

Westchester Rising

PRESORT-STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
White Plains, NY
Permit #7164

Yonkerstimes.com

www.RisingMediaGroup.com

Friday December 24-31, 2021

Don't Expect Free at Home COVID Tests Until Feb. 2022, and It's Hard to Find them for Sale



By Dan Murphy

MSNBC host Andrea Mitchell said what many Westchester residents are thinking, during an interview with Dr. Anthony Fauci on Dec. 21. "The testing shortages are profound, I don't need to tell you, even for people who fortunately can pay for it and go commercially. They're just not available," Mitchell said. "The drugstores don't have them. The commercial locations don't have appointments ready because it's a holiday week, and we all should have anticipated this. I know the president is making a big announcement today, but isn't the administration behind the curve on being prepared to ship about 500 million free home tests when we need them now?"

The people of Westchester should not expect to see a Free COVID home testing kit for at least 30 days. That is despite efforts by NY Governor Kathy Hochul to get free test kits to health centers and clinics here in Westchester and across the state, and the recent announcement by President Joe Biden that 500 million home testing kits have been ordered, but will not arrive until Feb. 2022.

Until recently, COVID home testing kits were available for sale at your neighborhood pharmacy for about \$30. Now most of the drug stores are sold out, and the Westchester residents who are traveling for the holidays are lining up outside of Urgent Care centers to get tested.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said that he has offered to reopen the County Center in White Plains and Glen Island Park in New Rochelle as testing sites to Governor Kathy Hochul.

New York State will have to staff the locations, and find a health care partner to operate the site, but the hope is that both could be open in January.

Many Westchester residents who are waiting on long lines to get tested in communities like Yonkers and White Plains are asking a question that we believe has merit. One mother and daughter who were flying to relatives for Christmas and wanted to get tested before they left asked, "Why didn't anyone think about ordering these tests earlier this year?"

And the responsibility to order 500 million COVID tests rests with our Federal government. Don't blame the County Executive or our Governor for not having tests to give you. Westchester County or New York State can't buy mass amounts of

continued on pg 6-

DiBartolo Gets No Jail Time for Home Depot Thefts, But Hope for His Victims Remains



"The Home Depot case has concluded, but other investigations related to positions held or businesses owned remain ongoing."

-Westchester County District Attorney's Office

Eric DiBartolo, left

By Dan Murphy

On Dec. 16, Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced that Yorktown resident Eric DiBartolo and Cortlandt Manor resident Tyrone Bass were sentenced for stealing nearly \$15,000 worth of merchandise from The Home Depot in 20

DiBartolo, 60, pled guilty to Petit Larceny, and Bass, 59, pled guilty to Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Fifth Degree, both misdemeanors. Each defendant was sentenced to a one-year conditional discharge, 50 hours of community service, and are barred from entering all Home Depot locations. DiBartolo also paid full restitution for the items stolen from the Mohegan Lake Home Depot store.

"Eric DiBartolo hatched this organized and ongoing scheme to steal thousands of dollars of merchandise," DA Rocah said. "He and his accomplice will now be held accountable in a manner consistent with other perpetrators of similar theft operations."

On over 20 occasions between Aug. 2020 and Dec. 2020, DiBartolo acted with Bass, a cashier at the store, to steal \$14,469 worth of building supplies, tools and other merchandise from The Home Depot in Mohegan Lake. During each visit, DiBartolo brought his merchandise to Bass, who only scanned a portion of the items and placed the remaining, unpaid merchandise into shopping bags. On each occasion, DiBartolo exited the store only paying for a few of the many items he left with.

Following an investigation, the Westchester County Department of Public Safety arrested Bass on Dec. 16, 2020 and DiBartolo on Jan. 6, 2021. The case was before Judge Maritza Fugaro-Norton in Cortlandt Town Court, and was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Livia Rodriguez.

continued on pg 7-

As COVID Rages On With Omicron Variant, Debate Over Masking Continues



Republican Gubernatorial candidate Lee Zeldin in Yorktown, with town officials, opposing mask mandate

By Dan Murphy

"We have politicians who are trying to pander to extreme ideologues who willfully tell us to not mask and not to vaccinate. That is playing with people's health for political gain. They should be ashamed ...but they're not."

-County Executive George Latimer

As COVID cases in Westchester County and across New York State increase exponentially, the debate over wearing a mask in public should be mandatory continues, with County Executive George Latimer making the case for vaccinations, masks and respecting your neighbors and fellow Westchester residents by staying safe, and Lee Zeldin, one of the republican candidates for Governor who came to Northern Westchester to speak out against Governor Kathy Hochul's mask mandate.

Latimer is completing his home quarantine after testing positive. He remained in relatively good health and conducted the business of Westchester County during this time, including signing the county budget for 2022, (see story on pg 4). Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins also tested positive and was at home under quarantine. Jenkins explained his symptoms as "like having a cold, with mild symptoms of chills and aches."

Both Latimer and Jenkins were vaccinated, and the point of both sharing their story is to caution Westchester residents to get vaccinated and boosted, because it will help you stay healthy, and out of the hospital if you become COVID positive. Latimer said that 94% of Westchester residents over the age of 18 has at least one dose and 83% have two doses, (700,000 Westchester residents).

The vaccination totals indicate that 9 out of 10 county residents support the science of vaccinations. And if you travel around the county, more than 9 out of 10 residents are wearing a mask.

In his weekly COVID update on Dec. 20, Latimer said that county government would be distributing 500,000 free masks, and that the Westchester County Center in White Plains has been offered to Gov. Hochul as a state testing site. Latimer added that all county meetings would be held remotely until the end of January and that while Westchester was enforcing the mask mandate, "we will do so without confrontation."

continued on pg 7-

Westchester Schools & Police Departments Address Dec. 17 TikTok Threats



By Dan Murphy

Several Westchester NY school district and local police departments addressed a number of vague warnings posted on TikTok about violence at schools on Dec. 17. The threats were made across the country and most schools stayed open, with both local and national law enforcement stating that the threats were low level with little or no specifics posted.

The Pelham School District took the threat most seriously, and conducted class on Dec. 17 remotely. "Early this morning, a parent outside of Pelham became aware of a screenshot of an anonymous Snapchat message that threatened a school shooting at "PMS." Recognizing that this could be a threat against Pelham Middle School the parent immediately notified Pelham Police early this morning, who relayed this information to us and immediately began investigating. While it was unclear if this threat was credible or not, the fact that it appeared to reference a specific school in our District necessitated that we close our school facilities to students and staff out of an abundance of caution and to allow time for police to investigate.

At about 3pm, we received the following update for the Pelham Police Department: "At approximately 6:30am, the Pelham Police Department received an initial complaint of a perceived threat against the Pelham Middle School. It has been determined this morning's social media threat was part of a nationwide viral social media challenge. There were no direct or specific threats to the Pelham School

continued on pg 7-

Cargiver Channels Frustration at Mother's Alzheimer's Battle Into Working for a Cure



Gwen Farassat, right, with her mom, Sally Factor

Gwen Farassat of Mamaroneck said that she and her brother, David Factor of Chappaqua, first realized that their mother, Sally Factor, was experiencing cognitive changes when she began having difficulty with finances.

A former real-estate broker from the Boston area, Sally Factor had lived an independent and dynamic life with many friends and activities. Widowed at 49, she put both of her children through college and traveled extensively after her husband's death.

"She was a dynamo. I would visit my mother at home, and when we would walk in the downtown area — everyone would know her; she always had lots of friends. She was always petite and energetic," Farassat recalled.

After retirement, Sally Factor moved to Heritage Hills in Somers to be closer to her children and grandchildren, where she lived for 14 years. There, she continued to live an active life while volunteering in the community.

"She played golf several times a week. She was very philanthropic; she would drive people to doctor's appointments who couldn't get there. She helped people cope with cancer diagnoses later in life when she had more free time." But when Sally Factor didn't file her taxes, Farassat and her brother realized something was off.

"She had an accountant who would send a checklist every year, and my mother didn't do it. That wasn't like her," she recalled. "She was initially diagnosed with MCI (mild cognitive impairment), probably six years ago. That's when my brother and I noticed that she was having some difficulty — but she was still able to take care of herself."

But eventually, about two years later, they began noticing some disturbing signs. Sally Factor's microwave door had been mysteriously burned, and her refrigerator was never full.

"We got concerned about her safety living alone, driving. She wasn't cooking meals for herself, she wasn't eating; her weight had gotten really low. Her refrigerator was always empty unless we brought her food."

So three years ago, they moved her to an assisted living facility. "It was actually a really great fit for her at the time," Farassat recalled. "It provided the oversight and assistance she needed, but at the same time, she had her own apartment. She could pick and choose the activities she did." But during COVID, her condition worsened, and eventually the choices and independence of the assisted living became a source of anxiety rather than a benefit. Suddenly all the choices had become overwhelming.

"My mother had anxiety and frustration. 'Something's going on here,' she would tell me. She didn't feel comfortable, she was overwhelmed, and she had trouble putting it into words." At that point, they moved her to a memory care unit.

Farassat said the COVID-19 pandemic likely took a toll on her mother's decline because of the isolation it forced on the assisted living residents. "Early on in the pandemic, the residents were almost isolated in their rooms — they were having meals in their rooms. For someone suffering from dementia, I think it was torture. We'll never know how much the decline that occurred during the pandemic was just the natural course of the disease and how much it might have been sped up by the isolation. And then when they did have things had things under control, they had a visitation room where we could schedule a visit for 45 minutes. We had to sit a certain number of feet apart wearing a mask. It wasn't very personal."

During November, which is National Family Caregiver Month, the Alzheimer's Association recognizes the impact of caregiving and honors the more than 11 million Americans caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease. Some of these caregivers may not even think of themselves as caregivers. Farassat said she was initially in this category.

"Originally, I didn't think of myself as a caregiver," she said, because she doesn't actually administer her mother's daily care. But as she became more involved with the Alzheimer's Association, she learned the role can take many forms. She said it has been hard watching her mother decline and knowing there is no way to stop it.

"One of my kids gets sick, and I'm going to take them to the doctor and get to the bottom of it, but I can't do that with my mother. I can't change the course of the disease; that's frustrating and sad. I've taken that negative energy and am putting it into something positive by turning it to the Alzheimer's Association. There is something comforting when other people are experiencing something similar to what you are. That's one part. The other part is raising the money for the research, services and care."

This year she started a team for the Westchester Walk to End Alzheimer's, Sally's Soldiers, which raised more than \$10,000. She also joined the walk planning committee as co-Mission Chair, a role she plans to continue solo in 2022. She says she finds the work fulfilling.

"I couldn't be more proud of my team," she said. "Once I got involved, and started doing the fundraising, it's amazing how many people have been touched in some way by dementia." She said that was a factor in her team's fundraising success. "I love the work that I've been doing, I love the people I've been meeting. It's been really helpful to me, just to try to give back."

To learn more about the programs and services offered locally, visit alz.org/hudsonvalley.

President Biden Calls Out Mt. Vernon Police Dept. for Investigation



On Dec. 17, President Joe Biden delivered a speech at South Carolina State University, for their 2021 Fall Commencement Ceremony. The speech, given to a class of graduates from a HBCU, (Historically Black College & University), included the following. On police reform, I share the frustration — and I know the family well — George Family [Floyd] Justice Act and Policing Act. I know the family well. It's not been passed in the Senate, but the fight is not over. (Applause.)

Despite Republican obstructionism on this bill, we've made changes to federal law enforcement policies that I have the ability to do with the stroke of a pen. The Justice Department has banned chokeholds, restricted no-knock warrants, required federal agents to wear and activate body cameras It — also ending the Justice Department's use of private prisons, rescinding previous administration requirements that U.S. attorneys seek the harshest penalties.

"The Justice Department has opened a pattern-or-practice investigation into systemic misconduct in police departments in Phoenix; Louisville; Minneapolis; Mount Vernon, New York," said Biden.

The President's negative reference to the Mount Vernon PD was based on a Dec. 3 announcement that the Justice Department has opened a pattern or practice investigation into the Mount Vernon Police Department (MVPD). "The investigation will assess whether MVPD engages in a pattern or practice of discriminatory policing. The investigation will also assess MVPD's use of force, strip and body cavity searches, and how it handles evidence."

Federal officials said they had reviewed public information, including news reports, and complaints from residents over the police department's conduct.

In 2019, the Gothamist broke the cover on the misconduct at the MVPD with an expose from former Police Officer Murashea Bovell. <https://gothamist.com/news/mount-vernon-police-tapes-secretly-recorded-calls-officers-allege-beatings-custody-and-illegal-strip-searches>

"We've struggled for years to get this message out. We're happy the Justice Department finally heard us," said Joseph Murray, Bovell's attorney, who said he and his client have shared information with federal officials.

In May 2021, Westchester County District Attorney Mimi Rocah requested that the Justice Department conduct a review of the MVPD. "The Westchester District Attorney's Office is engaged in ongoing criminal investigations of certain individual MVPD police officers," DA Rocah said. "In the course of those investigations, based largely on publicly available information, we have found disturbing allegations of patterns of inappropriate and potentially unlawful conduct by several former and current members of the MVPD. We have provided information that we gathered in this respect to DOJ."

"While our criminal investigations of individual officers continue, we are requesting that DOJ scrutinize the MVPD's operations, training and policies to determine whether the MVPD is systematically violating peoples' civil rights and, if so, to take action to address these matters."

Yorktown offices closed to visitors; public meetings online only

Yorktown's municipal offices will be closed to visitors and online-only public meetings will resume in response to rising Covid-19 cases.

Effective Tuesday, December 21, anyone doing business at Town Hall or other Town offices must call or email town staff. The policy will remain in effect until the first week of January, at which time Town officials will reevaluate the decision.

"These actions are common-sense responses designed to protect the health and safety of the public and our employees," said Supervisor Matt Slater. "I ask everyone doing business with our Town to have patience and understanding. We are still open for business by phone and email."

In addition to the no-visitors policy at municipal offices, the John C. Hart Memorial Library will resume porch-pick-up only and patrons are not allowed inside the library.

Since early November, Yorktown has experienced a significant increase in Covid-19 cases, according to the Town's Covid-19 dashboard on the Town's website. On December 16, the number of active Covid-19 cases was as high as the number of active cases on February 9—a period when most of the Town's population was unvaccinated.

The Delightful Gift

- 4 Butcher's Cut Top Sirloin (8 oz.)
- 4 Filet Mignon Burgers (5.5 oz.)
- 4 Boneless Chicken Breasts (7 lb. pkg.)
- 4 Gourmet Potato Fries (3 oz.)
- 4 Individual Grilled Potatoes (3.5 oz.)
- 4 Gourmet Apple Slices (4 oz.)
- 1 Jar Signature Seasoning (3.1 oz. jar)
- 1 Jar Filet Mignon Burgers (2.5 oz.)

Order Now! 1.844.615.2744 ask for 6565BPTN
OmahaSteaks.com/TheGift1248

THE CATSKILLS
OF ORANGETOWN COUNTY

New Year's Eve Events

- 12/31 – New Year's Eve Dinner Party at Riedlbauer's Resort | Roundtop, NY
- 12/31 – A Celestial New Year's Eve at Scribner's Catskill Lodge + Prospect | Hunter, NY
- 12/31 – New Year's Firework Display at Windham Mountain | Windham, NY

See more at greatnortherncatskills.com/events

Upgrade Your Home with a **NEW METAL ROOF**
Guaranteed to Last a Lifetime!

LIMITED TIME OFFER
60% off
YOUR INSTALLATION
+
TAKE AN ADDITIONAL 10% off
Install for Millers, Booth Workers and First Responders

STRONG AS STEEL WITH THE ATTRACTIVE LOOK OF VARIOUS ROOF STYLES
From Ornamental Shingles to sleek, clean, sophisticated Color Steel and Spanish Tile, we use advanced roofing systems by Elite Metal Panels can enhance the beauty of your home while protecting your family and property for a lifetime.

Call today to schedule your **FREE ESTIMATE 1-855-492-6084**

ERIE Metal Roofs

Stepinac HS Alumnus Donates \$1 Million to Alma Mater



Susan and Dan Mahoney with Stepinac Honors Academy students (l-r): Calvin Lindo, Nathaniel Alvarez and Lachlan McIntyre.

Daniel P. Mahoney, a distinguished alumnus (Class of '67) and long-time supporter of Stepinac High School, recently returned with his wife, Susan, to give back again to his alma mater that he credits for shaping his success as well as those of many other young men, with a \$1 million gift, the single largest donation in the 73-year history of the renowned all-boys Catholic high school. In recognition of the significance that the contribution will make in supporting the school's mission to provide students with the skills they will need to be globally competitive, the groundbreaking Honors Academy will be renamed the Susan and Daniel P. Mahoney Honors Academy.

In accepting Mahoney's gift, Fr. Thomas Collins (Class of '79), Stepinac President, said: "On behalf of our truly grateful Stepinac family, especially the students, I extend deep appreciation for your very generous gift. It truly reflects your abiding faith in the school's tradition of shaping tomorrow's leaders. Thanks to your investment, you will help assure that Stepinac remains strong as a preeminent leader in secondary education."

Dan grew up in an extended Stepinac family. His older brothers, Walter and Jay, respectively, graduated in 1963 and 1965 as well as cousins Bob Silbernagel, 1962 and Kenny Silbernagel, 1965.

After graduating in 1971 from Boston College where he majored in finance, Dan pursued a successful career spanning more than 30 years on Wall Street as a New York Stock Exchange specialist. He served as a senior partner at CMJ Partners, a leading New York Stock Exchange member firm.

The Mahoneys, now living in Jupiter, Florida, were longtime residents of Rye where they became pillars of that community as well as the neighboring region. Susan served on the board of trustees of Rye Country Day School for 14 years and was responsible for leading three major fund-raising campaigns.

When asked if he had some advice to impart to today's students, Dan said: "Listen, learn, take risks, bring others along with your success and, above all, believe in yourself."

We all Need A 'Linus Blanket'



By Eric W. Schoen

I was looking forward to writing a very positive column for our Christmas-New Year combined edition this week. I thought we would all be gathering with family and friends which it's hard to believe we haven't done in close to two years. People freely traveling to visit their loved ones like any normal year.

But as I sat down earlier this week, all I could think of is that we all need a 'Linus Blanket' right now. Don't tell me you don't know what that is! If you are not familiar with the Peanuts comic strip, no better time to turn on your 75 inch television and watch 'A Charlie Brown Christmas' this week or next.

Peanuts is a syndicated daily and Sunday American comic strip written and illustrated by Charles M. Schulz. The strip's original run extended from 1950 to 2000, continuing in reruns afterward. Peanuts is among the most popular and influential in the history of comic strips, with 17,897 strips published in all. It is referred to as "arguably the longest story ever told by one human being".

The phrase 'Linus Blanket' denotes an object, or occasionally a person, depended upon for reassurance and comfort. It was named after Linus van Pelt, a small boy who carries a blanket for comfort in the Peanuts comic strip. No one even Snoopy the dog in the strip can snatch away the blanket from Linus.

There's a lot going on in the world today, particularly in the area of our health. I'm not going to go into the details. I've done it via these columns so many times. Not that you shouldn't stay aware of what's going on in the world. Pick up every newspaper, turn on every television and radio station, turn on your iPads, iPhones, Laptops, Desktops and you will find what you need to know.

But we all need a 'Linus Blanket' for reassurance and comfort. Things are going to be alright. Whether it be a physical blanket like Linus used, or just someone to talk to when we are feeling down. Many of us if not all of us are in a state of confusion. We don't know what's going to happen next not only with ourselves but with our families and friends.

If you have watched 'A Charlie Brown Christmas' you know Charlie Brown doesn't have a big Christmas tree adorned with lights and bright bulbs and sentimental ornaments and tinsel like many of you have. He picks an unattractive Christmas tree to decorate. To Charlie Brown, The selection of the tree represents a protest against the commercialization of Christmas.

Yes, Christmas and Chanukah have become commercialized. Just this week I picked up a four foot Chanukah Menorah inflatable that will adorn my garden area next year. Did I need it? No. Have I lived without it for 61 years? You bet! But my hope in purchasing it is to share the joy of my holiday with others. And since this was the first time I ever saw one and it was on sale I thought I would buy it to have a little something new to look forward to brightening my holiday next year.

We have so much to be grateful for this Christmas and for the New Year. Things we take for granted and that many people in the world don't have. We have food on the table, and that table will be full on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

continued on pg 6-

**Happy New Year Westchester
See You in 2022!**



Harrison Opts Out of Marijuana Dispensaries & Cafes: Greenburgh Splits Vote

23 Westchester Communities Say No

21 Say Yes to Legal Pot Stores -Shops -Smoking Lounges

The Town of Harrison voted NO at their meeting on Dec. 16 to permitting Marijuana Cafes and Dispensaries in their community. This is good news for many Harrison residents who did not want their children and students walking past a cafe or store that sells marijuana, once the details are figured out by the NY State Office of Cannabis management. Earlier this year, republicans and democrats in Harrison were opposed to legal pot stores, so the vote comes as no surprise, but the Town Board and outgoing Mayor Ron Belmont did wait until the last minute to do so. Local communities have until Dec. 31 to opt out; after that if your town, village or city hasn't opted out they have in essence Opted-in to permitting marijuana on main street.

Harrison becomes the 23rd Westchester community to Opt-Out, with 25 communities either opting in for dispensaries or cafes, or not voting, which means Opt-in.

On Dec. 14, the Greenburgh Town Board split their vote on legal cannabis. The Town Board voted 4-1 to permit cannabis dispensaries, but No to Cannabis lounges. Greenburgh Supervisor Paul Feiner voted no on both matters and email the community explaining what happened. "The Greenburgh Town Board voted 4-1 to allow cannabis dispensaries to be located in Greenburgh. I voted no. The Board also agreed not to allow Cannabis lounges in the town (we all agreed) and directed the Commissioner of Planning to draft a local law regulating time, place and manner associated with adult-use recreational cannabis dispensaries, utilizing the following guiding principles: 1. Dispensaries shall not be permitted in any residential zones or mixed-use corridors (East Hartsdale Avenue, Rt. 119, Central Avenue, etc.) immediately and/or significantly abutting residential zoning districts 2. Minimum linear separation distances be required from schools, playgrounds, public parks, etc. The 2nd resolution requiring the Commissioner of Planning to draft a local law was approved unanimously.

"On December 8th members of the Town Board received a letter from the Greenburgh Council of Civic Associations. The organization, representing civic associations in Greenburgh polled their membership and recommended "opting out, at least for the present time. Several representatives suggested awaiting regulations from the Cannabis Control Board and then adopting the necessary Greenburgh Zoning legislation regarding the time, place and manner of locating such establishments in unincorporated Greenburgh before a decision is made to "Opt In at a later date." I agree with the Council And that is why I voted no. Municipalities that opt out can later opt in.

NYS is moving cautiously with the roll out of guidelines for marijuana dispensaries for what clearly are myriad social, fiscal and regulatory reasons. I believe there is inadequate information available for the Town Board to make a prudent decision regarding allowing dispensaries to operate. I suggested that until adequate info is available we should opt out. If in the future the obstacles and issues regarding such dispensaries are addressed Greenburgh could have comfortably revisited the matter and with the input of our community organizations and their leadership the Town Board could more intelligently decide if we should participate," writes Feiner.

In the Town of Greenburgh, some of the villages have opted in, while others have opted out. Tarrytown and Hastings have opted In, while Ardsley, Elmsford, Dobbs Ferry and Irvington have opted out.

In total, about one-third of all communities in NY State have Opted-Out.

Latimer Signs 2022 County Budget with Small Tax Cut; Services Maintained & Expanded

On Dec. 14, Westchester County Executive George Latimer signed the 2022 Westchester County Budget officially cutting the County Property tax levy by \$7 million dollars. This is the third County property tax cut in a row for Latimer, and the largest cut in over a decade.

Latimer said:"This is an important budget, its represents the third consecutive year we have cut County property taxes. This budget cuts the levy of \$7M, totaling \$9M over the last three years. I thank the Westchester County Board of Legislators for their hard work on this budget. I am proud of this budget and proud that through smart and innovative budgeting, we have been able to cut taxes responsibly again, find new revenue sources, save and provide needed services to County residents. We are committed to doing right by the people of Westchester County – and that is exactly what we have done."

Latimer's 2022 County Budget totals \$2.2 billion while restoring fiscal stability. The County is closing 2021 with a \$64 million operating surplus.

CHILD CARE: The 2022 budget contains a total of \$38.9 million for childcare subsidies. An increase of \$10.2 million from 2021 levels (\$28.7 million).

- Expanded income eligibility up to 85% of State Median Wage. From \$73k for a family of 4 previously, to \$89k now.
- Reduced the parent contribution from 27 to 10 percent of income above the poverty level, a 63 percent decrease.
- Increased provider rates.

Child Care Council of Westchester, Inc. Executive Director Kathy Halas said: "We applaud both the County Executive and his team and the Westchester County Board of Legislators for this historic investment in child care. It represents a belief that access to affordable, safe, quality child care benefits children, parents, employers, in fact all of us. Westchester County is leading the way on this critical economic issue."

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Department of Public Safety total budget is \$52.8 million – the largest in County history. The budget will add Spanish-speaking patrol officers, a result of the County administering a police officer exam for Spanish speaking officers in March 2021.

Westchester County Public Safety Commissioner Tom Gleason said:"This budget allows the Westchester County Police to maintain our full staffing levels and fill vacancies that occurred during the year due to retirements. I am grateful to the County Executive and Board of Legislators for fully funding our Department and enabling us to provide the police services that keep people safe."

Westchester County Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force Co-Chair Mayo Bartlett said: "Westchester County Executive George Latimer and the Westchester County Board of Legislators have taken a pivotal step toward making law enforcement more accessible to the residents of Westchester, and to those who visit Westchester. The inclusion of Spanish speaking patrol officers greatly increases the potential to accurately address criminal incidents through clearer interaction with suspects as well as complainants. This measure may reduce misunderstandings between law enforcement and members of the Spanish speaking community by removing potential language barriers."

Environment: major improvements are planned for the Mamaroneck and Yonkers wastewater recovery facilities in 2022. \$37.5 million is included for Mamaroneck for a variety of improvements including nitrogen and phosphorus removal to protect the Long Island Sound, emergency power systems and odor control. At Yonkers, \$22.6 million is included primarily for additional odor control measures and the completion of the methane recapture project that will allow the facility to generate approximately 70 percent of its energy needs.

Long committed to environmental conservation efforts, the County Executive has earmarked:

- \$31.9 million in appropriations for the purchase of electric hybrid buses for the County's Bee-Line Bus System;
- \$4.3 million to begin the process of electrifying the County's two bus garages;
- \$1 million for the installation of EV charging stations at County facilities; and
- \$1.1 million for improvements at Hilltop Hanover Environmental Center.

HOUSING

As in prior years, affordable housing is once again a top priority with a combined \$50 million included in the Capital Budget for land acquisition and infrastructure improvements to support the development of affordable housing within the County – this represents the largest single year commitment to affordable housing in County history.

Small Landlord Rehabilitation Assistance Program: Total \$10 million to provide money which landlords can use to repair, rehabilitate or improve apartment units, but in exchange, the units must remain affordable for a fixed period of time.

Mount Vernon United Tenants Executive Director Dennis Hanratty said: "Affordable housing continues to remain the County's most intractable problem. Fortunately, the County Executive both recognizes this and is willing to act to address this. This is evidenced by his inclusion of \$60 million in his Capital Budget, and \$10 million in the Small Landlord Rehabilitation Assistance Program. This commitment of public funds is exactly what our communities need. Thank you County Executive Latimer!"

NOTICE TO NEW YORK RESIDENTS

Homeowner Funding enables families to make necessary energy efficient home repairs who:

- ARE UNABLE TO PAY CASH FOR NECESSARY HOME REPAIRS.
- CANNOT AFFORD HIGH OR ADDITIONAL MONTHLY PAYMENTS.
- HAVE BEEN TURNED DOWN FOR FREE STATE OR GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.

REPAIRS INCLUDE:
ROOFING · SIDING · WINDOWS · DOORS & MORE...

up to **\$25,000**

NO Money Down / NO Equity Required

QUALIFY TODAY: **(800) 736-9629**
or visit NYImprovementFund.com

Approved applicants will have the work completed by a quality repair crew provided by HOMEOWNER FUNDING.

DENTAL Insurance

from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company

Call to get your **FREE** Information Kit

1-855-225-1434

Dental50Plus.com/mypress

Offering not available in all states. See rules. The participating Dr. My Press provider and Provider benefits. Some restrictions apply for one person per group. Read the fine print. Contact us for complete details. Some restrictions apply. This service may not be available in all states. Call us today. (1) 855-225-1434 or visit us online at Dental50Plus.com or request for info by email: info@Dental50Plus.com

COMPUTER PROBLEMS?

Friendly Certified Computer Repair Experts

Simply mention coupon code 42513 and get **\$20 OFF** any service you need!

Geeks on Site

Call Now for a **FREE** Diagnosis

1-866-848-0045

Westchester Congressman Bowman "Outraged" That Build Back Better Bill Delayed Until 2022



Rep. Jamaal Bowman

On Dec. 17, with the US Senate now out of session and taking their holiday recess without passing the Build Back Better Bill, or Human Infrastructure, \$2 Trillion spending plan, Westchester Congressman Jamaal Bowman denounced the delays in passing voting rights, democracy reform, and police abuse.

"For months, the Senate has centered Senator Manchin while failing to center what matters most: the basic needs and dignity of everyday people in my district and across the country," said Congressman Jamaal Bowman (NY-16). "The Senate's decision not to move forward on the Build Back Better Act is a reflection of that chamber's disregard of the people's most immediate needs."

"The House passed the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act on March 3, the For the People Act on March 3, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act on August 24, and it has now been 29 days since we passed the Build Back Better Act. These life and democracy saving bills haven't reached the President's desk because of two senators and what they represent: powerful special interest groups and corporate lobbyists who use money to protect the status quo and endanger our future."

"Every day that the Senate fails to act is another day that my community loses out on life-saving and life-changing resources. When the Senate says "no" to progress, it's really saying that it's willing to end child tax credit payments for 84,000 families in NY-16. In our district, the Senate is willing to tell over 44,400 children that childcare and universal pre-k isn't guaranteed for them, delay over \$151 billion in funding to improve 4,266 public housing units, and continue forcing our neighbors suffering from diabetes to choose between insulin and rent. They're willing to let police escape accountability after murdering Black men and women, and they're willing to let our democracy crumble."

Last month, Rep. Bowman voted no on a \$1.2 Trillion infrastructure bill because an agreement to vote on both bills together was changed at the last minute, with the first infrastructure bill being voted on and approved by both the House and the Senate. But the Build Back Better, Human Infrastructure Bill passed in the House on Nov. 19, the U.S. Senate never voted on it because there was not support from 50 Senators for its passage.

"While I feared that passing funding for roads and bridges without funding for families and children would result in this situation, the Senate's failure to act is not just about Build Back Better. It is past time to end the filibuster and ensure the Senate puts people over profits."

"The American people elected President Biden because of his commitment to deliver these resources to our community, and from day one, I have been committed to helping him get his full agenda across the finish line. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to work with me to find solutions and pass every single bill sent to them. If Democrats want to continue to have the opportunity to deliver for the American people, we must deliver on the promise of a more equitable and inclusive world – passing each of these transformative bills is the first step in that mission."

Two U.S. Senators, democrats Joe Manchin (West Virginia) and Kristen Sinema (Arizona), will not support BBB. President Joe Biden has been trying to negotiate changes to win the support of both. With the Senate in a 50-50 tie, both Manchin and Sinema must vote yes on BBB, so that Vice-President Kamala Harris can break the tie.

U.S. Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has been trying to get Manchin to switch parties, become a republican, and give the majority back to the GOP. If that happens BBB is officially dead; right now it is on life support.

Last week, another Westchester Congressman, Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney said that the SALT (State and Local Tax Cap) provision of BBB, was going to be modified to help Westchester homeowners deduct more of their property taxes, was "on the one yard line" and headed for a touchdown.

It now appears there was a fumble on the one yard line. We would encourage our elected officials to WAIT until the legislation that they are patting themselves on the back passes first please!

Westchester Teen Collects Holiday Gift Cards for Foster Children



congratulations to Sky Sams, 2nd left, for giving back this holiday season

One Westchester County teen made it her mission to see other children smile this holiday season, and she deserves our utmost praise. Thirteen-year-old Sky Sams, a STEER Student Athlete from Port Chester, set a goal to collect as many \$25 Visa Gift Cards as there are teenagers in Westchester County's Foster Care System. After making a video and posting it on social media to enlist the help of her family, friends and peers, Sky was able to raise enough money to purchase 118 \$25 dollar gift cards, enough for the 116 teenagers in Westchester County Foster Care.

Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Social Services Leonard Townes said: "Sky's compassion is an example to us all. Her willingness to sacrifice her time and consider others above herself is a true reflection of the spirit of the holidays and the meaning of Christmas. The heart she displayed is one we all need to imitate."

To find out more about how to make donations to children in Westchester County's Foster Care System, please contact Barbara Sabater at (914) 995-1937 or via email at bms7@westchestergov.com

WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHER

ARRAIGNED FOR FRAUDULENT COVID-19 VACCINATION CARD

Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced the arraignment of a former Westchester Community College assistant teacher who altered a COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card to obtain a full-time position at the college.

Sonya Tarter Wilson, 50, of Mount Vernon, was charged on December 21, 2021, in Greenburgh Town Court with Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a felony. The Westchester County Department of Public Safety made the arrest following an investigation.

On November 9, 2021, at approximately 6:07 a.m., Wilson submitted a copy of a forged COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card, with her name and date of birth, in order to obtain permanent employment at Westchester Community College, which has a vaccination requirement. When asked by the college for the original COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card, Wilson admitted that the card she submitted belonged to a family member and that she altered the information on it.

"The creation of fraudulent vaccination cards is a deceitful tactic that puts others at an increased risk of the serious effects of COVID-19," DA Rocah said. "Individuals with relevant information about anyone possessing or selling fake or altered COVID-19 vaccination cards are encouraged to contact my office."

Wilson is scheduled to appear again in Greenburgh Town Court on January 21, 2022. If anyone has information on someone purchasing, in possession of or selling fake or forged vaccination cards, please call the District Attorney's Office at (914) 995-TIPS.

Attorney General James Asks Consumers to Report Price Gouging of At-Home COVID-19 Testing Kits

On Dec. 21, New York Attorney General Letitia James issued a consumer alert to New Yorkers concerning potential price gouging of over-the-counter coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) testing products for at-home use, as well as other in-demand essential products. This comes in light of a surge of COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant, which has resulted in the rise of New Yorkers seeking to use at-home testing kits before gathering with friends and loved ones for the holidays. "As New York sees an exponential rise in COVID-19 cases, more and more New Yorkers are looking for at-home tests and other tools in the fight against the coronavirus," said Attorney General James. "If New Yorkers see exorbitant price increases on testing kits or other goods vital and necessary for health, safety, and welfare, they are encouraged to report it my office immediately. And fraudsters are on notice that if they attempt to price gouge during this new surge, we will not hesitate to take action."

The Office of Attorney General (OAG) has received complaints of COVID-19 testing products being sold at double or triple its retail price. A standard BinaxNOW brand test kit at a New York store, like Walgreens, costs appropriately between \$14 and \$25 for a package of two tests, however, there has been alleged reports of the same products being unlawfully sold for more than \$40 and up to \$70 per package.

New York law prohibits merchants from taking unfair advantage of consumers by selling goods or services that are vital to their health, safety, or welfare for an "unconscionably excessive" price. Last year, a law was passed that substantially strengthened Attorney General James' ability to bring charges against individuals and entities violating New York state's price gouging law. Any New Yorker who is aware of or believes that they have been the victim of price gouging is encouraged to file a complaint online or call 800-771-7755.

WE SPECIALIZE IN STAINLESS STEEL LINING SYSTEMS
Always Affordable Chimney Inc.
Much more than sweeping chimneys!
 — 24 Hour Emergency Service —

- Stainless Steel Chimney Linings/Caps
- Exhaust/Flue Pipe Repairs
- Level, 4, 6 and 8" Chimney Inspections
- Chimney Cap Support/Installation
- Professional Cleanings

10% OFF
 ALL BRICK WORK ON CHIMNEY HOUSING

BOILER FLUE CLEANING
 Starting at \$99 for residential; call for commercial quotes

FIREPLACE CLEANING
 Starting at \$99

800-344-8880 • 914-420-0111
 www.alwaysaffordablechimney.com

Wheels For Wishes
 Providing Make-A-Wish® Northeast New York
Your Car Donations Matter NOW More Than Ever!

- Free Vehicle Pick up ANYWHERE
- 100% Tax Deductible
- All Appraisals Meet Vehicles Running or Not
- Minimal To No Storage Charges!

Call: (877) 798-9174 WheelsForWishes.org

Saving a Life EVERY 11 MINUTES

I'm never alone

Life Alert® is always here for me.

One touch of a button sends help fast, 24/7.

Help at Home | Help On-the-Go

Life Alert® Batteries Never Need Charging.

For a FREE brochure call:
1-800-404-9776

GENERAC

Prepare for power outages with a Generac home standby generator

REQUEST A FREE QUOTE!
877-516-1160

FREE
 7-Year Extended Warranty*
 A \$695 Value!
 Limited Time Offer - Call for Details

Special Financing Available
 Subject to Credit Approval

*To qualify, consumers must request a quote, purchase, install and activate the generator with a participating dealer. Call for a full list of terms and conditions.

Legal Notices

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER DYNASTY, LLC, Plaintiff AGAINST CGSRE ACQUISITION CORP, ET AL., Defendant(s) Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly entered 10-22-2021 I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Westchester County Courthouse, 111 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Courtroom 200, White Plains, NY on December 23, 2021 at 10:30AM, premises known as 68 Runyon Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10710. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the City of Yonkers, County of Westchester and State of New York, Section: 3 Block: 3112 Lot: 59+60. Approximate amount of judgment \$1,792,943.78 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index #50855/2019. The aforementioned auction will be conducted in accordance with the Westchester County COVID-19 Protocols located on the Office of Court Administration (OCA) website (<https://ww2.nycourts.gov/Admin/oca.shtml>) and as such all persons must comply with social distancing, wearing masks and screening practices in effect at the time of this foreclosure sale. Anthony J. Centone, Esq., Referee CLAIR GJERTSEN & WEATHERS PLLC 4 New King Street, Suite 140 White Plains, NY 10604 70260

Notice of formation of youRmore LLC LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 07/09/2020. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 10 Dassern Drive Apt I Dobbs Ferry NY 10522 . Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of formation of Thomas Family Taste LLC. Arts. Of Org. filed with the SSNY on 07/20/2021. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as the agent of the LCC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 268 Van Cortlandt Park Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10705. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Auto Donations

Drive Out Breast Cancer: Donate a car today! The benefits of donating your car or boat: Fast Free Pickup - 24hr Response Tax Deduction - Easy To Do! Call 24/7: 855-905-4755

Buying / Selling

Buying diamonds, gold, silver, all fine jewelry and watches, coins, paintings, better furs, complete estates. We simply pay more! Call Barry 914-260-8783 or e-mail Americabuying@aol.com

Education / Career Training

TRAIN AT HOME TO DO MEDICAL BILLING! Become a Medical Office Professional online at CTI! Get Trained, Certified & ready to work in months! Call 855-543-6440. The Mission, Program Information and Tuition is located at CareerTechnical.edu/consumer-information. (M-F 8am-6pm ET)

Education / Career Training

COMPUTER & IT TRAINING PROGRAM! Train ONLINE to get the skills to become a Computer & Help Desk Professional now! Grants and Scholarships available for certain programs for qualified applicants. Call CTI for details! (844) 947-0192 (M-F 8am-6pm ET)

Health

VIAGRA & CIALIS! 60 pills for \$99. 100 pills for \$150. FREE shipping. Money back guaranteed! 1-855-579-8907

Home Improvement

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 15% off and 0% financing for those who qualify. PLUS Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-877-763-2379

Home Improvement

The Generac PWRcell, a solar plus battery storage system. SAVE money, reduce your reliance on the grid, prepare for power outages and power your home. Full installation services available. \$0 Down Financing Option. Request a FREE, no obligation, quote today. Call 1-888-871-0194

Home Improvement

Never Pay For Covered Home Repairs Again! Complete Care Home Warranty COVERS ALL MAJOR SYSTEMS AND APPLIANCES. 30 DAY RISK FREE. \$200.00 OFF + 2 FREE Months! 866-440-6501

Miscellaneous

BEST SATELLITE TV with 2 Year Price Guarantee! \$59.99/mo with 190 channels and 3 months free premium movie channels! Free next day installation! Call 888-508-5313

TV Internet Phone

Get DIRECTV! ONLY \$69.99/month! 155 Channels & 1000s of Shows/Movies On Demand (w/SELECT All Included Package.) PLUS Stream on Up to FIVE Screens Simultaneously at No Additional Cost. Call DIRECTV 1-888-534-6918

TV Internet Phone

DISH TV \$64.99 For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation, Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some restrictions apply. Promo Expires 1/21/22. 1-888-609-9405

NOTICE OF SALE

SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER
JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association, Plaintiff

AGAINST

Rosetta Silvestro as heir at law and next of kin of Luigia Silvestro a/k/a Luisa Silvestro; et al., Defendant(s)

Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly dated July 8, 2021 I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Courtroom 200 of the Westchester County Courthouse, 111 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, White Plains, NY 10601 on February 3, 2022 at 3:30PM, premises known as 147 Florence Street, Yonkers, NY 10704. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the City of Yonkers, County of Westchester, State of NY, Section 5 Block 5235 Lot 34 & 35. Approximate amount of judgment \$101,787.83 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index# 69552/2016. The auction will be conducted pursuant to the COVID-19 Policies Concerning Public Auctions of Foreclosed Property established by the Ninth Judicial District.

John Gifford Molloy, Esq., Referee

LOGS Legal Group LLP f/k/a Shapiro, DiCaro & Barak, LLC
Attorney(s) for the Plaintiff
175 Mile Crossing Boulevard, Rochester, New York 14624, (877) 430-4792
Dated: December 17, 2021
For sale information, please visit www.Auction.com or call (800) 280-2832

Forever Families Through Adoption

has an upcoming FREE event on Thursday, January 6, 2022– Adoption: Everything You Need to Know FREE ZOOM Information Sessionn 6:30-7:30pm ZOOM Conference Meeting This free event is open to anyone interested in or involved with the adoption process, including professionals, community members, expectant parents, adoptive or prospective adoptive parents, and adoptees. Come learn about the domestic adoption process and meet the staff of Forever Families Through Adoption. Please contact us for pre-registration and meeting information at adopt@foreverfamiliesthroughadoption.org or 914-939-1180.

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

If you read this column weekly like many of you do maybe we won't have cream cheese to make a cheesecake this year, though friends tell me it is abundant in the market. Or to schmear on a bagel or maybe a slice of Panettone as some friends I have do when they get up Christmas morning. But there will be plenty of food on the Christmas table, whether it be fish on Christmas Eve or turkey and fixings Christmas Day.

We have great hospitals, doctors and nurses to care for the sick, and first responders whether they be EMT's, firefighters, policemen and others to keep us safe. We have public works employees who keep our streets clean, and government workers who aren't subject to be thrown out of office by a dictator or a tyrant. We have freedom to walk the streets!

How many people in the world don't have a place to live. A roof over their head. We might not live on 5th Avenue but we know we can come home at night and not have to worry about the rain coming through the roof of where we live. Heat keeps us warm during the winter and air conditioning keeps us cool during the summer.

Look at the water we drink. Is there ever any concern for its safety? We can drink it, cook with it and cleanse with it not having to worry about contamination. How many people in the world don't have the simple amenity of water readily available that they can consume without fear?

We have vaccines including the one we read and hear about everyday that keep us free from illness from birth throughout our lifetime. We have medications available to us and a government that's helps when we cannot afford them.

As we prepare to enter 2022 we have much to be grateful for. We often take for granted what we have, moan and complain not thinking about those who are not as blessed as we are.

Yes we are going through a rough time right now. This, too shall pass. Sometimes our lives can be made better by simply turning off the negative news and putting on music to uplift our spirits. Taking a walk through our beautiful parks or simply going outside and enjoying the beauty around us. Children playing. A mother pushing her new baby in a carriage. A couple coming out of a church or synagogue having just been married. Or a couple walking down the street holding hands or simply sitting on a park bench in love.

Let's lift our spirits this new year by trying everyday to do something good for someone else. Never forgetting to do something good for ourselves, children, families and the ones we love. Think about that everyday but just don't think about it. Do it!

And find that Linus Blanket. It's ok in these difficult times to depend on it for comfort and assurance. We all need it right now.

I thank you for welcoming me into your homes every week. I hope I can make you laugh, maybe bring up a reminiscence that will bring tears to your eyes, and for a few moments take you on a journey that will let you forget your troubles and come on and get happy! Forgive me if I make a mistake. The New York Times with a much higher circulation than these Rising Newspapers makes many mistakes. Special note of gratitude to Editor Dan Murphy who is a one man band putting the paper together and making sure it gets to you assisted by Bayan Baker.

Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa and a Happy, Healthy New Year to you and yours. Pray for people everywhere!

Reach Eric Schoen at thistooisyonkers@aol.com. Follow him on Twitter @ericyonkers. Listen to Eric Schoen on the Westchester Rising Radio Show Thursday's from 10-11 a.m. On WVOX 1460 AM, go to WVOX.com and click the arrow to listen to the live stream or download the WVOX app from the App Store free of charge.

Lack of COVID tests, continued from pg 1-

not having tests to give you. Westchester County or New York State can't buy mass amounts of COVID tests.

It's great that President Biden ordered 500 million tests but when one reporter asked White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, "Why not just make them free ... and have them available everywhere?" Psaki sarcastically replied, "Should we just send one to every American?" "Then what happens ... if every American has one test? How much does that cost, and then what happens after that?" she asked.

When President Biden was asked if the lack of tests available was a failure, he said no "because COVID is spreading so rapidly...It just happened overnight."

Dr. Fauci said the Defense Production Act would be implemented and there would be a website where Americans could order one to have delivered free to their homes, and that he hoped "We're going to hopefully quickly catch up with that curve, and that this will be rapidly corrected."

The other issue is that even after taking an at home test, many people want the PCH test done by a medical professional.

Governor Kathy Hochul said on Dec. 20 that NY State will attempt to have an online testing portal where New York residents can order an at-home PCR test. One State official explained that the test kits will be mailed overnight, and then can be returned back for a result in 48 hours. Sounds great, but no idea when tests will be available, or when the State will have the portal up and running.

Yonkers City Clerk's Office is open by Appointment Only

Beginning Tuesday, December 21, 2021, the Yonkers City Clerk's Office will require everyone to make an appointment before visiting the office. City Clerk Vincent Spano is implementing this change in policy to address the increasing cases throughout our region.

"We are committed to providing the best service possible," said City Clerk Spano. It is necessary to control the number of visitors in our public spaces to protect them and our employees. While we are all hopeful that the winter surge will be limited, this new policy will remain in place until further notice."

Please call (914) 377-6020 or email cityclerk@yonkersny.gov to request an appointment or for any additional information. Please note that all visitors to City Hall must wear a protective face mask regardless of vaccination status. Learn how you may make requests online or via mail by visiting our website: Yonkers City Clerk Office.

Hours of Operation (Appointments Required)

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday (except holidays) 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Tuesday (except holidays) 9:00 am to 7:00 pm

Marriage Licenses: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday (except holidays) 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Marriage Licenses: Tuesday (except holidays) 9:00 am to 6:30 pm

Call 914-377-6020 or email cityclerk@yonkersny.gov to request an appointment or for any additional information.

CORPORATION NOTICE CITY OF YONKERS-NEW YORK PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to law, that the City Council of the City of Yonkers, New York will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, 40 South Broadway, Yonkers, New York on the following Resolution, to wit:

PROPOSED RESOLUTION: RESOLUTION OF THE YONKERS CITY COUNCIL TO HONOR THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY'S REQUEST TO HONORARILY RENAME THE PORTION OF HORATIO STREET BETWEEN DUNBAR STREET AND CLEMENT STREET "RITA GROSS NELSON" WAY
VINCENT SPANO City Clerk

Westchester Rising PO Box 705, Yonkers NY 10702-914-815-1388. Proudly serving all of Westchester County with hyperlocal news. Member NY Press Association. Legal notice inquiries to: risinglegalnotice@gmail.com. Daniel Murphy, Publisher & Editor in Chief, dmurphy@risingmediagroup.com. Bayan Baker, Assistant to the Editor in Chief risingmediagroup@gmail.com. Advertising requests to the Editor: dmurphy@risingmediagroup.com

Masking debate, continued from pg 1-

There are a portion of Westchester residents who do not support the mask mandate and do not believe that masks should be required to be worn in public, nor in schools for their children.

Long Island Congressman Lee Zeldin came to northern Westchester to speak out against Gov. Kathy Hochul's mask mandate. "In Westchester today, (Dec. 16), I joined Yorktown Supervisor Matthew Slater, Assemblyman Kevin Byrne, and other local elected officials, business owners, and residents to speak out against Gov. Hochul's new statewide mask mandate. Businesses shouldn't be forced to police their customers or fear fines," said Zeldin, in the Jefferson Valley part of the Town of Yorktown.

Zeldin, who is the leading republican candidate for NY Governor next year, added, "The only way to describe Governor Hochul's approach to governing is consistently inconsistent. Day after day, she constantly moves the goal posts for New Yorkers, who are desperate for a return to normalcy and want the government to no longer assert so much authoritarian control over their daily lives and freedoms. I strongly oppose the Governor's unilateral decision to impose a statewide mask mandate. I also oppose her threatening rhetoric and firing of essential workers and her recent order to end elective procedures at hospitals across the state. Access to vaccines and therapeutics is important, and so is medical freedom. We need leaders who value the freedoms of their constituents."

Joining Zeldin at the announcement was Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater. Slater had also criticized the decision to mandate masks, and to enforce that mandate in Westchester County, and in Yorktown, while neighboring Putnam County is not enforcing the mandate.

Slater wrote to Gov. Hochul that her mask mandate "is creating a disparity for municipalities like mine whose customers are going to neighboring counties that are choosing not to enforce it. It is disappointing to learn that some of our residents would choose to avoid our local stores and restaurants because of a mask mandate."

Other Yorktown residents claim just the opposite, and say that they are shopping in Yorktown, and that they want masks worn by all in the stores that they frequent.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said, "Vaccinations and masks do not guarantee you won't get COVID. But they reduce the chances you will. And they reduce the chance you'll be seriously sick, hospitalized or die. Being unvaxxed and unmasked raises those odds. Period.

"I have no desire to order you to do anything; that is why Westchester imposed no mandate of any sort. But we have politicians who are trying to pander to extreme ideologues who willfully tell us to not mask and not to vaccinate. That is playing with people's health for political gain. They should be ashamed ... but they're not.

"Have we forgotten how many people died while arguing against common sense – people like Herman Cain? A tragic and unnecessary loss of a life. Instead of focusing the debate on opposition to a mandate, they should be encouraging people to protect themselves and reduce the odds of illness.

"If Donald Trump, Tucker Carlson, Laura Ingraham and Sean Hannity all got vaccinated, why should we be pandering to the fear of being vaxxed? And if doctors wear masks in the ER why should we conduct a holy war against masks? No one wants to wear a mask..we're trying to survive a pandemic," stated Latimer.

The debate over masking also has landed in school board meetings across Westchester, from Yorktown to Yonkers and Eastchester, with parents holding signs saying, "unmask our kids."

In Yonkers, Superintendent Dr. Edwin Quezada listened to parents from a group United Yonkers, who want to have students unmasked in school. But Quezada disagreed with their request, saying "that the mask policy "is out of the circle of our control. It's a Governor's mandate. Everyone here has the right to express themselves, but we have kept our schools open because of the mitigation strategies that we have put in place."

YPS Parent Margaret Madden said on News 12 after the meeting, "We don't believe that (masks mandates are working to keep children safe). We are looking at the science, and we are pushing for parental choice. If you think your kids should wear a mask, put a mask on your kid but we think it's making it worse." Other United Yonkers parents at the Nov. YPS BOE meeting called mask mandates "about freedom of choice," and another called mask mandates a form of "child abuse."

But most parents in Yonkers, and In Westchester, are willing to have their children wear a mask in school, if it is a way to keep students learning in class. "To the BOE, stand strong to keep our kids safe! Make sure the ventilation systems are working well! Create safe spaces for our teachers and support staff who are working so hard during this pandemic! And yes, let's keep masking up," said Eileen O'Connor.

Dibartolo , continued from

Many of the people who had been wronged by DiBartolo over the years in Yorktown wanted to see him serve jail time as part of his final sentence, based on the initial, felony charge of Grand Larceny.

We contacted criminal defense attorneys from Westchester who told us that the reduction in DiBartolo's sentence was not unusual if he had a clean record prior to this incident. And while we cannot look up DiBartolo's criminal record, many believe that despite a State Comptrollers' investigation, a civil lawsuit filed against him for anti-semetic behavior, and accusations from more than one female that DiBartolo impersonated a police officer in a Town vehicle and pulled them over, none of these incidents ever materialized into criminal charges.

The criminal attorneys we spoke to said the primary factor that DA Mimi Rocah, and Assistant District Attorney Livia Rodriguez took into account was the criminal history, or lack thereof, of DiBartolo, and that resulted in what many see as a slap on the wrist of a disposition.

We also found out that even if the felony charge of Grand Larceny had remained, DiBartolo would not have been sentenced to jail time, based on this being his first criminal offense. And the dollar amount of good stolen, less than \$15,000, did not play a role in the determination of punishment. 4th degree Grand Larceny, which is a class D felony, is one of the less serious felony charged and frequently does not result in jail time.

Some Yorktown residents felt that DiBartolo "was embarrassed by his crime and this will follow him around. Everyone in Yorktown knows what he did. He is a millionaire and he was stealing from Home Depot. What a low life I hope his friends in Yorktown politics are embarrassed by him."

"It's not DA Rocah's fault that DiBartolo didn't have a record. And she certainly did not do him any favors for political reasons. They are on opposite sides of the spectrum. I do wonder what would have happened if a black man were arrested under the exact same circumstances, would the justice be the same? And where will he be doing his community service, at Trump Park in Yorktown? Or in South Yonkers?" asked Tony J. from Somers.

Finally, Mr. DiBartolo's troubles stemming from Home Depot may be over, but other investigations continue. According to the DA's office, "The Home Depot case has concluded, but other investigations related to positions held or businesses owned remain ongoing."

DiBartolo served as Yorktown Highway Commissioner from 1995-2013, and as a prominent member of the Westchester Republican Party during that time. Once his arrest was announced earlier this year, letters from our readers poured in concerning a number of incidents in Yorktown, from a lawsuit alleging anti-semitism filed by a Town employee, to accusations that DiBartolo improperly used town resources for personal use, to a State Comptroller's report outlining improper practices under DiBartolo's management, to accusations that DiBartolo pulled over females in Yorktown with a town vehicle with police lights.

TikTok School Threats, continued from pg 1-

District. Further police investigation concluded the social media post was similarly directed toward multiple out of state schools with the similar PMS abbreviation as the Pelham Middle School. To ensure the safety of the students and staff our district shifted to virtual instruction so a proper police investigation could determine the facts surrounding today's incident. The Pelham Police have concluded there are no direct threats to the Pelham School District. As a continued precaution, you will see a heightened police presence next week in and around the schools." With this in mind, we are confident that our schools are safe and we will open as regularly scheduled on Monday, December 20 with an additional police presence," wrote Sincerely, Dennis R. Lauro, Jr. Ed. D. Acting Superintendent of Schools, Pelham.

In Westchester, the Harrison Police Department posted, "The Harrison Police Department is aware of the activity on the social media platform Tik Tok regarding a possible school shooting on Friday, December 17th. The threat is considered to be a low level threat for several reasons including that no specific school was mentioned. We have been in contact with the Harrison Central School District and are working closely with other surrounding Police jurisdictions including the Westchester County PD Real-Time Crime Center. We will continue to investigate and monitor the threat, and provide updates as necessary. Out of an abundance of caution, Officers will be present on all HCS D campuses."

TikTok, the video sharing site most often mentioned in local news reports, said in a statement on Thursday that it was working with law enforcement "even though we have not found evidence of such threats originating or spreading via TikTok."

The company said a search of its posts showed users warning about the threats but no evidence of anyone directly making or promoting them. "We are deeply concerned that the proliferation of local media reports on an alleged trend that has not been found on the platform could end up inspiring real world harm," it said.

In a statement on Twitter, the F.B.I. urged people to contact the police or the federal authorities if they saw a threat against a school. "DO NOT share or forward the threat," the bureau said. "Doing so can spread misinformation and cause panic."

An alert was issued by Westchester County Police Department after it received a tip from its School Resource Officer Program about purported threats made on TikTok regarding a potential incident on Friday, Dec. 17. "WCPD / School Resource Officers WCPD increased patrols today in the school districts where we have School Resource Officers assigned (Somers, North Salem, Lakeland and Hendrick Hudson). Our goal, as it is every day, is to create a safe environment for students, staff and the entire school community. In light of recent social media posts causing alarm across the nation, our Patrol and Special Operations Divisions are providing additional high visibility, directed patrols throughout the school day. The high visibility patrols supplement the safety and security presence provided by school resource officers. In addition, we increased our patrols around Westchester Community College and its annexes. The recent posts on TikTok regarding the potential for school violence today have been investigated by law enforcement. The posts are general and NOT directed at any individual school or location. The posts appear to have originated outside the United States. The investigation is ongoing and the threat is considered low level at this time. Our Patrol Division actively engages with our Detective Division and Intel/Real Time Crime Center daily to monitor and investigate any social media posts of concern targeted at school safety. Information is shared not only within our Department but with the entire Westchester-Putnam law enforcement community. We hope the additional steps we are taking today will help reduce any anxiety related to these social media posts," posted the West. County Police.

The Yonkers Police Department issued the following statement, "The Yonkers Police Department and Yonkers Public Schools are aware of the nationwide viral social media threats claiming that schools will be targeted with violence tomorrow, Friday, December 17th, 2021. These threats appear to have originated on the TikTok social media platform and have spread from there. There is zero credible information regarding specific threats to Yonkers Public Schools or private institutions. Yonkers Police Detectives will continue to monitor the situation. The Yonkers Police Department and Yonkers Public Schools places the highest priority on student safety; as such and out of an abundance of caution, you may see an increased police presence and enhanced security measures at school tomorrow. The Yonkers Police assesses all threats to our community and takes appropriate action. At the same time, as these types of viral incidents have increased with the proliferation of social media and mobile devices, we must guard against those who would instill fear in our communities and hold them accountable."

yonkerstimes.com

FINALLY
The only place to read
news that matters to
your community
ONLINE

YONKERS TIMES
News in Yonkers and around Westchester

Notice of formation of Octopath LLC filed with the SSNY on 11/08/2021. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 150 S 10th Ave, Mount Vernon, NY 10550. Purpose: General contracting and handyman services.



**HEAL
AGAIN**

“Dr. Patel was able to heal my wounds when no one else could.”

- Paul B., wound healing patient

**LIVE
AGAIN**

DO YOU HAVE A WOUND THAT WON'T HEAL?

The Wound Healing Center at St. John's Riverside Hospital can help. The center offers hospital-based wound care treatments and state-of-the-art Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy. Patients with diabetic ulcers, surgical wounds, burns and other chronic wounds benefit from this highly-specialized approach.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PHYSICIANS combine vascular treatments with the latest wound dressing techniques

HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY delivers oxygen directly to the wound to promote faster healing

PROVEN EFFECTIVE our integrated treatment plan produces the best possible outcome for healing complex wounds



Nirav Patel, DO
Medical Director
of Wound Healing
Division Chief of
Vascular Surgery



Berdj Stepanian, DPM
Podiatric Surgeon



WOUND HEALING & HYPERBARIC CENTER

914.964.4DOC
RiversideHealth.org

© 2021 St. John's Riverside Hospital | All Rights Reserved

**Caring for someone
with Alzheimer's
isn't easy.**

Reaching us is.



If you care for someone with Alzheimer's disease, memory loss or dementia, you are not alone. We're here day or night — whenever you need us — offering reliable information and support.

Free 24/7 Helpline: **800.272.3900**
Alzheimer's and Dementia Caregiver
Center: alz.org/care

alzheimer's 
association

This advertisement is supported in part by a grant from the New York State Department of Health.