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Friday December 3, 2021

Chelsea's Charity: 12 Year Old Mt. Vernon Native Needs Your Help to Give Back for the Holidays



Chelsea Phaire

By Dan Murphy

For the past three years, 12 year old Chelsea Phaire has given back to others in our area by raising funds and collecting donations to provide art kits and toys, and is asking for your help to put a smile on a few more faces this holiday season.

Chelsea lives in Mt. Vernon for nine years and her parents own a barber shop and barber shop academy in Mt. Vernon on South Fulton Avenue (Barbershopacademy.org). In 2019 Chelsea formed "Chelsea's Charity," which is now a non-profit 501c that has been featured on CNN and is publications across the country.

Last month, for Giving Tuesday, Chelsea's Charity partnered with Hearts of Gold to provide homeless mothers and their children with a Chelsea's Charity art kit, a Comfort Case from Comfort Cases, a newly wrapped toy as part of a recent donation to Chelsea's Charity by Walmart, as well as a luxury designer bags from acclaimed designer, Aimee Kestenberg.

"The entire mission of Chelsea's Charity is to give back to those in need," says 12-year-old Chelsea Phaire, founder of Chelsea's Charity. "Giving Tuesday is an exciting time because everyone has the chance to be of service to others, especially during the holiday season."

Chelsea's Charity is the revolutionary, art-based foundation that creates art kits for youth in foster homes, shelters, hospitals, children that have gone through a traumatic experience, Veterans and for families that require assistance. These art kits are donated free of charge to the recipient and/or organization and are used to help the individuals to heal and thrive through the power of art. Chelsea herself consistently invites others to participate in her mission and help with Chelsea's charity through virtual and physical art kit packing parties and satellite Chelsea's Charity groups all over the country.

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Larchmont Home Sells for \$11.3M with \$176,000 Property Tax Bill!



Larchmont home at 25 Park Avenue on Long Island Sound

By Dan Murphy

The waterfront Larchmont mansion pictured above, is located in one of Westchester's most desired neighborhoods with views of the Long Island Sound, Located at 25 Park Avenue in Larchmont, the 1.6 acre home sold for \$11.3 Million, which reports claim was the highest grossing residential sale in the Village of Larchmont, Town of Mamaroneck, Westchester County.

The 8,000+ square foot home has everything you would expect, designed by Frank Ashburton Moore in 1898. The last owners paid \$10.4 Million in 2006, just before the great recession and financial crisis hit in 2008. But like most real estate holdings in Westchester, if you can wait long enough you can make a tidy profit.

The home was sold by Lisa Collins from Juilia B. Fee-Sotheby's Realty, and the listing was held by Mimi Magarelli of the same company. Magarelli said that the owners got their asking price and that the home was listed, sold and signed into contract within two weeks of being placed on the market. This points to a red hot Westchester real estate market, especially for high end properties.

What brought sticker shock to this reporters eyes was not the sale price, but the property taxes that the new owners didn't think twice about in quickly snatching up the listing. At \$178,000 per year for property taxes, which include Larchmont School taxes, Town of Mamaroneck taxes, and Westchester County taxes, the total is a number that most Westchester residents could not afford to pay by itself, without considering the mortgage costs which are probably around \$25,000.

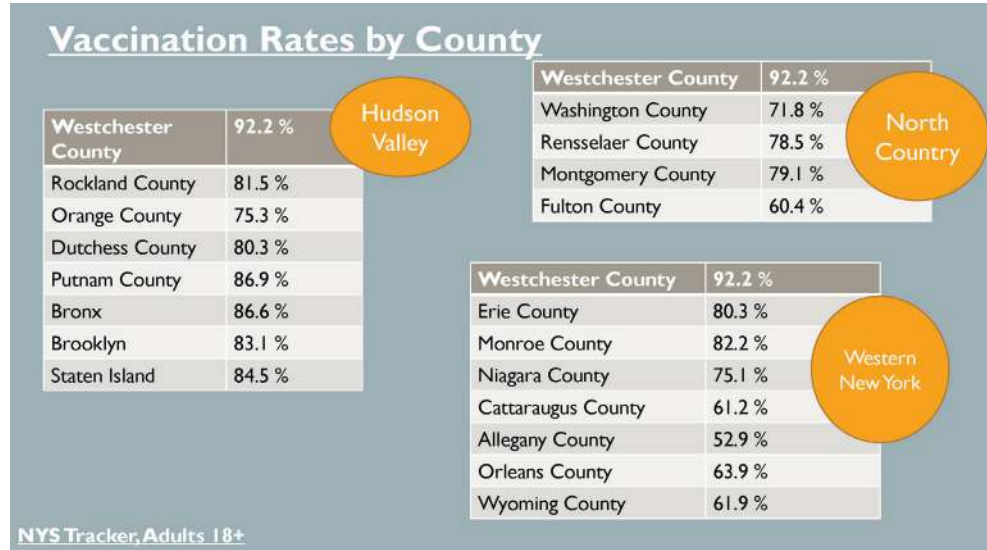
One real estate agent from the sound shore told us last year that on average, every Westchester home that has a \$1 Million sales price tag has about \$30,000 per year in property taxes. So for a \$3 Million home in Scarsdale, the property taxes are between \$75,000-\$90,000 per year.

Anyone with the financial resources to do so are moving to the suburbs since COVID. Nothing is staying on the market very long. For every house, there are 10 people bidding on it.

COVID has also been very good for stock holders, and the people who could afford to buy these properties have done exceptionally well over the past 18 months, so they have the money to buy the home of their dreams. And if they have \$11 Million to buy a house, or \$6 Million to put down on an \$11 Million house, they don't even care that the property taxes are \$178,000 per year.

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Westchester County 92.2% Vaccinated, "We are Monitoring Omicron But No Crisis Yet" Latimer



By Dan Murphy

Westchester County Executive George Latimer gave residents an important update on Nov. 29 regarding COVID vaccination rates, booster shots, immunizing students and the new Omicron variant that has yet to be detected in Westchester, New York state or the USA as of Nov. 30.

"Omicron has generated real concern. We can't overreact to bad news or good news; we have to keep a steady hand. The single most important reason to fight COVID is to prevent people from dying. We have had 2356 total deaths in Westchester, but 2 fatalities over the past two weeks and 3 fatalities over the past three weeks," said Latimer who also added that hospitalizations from COVID stand at 52, compared to a peak of 108 a few months ago during the Delta Variant and 244 hospitalizations in Nov. of 2020 before a vaccine was available. "We have had a low level of fatalities and hospitalizations even though we have had an increase in infections."

Both Latimer and Westchester County Health Commissioner Dr. Sherlita Amler attribute the fact that hospitalizations and fatalities are low to the fact that 92.2% of eligible Westchester residents over the age of 18 are vaccinated. And both Latimer and Dr. Amler continued to push for more county residents to get vaccinated and for residents to get their third booster shot if they can.

"When someone tells me we are in a crisis situation and need to react, we have 52 people hospitalized, a year ago we have 244 hospitalizations, and now we have vaccines, a key tool," said Latimer, who said that Westchester's 92.2% vaccination rate, for adults 18 years and older, is "dramatically different than in other parts of the state." With COVID's vaccination rates in neighboring counties, Putnam, 86.9%, the Bronx 86.6%, and Rockland 81.5%, and with vaccination rates in update and western NY at lower levels, Westchester County is one of the safest places to be, and much of the reason is for the successful outreach by your county government to make sure that 9 out of 10 residents care vaccinated, and that vaccines are readily available across the county.

"We have a total capacity of 2700 hospital beds. With only 52 COVID hospi-

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Shoplifting in SW Yonkers 'Out of Control'

Empty Shelves at Some Drug Stores Bail Reform-Repeat Offenders Blamed



some Westchester pharmacies have empty shelves due to "Organized Retail Crime"

By Dan Murphy

Yonkers Police Commissioner John Mueller told the Yonkers City Council at their meeting on Nov. 23 that shoplifting in the major retail drug stores in the southwest portion of the City, (Walgreens, Rite Aid, CVS) has become "a considerable problem and a big time, repeat offender, recidivist crime," and that because of bail reform, Judges cannot keep repeat offenders behind bars and they are released, only to commit the same shoplifting crime at the same drug store, the next day and week and month.

"The vast majority of shoplifters in Yonkers are repeat offenders, and in our three area pharmacies the bi product is the shelves are becoming empty and the elderly can't find the items they need to purchase to live," said Mueller, who said that overall, shoplifting arrests are the same as last year, but that repeat offender arrests are on the rise,.

"We believe that a multi-faceted solution is required that would include changes to the existing bail reform and how we can hard target some of the affected areas. The vast majority of shoplifters are a small subset of the criminal population. The same person goes into a pharmacy, steals, gets arrested and then is released, and the judge has no latitude to hold them. And when we have to repeatedly arrest the same person for shoplifting, we have limited resources and can't be spending time somewhere else," said Mueller, who also asked the retail pharmacies to step up their security and enforcement in their stores.

Also at the council meeting, the heads of the South Broadway and Downtown Waterfront Business Improvement districts told the council that the shoplifting in their members businesses have become a serious problem.

Doug Horsting, head of Rite Aid's Asset Protection Program, gave the council a bleak assessment of how bad the problem has become. Calling it "organized retail crime", he said "I have never seen this amount of shoplifting in my career. Customers are asking are you going out of business because there are no items on the shelves. Employees are afraid to go to work because they are assaulted and spit on. Shoplifters are coming in with large bags and the items are re-sold at a lower cost. We now have to hire additional security and lock up many items and install more cameras, but shoplifting is still rampant in

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Westchester Winter Wonderland, A Holiday Hit!



The Westchester Parks Foundation (WPF), and the Westchester County Parks Department celebrated the opening of Westchester's Winter Wonderland Drive-Thru Holiday Light Extravaganza at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla on Nov. 26.

The 8th season of what has quickly become a large part of Westchester's families holiday happenings, the event will be open seven nights a week starting at 6pm Monday-Friday and 5pm on weekends. *End times vary per night. Reservations are required to avoid additional surcharges. Tickets are \$25 Off Peak, \$35 Peak. (+additional cost for large passenger vans/limos, call for special reservations). And there are also Wegman's snack boxes available to enjoy for \$15 extra along the ride. Be sure to check the box when purchasing your ticket because they are not available for purchase on site. Con Edison also returns as a Platinum Sponsor of the Event, helping to light up the sky at Kensico Dam Plaza for all to enjoy!

Guests will be dazzled and delighted along the 1.2 miles of holiday lights with a new electrifying Elf Disco, a whimsical display of jubilant children from around the world, a breathtaking Peace on Earth LED display with animated trumpets and angels, and two new thirty-foot snowflakes to light up the largest holiday Christmas tree in Westchester! And if that is not enough, there is also a bigger and better snow-storm central that the whole family can enjoy right from the warmth and safety of your own car!

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said: "The holidays are such a special time to spend with family and Westchester's Winter Wonderland Drive-thru Holiday Light Extravaganza provides families with a fun and safe way to celebrate. I'm thrilled the Parks Department and Westchester Parks Foundation have found even more ways to make the event spectacular!"

Holiday classics will be simulcast through your vehicle's FM radio, setting the mood from the moment you enter the park. Guests should allow 25-30 minutes to drive thru the attraction. Additional attractions include favorite elves Ned and Albert, glittering angels of peace, 50-foot dove, dancing trees, glowing snowballs, candy cane lane, a spectacular 100-foot light tunnel, Westchester's favorite 40-foot Christmas tree, Santa and friends, and more!

Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins joined Westchester Parks Foundation in welcoming a special child to help them light the tree, 2-year-old Port Chester resident Santiago Carvajal who has epilepsy and had surgery at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital. Westchester's Winter Wonderland has become a Westchester holiday tradition without the hassle or expense of traveling to New York City and one of the safest and most affordable holiday options for the 2021 Holiday Season. For complete information and to purchase tickets, visit wwinterwonderland.com Westchester's Winter Wonderland runs through January 2, 2022.

Happy Chanukah Westchester



(L-R) Chuck Lesnick; Rabbi Mendy Hurwitz, and Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, who lit the leader "shammash" at the Cross County second night Chanukah celebration. Photo (c) Robert Kalfus

By Robert Kalfus

The first night of Chanukah, the Festival of Light, started this past Sunday night (Nov.28) and will continue for 8 days, with the last candle lit on Sunday night, December 5th leaving a magnificent event to experience. Chanukah remembers the miracles of a small outnumbered band of Jewish partisan fighters who fought for 25 years, refusing to accept defeat by the better armed, more numerous and overwhelming Syrian-Greek forces, sent to crush their culture, religion, and entire way of life. The Maccabees liberated the oppressed Jewish nation, bestowing independence, and were inspired by the miracle of the single cruce of undefiled oil, sufficient for only one day of kindling the lights in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, yet it lasting for eight days, the length of time necessary until new pure olive oil could be pressed.

Rabbi Mendy Hurwitz of Chabad of Yonkers/Greystone Jewish Center welcomed almost a hundred people who came out despite the cold weather on Sunday, Nov. 28th to witness "spreading the light", who saw the first candle of Chanukah lit at the Ridge Hill Shopping Center. Introducing Yonkers Fighter Donovan McKenzie to light the shammash, Rabbi Mendy noted that "Mr. McKenzie is far better at putting out fires than what he is about to do."

The Yonkers Fire Dept. assisted, lending the use of their Tower Ladder to raise Rabbi Mendy to recite the blessings as Yonkers firefighter Donovan McKenzie lit the shammash, and Howard Spielman lit the first candle on the 18 foot tall chanukiah. The Tower Ladder bucket again lifted Firefighter McKenzie, Ridge Hill General Manager Meghann Hongach, Yonkers Councilwoman Tasha Diaz, and Assembly Member Nader Sayegh to toss Chanukah chocolate "gelt" candy onto the crowd below of children and adults, followed by a generous distribution of jelly and custard donuts, and hot latkes, as the "Mr. Shabbas" band's music led people in dancing and celebrating Chanukah.

Rabbi Hurwitz noted "Judaism is not a religion to be practiced just in the synagogue. Judaism is a way of life, a religion which informs all your actions wherever you are", and Chanukah's celebration, inspiration, food, and joy was shared.

Chanukah's second night party moved to Yonkers' Cross County Shopping Center, where the "WhatsUp" band entertained with great music, causing much danc-

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Woman Pleads Guilty to Attempted Murder for Attack on Elderly Man She Married to Illegally Obtain Citizenship



GREEN CARD THROUGH MARRIAGE

On Nov. 19, Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced that a Jamaican woman who married a New Rochelle senior to illegally obtain U.S. citizenship and then slit his wrist with a straight razor pled guilty to attempted murder.

Olivia Raimo, 30, pled guilty on November 15, 2021, to Attempted Murder in the Second Degree, a felony. According to her plea agreement, she will be sentenced to 15 years in state prison, with five years of post-release supervision.

On January 24, 2020, while in the victim's New Rochelle home, Raimo pushed the 74-year-old victim, wedging him between the toilet seat and a wall, and then slit his wrist with a straight razor. The victim's home health aide arrived to the home during the incident, but was refused entry by the defendant. The aide, who did not know or recognize the defendant, called the New Rochelle Police Department. Police entered the home after they heard the victim screaming from the bathroom.

The victim was transported to Jacobi Hospital in the Bronx, where he underwent two surgeries to reattach the tendons in his arm. The attack resulted in the victim losing all function in his hand.

The incident happened after Raimo and the victim, who married in 2017, met with an attorney to prepare for an interview with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to demonstrate their marriage was legitimate. During the meeting, they were informed that they would have a hard time passing their marriage interview.

New Rochelle Police arrested Raimo on February 11, 2020, following an investigation. "Violent acts are particularly heinous when they target the elderly," DA Rocah said. "My Office will continue to work with our partners in law enforcement to pursue justice for all vulnerable victims of crime."

The case is before Judge Barry Warhit in Westchester County Court, and is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Charlotte Gudis. Raimo is scheduled to be sentenced on January 13, 2022.

In another prominent case prosecuted by DA Rocah's office, Latonia Stewart was sentenced for burglarizing six homes of families she targeted because they were attending funeral services of loved ones between 2017 and 2018.

Stewart, 30, was sentenced on November 22, 2021, to a determinate term of 10 years in state prison on each of the burglary counts, each to run concurrently, and an indeterminate term of one to three years in state prison to run consecutive to the 10-year sentence. On October 14, 2021, a jury found Stewart guilty of six counts of Burglary in the Second Degree and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Fourth Degree, both felonies.

"Latonia Stewart targeted individuals on one of the worst days of their lives knowing they wouldn't be home, and stole their jewelry, valuables, letters and other keepsakes a spouse would cherish while grieving their loved one," DA Rocah said. Between December 2017 and May 2018, Stewart burglarized the homes of six Westchester County residents in Cortlandt, Greenburgh, Ossining, Rye Brook, Scarsdale, and Tarrytown who were out of the house attending their spouse's wake or funeral service. Jewelry, watches, silverware and other valuables were stolen. Stewart targeted the homes after searching through obituaries online. She would then research the individual online.

Chanukah continued from pg 2-

ing and singing, keeping warm, until Chabad of Yonkers/Greystone Jewish Center Rabbi Mendy Hurwitz welcomed Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano who lit the "leader" shammash candle, and former City Council President Chuck Lesnick lit both the first and second night's candles. All present, including those passing and shopping, enjoyed Jelly and custard donuts, and hot latkes.

All are welcome and invited Sunday, December 5th at 4:15 pm on Chanukah's eighth night to see a giant menorah lit with all eight Chanukah lights overlooking the sun setting over the Hudson River, at majestic Untermyer Park, 945 North Broadway. However you prefer to spell the many transliterated names of the holiday, Rabbi Hurwitz asks for volunteers to climb the ladder to light the menorah's Tiki torches, to publicize the miracle of Hanukah and to spread the light. Singing Maor Tzur and traditional Hanukah tunes, and spinning dreidls, all will enjoy a large variety of jelly donuts and chocolate gelt. Please contact Rabbi@JewishYonkers.com

Stop Calling, Lady from the Auto Warranty Department!



By Eric W. Schoen

So the big question this week? Did you have a turkey on your Thanksgiving table. Were you able to buy it from the Stop and Shop, or did you have to capture a wild turkey on one of our regions roadways? Well, the latter is probably illegal, and from what I hear the meat from wild turkeys is tough and inedible. So the big turkey shortage of 2021 was a farce.

I assume you were able to find a turkey and enjoy it with your family. Fresh whole cranberries were abundant and actually on sale at many stores. I hope either you made cranberry sauce or got the can of Ocean Spray whole berry cranberry sauce. I heard the cans of whole berry were hard to find, but as long as u didn't serve the jelly cranberry sauce plopped out of the can on your holiday table you are OK in my book. I can't believe rumors that some people plop the jelly cranberry sauce on to a plate, don't chop it up and serve it so you can see the indentations from the metal can it came in. What can I say!

It was so nice to once again spend Thanksgiving with family. I sincerely hope you were able to. My sister and I went to our cousins the Meyerowitz's, he a long time dentist in Yonkers Manor House Square before moving up to North Broadway.

Cousin Georgette, Dr. Meyerowitz's wife, his daughter Sharon and Daughter-in-Law Nancy from Georgia were the chefs. From the soup to the homemade cole slaw to the moist, delicious Turkey to Nancy's corn pudding to Sharon's gluten free chocolate cake and everything in between the feast was spectacular. The corn pudding is the most recent addition, the recipe that comes from Nancy's southern upbringing. A couple of spoonfuls of this delicious side dish equal a week at the gym if you know what I mean. But it was so good to see everyone after almost 2 years of no family gatherings caused by Covid.

Speaking of Covid, yes we have a new variant. Sadly there will probably be many more. Is there anything you can do about it. Unless you are a top scientist, the answer is probably no. The only things you can do is wash your hands, getting vaccinated, get the booster shot if enough time has lapsed and mask when needed. Since it's out of your hands you have to go with advice of the top experts in the country and the world.

Covid is nothing but a big guessing game. A mystery. You never know what's going to happen in the world of Covid when you go to bed at night. It seems like something happens that affects our lives everyday. You have to keep your chin up, your mouth and nose covered as appropriate, and through the power of prayer we will get through this.

If the pressures of Covid are getting you down, contact your insurance provider for referral for professional help. That's what you pay those high insurance premiums for. Contact the Westchester County Health Department at 914-813-5000. Contact your Rabbi, Priest or respective clergyman. Last resort call 911.

Covid is affecting even the strongest among us, and you should not be afraid to seek help if you need it. There are resources out there for you and you should have no shame taking advantage of them! This, too shall hopefully pass, but until it does just remember if Covid wasn't upsetting you that's something you really should worry about!

Now onto the topic of the week. I'm tired of receiving calls on my cell phone and home phone from 'Mary from the Auto Warranty Department' who just magically heard that the warranty on my car is expiring. Friends I know who don't even own cars are getting this same call. The calls can come at 9 a.m. on a Saturday morning, 6 p.m. during dinner time or 8:30 p.m when you are getting ready to go to sleep. Whenever the call comes, it's always at the wrong time.

How does 'Mary' know my car warranty is expiring? If someone is giving her a list that person should be put in jail. 'Mary' should be put in jail. For most people their car warranties expired years ago, that is if they even own a car. These calls come in two, three times a day, and if you don't answer quite often the 'robocall' making these calls will leave a message that cuts off after a few seconds leaving you equally as frustrated when you go to retrieve your voicemails.

Something has gotten to be done about it. Time to act now Federal and State

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Letters to the Editor:

Letter to the Editor:
George Latimer for Governor

He probably doesn't want the job, and might be upset that this message was written and published, but the Democratic Party owes it to itself, and more so, to the residents of New York, to nominate Westchester County Executive George Latimer for Governor in 2022.

Long before the nursing home fiasco or debacle or honest mistake or whatever you choose to call it, or his behavior like a naughty bachelor on The Dating Game in the 1960's, the likelihood of Andrew Cuomo being elected to a fourth term was no sure thing: Even his father, Mario, whose personal probity was never in question, lost to a virtual unknown, George Pataki, when he sought a fourth term.

Had Cuomo fatigue set in then, as it might now? Andrew's grandfather, who owned a little grocery store in Jamaica where Donald Trump's father occasionally shopped (small world, isn't it?) could have told his heirs that, after too long on the shelf, even the finest prosciutto can lose its taste and texture, curl up, dry out, and need to be tossed.

George Latimer has long had a reputation for reaching across the political aisle to get things done and find good people, including appointing the former Vice Chair of the Westchester Board of Legislators, Republican Jim Maisano, as Director of the County's Consumer Protection Department.

No credible Republican challenger has come forward to challenge George Latimer for re-election this November, and no wonder. He has performed his role as County Executive during the worst crisis of our lives without fuss or fanfare. The non-candidates include Latimer's predecessor, Rob Astorino, who in addition to serving two terms in White Plains also was the Republican Gubernatorial candidate against Andrew Cuomo in 2014. Rob Astorino is bright, personable, articulate, looks ten years younger than his actual age...even speaks Spanish fluently... and surely has no shortage of ambition. Yet even he knows that George Latimer will be unbeatable in the fall.

An Andrew Cuomo candidacy will do for Republicans what Donald Trump's candidacy did for Democrats: Not only unite, mobilize, and energize the opposition, but bring to their side voters they would not traditionally win.

Like Andrew Cuomo, I grew up in Queens County, where one of the favored, fevered joys of hot summer Saturday nights in the 1970's meant drag racing on the part of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway called the Connecting Highway. Andrew: soup up your Easter egg purple 1971 Dodge Challenger with a 425 hemi or whatever you have under the hood, and under the tarp in your garage in Mount Kisco, and go back to the borough of our birth to show those young punks what an older gearhead can do.

One caveat: George Latimer is no spring, or even summer chicken; he will turn 69 years old on November 22, 2022 (if you have a sense of history, you probably wonder how he remembers his tenth birthday, the day John F Kennedy was assassinated). But unless you supported a third party candidate, last November your vote for President went to someone who was already in his seventies: Donald Trump, who is 74, or Joe Biden, who is 78.

So, in electoral politics, seventy is the new fifty. Run, George, run!
 Jim Vespe, Mamaroneck

Don't Mess With the Mario Cuomo Bridge

A WVOX Commentary by William O'Shaughnessy

It's time we weighed in on the misguided effort to try to re-name the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge. We are not Johnny-come-lately to the controversy.

Some many years ago, I received a call from then Governor Mario Cuomo who said, "We want to name something for your friend Malcolm Wilson. My people have suggested a vast track in the Adirondacks...or the Liberty Scholarships...which were begun under his stewardship."

At that moment, the call was joined by my former wife Nancy Curry, who said, "I think you should name something for Governor Wilson that you can 'reach out and touch' ...like a bridge." Thus was born (for a short time) the idea for the Malcolm Wilson Tappan Zee Bridge.

We were there at the dedication (when they unveiled the huge sign that misspelled the name of The Malcom Wilson Bridge-they left out the 'L' in Malcolm).

After the Governor's action, it had to be approved by legislatures in Rockland and Westchester.

Malcolm Wilson was an articulate and brilliant man who served in New York State government longer than anyone as an Assemblyman, Lieutenant Governor and Governor. He was also the greatest orator Fordham ever graduated. Mario Cuomo once observed "Malcolm would beat you up in English...and then finish you off in Latin!"

So we applaud the suggestion to name a "Welcome Center" on the Westchester side of the bridge as suggested by Mr. Abinanti. But Assemblyman Tom Abinanti and Assemblyman Mike Lawler, his Assembly cohort from Rockland, are ill-advised to try to change the name of the Mario Cuomo Bridge, which many view as yet another attempt to pile on his son and heir, former Governor Andrew Cuomo.

The bridge, which was appropriately named after a great and good man that the Boston Globe called 'the great philosopher-statesman of the American nation,' should not be messed with by vindictive and opportunistic politicians. Thus, the bridge that replaced the aging Tappan Bridge span should remain the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge as it is now widely known.

And we should also name something significant and meaningful for Governor Malcolm Wilson.

Facebook Neighborhoods Comes to Westchester, Yonkers



A new App called Facebook Neighborhoods, launched in a few trial communities in May 2021 has now been expanded to include the City of Yonkers, New York's third largest City. Facebook Neighborhoods is an app within the main Facebook app that lets you connect with, message, join groups, ask for recommendations, and even create po Today, we're beginning to test Facebook Neighborhoods, a single destination to build and strengthen local communities on Facebook.

Facebook Neighborhoods is a dedicated space within the Facebook app that lets you connect to people based on their location, and find neighbors who share the same interests, or may know of a great new restaurant nearby, or who can help you serve residents in your community who need some help during the holidays.

Reid Patton, Product Manager for Facebook Neighborhoods, explained how "through the pandemic our Facebook connections became a crucial part of staying together and keeping in touch with the people closest to us, who we were unable to see in person during COVID."

"We love to see how Yonkers has leveraged what Facebook already has available to strengthen their relationships between each other during the pandemic. And we look forward to seeing what the people of Yonkers will do with Facebook neighborhoods, which was designed to build and strengthen local communities," said Patton.

Facebook Neighborhoods is now rolling out to 132 American cities, including Yonkers. It's available only through your mobile device, and Facebook users from Yonkers will have 39 neighborhoods to chose from. Once you input your location, (you need to be 18 or older), you will be able to see groups and posts from your neighbors.

Other advantages will include the ability to search for items on Facebook Marketplace that are in your community, and you can leave your own neighborhood and check out other neighborhoods any time you want. Facebook's Community Standards will still apply when using Neighborhoods and are only available to Facebook account holders in good standing. And any comments that don't relate to your neighborhood should be kept for your regular Facebook account.

Facebook will also let you create a separate profile specifically for Neighborhoods. Anyone in your local neighborhood can see your profile, and they don't have to be Facebook friends with you in order to interact with them on Facebook Neighborhoods. Another good use of Facebook Neighborhoods will be the ability to help serve those in your community or neighborhood that needs a helping hand. Facebook will be testing a new Giving Exchange feature on Facebook Neighborhoods that allows people to share items with others in their neighborhood.

"Facebook Neighborhoods will help Yonkers residents strengthen their connection to each other and support their neighbors by creating a single destination and make it easier to give back to their community," said Patton.

Once you have tried Facebook Neighborhoods, let us know about your experience by emailing us at dmurphy@risingmediagroup.com.

Chelsea's Charity continued from pg 1-

Chelsea says art. is her "super power" and says it makes her feel so good that she wanted to share that feeling with others. So on her 10th birthday, instead of asking for gifts, she requested art supplies so she could start that charity, which has made her famous for all the right reasons. Her mission: to create art kits for children who may not have access to creative outlets.

To learn how you can make a donation or help Chelsea make the holidays a little bit brighter, visit Chelseascharity.com. And thank you Chelsea for giving us a example of how we should always try to give back and serve others, if we have the resources to do so, and especially during the holiday season.

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Phelps Hospital and Ossining Vol. Ambulance Provide Seniors at Home COVID Vaccinations



Phelps Hospital, Northwell Health and the Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps (OVAC) are pleased to announce a joint partnership providing free COVID-19 vaccinations and testing to Westchester residents. In addition to offering these services at the OVAC building and at pop-up sites throughout the county, the Community Paramedicine Program is also assisting some of the county's most vulnerable residents by making visits to homebound seniors.

The Community Paramedicine Program was developed in response to the ongoing pandemic and its impact on local residents, especially seniors unable to travel to vaccination sites. Volunteers at the OVAC were trained and certified to administer COVID vaccinations and testing, with the goal of expanding to seasonal flu vaccinations in the near future.

"When the pandemic hit our area, our dedicated members looked for innovative ways to connect and reach those that needed extra help," said OVAC EMS Director Nick Franzoso. "The Community Paramedicine Program has enhanced our delivery of care to the communities we serve – and it was through our partnership with Phelps Hospital that allowed us the ability to develop this program and have it become so successful."

The Phelps Department of Emergency Medicine's relationship with OVAC dates back to the 1960s. Today, their joint efforts have resulted in more than 5,300 COVID vaccines and 3,400 tests administered through the program. The partnership also extends beyond the ambulance corps' typical service area, reaching residents across all of Westchester with home visits and pop-up sites at various community organizations and local events.

"The OVAC/Phelps Hospital Community Paramedicine Program provides COVID vaccinations at the homes of vulnerable seniors, which can be lifesaving," noted Dr. Emil Nigro, OVAC Medical Director and Physician Advisor & President of the Phelps Hospital Medical Staff. "It's another first in Westchester County!"

COVID vaccinations are available in the Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps building on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. through the end of December. All vaccination types are currently offered: Pfizer-BioNTech (ages 5-11 and 12+), Moderna (ages 18+) and Johnson & Johnson (ages 18+). This includes booster shots of the Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine for all adults 18 and older who completed the primary series at least 6 months ago, or 2 months for Johnson & Johnson.

Vaccines for the Community Paramedicine Program are provided directly from either the Westchester County Department of Health, Or NYS Department of Health. New York State supplies all Antigen COVID testing kits and has supplied Molecular test kits until October 2021. Through a partnership with the Town of Ossining, OVAC is now able to offer COVID Molecular testing free of charge to the community.

The Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps is located at 8 Clinton Avenue in Ossining, N.Y. Appointments may be booked online for both COVID vaccines and testing by visiting www.ossiningvac.org. Home vaccinations and testing can be scheduled for those unable to travel by contacting 914-941-9196 or covidtest@ossiningvac.org. In addition to vaccinations, free testing, both rapid antigen and a rapid molecular NAAT, is available on Mondays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. by appointment.

Larchmont Has First Certified, AZGA Green Zone in Westchester



Electric equipment demonstration in Larchmont

In the Fall of 2020, the Village of Larchmont passed a landmark code, effective January 1, 2022, that entirely bans the use of gas-powered leaf blowers and restricts the use of electric leaf blowers to spring and fall clean-up periods. Larchmont is taking sustainable landscaping several steps further by encouraging mulch mowing; forgoing chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers; and using native trees and plants in landscaping municipal properties. Larchmont's Green Zone demonstrates that properties can be well-maintained without the use of fossil fuel-powered equipment.

Conceived by AGZA in Los Angeles, CA, Green Zones are defined properties that model sustainable landscaping practices by using low-impact electric equipment and people-powered tools for routine grounds maintenance. Decreases in greenhouse gas emissions and noise pollution are measured on these properties, and successful projects are certified as Green Zones. The first municipal Green Zone was certified in California in 2016; now they are spreading across the US.

Since March 2021, equipment usage and emissions monitoring at Kane Park have been overseen by Dan Mabe, AGZA President, in partnership with Quiet Communities, Inc., a national nonprofit founded by Jamie Banks, PhD, MS, in Lincoln, MA to help communities reduce health and environmental harm from noise and pollution.

"We are thrilled to establish Westchester County's first AGZA Certified Green Zone at Kane Park with the Village of Larchmont. Larchmont is leading by example and improving the quality of life for village residents. AGZA looks forward to expanding Larchmont's Green Zone areas and working together to reach out to private gardeners with education and information on how to reduce gas use." – Dan Mabe, CEO, AGZA

In an Environmental Landscape Footprint (ELF) report which quantifies the reduction in toxic, carcinogenic, greenhouse gas, noise and solid waste emissions, Quiet Communities shared these projected outcomes. Transitioning other areas of the Village will increase those carbon reductions 7.5 times – equivalent to 300 additional trees. If all cities, towns, and villages in Westchester made similar transitions, the carbon reductions would be equivalent to planting nearly 16,000 trees just from transitioning their municipal operations. And, that's a conservative estimate.

\$176,000 Property Tax Bill, Continued from pg 1-

The cost of real estate in Westchester and the property taxes paid by homeowners in Westchester is the highest in the country, and so the debate in Washington over making changes to the current \$10,000 limit on deductions for State and Local Income Taxes, SALT, is important.

Two plans are working their way through Congress regarding SALT deductions. One piece of the Build Back Better bill would increase the cap from \$10,000 to \$80,000 for all American homeowners, giving most homeowners in Westchester the ability to deduct all of their property taxes from their federal taxes.

But another plan, sponsored by US Senator Bernie Sanders, who is also the senate budget chair, and New Jersey Senator Bob Menendez, would entirely eliminate the SALT cap for anyone with incomes of less than \$400,000, and then gradually restore SALT caps on higher income earners.



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Legal Notices

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 Courtroom 200 of the Westchester County Courthouse, 111 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, White Plains, NY 10601 on December 10, 2021 at 10:30 AM, 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: October 5, 2021 For sale information, please visit www.Auction.com or call (800) 280-2832 70078

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

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, December 14, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, 40 South Broadway, Yonkers, New York on the following General Ordinance, to wit:

PROPOSED GENERAL ORDINANCE

A PROPOSED GENERAL ORDINANCE AMENDING GENERAL ORDINANCE 4-2000, ALSO KNOWN AS CHAPTER 43 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF YONKERS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF YONKERS, MAKING "AUTOMOBILE RENTAL ESTABLISHMENTS" A PERMITTED USE (WITH SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS) IN THE B "RESTRICTED BUSINESS AND APARTMENT HOUSES MEDIUM-DENSITY" DISTRICT OF THE CITY.

VINCENT SPANO, City Clerk

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Shoplifting Out of Control, continued from pg 1-

Yonkers, and across the country. The support we have received from the Yonkers Police is second to none."

Councilmember Tasha Diaz sponsored the resolution and spoke about the problem in her 3rd council district. "This is a real problem. I do food distribution and more people are in need because they can't find items at the drug store to buy. We are providing essentials because they are not available. The seniors in my district are afraid to pick up their prescriptions. I have witnessed theft at Walgreens in my district. We need to get to the problem and work with our state delegation. It's happening the most in districts 1,2, and 3."

Council Minority Leader Mike Breen said, "We see shoplifting nationally but now its also happening here in Yonkers, and it is organized retail crime. It our job to talk to our state officials about changes to bail reform, which is not working properly. We don't want to see stores pack up and leave Yonkers."

Council President Mike Khader said, "Some of these businesses have an internal policy of letting theft go and not reporting it. They call it loss prevention and the word gets out. They need to change those policies and once you crack down the word will get out."

The council resolution, which calls on "Mayor Spano and his administration to recognize and address the problem occurring within the city of Yonkers and to engage retailers to help fashion methods to reduce or eliminate shoplifting in their business," and that the "New York State Senate and Assembly recognize and address the problem of shoplifting and create stronger laws to deter such actions with respect to arrest, bail prosecution and sentencing," was passed unanimously.

Yonkers Police Commissioner John Mueller recently appeared on Fox News, where he discussed the recent rash of repeat offenders and shoplifters, in Yonkers but also across the country, that were emptying the shelves of many retail stores and pharmacies.

The police are doing the best they can but there is an issue about the lack of consequences and a lack of accountability," said Mueller, appearing on NewsNation Now's "On Balance" with Leland Vittert, Nov. 26.

"The messaging that we have had from progressive lawmakers is that we should not have any consequences (for committing crimes) and this is what you get. When people feel that there are not going to be negative consequences for their actions, some will say why not and go out and steal. There should be consequences for their actions," said Mueller.

On Fox news, Mueller renewed his call for changes to bail reform which would allow judges to punish and send to prison repeat offenders or recidivist persons who commit the same crime again and again.

"In New York there is a willingness to look at some changes to bail reform. If you believe in recidivism, and I do, the vast majority of crime is committed by a small group of people and they deserve to be put in jail."

Mueller told both Fox News and the Yonkers City Council that in Yonkers, crime is down overall despite the overall number of arrests dropping significantly from 7,000 last year to 3,000 this year. How was this accomplished?

"By arresting and asking for prison time for a small subset of our criminal population. We don't need to lock up the whole world and mass incarcerate. But if you engage and go after the small subset that get arrested and continue to shoplift at the same store, and never come back for their court date, crime goes down."

Mueller said that he is working with his fellow Police Commissioners across New York State to propose changing bail reform drastically. "We are asking for an abolishment of all cash bail. We don't need cash bail. Our founding fathers didn't intend on rich person staying out of jail while a poor person has to stay in jail."

"We want to go to a dangerousness metric, where a person is sentenced based on how many times they have been arrested and how many times they fail to appear. If someone is arrested 10 times for shoplifting and never returns for their court date, there should be consequences. If we make these minor modifications, and allow the Judge to have some latitude to consider the criminal history and the number of arrests, then the communities of color, who are suffering the most, will get the help the most," said Mueller.

To watch Mueller's video visit,

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=429848225362528>

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

legislators. And about the robocalls from the Police Chiefs and Fire Chiefs Associations that collect money not to help those in need but to enrich their benefactors. Putting your name on all these DO NOT CALL lists rarely helps because the companies who make these calls always find ways to get around the laws.

By the way, studies have shown that the auto warranty plans these companies sell are worthless and just a waste of your money. Let's say you miss the call and really do want one of these plans. Try calling back the CALLER ID number that popped up in your phone. You will probably get a message that either the number doesn't accept incoming calls or to push a number on your phone if you want your phone number permanently taken out of their call systems. An additional sign that the call is a fraud. And the number never leaves the system.

While we are talking about these frauds, let's talk a little bit about Giving Tuesday that occurred this week. Giving Tuesday should be everyday, not just one day. If you can afford to give money to a reputable charity you don't have to wait until Giving Tuesday to make your donation. Same goes for these days when you are called upon to do community service. If you can help a child read, help a senior citizen do daily tasks or get to the doctor or other appointment or buy groceries, don't wait until our leaders proclaim a special day.

There are many good charities out there but before you give, check to make sure that the soliciting charity is legitimate and uses its donations to help those in need, not for big bureaucratic salaries. Contact the Better Business Bureau or the State of New Charities Registration Bureau, part of the Attorney General's Office at (212) 416-8400. A lot of this information can be obtained online.

We have so many charities locally and throughout the country that do great work. Make sure you are donating to the legitimate ones!

HOT TOPICS: Black Friday and Cyber Monday spending by consumers was down. But if you walked into Macy's at Cross County Center on the day after Black Friday to take advantage of continuing Black Friday specials, you would see why. The joint was, as they say jumping! My feeling is that people want to get out of the house and shop after the long Covid hibernation, even though the weather outside is a bit chilly.

Many long time Yonkersites remember Rabbi Abraham J. Klausner and his dear wife Judy from Temple Emanu-El on Rumsey Road in Yonkers. If you mention Temple Emanu-El in Yonkers, the first thing people will remember is Rabbi and his wife Judy. It's always sad to me when one of my once avid readers dies. Rabbi died a number of years ago. Judy, his wife just passed this week. She was a talented artist creating many objects of art for the Temple. And a reader from Sante Fe, New Mexico!

Want to read a fun book. See if you can find a copy of a book Judy wrote in 2011, MY CUP RUNNETH OVER AND STAINETH THE CARPET available in paperback. Trust me, it will bring back memories and you will enjoy it!

Reach Eric Schoen at thistooisonykers@aol.com. Follow him on Twitter @ericnykers. Listen to Eric Schoen and Dan Murphy 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.

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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 Dobbsferry NY 10522 . Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Yorktown Launches Shop-Local Holiday Promotion



Enjoy family fun this holiday season in Yorktown.

- ❄ See "A Christmas Carol" at the Yorktown Stage
- ❄ Cut your own Christmas tree at Wilkens Farm
- ❄ Enjoy a hot chocolate at Trailside Café

Explore the local businesses that make Yorktown 'your home base for the holidays!'

The Town of Yorktown, Yorktown Chamber of Commerce and Yorktown Small Business Association launched a new shop-local campaign on Friday designed to help local businesses during the holidays.

Yorktown: Your Home Base for the Holidays is a multi-platform promotion that celebrates local shopping, dining, and entertainment. The campaign's goal is to showcase Yorktown as a destination for holiday shopping and entertainment. It includes social-media videos that target various consumer groups and a vanity website called www.yorktownholidays.com that directs the public to the Destination Y site listing the businesses featured in the videos.

"Yorktown has so many things to make your holiday experience that much more special. It's the only community where you can cut your own Christmas tree. You can shop at one of these amazing local stores. You can go to any of our wonderful local restaurants—all in the same day, all in the same place," said Supervisor Matt Slater during a launch event at Celtic Aer Gift Shop in Shrub Oak.

Yorktown: Your Home Base for the Holidays is the latest phase of Yorktown's Destination Y, a multimedia promotional campaign designed by Thompson & Bender of Briarcliff Manor. The Destination Y campaign launched in the summer of 2020 and targeted businesses considering a relocation to a socially distanced environment. This new phase of Destination Y focuses on consumers and local businesses.

"There are so many great things to do in our community. You've got great restaurants in Mohegan Lake. You've got great specialty food stores in Jefferson Valley. You've got a stage that has A Christmas Carol going on in the Heights hamlet," said Councilman-elect Sergio Esposito, president of the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce.

The five-week hyper-local campaign runs from November 26 to December 31 on social media, digital and print platforms. The consumer targets are residents of Yorktown and surrounding communities in northern Westchester and Putnam counties. The social videos target different demographics, including millennials, families and empty-nesters.

The campaign celebrates activities and retail in several of Yorktown's five hamlets. Councilman Tom Diana called the Shrub Oak hamlet unique. "You drive down Main Street and it's like Mayberry RFD," said Councilman Diana.

Councilman Ed Lachterman urged Yorktown's residents to shop local and he vowed to do the same. "Tonight, we're going to go hit one of the local restaurants and as soon as I leave here, I'm going to take my wife shopping around town," Councilman Lachterman said.

Westchester, 92% Vaccinated, continued from pg 1-

talizations, we are in a much better position that other areas of the state and of our neighboring counties," said Latimer, who urged Westchester residents to "calm down when you turn on the TV and hear the latest news. We have been at this for almost two years, and we don't know how long its going to be. Don't take extreme measures until we know that they are necessary. We have been getting good solid compliance in the county," said Latimer.

Dr. Amler said "there are many unknowns about the Omicron variant and there is still a lot that we don't know. Our concerns are, is it going to be more transmissible than Delta, and can this new variant evade or escape the vaccines that most of us have taken.

Dr. Amler said that the symptoms for Omicron are the same as other COVID variants, fatigue, headache, and pain, and she encouraged Westchester residents to get vaccinated and if your second vaccination has been more than six months ago, to get a booster, and for children ages 5-11 to get vaccinated.

"The best thing we can do is the same thing we have been doing for the past two years; social distance, wear masks and wash our hands. All these things need to be done to keep our population as safe as possible," said Amler.

While Westchester County's major vaccination site, at the County Center in White Plains, has closed, the County Department of Health has opened satellite vaccination centers, and local pharmacies and medical offices are now providing vaccines and booster shots. The County DOH is also providing vaccinations at pop up locations in school districts across the county. For more information on satellite vaccine locations visit Westchestergov.com.

Latimer said that Westchester County "will do all of the things that have to be done and will adjust depending on the numbers." Indoor mask mandates, vaccination requirements, a partial shutdown and a complete shutdown are all steps that may or may not be taken. Other counties in New York State, including Erie County in Western NY, have begun to mandate masks.

"These more extreme steps, if the crisis is so clear and present that it justifies it, we will look at it and assess our next steps." Latimer added that of the 52 people who are hospitalized due to COVID, two-thirds are either unvaccinated or unknown if they are vaccinated.

"This is a matter of prudent risk. We continue to take an active, aggressive role in making vaccinations available to anyone eligible. 8% of Westchester residents are not vaccinated at any level."

Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins said, "The best way to keep us safe is for everyone to get vaccinated and to get a booster."

Upcoming vaccination dates include: Dec 4-at 134 Court Street, White Plains, from 10am-2pm, and Monday Dec. 6, at 134 Court Street. You can walk in or make an appointment by visiting. <https://health.westchestergov.com/>.

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1. Please donate for babies through age 21 (No Stuffed Animals Please)
2. Monetary donations are graciously accepted in the form of gift cards, cash or checks **made payable to: "Westchester Child Welfare Holiday Fund."**

DONATIONS MAY BE MAILED TO:

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FOR ANY QUESTIONS CONTACT: bms7@westchestergov.com or call 914-995-1937



Untermeyer Gardens Conservancy 's Grand Holiday Illumination Opens December 10

See The Polar Express 4D Experience at Maritime Aquarium



Inaugurated in 2015, the Untermeyer Gardens Conservancy's Grand Holiday Illumination has quickly become a Yonkers tradition, and thousands of visitors come to enjoy the spectacle. Come and see the Walled Garden lit with more than 100,000 lights and listen to holiday music from many traditions.

A holiday tradition in The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk goes to a new dimension – literally – as an exciting new version of the beloved film “The Polar Express” steams off the screen of the family attraction’s new 4D Theater.

This holiday treat is free thanks to our generous sponsors. The Untermeyer Gardens Conservancy is proud to be a grantee of ArtsWestchester with funding made possible by Westchester County Government with the support of County Executive George Latimer.

The beloved film has played annually each holiday season in the Aquarium’s IMAX Theater. Although that venue is now closed, a condensed new version of “The Polar Express” arrives in the 4D Theater with thrill-enhancing special effects beginning Fri., Nov. 26 and will play daily through Jan. 2, 2022.

Be a Part of the Celebration! Would your community group like to be a part of the Grand Holiday Illumination this year?

“The Polar Express 4D Experience” is a 13-minute version of the 2004 Warner Bros. film, based on the beloved Caldecott Medal-winning children’s book. When a doubting young boy takes an extraordinary train ride to the North Pole, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery that shows him that the wonder of life never fades for those who believe.

If you have volunteered for Illumination before, or attended as a visitor, you know that it is a magical event. Visitors meander through the garden and experience the wonder and joy of the season. Every night brings smiles and laughter!

This memorable cinematic experience visually spills over the audience in 3D, combined with such thrill-enhancing sensory special effects as snow, wind, scents of hot cocoa, and more.

Each evening, a community group hosts the Welcome Table. Volunteers from the group welcome visitors to the garden, encourage them to sign up for our email newsletter and perhaps make a donation, and give out FREE hot chocolate provided by the Untermeyer Gardens Conservancy. We ask for at least 4 people to staff the Welcome Table at all times, and many groups find it convenient to organize their group to take two shifts 4:15-6:15 p.m. and 6:15-8:15 p.m. or sometimes take only one of the shifts for the evening. Email Trish Lindemann at tlindemann@untermyergardens.org if your group would like to participate, and visit untermyergardens.org for more information to prepare for your visit.

Also playing daily in the 169-seat theater will be BBC Earth’s “Shark: A 4D Experience,” a 12-minute film that puts audiences face to face with some of the world’s most strange and mysterious shark species.

On weekends (including Nov. 26) and daily Dec. 26-Jan. 2, “The Polar Express 4D Experience” will play twice each hour, and “Shark: A 4D Experience” will show once each hour.

On weekdays, “The Polar Express 4D Experience” will play at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30, 2:30 & 4:30 p.m., while “Shark: A 4D Experience” will play at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 & 3:30 p.m. Tickets for either movie are \$7 (\$6 for Aquarium members). They can be purchased with or without Aquarium admission.

Guests in the 4D Theater don 3D glasses, which are turned in and cleaned after every show. The Maritime Aquarium meets or exceeds state and federal COVID guidelines regarding theater capacity, cleaning between shows and other protocols. Masks must be worn in the theater and Aquarium by all guests age 2 and older, no matter their vaccination status.

The Maritime Aquarium’s 4D Theater opened in January 2021 and operates in partnership with SimEx-Iwerks Entertainment, the expert in integrating the highest-quality 3D high-definition projection with in-seat and in-theater effects to create fully immersive experiences. “The Polar Express 4D Experience” was created by SimEx-Iwerks Entertainment in partnership with Warner Bros. Consumer Products. Also starting at the Maritime Aquarium on Nov. 26 will be a “Shark-Diving Santa” presentations, each Friday, Saturday and Sunday through the holidays. Reserve your tickets at www.maritimeaquarium.org.

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NOT SHOWN: Evan Gaines, MD; Vishal A. Mehta, MD; Patrick Murray, MD; Paul S. Ragusa, MD; Daniel Shein, MD; David Shein, MD; Eric Spencer, MD; Mario Voloshin, DPM, FACFAS