on her 103rd birthday.

family to reunite with their father, who had previously immigrated to the United States as a stone mason. Angelina contracted COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, successfully

recovering both times.

"My mother was a character," said Merola, an only child who moved to Mohegan Lake with her husband, Michael, and Angelina

in 2006. "Growing up, ours was the hang-out house and on any given day, you'd have a bunch of teens in our living room, with Mom in the kitchen cooking up pasta to feed us all. Kids felt safe at our house, and that's the way Mom liked it."

Angelina, who was as friendly and talkative the first day she arrived at North Westchester Restorative Therapy & Nursing Center as she was on nearly her last day there, was an unofficial ambassador of goodwill to her fellow residents and staff.

"She always had a smile and kind word for others and was never too busy to join in the fun activities we have here," said Megan Elba, administrator at North Westchester Restorative Therapy & Nursing Center. "I don't think anyone who met her didn't walk away a little happier, a little changed."

Angelina is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Joanne and Michael Merola, of Mohegan Lake. She was preceded in death by her parents, siblings and husband Harold.

She was buried May 14 in Valhalla.

P'ville High School Students Honored as International Ambassadors

By Abby Luby

Five Pleasantville High School students were honored last Monday night as young ambassadors, traveling this summer as part of the Pleasantville International Association (PIA) 2022 Ambassadors Program.

The student ambassadors are Trey Persons, who is headed to Korea, Kate Moroney (Ecuador), Clara Neilson-Papish (France), Jessica Secrest (Costa Rica) and Sophia Vecchiariello (Puerto Rico).

Pleasantville Mayor Peter Scherer congratulated the students at the June 13 Village Board meeting, handing out special certificates while Village Trustee David Vinjamuri presented them with green Pleasantville hats.

"It is my pleasure to invite each of you to wear these hats in these other countries," Scherer told the students. "I am confident you will end up in conversations about Pleasantville in far-flung places you are going to and come back here and report

about those conversations."

The nonprofit PIA promotes international goodwill through its scholarships and exchange programs. Students are required with one parent to make a two-year commitment by attending monthly meetings and serving as a committee chair or officer.

Participation starts in the fall of the year prior to travel and continues until the June after the students return. They visit their destination for a minimum of three weeks to focus on cultural immersion by living with a family and participating in work-study or community service projects.

Upon returning, they publicly share their experiences through presentations.

Scherer applauded the PIA ambassadors.

"The decision to do this is with full enthusiasm and a certain amount of courage," he said. "To jump on a plane and head out in uncharted distances and to live in a different place, a different culture, I am mightily impressed by all of you who do it. I have been every year."



The Pleasantville High School students honored last week by the Village Board for their participation and upcoming travel this summer through the Pleasantville International Association.

Examiner Wins Best Local Newspaper in Westchester Magazine Contest

The Examiner News has been selected as best Local Community Newspaper in the Readers' Picks category in Westchester Magazine's annual Best of Westchester Contest.

Examiner Media publishes The Examiner News local news website, as well as four print editions, The Examiner, The White Plains Examiner, The Northern Westchester Examiner and The Putnam Examiner. The outlet also publishes member-supported Examiner+ premium content online and in e-mail newsletter format. The news organization covers Westchester County, with an emphasis on northern Westchester, and also serves Putnam County.

The annual Best of Westchester Party is

being held at Glen Island Harbour Club in New Rochelle on Wednesday, July 20.

There were 386 winners named by the magazine in this year's Best of Westchester contest; The Examiner group was picked as a "readers' pick." Winners were announced in the July print and online editions of the magazine.

Last month, Examiner Media journalists won six honors in the annual New York State Press Association's Better Newspaper Contest, securing prizes for news reporting, feature writing, rookie reporting, column writing and honorable mentions for best sports action photo and best COVID-19 feature story.

New Castle Man Sentenced in Sexual Abuse Conviction

A 25-year-old New Castle man was sentenced to 10 years' probation last Wednesday for sexually abusing a woman in 2019, the Westchester County district attorney's office announced.

Anthony Urena will also be mandated to register as a sex offender after his conviction in March for first-degree sexual abuse. The district attorney's office had recommended a prison term.

On July 21, 2019, at about 4 a.m., Urena sexually abused the victim while she was sleeping in the defendant's home in New Castle. The New Castle Police Department arrested Urena on Nov. 5, 2020, following an investigation,

with assistance from the Ossining Police Department.

In a victim's impact statement made to the court, the victim stated: "You have stolen something from me I will never get back. I felt violated. I felt scared...I felt betrayed. I felt embarrassed...No one should ever have the misfortune of blissfully thinking they can trust a friend who is not really a friend at all and would violate them given the opportunity. I hope this trial has aided in saving another girl from becoming a victim of sexual assault."

Judge Susan Cacace presided over the case.

--Martin Wilbur

First Case of Monkeypox Identified in Westchester County

By Martin Wilbur

The state Department of Health confirmed the first case of monkeypox in Westchester County last Thursday, now one of at least 23 cases discovered so far in New York State.

The cases of orthopoxvirus/monkeypox cases, a designation established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have been confirmed through testing. Of the other 22 cases so far as of Monday afternoon, 21 have been identified in New York City and one in Sullivan County. There was no mention as to where in Westchester the person who has tested positive resides.

Healthcare providers throughout the state have been alerted so they have information regarding reporting and case testing should any patients have symptoms consistent with monkeypox.

"Based on the limited information available at this time, the current risk to the general public appears low though we urge

New Yorkers to stay informed and vigilant," an advisory from the Department of Health read in part.

Monkeypox is a rare viral illness that does not usually cause serious illness, but in rare cases can result in hospitalization or death, according to the Department of Health. Monkeypox typically begins with a flu-like illness and swelling of the lymph nodes and progresses to a rash on the face and body. Most infections last two to four weeks.

State Sen. Elijah Reichlin-Melnick (D-Nyack) said it was critical to receive the alert from health officials. One of the lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic is the public receiving health information as quickly as possible.

"I appreciate the New York State Department of Health making us aware that a case has now been identified in Westchester," he said. "My office will continue to monitor the situation, and I

encourage constituents to be aware of symptoms and recommendations described on the New York State DOH website."

Also on Monday, New Jersey reported that the state had confirmed its first case. The person, who reportedly is isolating at home, lives in the northern part of the state.

Monkeypox has been identified in 20 states and the District of Columbia so far.

Irish Heritage Day Returns to Ridge Road Park This Saturday

The American Irish Association of Westchester will honor Westchester County hospital workers at the Irish Heritage Celebration this Saturday, June 25, from 12 to 6 p.m. at Ridge Road Park in Hartsdale.

"It's wonderful that we can come together again and celebrate Irish culture with traditional song and dance," said county Parks Commissioner Kathy O'Connor. "I'm looking forward to my personal favorite...the Irish Dancers."

Irish Heritage Day begins at noon. Mass starts at 12:30 p.m., followed by the featured entertainment: The Celtic Mikes, Susan and Gerard Irish Band, Bridget Flynn School of Irish Dancers and the New York Studio of Irish Dance. There will also be activities for the children including the Fitmobile. Shop for authentic Irish goods

from various vendors Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

"Each and every heritage celebration is special in its own way, and I'm excited for Ridge Road Park to encompass the Irish heritage once again in addition to honoring and celebrating our local pandemic warriors, Westchester County hospital staff, who are the heart and soul of the county," said County Executive George Latimer.

Admission is \$5 per adult. Children under 14 years are free. Parking is also free.

The festival will be held rain or shine. Seating is informal; bring blankets or folding chairs for seating on the lawn. No coolers will be allowed.

Irish Heritage Day is presented by Westchester County Parks and the

American Irish Association of Westchester County. Ridge Road Park is located at 287 Ridge Rd. in Hartsdale.

The other heritage festivals remaining in this year's series are:

- African-American, Sunday, June 26, 12 to 6 p.m., Kensico Dam Plaza, Valhalla.
- Hispanic, Sunday, July 10, 12 to 6 p.m., Kensico Dam Plaza, Valhalla.
- Italian, Sunday, July 24, 12 to 6 p.m., Kensico Dam Plaza, Valhalla.
- India, Sunday, Aug. 7, 12 to 6 p.m., Kensico Dam Plaza, Valhalla.
- Jewish, Sunday, Aug. 21, 12 to 6 p.m., Kensico Dam Plaza, Valhalla.
- Muslim Heritage, Sunday, Aug. 28, 12 to 6 p.m., Kensico Dam Plaza, Valhalla.

For more information on all of this year's festivals, call 914-864-PARK or visit parks.westchestergov.com.

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Letters to the Editor

Abinanti is an Independent Progressive With an Outstanding Record

On June 28 I am voting for Tom Abinanti for re-election to the state Assembly in the 92nd Assembly District's Democratic primary.

As an issue-driven voter and senior who focuses on the environment, reproductive rights, racial justice, taxes and the well-being of my community, I look to elect candidates who share my concerns. That's Tom Abinanti. He is an independent progressive with an excellent record.

As an African American man, it matters to me that Tom is endorsed by the state Teachers Union, state Nurse's Association, Public Employee's Foundation, 1199

SEIU, New York State AFL-CIO and the CSEA. Raised in the 1960s and '70s by parents who were both union members, I was told my career options were limited: doctor, lawyer, accountant or any job that had a union. Why? Because unions provide job security when discrimination runs rampant.

Tom is also a 2022 Gun Sense Candidate (Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense) and has earned the New York League of Conservation Voters 100 percent environmental rating. Tom has sponsored and passed legislation raising the maximum income permitted to qualify for tax savings

for seniors under enhanced STAR.

Very importantly, at a time when abortion rights are on the line, Abinanti is a staunch proponent of abortion rights. He served on the WCLA-Choice Matters Board and as its pro bono attorney for over a decade. He sponsored the first clinic access bill to be introduced in Westchester County while serving on the Board of Legislators. He went on to be a co-sponsor of the Reproductive Health Act, which codified Roe v. Wade into New York State law.

This legislative session Abinanti sponsored bills including an amendment

to the state constitution safeguarding reproductive rights. Today, as the Supreme Court is about to overturn Roe v. Wade, a candidate's commitment to defend and advance the right to an abortion and to contraception is more important than ever. I hope you will join me in voting for Tom Abinanti on June 28.

Rodney Lederer-Plaskett
Hartsdale

Abinanti Has Been Invaluable to Those With Developmental Disabilities

Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, who is the chair of the Assembly Standing Committee on Disabilities, is being challenged in the 92nd Assembly District by MaryJane Shimsky. The early voting for the Democratic primary voting has begun and ends on June 26.

Last night, members of the New York Alliance for Developmental Disabilities (NYADD) Regional Leads team met with Shimsky to discuss the pressing disabilities issues that are important to our 10,000-plus members. While Ms. Shimsky is experienced in local government, she faces a steep learning curve in the I/DD space where her opponent has an affected child, a long history of direct involvement in and leadership on the issues and challenges facing the I/DD community and a long list of accomplishments, especially as chair of the Assembly Standing Committee on Disabilities. Since time is of the essence in rebuilding and stabilizing the workforce and restoring programs and services, we just cannot afford to have a change of leadership and to begin a new engagement process.

OPWDD is currently developing the 5.07 Plan, assessing both the CCO system and address SelfDirection waiver inequities.

They also must determine by the end of the year whether managed care is a viable option for the I/DD service delivery system. We are at a critical crossroads and still facing significant workforce shortages and program closures due to the pandemic. This is not the time to lose a passionate champion for our family members in Albany.

As the parent of an adult son with autism, Assemblyman Abinanti has been a fierce ally of the disabilities community for over 10 years. When the Developmental Disabilities Committee was created two years ago, Tom stepped down from his powerful position as chair of the Banking Committee to take the lead on this new effort and has overwhelmingly received the support of his legislative colleagues on the I/DD Committee during this campaign.

The NYADD Leads strongly support and endorse Assemblyman Tom Abinanti in the 92nd District and urge our Westchester County residents in his district to vote for him.

The New York Alliance for
Developmental Disabilities

Levenberg Has the Most to Offer 95th Assembly District Residents

There are just a few benefits to offset the challenges of aging – grandchildren certainly – but also more leisure time to reflect on the current political scene.

Another is having the opportunity to volunteer for various candidates or institutions that reflect your values and support your vision of community – inclusive, diverse, tolerant, protective of everyone's rights, respectful, caring of the environment and supportive of sensible legislation to protect our children.

As an engaged member of both CD17 Indivisible and CCoHope Indivisible chapters and someone who has been both a homeowner and family provider in Croton-on-Hudson for 45 years and an apartment dweller in Peekskill for the last four years, I have worked with and am well acquainted with all of the current candidates now running for Assembly in the 95th District.

While respecting their sincerity, passion, talents and values, my personal choice to succeed the retiring legend, Sandy Galef, would echo Sandy's own endorsement and that of Peekskill Mayor McKenzie's – Dana Levenberg. She is the complete package

with the personality, caring commitment, intelligence and experience to best represent us.

That said, I hope you can join me in coming out to vote for Dana in the Democratic primary on June 28 or during early voting now through June 26.

Jay Forbes
Peekskill

Ellner Would Serve Putnam Residents Well

Greg Ellner has been an asset to the people of Putnam County for many years. He has contributed to the public safety issues advanced by the Putnam County Firearm Owners Association. Greg will be an excellent county legislator who will best serve the interests of the people of Putnam County.

Steve Clorofilla
Mahopac

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Letters to the Editor

Agudelo Has a Passion for Improving the Lives of Working People

It isn't a secret to anyone here in the Hudson Valley that traveling without a car can be extremely difficult. Public transportation is a vital lifeline for many but has frequently gone underfunded and under-prioritized by our elected officials.

This is one reason why I'm fully behind Vanessa Agudelo for state Assembly. Like me, Vanessa grew up in a working-class family. She is a candidate who understands firsthand the transportation needs of working families, many of whom rely on our too-often ignored public transportation system.

While I now have the privilege of having a reliable car, I also know how valuable a robust public transportation system can be. Public transit is a powerful tool to fight climate change, a driver of economic growth and a lifeline for working families.

Unfortunately, Westchester's public transportation system is not serving those needs. A lack of nearby bus stops and large gaps in pickup and drop-off times often leave residents stranded or jumping into a car. With the inflation crisis reaching into everyone's wallets, many of my neighbors in Ossining live with the constant fear of not having enough money on hand to afford

to fill their tank or purchase a train ticket. The temporary halt in Westchester bus fares has been a massive relief, but that only lasts until Labor Day. Our community needs long-term action on public transportation, not just stop-gap measures.

Vanessa Agudelo is a leader whose entire platform is built on genuine solutions. Vanessa will fight to make the wealthy elite of our community pay their fair share in taxes. With this money, we can start making the focus of the government what it should be: bettering the lives of the people in our community.

Central to our lives is the funding and maintenance of the public services that belong to all of us, including public transportation. Vanessa is one of the few political leaders today who understands the experience of those for whom public transportation is vital to paying the bills and feeding their families.

Instead of catering to moneyed interests who ignore or denigrate the public services they never have any need for, Vanessa will stand up for the working people of our community. She knows what it's like to worry about not even being able to get to work

every day and what that will mean for the people who depend on public transportation.

I'm supporting Vanessa because working people and their priorities are her passion. Anyone who cares about public

transportation should join me in backing Vanessa Agudelo for state Assembly.

Jennifer Cabrera
Ossining

Levenberg's Record Makes Her the Most Impressive Candidate

Democratic candidate for the 95th Assembly District, Dana Levenberg, has demonstrated consistently in her strong record of public service a commitment for putting passion into action on issues affecting voters in this district.

Now in her fourth term as Ossining town supervisor, she has built both broad and deep support across diverse constituencies and communities. Local Democratic support for Dana is rooted in business development, job creation, housing and infrastructure projects, capping taxes and environmental initiatives. She's been endorsed by the New York League of Conservation Voters for her "green leadership" addressing climate action with urgency.

Retiring Assemblywoman Sandy Galef wholeheartedly endorsed Dana. As Galef's chief of staff for nine years, Dana fully understands the state legislative process, enabling her to govern effectively. That's a distinction that others in this race cannot

claim.

Attracting wide support from numerous elected officials, a full and growing list is available on her campaign website. They know personally her ability to build alliances. Dana partnered with the NAACP to help form Ossining's Community Equity Task Force, and her drive for inclusivity was recognized by the Hudson Valley Stonewall Dems as an outstanding LGBTQ+ ally. A Planned Parenthood supporter, Dana will be a champion for reproductive justice in Albany. Dana's record as a school board trustee fighting to fully fund our schools is important to me as a former educator.

Crucially, my vote for Dana as an endorsed Moms Demand Action Gun Sense candidate needs no explanation. Expertise, knowledge and character matter.

Phyllis Shabad
Ossining

Agudelo Would Fight for Renewables, Working Class

In the Assembly, Vanessa Agudelo will fight for the Build Public Renewables Act so our state will finally start investing in the public green energy needed to preserve our environment and the life-changing new jobs that will come with it. While many candidates claim to be climate activists, I've seen Vanessa devoting herself by demonstrating, educating and championing the recovery of our climate.

The natural beauty of the Hudson Valley is what first drew me to bring my family to Croton 12 years ago, and is still one of the main reasons why I stay. But storm after storm, I saw the impact of climate directly on my home and my neighbor's homes. When I first moved here almost no one had generators, but now they are all too common. Losing electricity over the last decade has

become a "normal" outcome of any storm.

Vanessa is rejecting all funding from the real estate and fossil fuel industries. As a longtime climate activist, she knows we need a Green New Deal for our grandchildren to live in a sustainable world. As a dedicated fighter for working people, she also understands the need for good paying, dignified jobs and how vital environmental action is for everyone, not just a trendy concern for the privileged.

These issues are not in conflict; working people need a sustainable future more than anyone. The best way to start reversing the tide of economic insecurity is through genuine investment in renewable energy and the employment opportunities it will create.

Marina Guvenc
Croton-on-Hudson

Smith is a Proven Leader Who Can Unite the 95th Assembly District

On Tuesday, June 28, registered Democrats in the 95th Assembly District, which includes the Village of Croton-on-Hudson, will have the chance to vote on their choice to be the Democratic candidate for Assembly. This will be the first time since 1992 that there is an open seat without an incumbent in the race.

The 2022 election is a once-in-a-generation event. In this historic Democratic primary, I encourage my fellow Democrats to cast a ballot for a historic candidate: Colin Smith.

Colin is a proven leader. As a county legislator, he helped lead the police reform task force and helped pass legislation to protect abortion rights and promote gun

safety.

Colin has a progressive vision for our state and our district. He supports a green energy economy, healthcare for all and affordable housing.

I am inspired by the diverse coalition that has emerged to support Colin Smith. A broad coalition of labor unions, representing building trades, building services, nurses and teachers have endorsed Colin.

Colin is a person that can unify our district and I encourage Democrats to unite behind him.

Brian Pugh, Mayor
Croton-on-Hudson

Putnam Would Be Well-Served With Sheehy on County Legislature

This letter is in strong support of Pat Sheehy's candidacy for Putnam County legislator in District 5.

I have known and worked with Pat in both the volunteer world and in state government. In the early years, she was a force in the creation of the Child Care Council in Putnam, volunteering to author grants that brought needed funds for child care to our county.

Pat has the knowledge, experience and energy to be a highly effective county legislator. She understands and has led state and local agencies, addressing the needs of all people – children, families, job seekers and seniors. She has successfully managed budgets, dealt with regulatory constraints, local and state requirements, processes and grants. She has a history of bringing people

with diverse beliefs together, for solutions.

Pat is a fiscal conservative, whose goal is effective and efficient government that respects and protects the taxpayer's hard-earned tax dollars. As a legislator, she will review contracts with a keen eye and reasonably question settlements that cost the taxpayer.

She is beholden to no one, has no self-agenda, either personal or otherwise, and is running solely for the good of the community. The residents would be well-served by electing Pat Sheehy to the county legislature. She is the endorsed Republican candidate. Please vote for her in the primary on June 28.

Alana Sweeny
Mahopac

Shimsky's Expertise, Persistence Would Benefit Assembly District's Residents

I support MaryJane Shimsky for state Assembly in the upcoming Democratic primary. To be clear, both Tom Abinanti and MaryJane were helpful to me during my campaign last year for county legislator and they both raised funds for the campaign. But MaryJane's approach was emblematic of her overall approach to governance. She was the first person to approach me to help when I was endorsed by the Mount Pleasant Democrats. We set up a weekly call and spoke nearly every week through the rest of the campaign. She was persistent and unflagging.

MaryJane takes that same approach to her job as a county legislator. She has chosen one of the most important and least flashy areas to become expert at – infrastructure. She has

been responsible for huge investments in our county infrastructure. Water management in our area – from flooding to clean water – is a huge and growing issue. MaryJane is on top of it. She has also been a strong proponent of public health – and vaccination in particular.

I understand some of my colleagues' reluctance to unseat a Democratic incumbent. But I think this is the ideal time to bring in a new and energetic woman to represent us at the state, one who has already spent years working as a professional in the statehouse.

Please join me to elect MaryJane Shimsky to our state Assembly.

David Vinjamuri
Pleasantville

Obituaries

Anne Klemmer

Anne (Nan) S. Klemmer, 94, of New York City and formerly Chappaqua, mother, grandmother, teacher, artist, reader and master gardener, died June 15 of natural causes.

A complex fusion of a traditional Catholic mother and modern feminist advocating for women’s place in the world of work and public affairs, she raised seven children and was also a teacher, school librarian, gallerist and writer. She served on the board of the Katonah Art Gallery and co-curated a successful show of Mayan art and antiquities,

gathering pieces from many institutions, including the Harvard and Penn museums.

Later, Nan pursued her love of history and literature by researching and writing a biography of Mary Young Cheney Greeley, the wife of journalist and politician, Horace Greeley, whose homestead sat yards away in Chappaqua. While never published, the biography depicted Mary Greeley’s advocacy for women, her challenging marriage and her work as a school teacher and suffragette.

After moving back to New York City in 2014, Nan maintained her interest in the arts, gardening and literature, with

frequent visits to art institutes, gardens and performances. She also continued to hone her portrait art and piano playing, producing finished oil paintings and short piano recitals. As a master gardener, Nan was a veritable encyclopedia of plant species, Latin nomenclature and growing patterns and could be relied on for advice on what thrives where and when, regardless of the landscape or habitat being cultivated.

Anne Therese Serena Klemmer was born March 31, 1928, and raised in Brooklyn by her parents, Francis John and Margaret Elizabeth (Flood) Serena. Frank worked in insurance after an early stint in the American Hat Company factory. Margaret was a bookkeeper and homemaker. Nan was the valedictorian of her class at St. Brendan’s High School and had the highest score on the Brooklyn Diocese Catholic College Entrance Exam, winning a full scholarship to St. Joseph’s College for Women. She graduated with honors and pursued an early career in advertising and as a model.

It is in the latter role that Capt. Raymond Klemmer spotted her and began a courtship, while he flew jets for the Army and Air Force. They were married in 1952 and subsequently settled in Chappaqua where they lived for 56 years. After many years of a good and blessed marriage, Raymond predeceased

her in 2008.

Along with her Catholic faith and deep

belief in the value of a good education, Nan’s lifelong love affair with the world of ideas and books was well noted. Her reading was voluminous and wide-ranging. Her finest possession, according to her telling, was a copy of the 50-volume set of the Harvard Classics (Eliot’s Five-Foot Shelf), which she purchased for \$20 when times were lean in her early adulthood.

Nan’s proudest legacy and greatest devotion was to her family. In addition to her seven children, she nurtured and mentored 22 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren and served as counsel to countless others.

She is survived by her brother-in-law, Kenneth, of Camden, Maine; her seven children, Timothy (Jane) of Briarcliff Manor, Anthony (Jennifer) of Newport, R.I., Andrew of Scarsdale, Gregory (Alexandra) of Needham Mass., Elizabeth of New York City, Dr. Sarah Girardi of Mount Kisco and Katherine (Tom) Terry of Bedford; her 22 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on June 20 at The Church of Saint John & Saint Mary in Chappaqua. A reception was held afterward at Sarah Girardi’s home.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory can be made to St. Joseph’s College, 245 Clinton Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11205 or by visiting <https://giving.sjcny.edu/donation-form>.

Jessie Hall

Jessie Louise Hall, 78, of Pleasantville and East Hampton passed away on June 16 after six years of battling Parkinson’s disease.

Jessie was born in Mount Kisco to Roland M. Caiani and Marie (Connolly) Caiani. She graduated from Pleasantville High School, then attended Marquette University and later received her master’s in education from Fordham University. Jessie was an educator for 30 years. She enjoyed traveling, reading, teaching and gardening.

She is survived by her children, Josh R. Hall, of LaGrangeville, N.Y. and Layla K. Bennett of East Hampton, N.Y. Jessie was a loving grandmother to Alexa and A.J.

Bennett of East Hampton.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, June 22 from 4 to 7 p.m. at Beecher Flooks Funeral Home, located at 418 Bedford Rd. in Pleasantville. A graveside service will be held on Thursday, June 23 at 11 a.m. at Fair Ridge Cemetery in Chappaqua.

In lieu of flowers, kindly make donations to The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research, Paralyzed Veterans of America or The St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital.

Police Blotter

Croton-on-Hudson Police Department

June 11: Patrols responded to a report of neighbors fighting on Brook Street at 5:52 p.m. Croton EMS responded and treated a 54-year-old woman who reported that she was bleeding from her face. She refused further medical attention. All parties involved refused to pursue criminal charges.

June 13: A caller from Hastings Avenue reported at 6:16 p.m. that his vehicle was stolen from his driveway. Patrols responded and confirmed the theft. An investigation is ongoing.

New Castle Police Department

June 11: Officers responded at 10 p.m. to

the Millwood Market gas station on a report of a male causing a disturbance. Officers spoke with the male subject, who stated that the \$50 he prepaid for gasoline was sent to the wrong pump. He added that the pump had since been used by someone else, and he could not get any fuel. Officers mediated the dispute and the male subject was able to get his fuel.

North Castle Police Department

June 10: A caller reported at 2:46 p.m. that an adult male just fled from the Stop & Shop on North Broadway after having stolen products from the store. Witnesses stated that the subject fled from the scene in a Silver Audi A3 with temporary Connecticut tag DR5173 on the rear of the vehicle. The responding officer reported that security footage and a deposition were secured. A report will follow.

June 10: Report of a large number of teenagers hanging out at the Wampus Elementary School playground on Wampus Avenue at 9:57 p.m. throwing things and being loud. The responding officer reported the parties left the premises without incident.

June 11: A resident reported observing what appeared to be an assault occurring between two male parties on Emmalon Avenue at 10:29 p.m. No further description of the parties was given. The responding officers placed the suspect, Kevin Lyons, under arrest and transported him to headquarters for processing.

June 13: A Bates Lane resident arrived at headquarters at 2:40 p.m. to report that there was an altered check that was signed in her name.

June 15: A caller reported at 4:09 p.m. that she locked her keys inside her vehicle with her child inside on Bedford Road. The child is not in distress at this time and the vehicle’s ignition is off. Armonk Garage was contacted to assist. The responding officers reported that the party was successfully assisted without incident and the child checks okay.

June 15: An Old Byram Lake Road resident reported at 6:10 p.m. that there is a large peacock in her backyard. The peacock is not causing any problems at this time but just wanted police to be aware of the situation. The caller stated that this is not the first time this has happened. She has observed the peacock on her street and in the area of Byram Lake Road and Blair Road numerous times. It is unknown where the peacock is originating from. An incident report was forwarded to the animal control officer for further investigation.

Pleasantville Police Department

June 14: A resident reported at 6:41 p.m. being scammed out of \$2,900 for an apartment rental on Bedford Road that was advertised on Craig’s List. The matter is under investigation.

June 17: A criminal mischief report was filed by a Clinton Avenue resident at 3:45 p.m. after damage was done to the

complainant’s house. An unknown person tried to enter the residence. The incident is under investigation.

June 18: Report of a larceny was made at headquarters at 5:10 p.m. after messages on an Instagram account attempted to extort money by showing embarrassing photos. Police are investigating.

White Plains Police Department

June 12: Sierra Ezekiel was arrested and charged with second-degree criminal possession of a weapon at 49 Mamaroneck Ave.

June 14: Alfred Wisher was arrested and charged with third-degree burglary at the CVS at 24 Mamaroneck Ave.

June 14: Eileen Gabler was arrested and charged with second-degree assault at La Famiglia pizzeria at 48 Mamaroneck Ave.

June 15: Barbara Stahl was arrested and charged with fourth-degree grand larceny at 77 S. Lexington Ave.

June 16: Arlene Mershell was arrested and charged with third-degree grand larceny at 77 S. Lexington Ave.

Yorktown Police Department

June 13: Thomas Marcello-Bates, 25, of Yorktown was arrested and charged with petty larceny at 8:57 p.m. following a reported theft at the Commerce Street CVS.

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



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"SHE SAVED MY LIFE!"

White Plains resident Dawn G. had been experiencing the painful side effects of Peripheral Neuropathy, "my feet and legs were extremely painful and my doctor told me there was nothing they could do. That I would have to take Gabapentin for the rest of my life." Then she met Westchester's very own Acupuncturist Taisha Gonzalez, L.Ac.

Peripheral Neuropathy is the pain, discomfort and numbness caused by nerve damage of the peripheral nervous system. Dawn explained that daily tasks like opening doors and using the bathroom were overwhelmingly painful. "How can you live for the next 30 years when you don't even want to get out of bed to do simple things?"

She was experiencing the burning, numbness, tingling and sharp pains that those suffering with neuropathy often describe. "The way that I would describe it, it's equivalent to walking on glass. Dawn hadn't worn socks in five years and was wearing shoes two sizes too big so that nothing would 'touch' her feet.

Unfortunately Dawn's story is all too familiar for the over 3 million people in the U.S. suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy.

If you have the misfortune of facing the same disheartening prognosis, you're not sleeping at night because of the burning in your feet. You have difficulty walking, shopping or doing any activity for more than 30 minutes because of the pain. You're struggling with balance and living in fear that you might fall. Your doctor told you to 'just live with the pain' and you're taking medications that aren't working or have uncomfortable side effects.

Fortunately, four months ago Dawn read an article about the local Licensed Acupuncturist Taisha Gonzalez, and the

work she was doing to treat those suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy, without invasive surgeries or medications.

Taisha Gonzalez, L.Ac., founder of Signature Acupuncture Studio in downtown White Plains, NY is using the time tested science of Acupuncture and a technology originally developed by NASA that assists in increasing blood flow and expediting recovery and healing to treat this debilitating disease.

"Now when I go to bed at night I don't have those shooting pains. I don't have that burning sensation. I don't have pain coming up my legs," Dawn enthusiastically describes life after receiving Mrs. Gonzalez's treatments. "I can wear socks and shoes!"

Dawn and her sister now operate a successful dog walking business, sometimes covering up to 5 miles a day.

"It's life altering. As far as I'm concerned Acupuncturist Taisha saved my life!"

Acupuncturist Taisha Gonzalez L.Ac., has been helping the senior community for over 20 years. She now provides the most cutting edge and innovative integrative medicine. Specializing in chronic pain cases, specifically those that have been deemed 'hopeless' or 'untreatable' she consistently generates unparalleled results.

What was once a missing link in senior healthcare is now accessible to the residents of Westchester County.

If you've missed too many nature walks because of pain or you've passed on going to family events because you're afraid of falling, it's time to call Acupuncturist Taisha Gonzalez and the staff at Signature Acupuncture Studio.

It's time you let your golden years BE GOLDEN!

Taisha Gonzalez, L.Ac. is once again accepting new patients. And for a limited time will be offering \$40 consultations, call (914) 222-5644 or visit our website to schedule a consultation.



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Mid Westchester Elks Honor First Responders at Annual Ceremony

By Martin Wilbur

While many people are grateful for the efforts of police, firefighters and EMS workers, sometimes their efforts can get overlooked.

Over the past several years, the Mid Westchester Elks Lodge has made sure that won't happen.

Last Tuesday, Lodge No. 535 honored nine first responders for exemplary service, including putting themselves at risk to help save the lives of others in some cases at its annual First Responders Appreciation Awards Dinner.

"This is, if you will, the best of the best," said the lodge's Exalted Ruler Art Adelman.

The lodge, which holds its meetings at the

American Legion Hall in Armonk, recognizes police officers, firefighters and ambulance corps and EMS workers in its expansive territory, which stretches from Port Chester to Mount Kisco, because of the merger of the Port Chester, White Plains and Mount Kisco lodges years ago.

Honored last week were Lt. Kim Russell-Goldstein of the Croton-on-Hudson Fire Department; Police Officers Peter Burns of the Pleasantville Police Department; paramedic Raul Pimentel of the Ossining EMS; the father-and-son team from the Hawthorne Fire Department of Beau and Michael Desimone; Detective Anthony Sabatella and Police Officer Steve Cunningham from North Castle; and Port Chester firefighter P.J. Cambriello. Departments within the Elks district can

nominate their members for the recognition.

The Elks also posthumously honored Thornwood firefighter Sean Carroll, 26, who died early last Thanksgiving morning in a house fire at his parents' home.

Carroll's father, Rich, accepted the award as his voice at times cracked with emotion. He said that the honor will help his family get through the loss and the award will be seen by everybody when they rebuild their home.

"He loved volunteering, he loved everything that it brought, the camaraderie, whether it was at a parade, whether it was a fire...he loved making new friends and Sean made friends very easily," said Rich Carroll, a Rye Brook police sergeant and a longtime Thornwood firefighter. "But he was an amazing young man and I hate that I have to not live with him anymore. It's horrible."

During the ceremony, Pleasantville Police Chief Erik Grutzner praised Burns for his quick thinking in saving a young man who was sitting on the edge of a bridge. He kept on approaching the distraught individual pretending he couldn't hear him until he got



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

The Mid Westchester Elks recognize area first responders at its annual Appreciation Awards Dinner last week.

close enough to haul him off the edge.

Speaking to Burns' two young sons, Grutzner said that when their father isn't home, he's helping others.

"The next time that he's not there, he's late for a holiday or something else goes on, just know he's out there doing these things that help people; not just help people with stuff but he'll help people and save people's lives," he said.

County Legislator Margaret Cunzio (C-Mount Pleasant), a Thornwood volunteer firefighter, said regardless of the emergency service, first responders head out at any time of the day.

"Everybody in this room knows that when that pager goes off, (when) that call comes in, we never hesitate, we get up and we go," Cunzio said.

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Fox Lane Fashion Show Students Turn Public Space into Runway

By Martin Wilbur

It was no accident that the stone walking path in the space between the Mount Kisco Public Library and Village Hall became a fashion runway early last Friday evening.

That was where more than 50 Fox Lane High School students from the school's Fashion Design Program were able to show their peers, parents and community their creativity and talent that had been honed in class, for some of them as long as the past three years.

Some 70 garments were created by the students for the show. Many of them found volunteers at the school to model their creations while some strutted along the public square-turned-runway themselves.

"They learn how to use patterns, they learn how to create patterns and right from the get-go we were about individual expression," Fox Lane art teacher Lindsay Lappin-Burke said of the program in which she teaches all three levels of classes. "So it's not about creating cookie-cutters or anything; it's really like what is your aesthetic, how can you express that."

The picture-perfect weather for the occasion and the music that was piped in as the models circled the walk produced a special atmosphere for students and onlookers.

The idea for the show was planned by three senior high school interns, Olivia Lippolis, Bianca Giuliano-Thomas and James Antash, who were all part of the program and wanted to showcase what they and their



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

There were more than 70 outfits that were showcased last Friday at the first-ever Fox Lane High School Fashion Runway Show in Mount Kisco. All the garments were designed and created by students in the school's Fashion Design Program.

classmates have accomplished in school.

"I did the fashion classes and that was the best part of my school career. It was the best thing," Lippolis said. "I loved the people, I loved the teacher and it's like a really supportive community, so not only did I learn to do fashion and technical skills, it kind of gives you a better sense of the world itself."

Not only did Lippolis, Giuliano-Thomas and Antash organize the fashion show, but they took an empty storefront off of Main Street in Mount Kisco and turned it into an art gallery this spring, Lappin-Burke said. During the last five weeks of the school year, there were four different types of art exhibits, each with its own public reception.

Mount Kisco Arts Council Chair Lisa Abzun said the council and the village encouraged the fashion show as a way to bring different parts of the community together that might not typically interact.

"If you have a child in the school then you will know what's going on in the schools. If you don't have a child in the school, you won't necessarily have any updates about

what is going on," Abzun said. "This is the perfect place."

The Fashion Design Program was launched in the 2019-20 academic year after the Gerbino family of Mount Kisco made a donation to jumpstart the program, Lappin-Burke said. Their son had graduated a year before its launch and he was headed to the Fashion Institute of Technology. While the music and sports programs have their supporters, the family figured there must be other students like their son who would benefit, she said.

Their belief turned out to be correct, but there was no faculty at Fox Lane equipped to lead the program. Lappin-Burke said she drew "the short straw" to oversee the program and immersed herself in getting up to speed, including teaching herself how to sew.

"I really learned along with the kids, so it's been a tremendous learning experience for me to refresh my career," said Lappin-Burke who has taught at Fox Lane for 14 years.

Best of all, the passion of the students helped them take the initiative to help create the foundation for the program, she said.

For Giuliano-Thomas, who was part of the art program for the past three years and who will be headed to Pratt Institute in the fall, it helped her narrow what she hopes to do.

"So I feel like the school shaped me into learning what I wanted to do as a career and what I wanted to do for college, so I'm really lucky," Giuliano-Thomas said.

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Peekskill to Host Second Annual Family 'Pride in the Park'

By Em Stangarone

Around the world, millions gather every June for Pride Month to celebrate, support and lift up the LGBTQIA+ community, continuing the fight for acceptance for people of all genders and different sexual orientations.

Among this year's celebrations is Peekskill Pride Inc's second annual Pride in the Park, to be held at Pugsley Park on Main Street this Saturday, June 25 from 1 to 5 p.m.

The event welcomes everyone – LGBTQIA+ folks, allies, friends and family alike – for a fun-filled day.

With local drag performer Dotty Spartans serving as master of ceremonies, the main stage will feature the headlining drag act by Evita Loca, Drag Queen Story Time with Kitten Ka'Boodlez, music, a play reading, spoken word performances and more. This year's event also includes performers from Westchester Circus Arts, entertaining visitors throughout the day.

"To work together as a community, we must first get to know one another," said Peekskill Pride President Brian Fassett. "We hope that this year's Pride event will be an introduction to many of our new LGBTQIA+ neighbors and be a rousing community success."

Children can try their hand at circus tricks and make their own flags in a craft activity led by Abrakadoodle. The Pet Pride booth returns this year, where visitors who dress their pets for Pride can have a photo taken and their pet's look judged by local celebrity

judges for prizes.

No food vendors will be in the park, but visitors are encouraged to bring food to picnic or they can find something to eat at the nearby farmers market or any of the downtown restaurants.

Peekskill Pride has partnered with multiple sponsors and vendors who will be on hand to provide information about local real estate, health and wellness, recycling and LGBTQIA+ services. Peekskill's Human Relations Commission will also be attending in support and to speak with the community.

Peekskill Pride Inc, the organization running Pride in the Park and many other Pride events in the city, began as a group of like-minded friends looking to create community and support. It was officially incorporated as a nonprofit in 2019. Its mission is to lead community efforts for LGBTQIA+ advocacy, inclusion, education and celebration by bringing people of all ages and backgrounds together.

Pride in the Park was designed in response to Peekskill's growing LGBTQIA+ community in recent years. Organizers and Peekskill officials agreed that last June's inaugural event was a big hit.

"Even though the rains came and tried to wash us out, people did not leave," Fassett said. "This event proved our community needed to be here."

"I am one proud mayor to see events like Pride in the Park being hosted here in our great City of Peekskill," Mayor Vivian McKenzie said. "It means we are an inclusive,



Peekskill Pride Inc's Pride in the Park will be held this Saturday afternoon for the second time at Pugsley Park, featuring a wide variety of activities, music, performances and vendors.

diverse and accepting city that welcomes and celebrates everyone."

Fassett said that Pride promotes self-affirmation, dignity, equality and increased visibility for everyone.

"Pride Month takes on greater meaning than it has since the days of Stonewall," said Fassett, citing attacks around the world against the LGBTQIA+ community. "We must all continue the progress of our brothers and sisters who fought so hard to get us to where we are today, as we are so often reminded of how far we have to go."

"Our LGBTQIA+ youth must see adults just like them, respected elected officials, successful business people and artists who are out and proud," he added. "And it is essential that they know we are here to support them."



Jacob Thompson and Cacophony Daniels perform during last June's inaugural Pride in the Park in Peekskill.

Peekskill Pride and city representatives hope that as the community grows, so will the Pride celebrations that support it.

"A healthy city can only prosper when we are genuinely aware of how vital it is to be accepting of all," Fassett said. "Peekskill has so much to offer; we are just another cog in that wheel."

More information about the event can be found at www.peekskillpride.org and on Instagram, @peekskill_pride.

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Peekskill Observes Juneteenth with Jubilant Celebration

By Abby Luby

More than 250 people filled Peekskill's Depew Park field to celebrate the city's 11th annual Juneteenth Freedom Day last Saturday as local performers were joined by youth groups who proudly strutted their talents throughout the afternoon.

The focus for this year's Juneteenth celebration was on "Africa American Firsts," featuring this year's grand marshals, Westchester Deputy County Executive Kenneth Jenkins, Peekskill City Court Judge Reginald Johnson, Mayor Vivian McKenzie and Joan Battle King, CEO and owner of Little Kings & Queens Daycare.

"I thank the City of Peekskill for honoring this day," King said. "I've owned a child care center for over 30 years here in Peekskill and I've seen the kids from years ago come back as adults to celebrate this day with me."

Johnson reminded the crowd of the meaning of Juneteenth.

"Juneteenth commemorates the day in 1865 when enslaved people in Galveston, Texas learned about the Emancipation Proclamation two years after it became law," he said. "This day is about America's promise that all men are created

equal. We celebrate America's kept promise."

Last year President Biden signed legislation making Juneteenth, typically celebrated on June 19, a federal holiday. Since June 19 falls on a Sunday this year, the holiday is being observed on Monday, June 20.

Currently, 18 states observe Juneteenth as a permanent paid state holiday: Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Virginia and Washington.

"We have waited as they did in Texas," said Rev. James Perry, pastor of the Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Peekskill. "We are still waiting. Right now, as a community, we ask you, Lord, for freedom from everything that seeks to hurt us. Let us rejoice today. We know a better day is coming."

Several times during the celebration Perry chanted out "Ashay! and many responded by repeating the African word that means to come together.

Among the highly talented performers that helped celebrate the day were the X-Factor Drumline and Dancers, the Peekskill City School District



The youth dancing group the Peekskill S.T.A.R.S. at last Saturday's Juneteenth Celebration in Peekskill.

Band, the Peekskill City Singers who sang in rich four-part harmony, the Libations, with their energized drummers providing a non-stop beat for dancers, and the Peekskill S.T.A.R.S., a youth dancing group.

Spread out over the field were local food and craft vendors and tables representing about 40 community groups including, schools, churches and local youth organizations.

Several local elected officials were on hand to view and be a part of the celebration as were Valerie Eaton, president of the Peekskill branch of the NAACP, and Peekskill Superintendent of Schools Dr. David Mauricio.

"There are still inequities in



ABBY LUBY PHOTOS

The grand marshals at Peekskill's Juneteenth celebration, from left, were Westchester Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins, Joan Battle King, CEO and owner of Little Kings & Queens Daycare, Peekskill City Court Judge Reginald Johnson and Peekskill Mayor Vivian McKenzie.

our system," said state Sen. Peter Harckham as he briefly addressed the crowd. "There's inequities in housing, education and child care for lower income families. You have to hold us accountable; we have a lot more work to do."

Many waved the red and blue Juneteenth flag with a white star burst, as well as the black, red and green Pan-African/African American flag.

Waiting to perform was the jazz-funk bass guitar player Richie Goods who, when not on tour, plays regularly at Mount Olivet Baptist Church.

"From the original Juneteenth

day until now, we've come a long way but history repeats itself," Goods said. "This day is important particularly so younger people can appreciate our history."

Adding to that sentiment was Keturah Louise Hadley, president of the Peekskill chapter of the Westchester Black Women's Political Caucus. The group supports Black women running for elected office.

"Juneteenth is part of our history and represents every person of color," she said. "We support this day because it's important to our community."



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Home Security While on Vacation

We're coming into vacation season when many of us will be away from home, and that's a good time to be aware of home security.

When I owned a historic home in Brooklyn Heights, I was always nervous about security when away on vacation. I had tenants in the upper duplex of a four-story home and they were not as conscious about security measures, such as locking the door to our shared entry at night.

Every time we were returning from a vacation, we looked down from the Brooklyn Bridge where we had a split-second view of our home two blocks away and below, just to make sure that it was still there.

During our six years of residence there, we had a couple of security scares that still give me the chills today. In one instance, a thief removed the hinges from our back door and came into our house, visiting every room while we slept. When we awakened the next morning, my wife shared that she had a dream that there was a man in our bedroom, looking down at us in bed. Little did we know that it was not a dream, but reality, when we went downstairs to discover the outrageous breach in our privacy.

The thing that struck me the oddest was that every single book in our library had been rifled through, teaching us that hiding money in books must be a security measure



By Bill Primavera

for some people. Frankly, I had never thought of it.

At that time, we lived over an antiques shop that we operated. There was nothing scarier than standing at the top of our stairs, looking down at our apartment door and seeing a foot kick through one of its lower panels. My wife had the intelligence – or fear – to scream her lungs out, which deterred the foot kicker. He ran from our foyer and hesitated for a few moments just outside, where I was able to get a good look at him through a window.

Later when the cops picked him up at another location in the neighborhood he was trying to burglarize, I was able to identify him at the police station. There was nothing more satisfying than to be a witness to his crime before a grand jury, and he was convicted and sent on his way to do time where he couldn't victimize others for a while.

I was really naïve about protecting life and property in those days. I'm smarter about it now and know exactly what I would do to assure my family's safety. I happen to live in a condominium with 24-hour security; nobody gets to me without a notice first from the doorman, receptionist or security guard. No one can get to the elevators without first being screened. So, if you live in an apartment or condo, make sure the onsite management and your closest neighbors are



aware of your being away.

If living in a single-family house, here are the essential precautions to take for security.

First and foremost, have a regular security system for your home, which provides an alert to your local police department if that system is breached. Have a front-door camera system installed where you can see who's at your door, even when you're away.

While you plan to be away, make sure newspapers are stopped. A collection of papers on a front lawn is an open invitation for a thief.

Notify your closest neighbors and ask them to be on the lookout for anything unusual.

Keep a car in the driveway.

If planning to be away for two weeks or more, arrange to have your lawn mowed.

Place house lights on an automatic timer.

Ask a good friend to pass by the house daily to double check that everything's okay.

Don't announce on Facebook that you will be away or send pictures of yourself on the slopes or beach. Save all that until after you return.

Adhering to these security practices, you can feel confident that you're doing all you can to avert an unwelcome guest to your home while you enjoy your vacation.

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

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Making Friends the Old-Fashioned Way

Manhattanville professor tries to heal the wounds caused by social media

By Warren Berger

You are reading this week's print excerpt of an article from our Examiner+ newsmagazine-style email newsletter. To read the entire article and others like it, subscribe at www.examiner-plus.com to receive all of our bonus content.

"I feel like we use our phone as a barrier between other people and us," a female college student said to her classmates and her professor, Joni Siani, during a recent communications class Siani was teaching at Westchester's Manhattanville College. "We edit our photos and craft our texts so much that we've stopped being real," the student added.

There were nods around the classroom, and other students took turns weighing in: "Everyone feels the need to post everything, all the time," said one, referring



Manhattanville Professor Joni Siani, leading a class outdoors.

to the widespread tendency among young people today to text or write social media posts constantly, about even the most mundane things. Another student noted that living in today's social media-driven world — where our own images are reflected back to us while social media algorithms serve us customized content — "is like being trapped in a hall of mirrors."

If it sounds like these students are less than thrilled with the pervasive effects of social media on their lives and everyday behaviors, that would be an understatement. "Traumatized" might be a better word to describe the students, according to their professor, Siani. She says that almost without exception, the students in her class report experiencing bullying

and betrayal on social media during their middle school and high school years. Many of them felt pressured to text nude or semi-nude images of themselves to classmates. And they've shared with Siani that their constant exposure to social media affected their ability to make friends, be intimate with others, and even just have a decent conversation.

"They are the first generation whose human socialization has been through digital media," Siani says. And she thinks that is central to why they are part of an 18-24 age demographic that is now, according to some studies, experiencing an epidemic of loneliness and high suicide rates.

"These kids have been through trauma," Siani says. "Their anxiety levels are through the roof."

Digital Socialization and "Celling Your Soul"

Siani first became aware of the problem more than a decade ago when she was teaching communication classes to college students in the Boston area. During those still-early days of social media, with Facebook and texting just beginning to get a foothold

in people's everyday lives, Siani conducted classes on how to use social media.

Gradually, she says, her classes "turned into three hours of Facebook group therapy." At the time, there wasn't as much public discussion as there is today about the possible harmful effects of social media. But Siani says she could see early on that young people were being deeply affected — often in negative ways — by growing up with constant exposure to online texts and posts.

Siani decided to make this a focus of her communications classes, which she brought to Manhattanville College four years ago. Along the way, she also wrote a book and created a film, both called "Celling Your Soul," about the harmful effects of social media on young people. Today she also hosts a podcast on the subject ...

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Two Beverages Strain the Meanings of Homegrown, Natural Taste



By Nick Antonaccio

The food and beverages we consume have gone through revolutionary production processes and distribution channels in the last several decades.

Before the globalization of our economy and the dominance of the corporate-industrial complex in the food chain, life seemed simpler. Before science perfected ways to optimize food production and increase the shelf life of foodstuffs, life seemed in harmony with the natural order.

Here in 2022, we're coming full circle for many of these products. The surge of neighborhood farmers markets and a demand by consumers for more natural products has brought us to a new ethos, introducing into our lexicon concepts such as locavore, sustainability and farm-to-table.

But not all the stars are aligned.

Certain sectors of the food chain are still entrenched in the big business industrial food chain. Two of these products are American wine and orange juice.

What, you say? One cannot find more natural beverages than these two. California vineyards and Florida orange groves are close to Nature herself.

Let's examine two myths these products

have in common: they are homegrown and their taste is natural.

First, they are homegrown. Fact or myth?

1. It is fairly straightforward. American wine is produced in the United States from grapes grown in the United States. Well, not quite. In recent years, American producers have seen demand outstrip supply in certain vintages. To sustain their market share and profitability, a number of them have purchased huge vats of grape juice and/or processed wine from South America. That California Cabernet you enjoy may be partially sourced from Chile (and if it's not the dominant source, you won't find that information on the label).

2. Florida orange juice comes from Florida orange groves – except when it doesn't. There is a growing percentage of orange juice on grocery shelves that is a combination of bulk juices purchased from several countries, blended together and bottled or boxed for retail sale by the giant orange juice companies – Pepsi (Tropicana) and Coca-Cola (Minute Maid).

Second, their taste is natural. Fact or myth?

1. Grapes are crushed, fermented and bottled, preserving a particular wine's natural components and taste. Well, not always. A growing percentage of wines are influenced in the winery, which at times may resemble an industrial factory.

Here are two of the many techniques employed:

- To increase tannins and structure during production, bags of wood chips may be floated in stainless steel wine vats. Want a toasty aroma and flavor in your wine? Don't wait years for the natural evolution; add a bag of oak chips for a few weeks.

- To completely control flavor consistency each year, a winemaker may employ a device called a spinning cone. The flavor compounds and alcohol in a tank of wine are literally stripped out of the wine via centrifugal force. The winemaker now has a clean palette to reconstruct his or her wine. He or she then purchases and adds personally designed flavor compounds and alcohol into the wine.

Just like that, a perennially consistent wine product is created.

2. Making orange juice is simple. Pick oranges, squeeze oranges, bottle the juice. Well, not exactly. In order to ensure a consistent flavor every year, certain producers resort to modern science, similar to the spinning cone used in the wine industry. Some grapes go to hell and back and now, we find out, so do oranges.

First, all oxygen is removed from the extracted juice to retard spoilage. Then, as reported in an article I read in The Atlantic, "Oils and essences are extracted from the oranges and then sold to a flavor manufacturer who concocts a carefully composed flavor pack customized to the company's flavor specifications. The juice, which has been patiently sitting in storage sometimes for more than a year, is then pumped with these packs to restore its aroma and taste, which by this point have been thoroughly annihilated."

In spite of this process, the final product may still be labeled "natural" and "100 percent pure."

Sometimes it seems the more refined and sophisticated our preferences for natural foods become, the more refined and less natural our food products remain.

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

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Support Connection Announces Annual Support-A-Walk is Oct. 2

Support Connection announced Monday that its 2022 Annual Support-A-Walk for Breast and Ovarian Cancer is scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 2.

The event is Support Connection's most important annual fundraiser. Proceeds provide funding for its year-round breast, ovarian and gynecological cancer support services, which have helped thousands of people since the organization was founded in 1996.

The Support-A-Walk was created by local residents to bring attention to the needs of people affected by breast, ovarian and gynecological cancers. Thousands of people participate each year in this inspiring and

uplifting event. Participants of all ages walk, often in honor or memory of loved ones, a celebration of life and a tribute to those individuals and families who are affected by breast and ovarian cancer. Families, friends, co-workers and teams of walkers walk together. Individuals are also welcome to participate.

Support Connection will gather again in person and host the event at FDR State Park. Even those who can't make it to the park are still welcome to walk where they are, near and far.

The Support-A-Walk theme is "Walk With Us, Wherever You Are" in recognizing that Support Connection's programs serve people nationwide. This enables people throughout the country to participate in the walk. No matter where you live, you can join Support Connection and work together to support a common cause, on walk day.

It's easy to participate. Walk with family, friends, neighbors or co-workers. Walk in your neighborhood, your local park, even your backyard. Create your own t-shirts and personal messages about your reasons for walking, then send photos to walk@supportconnection.org so Support Connection can share them online as part of the celebration.

Support Connection does not receive funds from any national cancer organizations including Relay for Life, Susan G. Komen or Making Strides. By participating in or donating to the Support-A-Walk, community members can make a positive difference



Some of the walkers who participated in Support Connection's 2021 Support-A-Walk. This year's event will be held at FDR State Park in Yorktown on Sunday, Oct. 2. Participants can choose to walk on their own or with friends and family at a location of their choosing.

in the lives of women and families facing the challenges of a breast, ovarian or gynecological cancer diagnosis.

To help raise funds, participants can create personal online fundraising pages by following <https://tinyurl.com/walkfundraising22>. Donations to the walk are accepted by check, cash and online.

To learn more, and for ongoing updates about the Support-A-Walk, visit www.supportconnection.org/support-a-walk or contact Support Connection at 914-962-6402 or by e-mailing walk@supportconnection.org.

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Five Ways to Help Reduce Risk of Cognitive Decline

During Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month in June, the Alzheimer’s Association is encouraging all Americans to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors that may help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.

There are currently more than six million Americans age 65 and older living with Alzheimer’s disease.

Age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer’s disease. In fact, 1 in 3 seniors age 85 and older will have Alzheimer’s disease. While some brain changes are inevitable as we age, there is a growing body of research to suggest having the necessary resources to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyle behaviors, including healthy eating, exercising regularly, not smoking and staying cognitively engaged may help us age healthier and help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.

“Understanding strategies to reduce risk of cognitive decline is a robust area of research currently,” said Heather M. Snyder, vice president, medical and scientific relations for the Alzheimer’s Association. “Researchers are working to determine what may be the optimal lifestyle interventions to reduce cognitive decline, but there are steps we can take now to possibly help reduce the risk of cognitive decline as we age.”

During June, the Alzheimer’s Association offers five tips that may help reduce the risk of cognitive decline:

1. Keep your heart healthy. Studies have consistently produced strong evidence that a healthier heart is connected to

a healthier brain. One recent study shows that aggressively treating high blood pressure can help reduce the development of mild cognitive impairment (MCI).

2. Exercise regularly. Regular cardiovascular exercise helps increase blood flow to the body and brain, and there is strong evidence that regular physical activity is linked to better memory and thinking.
3. Maintain a heart-healthy diet. Evidence suggests a healthful diet is linked to better cognitive functioning and may reduce the risk of heart disease as well. Stick to a meal schedule full of fruits and vegetables and low in saturated fats. The MIND diet – a hybrid of the DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) and the Mediterranean diet – is a brain-healthy diet that emphasizes whole grains, green leafy vegetables, poultry, fish and berries.
4. Get proper sleep. Maintaining a regular, uninterrupted sleep pattern benefits physical and psychological health and helps clear waste from the brain. Adults should get at least seven hours of sleep each night and try to keep a bedtime routine.
5. Stay socially and mentally active. Meaningful social engagement may support cognitive health, so stay connected with friends and family. Engage your mind by doing activities that are challenging to you such as learning a

new language or musical instrument. “Incorporating these strategies becomes especially important as we age,” Snyder said. “Research suggests that these lifestyle interventions in combination may have the

greatest benefit and are good to consider at any age, but even if you begin with one or two, you’re moving in the right direction.” To learn more about Alzheimer’s and other dementia, visit www.alz.org.

Southern Dutchess Concert Band to Perform July 9 in Patterson

On Saturday, July 9, the Patterson Recreation Center will be the venue for a family-friendly “All-American” concert by the Southern Dutchess Concert Band and sponsored by The Duffle Bag and the Town of Patterson. The free concert starts at 6 p.m.

The Southern Dutchess Concert Band continues in the great American tradition originated by the John Philip Sousa Band to entertain audiences with a wide variety of music. Featuring crowd-pleasing show tunes, popular standards, marches, light classical and wind ensemble music, the Southern Dutchess Concert Band consists of more than 70 woodwind, brass and percussion musicians from southern Dutchess County and surrounding areas.

Special selections will include a new composition by American composer Brian Balmages titled “Kyiv, 2022,” which honors all Ukrainians, their families and relief organizations, a tribute to those who’ve lost their lives defending America titled “Hymn to the Fallen” and a salute to American military service members, veterans and their families.

The conductor is Craig Fryer, retired band director from the Millbrook schools. The bandmaster is Dave Cole, who is also director of The Big Band Sound jazz orchestra.

The concert will be held in the Patterson Recreation Center regardless of the weather, so come and enjoy the amenities of air conditioning, convenient parking and handicapped accessibility.

The Patterson Recreation Center is located on Front Street in Patterson, just south of the Patterson train station. If driving, take I-84 to Exit 18, then take Route 311 north for 2.9 miles and turn right onto Front Street. Or take Route 55 east to Route 22 south for 2.7 miles, then turn right onto Route 311 and turn left onto Front Street after the railroad tracks. The Patterson Recreation Center is on the right, a block past the train station.

For more information, call 845-878-7106 or e-mail info@theduffelbaginc.com. Visit facebook.com/southerndutchessconcertband for more information about the Southern Dutchess Concert Band or e-mail dave@thebigbandsound.com.

THERE’S A WORD FOR IT

A vocabulary-building quiz

By Edward Goralski

What’s the Meaning? The 2022 Scripps National Spelling Bee was won by Harini Logan, a 14-year-old eighth-grader from San Antonio, Texas, in the first-ever lightning round tiebreak. The 234 spellers from across the country and around the globe had to not only spell words correctly, they had to navigate several Word Meaning rounds. The quiz this week is based on words from those Word Meaning rounds.

1. What does it mean to discombobulate?

A) untangle

B) reveal a secret

C) confuse

2. Who would be most likely to use a lancet?

A) a surgeon

B) a medeviel knight

C) a musician

3. Something described as diaphanous is:

A) cool

B) transparent

C) sweet

4. To equivocate is to:

A) speak passionately

B) beat around the bush

C) counterbalance

5. A milliner specializes in:

A) making rugs

B) making flour

C) making hats

6. What is another word for dactylogram?

A) fingerprint

B) signature

C) cave painting

7. Something that is tendentious is:

A) uncertain

B) biased

C) reasonable

8. Somniloquy is the practice of:

A) talking in one’s sleep

B) walking in one’s sleep

C) snoring

ANSWERS:

1. C. Confuse

2. A. A surgeon

3. B. Transparent

4. B. Beat around the bush

5. C. Making hats

6. A. Fingerprint

7. B. Biased

8. A. Talking in one’s sleep

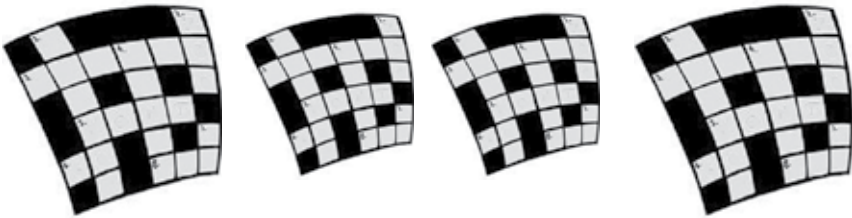
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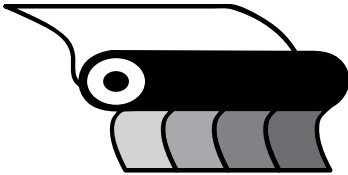
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Prime Pub is a Flavorful and Visual Experience

I had heard of Prime Pub, a relatively new restaurant in Somers, through the grapevine. A veteran restaurant guy takes over and revamps a former Chinese eatery and turns it into an airy, inviting, multigenerational American gastro pub.

Proprietor and dynamic restaurateur Simi Polozani, founder of Prime Pub restaurants in Bethel and Danbury, Conn., opened his latest destination in January on Route 202 at the entrance to Heritage Hills. It is a worthy, flavorful destination for diners throughout the region.

Walk in and you notice the extraordinary setting. The freestanding building sits at the edge of a big pond, which can be seen through large picture windows, a seasonal fireplace highlighted with wood and stone, an attractive dining room with tables that are well spaced, contemporary ceiling lighting and a semi-enclosed bar and lounge area for schmoozing and munching.

Best of all, the staff are all about hospitality from the moment you enter. Something that trickles down from Simi, I guess, who obsessively makes the rounds of his establishment, offering smiles and chatter to all who enter.

We visited on a lovely late weekday afternoon and found ourselves in the comfort zone as soon as we took our seats at the bar. Joleen, our waitress and bartender, was most cordial. I ordered a local Industrial Arts IPA and just took in the surroundings for a while. The views are soothing.

The kitchen is the domain of Chef William DeLuca, who had previously put his talents to work at Terra in Danbury. We got our meal going with a sharable order of Rhode Island-style calamari, a very ample portion served in a metal bowl with spicy chipotle mayo and marinara sauce on the side for dipping. We decided to bag half of it and leave room for our next course.

We followed with their Prime Pub Salad, a large colorful platter loaded with fried goat cheese, mixed greens, walnuts, oranges, dried cranberries, thinly-sliced apples and garlic croutons bathed in a raspberry vinaigrette. Had to try their decadent-sounding Burrata Burger, stacked with baby arugula and roasted red pepper served on a brioche bun with pickles and sliced red onion on the side with our choice of fries. We did our best but ended up taking home half the salad. Made for great snacking the next day.

In future visits I have my eyes set on the eggplant tower, the beet and baby arugula salad, honey goat cheese flatbread, and their blast from the past, beef stroganoff.

Prime Pub is located at 249 Route 202 in



By Morris Gut

Somers, across from DeCicco & Sons. Open seven days a week for lunch and dinner. There's also Sunday brunch, craft beers and a kids' menu. Info: 914-617-9818 or visit www.primepubgroup.com.

Hard Cider Fest & Brews

Boscobel House and Gardens in Garrison will again be hosting the annual New York Hard Cider Festival this Saturday, June 25, from 1 to 6 p.m. The event will highlight more than 20 regional apple

cideries and artisan cheese purveyors, including Second Mouse Cheese Shop in Pleasantville and Acorn Hill Farm of Pine Plains. For info and tickets, visit <https://boscobel.org>.

Hops on the Hudson will hold its second annual Brews With Views at Mayor's Park in Cold Spring on Saturday, July 16, from 2 to 6 p.m. More than 50 regional microbreweries and food artisans will be offering tastings, including Dutchess Dog House, Khmer Style Egg Rolls & Dumplings, Wolf & Warrior, Captain Lawrence, Sing Sing Kill Brewery, Industrial Arts Brewing Company, Decadent Ales, Chatham Brewery and Broken Bow.

For info and tickets, call 845-661-1557 or visit www.hopsonhudson.com.

Shah's Halal on its Way

Shah's Halal Food, a restaurant chain throughout the region and Great Britain, will be opening a franchise on Mamaroneck Avenue in White Plains. A large sign is up across from City Center, and they are now hiring. Shah's, which started as a food cart in Queens in 2005, will offer certified halal specialties.

What is halal? The preparation of the food and drink must adhere to Islamic law. The menu will offer a variety of platters, gyros, sandwiches and salads. Locally, they join The Halal Guys at the Galleria mall and Ambadi Kebab & Grill in White Plains, which also serve halal menus.

Shah's Halal Food will be located at 40 Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains. Info: 347-381-0411 or visit www.shahshalalfood.com.

Around the Table at NYBG!

The beautiful New York Botanical Garden has launched a new exhibition "Around the Table: Stories of the Foods We Love" that will run through Sept 11. Throughout the park, it will explore the rich cultural history of what we eat.

Across its 250-acre landscape, visitors can gather at tables uniquely designed by artists living and working in the Bronx. The tables will encourage sitting, sharing and storytelling. Throughout the exhibit, there will be weekend programming celebrating food with cooking demonstrations and



The dining room at Prime Pub in Somers, which opened in January, and its magnificent views.



The Rhode Island-style crispy calamari, with spicy chipotle mayo and marinara sauce on the side, at Prime Pub in Somers.



Shah's Halal Food will soon be opening a new location in White Plains.

other culinary-themed activities. You can watch the planted produce and grains as they mature throughout the season.

The 2022 NYBG Farmers Market has started again, operating on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. through Oct. 26. The popular market is run by Morning Glory Markets, which operates markets in Westchester featuring a weekly variety of produce vendors, bakers, specialty food purveyors and crafts.

The director is Pascale Le Draoulec, a former restaurant critic for the New York Daily News. Look for vendors such as Wave Hill Breads, Bombay Chutney Co.,

The Orchards of Concklin, Don Pickle, Ztudio Zsa Zsa and more. Admission to the

market is free.

Special Hint: While at the Garden, hunt down the "Julia Child Rose" that is planted in the stunning Rockefeller Rose Garden now in full bloom. It is amazing!

The New York Botanical Garden is located at 2900 Southern Blvd. in the Bronx. Info: 718-817-8700 or visit www.nybg.org.

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

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Women Making History at 'Vote Like a Girl' Event July 9 at Sunnyside

Pay tribute to fearless women of the past and get inspired about the future during Vote Like a Girl, a special event taking place at Washington Irving's Sunnyside on Saturday, July 9, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

STEAM activities, live music, a suffrage debate and a special tour of Sunnyside featuring the stories of the women who lived and worked there will highlight the day.

Visitors can explore suffrage and citizenship by making a radical cross-stitch project, getting photo-ops with suffragette sashes and 19th century clothing and sharing the issues that matter to them with the League of Women Voters of the Rivertowns.

Little scientists can test their STEAM skills while honoring female inventors

with hands-on projects. History detectives will explore the cottage and learn about the lives of the women connected to the estate, including Washington Irving's niece Catharine Irving and one of the servants, Helen Lantry. Picnicking is encouraged and visitors can enjoy live, outdoor music performances from local Tarrytown musician Myco.

There will be snacks available to purchase in the museum shop and picnic tables are available.

Online admission is \$16 for adults and \$12 for seniors. Children under 17 are free along with Historic Hudson Valley members. Prices are \$2 more per ticket when purchased on the day of the event.



Washington Irving's Sunnyside will be the site of the July 9 special event Vote Like a Girl, which will feature the stories of the women who lived and worked at the site in the 19th century.

Music Fest and Fireworks Return to Kensico Dam Plaza July 3

Once again fireworks will light up the night sky during the Westchester County Music Fest and Fireworks at the Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla on Sunday, July 3.

Pre-concert entertainment begins at 5 p.m. with a guest DJ followed by the FDR Drive Band at 7 p.m. Spectacular fireworks, with the historic Kensico Dam as the backdrop, will follow at about 9:15 p.m.

Admission and parking are free. Carpooling is suggested. Concert-goers

should bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating as well as a picnic supper.

Music Fest is presented by Westchester County Parks and sponsored by Captain Lawrence Brewing Company and the Westchester Parks Foundation with support from radio station 100.7 WHUD.

Kensico Dam Plaza is located at the north end of the Bronx River Parkway in Valhalla. For more information, call 914-864-PARK or visit parks.westchestergov.com.

Vote Like a Girl is an event of the Women's History Institute, a Historic Hudson Valley initiative designed to illuminate the significant contributions made by women in the local region.

The Women's History Institute fosters a deeper understanding of the women who shaped the culture of the area, including the diverse women who lived and worked on our sites, and offers a contemporary audience the resources necessary to take inspiration from their history.

Irving, America's "Founding Father of Literature," created a romantic, picturesque estate nestled along the Hudson riverbank. The house and the furnishings, many of which are original to Irving, have been restored to its 1850s character.

Washington Irving's Sunnyside is located at 3 W. Sunnyside Lane in Irvington, one mile south of the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge. For more information, call 914-366-6900 or visit www.hudsonvalley.org.

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Cortlandt Nationals Take Pair from Putnam Coyotes in GHVBL Action

Cortlandt National's Aidan "Fox" Diedrich, Putnam Coyote C Rocco Spirelli and umpire Dontae Harris all get a pretty good look at Diedrich's line drive hit to left field, part of a double-header sweep by the Nationals in recent Greater Hudson Valley Baseball League action. Shutterbugs are encouraged to send their action and/or candid photos of summer sports to rgallagher@theexaminernews.com.

Hudson Valley Box Lacrosse League Takes Flight



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Mahopac Water Panther Matthew Wistrom (Plattsburgh) takes a diving shot in recent Hudson Valley Box Lacrosse League action, which got underway last week at rinks in Yonkers and Mahopac... See P32

Sports

Somers' D'Ippolito Named NYS Gatorade Soccer Player of Year



By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports
Editor @Directrays

In the United Kingdom and Ireland they call the Big Dipper the Plough, the large asterism consisting of seven bright stars of the constellation Ursa Major.

In Section 1 soccer we call Fordham-bound Somers soccer star Daniel D'Ippolito the Big Dipper on account of the way he plowed through New York State opponents en route to Somers' second state title last November, leading the Tuskers on a remarkable 17-2 scoring spree throughout the NYSPHSAA Class A tournament.

The field was thoroughly plowed and the Big Dipper did the digging, scoring 14 goals and dishing 10 assists throughout a postseason that saw D'Ippolito hit a gear the folks at Gatorade could not ignore when they named him New York State Boys' Soccer Player of the Year late last week.

"It feels amazing, it's hard to describe the feeling," said the All-American D'Ippolito, who finished an amazing senior season with 36 goals and 38 assists while maintaining a 94 average in the classroom. "It's truly just rewarding to see all my hard work pay off and to be able to receive awards like these."

D'Ippolito's impact was vast, a canyon-like effect that resonated with teammates and foes alike on account of his competitive yet likable disposition.

"Love me some Dip," Lakeland Coach Tim Hourahan admitted. "He is one of those kids that is just as respectful away from the

game as he is during the game. Class act, great kid who is just getting ready for his prime. I expect him to fare very well at the next level playing at Fordham."

What Dip did during his senior year at Somers was the stuff of legend. What he did in the sectional finals, scoring four goals, including the equalizer and the game-winner in a span of two minutes – erasing a late two-goal deficit and willing his team past Eastchester in a 6-5 title tilt – is the stuff of Somers folklore. Awesome is a word we throw around like LOL these days, but D'Ippolito's performance in the sectional finals was the very definition of awesome.

"What he did during his senior year has not been matched in a long time and I would put his senior season up against anyone in the last decade," Hourahan added. "That sectional finals performance, down by a couple of goals in the second half, was legendary and then he followed it up with a state title."

Opposing coaches, starting in Section 1, and those going forward in the state tournament, had no way to contain his combination of guile, speed and strength. The kid was a thoroughbred in a field of stallions.

"You can't game-plan against him," Byram Hills Coach Matty Allen said. "He's too universal and smart of a player. His defense is underrated and he can play any position. Just as tough as they come, too."

Is he an all-time Section 1 great? Is D'Ippolito of that ilk? Section 1 has had some great ones and he's certainly in the conversation after beginning his career as a four-year-old on Fireman's Field in Somers.

continued on page 33

**Direct
Rays**



Goals like this game-winner in sectional finals against Eastchester were signature moments in the career of Somers senior and NYS Gatorade Player of the Year Daniel D'Ippolito.



As the center of attention the last few years, NYS Gatorade Player of the Year Daniel D'Ippolito (center) took Somers to new heights last November.

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS



Somers All-American Daniel D'Ippolito (L) mastered the craft of soccer like few before him ever have en route to being named NYS Player of the Year.

Sports

Mahopac Water Panthers Open Hudson Valley Box Lax on High Note

By Sam Federmean

Across the street from the Mahopac Fire Department sits a rather nondescript roller hockey rink, where on Wednesday night, a collection of young men, including many Division I players, played the Mahopac Water Panthers first home game against 845 Box Lacrosse, displaying their skill, speed, and strength, but it was apparent early on who the better team was. A shot squeaking past the goalie on the near side less than a minute in gave Mahopac the early lead, which they would never relinquish. The Water Panthers led 5-0 within the first eight-plus minutes of the game, but 845 fought hard.

Mahopac's goalie Pasquale Kourakos, who went to Harrison High School and now plays for the Generals in the Connecticut Collegiate Box Lacrosse League competing for a national title, had an excellent performance. Kourakos was given an early lead, and never let any doubt creep in as to who was going to win the game. The Water Panthers led 7-2 at the end of the first period, 12-7 at the end of the second, and ended up winning the game 15-9, leading wire-to-wire. They were led by a five-goal performance from Putnam Valley native and former SUNY Maritime player Brett Trodden. Logan Peters, who played for a Rutgers team that made the Final Four



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Members of the Mahopac Water Panther box lacrosse team gathered before beating 845 Lax Club last Wednesday at Geary Memorial Rink in Mahopac.

this year, chipped in with two goals and two assists of his own for Mahopac.

Other goal scorers for Mahopac were Jon Bota, Aidan Martin, Alex Sirico, Giovanni Jean-Pharuns, Mike Anecchino and Aidan Eggazarian. The game had a healthy attendance, with family, friends, and lacrosse fans nearly filling the bleachers and also lining up around the rink to get a closer view of the action.

These teams compete in the Hudson

Valley Box Lacrosse League, which is a league that promotes the growth of box lacrosse at all levels, hosting all-day events that are fun for the whole family. While many of the athletes are there to improve their skills for field lacrosse, Mahopac captain Bryan O'Gorman says that "we hope people will recognize that box lacrosse is its own unique sport, and not just something to improve your field game."

The league is seeing plenty of success, with players from Rutgers, Vermont, Notre Dame, Johns Hopkins and more coming to play. O'Gorman said, "It's a way for men in their late 20's and early 30's to stay competitive and active in the game that they love. Each team held tryouts and was very selective in forming their team, and the league held a combine to introduce field lacrosse players to the game."

Played with a spacing, physicality, and pace similar to hockey, players will screen and cut the way that basketball players do. It's much easier to grasp for an outsider than field lacrosse, with positions not being as strict and the pace being much faster. The talent that the players display is fantastic, as the small space and fast pace requires a very high level of hand-eye coordination. After watching a box lacrosse game, it's easy to see why O'Gorman says that "no amount or set of drills will give you the quality reps and naturally teach many of the skills field coaches want better than box lacrosse."

If you want to catch the next set of HVBL games, there is an all day event at EJ Murray Rink in Yonkers next Saturday, June 25th starting at 10 AM with each team playing 4 games. Admission is free, and you can stay as long or short as you want.



Brett Trodden had a monster game for Mahopac Water Panthers.



Bryan O'Gorman (L) of the Mahopac Water Panthers has done plenty to get the Hudson Valley Box Lacrosse League up and running.

40 Years Later, Mahopac Celebrates its 1st Baseball Title!

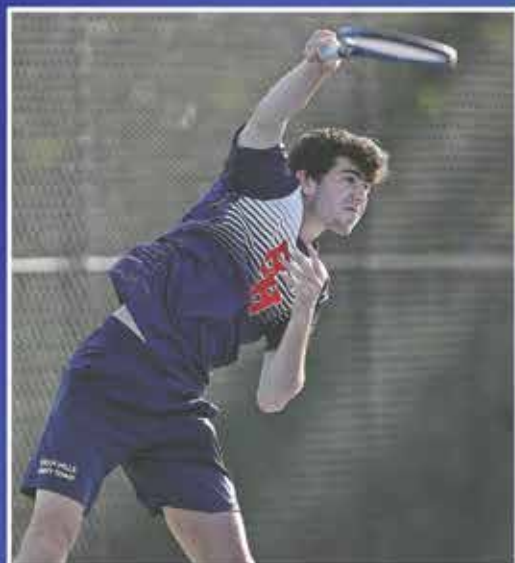


Members of the 1982 Mahopac baseball team came from far and near to gather Saturday at Citi Field for the NY Mets' win over the Marlins and celebrate the 40-year reunion of their magical 23-2 season, which was capped off with the first sectional title in Mahopac history (all sports included) under former Coach Frank Miele, the centerpiece of the experience, which concluded Sunday with a pizza truck and tunes at the home of former Detroit Tigers draftee Teddy Lawrence.

"I had the day of my life catching up with players that mean so much to me," said Miele, who went on to win five sectional titles while building a powerhouse program. "I am so proud of the men they are today and am so honored to know that I was part of their lives so long ago. This group was a very awesome baseball team but they are such better people than players."

Pictured members of the 1982 team include: Detroit Tigers MLB draftee Teddy Lawrence, Chris Bucciferro, Paul Stefunek, Ben Silidjian, Greg Ackley, Joe Ferrara, Andy Gravina, Rob Marano, Coach Frank Miele, John Lupinacci, John Petrogallo, John Bellucci.

Sports



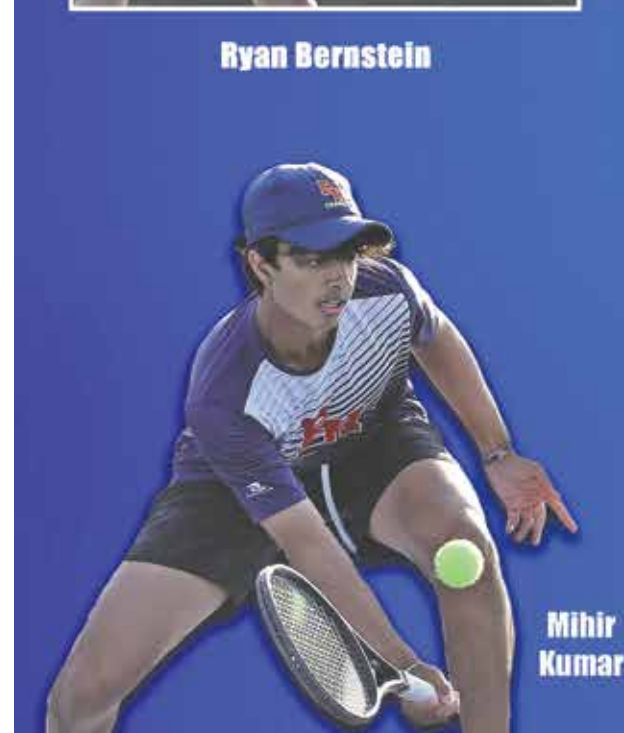
Ryan Bernstein

BYRAM HILLS Tennis 2022

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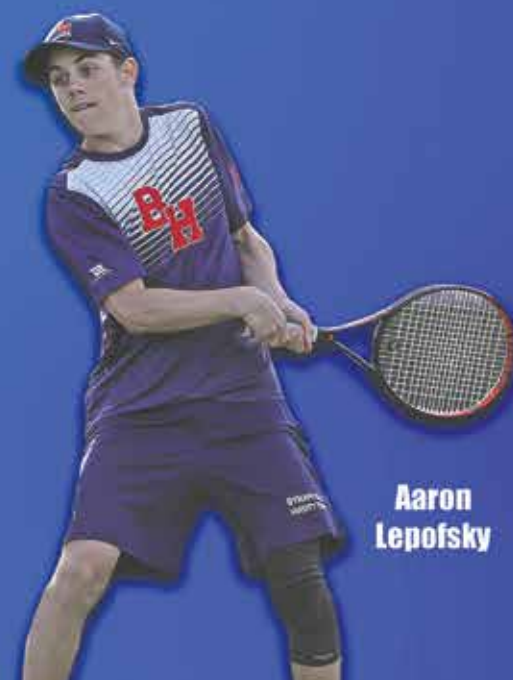
Aidan Berkman



**Mihir
Kumar**



**Arel
Rivera**



**Aaron
Lepofsky**

Somers' D'Ippolito Named NYS Gatorade Soccer Player of Year

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"It's very fair to put him up there with all-time greats," said Allen, who has seen his fair share of great ones come through Byram Hills while forging Section 1 into a soccer hotbed in recent years. "Dip is one of the most complete players I've ever witnessed and most clutch player I've seen. Think the game against Eastchester is the perfect example. His team was down and he never panicked. He and (Bennet) Leitner could be the best 1-2 punch I've ever seen in Section 1."

Folks got their first look at the future and a sample of his varsity career in the fall of 2019 when the budding sophomore scored two goals, including the game-winner in a sectional title triumph over Pearl River. From there, D'Ippolito ignited a stampede of Tusker triumphs, including three sectional titles in the last six years under Coach Brian Lanzetta.

"Being part of Somers soccer has meant so much to me," D'Ippolito said. "Even without soccer, the lifelong friends and memories I've made over the years are priceless and Somers soccer will forever be a part of me. I

wouldn't trade it for the world."

Gatorade has a longstanding history of serving student athletes and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward platform, D'Ippolito has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports.

D'Ippolito is also eligible to submit a short video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of 12 \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators. D'Ippolito stands in line with a chance to do so, too.

"Dip is one of the most special players

I've ever coached," Lanzetta said. "I love that kid. One day I believe he will be drafted into the MLS. I got to spend a weekend with him in Kansas at the All-American weekend and found out what a good, responsible kid he is. He's a professional."

As we mention on page 1 of sports, we could use some help this summer while describing the exploits of our youth sportsmen/women. If you shutterbugs are out there snapping pictures of our youngsters, please send your top-notch shots to rgallagher@theexaminernews.com with the names of the participants and a brief description of the event. You might

even make the front page of sports like some sharpshooter did this week.

If the MLB season ended today, the Yankees and Mets would be playoff-bound with both teams having MVP candidates in Yankee slugger Aaron Judge and Mets 1B Pete Alonso, plus the favorites for Manager of the Year in Aaron Boone and Buck Showalter. If this keeps up, we may get that coveted Subway Series again. That said, the Mets still have a couple of weeks to go to avoid that June Swoon we've seen all too many times. This team seems different, though.

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Sports

Softball 2022 *A Look Back*



White Plains standout Alexa Galligani lines a pitch down the right-field line during a game at Fox Lane.



Tanvi Prasaad of Greeley gets set to deliver a pitch during a Quaker home game.



Jordynn Killion of Fox Lane fires a pitch in a mid-season tournament at Sprout Brook Park in Cortlandt.



Pleasantville shortstop Lena Freberg fires to first for an out in the Panthers' season-opening home win over Edgemont.



White Plains players are all smiles as they wait at home plate for teammate Natasha Mendez to finish circling the bases after she homered vs. RCK in the last game of the regular season.



Pleasantville senior Ashley Rosen hits the ball toward the right-field corner at the Panthers' road game vs. Valhalla.



Valhalla right fielder Ava DeNatale watches the ball sail skyward as she bats vs. visiting Pleasantville.



White Plains freshman Serena Gillen pitches in the Section 1, Class AA championship game vs. North Rockland.



Byram Hills catcher Gabby Nero awaits a pitch during a three-hit day for her against the Greeley Quakers.



Senior pitcher Shennah Preble of Briarcliff delivers to the plate early in the season.



Slugging catcher Natasha Mendez of White Plains drives the ball toward left-center field late in the season against host Roy C. Ketcham.



Greeley freshman outfielder Olivia Berk makes a catch in a game late in the season.



Briarcliff sophomore outfielder Jayna Borrelli hits the ball to left field in a game at Westlake.

Sports



Byram Hills junior Alexis Conigliaro pitches in the Bobcats' road win over Greeley late in the season.



Kelly Andrews of Westlake delivers a pitch to the plate during a Wildcat home game.



Westlake third baseman Mallory McCarthy hits the ball to the opposite field in the Wildcats' home game vs. Valhalla.



Westlake shortstop ToniAnn Mastracchio runs to third base.



Briarcliff's Michela Deem smacks a pitch to right field during a Bear home game.



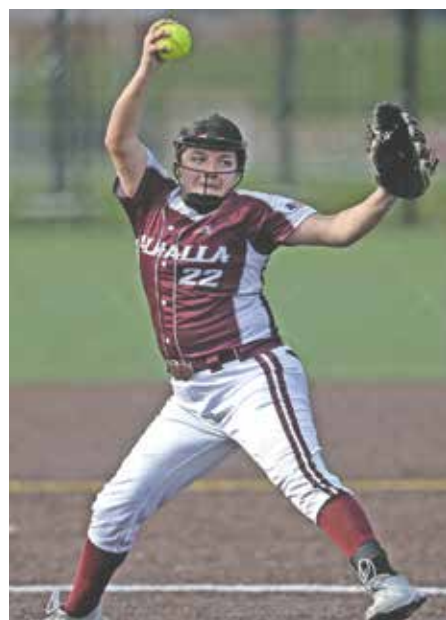
Jillian Nichols of Byram Hills tries to tag out Horace Greeley's Jenna Rosenberg on a close play at second base.



Fox Lane shortstop Quoya Schnell tries to turn a double play in the title game of Hen Hud's annual softball tournament.



Madelyn Saraceno of Pleasantville races down the third-base line to score a run.



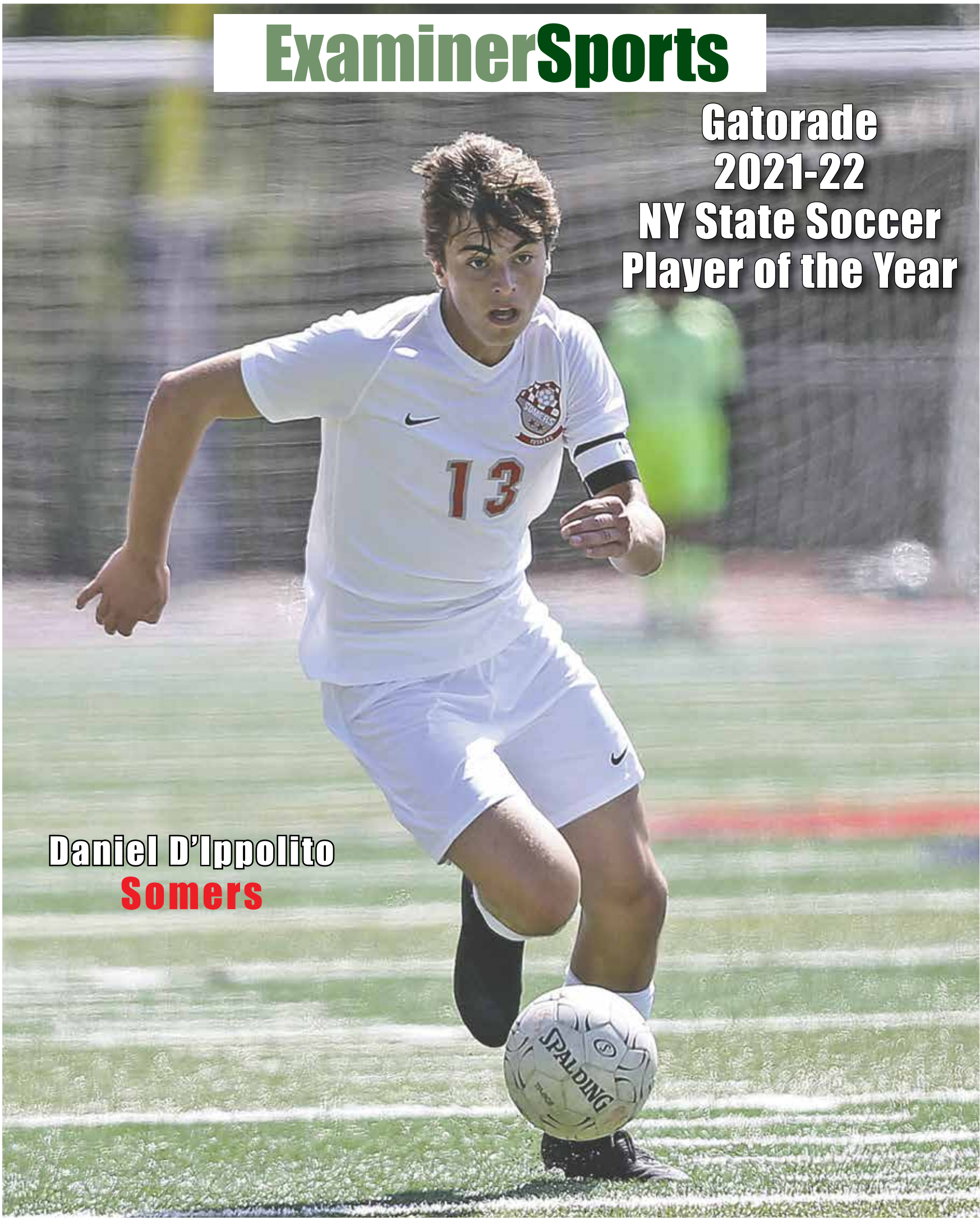
Valhalla sophomore Tanner Smith delivers a pitch during a Viking home game.



Katie Cristiano of Fox Lane watches the ball jump off her bat during a home game against White Plains.



Jessica Wichman of Valhalla runs the bases in a home win over Pleasantville back in mid-April.



ExaminerSports

**Gatorade
2021-22
NY State Soccer
Player of the Year**

Daniel D'Ippolito
Somers

ANDY JACOBS PHOTO