

The NORTHERN WESTCHESTER Examiner

Covering Yorktown, Somers, Cortlandt, Croton-on-Hudson, Buchanan, Ossining and Peekskill

FREE

October 27 - November 2, 2020

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 566

Developers Submit Revised Plans for MOD in Cortlandt

By Rick Pezzullo

The developers of two mixed-use projects in the area of New York-Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital on Route 202 in Cortlandt have submitted revised conceptual site plans.

Representatives of Evergreen Manor and Gyrodyne will present their plans to the Cortlandt Town Board on Monday, November 2 at a work session via Zoom. Information for residents to join the Zoom meeting will be posted on the town's website when available.

The Evergreen Manor project, proposed by Val and Armando Santucci of VS Construction, initially involved the redevelopment of three vacant contiguous parcels totaling 28 acres with a 120-unit assisted living facility, a five-story, 100-room hotel with 13,000 square feet of retail space, 30,000-square-foot mixed-used retail/office building, 166 residential units



PHOTO BY RICK PEZZULLO

Developer Val Santucci (right) shares a laugh with attorney David Steinmetz.

(152 studios and one-bedroom units and 12 two-bedroom) and a 7,000-square-foot restaurant.

The latest plans, according to Cortlandt's Deputy Planning Director Chris Kehoe, eliminate the hotel and the mixed-use retail/office building and add 100 senior

age-restricted condominiums in two buildings.

The Gyrodyne site originally called for the redevelopment of eight contiguous parcels totaling 13.8 acres with 100,000 square feet of medical offices, 4,000 square feet of complementary re-

tail, 200 market rate apartments, 180 structured parking spaces and 383 at-grade parking spaces.

Now, a team of developers is looking at a two-phase proposal and has eliminated the 200-unit, multi-family residential component.

Phase one includes the three-story, 100,00 square-foot medical office building and a 303-car structured parking facility. The existing 30,000 square feet medical office that is on the property now will remain operational during the construction of phase one.

In phase two, the existing medical office will be replaced with an 84,600, three-story medical office with an integrated 290-car structured parking garage in the area where the 200-unit, five-story residential apartment was originally proposed.

The go-ahead for the projects was the zoning creation by town officials of the Medical Oriented

District (MOD), the intent of which is to encourage economic revitalization in the area surrounding the hospital and implement the goals and recommendations outlined in the town's 2016 Sustainable Comprehensive Plan.

If approved, both projects are projected to generate more than \$4.5 million annually in tax revenue, along with 780 construction jobs and 195 permanent on-site jobs. The development teams are investing an estimated \$240 million in the developments and committing \$3 million for studies and traffic improvements along Route 202. Currently five new traffic signals in the area are planned and turning lanes, along with sidewalks and other enhancements.

Residents and Town Board members have raised eyebrows about the additional traffic the developments will bring to an already overburdened roadway and the magnitude of the projects.

Peekskill Rotary Club's 50th Annual Horse Show Going Virtual

By Anna Young

COVID-19 may have caused the Peekskill Rotary Club to cancel nearly all their fundraising events this year, but the 50th Annual Horse Show will trot on.

While the horse show generally attracts about 5,000 attendees over two days at Blue Mountain Reservation, the rotary opted to move its biggest event of the year to a virtual platform to maintain the safety and health of all involved. The November 7 event will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with virtual attractions, entertainment and advertisements remaining available online for one year.

"At one point we didn't think we were going to have a horse show or any type of fundraiser this year," event chairman Luis Segarra said. "But we came up with this concept because we needed to do something for the many organizations we support and the community as well."

While the show is moving online, the same events, classes and attractions attendees have come to love and expect will continue to be offered. With this show the only one in Westchester County featuring both English and western riding classes, riders from stables throughout the tristate area can participate by submitting videos for judging. No entry fee is required.

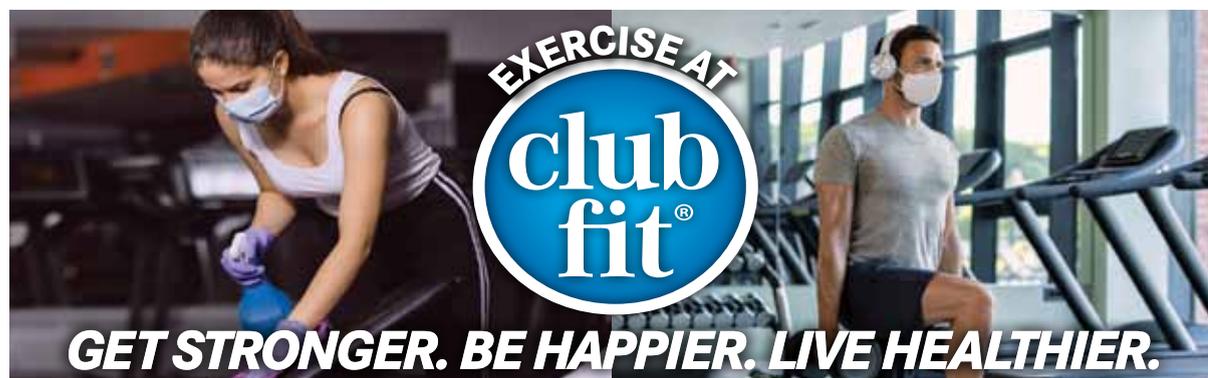
There will be five western classes and five English classes, with six ribbons awarded as prizes for each pattern in both categories. Riders and horses are also implored to sport Halloween costumes in their submission for the chance to win a \$30 prize. Kennis "Buttons" Fairfax of Westfield, New Jersey will serve as a judge.

With the food tent often the event's biggest moneymaker, Segarra said local restaurants and vendors can submit videos of themselves cooking a recipe for others to learn. Furthermore, professional entertainers, such as violinist Daisy Jopling, magician Gary the Great and master storyteller



continued on page 2

Horse show will take place on Nov. 7.



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Peekskill Rotary Club's 50th Annual Horse Show Going Virtual

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Jonathan Kruk, have supplied videos for all to enjoy.

The event has also teamed up with AAA to host a bike rodeo to help kids learn to ride their bikes safely.

Additionally, the Rotary is holding a raffle, selling one ticket for \$5 and five for \$20, with 15 prizes awarded to winners, in-

cluding gift cards to Kathleen's Tea Room, Dylan's Wine Cellar, HomeScape Kitchens & Baths, Optimum Health/Weight Loss program, a couples night out, and The Abbey Inn & Spa. Other prizes include electronics, designer sunglasses and jewelry, an outdoor photography session, and a handmade horse and foal quilt.

While vendors can't be physically present at the show, the ro-

tary is charging \$50 per business that wants to be included virtually. Vendors must submit a description of its product or services, a video embed and links to a website, Facebook, or page of choice.

"This is what's going to help us do the great things we want to do next year," Segarra said. "This is something that is new to all of us, so we're watching to see how it turns out, especially the fundrais-

ing part of it."

Currently, Segarra noted the event has already generated close to \$35,000, a roughly \$12,000 increase over last year. While pleasantly surprised by the funds raised, he noted the vast difference compared to last year is due to monies not going toward Blue Mountain Reservation to host the event.

"We're kind of reinventing

the show now, but we're upbeat, we're excited and the members are looking forward to it," Segarra said. "We don't know what to expect but we're doing it for the right reasons and the right causes."

For more information, visit <https://peekskillrotaryhorshow.com/> or contact the Peekskill Rotary Club at Peekskillrotary5032@gmail.com.

Parking Could be Prohibited on Two Yorktown Roads

By Anna Young

Motorists could soon be barred from parking on two Yorktown roads with officials citing both as a safety hazard.

The Yorktown Town Board is currently considering a proposal that would prohibit parking year-round on White Hill Road and Commerce Street from Hanover Street to Route 118 and Route 35 on either side of the road. Highway Superintendent Dave Paganelli said the while the congestion on White Hill is seasonal, any parking on the narrow roadway is a "major safety issue."

While Commerce Street is in the heart of town, Wilkins Fruit & Fir Farm is located on White Hill Road.

"There's a business up there and thank

God they're doing well, so certainly people are parking, and we certainly don't want to do anything to harm their business, but my feeling is we cannot have cars parking on White Hill," Paganelli said at the October 13 work session. "It's a two-lane road and when you have 10, 12 cars parked there, you basically have 200-and-something feet where one car can come through and then it becomes an issue where hopefully the other person in this traffic log jam is gracious enough to let you through."

Paganelli said he tallied 137 cars parked in the White Hill area on a Sunday afternoon, with Traffic Safety Office Robert Rohr adding the Police Department has been fielding calls from residents requesting officers be on hand to oversee traffic control. He said the congestion on the roadway has been a "nightmare."

Police Chief Robert Noble agreed that while Wilkins is the cause of most of the traffic, White Hill isn't an area where cars should be parked.

"That's a country road and people parking their cars there are susceptible to be damaged, it's a safety issue," Noble said. "Now more than ever with the apple picking season I know that the road is jammed, but throughout the year we all know that road; it's a narrow country road with hills and turns."

Additionally, Rohr explained that parked cars on Commerce Street also impedes traffic. Noble added that it's a hazard to not only the Fire Department, but those entering and exiting nearby businesses. Both indicated that parking on that roadway is not worth compromising people's safety.

Councilman Tom Diana noted that those exiting the BP gas station on Commerce are forced to pull out far into the roadway to see around the cars parked nearby. There should be no parking on Commerce Street, he said.

"For anybody that's trying to get through that area, especially when there's large commercial vehicles going through, the trucks have to go on the other side of the road to get around those parked vehicles," Rohr said. "When people are pulling out of the BP they can't see around those parked cars and they have to pull out into the roadway, almost causing collisions and that's not good."

Supervisor Matt Slater agreed to send the proposal to the town attorney to draft into a local law. The proposal would require a public hearing prior to voting.

Levin Leads Slate of Unopposed Dems in Village of Ossining

By Rick Pezullo

The Village of Ossining will have a new mayor on January 1 with Village Trustee Rika Levin poised to replace Victoria Gearity, who is not seeking a fourth two-year term.

Levin is at the top of an unopposed Democratic ticket that also includes Trustee Manuel Quezada and former Village Historian Dana White running for two available trustee positions and Jeff Gasbarro running for town justice.

Levin, who has lived in Ossining for 27 years, currently serves as deputy mayor and has been on the Village Board since being appointed in 2015. She spent more than 25 years

in management, new product development, diversity management, and eventually Chief Marketing Officer in Fortune 100 companies in New York. She is currently in management at a large not-for-profit organization in Westchester.

In a recent letter to the editor, Gearity called Levin "the hardest working trustee I've had the pleasure to serve with for most of my tenure as mayor."

"She will bring her own style

to serving as our chief elected official," Gearity wrote. "One of the things Rika enjoys most about serving in elected office is connecting with individuals. She enjoys hearing their ideas and learning from their experiences. I look forward to seeing how she will expand her accessibility to residents in new ways as mayor."

"Last fall when I decided not to seek re-election, aside from my husband and children, Rika was the first person I spoke with. She

was surprised. But it didn't take long before she welcomed the idea of being the next mayor of Ossining," Gearity stated. "She and I have had a whole year to prepare the transition from my administration to hers. It's been a long time since Ossining experienced a smooth and collaborative transfer of leadership. Despite the pandemic, great things are happening for our community. With Rika at the helm, more great things are on the horizon for Ossining."

Quezada, an Ossining High School graduate, is running for a second consecutive two-year term. He previously served as a trustee from 2012 to 2017. He works in the architectural field.

White, an Ossining resident

since 1991, is a freelance writer and journalist. She served six years as Ossining Village Historian. She also serves on the Historic Preservation Commission, a village land use board, and is on the board of the Sing Sing Prison Museum project. She has served on the board of the Ossining Rotary Club and Ossining Matters, a parent support group that raises money for enrichment programs in the school district.

"When Mayor Gearity decided not to run for re-election this year, that opened up a spot on the board of trustees, since deputy mayor Rika Levin will be taking her place. So, I thought, *carpe diem*. Seize the day. I just turned 59, so what was I waiting for?" White said earlier this year.



RIKA LEVIN

HV Gateway Chamber Taking Steps to Build Economic Equity

Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce (HVGCC) members have come together to take action on economic equity.

The statement issued by the HVGCC over the summer in response to the senseless death of George Floyd prompted members to look for concrete ways put those words into action. The Equity and Diversity Committee is the result.

The 13-member committee, made up of HVGCC members with backgrounds in

health care, education and business along with partners from NAACP, is focused on supporting underrepresented business owners by improving access to capital for business development, education and networking opportunities.

Marianne Oros, HVGCC Board Chairperson, stated, "We believe that we can best help business owners of color, and others, grow their business by opening opportunities, where business ideas can be

exchanged and shared issues can be discussed."

Committee Chair and HVGCC Board Member, Jann Mirchandani, added, "Helping businesses grow is the mission of the Chamber; our committee is making sure that we look specifically for gaps that create economic inequity and work to fill them."

The group is already working on a survey for black and brown business owners to identify specific needs such as access

to funding and creating networking opportunities, where diverse attendees feel welcome and included.

Kecia Palmer-Cousins, HVGCC member and Peekskill NAACP Board member, said, "We are dedicated to having the difficult conversations that promote a better understanding of different lived-experiences so we can widen understanding and create opportunities for all business owners to succeed."

Yonkers Man Indicted for Defrauding Chappaqua School District

By Anna Young

A Yonkers man who stole nearly \$200,000 following a money laundering scheme aimed at defrauding the Chappaqua Central School District was indicted on Monday.

Ricardo Jimenez, 56, was arraigned in Westchester County Court and charged with first-degree corrupting the government, a Class B felony, and second-degree bribery, a Class C felony. He is also charged with second-degree rewarding official misconduct, two counts of money laundering in the fourth degree and conspiracy in the fourth degree, all Class E felonies.

Jimenez was an employee of Johnson Controls, Inc., a vendor of the school district, according to the Westchester County District Attorney's Office.

The indictment alleges that between November 2014 and August 2017, Jimenez and a district employee conspired to award district work projects to Jimenez's company, RJ Summit Services, Inc., officials said. As part of the scheme, Jimenez fraudulently billed the district for work performed by co-defendant Jorge Barreiros and other district staff members under the direction of Barreiros.

Officials said that when the district paid

the bills, Jimenez kicked back portions of the payments to Barreiros by paying him in cash and checks made out from another company. In total, Jimenez obtained more than \$180,000 in Chappaqua School District money.

Barreiros, of Cortlandt Manor, pleaded guilty in December to second-degree corrupting the government, a Class C felony, and third-degree bribe receiving, a Class D felony. His sentence is still pending, officials said.

Jimenez was released on his own recognizance and is scheduled to return to court on Nov. 18.

Following the hearing, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Christine Ackerman said in

a statement the scheme was first brought to her attention in 2017, when a district contractor informed officials that one of its former supervisors was involved in a fraudulent kick-back scheme with a former district maintenance employee.

Ackerman explained the district took immediate action, placing the employee on leave and launching an investigating in conjunction with the district attorney's office. The investigation resulted in the employee resigning in December 2017.

In October 2017, school officials employed an independent forensic auditor to examine the district's policies and procedures. That was done to ensure the strictest guidelines and protocols were being followed to protect

finances against criminal activity. The auditor suggested additional safeguards be implemented, Ackerman said.

"We also notified our insurance company, and we have already recovered a substantial portion of the funds that were overpaid due to this alleged fraudulent activity," Ackerman said. "Please know that the illegal actions of this former employee in no way represents our district or the trustworthy employees who work in our schools."

Assistant District Attorney Brian Fitzgerald, Deputy Bureau Chief of the Economic Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case.

Holocaust & Human Rights Center Benefit to Honor Human Rights Leaders

On Thursday, Oct. 29, the Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center (HHREC) will host a virtual benefit event "Generations Forward: Honoring Human Rights Leaders Past, Present, Future" at 7 p.m.

The event will honor Rep. Nita Lowey, the HHREC Speakers Bureau Survivors and Liberators and feature guest speaker Derek Black, who is the subject of the book "Rising Out of Hatred: The Awakening of a Former White Nationalist."

There is no fee to attend this online event. For more information about sponsorship and support for HHRECNY, contact Millie Jasper, executive director, Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center, at 914-696-0738 or e-mail mjasper@hhrecny.org.

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Heavy Turnout Throughout Westchester for Start of Early Voting

By Martin Wilbur

Scenes of hours-long lines for early voting from around the nation came to Westchester on Saturday as New Yorkers had their first opportunity to cast their votes in the general election.

In Peekskill and Mount Kisco, there were reports of people standing in line for three to four hours for the first of nine days of early voting. Despite the apparent inconvenience, those in line shrugged off the wait as part of their civic responsibility.

Many stood for an hour or more before the doors opened at noon at the Peekskill Nutrition Center on Nelson Avenue. The line formed outside the center's front door, extended onto the sidewalk, snaked around the corner onto Main Street and down the block before curling into the Bohlman Towers parking lot.

"I got here at 11 (a.m.) and I just sent a friend a text that it's one o'clock and I'm still in line, but that's okay," said Peekskill resident Sal Girardi, who is usually in the city during the week. "I just wanted to make sure there was nothing that could happen that wouldn't allow me to vote."

Some of those waiting remarked

how they had been planning to vote by absentee ballot but didn't trust the postal service or that their vote would count.

Peekskill's Felecia Morris, who arrived about 11:30 a.m. to stand on line with a friend, struck up conversations with others on the line to help pass the time. There were no incidents and people waited patiently and quietly. Some came prepared by bringing something to read and folding chairs so they wouldn't have to stand.

"I wanted to come down and make sure I got my vote in," Morris said. "It was a little nerve-racking, and we weren't sure about what was going to happen on Election Day because of the threats from the hate groups, but I'm ready for that, too."

Another woman who identified herself only as Deb from Montrose said she decided to vote early because she will be poll watching on Election Day. While standing on line around the corner from the nutrition center, she took the wait in stride.

"It's like waiting on line for Ticketmaster for Who tickets," she said. "Remember those days? Well worth it."

In Mount Kisco, the line started forming about 9 a.m. at the Leonard



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

A portion of the three-hour line outside of the Peekskill Nutrition Center during the first of nine days of early voting on Saturday.

Park pool complex and extended beyond the tennis courts, said Mayor Gina Picinich. One police officer estimated that about 400 people were in line.

At one point, 10 pizza pies were delivered from a local pizzeria to feed voters standing in line, donated by a nonpartisan organization called Pizza to the Polls. It was created in 2016 to bring food and snacks to people standing on log lines to vote.

Picinich advised that there are eight more days to vote before Election Day. Early voting runs

through Sunday, Nov. 1.

"I expect the line's going to move pretty swiftly because there's plenty of room, lots of space for people to vote, but there's great enthusiasm not only from people in the village but all the surrounding communities," she said.

This year registered voters who live anywhere in Westchester County are able to visit any of the 17 early voting polling places to cast their ballot. On Saturday morning, County Executive George Latimer visited the Pound Ridge Town

House to vote.

Outside the nutrition center in Peekskill, David Duncan of Cortlandt said he didn't want to take any chances in such a crucial election. He was willing to stand on line for as long as it takes.

"This is a special year," he said. "Six months we were locked in our homes watching the worst show ever. So we need to put in our votes to get rid of this."

Before the early voting got underway, Democratic 17th Congressional District candidate Mondaire Jones and state Sen. Peter Harckham appeared at an early voting rally at the Peekskill gazebo. Afterwards, Jones said the unprecedented enthusiasm and recognition about the importance of voting was an encouraging sign.

In Orangetown, Rockland County, 300 people were on line by 9:30 a.m., he said.

"There's just tremendous excitement and the messages we've been getting on social media and the text messages I've been getting is literally every polling location is experiencing this same kind of sustained turnout," he said. "So I don't think people are turning out to maintain the status quo. I think they're turning out for change and that's exciting to see."

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Westchester Broadway Theatre Takes its Final Bow After 45 Years

By Rick Pezzullo

The Westchester Broadway Theatre in Elmsford will close its doors after 45 years of business due to the coronavirus pandemic.

“It is with a great sadness that we say goodbye. We wish you much good will in the future. We will miss you!” said Bob Funking, Bill and Von Ann Stutler, founders of the Westchester Broadway Theatre, in a letter to employees. “The work that WBT has done over the years has been truly historic and will go down in history, not only in Westchester, but in the theatre industry.”

The founders of New York’s longest running Equity theatre, which produced

217 musicals, hosted numerous concerts, benefits and fundraisers, employed 5,000 theater professionals and entertained more than six million customers, stated they had determined there was no way to reopen when the ban in New York is lifted on live theater.

“Dinner-theatre, because of social distancing requirements, will be the last entertainment category to be given permission. Our landlord does not want to continue supporting our lease,” they stated.

The founders noted the interior of the facility will be destroyed and the building will be turned into a warehouse.

Westchester residents will still have a



A photo of the cast of The Westchester Broadway Theatre’s production of “Newsies” in spring of 2019. The popular venue will not reopen after being shuttered for more than seven months because of the pandemic.

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professional Equity theater in their backyard to attend when restrictions are lifted. The White Plains Performing Arts Center, which is located in downtown White Plains, has used this downtime to make new renovations to accommodate the “new world of theatre” with air purification systems, advanced cleaning solutions and social distancing procedures.

“As someone who grew up seeing and working on shows at WBT, it’s with a heavy heart that we say goodbye to our colleague. The work they have done over the years was remarkable,” stated Stephen Ferri, White

Plains PAC’s executive producer. “When we heard of this news, we knew we had to do something to not only honor their legacy but also make sure we keep professional theater alive in Westchester. We are honored to have the torch passed to us at White Plains PAC to take on that task!”

White Plains PAC has offered to try assisting affected WBT ticketholders by honoring outstanding tickets and gift cards for a future show. Eligible patrons will be contacted in the coming weeks with details about the exchange program.

His two tiny babies spent twelve days in Northern Westchester Hospital’s Level III NICU, the highest possible level Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in a community hospital.

“We learned everything there. The NICU nurses took great care of our babies – and us.”

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Latimer Pledges to Restore Westchester in State of the County Address

By Martin Wilbur

County Executive George Latimer vowed that Westchester will bounce back from a coronavirus-battered economy, outlining steps his administration has taken to help business owners and residents survive and recover from the pandemic.

During his State of the County address last Thursday evening, which had been delayed twice since April, Latimer touted his team's accomplishments through the health crisis and lauded county employees and health care workers who have helped Westchester weather the storm.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it has been a long seven months, it's been a long 2020," Latimer said before the Board of Legislators and staff in an otherwise empty lawmakers' chamber at the County Office Building in White Plains. "Plans we had were sidetracked. Ships have gone astray, but we find our way back, because that is what we always do."

When New Rochelle was one of the first COVID-19 hot spots in the nation, Westchester County's Department of Health sprang into action, conducting initial home visits for diagnostic testing and collecting specimens at facilities with clusters, Latimer said. Personnel worked with the state to establish the first mobile testing site and initiated a comprehensive case investigation and contact tracing program.

He said the county has set aside \$10 million from federal funds for Westchester County Business FIRST, a program to provide grant



County Executive George Latimer, shown here at the 2019 State of the County address. Last week, he delivered this year's address, which had been postponed twice since April because of coronavirus-related concerns to a mostly empty legislature chamber.

money for small businesses and nonprofit organizations with less than 100 employees that have been hurt by the pandemic.

The county developed the Westchester Food Security Initiative, which provided \$4 million in support to food pantries, restaurants and food delivery services, he said.

To help schools in the county reopen, the administration established a working group over the summer consisting of

superintendents and other school officials.

During the spring and into the summer, the county was able to restore some recreation for its residents, opening golf courses and later the county's two beaches and four swimming pools.

"These last few months have been trying," Latimer said. "We have buried our neighbors and seen our loved ones suffer, we've seen fear in our children's eyes, and through it all we have worked every day to carry this county through dark times."

Other accomplishments that Latimer listed apart from the pandemic-related responses included Opportunity Zones Program to spur economic development and provide tax incentives; re-establishing the Urban County Consortium; being awarded federal CDBG grants for the first time in a decade; and instituting the shared services initiative to help local governments and school districts partner with each other to find savings.

Latimer said his administration is focused on affordable housing, keeping a record of new units that have been created. It has also created a system of updating the affordable housing database as developments progress from funding to completion. In his nearly three years in office, there have been 2,089 affordable housing units proposed, approved or built in Westchester.

About two weeks ago, Latimer had announced a \$231.8 million capital budget plan for 2021, including money for road and bridge repairs and water and sewer-related projects.

However, the county executive did not raise the issue of the looming deficit the county must close by the end of the year, likely to be well in excess of \$100 million.

"We have closed the 2020 budget with no layoffs, no furloughs and no service cuts," Latimer said. "We now turn our attention to the 2021 budget. What is in store is still unclear. Much depends on Washington and Albany. But I can tell you we are spending long days and nights advocating for federal and state help and we won't stop until we do what is best for each of you."

The administration is tentatively scheduled to present its 2021 operating budget on Nov. 12.

On a positive note, he said Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch, the county's ratings agencies, have affirmed Westchester's strong position for its 2020 bonds, he said.

"What that shows is that we are strong, we can weather this storm," Latimer said.

"Can we weather it forever? No. But at this time, considering the path we have traveled through the pandemic, our rudder is staying the course."

Despite the challenges, the county executive said Westchester will emerge from this period stronger as long as everyone works together.

"We yearn for the raging storm to calm," Latimer said. "We long for still waters. The challenges we face are many and great, and they will take time, but I'm vowing to you, they will be met."



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Endorsement Editorials

Harckham Has Earned Chance to Continue Serving in 40th Senate District

With much of the election year suspense revolving around Washington, D.C., it might be easy to forget some of the races closer to home.

It is obvious why most of the thousands of people standing outside polling places throughout the area are willing to spend three to four hours waiting to exercise their right to vote.

But for those who live in the 40th Senate District, the Peter Harckham-Rob Astorino Battle Royale is also of supreme importance.

Both candidates have become recognizable and respected figures in Westchester political circles, even if their television attack ads and mailers in this campaign fail to enlighten anyone about a single thing either one hopes to do in the next two years.

Harckham's vanquishing of former state senator Terrence Murphy two years ago was something of a historic day, the first time since World War I that a Democrat has represented northern Westchester and Putnam County in the state Senate.

For Republicans, it's a seat they desperately want to recover with hopes of someday soon reclaiming control of the state Senate. They likely have the strongest candidate they could find in Astorino.

Each candidate has a record of accomplishment in offices they held, and had some missteps along the way.

But after a bit of a rollercoaster ride

during his two years in the Senate, capped by a once-in-a-century crisis, Harckham is the choice to continue representing the district. Agree or disagree with him, he was a steady hand for seven-plus years on the Westchester County Board of Legislators and has been similarly reliable in his first term in Albany.

It may be easy to point fingers and blame Harckham, or any Democrat for that matter, for the state's fiscal woes, but every state in the union has a projected revenue decline for 2021 as of Oct. 5, according to the nonpartisan Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. New York has an estimated 15 percent decline, with its heavy reliance on tourism. Similarly, Florida, California, Nevada and Hawaii are all projected to have double-figure percentage revenue declines.

Beyond that, Harckham has gotten results, sometimes under the radar. He's worked with other state lawmakers to help bolster the state's Electric Generation Facility Cessation Mitigation Program, which will help ease the burden on the communities around Indian Point as the nuclear power plant gets set to go off line next spring.

His efforts helped bring a combined \$10 million in extra aid for the Brewster, Peekskill and Ossining school districts, a major accomplishment to help high-needs school systems.

Harckham has also served municipalities in his district well, whether it was pushing

legislation to complete a land swap in Southeast for them to build a ball field or securing funds for lights and other improvements at Millwood Park in New Castle.

And, no, he didn't write the bail reform legislation, which admittedly went too far in its initial rollout in 2019. That was included in the Fiscal Year 2020 state budget.

Astorino, who started his public service as a member of the Mount Pleasant Board of Education while still in college, has a long career of service. He spent 12 years on the Mount Pleasant Town Board, one term on the Board of Legislators before winning the first of two terms as county executive.

He kept his promise of holding taxes in check, reducing the rate by 2 percent his first year in office.

For the most part, Astorino governed capably in his eight years, although his picking fights with the Department of Housing and Urban Development over the affordable housing settlement was at times unnecessary.

In terms of knowledge of the issues, communication skills, drive and passion, Astorino has it all.

But what New York State and the 40th Senate District need at this time is someone who isn't flashy but can roll up his sleeves and get the job done. For this year, that candidate is Peter Harckham.

Jones a New Voice at the Right Time for 17th Congressional District

Sometimes life is about being at the right place at the right time.

In some respects, that could sum up the political ascent this year of Mondaire Jones, the Democrats' choice to succeed Nita Lowey, who is retiring at the end of the year after 16 distinguished terms in Congress.

Riding the crest of an increasingly progressive Democratic Party, particularly in downstate New York, the Rockland County native handily defeated a strong field of capable Democrats in the June primary.

But chalking up his success to simply timing would be selling Jones short.

Now, there's no doubt he's quite progressive, and that will rankle nearly all of the politically conservative set, and some Democrats as well.

The 33-year-old graduate of Stanford and Harvard Law, Jones worked in the Westchester County attorney's office before embarking on his political career. Listen to him speak, he makes sense even when you may disagree.

Advocating for a \$15-an-hour minimum wage – something that is already in place in New York – equity in education and putting people to work through an infrastructure funding program, all issues that Jones

supports, is common sense. So is having a national strategy to fight COVID-19.

Don't care for Medicare for All or the Green New Deal? That's fine, there are many in his own party who won't support it either.

But Jones is also pragmatic. In an interview with The Examiner earlier this year, he said Medicare for All is his ultimate goal, but he would support a public option to get more people insured. What is clear is that the entire country can't just rely on employer-based health insurance, as the pandemic has so painfully revealed.

There is no question that given the nation's \$27 trillion debt and problems coping with COVID-19, the Green New Deal is a laudable but unrealistic plan. That doesn't mean that pieces of it can't be borrowed when the time is right.

Jones' Republican opponent, Maureen McArdle Schulman, deserves praise for having the courage to get into the political arena as a newcomer – and run for Congress, no less. But that's nothing new for Schulman. In 1982, she was part of the first class of female New York City firefighters to graduate. There were 38 women and about 10,000 men. Nearly 40 years ago, that took considerable audacity.

However, many of Schulman's proposed policies are insufficient in a time of need. Leaving decisions on mask wearing and shutdowns entirely up to state and local governments have left the country reeling from the virus.

Health saving accounts could have some value, but the price of private health insurance, which she advocates, remains too high and would still expose too many families to financial ruin in the event of an emergency.

And Schulman's skepticism of money for states isn't what's needed.

In today's hyper-partisan atmosphere, even well-meaning people of all political stripes too often feel compelled to never disagree with their candidate of choice, and conversely, never find common ground with an opponent.

As the late New York City Mayor Ed Koch was once quoted as saying, "If you agree with me on 9 out of 12 issues, vote for me. If you agree with me on 12 out of 12 issues, see a psychiatrist."

There are times when there will be disagreements with Mondaire Jones, but he is by far the most impressive candidate in this race.

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Endorsement Editorials

Mayer, Byrne, Burdick, Galef the Choices for State Legislature

For the past two-and-a-half years, state Sen. Shelley Mayer has represented arguably one of the most diverse districts anywhere in the state.

The 37th Senate District extends from parts of Yonkers in the southern end, through the Sound Shore communities and up to the Town of Bedford.

Mayer has been able to successfully wade through the challenges of handling very different constituencies – and problems. As the chair of the Senate's Education Committee she has handled those occasionally competing interests with aplomb.

Her sensible approach and ability to adapt is laudable. No one likes to raise taxes, but given the looming fiscal crisis Mayer is open to finding new revenues that will cause as little pain as possible. She supports a temporary 2 percent increase on the top tax rate for those earning over \$5 million a year and a stock transfer tax, among other possibilities.

After opposing the legalization of marijuana since she started serving in the Senate, Mayer is now open to its passage,

mainly because of the revenue stream it promises to provide. Her support for sensible police reform is a welcome voice.

Her opponent, Dr. Liviu Saimovici, is an accomplished eye doctor, whose life experience of growing up behind the Iron Curtain has certainly shaped his worldview.

Saimovici is at least partially correct in assessing that New York is overregulated, which drives businesses out of New York. However, there are sensible regulations to protect health and safety.

Mayer should be returned to the Senate for another term.

94th Assembly District: Kevin Byrne

Voters in the 94th Assembly District are fortunate to have two capable candidates to choose from when they go to the polls this year.

Incumbent Kevin Byrne, who is running for a third two-year term in Albany, has worked well with leaders in the municipalities he represents and responded to their needs with funding for seemingly small but important projects.

His opponent, Stephanie Keegan, has never run for elected office, but she has

advocated tirelessly and effectively for issues to benefit veterans following the death of one of her three sons after he returned from active duty in Afghanistan.

After getting his feet wet during his first term, Byrne hit his stride over the last two years and demonstrated he was willing and able to work across the aisle to best serve his constituents. If elected, Keegan would be in the Democratic majority.

Both candidates are level-headed and have a clear set of priorities that they plan to focus on if they prevail on Nov. 3.

In a race where voters really can't make a bad choice, the nod is given to Byrne for re-election for his experience and promise of getting even more done for those he serves.

However, Keegan deserves applause for her efforts and commitment to veterans causes and she should not rule out another run in the near future.

93rd Assembly District: Chris Burdick

In perhaps the most obvious nod, Burdick should easily make the leap from Bedford town supervisor to Albany. At the municipal level, Burdick has been a leader on environmental issues, particularly in his role

as vice chairman of Sustainable Westchester.

Before his seven years as supervisor, Burdick served for six years on the Bedford Town Board.

If he is elected, Burdick wants to make additional revisions to bail reform and would only support legalizing recreational marijuana if steps were taken, such as an education program to address the potential for impaired driving.

His opponent, John Nuculovic, is on the ballot on the Republican line but has not run an active campaign.

95th Assembly District: Sandy Galef

One of the elder stateswomen of the legislature, Galef has been a fixture representing her district since the early 1990s. She has provided consistent and steady representation for her constituents and continues today.

Her opponent, Lawrence Chiulli, is an intriguing candidate who is mature beyond his 23 years. He would be well served to continue his involvement in the political process if unsuccessful.

Letter to the Editor

An Open Letter to the New Castle Town Board Concerning the Form Based Code

Dear New Castle Town Board,

We are Asian immigrant families and their friends in New Castle and/or the Chappaqua School District. This letter is nonpartisan. We are a community with some shared core concerns, and respectfully demand that these concerns be heard, which means they are carefully reviewed, and responded to in good faith.

The Open Letter to the Town Board of Oct. 18 presented our concerns: a) material information in the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) is not credible based on our evidence, and b) public hearings should not continue when the public is misinformed of the material information.

We include the evidence at the end of this letter. We plead to the Town Board to respond to us publicly.

This letter takes no position on the Form Based Code. We are only asking for reliable data for an honest discussion. We believe anyone who takes a few minutes to read our evidence will conclude the student enrollment numbers

in the DGEIS are not credible. Different policy preferences will not scar the New Castle community permanently. However, the perception of a dishonest process will.

The evidence was related to the enrollment projection. The DGEIS disclaims "[i]t is important to note that this source is over 10 years old, not specific to New Castle or Westchester County, and provides very conservative estimates" before presenting the estimated additional school enrollment of 96 students for the estimated additional housing units of 988. DGEIS 3-146; see Id. at 3-143.

The 10-year-old source is the residential demographic multipliers produced by the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University. Id. at 3-146. The DGEIS did not follow the quick guide provided by the same center on correctly using their multipliers. (Listokin, David, et al. A Quick Guide to New Jersey Residential Demographic Multipliers." (2006).)

The guide explains the residential demographic multipliers should not be simplistically relied upon for areas known for

the "quality of the local school district." Id. at viii. New Castle is better-known than most places regarded as known for the "quality of the local school district."

"The residential demographic multipliers contained in this document provide important statewide average benchmark data that can only go so far in accurately predicting the actual demographic impact of housing development in a specific community. For instance, a given community may attract 'more' ... public school children per housing unit because of such differences as ... the 'quality of the local school district' (e.g., households with more children may disproportionately self-select to live in communities with high-quality school systems)." Id. at viii. "For best results, the state-level data presented here should be supplemented by local analysis, such as conducting case studies of the actual population, and especially public school children generation, of occupied housing developments comparable in character (i.e., type, size, price and tenure) and location to the subject development(s) being considered by

the analyst.

For example, in quantifying the likely public school children generation from three-bedroom townhouses priced at \$300,000 per unit proposed for Princeton Township, an analyst should first consider the "Quick Guide" statewide data for the average number of public school children (0.24) in housing of this type (single-family attached), size (three bedrooms) and price level (above median value).

The analyst should then identify comparable townhouses (e.g., three-bedroom units priced \$250,000 to \$350,000) that are occupied in Princeton and nearby communities and should then ascertain these developments' actual public school children generation from public school data (e.g., busing and other information).

The combination of this document's multipliers and local analysis provides a comprehensive framework for answering who lives in New Jersey housing. Id.

This letter was submitted by Zhengxi Liu of Chappaqua

There Would Be No Better Steward of the Environment Than Harckham

It is our collective responsibility to leave the world better than we found it for future generations. That is why climate change and environmental protection must be the number one priority for elected officials at all levels.

Through only one term, state Sen. Pete Harckham has proven himself a leader in this area by co-sponsoring the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which puts New York on track to reach an ambitious goal of reducing statewide

greenhouse gas emissions by 85 percent by 2050 and achieving net zero emissions in all sectors of the economy.

He has pushed for sustainability through initiatives like the Restore Mother Nature Act, a \$3 billion investment in various environmental and eco-smart projects. And he has been a staunch advocate for clean air, resisting the reckless rollbacks of environmental laws at the federal level from the Trump administration.

Rob Astorino, on the other hand, has

proven his ambivalence to this cause. He is a climate change denier who has openly questioned whether climate change is in any way caused by human activities. As county executive he disbanded Westchester's climate change task force. Under Astorino's watch, the federal government fined Westchester \$1.1 million for violating the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and ultimately resorted to ordering Astorino to spend nearly \$10 million to safeguard Westchester's drinking water.

Years from now when your children and grandchildren ask what you did to help protect our world for them and for future generations, I hope you can give the same answer I can, that you voted for public servants like Sen. Pete Harckham who heed scientific consensus and fight for a better world for us all.

**Robert Mayes
Crompond**

Letters to the Editor

Advanced Septic Systems are A Valid Sewer Alternative in Somers

If someone thinks their position is right and good, they ought to be able to defend it with nothing but the truth. It saddens me to have to respond to so many misrepresentations regarding these systems that Ms. Anderson referred to in her article letter last week ("Advanced Septic Systems Are Not a Solution for Shenorock, Lincolnale).

We don't claim the new systems are just as effective. I claim that they are kinder to our environment, than the Peekskill system is to our river.

Advanced systems are allowed anywhere

any system is failing. If our communities need sewers, that means we have failing systems! In that case, these advanced systems can be used. The county DOESN'T prohibit these systems; they do exist in Shenorock and Bedford. The \$10 million in East of Hudson funds would pay for these failing systems at no cost to the resident, with money left over to actually dredge and aerate the lake.

These systems range from \$5,000 to \$22,000. The maintenance fee is \$375 a year; pumps last for seven to 10 years. These systems run on about two amps, which is

equivalent to two 100-watt light bulbs. This is cheaper than \$1,187 annually for sewers.

These systems don't require special additives or detergents.

Ms. Anderson's biggest misunderstanding is that the \$10 million can only be used for sewers. Fact is, the East of Hudson Water Quality Fund Memorandum of Agreement states in item #3 that "rehabilitation or replacement of septic system that are failing or likely to fail in certain areas."

Sending our problem to the Hudson River, instead of dealing with it ourselves with these

new systems, is just wrong.

Finally, my primary reason for not wanting sewers is financial because we are at the mercy of powers beyond our reach, and I don't believe in this economy we'll receive any funding. If we don't and the Town Board borrows \$50.7 million to complete this project, our yearly cost can be as much as \$2,700.

Jay Batchelor
Shenorock

Chappaqua Residents Seek an Equal Voice in Rezoning Debate

New Castle is in the process of planning Chappaqua's future, through a major rezoning effort that will allow buildings up to five stories tall in the hamlet, forever changing life in the community.

This is being done despite the town's award-winning 2017 Comprehensive Plan stressing the importance of maintaining the community's "bucolic" character.

Many problematic issues have been raised about the rezoning, including the Chappaqua Board of Education raising serious concerns about the credibility of the town's projection that roughly 1,000 new apartments would generate only about 100 schoolchildren, and the potential for large tax hikes for the district's single-family homeowners, who are taxed at much higher rates than the new condos and apartments of the same market value will be taxed. There is also no clarity of how the loss of commuter parking at the train station would be handled.

A grave concern is that the town is selectively amplifying the views of a subset of property owners – those who stand to gain the most financially from the rezoning and are understandably strongly supportive.

The town has sponsored professional production of social media videos promoting the views of landowners such as Don Feinberg, the owner of a large commercial

property. It also prominently promoted his opinions in the town's Oct. 16 e-newsletter.

But for other property owners who call the hamlet home, and have expressed principled concerns about negative quality-of-life impacts, New Castle Supervisor Ivy Pool and the rest of the Town Board have been silent in response to requests for equal access to share our views, thoughtfully and respectfully, in the town's e-newsletter.

We are all entitled to equal protection from our government. It is outrageous for the town to use the public's communications platforms to promote only one-sided perspectives and decline to offer others the same access.

All residents have an equal stake in the future of Chappaqua. The Town Board can live up to the community's ideals of transparency, fair and open debate and good government, by allowing the residents of Chappaqua to have a voice equal to that of the major downtown landlords.

Our hand is outstretched to town leadership – let us work together collaboratively and in partnership to deliver the brighter future that Chappaqua needs and deserves.

Scott Le Vine
Chappaqua

Harckham Has Been a Tireless Public Servant for 40th Senate District

As a former New Castle Town Board member and current Millwood fire commissioner, I worked with Pete Harckham when he was a county legislator and state senator. I have known Pete for a long time and found him to be a tireless worker who truly cares about his constituents.

He has been a great senator since being elected to the legislature in 2018, passing important legislation in support of taxpayers, the environment and people with substance abuse disorder. Pete also fought for an increase in school aid by \$1 billion, championed an investment of \$500 million for clean water needs, plus extra funding for veterans' programs, local law enforcement agencies and first responders.

In New Castle he was able to secure funds to help redo a local ballfield and playground and has secured more than \$27 million in grants and funding in direct support for

the district, providing crucial support for infrastructure, first responders, parks, libraries and health care clinics. He stood up for taxpayers by voting against a sales tax increase and supported a permanent property tax cap that will save taxpayers nearly \$200 billion over the next decade.

Pete also worked to pass the Child Victims Act so victims of abuse can finally have access to justice in the courts. Pete helped to pass the toughest climate protection legislation in the nation to help combat climate change.

For these reasons and many others, Pete Harckham deserves to be re-elected as our state senator. He has worked hard to deserves your vote.

Michael Wolfensohn
Chappaqua

Village of Ossining Will Have a Bright Future Ahead With Levin at the Helm

Fellow Ossining voters,

Please join me in casting a vote for Rika Levin to be the next mayor of Ossining.

Rika is the hardest working trustee I've had the pleasure to serve with for most of my tenure as mayor. She will bring her own style to serving as our chief elected official.

One of the things Rika enjoys most about serving in elected office is connecting with individuals. She spends a good chunk of her weekends having coffee and one-on-one conversations with residents. She enjoys hearing their ideas and learning from their experiences. I look forward to seeing how she will expand her accessibility to residents in new ways as mayor.

Very early in her tenure as trustee, I asked Rika her goals for the village. One memorable thing she said to me was, "I don't want Ossining to be just the greenest village in the county. I want us to be the greenest village in the country."

To help us get one step closer to that ambitious goal, I recently asked Rika to serve as the village's lead contact for our latest campaign combating climate change

– the HeatSmart initiative from Sustainable Westchester, which you'll be learning more about very soon.

Last fall when I decided against seeking re-election, aside from my husband and children, Rika was the first person I spoke with. She was surprised. But it didn't take long before she welcomed the idea of being the next Ossining mayor. She and I have had a whole year to prepare the transition from my administration to hers.

It's been a long time since Ossining experienced a smooth and collaborative transfer of leadership. Despite the pandemic, great things are happening for our community. With Rika at the helm, more great things are on the horizon for Ossining.

Early voting at the Community Center began Saturday, Oct. 24. That's when I cast my vote supporting Rika Levin for mayor and Manuel Quezada and Dana White for trustees.

Victoria Gearity
Mayor, Village of Ossining

Harckham, Burdick Bring Valuable Experience in Times of Uncertainty

During this time of deep uncertainty, when many of us wonder when or if things will ever return to normal, it is imperative that we elect proven leaders with the experience and "know-how to guide us through whatever lies ahead.

I urge residents to join me in voting to re-elect state Sen. Pete Harckham. Pete has helped us to secure critical funding for capital projects and he has proven to be a fierce advocate for the communities that he represents. In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Isaias, when the utilities were nowhere to be found, Pete fought hard to get Con Edison, Verizon and Altice to redirect their resources to the massive clean-up and restoration efforts required in northern Westchester. In addition to his strong track record of representing us in the Senate, Pete holds the same Hudson Valley values that are important to local residents: protecting reproductive freedom, promoting sensible gun safety legislation, promoting racial equity and fighting to

secure our property values.

I have had the pleasure of serving alongside Bedford Town Supervisor Chris Burdick, and I am delighted to have the opportunity to vote for Chris in his campaign to replace Assemblyman David Buchwald, who is stepping down following eight years of distinguished service. I consider Chris a mentor and friend. I know that he understands the needs of municipalities and that he will bring his local government experience to bear on issues like funding for critical infrastructure projects such as sewers and roads.

During this time of crisis and uncertainty, we need steady hands at the helm. Experience matters. That's why I will be voting to re-elect state Sen. Pete Harckham and to elect Chris Burdick to the Assembly, and I urge you to do the same.

Ivy Pool
Town Supervisor, New Castle

Guest Column

Somers Sewer Vote is Shrouded in Deceit and Unanswered Questions

By Linda Luciano

The Somers Town Board hasn't been open and honest with residents for 14 months regarding the proposed Somers Sewer District #2.

They never notified us by mail; it's the only way to fairly ensure that residents are properly notified.

They approved a flawed map, plan and report last year, and residents caught many errors.

They never put it up for a public vote; the opponents had to petition for it.

A Town Board member worked with proponents behind our backs and created a website, calling it an "Official Town of Somers Website" to make it look legitimate.

They didn't have discussions with us, the taxpayers, on alternatives.

They didn't advertise public hearings or run them on Channel 20 as they are supposed to.

The wording in the revised report leaves too many questions unanswered.

I've looked at other towns that have openly told the residents their costs, what type of system they will need, if they need a grinder pump and that hook-ups were optional. Everything was transparent, unlike Somers.

We fear many things about this project.

We just learned that Lake Lincolndale Property Owners Association (LLPOA) Chairman of the Board Michael O'Keefe, who has repeatedly spoken in favor of this sewer project, never mentioned that the LLPOA clubhouse isn't included in this sewer district. How can this be when all other 989 residents, Shenorock Community Center, businesses and synagogue are all included?

The clubhouse has two kitchens and two bathrooms and is located right on the lake.

Town Board members have said they haven't been underhanded with this project, but knowing this new information and the fact that Lincoln Hall is selling 100 acres for development (which can be rezoned using our sewer system), makes everyone very suspicious.

The Town Board proposed that this sewer district only include R-10 lots. There are R-10 and R-40 lots right on Shenorock Lake that aren't being included, as well as Horton Estates, Route 118 and Lake Road, which are much closer to the reservoir. Why, if it's about water quality? If our water was so contaminated, why didn't Gov. Cuomo in 2017 give some of the \$75 million from the State Septic System Replacement Fund to

improve Westchester's water quality?

The Town Board uses the scare tactic that we'll lose the \$10 million from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, but we've had the money for 21 years. The engineers say that the district has to be formed in order to receive funding. Lies! They have \$10 million, they secured another \$1.3 million from the federal Water Resources Development Act, and they even received \$847,000 in 2016 from the state or a stormwater improvement project at Lake Shenorock – all without a district.

New York State is broke due to COVID-19 and it's unlikely we'll ever get millions in future funding. As it is now, our projected yearly fee is \$1,187, which is based on the town borrowing \$16,197,000. However, the town can borrow more than this, so residents must understand our flat fee could be more than \$2,700 a year.

The Town Board told residents that the county buy-in and operation and maintenance fees are going to start at the time of our hook-up. It states very clearly on page 4-3 that it starts "at the time of construction." This is another example of their deceit that we have been fighting this past year.

The Town Board is including the hook-ups fees in our overall debt cost. On the

comptroller's website it clearly states that hook-up fees are not to be included in the overall debt. If the district goes through, we may find out later that we have to pay for our own hookup.

Innovative advanced septic systems are being installed in Westchester County, and one was just installed in Shenorock. The waste from your house goes into this system and it comes out clean and clear. It keeps you independent from paying fees and taxes forever. Visit www.Westchestergov.ny (Sec.873.740 Enhanced treatment units). Why not treat your sewage in your own yards – instead of sending it 13 miles to get dumped in the Hudson River at Peekskill.

Somers has been a town of constant development the past five years. Our biggest concern is the lack of honesty from our Town Board. There are way too many unanswered questions, and we fear expensive eleventh-hour surprises long into our future.

Please vote no on Nov. 10 to unanswered questions, higher taxes and more development. Visit www.SomersSewers.com for more information.

Linda Luciano is a Shenorock-Lake Lincolndale Sewer Committee for Truth and Honesty member.

Letters to the Editor

Peekskill Needs More Affordable Housing, Not Rents That Are Out of Reach

Westchester County doesn't offer the same housing opportunities as it did 30 years ago. Now, between substantial student loan debt and low-paying entry level positions, the majority of my generation can't imagine purchasing real estate at 29 –my age now – and the age my parents were when they bought their first home in Mohegan Lake.

Recently, the Peekskill Common Council entered into an agreement to sell public land to a private developer for a market-rate (or luxury) apartment project on Central Avenue. But what the city needs is more

affordable housing. The affordable alternative means rentals would be restricted to income-specific brackets, including sliding-scale rates for earners between \$50,000 and \$80,000. An affordable one-bedroom would go for \$1,500, as compared to the market-rate one-bedroom which costs \$2,700. I understand if folks might need a moment to pick their jaws up off the floor.

The median income in Peekskill is about \$52,000. These market-rate prices are out of reach for current residents. Because this project cannot move forward without

the sale of public land, Peekskill has the unique opportunity to make demands of the developer, who has already demonstrated a willingness to oblige more affordable rates. The council is squandering its leverage – leverage it will not have when developers swoop in to buy other privately-owned buildings and land – because they believe they need to "grow the tax base."

Affordable housing increases disposable income and supports wealth-building for low- and middle-income individuals and families. This is a progressive approach that enables the city to naturally support the tax base that exists, rather than displacing folks for higher income residents, which is what has happened historically across

the country, most obviously in New York City. The only thing this accomplishes is a worsening of the divide in income and geographic inequality.

The council has attempted to discredit my own and many other voices on this matter. Meanwhile, they have demonstrated, at best, negligence, and at worst the active dissemination of misinformation to support the decision they've already made without thought or concern for public opinion. I urge them to remember their responsibility to the public and to reconsider this decision while time remains.

Daniel O'Brien
Peekskill

Chris Burdick for Assembly is the Best Choice to Represent North Castle

Chris and I were both elected councilman in 2007, Chris in Bedford, and we were both elected supervisor in 2013. Thus, more than anyone, he knows exactly the type of support from New York State that is essential to local municipalities like North Castle. He's a pro with a legal background that will provide the representation we need in Albany. Here's a few quick examples of his commitment and skill.

One of our biggest challenges this year was our effort to prevent the ill-advised Connecticut I-684 toll. Chris drove all the way to Hartford to join our town's team in helping us prevent the toll by testifying before the Connecticut state legislature. The effort was successful, thus no toll, which would have created extremely disruptive and

unwanted truck traffic through North White Plains, Armonk and Banksville.

Chris is also a collaborator amongst all town supervisors to achieve common goals. He led the effort to provide property tax relief to homeowners during COVID and continually leads environmental efforts to keep our drinking water clean and safe.

We need Chris in Albany to continue to have our town's interests represented properly. He knows firsthand how legislative decisions in Albany impact those of us responsible to deliver local constituent services. Join me in supporting Chris Burdick as our assemblyman.

Michael J. Schiliro
Town Supervisor, North Castle

New Castle Supervisor, Planning Director Should Resign Over Rezoning Fiasco

The massive Ivy Pool-Sabrina Charney Hull 997-unit redevelopment plan in Chappaqua is now opposed by almost 900 signatories on the Chazin petition. The Chappaqua Board of Education opposes this ill-conceived plan that would dramatically change the character of the town, endanger public safety due to the inability of the fire department to service five-story buildings and cause massive chaos during the multiyear construction process. No cost analysis was performed and an increase in taxes is unlimited.

The Pool-Hull plan is misnamed. It

should be called "The Robert Moses Cross Bronx Expressway Part II Construction Project." Both Ms. Pool and Ms. Hull should resign immediately since they have lost all credibility and their leadership ability is seriously compromised.

Chappaqua residents are finally waking up and their vision of the hamlet's future is vastly different from that of Pool and Hull and their small group of supporters.

David Maisel
Chappaqua

Letters to the Editor

Harckham is a Responsible Steward of the State's Environment

This letter of support for state Sen. Peter Harckham speaks to his proven record of environmental advocacy, which might be the most important issue facing all of us, no matter our political orientation.

His accomplishments include co-sponsoring the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which puts New York into a national leadership position on multiple environmental fronts. He has supported policies that protect fragile drinking water supplies, freshwater wetlands and marsh ecosystems by improving water infrastructure and removing toxins from the environment. He has been a staunch advocate for clean air, resisting the reckless rollbacks of federal environmental laws from the Trump administration, forcefully fighting against the egregious environmental policies that this President and his cronies have sought to impose on each and every one of us.

Which brings us to his opponent in this race, Rob Astorino, who seems to proudly embrace the role of being a climate denier and rejects the science that points to the role of carbon emissions caused by human activities. Refusing to acknowledge the crisis at hand, and in fact, being willing to continue to cause further damage to people and planet is more than enough to disqualify him from any political office. Suggesting that he might act otherwise in the future is undermined by his past actions; upon taking office as county executive, he disbanded Westchester's Climate Change Task Force.

Pets Harckham's record on climate change is strong and is reason enough to re-elect him to continue serving as our state senator.

**Ira Rosh
Mount Kisco**

Many Thanks to Drummond, County Planning for Work on Census

I would like to take this opportunity to commend Norma Drummond, Westchester County commissioner of planning, for doing an outstanding job overseeing the Westchester County Census responses.

Thanks to her hard work, eight communities in Westchester had a response rate of more than 80 percent; 23 had a response rate over 75 percent; and 34 communities had a response rate exceeding 70 percent. In 2000 and in 2010 (the last times the Census was taken) the Westchester response rates were much lower. This year 79 percent of the municipalities exceeded their 2010 response rate and 72 percent exceeded their 2000 responses – which is amazing! My own town of Greenburgh had a response rate of 76.4 percent.

How did Norma and her staff accomplish this? Every day local officials received daily counts (via e-mail updates) comparing our community with others. Her updates inspired local officials to work harder and to come up with creative approaches to persuade residents to respond to the Census. The daily

reports highlighted what communities were doing successfully. Norma made the Census into a competition; the daily reports were the first e-mail I looked forward to reading each day.

This is the way government should operate. The county involved everyone in the process and officials were encouraged to do more by positive messaging. Local and county officials shared information, highlighting what worked in their communities.

Norma Drummond deserves the thanks of every taxpayer because the excellent response rate means that the county, school districts and towns, cities and villages in Westchester will receive more dollars from the federal government during the next decade. Grants are based on Census information.

Thank you, Norma Drummond. You are an exceptionally dedicated public official.

**Paul Feiner
Greenburgh Town Supervisor**

Support Formation of Somers Sewer District for Shenorock, Lincolndale

I have been in favor of a sewer project in Shenorock for years and encourage everyone to vote in favor of this project. Our communities are far too densely populated to continue using septic systems (even if they are properly maintained). Fortunately, as a Shenorock resident, I have town water, not well water so I don't have to worry about septic leaching into a well.

I am familiar with the Yorktown sewer project. The fact that our Town Board has included the decommissioning of my existing septic pumpers where necessary is impressive. My neighbors in Yorktown had to incur those fees personally and had to lay out several thousand dollars for these jobs. I am in favor of investing in our infrastructure to provide a healthier environment for generations to come.

I am disappointed in the scare tactics and misinformation that I have heard throughout this process. My water bill is not listed as a tax but I pay a fee for a service. A sewer tax is a fee for a service just the same, not an increase in existing taxes.

I understand that there will be headaches with construction when the time comes but this too shall pass. Hopefully, our roads can be paved upon completion of the sewer project if it passes.

I hope that the ugliness that I have seen at town meetings will cease going forward no matter how the vote turns out on Nov. 10. I will enthusiastically be voting yes.

**Alan Masterson
Shenorock**

Towns Can't Force Commercial Property Owners to Report Vacancies

Re: The Yorktown Chamber of Commerce's Oct. 13-19 letter about chronic vacancies and the town's proposed law to require the owners of vacant buildings to report to the town.

We all agree on the same end: The need to find new tenants and/or uses for our long-vacant commercial spaces. The problem: By what means? Alas, the solution is not as simple as requiring a property owner to "report" to the town efforts to lease or sell a property.

Here are some of the practical and legal issues.

Free enterprise or socialism. We're a free enterprise country. Within limits, like zoning, a town can't tell a property owner what to do with his or her property. If the federal tax laws allow an owner to maximize his profit or reduce his taxes by keeping his building vacant, a town can't change that business decision. Nor can the town change state tax certiorari laws that allow property owners to challenge their assessment when vacancies reduce the property's income.

Nor can the town require a business to locate in an existing vacant space instead of constructing a new building. This was very clearly explained at a recent Planning Board meeting where the new Atlantic Appliance building was approved.

Promoting new development can create more vacancies. Before the new CareMount facility was built, the medical

group had offices in several existing buildings. The group's business decision to consolidate into one building created vacancies in those buildings. Good for CareMount, but now more vacancy signs in Yorktown.

The legality of a reporting requirement. I'm not a lawyer, but I'd like to hear from the town attorney on the legality of the town requiring a property owner to report on his efforts to lease or sell his property when its being maintained, taxes are being paid and is not a blight on the town.

The town has other, more productive options for addressing the vacancy problem. Instead of feel-good but meaningless reports, the town, working with property owners, can use its zoning power to assist property owners fill their vacant buildings. It's been done in the past and it's being done now with the vacant Toys "R" Us building. But the property owner has to want to fill his space. It should be the owner's responsibility to search for potential tenants and then come to the town to ask for any necessary and appropriate zoning changes.

Feel-good laws may make for good politics and public relations, but they won't fill our vacant commercial space.

**Susan Siegel
Yorktown Heights**

Raskyn is the Only Choice for Town Justice in Putnam Valley

I recommend our community to vote Terry Raskyn for town justice in Putnam Valley on Election Day. Terry is an experienced attorney with experience in many areas of the law, but most importantly, she has shown a caring and respectful attitude toward our town and her neighbors.

There is a sharp contrast between Terry and her opponent. Please investigate!

Terry is widely endorsed, by Supervisor Sam Oliverio, Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, the AFL-CIO and others.

Terry doesn't change parties.
Terry votes.

Terry has no debts or liens to her name.

Terry is constantly involved in town activities.

Terry holds leadership roles with the Westchester Bar Association, COVID Task Force, the state Bar Association and the Elder Abuse Committee.

Terry is a trained mediator, specializing in guardianship law.

Vote Terry Raskyn for a quality Town Court!

**Ralph Smith
Putnam Valley**

Too Many Warning Signs to Back Longobucco for PV Town Justice

Why is Pat Longobucco is running for Putnam Valley town justice? He is not qualified to judge us. He's had IRS liens brought against him for not paying his income taxes. He had a default judgment brought against him by Bank of America for unpaid credit card debt. He's switched his party affiliation several times.

Apparently, he's lived in Putnam Valley for seven years as a registered Democrat but never voted. He switched to the Republican Party just before running for town judge – the behavior of an opportunist. He raises money on his website but has not registered a committee with the state Board of Elections as the law requires. When he receives donations, he sends a personal thank you letter, which is against the rules for judicial candidates.

Campaign ethics rules specify that judicial candidates are to be kept unknowing and separate from their contributors.

Longobucco is apparently very sloppy and undisciplined – a little bit of a mess. His campaign signs say that he IS Putnam Valley town justice. His sign should say "Elect" "For Town Justice." He's NOT the town justice.

This lack of precision and sloppiness reminds me of Pig-Pen from the Peanuts comic strip. I don't want a mess sitting on the bench in Putnam Valley Town Court. So I'm going to vote for Terry Raskyn – someone who's experienced, mature, neat, tidy and precise.

**Karen Freede
Putnam Valley**

Skepticism Voiced at Opening of Chappaqua Form Based Code Hearing

By Martin Wilbur

A majority of Chappaqua speakers last week questioned why New Castle officials are considering the proposed Form Based Code and potential significant changes for the hamlet's downtown as COVID-19 could permanently alter life and work patterns.

At the opening of the Oct. 20 public hearing on the code and Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS), some detractors said that they didn't understand officials moving the process along so quickly.

Ridgewood Terrace resident Angelo Grasso was one of those who found the Town Board's process hasty given the circumstances.

"I think passing legislation of this magnitude during a pandemic doesn't make a lot of sense," Grasso said. "We don't know what the ramifications of the pandemic are going to be either in the short or long term."

Resident Cyd Falkson, of Cross Ridge Road, said the impact that COVID-19 may have on commuting, dining and other activities may not be known for years.

"With less reliable commuting to the city, the presence of apartments downtown and the need for parking downtown, or the requirement, in my opinion, of grotesque and intrusive parking garages will be far less attractive," Falkson said.

They were two of the roughly 25 people who commented on the proposed code for close to two hours. During the past month accusations have been leveled that the town and its consultants have grossly underestimated the number of schoolchildren

developments would generate in the full buildout scenario. The maximum buildout, which is required by the state as part of the town's environmental review, revealed 997 more units and 96 additional school children.

There has also been pushback about four-story buildings and even the possibility five-story buildings along the west side of South Greeley Avenue.

The town is weighing the zoning change in hopes of invigorating downtown by potentially enticing developers to build mixed-use projects, which would bring more people to the hamlet. There could be retail shops and restaurants on the ground floor and apartments upstairs.

Despite ample criticism, there were those residents who applauded what Town Board members are trying to do. Eldad Gothelf, a member of the town's Planning Board, called the Form Based Code "the right move for Chappaqua for many reasons."

It will bring people downtown and add a more diverse housing stock, which is also a social justice issue, he said.

"If we are able to bring people downtown that would be a better economic situation for the town," Gothelf said. "It's right for Chappaqua for planning reasons. Adding density to a downtown is absolutely the right thing to do. Adding density to a downtown that has awesome public transportation infrastructure like this, going both to Manhattan and north, is the absolute right thing to do. We're lucky to have it. We should build off of our public infrastructure."

Resident Brendan Rudolph said he

generally agreed with the Form Based Code and that the town needs to add density downtown.

However, many of the other speakers were skeptical that the code would benefit the town. North Place resident Annette Clearwater said she could see it encourage larger developers who would change the character of the town.

"If you want big-city developers interested, have five stories," she said. "I don't think you want big developers to Chappaqua," she said. "They're going to want big-chain tenants, they're going to want deep pockets and credit lines with banks that are not available to small mom and pop businesses."

Public comments were preceded by a presentation outlining some of the code's key points by two of the town's consultants. Bonnie Von Ohlsen, a planner with Kimley-Horn who is working with the town, explained the purpose behind the buildout scenario.

"It's not a specific construction project, it's a replacement of the zoning code, and in order to analyze that and understand impacts in all the different categories, we had to develop a buildout scenario," Von Ohlsen said.

The hearing is scheduled to resume at Tuesday evening's Town Board meeting at 7 p.m., which will be live-streamed.

Legends of the Fall

GameOn13's 14u Lady Fury softball team defeated the Scarsdale Raiders 15-5 on Sunday afternoon in the championship game at Supply Field in Scarsdale to win the team's final weekend-long fall ball tournament of the season. Top row, left to right, are Coach Rob Cirillo, Becca Friedman, Olivia Polsky, Elana Olson, Andy Hegarty, Daniela Moccia, Carly McBride, Maddie Medico, Katherine Papa and Coach Cassidy Wooten. Bottom row, left to right, are Maeve Padley, Kayla Wels, Montana Peppard, Lucy Black, Samantha Vedovato, Maddie Stone and Haley Albano.



LISA MCBRIDE PHOTO

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Obituary

Margaret Kolvenbach

Mrs. Margaret "Maggie" Kolvenbach died peacefully on Oct. 18 at the age of 87.

Maggie is survived by her husband of 62 years, Gordon. She was mother to six children: Mary Hacobian, her husband Hamo and their children Alex, Emily and Nikko; Ann Kolvenbach and her partner Gary Stevens; Joan Jacobsen Leyva, her husband Henry Leyva and their children Grace Jacobsen and Ella and Theo Levya; Beth Waggoner, her husband George and their children Daniel, Josiah, Lydia, Nathan and Sara and great-grandchild Oliver; John Kolvenbach and his children Baker and Hollis; and Laura Olson, her husband John and their children Claire, Jack and Margaret. Maggie was preceded in death by her parents, Perc and Inez Mattison, and her sister, Ann Frisch. Maggie's favorite things in life were laughing and spending time with her family.

Maggie was born on May 22, 1933, in Winona, Minn. She graduated from Iowa State University with a home economics degree, which she put to good use for her entire life. After graduating college, she moved to New York City and worked at Family Circle in the test kitchen, creating recipes for the magazine. In 1963, Gordon, Maggie and their four children moved to Mount Kisco, where their two younger children were born.

Maggie will be remembered for all that she did for her community. She was



Margaret Kolvenbach

dedicated to volunteering and did it her entire life. She was an active member of the West Patent Elementary School PTA. She served as the enrichment chair, scheduling and working with hundreds of volunteers to share their specialties with the students. She taught CCD classes at St. Francis of Assisi. She worked with the public library to offer summer art courses for the children in town, including hat making, tie-dyeing and making a quilt that hung in the library for many years. In later years, Maggie volunteered at the Mount

Kisco Child Care Center and drove for FISH for more than 20 years.

Maggie was a woman of great talents and varied interests. She was an avid seamstress her whole life. She sewed her children's clothes, including embroidering and smocking dresses for her five girls and granddaughters. She was a master and award-winning quilter, creating more than 40 personalized quilts and wall-hangings for her family members. She loved to knit and was known for gifting a tomato hat to newborn children.

Maggie was passionate about learning and staying active. She learned calligraphy, paint with watercolors, quilt, knit and decorate cakes. She practiced yoga daily, swam laps in the summers and took daily walks with her husband. Maggie's gardens were magnificent as she tended to them daily with her "garden walks."

A mass was held for Maggie at St. Francis of Assisi on Oct. 20. Her wishes were to have her body donated to New York Medical College to further medical science.

Putnam County Sheriff's Officer Killed in Yorktown Crash

By Rick Pezzullo

A Putnam County Sheriff's Department officer was killed in an off-duty two-car accident Sunday evening on Route 6N in Yorktown.

According to the Yorktown Police Department, a 50-year-old Mahopac man who was the operator of one the vehicles was declared dead at the scene at about 6 p.m. An unidentified 56-year-old Mahopac woman, who was the operator of the second vehicle, was transported to Westchester County Medical Center, where she succumbed to her injuries.

On Monday, Putnam Sheriff Robert L. Langley Jr. announced that Michael J.

Moore, who joined the Sheriff's Department after retiring from the Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department in 2019, was the man who died in the crash.

"The members of the Putnam County Sheriff's Department join his family in grief," Langley stated. "Michael is survived by his wife Janene and his children Jenna, Ryan and John. Michael will never be forgotten and gave 23 years serving and protecting others with pride and integrity."

The Yorktown Police Department, which is investigating the accident with the Westchester County Department of Public Safety, is requesting anyone with information regarding the accident to contact Detective Swart or Sgt. Dillon at 914-962-4141.

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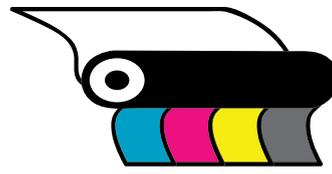
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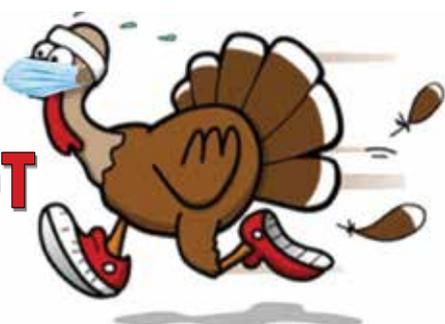
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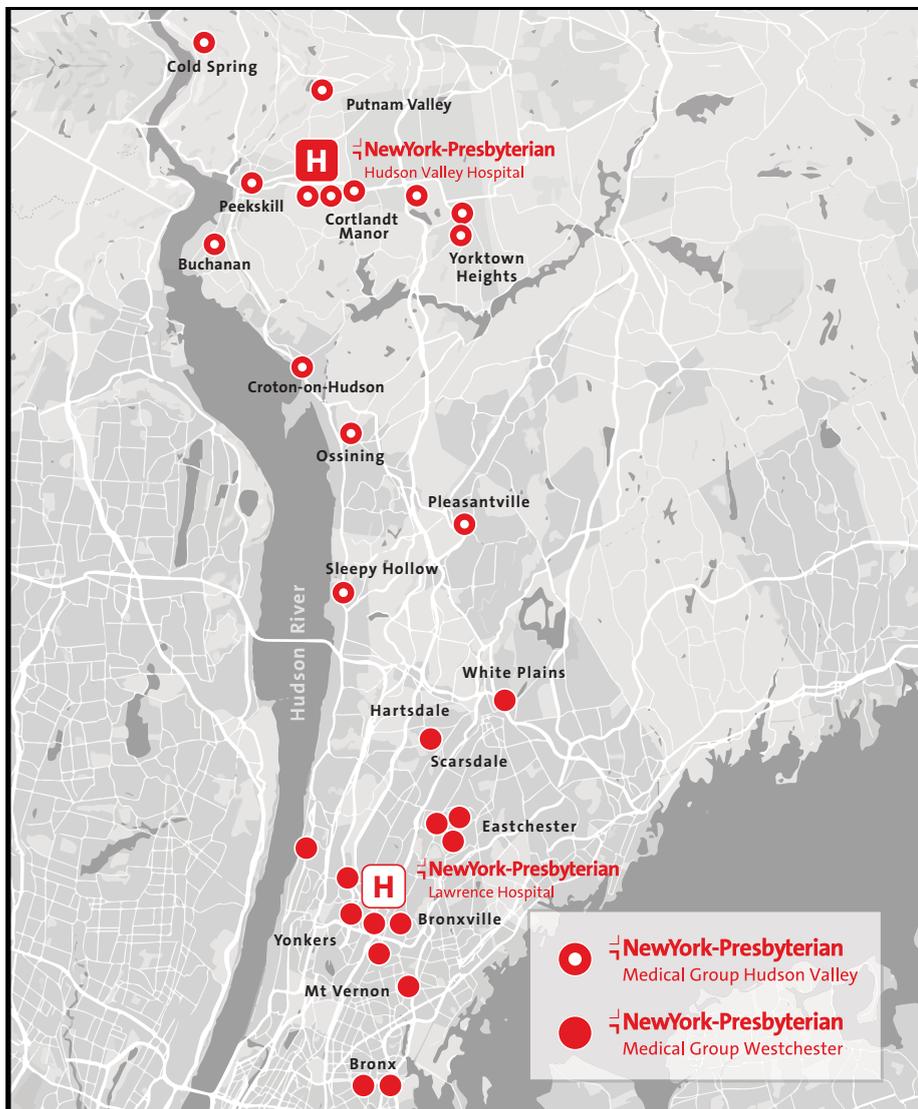

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Officials Recommend Low-risk Halloween Activities This Year

By Sydney Stoller

With COVID-19 cases on the rise locally, Halloween may be even scarier this year for those who risk going door to door.

Local officials are hoping to avoid the swell of trick-or-treaters that would come from the evening's typical festivities by promoting two major initiatives: finding safer ways to celebrate and keeping an eye out for large gatherings, especially those attended by teens that could lead to coronavirus infections and school closures.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) published a report this month emphasizing the high risk that accompanies traditional Halloween activities including costume parties and indoor haunted houses. In lieu of these events, they recommend alternatives such as contact-free trick-or-treating (classified as moderate risk) or virtual costume contests (low risk).

Gov. Andrew Cuomo released a similar pamphlet urging New Yorkers to keep track of local COVID-19 cases using the state Department of Health COVID-19 Tracker. That should be in addition to following the CDC's guidelines,

Towns in Westchester County have devised their own plans and creative ways to safely celebrate Halloween.

The Village of Croton-on-Hudson recommended that households decide individually whether or not they would like to distribute candy to trick-or-treaters, and then display a sign created by the town

expressing their wishes. The signs should read either "welcome trick-or-treaters" or "see you next year," and are decorated with the village's logo or festive cartoons.

In addition, the village will host a modified version of its annual Goblin Walk, a costume parade along the Hudson River. This year, in addition to prizes for the most creative costumes, the event will include masks and social distancing.

"Seven months into the pandemic, the emotional toll of social distancing is draining many people's spirits," said Mayor Brian Pugh. "Halloween in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson has always been an opportunity for residents to connect with family, friends and neighbors. I hope that residents will take advantage of these opportunities to safely celebrate and enjoy a Halloween that's spooky but safe."

North Castle residents, at the request of Town Supervisor Michael Schiliro, have taken a similar approach. They are instructed either to tie an orange ribbon around their mailboxes if they wish to give

out candy or post relevant signage.

In one North Castle neighborhood, Rose Jakaj organized a socially distant festive food truck event. Ralph's Ice Cream and Crafty'Cue, a barbecue restaurant, will park their food trucks in a cul-de-sac so that masked residents can admire each other's costumes and enjoy their food in a socially distanced manner. To avoid crowds, the event will be limited to people who reside in the Huntwood neighborhood.

"My son kept asking what we were doing, and since North Castle canceled our town's unofficial trick-or-treat run on Wampus and Glendale, I knew we needed a backup plan," Jakaj said. "I reached out to Crafty'Cue food truck and our local ice cream truck driver, and asked them to come to our neighborhood on Halloween."

"It's been heartwarming to watch how Huntwood has joined together over the pandemic - neighbors helping neighbors, volunteering, beautifying, and now, saving Halloween."

Pleasantville residents will celebrate the holiday by hosting a streamlined version of their annual Halloween window painting contest for children in grades 2-8. To ensure social distancing, participants must sign up online for a specific date and time slot to express their creativity.

Despite these innovative and fun low-risk alternatives, county officials are ready in case some residents don't follow CDC guidelines.

The Bedford and Katonah-Lewisboro school districts notified district parents this week warning them to limit their children's involvement in high-risk Halloween activities. Bedford Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joel Adelberg and his counterpart in Katonah-Lewisboro, Dr. Andrew Selesnick, noted they are working closely with local police departments who will be enforcing laws related to underage drinking and doing their best to limit partying.

"If we hear of large gatherings, we reserve the right to take appropriate action, including prohibiting in-person or hybrid learning and participation in other school activities for those students who participate in these gatherings," Adelberg and Selesnick wrote.

In recent weeks there has been a temporary halt of in-person learning at numerous Westchester schools due to a rise in COVID-19 cases.




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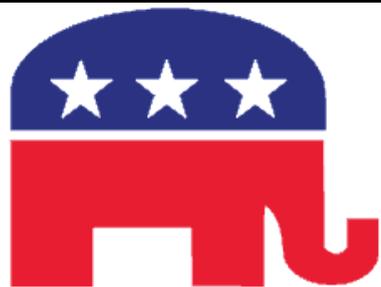
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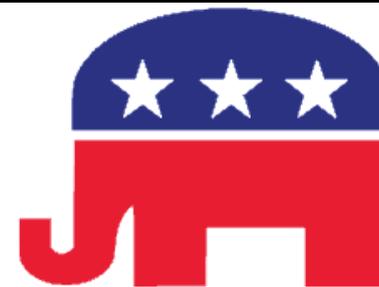


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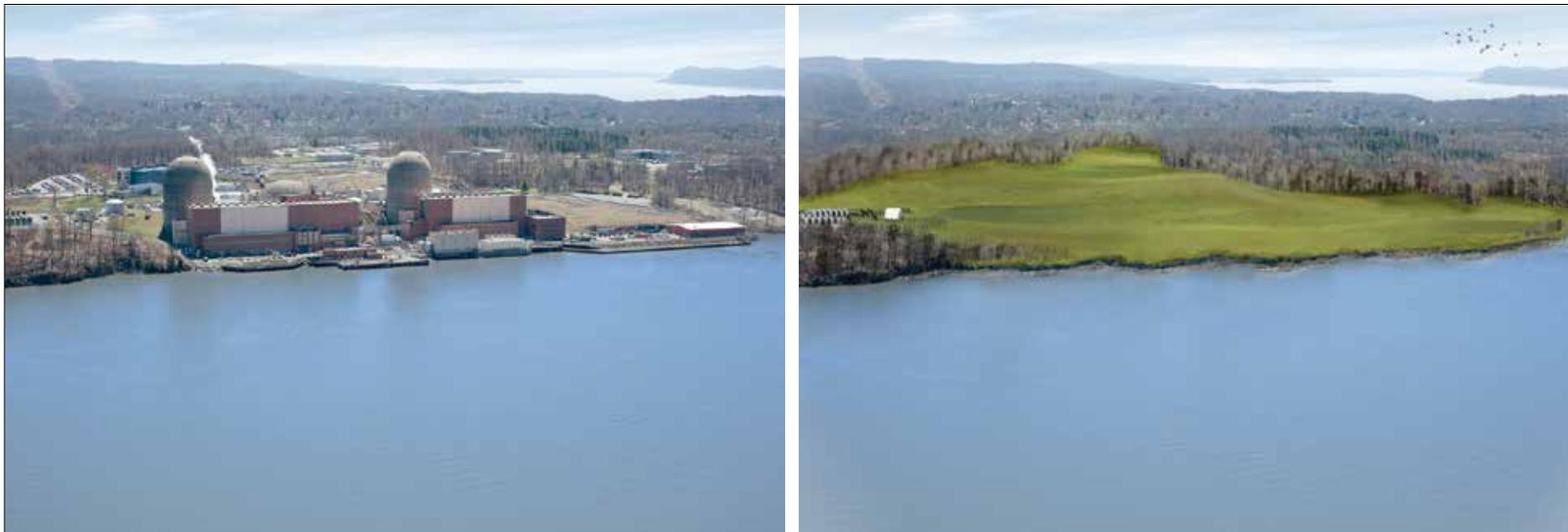
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Tips for Keeping Windows, the Eyes of the Home, Clean

Living happily at Trump Park in Shrub Oak, my wife and I were recently offered by management the opportunity to have our windows cleaned, a chore that hadn't been done for about two years.

From our top-floor windows we look out at a glorious burst of green in summer and bright orange and yellow now. It is too beautiful a view to miss through a haze of dirt that had attached itself to the glass panes during the summer months.

Having just had the job completed, I feel as I did when I tried on my first pair of glasses for nearsightedness.

When I am inventorying a house as a realtor, looking for the best ways to stage a house for sale, I always look out the windows to make sure they are clean, a sure sign for gauging the upkeep of a property. Not only do clean windows show good care, but they also let in more light.

The first windows back in ancient Mesopotamia were literally just holes in the wall to let in light. And the purpose of glass windows, around since the Roman Empire, has remained pretty much the same, although today the new insulated windows also allow for heat and cool air retention.

The real purpose of windows, in my opinion, is to observe the bucolic joys of the



By Bill Primavera

landscape from inside. But with dirty windows, colors are dulled and, actually, less light enters the home.

When I lived in a single-family home, I used professional window cleaning services to get that job done, but the plan sometimes got delayed or forgotten, and I would get the foolish notion to clean some windows myself – but only on the first floor.

To do it, I always used Windex, which I have considered a miracle household product since I was a child cleaning my mother's glass coffee tabletop with it. But lately, the "green" messages have been reaching me that the chemicals in

it are not good for one's health or for the environment.

Because the EPA does not require manufacturers of household products to list ingredients on their packages, who knows? I mean, didn't it give you pause to wonder when you heard about those manic house cleaners who passed out from fumes while cleaning their bathtubs with household chemicals?

So, here's the way to combat that fear with ordinary natural products around the house, namely vinegar or lemon. And the method makes good secondary use of your newspapers as well.

In a spray bottle, mix half with vinegar



and half with water. Or with lemon juice, use proportions of one-quarter lemon juice and three-quarters water. Spray the mixture on to the window pane. Then, take a single sheet of newspaper and crumple it in your hand, making a pad to polish the glass.

While I've heard that this system may not work as well as in newspapers' heyday because of the change in the composition of the inks used, I found that it still works perfectly fine. Also, it is said that the ink leaves a film on the window pane, which makes it harder for dirt to cling to the surface. How about that for killing two birds with one stone?

If you're more adventuresome about window cleaning than I, here's a list of other tidbits of information about cleaning the "eyes" of the home:

*Clean one side of a window with vertical strokes and the other side with horizontal strokes so you can identify which side of

the glass has streaks. Clever, huh?

*Wash windows on a cloudy day because direct sunlight dries the cleaning solution before you can polish the glass well.

*Use a toothbrush or cotton swab to clean corners.

*Eliminate tiny scratches on window surfaces by polishing the affected areas with toothpaste.

*Wash windows from the top down to handle drips on the way.

*And if you're really fanatical about a window with a brilliant shine, rub a clean blackboard eraser over a window that has been just freshly washed and dried.

Because I lived in a historic home and wanted to keep the original windows intact, I added storm windows to create that air barrier that insulates, but that doubled the job. So I decided, bring on the professional window cleaners.

For years I had a handyman who cleaned all of my windows once a year for only \$500, and he did a wonderful job. But, alas, when I called him to ask if I could recommend him for this article, he confessed that he gave up the service because he just didn't like doing the job.

I understand his sentiment perfectly.

Bill Primavera, while a writer and public relations practitioner, is also a realtor associated with William Raveis Real Estate. To engage the talents and services of The Home Guru to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.

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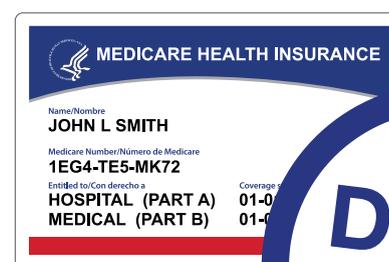
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More Fall Buzz and Bites in Area Culinary Scene

Buffets Slowly Reopening

With the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants and food markets with open buffet stations were forced to close out of an abundance of caution.

This caused great upheaval, especially at Indian and Asian restaurants, Brazilian churrascaria-type operations and supermarkets that relied heavily on fresh hot and cold buffets.

In White Plains, after a multimillion-dollar renovation to a former Bank of New York building, one of the newest of these Brazilian restaurants, Fogo de Chao, has been waiting to open at Main and Church streets for months now.

Well, things appear to be slowly changing.

During a recent walk through at DeCicco's & Sons in Armonk and its newest location in Eastchester, I was surprised to see the buffet stations open again, albeit with stricter guidelines. There were markers on the floor and added cover guards at the buffets. Customers did not seem to mind while filling their take-out containers with their favorite salads, meats and vegetables.

A walk through a local Stop & Shop still had the buffet and soup stations closed.

At a newly-opened Indian restaurant in Harrison, the luncheon buffet station was also closed.

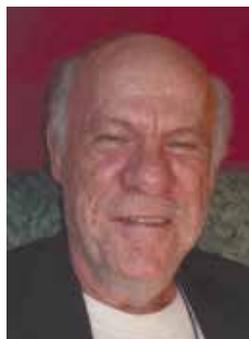
For those who remain a bit squeamish about open buffets right now, markets and restaurants will pre-package your menu selections, and even bring them to you in some cases.

Don't know how widespread this is, but it is underway and apparently under the watchful eye of the Westchester County Department of Health.

A Stop at Exit 4

Our technicolor fall drives around Westchester last week took us through Katonah, Mount Kisco and Chappaqua. We thought Exit 4 in Mount Kisco would make a good rest stop. When they opened the space several years ago, it was Westchester's first "food hall" concept. Since our last visit in May, it seems that the food purveyors and menus have been consolidated.

We were happy to see the Exit 4 craft beer and wine bar had reopened. We had two good brews, a SingleCut IPA and the Sloop Brewing Co. Juice Bomb, and split an order of their popular pan-seared Asian dumplings stuffed with pork and shrimp and spicy dipping sauces.



By Morris Gut

Very tasty!

Partner Isi Albanese and his friendly crew were keeping it active. According to Albanese, the food hall always had a robust takeout business because of its wide variety, such as Japanese, barbecue and pizza, so business has been pretty good even during the pandemic.

The phones rang consistently. Out front on Main Street, parking meters were covered to allow for easy curbside pick-up.

Exit 4 Food Hall is located at 153 E. Main St. in Mount Kisco. Open seven days. Major credit cards accepted. Info: 914-241-1200 or visit www.exit4foodhall.com.

Lefteris: Greek Food at a Great Price

I have been a fan of Lefteris Gyro restaurants for a long time, starting with the original location in Tarrytown, and later when they expanded to Ridge Hill, Yonkers, Mount Kisco and Pleasantville. There may be some more sophisticated Greek spots in the area, but this casual group of restaurants always puts out a good Greek meal at a reasonable price.

On this visit we ordered a large portion of spanakopita, spinach pie and a large gyro wrap, loaded with sliced lamb, lettuce, tomato and onions, all in a pita. Both were



The craft beer and wine bar at Exit 4 Food Hall in Mount Kisco.

so good and plentiful. The large pita wrap does get unruly, but over the years I have resorted to eating it with a knife and fork. Extra tzatziki sauce on the side. Certainly, enough to share.

By the way, COVID-19 guidelines were firmly practiced inside. We had our

continued on next page



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More Fall Buzz and Bites in Area Culinary Scene

continued from previous page

temperature checked before we were seated. First time that was provided to me at a restaurant.

Lefteris Gyro is located at 190 E. Main St. in Mount Kisco. Open daily. Take-out available. Check the website for the other locations. Info: 914-242-8965 or visit www.lefterisgyro.com.

Palminteri to Open White Plains Restaurant

Bedford resident, actor and restaurateur Chazz Palminteri and his partnership are taking over the former Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza on Main Street in White Plains. The new eatery will be called Chazz Palminteri Restaurant & Pizza.

Palminteri is best known for his 1993 hit film "A Bronx Tale," which was filmed in and around Arthur Avenue in the Bronx.

Chazz has already put his name to a restaurant in midtown Manhattan, in partnership with Jack Sinanaj, who also owns Ben & Jack's Steakhouse and Empire Steakhouse in the city. More details as they become available.

Chazz Palminteri Restaurant & Pizza will be located at 264 Main St. in White Plains. Info: 914-600-8430 or visit www.chazzpalminterinyc.com.

New Tenant at Old Sofrito Space

The owners of Colombian House in New Rochelle have leased the space previously occupied by Sofrito at 175 Main St. in



The big gyro wrap and spinach pie at Lefteris Gyro, which offers delicious Greek food at reasonable prices.



Some of the buffets, like the one above at DeCicco's & Sons in Armonk and other locations, have reopened.

White Plains. The windows have been decorated with big food photos and a sign announcing "Coming Soon!" For an idea of their menu, visit www.colombianhouse.com.

Remember to follow COVID-19 guidelines and stay safe!

Morris Gut is a restaurant marketing

consultant and former restaurant trade magazine editor. He has been tracking and writing about the food and dining scene in

greater Westchester for 30 years. He may be reached at 914-235-6591 or by e-mail at gutreactions@optonline.net.

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Chappaqua Teens Create Personalized Poems to Raise Money for Charity

By Sydney Stoller

Instead of turning to baking bread or mask making this spring during the COVID-19 lockdown, three Horace Greeley High School students found a more poetic way to help the community.

Sophomore Devisi Goel began writing poems while they were stuck at home and shared them with her friends and family.

From this work sprang Poetry's Purpose, an organization where the public can now commission personalized poems for a friend or loved one, and in return, donate to a rotating set of charities.

Goel, who works alongside Poetry's Purpose Vice President Tessa Wheeler, a sophomore, and freshman and Chief Publicity Officer Emma Wasserman, said the power of the written word and the impact that a gift of a poem can have on loved ones has been immense.

"Writing a poem is unique because it is a specific art form of putting words on the paper that truly express your emotions," said Goel, the founder of Poetry's Purpose. "We are taking the time to carefully decide on word choice, structure, cadence and more. This makes the final product even more



Left to right: Devisi Goel, Emma Wasserman and Tessa Wheeler, the three Horace Greeley High School students behind Poetry's Purpose. They write poems for others in exchange for a charitable donation to a designated organization.

meaningful."

To request a poem, an interest form is submitted to Poetry's Purpose website at www.poetryspurpose.com. The recipient is guaranteed a poem within 72 hours.

Along with name and contact information, the person includes the purpose for the poem, such as a milestone or special event, and some of the subject's key personality traits. These details help Goel, Wheeler and Wasserman produce high-quality prose.

The final product is then e-mailed to the recipient alongside a personalized note from the organization's founders. This paperless methodology permits unique and customizable formatting for each piece. Goel said most often they opt for black text on a pastel background.

After the poem has been delivered, patrons are encouraged to make a donation to various charities.

The trio decided this month to direct the public to the Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry

because of the growing food insecurity in the area caused by the pandemic.

"It (the food pantry) is a local organization, so people who are donating can feel like they're actively making a change in their community," Goel said. "The food pantry is doing an amazing thing by making the lives of the people who recently lost their jobs because of COVID-19 just a little bit easier."

They have moved on from their last cause, Elmhurst Hospital Center in Queens, after

spending a few months raising funds for the New York City public hospital that was overrun with COVID-19 patients in early spring. Devisi received and filled nine orders this summer that helped to replenish the hospital's supplies and resources that were severely diminished following the outbreak.

In the hopes of equal success with the Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry, Wasserman said she is trying to spread word of Poetry's Purpose's mission around Westchester. For example, they have been handing out pamphlets at the Chappaqua Farmers Market each Saturday.

Wasserman said it is gratifying helping others by doing something she is so passionate about.

"It does not feel like a burden," she said. "I am not doing this for any reason other than the fact that I love it and am super passionate about it. I am so happy that I was brought into Poetry's Purpose because it has given me an opportunity to be creative and make a difference in my community."

For more information about Poetry's Purpose, request a poem or to read previous poems, visit www.poetryspurpose.com

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LEGAL NOTICES

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY of Putnam Index No. 501433/2020 ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE
Paul Koehler and Wendy Koehler, Petitioners -against- Empire Financial Corporation and GMAC Mortgage Corporation, Respondents
UPON THE READING AND FILING of the annexed Petition of Paul Koehler and Wendy, verified October 20, 2020, and upon all the proceedings heretofore had herein and the exhibits annexed hereto; **LET THE Respondents SHOW CAUSE** at the Putnam County Courthouse located at 20 County Center, Carmel, New York 10512, before the Honorable Victor G. Grossman, JSC, on the 25th day of November, 2020 at 9:30 o'clock in the forenoon of that day, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, why an Order should not be entered pursuant to Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law Section 1931, directing the Clerk of the County of Putnam to cancel and discharge of record the Mortgage made by Paul Koehler and Wendy Koehler in favor of Empire Financial Corporation and serviced by GMAC Mortgage Corporation dated October 16, 1991 in the principal amount of \$148,200.00, recorded on October 25, 1991 in the office of the clerk of the County of Putnam in Liber 1439 Page 325, and the Mortgage made by Paul Koehler and Wendy Koehler in favor of Empire Financial Corporation and serviced by GMAC Mortgage Corporation dated August 5, 1993 in the principal amount of \$7,539.94, recorded on August 20, 1993 in the office of the clerk of the County of Putnam in Liber 1760 Page 254, and the Consolidation, Extension and Modification Agreement made by Paul Koehler and Wendy Koehler in favor of Empire Financial Corporation and

continued on page 28

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The Fascination That Accompanies the Lunar Month

It's a funny thing about the moon's phases. They don't care about our calendar.

Even though the word "month" comes from an old Germanic word for the time it takes for the moon to orbit earth, our months don't line up with the moon's cycle. If they did, we'd start every month with a new moon, and it'd be full around the 15th.

The Muslim and Jewish calendars, among others, do and highlight the elegance of the moon's phases.

Instead, a lunation – a full lunar month from one phase back to that same phase again (usually, from new moon back to new), about 29 earth days – is constantly out of sync with our mostly longer calendar months. With a little quick math, we see that we spend our lives trying to squeeze a bit less than 13 lunar months into our 12-month calendar year.

This doesn't really affect our lives very much, but occasionally we wind up with a blue moon, a term people used for centuries to mean a rare occurrence. Its popular use as a month's second full moon is only about 30 years old. We have one every

two-and-a-half years or so.

This Saturday, Halloween night will be particularly spooky as a blue moon rises above the witches, zombies and swooping bats.

I don't care for the hype that tends to come with blue moons, but there's something fascinating if we take a bigger view. The 29-day lunar cycle is shorter than every month except February; therefore, every month except February is likely to have a repeated phase, full moon or not.

Put differently, every 29 days, the moon finishes a lap and returns to the same spot in its orbit, bringing it back to the same phase. Since 29 days is shorter than the length of all non-February calendar months, the moon is likely to be back at the spot it was in at the beginning of a month when the end of the month comes around.

Clear Skies



Last Quarter
November 8



New Moon
November 15



First Quarter
November 21



Full Moon
November 30

November's moon phase chart

It might not be one of the fancy primary ones, but just like that, we have a repeated "blue" phase every month.

October's repeated phase is a full moon. Then, we'll finish 2020 with waning gibbous moons at the start and end of November and December.

As time goes on, the phases move earlier by a day or two each month. If you keep an eye on this as the months pass, you'll gradually see interesting patterns develop. After full, the next primary phase is last quarter (on Nov. 8). That floating monthly day or two will add up until we have a blue last quarter next July. Then, we're off into the exotic-sounding blue waning crescents.



By Scott Levine

Eventually your favorite phases will float to the top and happen twice in the same month, too. While this happens, the previous blue phase pops off the top and drops to the end of the month.

Our calendar and the moon's cycle are constantly out of sync, but that imperfection puts its own human twist on how we see the sky. It's always fun to watch. I hope you will this month.

Scott Levine (astroscott@yahoo.com) is an astronomy writer and speaker from Croton-on-Hudson. He is also a member of the Westchester Amateur Astronomers, who are dedicated to astronomy outreach in our area. For information about the club, including membership, newsletters, upcoming meetings and lectures at Pace University and star parties at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, visit westchesterastronomers.org. Events are free and open to the public. Please Note: All in-person club activities are suspended until further notice due to COVID-19 concerns.

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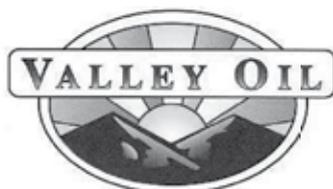
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served by GMAC Mortgage Corporation dated August 5, 1993 in the principal amount of \$154,000.00, recorded on August 20, 1993 in the office of the clerk of the County of Putnam in Liber 1760 Page 268, covering the real property known as RD7 North Brewster Road, Brewster a/k/a 399 Tonetta Lake Road, Town of Southeast, County of Putnam, State of New York, Tax Map No. 56.12-3-57 and to mark upon the records a statement that the mortgages have been cancelled and discharged by virtue of said Order, together with such other and further relief as this court deems just and proper. **SUFFICIENT REASON APPEARING THEREFORE**, let service of this Order to Show Cause and the Verified Petition be made upon the Respondents in the following manner on or before the 13th day of November 2020 be deemed good and sufficient service: By Publication of this Order in Putnam County Press and Putnam County Examiner newspaper(s) for 2

weeks, at least 14 days prior to the return date herein, and by first-class mail to last known addresses of (1) Chief Executive Officer Marc J. Thomaes; (2) GMAC and GMAC Mortgage Corp; and Chief Executive Officer David Applegate. ORDERED that Answering affidavits, if any, shall be served upon the attorney for plaintiff no later than November 20, 2020. **PERSONAL APPEARANCES ARE NOT REQUIRED ON THE RETURN DATE.** Dated: Carmel, New York October 22, 2020 ENTER Hon. Victor G. Grossman Justice of the Supreme Court

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On the Virtual Road to a Storied Wine Region With Geopolitical Influences



By Nick Antonaccio

Italy has 20 unique wine regions, each with its own macro and microclimate.

We've traveled through three regions so far in this reprised series on lesser-known Italian grapes: Campania, Sicily and the Veneto.

For this week's virtual tour, we are in the north for a region that is one of the most diverse areas in all of Italy. It is dominated by small towns, bucolic country settings, small wineries and a rather simple, although diverse, cuisine.

Paradoxically for Italian wines, it is a wine region known predominantly for its white, not red, wines. Here at the foothills of the Austrian Alps is a land seemingly created from natural geology and geography for the express purpose of producing stellar, complex white wines.

This region in the northeast corner of Italy is Friuli-Venezia Giulia, bordering with Austria to its north, Slovenia to its east and the Adriatic Sea to its south. It may be one of Italy's least appreciated wine regions – outside Italy. Within Italy it is recognized

as the gemstone for fine white winemaking. The local winemakers have taken God's gift of a unique land and climate and have elevated Friulian white wines to a revered position.

First, a bit of history. The compound-word designation reflects centuries of historic tugs of war. From the early Romans who ceded it to northern European marauders, to 10th century Austrian influences, to several border changes with Slovenia, the region called Friuli – its name is a reference to a local Roman Forum built in 568 – has undergone significant, if gradual, cultural morphing. The cuisine is multinational, as are the dialects spoken and the traditions upheld.

The most recent change was the annexation of the Venezia Giulia area by Italy in 1954, under a World War II treaty with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Today the region is commonly referred to by its ancestral name of Friuli.

Throughout the region, winemakers have honed their skills at plying the symbiotic relationship of the land and climate to produce crisp, balanced wines. Geography is the key. Much of the region benefits from a unique combination of cool breezes wafting down from the Alps, intermixed with air currents coming up from the Adriatic

Sea. These ideal growing conditions allow the grapes to mature slowly, producing wines with a perfect balance between fruit sugars and acidity.

The wines

1. Friulano. Formerly called Tocai Friulano, this is the most famous and highly respected wine in the region. It starts out with aromas of peaches, almonds and pears and then finishes with a crisp minerality that clears the palate. Think Sauvignon Blanc on steroids.
2. Pinot Bianco. Not to be confused with the Pinot Grigio/Pinot Gris grape, this wine is crisp, very clean on the palate and satisfies with balanced acidity. Aromas of apricot and bananas are very distinct.
3. Dessert Wines. Verduzzo has peach and nut flavors that evolve into honey as the wine ages. Picolit has the alluring components of a complex Sauternes.
4. I would be remiss if I didn't mention another stellar wine from this region: Pinot Grigio.

Although wildly popular for its appeal as an innocuous quaffer produced in other wine regions around the world, the Pinot Grigio of Friuli is a sophisticated wine. Complex, full-bodied, with flavors of peaches, green apples



and almonds, it outshines the rest. Try it and be pleasantly surprised.

There are several red indigenous grapes that are gaining international recognition.

1. Refosco dal Peduncolo Rosso, with blackberry notes and high acidity.
2. Pignolo, a dense wine whose aroma and flavor profile are compared to the Sangiovese Grosso of Brunello di Montalcino.
3. Schioppettino,

comparable to a Rhone Syrah, which evolves and gains complexity with several years of cellaring.

Friulian winemakers are beginning to export more wines to the United States. Look for these hidden gems that seemingly sparkle in the glass, reminding us of the unique history and terroir of the region.

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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Yorktown 250 Initiative Launches With Musical Presentation

The Yorktown Heritage Preservation Commission will launch a series of events commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence with a performance of Revolutionary War-era songs.

Recorded at the landmarked Community Church of Yorktown, the program by award-winning duo Anne and Ridley Enslow will be broadcast twice on the Yorktown television channel (Optimum Channel 20 or FIOS Channel 33) on consecutive Saturdays, Nov. 7 and Nov. 14 at 7:30 p.m.

“This is the first of what will be many events and commemorations,” said Commission Chair Lynn Briggs. “The

Enslows will transport the television audience to a bygone era infused with a revolutionary spirit that gave birth to our country.”

The Enslows, dressed in historically accurate clothing, give concerts on American themes and play music of the American colonial period, using instruments accurate to the time – 18th century violin, hammered dulcimer, jaw harp, mountain dulcimer, pennywhistle and the playful percussion instrument the “limberjack.”

The duo has recorded five albums, two of which – “Music for the American Colonies” and “Music for Abraham Lincoln” – were named Notable Recordings by the American Library Association. Most of their music is drawn from original manuscripts, sheet music and songsters or wandering musicians.

“This is a great opportunity for families to safely enjoy a learning experience together,” said Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater. “Our community has a rich Revolutionary War history and my hope is that this program will spark our residents’ interest in learning more about Yorktown’s contributions to our country’s struggle for independence.”

In July 2016, Congress passed the United States Semiquincentennial Act in order to provide for the observance of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, which is in 2026. Local, state, national and international activities are being planned, encouraged and developed



Anne and Ridley Enslow will broadcast a special program, “Washington and His Spies,” on Yorktown community access television on Nov. 7 and 14 at 7:30 p.m. The program launched the Yorktown 250 initiative, which will lead up to the 250th anniversary of the country in 2026.

Revolutionary subterfuge took place in Westchester County, and even in Yorktown, the program is a perfect fit.

Beginning with “British Grenadier,” the Enslows introduce their program with a traditional 18th century marching song of British military units, performed by Ridley Enslow on a violin actually crafted in France in the year of our country’s birth – 1776 – and Anne Enslow on hammered dulcimer. Anne provides a narrative of remarkable detail, transporting listeners back to every Revolutionary place and time. Other numbers focus on the mysterious Culper Ring of spies, hero Nathan Hale and double agent John Champe, who was sent to New York City to apprehend the traitor Benedict Arnold.

Yorktowners have a special connection to the “unfortunate” British Spy Master, Major John Andre, who ate his last meal as a free man at the Underhill House on Hanover Street. Andre’s numerous talents included poetry as evidenced by the song “The Cow Chase.” It is set to music by the Enslows, which he penned to mock a failed cattle raid by the American General “Mad” Anthony Wayne. Andre’s captor, Paulding, is also memorialized in another tune, “Brave Paulding.”

The Enslow’s program is a remarkable mix of history, music and entertainment – enjoyable for all ages and a triumphant reminder of our town’s place in the history of our country.

to celebrate this birthday.

Westchester County, and in particular, Yorktown, played a pivotal role in both the American Revolution and the founding of the United States, and passed a local resolution to honor the occasion. The Yorktown Heritage Preservation Commission is pleased to partner with Revolutionary Westchester 250 (RW250) in presenting special events relating to the nation’s birth.

For the Yorktown Concert – their first virtual foray – the Enslows have prepared a selection of songs and music entitled “Washington and his Spies.” Since much

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THERE'S A WORD FOR IT
A vocabulary-building quiz By Edward Goralski

Okto“ber” Fest October brings with it many ways to celebrate. Oktoberfest is a popular way to celebrate this month. Unfortunately the world famous Oktoberfest held in Germany was cancelled due to the pandemic. To help fill the void, the quiz this week features words that contain the letters “ber.” Cheers!

- aberrant (adj.)**
 A) atypical B) spiritless C) contrary
- clamber (v.)**
 A) to call for more B) hold tightly C) scramble
- flibbertigibbet (n.)**
 A) leftovers B) a silly person C) an old car
- protuberant (adj.)**
 A) flamboyant B) bulging C) full of pride
- auberge (n.)**
 A) an inn B) a morning song C) an eggplant
- berceuse (n.)**
 A) an apology B) an act of kindness C) a lullaby
- cyberbate (v.)**
 A) to use the internet B) hack a computer C) control by computer
- zeitgeber (n.)**
 A) an external stimulus B) excess devotion C) cultural climate

ANSWERS:
 1. A. Deviating from what is considered proper or normal; atypical; deviant
 2. C. To climb with difficulty, especially on all fours.
 3. B. A silly, scatterbrained, or garrulous person
 4. B. Swelling outward; bulging
 5. A. An inn or tavern
 6. C. A lullaby
 7. C. To control (an industrial process) by computer
 8. A. An external stimulus or cue, such as daylight or a regularly repeated occurrence that serves to regulate an organism's biological clock; signal

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White Plains Troupe Explores Mental Illness in its Performances

By Lindsay Emery

The Demitasse Players is an acting troupe based in White Plains that focuses on plays that concentrate on mental illness.

During the pandemic, the Players have gone virtual and upload plays on their website that can also be found on the White Plains Community Media cable channel.

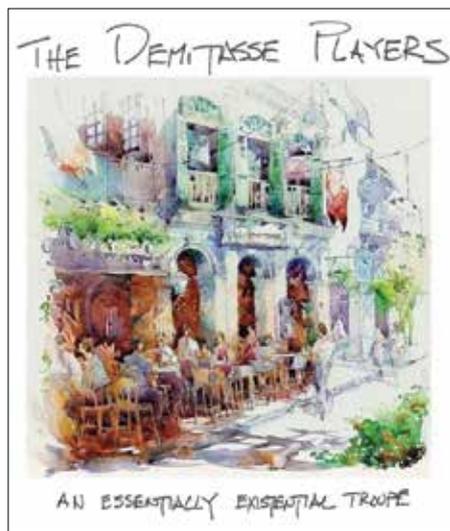
"I write all original plays and works that deal with mental illness and our vision is to use the stage as a tool, as a classroom, to teach people about mental illness, to try and remove taboos," said the troupe's founder Richard Cirulli.

Cirulli has written and performed four full-length plays during the past five years that deal with mental illness.

The troupe is coming up on its fifth anniversary following the launch in 2016 when Cirulli wrote his first play "Via Delarosa." Actress and child psychologist Benna Strober arrived at the Iron Tomato on a Saturday morning after responding to Cirulli's call for actors.

Strober is one of the founding members of the Players and found the combination of raising awareness for mental health and acting appealing when she auditioned for Cirulli.

"I liked the fact that it was available acting and there was a cause behind (it)," Strober said. "I think it's really great to spread awareness about mental illness so that we can kind of destigmatize it, and it's a way that we can sort of get stories out there in a different venue so that we can reach more people."



Fellow Players' actress and clinical social worker Alexa Servodidio, expressed a similar sentiment about the importance of raising awareness about mental health. Even though the plays might not end perfectly the dialogue that comes out of the shows is just as important about what life is like with mental illness.

"Unfortunately, whether it's mental health or also with life, it doesn't wrap up in a nice box with a bow," Servodidio said. "There's always other issues going on, but that doesn't mean people can't find happiness and peace and have a good life."

Cirulli explained that the Players want to bring awareness to the people around them and how they can help.



Richard Cirulli, the founder of The Demitasse Players, which addresses mental illness in its plays.

At the end of the show, Cirulli says that he tries to explain to people that they are in control of the ending of the real-life consequences.

"We try to emphasize that although you don't like the ending, we collectively as an audience have an opportunity to change it in real life if we just follow the character and show their slow decline into mental illness," Cirulli said.

Both Strober and Servodidio praised Cirulli and his directorial style for listening to the actors and his nonjudgmental attitude that encourages viewers to start a dialogue.

"From the characters, from the audience, from the actors, we don't put judgment on

anything that we're doing and I think that's what's really important, is that we don't try to pick a side, prove a point or anything like that," Servodidio said.

Digital Director Eric Scholz began building the Players' website but also helped Cirulli incorporate multimedia into his performances such as background videos. Scholz appreciates how Cirulli is invested in providing a full experience including digital and multimedia in addition to live player performances.

"But one of his big ideas is that the performance doesn't start on stage but with somebody looking at the click of the mouse on the website where they can learn and understand and see some of the performances and see what we do and continue their journey into what we do, whether it be an online performance or a live performance," Scholz said.

As the pandemic made live performances more difficult, Cirulli decided to start doing Studio E performances. "My Existential Virus" is a short documentary that consisted of poems about COVID-19 read by someone who has the virus and a severe mental disorder with original music overlays and graphic backgrounds.

The Players are currently taping an existential dramedy, "Vanity Hair," starring Servodidio and Susan Bond that will be released next month on YouTube, The Demitasse Players' website and on the White Plains Community Media cable station.

To watch The Demitasse Players' performances, you can find information on their website at <http://demitasseplayers.com>.

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