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The Creche in Scarsdale Shows us It's Still Ok to Say Merry Christmas



Scarsdale Creche, located in Boniface Circle, Scarsdale

By Dan Murphy

Here's a holiday story that you may not have heard about. After watching Nativity scenes across the county, and the country, removed from public property, I wondered how I continued to see a Creche in Scarsdale ever December before Christmas. And next to the Nativity is a sign, "This Creche has been erected and maintained by the Scarsdale Creche Committee a private organization."

The Village of Scarsdale permitted the Nativity scene for many years to be erected by the Scarsdale Creche Committee in Boniface Circle for around two weeks during the Christmas season, from 1957 to 1981.

However, in 1981, after complaints from several residents who characterized the Creche as being insensitive, the Village Board barred the Nativity scene. Several Scarsdale residents and the Creche Committee sued the Scarsdale Board in Federal Court, claiming that their First Amendment rights of free religion and free speech were violated. US District Court Judge Charles Stewart ruled in 1983 that the nativity scene improperly constituted an "impermissible establishment of religion on public land," making the Village square in Scarsdale "the message-bearer" for one religious belief.

The Creche Committee and one resident Scarsdale attorney Kathleen McCreary, who the case is named for (McCreary v. Stone) appealed to the US Court of Appeals, which ruled in 1984 that while the Village Board's denial of the nativity scene was correctly based, another case, Lynch v Donnelly, which found that "an equal access policy would not contravene" having religious symbols on public property, reversed the lower court's decision.

The Scarsdale Board then voted to appeal to the highest court in the land. The issue was, and still is, whether a religious symbol like a nativity scene, or a Menorah, placed on public property, was a violation of the Establishment clause of the First Amendment, which calls for the separation of church and state.

continued on pg 7-

Business Owners Welcome Jan. 1 New York Minimum Wage Increase



Jessica Galen, owner of Bloomy Cheese & Provisions in Dobbs Ferry

On Jan. 1, New York's minimum wage will increase to \$16 in New York City, Long Island and Westchester County, and \$15 for the rest of the state as the first step under New York's minimum wage raise passed earlier this year. Business owners across New York are welcoming the minimum wage increases, saying they will boost consumer spending and bolster New York businesses.

New York's minimum wage will continue to increase by 50 cents a year for the next two years, until it reaches \$17 in New York City, Westchester County and Long Island, and \$16 upstate by 2026. Starting in 2027, the minimum wage will be indexed annually, but unfortunately, there is a counterproductive "off-ramp" provision that suspends cost of living adjustments when unemployment goes up. In reality, raising the minimum wage is a powerful way to boost the economy during downturns because it puts money in the pockets of people who most need to spend it.

Jessica Galen, owner of Bloomy Cheese & Provisions in Dobbs Ferry, New York, said, "When people are working full-time jobs, but don't make enough money to make ends meet, that's bad for our whole community. Raising the minimum wage will help people afford what local businesses are selling, which drives our economy forward. For us to rebuild local businesses and main streets after the pandemic, we have to recognize that we're all in this together. With minimum wage increases, our workforce is stronger, our local businesses are stronger, our tax base is stronger, and our quality of life is better."

Phil Andrews, president of the Long Island African American Chamber of Commerce, said, "It's a good thing the minimum wage is going up. It would be

continued on pg 7-

Susan Cacace Retires From Bench to Run for Westchester District Attorney



Susan Cacace

By Dan Murphy

Former County Court Judge Susan Cacace recently stepped down from the bench to announce her candidacy for Westchester County District Attorney. The current DA, Mimi Rocah, announced that she will not be running for reelection next year (2024).

Cacace made her announcement before 100 supporters in front of the County Courthouse. "From protecting the most vulnerable in our society from domestic violence and child and elder abuse, to holding our government officials to the highest standards, to eliminating political corruption on all levels, to prosecuting the most heinous of crimes, sex crimes and homicides, every case will be given the attention it requires under my leadership and at the capable hands of the outstanding people who I will bring to serve in the Westchester DA's office," Cacace said.

Cacace has worked for over 30 years as a prosecutor, defense attorney, and judge in Westchester, with nearly 15 years serving in the Westchester DA's office and nearly 20 years serving as a Westchester County Court Judge. She resigned from that position, as the currently longest serving County Court Judge earlier this month to dedicate herself entirely to this endeavor. The Democratic Primary will be on June 25th, 2024.

While Cacace has become the front-runner in the Democratic Primary to replace Rocah, four other democrats have announced their campaigns for DA. They are:

- Adeel Mirza, a former prosecutor in the Westchester DA's office
- William Wagstaff a civil rights attorney,
- Sheralyn Pulver Goodman who works in the Westchester Independent Office of Assigned Counsel, and
- David Szuchman, a former Manhattan ADA who now works for Paypal.

continued on pg 7-

Ken Jenkins at The Center of the Political Universe in New York State



Westchester Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins, also Chair of the NYS Independent Redistricting Commission, IRC

By Dan Murphy

A recent court decision ordered that a new set of congressional lines be drawn in New York State for the upcoming 2024 elections. In Westchester, the new lines will redraw the 16th and 17th Congressional districts, held by Rep. Jamaal Bowman (16) and Rep. Mike Lawler (17).

Westchester Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins, in his other role as Chair of the NYS Independent Redistricting Commission, IRC, now sits as head of a body entrusted to come up with a new set of Congressional lines for New York State that is amenable to both democrats and republicans.

In 2014, New York voters passed a referendum in 2014 creating the IRC in the hopes of drawing fair, non-partisan congressional boundaries. Since then, the IRC has been unable to come to an agreement agreeable to both parties. The IRC is made up of ten members of both parties; Republican Charles Nesbit is the co-chair of the IRC.

If the IRC is unable to come to an agreement, then the boundaries will be drawn by the democratic controlled state legislature. Two years ago, this scenario occurred. The IRC deadlocked, (without Jenkins), and democrats in the state legislature passed congressional lines that republican objected to as being unfair. The courts agreed and appointed a special master to draw the lines for the 2022 Congressional elections.

And in those 2022 Congressional elections, republican did quite well in New York State, winning 10 House seats, including 5 on Long Island and NYC, 5 upstate,

continued on pg 7-

Slater Leads Regional Push for Universal School Meals



Assemblyman Matt Slater at podium, with Yorktown Supervisor Tom Diana, left, at St. Mary's Food Pantry

As we get ready for the start of the 2024 Legislative Session, Assemblyman Matt Slater (R,C-Yorktown) is urging the governor to include full funding for universal school meals in her budget proposal and increase funding for SNAP benefits. Slater, a fierce advocate for food security, joined a bipartisan coalition calling on Gov. Hochul to fund Universal School meals.

In a collaborative effort in March, both the Assembly and Senate included \$260 million in funding within their respective one-house budgets. Although this funding was only partially realized in the final budget, Slater persists in advocating for its full implementation.

"Hunger affects every community, and with New York state spending hundreds of billions of dollars, there's no justification for not backing this initiative. Prioritizing our children is crucial, and ensuring each child has access to a nutritious meal paves the way for academic success," stated Slater. "School superintendents unanimously consider this their top issue. Regardless of what side of the aisle one sits on, we can all agree that no child should suffer from hunger."

For almost two years amid the COVID-19 pandemic, federal funding guaranteed all students access to complimentary school meals. However, when the federal waivers supporting free school meals in New York expired, more than 726,000 students no longer had access to free meals at school, leading to a surge in families' school meal debt. This led Slater to tackle hunger in the 94th District by initiating the Yorktown Food Insecurity Task Force as town supervisor.

"Our children are our biggest assets. Our kids are not unfunded mandates that are something we have to take care of. If they go to school hungry they are not going to learn properly. They are what's going to lead this state and this country," said Yorktown Supervisor Tom Diana.

"On behalf of all the children who are going to benefit from this program, I want to thank Assemblyman Slater. We are very proud of the education we provide but unless they can think and function because they are well fed we don't get the full benefit," said Michael Daly, Lakeland Board of Education Vice President.

"We want to take away the stigma. Children don't want to be singled out, they want to be like their friends and neighbors so providing breakfast and lunch to every child is a really important issue. I am in full support of this program and Assemblyman Slater," said Cindy Smith, St. Mary's Food Pantry Director.

"We provide many food pantries to schools and families but what we found is children who are eligible for it won't come forward because of the stigma. We are fighting a long standing problem and universal free meals will help solve it for all children," said Sara Gunn, Food Bank of the Hudson Valley.

Slater, continuing his fight in the state Assembly, has authored a letter to Gov. Hochul expressing his support and advocacy for the inclusion of a universal free school meal program in her Fiscal Year 2025 Executive Budget Proposal. More than a dozen Republican lawmakers signed onto Slater's letter.

Assemblyman Nader Sayegh & Other State Legislators Urge State to Avoid Closure of 270 Agencies for Medicaid Patients



Assemblyman Nader Sayegh, left, with Bangla CDPAP Services CEO Abu Mahmood, whose seven offices in New York are targeted for closure.

More than 40,000 Elderly Medicaid Patients at risk

CDPAP New York United hosted a press conference at Health Aid in Yonkers on Tuesday, December 12 where New York legislators spoke to a room full of interested and concerned community members and in-home care providers to show their support for stopping the closure of an estimated 270 CDPAP (Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program) agencies that provide home care services to disabled and elderly Medicaid participants. This December event follows a similar one held at N&J Homecare in Rego Park on October 11.

The New York Department of Health (NYDOH) plans to close an estimated 270 agencies that serve more than 40,000 New York residents. Small local minority agencies are being targeted for closure, and agencies serving specific cultural and diverse populations are scheduled to be cut as well, amounting to an estimated 60 percent of CDPAP home care agencies in New York.

Assemblyman Nader Sayegh, 90th Assembly District said, "This legislation before us would seriously impact in a negative way how we provide services for these elders and these disabled individuals. And, we know that the make-up of our community – as diversified as it is – requires agencies that have the ethnic and the knowledge and the awareness of the people we serve." He continued saying that "We are at a point as a society where we focus on healthcare, and we focus on making sure that our loved ones have the ability to live a quality of life that surely allows them to stay at home."

"When we reach out to allow more agencies that represent our ethnic fabric to really stay in business and really allow a workforce to address the needs, it's a win-win for everyone involved," Sayegh added.

Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, 28th Assembly District, said, "I'm here today to support Nader's bill which is particularly designed to fix a mistake that the State Legislature made in 2018. We were pushed by then-Governor Cuomo into a budget agreement that is bad for our seniors, bad for our disabled and bad for the home health aid groups that provide these services."

"My understanding is the services provided by your agencies – these agencies – have been stellar, and that's not why this issue came about. These groups – your groups – provide what I believe are preventive services, now I know most don't think of it that way, but if your services are not provided, those people that you care for are going to the emergency room, and the emergency room costs exponentially more than the services you provide."

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Congressman Lawler Explains Vote for Impeachment Inquiry



“Is it enough (evidence) to impeach the President today? No, not for me,”

Rep. Mike Lawler, left

On December 13, Congressman Lawler released the following statement after the House passed a measure to move forward with an impeachment inquiry.

“For the past eleven months, the House Oversight, Judiciary, and Ways and Means Committees have been conducting multiple investigations into the financial dealings of the Biden Family. These committees have uncovered foreign transactions totaling over \$24 million passing through at least 20 shell companies to the Biden family — including payments to Joe Biden — and its business associates from Chinese, Russian, Romanian, and Ukrainian businesses and oligarchs,” said Congressman Lawler. “In addition, there were over 170 suspicious activity reports filed by banks and financial institutions questioning the legitimacy of these payments.”

“Is it enough to impeach the president today? No. Not for me,” stated Congressman Lawler. “However, the White House’s refusal to turn over additional information, including their failure to comply with subpoenas, is deeply concerning and has necessitated a more formal approach to get the whole truth.”

“That is why, I have decided to support this impeachment inquiry and voted to authorize it moving forward. We will follow the facts and evidence wherever they may lead,” concluded Congressman Lawler. “To my constituents, I promise to approach this inquiry with the seriousness it demands, keeping in mind the core American value that someone is always innocent until proven guilty – and you will always have my word that I’ll put what’s right for our country before what’s right for my party.”

New York’s 17th Congressional District is just north of New York City and contains all or parts of Rockland, Putnam, Dutchess, and Westchester Counties.

Former Mamaroneck Library Business Manager Charged with Stealing More than \$44,000

Defendant, who resigned from the library in March after 27 years, allegedly spent library funds on personal expenses for nearly seven years

Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced today that the former business manager of the Mamaroneck Public Library was arraigned on a felony charge of stealing approximately \$44,769 from the library between 2016 and 2023.

DA Rocah said: “We are committed to seeking accountability for the alleged betrayal of trust by a lifelong Mamaroneck resident who held a position of leadership in the community.”

The defendant, Mary Soto, 62, of Mamaroneck, was arrested on Dec. 14 by the Westchester County District Attorney’s Office and arraigned before Judge Christie L. Derrico in Mamaroneck Village Court on the charge of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree. The defendant’s next court date is Jan. 25, 2024.

As alleged in the felony complaint, between May 2016 and February 2023, the defendant stole approximately \$44,769 from the library’s bank accounts in the form of credit card and recurring debit transactions, for personal expenses. The defendant resigned from the library in March after 27 years.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Renee Hassel of the Public Integrity and Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau in the Trials and Investigations Division.

The charges against the defendant are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Is Christmas Really Monday?



By Eric Wolf Schoen

When I pulled into the parking lot at Cross County Shopping Center on Tuesday to get my coffee at Panera and write this week’s column, I saw many more cars than I would normally see on a Tuesday morning. This truly woke me up to the fact that Christmas is upon.

Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus and the elves are busy putting the finishing touches on all the presents he will deliver through the chimney on Christmas Eve to be ready when the children wake up yes, this coming Monday morning. Rudolph with his nose so bright is getting ready to lead the reindeer to take Santa on his trip to visit our homes. The baking has begun on the cookies, treats we will leave out for Santa and the reindeer to thank them for their yearly visit.

Tell me where did this year go? I guess it’s true the older you get the faster time flies. It’s seems like we just put our winter wardrobe away for the season. If you haven’t taken those warm winter jackets and ear muffs back out of the closet by now, you are walking around shivering as you partake in the many wonderful winter activities and holiday celebrations the gracious city of Yonkers and quaint Westchester county have presented this month.

So much has happened in the year we will leave behind in a little more than a week. And we know a lot of what to expect in the new year. I will touch on some of the highlights, but please don’t throw any snowballs at me if I forget something that tickled your fancy.

Yes, the Yonkers City Council did pass those massive salary increases several days after they were announced. Included in the raise package was retroactive pay for the Mayor. The way this occurred is no surprise to the vast majority of Yonkers residents use to a City Council that never fails to amaze us! Your last and only opportunity to express your feelings to the Mayor who will give thumbs up or down to the raises is Wednesday, January 3 at 5:35 p.m. at a Public Hearing at Yonkers City Hall. If you can’t make it call the Mayor at 914-377-6300 by the January date to tell him how you feel.

Voters approved term limits for the Yonkers City Council and the Mayor and twice the Council has extended the limits doubling them from those voter approved. Will the Mayor or City Council appoint a Charter Revision Commission to examine this issue and put it on the ballot for voter review, or will they collectively not stir up the pot. Stay tuned!

Spring 2024 is when Congestion Pricing is scheduled to start in New York City, a toll for cars including those from Westchester who drive south of 60th Street in the Big Apple. The money will not go toward road improvements desperately needed but to mass transportation. Fewer people from the suburbs are coming into New York City since the pandemic. Expect even fewer when this ridiculous toll kicks in. Though the matter is pretty much set in stone, it’s not too late to call your State Legislators and the Governor to put a stop to it!

A big question as we head from 2023 to 2024 is who will represent us in Congress come 2025. State courts have put the matter back in the hands of an Independent Redistricting Commission that will again attempt to draw legislative district lines for approval by the New York State Legislature.

Will we in Yonkers and Westchester have the fire alarm pulling, Congressionally censured Jamaal Bowman on our ballot in a primary with Westchester County Executive George Latimer? Will the district lines be redrawn to take Yonkers or Westchester or parts of both out of the district currently represented by Congressman Bowman. Bowman, who so early in his term of office voted against an infrastructure bill that had then House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visit the district and say she was upset with him! I’m afraid we will probably have to wait until late Spring for this issue to be settled.

While we are discussing things in Washington, D.C., 2024 is a Presidential Election Year. During 2023 we have learned everything we need to know about those running to lead our country, and in 2024 we, the people will make the decision. Though it looks like President Biden will compete against former President Trump, anything is possible in this great land of ours!

Flooding on Westchester roadways will continue to be a problem in 2024 as it was in 2023. Just this week the usual suspect roads like the Saw Mill and Bronx River parkways were closed due to heavy rains. Will anyone come up with a solution? Is there a solution?

Same thing goes for trucks too high entering roadways with bridges too low causing damage and traffic jams for miles. Everyone knows that the way to stop this is to put physical barriers up to prevent the trucks from entering the roadways, but New York State refuses to approve the solution.

continued on pg 5-

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Two Westchester County Police Officers Honored for Rescuing Motorist from Burning Car



Westchester County Police Officers Niall Nerney and Christopher Duffy (center) are flanked from left to right by Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins, Sgt. Ed Zerbo, Chief Inspector James Luciano and County Executive George Latimer

Driver had fled from a traffic stop before crashing on Saw Mill River Parkway

Two Westchester County Police officers will be nominated for a lifesaving award for pulling a fleeing suspect out of a burning car after he crashed the Saw Mill River Parkway.

The driver had fled from an attempted traffic stop at a high rate of speed before losing control on wet pavement, going off the road and rolling the vehicle on to its side on the northbound Saw Mill in Chappaqua. He was flung into the back seat and was initially unconscious when his car burst into flames.

Police Officers Niall Nerney and Christopher Duffy used a portable fire extinguisher to slow the raging fire and then broke through the damaged windshield to climb inside the vehicle. The officers rendered first aid to help the injured man regain consciousness and then pulled him out of the vehicle as the flames spread into the passenger compartment.

Commissioner Terrance Raynor of the Department of Public Safety commended the officers for their actions. "This suspect fled at high speed on a rainy night, putting himself, other motorists and these officers in jeopardy. Regardless of this man's reckless behavior, Officers Nerney and Duffy did not hesitate to put themselves in harm's way to save him as the flames spread. I commend them for the decisive, skillful and courageous actions they took when every second mattered."

The incident began on Friday, Dec. 1, about 9:30 p.m., when a Chevy Malibu traveling northbound on the Saw Mill River Parkway in Hawthorne sideswiped another car. The Malibu did not stop at the accident scene and continued north on the parkway. The driver of the other vehicle called County Police and provided a description of the fleeing vehicle.

Nerney and Duffy positioned their patrol car at Grant Street in Pleasantville to observe passing traffic and soon spotted the Chevy Malibu. They attempted a traffic stop near Route 120 in New Castle but the driver accelerated in an attempt to elude them. The driver lost control of the vehicle about a mile south of Readers Digest Road, colliding with another car before rolling his over and going off the road.

After he was rescued from the burning car, the suspect was transported by Chappaqua Volunteer Ambulance Corps to Westchester Medical Center. Nerney was also taken to the hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation and cuts to his hands.

A 33-year-old woman and 7-year-old child, occupants of the vehicle struck by the suspect, were also taken to the hospital for a medical evaluation and were released.

During a subsequent search of the suspect's vehicle, a loaded handgun was found in the car. The 51-year-old driver of the fleeing vehicle was charged with Criminal Possession of a Weapon 2nd Degree, Criminal Contempt 2nd Degree, Fleeing an Officer in a Motor Vehicle and Reckless Driving. He was also issued summonses for speeding and leaving the scene of the initial accident in Hawthorne.

The criminal contempt charge was lodged because he is barred from possessing a firearm as a result of a pre-existing Order of Protection.

Yonkers City Council Approves Reappointment of Liam McLaughlin as Yonkers Inspector General

By Dan Murphy

The Yonkers City Council unanimously approved the reappointment of Liam McLaughlin as Yonkers Inspector General. McLaughlin, who served on the Yonkers City Council and as City Council President was reappointed to a term ending in 2029 after being renominated by Mayor Mike Spano to continue his service.

"I'm happy to support this reappointment of the Inspector General said Councilman John Rubbo. Liam is a lifelong resident of the city and has been a dedicated public servant for many years. He takes the role of IG very seriously."

Council Minority Leader Mike Breen said, "The council has received good, frank advice from him. He continues to help the city."

Council Majority Leader Tasha Diaz said, "I think he (McLaughlin) is doing an awesome job. We can also call on him."

Councilwoman Corazon Pineda-Isaac said, "I have reached out to him on constituent concerns, and he has answered professionally and promptly."

Council President Lakisha Collins-Bellamy said, "He has been an excellent IG. He takes his role seriously and issues opinions that are always fair and just."

DA and Family of CJ Hackett Wanted Stiffer Sentence for His Death from Drunken Driver



CJ Hackett

In August of 2022, 16-year old CJ Hackett was riding a scooter on McLean Avenue in Yonkers, when he was struck by a car driven by Stephen Dolan. Dolan fled the scene, only to be found and arrested by Yonkers Police

Dolan pled guilty to 2nd degree vehicular manslaughter, leaving the scene of a fatal accident and driving while intoxicated, in exchange for an agreed up sentence of 1 1/2 years to 4 1/2 years in prison.

Hackett was a student at Stepinac High School about to start his junior year. His family wanted Dolan to receive the maximum sentence, but State Supreme Court Justice James McCarty explained that Dolan had no prior record.

Westchester County DA Mimi Rocah's office also did not agree with the sentence. "The Westchester County District Attorney's Office has remained committed to seeking justice for CJ Hackett and his family. We consistently recommended to the Court that the defendant receive the maximum sentence under the law of two and one-third to seven years in state prison for the vehicular manslaughter of the 16-year-old Stepinac High School student.

"While we are disappointed that the Court's promised sentence today will not reflect our recommendation, the defendant, Stephen Dolan, is going to prison. Our thoughts remain with the Hackett family and the Yonkers and Stepinac communities."

Obituary: Theresa Olson



Theresa Olson

Theresa Ann Olson, affectionately known as "Terri," gracefully departed from this world on December 9, 2023, at the vibrant age of 80 in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Born on July 29, 1943, in Yonkers, New York, she lived a life filled with laughter and love.

Terri dedicated 37 years of her life to the Edenwald Center in Pleasantville, New York, where she eventually earned the title of Director. Her career was truly a work of art.

Survived by her daughter and best friend, Kelly Chiarella, her son, Keith Olson, and her partner, Marie Fontes, Terri leaves behind a legacy that will be cherished forever. Her grandchildren, Tyler Olson, AJ Chiarella, Sean Olson, Nicky Chiarella and her daughter in law Liza will fondly remember her as the queen of fun and mischief. Her love, support and dedication to her grandsons was boundless.

In this grand performance called life, Terri was preceded in death by her loving husband, John Olson, and her six brothers and sisters. They've now reunited in the ultimate afterparty.

To celebrate Terri's unforgettable journey, the family will be hosting intimate "Celebration of Life" parties that promise to be as lively as she was. Stay tuned for details on these joyous gatherings, where memories will be shared, laughter will be abundant, and tears will be replaced with smiles.

Terri Olson, a true maestro of life, will forever be remembered for her vivacious spirit, her zest for adventure, and her ability to bring sunshine into every room. As she takes her final bow, let us honor her legacy with love and laughter. Rest in peace, Terri. Your performance was truly one for the ages.

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adopt Bolton today

The SPCA announced today that now through December 31st all adoption fees will be waived for any dog or cat who has been patiently awaiting adoption for 30 or more days. "What better time to support the SPCA and save the lives of orphaned animals by gifting them with loving homes," says Shannon Laukhuf, Executive Director.

Shelters nationwide are currently experiencing a decrease in adoptions since the pandemic. Many highly adoptable dogs and cats are subsequently waiting longer to be adopted. Currently SPCA Westchester has more than 100 animals in their care who will make great additions to a family. Dogs and cats like Bubba, Trolly, Arrow and Bolton are just a few of the dogs and cats whose fees are waived this holiday season.

Adoption policies and procedures will remain the same during the SPCA's Home for the Holidays promotion, ensuring adopters and animals are properly matched. To learn more about this special event, visit spcawestchester.org or email info@spcawestchester.org for further details.

Link to view all of our adoptables:
<https://spcawestchester.org/adopt/animals-for-adoption>.

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

It seems like every time we go to the grocery store prices have increased. Will this continue in 2024? Is there truly a reason for these increases or are manufacturers and the stores that sell us goods just taking advantage of consumers. Sadly many among us suffer.

We pray for Peace in the Middle East and an end to war and the tragic loss of lives. There are so many columnists more versed on this topic than yours truly so I will not compete. As I asked you to do, I put a menorah in the window of my apartment and a Happy Chanukah banner on the front door. To support the people of Israel I have purchased products made there as many of you have.

As you get ready for some well deserved time off this holiday season, let me recommend some films you may enjoy at the multiplex or via streaming services. Maestro starring Bradley Cooper is a biographical film that centers on the relationship between American composer Leonard Bernstein and his wife. Willie Wonka is back in WONKA, the story of a young chocolatier who manages to change the world one delectable bite at a time. The Holdovers is a comedy about a bad tempered history teacher forced to chaperone a handful of students during Christmas break. Napoleon, a film that depicts the rise and fall of French dictator Napoleon Bonaparte. All worthy of watching.

Yes Virginia, Target came to Yonkers this year!
It's that time of year when we remember those killed in the fire at the Yonkers Jewish Community Center on December 20, 1965. Nine children and 3 adults killed. Largest number of lives lost in a Yonkers fire.

Please remember to throw a dollar in the Salvation Army Kettle as my dad did every time he saw a bell ringer ringing the bell. All year long and particularly at this time of the year, the Salvation Army helps those in need providing things you and I take for granted.

Thank you again this year for welcoming me into your homes each week for my take on what's going on in our planet. Kudos to Editor Dan Murphy and his assistant Bayan Baker for producing the Rising Media Group Newspapers providing you with news about you and your neighbors.

Merry Christmas. Happy Kwanzaa. Happy , Heathy New Year in a world of Peace!

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

Greenburgh Supervisor Feiner Compares Energy Rates Between Con Ed and ESCO

Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner, in a recent email to the community, compared energy rates between Con Ed vs ESCO,

"Con Ed rates lower than ESCO and everyone is enrolled in unless they opt out" writes Feiner. "29 communities in Westchester, including Greenburgh, have entered into an agreement with Sustainable Westchester to participate in an ESCO that offers ratepayers who live in the community fixed rates for electricity supply.

Every resident in the participating community is automatically enrolled unless they opt out. When we first participated in the ESCO a few years back Greenburgh ratepayers saved some money because the ESCO rates can't go up or down and Con Ed rates can.

This year Greenburgh ratepayers who have not opted out have paid higher rates than those that have opted out. One never knows what the future will look like--Con Ed rates can go up or down each month. The ESCO rates stay fixed until October, 2024.

When the contract the town has expires I will not vote for any opt out provision. I feel that residents who want to participate in the ESCO should not be automatically enrolled in the ESCO.

I am not being critical of Sustainable Westchester. They have an exceptionally dedicated staff. Have worked hard. The power we purchase is GREEN power which is good. I just don't think an opt out provision is fair. Some residents had expressed that feeling before the Board and 28 other communities signed on. In retrospect, I feel they were right.

I will be urging Sustainable Westchester and participating communities to try to come up with another model so we can continue to promote green renewable energy.

Every month I have been posting on the town website comparisons. Earlier this year Sustainable Westchester sent, at their expense, a letter to every resident who was signed on advising that the rates were higher than Con Ed's," writes Feiner.

Fair Campaign Practices Committee Finds Against Rye Town Democratic Committee

By Dan Murphy

The Westchester Fair Campaign Practices Committee, (FCPC) recently ruled that a mailing and social media post that "Safe Reproductive Health Care is on the Ballot this November Right Here in Westchester," as well as the reference to Mr. Aldo Vitagliano and his family in the mailing, was false and misleading since (a) abortion was not on the November ballot, (b) Rye Town government does not get involved with the issue of abortion, and (c) Mr. Vitagliano and his family were not candidates.

"The mailing in question did state where the Republican and Conservative Parties stand on a woman's right to choose, but the choice of words used here matters. To state that the issue was "on the ballot" is misleading to the voter because no such matter was up for local consideration. In addition, there was no evidence offered that any of the Rye Town Republican/Conservative candidates had shared their positions on the issue. The Committee also finds it unfair to call out the views of the Vitagliano family as part of the candidates' platform. Neither Mr. Vitagliano nor his family members were candidates," writes the FCPC in their decision.

Rick Hyland, Chair of the Rye Town and Port Chester Republican Committees said, "The FCPC held it was an unfair campaign practice for the Rye Town Democratic Committee to inappropriately represent to voters that a national campaign issue was applicable at the local election. Local elected officials have no sway over national issues, and to frame the election in this way was unfair to say the least. Furthermore, they smeared private Town residents who have long records of service to our community, which is unacceptable.

"We must remain diligent in holding our elected officials accountable on important local issues, be they high salaries, excessive compensation paid to their government staff, or blurring of the line between government service and politics by using Town personnel in campaign positions."

Aldo Vitagliano issued his own statement, which reads "The FCPC finding that the Rye Town Democratic Committee effort to smear my family and myself was unfair is appreciated. Attacking the reputation of non-candidates in a local race on an issue unrelated to that race is inappropriate. That it was my wife, my family and myself who were on the receiving end of the attack was in stark contrast to my family's record of public service in the Rye Town community, whether in the Blind Brook School District where my wife was employed as an Occupational Therapist for children with special needs, my son's Eagle Scout projects, or my own efforts as Rye Town Attorney years ago, service on non-profits, and various committees, and my reputation for providing legal services within our community.

"That the attack was precipitated against my wife is especially despicable. She simply asserted her First Amendment Constitutional rights in a lawsuit against a Westchester County ordinance. The ordinance was passed with the advocacy and full support of Planned Parenthood under the obedient eye of County Legislator Nancy Barr ignoring the warning of the County Attorney. Planned Parenthood defended the ordinance even seeking argument time at the Second Circuit as an amicus Curiae. Several weeks after the Second Circuit decided that the US Supreme Court needed to make the final decision on overturning a controlling decision in the case of Hill v. Colorado, Planned Parenthood hypocritically reversed course by 180 degrees which resulted in the County Board of Legislators bowing to them and removing the offensive provision simply to successfully avoid US Supreme Court review. "

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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

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.

LEGAL NOTICE

The ordinance, a summary of which is published herewith, has been adopted on November 28, 2023, and approved by the Mayor on December 18, 2023, and the validity of the obligations authorized by such ordinance may be hereafter contested only if such obligations were authorized for an object or purpose for which the CITY OF YONKERS, in the County of Westchester, New York, is not authorized to expend money or if the provisions of law which should have been complied with as of the date of publication of this Notice were not substantially complied with, and an action, suit or proceeding contesting such validity is commenced within twenty days after the publication of this Notice, or such obligations were authorized in violation of the provisions of the constitution.

Vincent E. Spano, City Clerk
City of Yonkers, New York

SPECIAL ORDINANCE NO.52-2023

BOND ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF YONKERS, NEW YORK AUTHORIZING FUNDING FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL PROJECTS INCLUDED IN THE CITY’S 2023-2024 CAPITAL BUDGET, AS AMENDED; STATING THE TOTAL ESTIMATED MAXIMUM COST THEREOF IS \$82,981,816; APPROPRIATING SAID AMOUNT THEREFOR; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS OF SAID CITY IN THE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED \$82,981,816 TO FINANCE SAID APPROPRIATION

The bonds are authorized to finance various capital projects included in the City’s 2023-2024 Capital Budget, as amended.

The amount of obligations to be issued is \$82,981,816.

The periods of usefulness are various periods from 3 to 40 years. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 17 of the Special Local Finance and Budget Act of the City of Yonkers, constituting Chapters 488 and 489 of the Laws of 1976 of the State of New York (herein called the “Act”), the City is authorized and directed to include the pledge and agreement of the State of New York (herein called the “State”) contained in said Section 17 of the Act, in the ordinance, and the Act provides that upon payment for the bonds or notes by the original and all subsequent holders thereof the inclusion of such pledge and agreement shall be deemed conclusive evidence of valuable consideration received by the State and City for such pledge and agreement and of reliance upon such pledge and agreement by any holder and that any action by the State contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of such pledge and agreement shall be void.

A complete copy of the Bond Ordinance summarized above shall be available for public inspection during normal business hours at the office of the City Clerk, 40 South Broadway, Yonkers, New York 10701.

DATED: December 19, 2023

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.

Notice of formation of Say Say Mwah, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 10/31/2023. 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, 42 Linden Street, Apt1L, Yonkers, New York 10701. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

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Scarsdale Creche, continued from pg 1-



The case was heard in 1985 by only eight USSC Justices: Justice Lewis Powell was absent due to illness. With a 4-4 split, the Justices affirmed the court of appeals decision.

Since then, this simple and traditional Nativity Scene has been placed for two weeks in the middle of Scarsdale. And every year, the Scarsdale Board votes on whether to allow the request by the Scarsdale Creche Committee to do so, including this year, Nov. 2021, and the Creche will go up starting Dec. 15.

I recently drove by to make sure it was up and took the photo above. This shows the importance of highlighting all religious celebrations. So Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah and Happy Kwanzaa Westchester!

Happy New Year -See You in 2024

Cacace, Westchester DA, continued from pg 1-

Cacace is from Yonkers and now lives in Eastchester. Yonkers Democratic Chair Tom Meier said, "I think she (Cacace) is the most qualified and most committed. She retired from the court to run for DA. She is born and raised in Westchester and is a long time public servant, as an Assistant District Attorney and a Judge. This type of experience will make her a great chief prosecutor for Westchester County."

Minimum Wage, continued from pg 1-

even better if it were going higher than \$16 on January 1 to better reflect Long Island's cost of living. Minimum wage increases turn into spending on food, car repairs, school supplies and more. Small businesses thrive when the people who are our customers have more money to spend. And there are strong connections between employee pay, employee retention, productivity and customer service. At the Long Island African American Chamber of Commerce, we are committed to strengthening businesses, the workforce and our economy. That's why we support a strong minimum wage."

Annie Adams, owner of Second Chic, with two clothing stores in Buffalo, New York, said, "As a small business owner, I'm invested in New York and building a business to last. That's why I welcome New York's minimum wage increases. Both our stores have incredible followings because our employees know our changing inventory and love to help customers. Retail businesses often have high turnover caused by low wages and poor treatment of staff. It's very shortsighted. High turnover costs you in time and money spent on hiring and training new employees. And high turnover costs you dearly in lost sales and lost customers. When workers in our community make more money, they can spend more at local businesses."

Deepti Brambl, CEO of Kaylaan, a manufacturer in Floral Park, New York, said, "The minimum wage increase to \$16 on Long Island is past due and we look forward to further increases in the future. We pay better wages and benefits so our employees can make a living and want to stay with our company. We benefit from low employee turnover and increased efficiency, morale and productivity. Raising the minimum wage is important for workers, customers and businesses."

Scott Tillitt, founder of Beahive with coworking spaces in Beacon, Cold Spring and Newburgh, New York, said, "A strong minimum wage is essential to building a resilient economy that works for everyone – from workers to businesses to our larger communities. Through Beahive and a localism nonprofit I co-founded, I've worked with thousands of entrepreneurs, small businesses and community groups in the Hudson Valley, and I know that raising the minimum wage is vital for workers and will boost the consumer spending that local businesses depend on to survive and grow. We're glad the Upstate minimum wage will finally get to \$15 on January 1, and welcome stronger steps to a more livable minimum wage."

The New York Business for a Fair Minimum Wage Coalition, made up of more than 300 businesses and business organizations across New York, advocated for an even more robust incremental minimum wage increase to \$21.25 by 2026/2027 plus indexing as proposed in the 2023 Raise the Wage Act, which would have restored the eroded value of the minimum wage and keep up with the cost of living in future years.

Visit <https://www.businessforafairminimumwage.org/> for more information.

Jenkins, IRC, continued from pg 1-

and one in Westchester for Lawler. That number is now 9 with George Santos expelled.

Republicans were hoping to have the current lines in use for their 24' reelection campaigns. What will the new boundaries proposed by the IRC look like in the 10 republican seats, at least 7 of which can flip back to democrat.

A path to a democratic majority in the House in 2024, runs through New York, as does a republican majority. This is the task before Jenkins and the IRC.

Westchester democrats and republicans we spoke to called it "a nearly impossible task."

In today's hyper-partisan political climate, "it is hard to get 5 democrats and 5 republicans to agree on what day it is. But I think Ken is someone who can seek consensus and compromise. The question will be if republicans are willing to meet him in the middle," said one Westchester democrat.

Jenkins served as a County Legislator, and briefly as Chair of the BOL. He ran for County Executive on two occasions. County Executive George Latimer tapped Jenkins to serve as Deputy County Executive six years ago. During that time Jenkins has forged strong ties to democrats across Westchester County, and is widely seen as the front runner to become the next County Executive in 2025. County Executive George Latimer is term-limited from running for a third-term.

Independent voters are hoping that Jenkins can bring about the compromise that voters asked for in 2014 Good luck Ken and Happy New Year!

A Tribute to Ed Whitman



Ed Whitman, right, with Mike Bennett

By Dan Murphy

The people of Yonkers lost one of their greatest cheerleaders last month, when Ed Whitman passed away at the age of 81. Ed was the "official" photographer for our Yonkers Rising newspaper for two decades.

When I started working with Ed back in 2006, the concept of digital photos had not yet taken over in media – so Ed would go to his local photo store in Bronxville, print out each of his photos and bring them to the Yonkers Rising office at 25 Warburton Avenue.

Together with Ed's good friend, Mike Bennett, we would review the photos to determine which ones would make the paper and which photo stood out and would make the front page. It was a wonderful time going over these photos with Ed and Mike over the years.

Ed and Mike formed a "Dynamic Duo," who would follow the Mayor around the City (Mayor's Phil Amicone and Mike Spano included), take photos, take names of the people in the photos and bring them back to my office. These events helped me put together a positive narrative about the City of Yonkers and the good things happening in the city – especially helpful considering the negativity that the media was focused on at the time.

With Ed's help, we were able to show our readers about the PAL Poster Contest, the PAL Easter Egg Hunt, the PAL Christmas Party and notably, an exceptional spotlight on the individual stories of the boys from Yonkers that gave their lives in the Korean War.

Although hampered by a lame leg, Ed was available to cover events whenever needed. In the Mayor's office, Lucia Travato was a great help by confirming events where he would be needed and also made sure that he would have a seat close by.

Ed would quietly and efficiently be in the right place at the right time. He was also a member of AMVETS Rauso Post 40 in Yonkers and worked with Commander Sam Riti, another close friend of Ed's, to get out the news of the Post and their work to help and serve veterans in Yonkers and in Westchester.

"Ed Whitman was a big participant with AMVETS Post 40. He was very involved in the Post activities at FDR Montrose and Castle Point. He was a very active member in all Post 40 meetings and taking Veterans to Yankee and Met games, dinner theatres. He will truly be missed and remembered as a member and a dear friend, said Commander Sam Riti.

Ed was one of the kindest people that I have had the pleasure of working with. He was generous to a fault, exacting in his work, an avid reader with an exceptional memory. Ed would blow up a special few of his photos into 8 x 10's and hand them out to me and others. I still have the Santa photos that he took for me at the PAL Christmas parties.

We became good friends over the years, and although we didn't see each other in recent years, Ed would also call me with a story idea, or a photo that he would now comfortably email me. And he was always an avid reader of our newspaper and when it came out on Thursday night and was dropped off at the Raceway Diner in Yonkers, Ed was there late at night reading it front to back. If there was an error, he was the first to let me know. He was also a proud member and officer of the Templers.

Thank you for all your hard work, Ed, and for your friendship. You will be missed.

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News in Yonkers and around Westchester

Stepinac HS Senior Organizes Toy Drive for Injured Children at Fareri Children's Hospital



Top row, l-r: Shane Byrne, who led the top drive and his Stepinac classmates, Cody Murphy, Thomas Brady, Liam Egan, Jack Doyle and Aidan Carroll and front row, l-r, Derek Saa, John Calise and Tim O'Shea.

Shane Byrne of Yonkers, a senior at Stepinac High School, was recently lauded by Heavenly Productions Foundation, for organizing a successful toy drive to bring hope and smiles to the gravely ill and injured children who are being treated at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital, Valhalla, NY.

Byrne reached out to Heavenly Productions to help with the non-profit's 8th Annual Toy Drive, a campaign he wanted to undertake in memory of his late cousin, Luke Gallagher, who was a patient at Maria Fareri for 18 months and fought cancer courageously before passing away in 2019 at the age of 12.

In an email to Paul Carty, Principal, Dr. Kathy Reilly Fallon, founder and chairwoman of Heavenly Productions, said: "On behalf of the executive board members, we wish to extend our deepest gratitude to Shane Byrne who organized the toy drive." Over the past two months, Byrne and a group of his classmates collected and donated 225 toys as well as four blankets. Heavenly Productions delivered Stepinac's donations to the young patients just in time of the holidays.

Byrne was assisted by fellow students Cody Murphy, Thomas Brady, Liam Egan, Jack Doyle, Aidan Carroll, John Calise and Tim O'Shea, all of Yonkers and Derek Saa of Hartsdale.

Byrne's was the second drive in memory of Luke Gallagher that was undertaken this year by a Stepinac student (and also a close family member). In the spring, Matthew (Class of '23) — Luke's brother— led a successful spring community blood drive. A total of 88 donors (students, faculty, administration, family members and friends, among others) answered the call to help address blood supply shortages, exceeding the drive's goal of 70 blood donors. As a result, their donations will potentially help save the lives of 264 area hospital patients.

For more information, visit www.Stepinac.org.

Panas HS Senior Bobby Mayclim Named Con Edison's Scholar-Athlete of the Week



Bobby Mayclim

Congratulations to Bobby Mayclim, a senior at Walter Panas High School, for being named a Con Edison Scholar-Athlete of the week.

Bobby has continued to be one of the top cross-country runners not only in Section One, but in New York State. Mayclim recently competed in

the Nike NY Regional Cross Country Championships at Bowdoin Park and finished in 4th place in the national qualifier and has received an automatic bid to compete at the Nike Cross Country National Championships in Eugene, Oregon.

Bobby is returning this fall after being shut down for health issues. This comeback story is remarkable and with every passing week he is getting stronger and stronger as the stakes continue to rise. It's remarkable he is competing at such a high level after the adversity he faced last school year.

This postseason Bobby is the Westchester Country Champion (for 2nd time), 5th in Section One, 9th in NYSPHSAA, 5th in the NYS Federation. At the NYS Federation Cross Country Championships, Bobby finished 5th, making him the 5th fastest cross-country runner in NYS including public, private and parochial schools.

Bobby is captain of indoor & outdoor Track & Field T&F teams. He volunteers at the Town of Lewisboro Recreation Department and is a volunteer basketball coach for the local Shrub Oak Athletic Club. Bobby is also a member of the UNICEF club.

Bobby is a recipient of The George Bailey Award, The Erasmus Award, The Ana Maria Matute Award and The Academic Excellence Award. He is a High Honor Roll student; Member of the National Honor Society; Member of the Spanish Honor Society; Member of the Science Honor Society. He has a 95.8 GPA and has taken 8 AP courses.

"Bobby is the quintessential candidate for this prestigious award. Bobby not only excels in his sports, but in the classroom. He is role model to others in the building and a volunteer in the community. Bobby is coming back from injuries and illness that may end most student-athlete's careers. His perseverance to regain his top form is a testament to his overall character," said Coach John Benven. "His peers look up to him and he carries himself in the most humble, professional and respectful manner at all times."

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