

Westchester Rising

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Friday December 15, 2023

Speaker of the House Johnson Visits Westchester to Support Lawler



L-R-Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, Kelly Johnson, Doina Lawler, Rep. Mike Lawler
By Dan Murphy

The new Speaker of the House, republican Mike Johnson, came to Westchester last week to attend a fund raiser, and lend his support to the reelection of Congressman Mike Lawler. Rep. Lawler, who represents the 17th district, which includes all of Northern Westchester, joined supporters, contributors, and republican elected officials at the home of Tony and Maria Sayegh. Tony Sayegh served in the Trump administration as a Public Affairs official in the US Treasury Department.

“Thank you to Speaker Mike Johnson for visiting the Hudson Valley today for an event in support of my re-election campaign. Throughout my time in Congress, I have been focused on addressing the issues that matter to our district and the families that live in it — tacking the affordability crisis and lifting the cap on SALT; ending the reckless spending and addressing our national debt; securing our border and fixing the immigration system; increasing domestic production of energy; restoring public safety; improving our education system; and supporting allies like Israel while taking on the malign influence of China, Russia, and Iran.

Lawler said, “While we have a lot of work ahead of us, I look forward to working with Speaker Johnson to address these important issues and more. While the Speaker and I do not agree on everything — as Ed Koch famously said, if you agree with me on 12 of 12 issues, go see a shrink — we do agree about the importance of tackling the big issues impacting our country. I will always fight for our communities here in the Hudson Valley.”

Outside of the fund raiser, democrats including former Congressman Mondaire Jones, protested Johnson’s appearance in Westchester. Jones, who will be the

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Latimer Talks Congressional Run With Westchester Rising



By Dan Murphy

Westchester County Executive and now official candidate for Congress George Latimer spent some time with Rising Media to discuss his campaign to unseat Congressman Jamaal Bowman next year. Latimer and Bowman are both democrats and will compete in a democratic primary in the 16th Congressional district, which includes most of lower-mid Westchester next June.

“Democrats in the district are getting a choice between two progressives. I am running on all the progressive things we have done in Westchester County government,” said Latimer who highlighted increases in health funding for lower income residents, free bus service, and completing capital projects in the county including Memorial Field in Mt. Vernon and Sprain Ridge Pool in Yonkers.

“We have also managed the migrants with no crime issues. I have done all of this in a reasonable way.”

“Their game plan (Bowman campaign) is to say that they are progressive, and they are running against someone on the right. But when you have someone who has a progressive record to run on, and who has actually accomplished things and is deeply rooted in the Westchester communities that make up the 16th district, it’s a problem for their narrative. They are apoplectic because they can’t frame me in the way they want to,” said Latimer.

Supporters of Bowman have aggressively pushed back against Latimer’s candidacy. Congresswoman Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez (AOC) Tweeted about Latimer’s use of Dr. King’s famous words, “don’t judge me by the color of my skin, judge me by the content of my character,” in an interview with Gothamist.

“Quoting MLK to justify a cynical effort to unseat the only Black man representing Westchester & one of the few in Congress who stand for the human rights of Palestinians is repulsive. It’s time to organize with electoral force,” tweeted AOC.

Latimer’s MLK reference made Politico’s quote of the day, and Westchester progressives hoped to pounce on what they called Latimer’s shaky rollout of his congressional campaign. “Instead of the strong announcement he wanted, he went viral for his MLK comments, POLITICO has him as the quote of the day this AM (for unfavorable reasons), and he admitted to speaking with his second-in-command Ken Jenkins around redistricting in his Gothamist piece (contradicting an earlier interview). Latimer’s been a formidable campaigner at

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Tie a Blue Ribbon Around Your Tree for Israel!



By Dan Murphy

Here is another wonderful idea to show your support for the people of Israel during a difficult time this Chanukah Holiday. After the October 7 attacks by Hamas against the people of Israel, Rye resident Kelly Goldstein began a fundraiser for families in Israel affected by the Hamas attacks.

The fundraiser asks for an \$18 donation and in return donors will receive a Blue Ribbon to hang in your home or business, or around your old Oak tree. So far, the response has been great, with more than \$6,000 raised and Kelly has appeared on News 12, WABC TV-7, and several local publications.

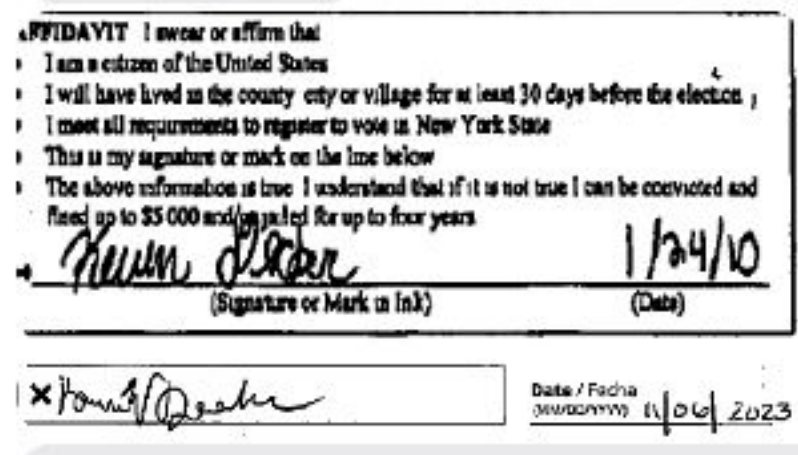
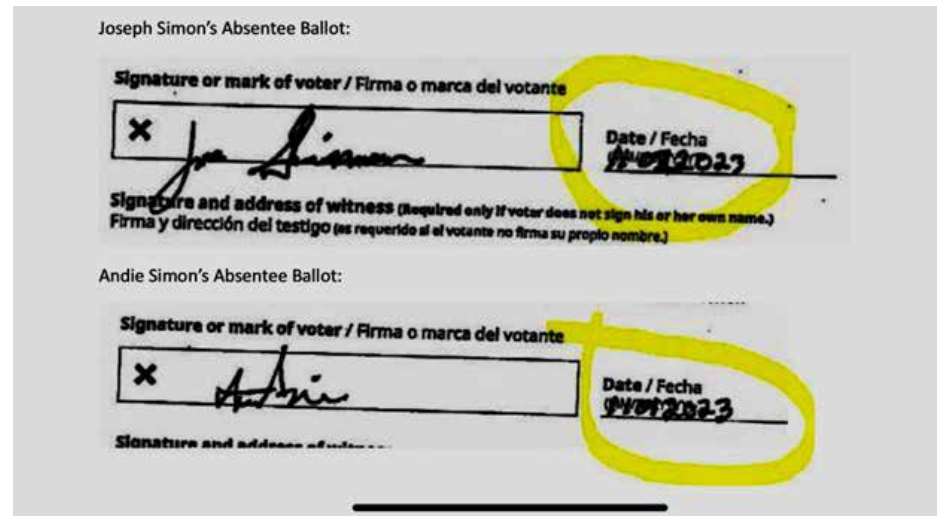
While Chanukah is ending, Kelly is continuing her fundraiser. Please make a donation as any amount will help. Venmo @kellyreid-goldstein. Last 4 digits 3477.

Show your support for this great cause by donating and hanging your Blue Ribbon today! All donations will go directly to families in Israel, who need some help.

Thank you Kelly for starting this worthy cause and giving all of us a chance to give back and show our support for the people of Israel this holiday season.

North Castle Supervisor Schiliro & Clerk Simon Asked to Resign Over Absentee Ballot Scheme

Below: North Castle resident Robert Greene compared the signatures on two voter cards to the signature submitted. These signatures were withdrawn in court



By Dan Murphy

The race for Town Supervisor in North Castle on November 7 was so close that they are still recounting the ballots. Currently, Democrat Joe Rende holds a 5 vote lead, and after two recounts it appears that his lead will hold over Republican Barbara DiGiacinto, who is also a Town Councilwoman.

When the vote totals are this close, just a 5 vote lead out of 3,137 votes cast, the absentee ballots that are mailed in are thoroughly examined. And in the case of this election, 4 absentee ballots were examined in court, and eventually were not counted or included.

Here’s where it gets a bit complicated. Schiliro, a democrat, endorsed DiGiacinto, the republican for Supervisor. So any absentee ballots coming in from friends and relatives of Schiliro would have been cast for DiGiacinto.

In the end, the absentee ballots in question were not counted, and Rende has been declared the winner.

But North Castle resident Robert Greene will not let this rest. “The worst thing they can do is try to steal my vote. I’m outraged. They committed a crime against the people. I play by the rules and campaigned for Rende. But the fact that Schiliro gets his daughter to put in a vote that cancels out my vote is terrible.”

Greene sent us this Letter Opinion based on his analysis of the vote count and court hearing. He includes comparative signatures on ballots and of board of elections voter cards that do not appear to be the same.

“In my opinion, North Castle Supervisor Mike Schiliro, North Castle Town Clerk Alison Simon, and Town Council member Barbara DiGiacinto (a candidate for Supervisor endorsed by Schiliro) were involved in an effort to inflate the vote count in favor of DiGiacinto by encouraging and enabling illegal votes to

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Outpouring of Love for Josephine Spano; Mother of 16, Including Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano



Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano with Mother Josephine Spano who passed away at the age of 89

On December 6, 2023, Josephine Spano, 89, of Yonkers passed away peacefully at home with her children by her side. Born on January 6, 1934, Josephine grew up in Yonkers and attended Commerce High School. She met and fell in love with her teenage sweetheart, Leonard Spano. They married on July 12, 1952. She followed him into the desert in California, where he was stationed as a U.S. Marine entering the Korean Conflict. Their adoration for each other deepened with every decade, and through his years of public service as a longtime County Legislator, Westchester County Clerk, and business owner, she remained a supportive force. They were happily married for 67 years.

The matriarch of the Spano family, Josephine's life overflowed with love, devotion, and an unyielding spirit. Many touching moments could be written about the profound impact she had on each life she touched. When you walked into the Spano home on Christmas morning, you would see a crowd of family members and only the angel peeking from the top of the Christmas tree. That's because hiding the rest of the tree were wrapped presents piled a mountain high and reaching nearly to the ceiling. Josephine showered her family with gifts; those came in many forms, most notably the gift of love.

From the beginning, she instilled the gift of unwavering faith in her family. When their first child Nicholas was born, they celebrated the gift of parenthood, but a year later after losing twin boys shortly after birth, she was told another child would not be in her future. On that day her prayers for intervention to Saint Gerard, the patron saint of motherhood, began and Josephine and Leonard were blessed with 15 more children. For more than fifty years, she hosted a mass asking Saint Gerard for his intercession in helping women faced with the same challenge.

To her children, she offered the gift of her guidance, support, and dedication, whether it was sharing a hug or a special private moment. She is survived by her children, Senator Nicholas Spano (Linda), John (Evelyn), Maria Elena, Eleanore (John Kolmer), Leonard (Christine), Joanne (Vincent Finnegan), Rosemarie (Christopher Gannon), Camille (John Zajac), Mayor Michael Spano (Mary), Victoria (Thomas Smith), Anthony (Eva), Dolores (Richard Wilson), Loretta (Luis Eleutice), Gerard (Karly), Joseph (Rosalie), and City Clerk Vincent Spano (Jaime).

Her legacy carries on in her 42 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren. When asked what they'll remember most, her children said her gift of inner strength, her ability to carry a family through a crisis, and her hospitality in welcoming everyone into her home. Her gift of generosity began as a young mom when she served as the President of the PTA at Saint Peter's School and Mount Carmel School, member of the St. Ann Society, head of the lunch program at Sacred Heart, supporter of special needs children, and a volunteer for many charitable causes.

A keeper of traditions, whether it be summers by the bay in Mastic Beach with the whole family, a weekend away with her girls, an afternoon of bingo, Easter morning with baskets for each of her grown-up children, a talk over a cup of tea or a glass of red wine, she always put others first. As a young girl, Maria Elena may have said it best when she wrote, "Thank you, Mom, for always being there and being you. If I had a chance to pick my mom, I would have picked you." To her children, Josephine will forever be their guiding light, their cherished friend, and their angel.

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano said, "Our beloved mother, Josephine Spano, went to be with the Lord this morning. She is the strongest woman I have ever known. She always made each of her 16 children feel loved, valued and cherished. We all just wanted to make her so proud.

She inspired us. She educated us. She dedicated her life to us. For that, we are eternally grateful. She was the matriarch of our family, placing her foundation in faith. St. Gerard, the patron saint of childbirth, was whom she turned to for prayer.

Notably, he said, "Who except God can give you peace?" You are at peace now, Mom. What gives me comfort is you now are reunited with dad – forever our guardian angels. We will always strive to make you proud and keep you in our heart always."

New Yorkers Split on Whether to Combine Local Elections Year with Even Year Elections

By Dan Murphy

Governor Kathy Hochul has on her desk a bill which would change when the County Executive and town officials run for office. The bill calls for these offices to be on the ballot at the same time as a Presidential or Gubernatorial election, which are held on even year elections.

Opinions are mixed over whether this is a good idea and she should sign it into law, or a bad idea that warrants a veto.

Greenburgh Supervisor Paul Feiner, writes, "Within the next few weeks Governor Hochul will have to decide whether to sign or veto legislation that would change the years when the County Executive, town officials run for office. I urge her to veto the legislation. Currently these elections are held in off years- not when the President or Governor runs for office. The legislation the Governor will be considering signing would change the election for county officials and town officials to the years when the President and Governor are on the ballot. The law does not apply to city or village elections, and for races for county clerk, sheriff, district attorneys, local judges.

Although more people will vote in town and county elections if the elections for these offices are held the same time as Presidential/Governor elections, there are big negatives to the law. Local elections will be nationalized. Many of the voters who cast their ballots when there are national elections vote the straight party line. They are not paying attention to local issues.

There will be much less media attention given to local races. That means that local officials who are unresponsive to the community will stand a better chance of getting re-elected. If there is a heated race for President, Governor, US Senator, US Congressional representative, State Senator, State Assemblyman, County Executive, County Legislator and town officials the same year how many people will focus on the local races? In an off year election the media has the air time or print space to cover local issues. During a national election year I think there will be very limited media attention given to the local town races. It will be very hard for candidates who are critical of policies of their opponents to get people to focus attention.

I believe that the legislation, if signed, will reduce the influence of neighborhood associations. If local officials disregard public opinion on land use matters (as an example)- it will be much harder to organize successful campaigns to defeat incumbents who were endorsed by the party. It will also make it almost impossible for independent candidates to win election against party supported candidates--resulting in even fewer contested elections.

Finally, why did our State Legislators decide to change the election years for only town & county offices but not for village, city, fire district or school votes? I urge the Governor to veto the legislation," writes Feiner.

The watchdog group Reinvent Albany supports the Election Alignment Bill. In a letter to Gov. Hochul, they write, The undersigned organizations encourage you to sign Assembly Bill A4282B/Senate Bill S3505B (the "Election Alignment Bill"), which would move the timing of many local elections across the state to even-numbered years, on the same cycle as federal and state elections.

New York State's current practice of holding local elections "off-cycle" in odd years is both racially discriminatory and discriminatory against young voters. Off-cycle elections exacerbate racial and age disparities in political participation and lead to under-representation of voters of color and young voters in local governments across the state. The Election Alignment Bill provides a critical opportunity to shift many of the off-cycle elections that produce these discriminatory effects to even years, yielding more representative turnout.

Pursuant to existing New York law, towns and counties hold primary elections in June of odd-numbered years and general elections in November of odd-numbered years, which is "off-cycle" from federal and state elections held in even-numbered years. The Election Alignment Bill would shift these local contests to even-numbered years so they are "on-cycle" with federal and state elections. This measure would reduce burdens on voters, facilitate more accessible public education surrounding elections, and increase participation in elections.

Off-Cycle Elections Can Exacerbate Racial Discrimination in Voting
a. Off-cycle elections have been shown to contribute to significant racial and age-based disparities in political participation. Studies have consistently shown that off-cycle elections significantly depress voter turnout, and in doing so disproportionately suppress participation in the democratic process by young people and people of color. Aligning local elections with state and national elections "greatly reduces [that] cost of participation" for these voters to engage in local democracy, without reducing other voters' opportunities to participate.

The impact of off-cycle elections is starkly demonstrated in the disparity between younger and older voter turnout. In fact, one study examining election timing and voter turnout for school districts noted that one of the "most substantial difference[s]" in voter share between on-cycle and off-cycle elections was based on voters' age. While younger Americans are vastly underrepresented in off-cycle contests (with older voters sometimes representing "more than 2 times as many voters as they do . . . residents"), younger Americans are "substantially better represented in on-cycle contests" to create a more representative voting population. The Election Alignment Bill Will Promote Compliance with Federal and State Law.

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Westchester Board of Legislators Passes, Latimer Signs 2024 Budget: No Tax Levy Increase for Fifth Straight Year; 14-2 BOL Vote

By Dan Murphy

On Dec. 11, the Westchester County Board of Legislators passed the 2024 Westchester County Budget. The \$ 2.7 billion budget includes additions approved by the Budget & Appropriations Committee. It reflects key priorities and investments in advocacy for youth, domestic violence, mental health, support for community centers and services, arts and culture, and environmental sustainability to make Westchester more affordable, livable, and safer.

BOL Chairman Vedat Gashi said, "As a Westchester resident with a family, I recognize that each dollar counts. As Chairman of the County Board of Legislators, I am proud that we have maintained our commitment to keeping the tax burden in mind while making great strides to achieve an upgraded Bond Rating to AAA. We have done this by carefully managing resources to revive medium-term growth for County residents while improving public safety, transforming our mental health care system, protecting our environment, and investing in our children's future."

The Operating Budget allocates \$8.8 million to the many non-profits that provide essential services for Westchester County residents. Areas of focus reflect the priorities of the Budget and Appropriations Committee and include over \$4 million for community centers and community-based services, \$550,000 for cultural organizations, over \$2.5 million for youth programming and services, \$620,500 for organizations combatting food insecurity, and over \$1 million for domestic violence.

The 2023 County budget will end shortly with:

No Borrowing for Tax Certioraris

No Borrowing for Pensions

No Use of Fund Balance

No Borrowing for Cash Flow

The 2024 budget has No Borrowing or One-Shots and No Increase in Property Tax Levy, for the fifth straight year.

The budget signing comes on the heels of Westchester County being recognized by Fitch Ratings with a prestigious "AAA" credit rating. The "AAA" credit rating is the highest designation possible and underscores the County's commitment to maintaining a solid financial foundation. This recognition not only reflects the County's current financial standing but also positions it favorably for future economic challenges and opportunities. The "AAA" credit rating is expected to have a positive impact on Westchester County's ability to secure favorable interest rates when issuing bonds, ultimately benefiting taxpayers and supporting continued investment in critical infrastructure and community initiatives.

Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson Budget & Appropriations Committee Chair said, "The 2024 County Budget is a sound and balanced budget. It upholds our commitment to programs that meet the needs of Westchester County residents. I am very proud to Chair the Committee on Budget and Appropriations to usher through the approval of this budget today as it continues to emphasize health and mental health services, on the development of affordable housing and on environmental programs. This budget is also a catalyst for creating an even more inclusive economy. I am so glad we're continuing the childcare scholarships and I am very excited about the new initiatives in 2024 including a new Director of Flood Mitigation & Resiliency and funding for United Way's new Growing Together Westchester Family Resource Tool for new parents."

Vice-Chair Nancy Barr, said, "As someone who believes that County government should protect the health and welfare of its residents while maintaining sound fiscal management, I am pleased that this year's budget does precisely that. By taking advantage of unprecedented grant and trust funds that are available for flood mitigation, environmental initiatives, and health and wellness, we can maximize our impact without raising taxes or decreasing fund balance."

Majority Leader José Alvarado said, "Bringing our county budget together is a year-long process. It takes strong governance, fiscal prudence, and as Majority Leader, it takes bringing our Board together so we can align on priorities that will best serve the people of Westchester in both the near term and in a sustainable way."

The vote on the budget was 14-2, with Legislators Damon Maher and Catherine Parker voting no.

Yonkers Mayor & Council: We're In The Money



By Eric Wolf Schoen

There they go again! By the time you read this article, the Yonkers City Council will probably approve raises for themselves and the Mayor that could be as high as 46%. Yes friends, 46%. Didn't you get a 46% increase the last time your boss raised your salary. And in the case of the Mayor, the raise will include 'retroactive' pay of some \$72,400. You can't make this stuff up.

When did the Council announce they would be voting on raising their salaries and that of the Mayor? After Primary Day and Election Day which was just a month ago. If they announced it before then, do you think the outcome of the election might have been different. Is the Council required to have a public hearing on this? You guessed it, nope!

This speaks to the problem with these proposed raises. The Council vote on the raises was first announced in the meeting call for the City Council Meeting on December 12, Tuesday of this week via the distribution of the City Council Agenda last Friday. So you have a full 5 days to make your voice heard Yonkers. Not enough time.

It's these last minute announcements that get people crazy and fed up with the Yonkers City Council. The money for the raises was included in the budget for Fiscal year 2023-2024 which was approved last year in June. 7 months ago! And the Council just so happened to put it on the agenda in the middle of the holiday season when people aren't paying much attention to what's going on in City Hall.

Folks are busy making gingerbread houses or potato latkes (pancakes) or preparing for Kwanza Karamu, the most important meal of the holiday which takes place on the sixth night. The affairs of Yonkers City government Right now are not on peoples minds.

The then City Council played a game like this when they increased term limits with little notice from 3 to 4. Could the term limits vote have been a quid pro quo or deal for the salary increases? Why does it look strangely like that. And may I remind you that together with an increasing salary the City Council and Mayor get full health benefits paid for by the city as well as a city gassed up and maintained vehicle for their use. Take it from me, the free health benefits they get are better than those most people in Yonkers get, and after working a certain number of years they are eligible for a pension together with those health benefits free for life!

As the song brothers Ira and George Gershwin composed for the the Broadway musical film 'A Damsel in Distress' in 1937 says, it's 'Nice Work if You Can Get It!'

Some proposed numbers. The salary for the Mayor will increase 46% to \$228,500. He will get over \$72,000 in retroactive pay. The City Council President's pay will increase 30%, 38% increase for City Councilpersons, 40% increase for Majority and Minority Leaders and Committee Chairs will receive an additional \$15,000 for their work. Pretty much everybody gets an increase over their base pay.

The Mayor's retroactive pay seemed a bit odd as taxpayers get nothing for this. A City spokeswoman told my colleague Journal News Tax Watch columnist David McKay Wilson that the Mayor's retroactive pay is in line with the 1 time checks issued to union members when a contract is settled. She said the State Legislature approved retroactive raises for the Governor and Lt. Governor in 2016.

We need to learn in Yonkers that just because some other party in government does something like retroactive raises doesn't mean Yonkers has to do it to. It's like the \$15,000 stipend given to the School Board President because other districts give their School Board Presidents \$15,000, a move by the Board of Education Mayor Spano agreed with me was wrong. This was the first time in the history of the Yonkers Board of Education that a trustee got paid for his work, hundreds of people volunteering without pay to do the job since the district was created. Like the \$15,000 and retroactive pay, you have to watch these things cause they can spread like wildfires!

Councilman John Rubbo told my colleague Wilson that the Council 'delayed approving Raises to avoid disruption of negotiations with municipal unions before settling contracts.' One has nothing to do with the other. If Yonkers can't it's act together settling union contracts before the old ones expire, then maybe it needs someone fresh to negotiate contracts and a new way of thinking taking the election cycle out of the process.

The Mayor will hold a public hearing on the raises sometime after the first of the year. If you don't show up and object to the raises and what is occurring here or at least call the Mayor's office at 914-377-6300 to voice your concerns, you have only yourself to blame for the games they play in the City of Gracious Living!

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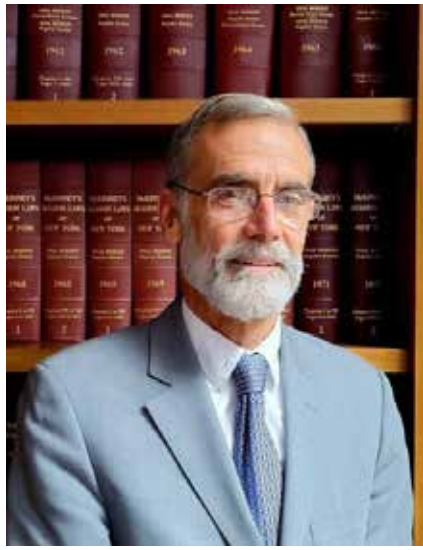
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County Legislator Damon Maher Changes Parties, from Democrat to Working Families



County Legislator Damon Maher

By Dan Murphy

County Legislator Damon Maher announced on Dec. 6 that he has changed his voter registration from democrat to the Working Families Party. For the final three weeks of his term, Maher will be the only member of the Working Families Party elected to office in Westchester. Maher declined to run for reelection, opting to run for Mayor of New Rochelle.

Maher writes, in an email to his constituents, "Dear friends, I will submit a voter registration form this morning changing my political party affiliation to the Working Families Party.

"First, please know that my switch to WFP is certainly NOT based on its national organization's foreign policy positions. Rather, I am much more closely aligned with the WFP's domestic agenda, which in fact is more in line with the stated Biden agenda than with that of many Democratic officials in our region. Over the past two years especially, I have grown continually more alienated from suburban New York Democratic politicians, who are mostly good people but, in my view are often captive to a more cautious, corporate mindset.

"My term in office at the County Legislature ends on Dec. 31, but there are still important days and hours of review and, I hope, some revision of the County Executive's proposed budget for 2024. During this time, and in the long term as I continue as an activist looking forward with a progressive and anti-racist lens, I think the WFP will be a better space from which to advocate for...

Fair, affordable and integrated housing.... more aggressively pushing out the \$200 Million we have appropriated in 2023-24 for Affordable Housing throughout the County.... expediting implementation of our Tenant Right to Counsel law and the promised amendment eliminating the sunset provision that the County Executive's office inserted into the bill at the last moment.

Police Accountability.... insitutionalizing meaningful civilian oversight.... reducing rarely questioned increases in salaries, overtime and infrastructure for policing, punitive prosecuting and punishment.

Reducing income inequality and extreme wealth disparities with fair, progressive taxation.

More funding of academic or vocational education for 1-2 years beyond high school (e.g., free Westchester Community College and forgiving of debts owed to WCC).

More money for community-based nonprofits tackling the social and economic problems that harm our communities.

REAL environment initiatives encouraging less reliance of the private, one-person-commuting private car.... permanently lower or free county bus fares, true pedestrian and bicycle safety.... long-term strategy for car storage (aka parking) that encourages less, not more, private car use.

Stronger campaign finance laws.... putting serious funding into our Ethics Board or create an independent office of Inspector General or Comptroller.... curtailing big money from big real estate developers whose project are dependent on favorable actions by the various levels of government.

I look forward to working with you, my friends, on these and other crucial matters, now and after my term in office ends," writes Maher.

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION BACK TO WORK

Tuesday afternoon, right before press time the New York Court of Appeals ordered the Independent Redistricting Commission back to work to redraw its Congressional map to return control of the states 26 Congressional districts to the New York State Legislature. The new map must be completed by February 28 of next year. The court said the neutral lines imposed for last years election were a temporary fix.

Though Democrats liked the decision, how fair is it to someone who wants to run for Congress and with legal battles won't know the district lines for months. Like County Executive George Latimer who was going to battle Congressman Jamaal Bowman based on the current lines. Will a set of approved Congressional lines be in place far enough in advance to complete all that is necessary for the Congressional primaries next year (I.e petitions) allowing time for candidates to campaign and debate the issues?

Another fine mess!

BRIEFS:

My condolences to the Spano family on the loss of matriarch Josephine Spano. What a nice lady! I have known the Spano family since they sold dry ice out of a vending machine on Riverdale Ave next to their garage many moons ago. Years ago Josephine and I met by chance at the doctors offices on North Broadway. All I could think of was with 16 kids how much time she must spend in those offices! Several years ago I ran into her at WESTCHESTER County Airport heading to Florida as I was. All I could think of was with such a large family she truly deserved a nice vacation. May her memory serve as a source of inspiration for her family and all Yonkersites!

With all the antisemitism in this country today, so happy to see that Yonkers has increased the number of menorah lightings, a new one this year at DPW headquarters on Nepperhan Avenue. Kudos to Chabad at Greystone Jewish Center and Rabbi Hurwitz for providing the guidance and inspiration for so many of them.

Reach Eric Schoen at thistooisonkers@aol.com, or friend him on Facebook Eric Schoen...just look for him in the picture with Joan Rivers!

Service of Lessons and Carols Concert Dec. 17 Sacred Heart Church, Dobbs Ferry



On Sunday, December 17, 2023 at 3:00PM, the Parish of Sacred Heart and Lady of Pompeii will present the beloved Service of Lessons and Carols, based on a long choral tradition of King's College, Cambridge England. Singers of all levels are invited to sing with the choir; the dress rehearsal is on Sunday, December 17, at 1 pm.

The beautiful service will be led by Reverend Christopher Monturo, Pastor at Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Pompeii Parish and Dr. Sándor Szabó, conductor. Dr. Szabó is active as conductor, organist, pianist and harpsichordist in many major concert halls and churches throughout Europe, Asia, Canada and the United States. He presently serves as Director of Music, Principal Organist and Choirmaster at Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Pompeii Parish and Music Director of Oratorio Society of New Jersey.

The Service will include well-known carols and solos inspired by Christmas from around the world sung by the adult choir, Cherub Choir and accompanied by organ, piano, brass, strings, bells and percussion. Free admission, donations to support the music ministry are welcome.

Sacred Heart Church, 417 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522.

PAC Supporting RFK Jr. for President to Spend \$15 Million for Ballot Access in 10 States, Including New York

American Values 2024 (AV24), the Super PAC supporting Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.'s presidential candidacy, announced its intent to pursue ballot access in pivotal states independent of the campaign. The targeted states include Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Nevada, New York, and Texas. These ten states represent approximately half of the required signatures nationwide. AV24 is embarking on an independent ballot access campaign and stands ready to address all requisite tasks that it may undertake independently and within the bounds of the law, which further solidifies the organization's commitment to ensure Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s path to the White House. This list may change upon additional legal review.

AV24 is expecting to spend between \$10M-\$15M to tackle this monumental task in these ten states with the legal expertise to analyze each state's requirements, process, and implementation.

"We have chosen to pursue these critical states, some of them battlegrounds, due to the complexity of the state election codes and the volume of signatures necessary to achieve ballot access. A successful ballot access initiative ensures Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. as an option for president of the United States," said Deirdre Goldfarb, Special Counsel Ballot Access.

Tony Lyons, co-founder of AV24 and President of Skyhorse Publishing, said, "The Super PAC is also preparing for inevitable attacks from both sides of the aisle. Democrats and Republicans are panicked about Bobby's surging popularity among black voters, Hispanic voters, all voters under 45, and anyone concerned with ending DC corruption. Kennedy's numbers have shocked the uniparty elites to their core. They will work overtime in a futile attempt to keep Bobby off both the ballot and the debate stage. They clearly don't understand what people worldwide have realized—that we are in the middle of a revolution and the will of the people, their desire for politicians who will fight for the middle class against the greed and corruption of oligarchs, is unstoppable. Bobby is a populist polling at 24%, which equates to 40 million people who would vote for him if the election were held today, and it's just the very beginning."

Ballot access in New York State is difficult without the support of either the Democratic or Republican party. 45,000 valid signatures are required in order to run for statewide office (Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller), or for President.

A few NYS minor parties and organizations have recently attempted to get on the ballot, but were unsuccessful last year. Statewide ballot access in New York became more difficult after then Governor Andrew Cuomo convinced the state legislature to change the Election Law and required minor parties to secure 100,000 votes on their line in order to continue to keep their automatic ballot access.

The changes came at the time that actress-activist Cynthia Nixon was challenging Cuomo for Governor on the Working Families Party line. Minor political parties in New York including the Libertarian Party and Green Party did not meet the threshold and lost their automatic ballot access.

A combination of volunteers and paid staff are required to collect enough signatures for RFK Jr. or any independent Presidential candidate. 45,000 valid signature are required, but as many as 750,000 signatures are needed to avoid a petition challenge.

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Senator Mayer Recognizes Four Local businesses with NYS Empire Award for Community Dedication



State Senator Shelley Mayer, pictured above with, top left- Lynda Hernandez DeGomez, and members of The Blue Heart Forever Project, top right-with Mike Nazzaro (left) and Ali Nazzaro (Right), owners of Laughing Horse Coffee and Tea Co bottom left-Robbie and Daphne Evertt, owners of The Kitchen Table, bottom right Marissa Goulbourne, of Prana Prenatal Yoga, and Senator Mayer

The New York State Empire Award honors and showcases small businesses and nonprofit organizations that make a positive impact on their communities. New York State Senate District 37 is home to many exceptional businesses and small nonprofit organizations that improve the quality of life and help build civic life and connections in the community by providing food, culture, spaces to gather, or by directly helping others in need. New York State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, "I am proud that Westchester is home to so many businesses and organizations that are steadfast in their dedication to their communities. Each business or organization that I have had the pleasure of honoring has helped bring our community closer in extraordinary ways. They offer diverse services, but they share a spirit of unity and positivity that can be felt throughout the municipalities that make up our District. I am grateful to each one for their generosity and commitment to their community."

The Blue Heart Forever Project (BHFP) was established in 2017 by Lynda Hernandez DeGomez who saw a dire need for a support system for Latino families of children with autism in special education in the Village of Port Chester. Lynda organized and brought families together to support and help advocate for one another. In addition to offering support groups, BHFP maintains a list of community resources, advocates at community events, and recommends programs for children based on the specific support needs for each child. BHFP has made a profound and positive impact on many Latino families as it continues to grow as an organization.

Lynda Hernandez DeGomez, Founder of the Blue Heart Forever Project, said, "We are a Special Education support group for Hispanic families in Port Chester. We appreciate this recognition from Senator Shelley Mayer because it motivates us to continue supporting and educating the Hispanic community. We also thank all the organizations that support us in different areas for the progress of the group and especially that of our children."

Laughing Horse Coffee & Tea Co. is a coffee shop in Harrison, NY where people of all ages can gather and feel a sense of community. All of Laughing Horse's coffee is ethically sourced, their dairy products come from New York State dairies, and their baked goods and treats come from local bakeries. It is the kind of place where the person behind the counter will recognize you and know your "usual." Laughing Horse also provides a warm and upbeat space where community members can work, relax, watch local musicians and entertainers, or take part in open mic nights. Laughing Horse was nominated for being a new, friendly and much-needed gathering space for the Harrison Community.

Mike and Ali Nazzaro, owners of Laughing Horse Coffee & Tea Co. said, "It's an honor for Laughing Horse Coffee and Tea to receive a New York State Senate 2023 Empire Award! We love what Senator Shelley Mayer has done for the community and being recognized by her is wonderful. We love serving the Westchester area and being part of this incredible and vibrant neighborhood to live in."

The Kitchen Table is a farm-to-table restaurant in Pound Ridge, NY that has become a centerpiece in the community not only for its excellent food and drink, but for its welcoming atmosphere and encouragement of inclusion. The Kitchen Table regularly hosts trivia nights, features local entertainers and artists, and is a spot where local elected officials can discuss issues with their constituents. The Kitchen Table also serves as an organizing hub where multiple pop-up charities have hosted events whose proceeds have gone to organizations within the community. The Kitchen Table was nominated for the variety of services it has provided to the Pound Ridge community and for its continued devotion to promoting diversity and equity.

Daphne Everett, owner of The Kitchen Table, said, "Next April The Kitchen Table will celebrate our 10th year in business in Pound Ridge. When we opened we wanted to create a place where people in town could gather and talk and get to know one another – to build community. We are most grateful for the continuing support we have had from local residents and hope we have made life in Pound Ridge a little bit better. We are so lucky to live in an incredible place and are thrilled to be participants in the life of our town. We are very honored to receive the Empire Award from Senator Shelley Mayer and to know that our efforts to build community have had an impact. We're looking forward to the next 10 years! Thank you Senator Mayer!!!!"

Prana Prenatal Yoga offers support, guidance and a sense of community for women going through pregnancy, childbirth and new motherhood. Offering prenatal and postnatal classes and workshops, Prana Prenatal Yoga was nominated for their important work in Westchester and beyond, for providing physical and mental health resources to all individuals, and for supporting women through their pregnancy, childbirth and parenting experiences. Marissa Goulbourne, Prana Prenatal Yoga, said, "We are so grateful to be a trusted and valuable resource for expecting and new families in Westchester. It was truly humbling to have Senator Mayer share with us direct quotes she received from various community members, expressing the positive impact Prana has had on their lives. We look forward to growing with organizations such as NYMilk Bank to continue serving Westchester's perinatal community."

Town of Riverhead Surplus Real Estate Auction
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NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER Mortgage Assets Management, LLC, Plaintiff AGAINST Dutchess County Commissioner of Finance, as Limited Administrator of the Estate of Rosalina Pacheco; et al., Defendant(s) Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly entered October 4, 2023 I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Lobby of the Westchester County Courthouse, 111 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, White Plains, NY, 10601 on January 10, 2024 at 11:30AM, premises known as 25 New Haven RR Street, Mount Vernon, NY 10550. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the City of Mount Vernon, County of Westchester, State of New York, Section 164.76 Block 1067 Lot 11. Approximate amount of judgment \$499,680.01 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index# 51310/2017. The auction will be conducted pursuant to the COVID-19 Policies Concerning Public Auctions of Foreclosed Property established by the Ninth Judicial District. Joyce Brown, 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 12, 2023 78199

PUBLIC NOTICE

GENERAL ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 66 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF YONKERS KNOWN AS "NOISE" RELATING TO PROHIBITED NOISES

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Yonkers has adopted the abovementioned legislation that amends Chapter 66 of the Code of the City of Yonkers entitled "Noise" is hereby amended, in part, by amending Subsection A of 66-4 entitled "Enumeration of prohibited noises" to raise the decibel levels for certain noise violations.

The penalties for violation of this ordinance are as follows:

§ 66-24 Penalties for offenses.
Any violation of any provision of this chapter or violation of a lawful abatement order shall constitute a Class II offense.

The complete text of the ordinance is on file and may be examined at the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 40 S. Broadway, Yonkers, NY 10701.

Dated: December 4, 2023
Vincent Spano, City Clerk

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) # 231211_LA_
Landscape Architecture Design Services to Implement Environmental Justice Measures**

The Municipal Housing Authority for the City of Yonkers ("MHACY") is soliciting proposals from qualified landscape architecture firms for final design and construction documents to implement portions of a recently-completed Green Infrastructure Plan at various sites as specified in this Request for Proposal ("RFP").

Proposals will be accepted on a continual basis for a period of 30 calendar days. Proposals may be sent to the following: procurement@mhacy.org, cc km y be sent to the following: procurement@mhacy.org, cc kmagoolaghan@mulfordcorporation.com
Subject Line: MHACY RFP#231211_LA_

Proposals must be submitted no later than 5:00 PM (EST) on January 11, 2024. Awardees will be interviewed and selected no later than January 31, 2024. Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to procurement@mhacy.org, cc kmagoolaghan@mulfordcorporation.com.

MHACY is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, sexual orientation, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability or family status.

MHACY solicits and encourages the participation of minorities and small businesses in procurement. Contact, related to this procurement, with members of the Authority's Board of Commissioners or the Authority's officers and/or employees other than the contact person shown below, during the procurement process could result in disqualification of a proposal

Contact related to this procurement, with members of MHACY's Board of Commissioners, or MHACY's officers and/or employees other than the contact person show above, during the procurement process could result in disqualification of a proposal

Wilson Kimball
President & CEO Municipal Housing Authority for the City of Yonkers
1511 Central Park Avenue Yonkers, NY 10710

**YONKERS POLICE DEPARTMENT
NOTICE OF ABANDONED VEHICLE**

I, Christopher Sapienza, Commissioner of the Yonkers Police Department, do hereby issue the following notice pursuant to Sections 109-144 and 109-147 of the Code of the City of Yonkers: A 2017 Honda Civic, bearing Connecticut license plate BE37471 (and identified by VIN # 2HGFC2F59HH571480) has been lawfully impounded since 05/18/23 and to this date no owner has come forward to claim any interest in this vehicle. Any persons having a legal interest in this vehicle may seek recovery of said vehicle by contacting Lt. Gregory Forshey no later than 05/12/23. If such person has a legal right to the vehicle, they shall be responsible for all costs incurred by the City to remove and store said vehicle and for the cost to publish any notice. If this vehicle is not claimed by 01/12/24, the vehicle shall be deemed abandoned and title shall vest with the City on 01/12/24, (20 business days from the date of publication).

CORPORATION NOTICE

CITY OF YONKERS-NEW YORK

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to law, that the Mayor of the City of Yonkers, New York, will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, January 3, 2024 at 5:15pm, Mayor's Reception Room, 2nd floor, 40 South Broadway, Yonkers, New York, to hear all interested parties and citizens regarding the adoption of the following Local Law, to wit:

A LOCAL LAW AMENDING CHAPTER 58 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF YONKERS ENTITLED 'HOUSING AND BUILDING MAINTENANCE CODE' IN RELATION TO PERMITS AND THE INSPECTION OF BOILERS.

Said hearing may be adjourned from time to time as necessary. Further information, including access to a copy of said proposed local law, may be obtained at the City Clerk's office, City Hall, 40 South Broadway, Yonkers, New York and on the City's Website.

MIKE SPANO Mayor Date: December 13, 2023

Notice of formation of a Limited Liability Company TM Studio Ink LLC Articles of Organization filed with the SSNY Office on 08/18/2023 Office Location: Westchester County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to : 5 Palisade Avenue Yonkers, NY 10701 Purpose: Any lawful purpose. Latest date upon which LLC is to dissolve: No specific date.

Notice of formation of a Limited Liability Company 2023 Holdings LLC Articles of Organization filed with the SSNY Office on 08/21/2023 Office Location: Westchester County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to : 5 Palisade Avenue Yonkers, NY 10701 Purpose: Any lawful purpose. Latest date upon which LLC is to dissolve: No specific date.

Notice of formation of D & E Guest Reality Management, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 09/15/2023. 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, D & E Guest Reality Management LLC, 79-81 Main Street, P.O. Box 1100, Yonkers, NY 10702. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of 66 Meserole, LLC., Articles of organization filed with the NY Secretary of State (NYSS) on 11/28/2023. Office location: Westchester County. NYSS is designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process may be served and shall mail a copy of process to: 11 Bon Air Ave, New Rochelle, NY 10804. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Formation of TAQUERIA MARQUITO, LLC filed with the Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/8/2023 with formation date of 1/1/2024. Office loc.: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. The address SSNY shall mail process to Lundy, Beldecos & Milby, P.C., 450 N. Narberth Ave., Ste. 200, Narberth, PA 19072. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Formation of EVERYBODY EATS FOOD GROUP, LLC filed with the Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/8/2023 with formation date of 1/1/2024. Office loc.: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. The address SSNY shall mail process to Lundy, Beldecos & Milby, P.C., 450 N. Narberth Ave., Ste. 200, Narberth, PA 19072. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of 326 PROSPECT AVE LLC. Articles of Organization filed with SSNY on 03/24/2023. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Brian Caldwell at 130 Franklin Avenue, Harrison, NY 10528. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Formation of 25 COUNTY ROUTE 62 LLC filed with the Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 10/6/2023. Office loc.: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. The principal business loc. and address SSNY shall mail process to is Floann and Raymond Landeck, 79 Pembroke Dr., Yonkers, NY 10710. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of [THE NAVIE THERAPY GROUP L.L.C], LLC filed with SSNY on [08/29/23. Office: [WESTCHESTER] County. SSNY designated agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of the process to LLC: [200 Bloomingdale Road, Suite 1A, White Plains, NY 10605]. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of formation of Jaylee's Beauty Lounge, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 10/29/23. 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, 55 Cole Street, Ste. 101, Yonkers, NY, 10710. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

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CORPORATION NOTICE

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MIKE SPANO Mayor Date: December 13, 2023

North Castle Ballots, continued from pg 1-

be cast in the 11/7/2023 North Castle town board election.

“The effort among supporters of DiGiacinto to overturn opposition candidate Joe Rende’s legitimate win would have worked if it were not for a challenge to several absentee ballots commenced in Westchester County Supreme Court on November 14, 2023. Investigation into alleged ballot fraud is continuing. Here is a summary of 6 flawed votes that have been discovered so far:

“Vote 1: An absentee ballot was submitted in the name of Supervisor Schiliro’s adult daughter, Paulina Schiliro, 28 years old, who left her full-time residence in North Castle in 2017. Paulina worked and lived in Colorado for four years and then moved to New Haven, CT, where she now lives in an apartment with her fiancé and plans to be married in June. Mike Schiliro picked up an absentee ballot form for her which was signed and submitted to be counted as a legitimate vote. However, as copies below clearly show, her signature on the ballot differs vastly from her signature on file at the BOE, calling into question not only her eligibility to vote in North Castle – but also whether she personally signed her absentee ballot. The top signature is a copy of Paulina’s BOE voter registration card. The bottom signature is copied from her 2023 absentee ballot. The two signatures are vastly different. When asked in court to identify the absentee ballot signature, Mike Schiliro testified, “That is my daughter Paulina’s signature.” (See Testimony page 62, line 11).

Mike Schiliro offered questionable sworn court testimony concerning the circumstances surrounding the signing of Paulina’s ballot and the legitimacy of her North Castle residency. (See Schiliro testimony beginning on page 53), including that Mike Schiliro both picked up and dropped off Paulina’s absentee ballot. Paulina Schiliro was subpoenaed to testify in Westchester County Supreme Court as to the validity of her ballot. However, under a settlement agreement by attorneys for Schiliro, Paulina was not required to testify under oath because Schiliro agreed to withdraw the ballot before it could be counted.

Votes 2 and 3: Absentee ballots were submitted in the names of 2 adult children of Town Clerk Alison Simon: Andie Simon, 27 years old, and Joseph Simon, 30 years old. Both Simon children live predominantly in NYC apartments and work full-time there, which would make it illegal for either of them to vote in North Castle. Furthermore, there are obvious signature discrepancies on the absentee ballots allegedly completed in-person by Joseph and Andie. Signatures of Joe and Andie Simon found on their BOE registration cards were compared with signatures on their 2023 absentee ballots. As shown below, the handwriting styles are vastly different – calling into question the identity of who signed the 2023 ballot.

When Joe was asked about his ballot in court, he testified, “No one touched it but me.” (See Testimony page 106, line 3) When Alison Simon was asked about the handwriting on the date of Andie’s ballot, she testified, “That’s mine.” (Testimony Page 84, line 18). When asked if she also dated Joe’s ballot she testified, “I don’t think so.” (Testimony Page 89, line 7). Judge Koba was skeptical, not just because of evasive and conflicting testimony, but also because the error in the position of the written date (circled above), nearly identical handwriting style, and ink pen type appeared to be the same on both Andie’s and Joe’s ballots. A handwriting expert was retained to analyze the validity of Andie and Joe Simon’s ballots. But before further investigation could begin, attorneys for Simon negotiated a settlement under which both questionable Simon ballots were withdrawn. As a result, the two ballots were not opened and therefore not counted.

Vote 4: An absentee ballot was submitted in the name of Giana Poppo, a 24-year-old likely Schiliro family acquaintance. Poppo Lives and works in Los Angeles, California which would make it illegal for her to vote in North Castle. Poppo was subpoenaed to appear in court, but she was able to avoid the process service. The judge disqualified her ballot. Poppo’s ballot is one of 4 that were withdrawn, not opened, and therefore not counted which begs the question, “Why would one agree to withdraw a legitimate ballot?” Since all 4 withdrawn ballots were submitted by DiGiacinto supporters, it therefore seems certain that the votes, if opened, would be for DiGiacinto. Had these questionable ballots not been set aside by agreement of the parties – the attempt to flip the election result would have succeeded.

Vote 5: An absentee ballot was submitted in the name of Kevin Decker, a 35-year-old first cousin and close friend of Barbara DiGiacinto. Decker, 35 years old, is the offensive coordinator at ODU in Virginia. Decker lives in Virginia and therefore voted illegally in North Castle. Decker’s vote was counted because it was opened before the investigation of absentee ballots began – but Kevin’s signature and the legality of his residency will undoubtedly be challenged. The top signature (below) is from Kevin’s 2010 registration card on file at the BOE. The bottom is from his 1/24/2023 absentee ballot. As with the Schiliro and Simon ballots – the signature styles are vastly different – calling into question the identify of who signed the ballot.

Vote 6: Larry Ruisi was a candidate for North Castle Town Council, a running mate of Barbara DiGiacinto, and endorsed by Mike Schiliro. He is also a member of the North Castle Planning Board. Larry’s 40-year-old son, Jonathan Ruisi, has lived in White Plains for over 10 years. Nevertheless, Johnathan illegally cast his vote in North Castle, in person, which was counted in this election. There is little doubt that an attempt to steal North Castle’s election for the office of Supervisor was made using multiple ineligible or fraudulent absentee ballots. Those involved have trampled on one of our most basic constitutional rights – the right to a fair and free election – and they very nearly got away with it. We find it disheartening that disregard for election integrity could happen in our small town, particularly involving senior elected officials who have the power and responsibility to protect the public interest. But in this case, the evidence of wrongdoing is overwhelming and impossible to ignore. Bad acts have consequences.

We are asking Mike Schiliro and Alison Simon to resign immediately. By their own court testimony and review of public records, we believe both have violated their oath of office and lost public trust by acting in disregard of our election laws. North Castle taxpayers should no longer be expected to honor their elected positions or pay their salaries.

Mike Schiliro: Setting aside the questionable signature on your daughter’s absentee ballot, by your own sworn court testimony you admit to collaborating with Paulina to submit an absentee ballot even though you knew she was not qualified to vote as a North Castle resident because she moved out of your house in 2017. Making things worse, when confronted with clear evidence that absentee ballots bearing the name of your daughter and of Allison’s son and daughter were irreparably flawed, you doubled down. Rather than accepting the suggestion to have the ballots simply tossed out, you insisted on a court hearing in an attempt to have all 4 obviously illegal votes counted – all the while knowing that those 4 votes, if counted, would fraudulently change the election results in favor of your endorsed candidate, Barbara DiGiacinto. You should resign from your position as Supervisor.

Allison Simon: Your office is the Town’s liaison to the Westchester County Board of Elections. One of your main responsibilities as Town Clerk is to oversee the integrity and validity of our elections. Based on your own court-sworn admissions, taken together with your children’s conflicting testimony and available public information, there is sufficient evidence that you have abetted the submission of invalid and perhaps fraudulent absentee ballots. It is appropriate for you to resign.

Barbara DiGiacinto: We know of no evidence that you manipulated ballot signatures or encouraged ineligible votes to be cast. However, we also doubt that there has ever been a conspiracy to inflate a vote count wherein the beneficiary of the conspiracy was unaware of what was going on. So – If you had any knowledge of the events detailed above, and took no action to stop it, you are also guilty of subverting North Castle election laws and should also resign.

Larry Ruisi: We are wondering why your son would drive from his residence in White Plains to vote in North Castle unless he was prompted to do so. If you were not involved – great. What you decide to do next will be governed by your own conscience,” writes Greene.

Lawler, Speaker Johnson, continued from pg 1-

democratic challenger to Lawler, called Johnson “a wolf in sheep’s clothing,” by appearing at the fundraiser.

Jones’ primary democratic opponent, Katonah school board member Liz Gereghy, announced last week that she was ending her campaign and endorsing Jones. “Uniting our party and focusing our resources on taking back the House is critical to fighting back against the radical extremism plaguing our politics. In that spirit, I endorse Mondaire Jones’ campaign for Congress.”

Gereghy, whose political claim to fame was that she is the sister of Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, had been critical of Jones far-left progressive views, which she said Congressman Lawler would use against him in the upcoming 2024 campaign.

Lawler commented on Gereghy’s withdrawal, saying the fact that “Liz did not find traction in today’s Democratic party speaks volumes. Its clear New York Democrats would rather support a “defund the police” and open the borders radical, with one of the most extreme, partisan voting records in Congress and proudly referred to himself as a socialist.”

Two years ago, Lawler defeated democrat Sean Patrick Maloney by 1,820 votes out of 285,220 total votes cast.

Latimer for Congress continued from pg 1-

the city and county level. But how many times he’s already stepped in it--in just a single week--raises questions about whether he’s ready for a high-profile primary like this,” said one leader in the NY Working Families Party, who has already endorsed Bowman’s reelection.

Latimer shook off the critiques and said, “I have not heard any of this from the people in the district-the people of Westchester who know me and see me in their communities. “I want to offer progressive policies with results -but also to work across the aisle and respect the other side. We don’t have to vilify each other. Its how you choose to do your job. That is what I am hearing from my democratic friends in the 16th District.” What this comes down to is who can be effective in congress for the people. Let the people make their own choice-

Latimer challenged the notion that Bowman, a sitting two-term incumbent Congressman, should not be challenged. “Four years ago he made the decision to run against Eliot Engel, a sitting Congressman. The people were given a choice then, and to say they can’t have a choice now is divisive.

Latimer also pushed back against the belief by some that he cannot or should not run against an incumbent, black member of Congress. “I’m not black, but I have a record of opening doors for black leadership. I supported Loiz Bronz for Chair of the County Board, and I supported Andrea Stewart-Cousins for State Senate when she first ran. I also picked Ken Jenkins to be my Deputy County Executive.”

Some in the media called Latimer’s congressional campaign an attempted “Crucifixion” of Bowman. “As a Catholic, I find it outrageous to use the word Crucifixion about a political campaign. Nobody is being forced to support Latimer and people can make their own decision if they endorse him or me. A lot of Westchester democrats have worked with me for years and I am in most of the Westchester towns and cities in the district 5-10 times a month.”

“I plan on campaigning everywhere. I’m not writing off anything and I cede nothing. I represented Yonkers in the State Senate for four years. The question that voters need to ask is who will accomplish more in Congress?”

Latimer recently visited Israel and received a letter from 26 Westchester Rabbis urging him to challenge Bowman. Latimer said that support from the Jewish community is only one part of his coalition. “The idea that I’m someone’s puppet is nonsense. I have never been that over my career in public service.”

When asked about support for his campaign coming from AIPAC, (American Israel Public Affairs Committee), Latimer pointed out that NY members of Congress, including Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, Gregory Meeks and Grace Meng have all received support from AIPAC. “The majority of my fundraising and support will come from Westchester. His money will come from outside Westchester, from a nationwide network.”

Why is the Latimer-Bowman contest the talk of the town in Westchester political circles? “Because they are trying to create a narrative that isn’t credible, and they are afraid that someone from “The Squad” might lose a primary. Maybe I’m the guy with the grass roots support from Westchester democrats. He makes great speeches, but what has he done to represent his community? Let us both run on our records.”

One more political fact about George Latimer—He hasn’t lost an election since 1987. from the Rye City Council -to the Westchester County Board of Legislators-to the NYS Assembly-NYS Senate and two terms as County Executive.

Veteran Honored, continued from pg 8-

Yorktown Town Supervisor Tom Diana said, “I met Alex Mandara a number of years ago, and am proud to call him my friend. He does so much for our community, and like a lot of people who serve our community, he is the glue that holds us together.

The Veterans Advisory Council meeting that followed the award ceremony featured (Ret.) Brigadier General Loree Sutton, the U.S. Army’s highest-ranking psychiatrist and former Commissioner of New York City’s Department of Veterans’ Services, as a guest speaker. The Peekskill resident, who has devoted over 35 years of service to the nation, talked about the many challenges that veterans face, including post-traumatic stress disorder and housing issues.

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State Senator Harckham Honors Alex Mandara for NYS Veterans Hall of Fame



State Sen. Harckham with Alex Mandara and Dr. Loree Sutton

New York State Senator Pete Harckham honored Alex Mandara for his induction into the 2023 New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame and commemorated his military service at a special ceremony held on Saturday, Dec. 2, here at the Bedford Hills Community Center, with nearly 50 veterans and several local officials in attendance.

At the ceremony, which preceded a meeting of the Veterans Advisory Council that Harckham hosts semi-annually, Mandara was presented with a special Senate plaque regarding his Hall of Fame induction.

“Alex served his country with distinction and is a respected leader in the Yorktown community, where he continues to make an impact on the lives of his neighbors and fellow veterans,” said Harckham. “Through his role at the Yorktown VFW, Alex is a tireless advocate for veterans and their families, coordinating programs and services for them, and ensuring they get the help they may require. It was my distinct honor to nominate Alex for induction as the 40th Senate District’s 2023 selection to the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame.”

Mandara serves as the Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8328 in Yorktown Heights, an essential gathering space for the community, allowing veterans to connect with other veterans. He was born on September 11, 1972, in the Bronx, the oldest of 5 siblings, and attended Yonkers public schools. After graduating from Roosevelt High School at 17, he decided to serve his country and enlisted in the U.S. Navy, following in the footsteps of a grandfather who had served in the U.S. Army.

After completing boot camp at Naval Station Great Lakes north of Chicago, Mandara studied to become a hull maintenance technician, and in 1991 began his service on USS Enterprise, the U.S. Navy’s first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, during the Gulf War. Mandara continued his service on the USS Enterprise for the next five years, finally being stationed out of Norfolk, Virginia. As a member of the U.S. Navy Reserve, Mandara spent 22 years serving on the USS Ogden, an Austin-class amphibious transport dock, and traveled around the world.

After the September 11th attacks, Mandara spent many long days searching through rubble of the World Trade Center’s Twin Towers until he was called to active duty.

Mandara and his wife Annamaria moved to Yorktown in 2005, and three years later their daughter Gianna Maria Mandara was born. Mandara retired from the U.S. Navy Reserve in November 2012 and started working for Entergy Nuclear at the Indian Point Energy Center, where he remains a part of the security operations at the site. He also works as an umpire for Westchester’s Section 1 High School Baseball and regional travel leagues.

“As I noted in my retirement speech (from the Navy), we retire but we never get out,” said Mandara after accepting his award from Harckham. “My wife and I enjoy working and helping out other veterans. It’s a natural progression to serve in the military and then continue to look for other ways to serve.”

continued on pg 7-

Somers High School Senior Ryan Cole Named Con Edison Scholar-Athlete of the Week



By Dan Murphy

Congratulations to Somers High School Senior Ryan Cole for being named a Con Edison Scholar-Athlete of the week. Cole was a member of the Somers HS Football team that won the state championship on Dec. 2, with a 35-6 win over Whitesboro.

At the State regional game, Ryan had 6 tackles, 2 sacks and 3 tackles for losses in the win over Averill Park, 31-7. In the State Semi-final game, Ryan had 2 sacks, 3 tackle for losses and 8 tackles in their 21-7 win over Niskayuna.

This season, Ryan has had 68 solo tackles, 27 tackles for losses, 15 sacks, 1 interception, 1 kick block and 2 forced fumbles. In Football, Ryan is a 3-year Varsity lettered player and 1 year captain. He received All-State, All Conference, All League, Top Linebacker in Class A Section. In Wrestling, made Varsity as an 8th grader and during that season earned All-County, and All-League as well as up into his sophomore year. Ryan was unable to wrestle due to an injury his junior year. Also, in his wrestling career, Ryan received the Section 1 Student-Athlete leadership award.

One extra curricular activities that Ryan has enjoyed are serving in the Westchester county Police Cadets program. “While working as a Squad Leader and Intern for the County Police we went around to nursing homes, hospitals and children centers to play games talk about the department and just have conversations, said Cole, who has also volunteered for the Special Olympics and helped start a Best Buddies group.

At Somers HS, Ryan helped created the Somers School District Student Athletic Council, working with the Athletic Director and Dean of Students to create a program that creates a link between the student athletes in the building and the administrators. He also is a member of the Somers High School chamber Choir

Academically, Ryan is a member of the National Honor Society as well as the French National Honor Society. He has a 96.15 GPA.

What sets Ryan apart is his genuine passion for giving back to his community. He actively seeks opportunities to contribute and make a positive difference in the lives of others. He has volunteered at the Danbury, Connecticut ER, providing valuable assistance to medical professionals and demonstrating his willingness to help those in need.

Additionally, he has actively participated in community trash pick-up events, showcasing his commitment to maintaining a clean and vibrant neighborhood,” said Guidance Counselor Annia Rivero.

“Ryan epitomizes the qualities of a student athlete we all wish to see in our students. He gives his all to his athletics as well as his academics, is a role model both on and off the field, and demonstrates a level of commitment, passion, and respect for others that is unparalleled,” said Somers HS Principal Mark E. Bayer

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