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## From Yonkers to Yorktown, Westchester Says NO to Con Edison's Proposed 17% Rate Hike



A comparison of Green Energy Rates to Con Edison Rates, before their proposed increase show that Green is currently less expensive

By Dan Murphy

The outrage to a proposed 17% Con Edison rate hike has spread across Westchester and New York State, at the same time as residents in Yonkers are being offered a renewable energy rate from Westchester Power that is less than Con Ed's rate, even before the new rate increase goes into effect.

Governor Kathy Hochul urged Con Edison to review their billing practices and better communicate with New Yorkers after the recent surge in energy costs in New York State left many already struggling New Yorkers surprised, through a letter from Public Service Commission (PSC), and also announced increased relief efforts to reach low-income New Yorkers about millions of dollars in aid available.

"The extreme utility bill increases we are seeing across the state come at a time when New Yorkers are already struggling financially following the COVID-19 pandemic," Governor Hochul said. "Even though the spike we are seeing in electricity, natural gas and fuel prices were predicted and are due to severe winter weather, I am calling on Con Ed to review their billing practices because we must take unified action to provide relief for New Yorkers, especially our most vulnerable residents."

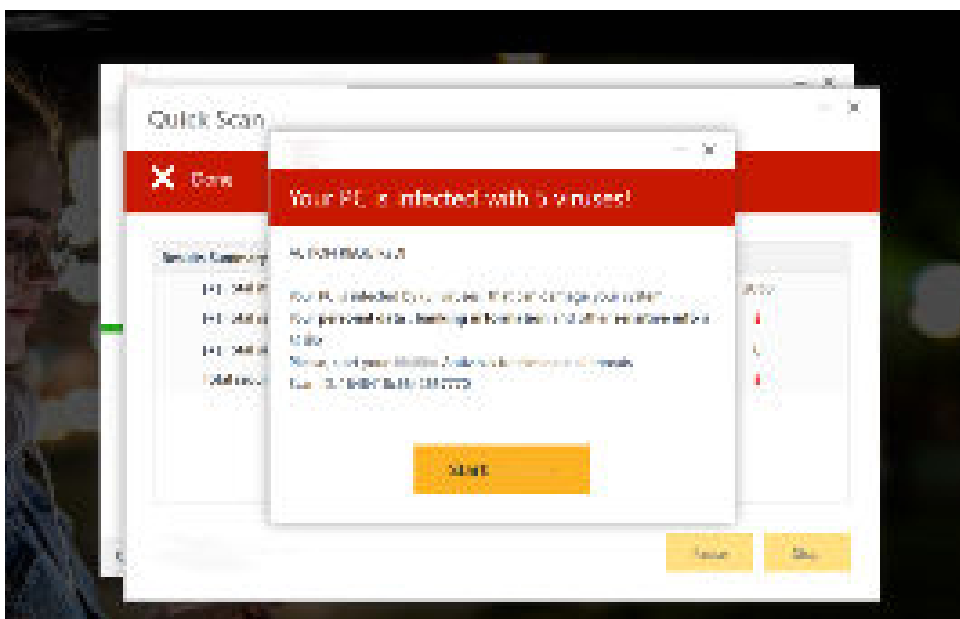
This winter the cost of natural gas, which is used to heat homes and generate electricity, has risen sharply resulting in a significant increase — sometimes more than doubling — of the supply component of customer electric and/or natural gas bills as compared to prior months. These bill increases are being driven by a global increase in natural gas commodity prices due to higher domestic usage because of colder-than-normal weather, increased economic activity, and increased international demand for natural gas.

Some residents in Yorktown have seen their Con Ed bills double over the winter, resulting in a rally on Feb. 11 to condemn skyrocketing utility rates and demanded answers, transparency, and accountability.

"The fact is the State has led us into an energy crisis that is creating a financial emergency for families, seniors on fixed incomes and small businesses," said Supervisor Matt Slater. "We are facing record inflation and for the State to even

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## Westchester PC Users Group Warns of Growing Computer Malware Virus Threats



A malware warning appears without warning on a browser asking to press the scan "start" button, which would be a mistake.

A Westchester community computer non-profit is warning the public that while home computer virus threats are on the upswing, there are easy, protective measures that all of us can take. The Westchester PC Users Group (WPCUG) alerts that scammers, hackers and other bad actors increasingly employ fake emails, fake alerts that pop up when viewing legitimate websites, telephone scams and anti-virus marketers peppering cyberspace with hard-sell sales messages.

All these literally touch all the homes in the region—and particularly try to trick untrained senior citizens into downloading malicious software. WPCUG president and former career IBMer Pierre Darmon, who is a computer consultant based in White Plains, senses a false sense of security by home users who think that computer viruses are aimed only at big companies and big industry.

Darmon said that all home computer users on websites can encounter a takeover of their web browser software by scammers with large-size messages such as "your computer may be infected" and other chilling warnings.

"This is scary because it makes you think that you've lost control of your computer since it is a full-screen message," says Darmon. "And there's a worry that the scammers may have done some more serious damage in the background."

In reality, the scammers have only put the user's browser in full screen mode that makes it difficult to close the page. WPCUG advises that users can make a safe exit most of the time by pressing on their keyboards Alt-F4 (on Windows) and Cmd-Q (on macOS). That closes the browser altogether and lets users regain control of their computer; after such force-closing, the browser can then be re-

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## Calling it a "Republican National Coordinated Fear Campaign," Sen. Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins Says No Changes to Bail Reform



Republicans "want to link the fear with democrats being in charge. Our reforms on bail was about misdemeanors and non-violent felonies. Shooting people is still a bailable offense, but no matter what the crime is they blame bail reform,"

State Senate Majority Leader  
Andrea Stewart-Cousins

By Dan Murphy

At the February 6, 2022 monthly meeting of NYCD16-Indivisible, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins pushed back on critics of the criminal justice, police and bail reforms passed by the democratic majorities in Albany two years ago, and categorized the loud calls for changes to bail reform as a "Republican nationally coordinated campaign of fear." Sen. Stewart-Cousins also condemned Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano's remarks about Congressman Jamaal Bowman and that he should be "arrested" for voting against the bipartisan infrastructure bill, and added that Spano was already "running for Congress" and "making calls to donors."

This was Stewart-Cousins ready to stand up to the attacks made against her leadership and willing to fight to keep the criminal justice and bail reforms made, and explain them to the voters. "It's very alarming when we find ourselves in a situation when we are echoing the talking points of republicans and finding us at a loss for a rebuttal. It's clear to me—listen to this—it is very clear to me that this is a republican national coordinated campaign of fear. What happened after George Floyd was the people around the world understood the importance of reforming the police and criminal justice system. People understood we can have justice and maintain peace in our community without brutality."

Stewart-Cousins used the interview as a call to action for democrats and progressives to stand up to what she called untrue claims from republicans that blame increases in crime, and gun violence, not only in New York but across the country, on the criminal justice reforms passed in NY.

"Bail reform was done before the George Floyd murder and police reform happened after. They were pissed off that it happened at all, and now we have this backlash and a republican national campaign of fear"

"The are linking crime to bail reform. Crime is going up in some places but not in Westchester, according to the County Executive. Gun violence is a national issue that is not linked at all to bail reform. But the

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## Law Enforcement and Some Westchester Electeds Ask For Changes to Bail Reform & Raise the Age Legislation



"There is a small subset of repeat offenders that commit most of the crimes. We can say that if we made some minor changes to bail reform it would help with property crime. Just give us the tools to deal with that small group,"

--Yonkers Police  
Commissioner John Mueller

By Dan Murphy

Several members of Westchester law enforcement, and some elected officials from Westchester, have called for changes to be made to the existing criminal justice reforms. Specifically, they are asking for modifications to bail reform and raise the age legislation.

Yonkers Police Commissioner John Mueller said, "in Yonkers, bail reform is affecting property crimes (car breaks ins and shoplifting). Raise the age legislation is impacting our violent crime."

Mueller said that state legislators worked last summer to make some changes to the criminal justice reform set of laws passed, but that a few, additional changes are still needed. "There is a small subset of repeat offenders that commit most of the crimes. We can say that if we made some minor changes to bail reform it would help with property crime. Just give us the tools to deal with that small group."

Mueller said that there is more gun violence from young teenagers, 15, 16 and 17 years old that are affected by Raise the Age legislation., Many of these cases go to Family Court and the records are sealed. That means the next time they come before a judge, the judge will not know about their prior crimes because their records are sealed. We are asking that the judge be allowed to see the prior criminal history of anyone before the court. Don't seal the records for the public, but for the judge.

"We respect the reforms but we see a few areas that need improvement. We hope that they will sit down and listen to our concerns, which are based upon the crime data. We have the information, please let us talk to you about it," said Mueller.

Keith Olson, the President of the Yonkers PBA, and President of the Affiliated Police Associations of Westchester said, "The huge uptick in violent crime seen in most of New York and throughout the nation is a very real and extremely

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## 2022 Black History Month Series: A Conversation About Music with Crystal Renee



by **Dennis Richmond Jr.**

“Shut up and listen to those who did it before you,” Crystal Renee said. To move forward in the Hip-Hop/Rap culture, we must pay homage to those who came before us. “Respect the knowledge.” Crystal Renee, 28, is a battle rapper from Yonkers, New York. No stranger to hard work, when outside of the ring, she’s either catering with her catering business or working as a nanny. Crystal is a “go-getter, going for her dreams.”

Crystal’s love of music goes back close to 20 years. At nine years old, she performed a song during a competition in her Foxfire Elementary School 5th grade class. The song was a remake that she made of a Missy Elliot song. Her group performed the song and won. The rest is history. Missy Elliot is one of the people that inspire Renee. Elliot grew up in an active church choir family. The Black church is a vital part of Black music.

For centuries, Black Americans used the church to express themselves. Clapping hands, stomping feet, and shouting are some of the ways of self-expression in the church. Gospel music plays a role in Black America to this day. Without the Black church, there would be no Crystal Renee.

Missy Elliott is Renee’s famous inspiration. Her more local inspiration is a young man named Phillip. Phillip “P Bills” Wells introduced Crystal to her first league to have her first battle competition. Afterward, the head of O.T.M known as ChopNGo Ty, scouted her out. Through her lyricism, she was able to earn the nod of many Yonkers folks. P. Bills, QwanDaRebel, Taj\_Milli, and Whitted, always pushed and supported her.

What makes Crystal different is that she isn’t afraid to network with her competition. “I try to connect with other local rappers,” she said. A trait like this will put her ahead of the pack. Nicki Minaj once said, “I lead the pack, so my back’s to them.” Renee is still a competitor, though. She will wake up at 3 or 4 a.m. to write lyrics. “Music is my outlet,” she said.

Many young people across the country use music as an escape from reality. Home lives are sometimes in ruin, but music is there to help. Bus rides and train rides are long, but music is there to help. Sometimes you feel upset or down, but music is always there to assist you with whatever you need.

Crystal wants to leave readers with one takeaway. “You could do anything you put your mind to.” She’s determined to live her wildest dreams by any means necessary. With no children and a supporting family, the only thing that can get in the way of Crystal is Crystal. My “family gives props,” she told me. Her uncle tells her, “it’s all on you.”

**Dennis Richmond, Jr., is an author and journalist focused on the Black, Latinx, and LGBTQIA+ Community. He has covered HBCUs periodically for six years at Yonkers Rising. Richmond lives in Yonkers. Follow him on Twitter @NewYorkStakz.**

## Six Year Old Larchmont Cancer Survivor Kicks Off Stop & Shop Donation of 2,000 Stuffed Animals for Valentine’s Day



The Stop & Shop Stores across Westchester delivered 2,000 stuffed animals for Valentine’s Day to the home of six year-old Larchmont cancer survivor, Cassidy Kline. Cassidy’s Charity, Cuddles from Cassidy <https://www.cuddles-fromcassidy.org/> will present the Teddy Bears to pediatric cancer patients across Westchester and the New York City metropolitan area.

Cassidy serves as one of the ambassadors to Stop & Shop’s Help Cure Childhood Cancer Campaign, which has raised over \$25 million since 2001 for hospitals like Memorial Sloan Kettering.

Cassidy is currently in remission after being diagnosed with stage-four rhabdomyosarcoma, a rare muscle and soft tissue cancer. Cuddles from Cassidy Pediatric Cancer Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to provide comfort and joy to children battling life-threatening illnesses by providing cuddles (care packages with stuffed animals, toys, and tokens of love) to put smiles on their faces.



Notice of Formation of J’s Admin, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with SSNY on 1/12/22. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Julia Rea 69 Dale Ave Apt 6 Ossining, NY 10562. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

## Yonkers City Clerk’s Passport Office a Success More Convenience and Longer Hours Offered



By **Dan Murphy**

In early 2020, just before the COVID pandemic, Yonkers City Clerk Vincent Spano went to the Yonkers Post Office with his wife to renew their passports for an upcoming trip to the Bahamas. The experience stretched out to three hours before the two filed the paperwork so they could take their vacation.

“We waited for an hour and then they took lunch and closed up. They are only open for passports from 1-3pm. When I left I said to my wife, this was bad customer service. There has to be a better way to do this, besides going to the County Clerk in White Plains, said Spano.

The only options for submitting the paperwork and photo to get a US Passports are at your local post office, or the County Clerks office. Until now. The Yonkers City Clerk has opened a Passport office in City Hall. It is the first downstate City Hall in New York to feature an office dedicated to helping individuals apply for US Passports.

City Clerk Spano decided to embark on a mission, (or crazy idea as he put it), to try and open a passports office in Yonkers City Hall. “Nobody in New York State, except for Jamestown did passports in their City Hall. It took a lot of time and paperwork, but we got it approved from the Secretary of State and now we are up and running.”

“I wanted to offer the people of Yonkers another alternative. It seems that you can’t get anyone to answer the phone in a lot of government agencies, and the alternative is to wait for three hours on line. I wanted to open a Passport office where we actually answer the phone and help you with your questions,” said CI Spano explained that while appointments are taken with the Post Office and County Clerk, they are booked until April. He also realized that there was a need to offer passport services at different times

The Yonkers Passport office is open from 9am-4pm, Monday-Friday, and on Tuesday night open until 7pm, by appointment only. “This is all about customer service and making things easier. Everyone is so busy, with work and family and their lives that this might make it a bit easier if you need a passport. You will not find another place in New York State that’s open to 7pm for passports.”

The Yonkers City Clerk’s Passport Office opened on Feb. 7, but the response has been so great that there is already a two week wait to make an appointment. “The interest has been great and the phone is wringing off the hook. Hopefully, we are in the process of putting this pandemic behind us and people will return to normal travel. I am confident that by providing this service, it will make it easier to obtain a passport. We look forward to working with the U. S. Department of State to make it happen.”

Once the paperwork is filed, there is an 8-11 week wait for the NYS Department of State to process your passport. If you decide to pay for an expedited application, it still takes 5-6 weeks.

Spano has also been able to open the Passport office without any increases in staff. “We were able to move some positions around to make it work without hiring anyone else. And the revenues will help the city. That’s another reason to come to City Hall for your passport, but we also do E-Z Pass, licenses and birth certificates. We try to make it a one-stop place to make it easier, and our offices revenues will double.

Spano thanked his team at the clerk’s office, including deputy Clerks Mike Ramondelli and Nerissa Pena, for their help in setting this up, and Mayor Mike Spano for helping with the office set up. And the approval of the City Council So far, the response from the residents of Yonkers has been positive, on social media, and in the proof that in their first week of operations, appointments are sold out for two weeks.

Other enhancements added to the City Clerk’s Office in the last few years include, partnering with Vitalchek to make online requests for Birth, Marriage and Death Certificates possible, E-ZPass® “On-the-Go” program, the easiest and fastest way to start an E-ZPass account, and Dog License applications and renewals now available online

To learn more about getting a passport,. Call 914-377-8099 or email [Passports@YonkersNY.gov](mailto:Passports@YonkersNY.gov) to schedule your appointment today. The Yonkers City Clerk is located at 40 South Broadway Room 102, Yonkers, NY 10701. By appointment only.

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## County Executive Latimer Hosts Opening of New County Veterans Service Agency Office



L-R-Rep. Mondaire Jones, County BOL Chair Catherine Borgia, Westchester Veterans Affairs Director Ron Tocci, County Executive George Latimer, WP Mayor Tom Roach

In order to best serve the population who have risked their lives to protect us, County Executive George Latimer proudly opened a new County Veterans Service Agency office today in White Plains. Located at 10 County Center Road, the office is now open and ready to provide counsel, support and be a resource for the County's veteran population.

Latimer said: "The Westchester heroes who will be served by this new central office location deserve the best we can offer for them. A new facility, coupled with the VSA's hardworking staff, allows us to better provide for and take care of our County's veterans."

The Westchester County Veterans Service Agency works year-round to ensure that veterans and their dependents receive the maximum benefits from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs and other agencies at all levels of government.

Veterans Service Agency Director Ron Tocci said: "My fellow veterans need a County government they can trust will work hard on their behalf. It is the least we can do – and something we put all of our efforts toward each day. I am proud of this department and thank the County Executive for understanding our needs."

There are approximately 50,000 veterans in Westchester County representing all periods of conflict, up to and including the current conflict in the Middle East.

As advocates for veterans and their families, Westchester County counselors work closely with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and other federal, state, local, and private agencies to provide optimal service at the local level. Services include free accredited representation, securing military and personal records, obtaining medals and awards and assistance with veterans' real property tax exemption filing and veterans medical ID card enrollment.

## Registration to Open for Westchester County Parks Nature and Muscote Camps

If the freezing temperatures have you thinking about summer plans, look no further than Westchester County Parks' Nature and Muscote Camps for children entering grades one through nine! Muscote Young Farmers Camp registration opens Wednesday, Feb. 16 at noon and Nature Camp registration opens Wednesday, Feb. 23 at noon.

Campers can explore and discover the natural environment of Westchester County with fun, hands-on experiences at our nature centers and Muscote Farm. Each camp will focus on different aspects of nature and teach youngsters about animals, insects, plants and more with a new theme each week. The program runs from Monday, June 27 through Friday, Aug. 19, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fees are \$350 per camper per week.

Camps will operate outdoors under applicable state guidelines in place at the time camp is in session.

### Locations:

- Cranberry Lake Preserve, North White Plains- (914) 428-1005
- Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary, Rye (914) 967-8720
- Lenoir Nature Preserve, Yonkers (914) 968-5851
- Marshlands Conservancy, Rye (914) 835-4466
- Trailside Nature Museum at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, Cross River (914) 864-7322
- Muscote Farm, Katonah (914) 864-7282

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said, "The Westchester County Parks Nature and Muscote Camps not only provide the children of Westchester County with a fun way to spend their summer outdoors, but an opportunity for youngsters to learn and care for the environment and implement those skills into daily life for years to come."

Westchester County Parks Commissioner Kathy O'Connor said, "The parks department looks forward to summer every year and our Nature and Muscote Farm camps are just a few of the many reasons. We are excited to welcome back our campers, new and old, to have a fun and educational summer with us."

## Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall? You've Got a Friend!



By Eric W. Schoen

The weather last week and this week sure looks like it will continue its craziness. As mom would say, the sudden change in weather is pneumonia weather. But for some strange reason, thank god we never got pneumonia! Over Ground Hog Phil and Staten Island Chuck and the Westchester County bird. But changing temps are hopefully a sign that Spring is on its way and yes, after my Birthday on February 22 things always seem to get better.

Speaking of better, were you a better on one of these new Sports Betting apps for the Super Bowl? Close to \$2 Billion Has been bet on sports apps since they became legal in New York earlier this year according to Governor Hochul. Whatever government agency I worked for over the years (won't mention names as Super Bowl pools are technically illegal) everyone always knew that I wanted to participate even though I haven't a clue about Football.

So I saw all these special deals to entice bettors to participate on betting on the big game. When I participated in the pools I would occasionally win not knowing why. I bet on the Rams on 2 apps, \$5 each, expected to win something when they one won and ended up with bupkis! The next day I won \$10 on Cash for Life Lottery game, so now I am even.

My point is how many other schmucks out there bet on the apps not having a clue as to what they were doing? A company called Schneps Media ran a tutorial which I caught a bit of, describing how the betting process worked. But I would highly suggest that New York State have online tutorials because apparently there are a lot of things you can bet on other than the Super Bowl. The state cannot be more interested in revenue generated on sports gambling than on whether people doing the gambling can afford to.

What I did find disconcerting is that both of the apps that I bet on sent me emails the day after the Super Bowl offering deals to bet on other sports, as low as a \$1. I hope this isn't their way to draw people who don't have the money into sports betting. You should not be Betting the rent money in these apps. And our State Legislators and the Governor should put pressure on these companies not to send out these deals. Have an opt in if you want the emails, and an opt out if you don't. Bet with your head not over it!

As for me I'll stick with the \$2 lottery bets where now everyday can win over a million dollars or Cash for Life. They are simple. Either you have the correct numbers or you don't. But that \$1 app bet on basketball looks enticing, and I do know the Knicks usually aren't very good. I bet confidently knowing that my long time friend Assemblyman Nader Sayegh who was on Facebook and other venues talking about betting would have bought me lunch if I didn't win the \$10 Cash for Life to make up for the apps. Maybe he still has the special Roast Beef recipe his Uncle Gus made at the grocery Store down the street from where I grew up. I could use a nice, thick roast beef sandwich on rye with deli mustard as his uncle would make. Fond memories!

Hope you are sitting enjoying your coffee realizing this article is going to be pretty light this week. Masks. We all hate them. The mask mandate was lifted by the Governor for stores and businesses but remember, each individual business can keep the mask mandate in effect. And many have. And you must respect it. I went to Panera at Cross County the day after it was lifted, and the manager was pretty clear when I asked her if masks were needed.

One thing I can't understand. I was picking up a prescription at a pharmacy in a supermarket and a woman walked up picking up numerous prescriptions for her and her friend not wearing a mask. If there is a place where I would consider masking it certainly is at or near a pharmacy. Let's face it. Most people get prescriptions for some health related reason or another. The woman looked like she was in her 70's, more reason to where a mask. I stayed at least 12 feet away from her, and the Pharmacist in our discussion was surprised the lady wasn't masked.

Fake vaccination cards are a problem. There has to be way to detect them and make sure all cards are real. Our technology people have to come up with a solution to this situation.

Walmart and Amazon are dropping mask mandates for fully vaccinated workers. Within the law but I am sure many will still wear them until we know for sure Covid and it's variants are done with. I only wish the date we knew this was sooner than later.

As we go to press another unauthorized tractor trailer was on the FDR holding up traffic. This is not only a Hutchinson River Parkway or Westchester County problem. Thousands of people sit in their cars inconvenienced until the trucks are guided off the parkway. Governor Hochul has got to convene a task force with a finite date to solve this problem. I've given you my solution many times. We can't wait for all commercial vehicles in this country to be outfitted with a commercial vehicle GPS. The traffic stops and inconvenience to drivers have got to be causing the New York Economy millions if not billions of dollars.

The 15 year old Russian Skater who was found to be doped and couldn't pass a drug test should be disqualified forever from Olympics competition. Isn't it sad that Russia is now doping 15 year olds? I hope you join me in wishing our U.S.A. athletes success at the Olympics. Bringing home gold, silver and bronze metals is our way to show China we are not happy with their policies and the way they treat their people. Novak Djokovic. Want to play tennis. Stop being a cry baby and follow the rules!

New York City fired 1400 or less than 1% of their employees this week who remain unvaccinated. You don't follow the rules this is what happens. I have no sympathy and neither do the 99% of workers who did what they had to do!

The at home Covid tests sent by the government are reaching homes. Be on the lookout for them. Porch thieves are stealing them. And as my doctor said, only use them when you have symptoms.

The high Con Edison bills are making people in Yonkers take a second look at Sustainable Westchester. But folks I talk to are opting out as they don't trust the

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Notice of Formation of Jovanna Realty LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with SSNY on 5/14/2021. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Jovanna Realty LLC, 100 Riverdale Ave., Apt. 8C., Yonkers, NY 10701 Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

## PBA Attorney: Anti-Police Rhetoric Doesn't Help Police in the War on Illegal Guns

Op-Ed by Andrew Quinn, Esq.

**Editor's Note:** A Westchester attorney who represents PBA's has written an Op-Ed that points the finger at comments made by New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson and Congressman Jamaal Bowman, based on their own words concerning the death of Kamal Flowers by New Rochelle Police Officer Alec McKenna.

Quinn, from The Quinn Law Firm in White Plains writes, "This may be the most painful morning that I can recall in my time of service and one of the most painful that I can recall in my life": New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson on June 6, 2020, the morning after the shooting death of convicted felon Kamal Flowers and before any investigation was begun.

"I'm so upset about another horrific incident in our community. We are going through so much already. There needs to be an immediate state investigation into this police killing of a Black man, Kamal Flowers, in New Rochelle": Candidate Jamaal Bowman on June 6, 2020, also before any investigation into the shooting of Kamal Flowers was conducted.

These were the words of our local elected leaders on the morning after Police Officer Alec McKenna came within a trigger pull of losing his life trying to keep illegal guns off the streets of New Rochelle. If Flowers succeeded in killing Officer McKenna, these same politicians would have been tripping over themselves to get in front of a camera to call him a "hero" who bravely died in the service of the city.

On June 5, 2020, Officer McKenna chased Flowers – a convicted violent felon in possession of an illegal weapon – placing himself at extraordinary risk of death with every step. During the pursuit, Flowers – a parolee released from a lengthy prison stint three months earlier for a gunpoint carjacking – pulled his gun from his waist band and, as his later actions show, would have tried to shoot Officer McKenna with it. Instead, he dropped it to the ground. Rather than shoot, Officer McKenna deployed his taser, with no effect. Flowers grabbed the illegal gun and pointed it directly at Officer McKenna for a second time and fired: later tests confirmed Flowers' his DNA on the trigger. By the Grace of God, the bullet did not discharge and Officer McKenna was spared. Undeterred, Flowers adjusted the cartridge of the weapon and again pointed it directly at Officer McKenna, who was shouting at Flowers "don't do it". Left with no choice, Officer McKenna fired, killing Flowers and saving his own life. Notably, he also took an illegal gun off the streets of New Rochelle: a gun that could have resulted in many more senseless, tragic deaths, like the one that happened recently in New Rochelle's West End.

At a press conference attended by virtually every local elected official in New Rochelle, Mayor Bramson labeled the morning of Flowers' death "one of the most painful that I can recall in my life". Mayor Bramson never once mentioned the extraordinary risk Officer McKenna faced to rid his city of the scourge of illegal guns. No elected leader commended Officer McKenna for the exceptional restraint and bravery he displayed, firing his weapon only after Flowers made it clear that he was intent on carrying out his plan of escaping at any cost – including taking the life of a uniformed police officer. To this day, neither Mayor Bramson nor Congressman Bowman has ever acknowledged that Flowers' illegal 9 mm semi-automatic handgun was recovered at the scene along with several 9mm bullets recovered in his pocket.

We mourn the death of two New York City police officers killed by gunfire last month, once again rightly lauding each of them as a "hero". Yet to this day, not a single elected official in Westchester County has acknowledged Officer McKenna for the bravery he displayed in getting yet another urban weapon of war off the streets. To this day, not one local leader has thanked Officer McKenna for removing another gun from our community. Nor has a single New Rochelle official expressed relief or gratitude that Officer McKenna did not die in the process, though he very nearly did.

Instead, following the horrific shooting death of a 17-year old in New Rochelle, our local elected officials have expressed outrage over the proliferation of guns in Westchester – guns that become available to teenagers who use them to shoot and kill each other. Not surprisingly, news reports indicate that the New Rochelle shooter fired a 9mm semiautomatic handgun – the same gun which nearly killed Officer McKenna.

Mayor Bramson and Congressman Bowman, predictably riding the waves of the shifting political tides, are now lamenting their inability to stem the flow of illegal guns into the hands of teenagers:

"The tragic death of the 16-year-old New Rochelle boy is only made worse by the fact that he was killed by a 16-year-old who was able to get his hands on a gun. The system is failing our youth at every level. We need to do everything in our power to support our youth and their families, address the mental health crisis, and put an end to the influx of guns coming from outside of our state and into the hands of our teenagers. This is unacceptable and cannot be normalized". Congressman Jamaal Bowman on January 27, 2020 commenting on the shooting death of a 16 year old in New Rochelle.

"More broadly, this incident highlights yet again the destructive impact of our nation's lax gun regulations, which flood firearms into the wrong hands and can transform any dispute into a heartbreaking loss". Mayor Noam Bramson on January 27, 2020.

Getting guns off the streets of Westchester is extraordinarily dangerous work. It requires a profound level of bravery, yet is so often overlooked or worse, taken for granted. Since the death of Kamal Flowers, New Rochelle police officers have made forty gun arrests, each time risking their own life in the process. Each time a police officer takes a gun illegally possessed by another from the community, he or she faces the very real risk that they too will be placed in Officer McKenna's dangerous position. Police officers should not be forced to consider whether they want to die a "hero" or live as a "defendant".

It is long past time to once again allow Westchester County police officers to use the tools they already have to stop the violence that is plaguing our communities. The progressive policies of frighteningly liberal District Attorneys who believe that police officers are the problem and not the solution must be soundly and loudly denounced. The citizens who truly care about the safety of all of our county's neighborhoods must come forward and be heard. We must, as law abiding residents who seek to protect all children in all communities, elect leaders who understand that police officers are our greatest weapon in the war on gun violence, who deserve support rather than contempt. We must reject the anti-police rhetoric that is demoralizing police officers and curtailing recruitment.

And it is long past time that someone thank Alec McKenna for his service.  
**Andrew Quinn, Esq. The Quinn Law Firm, PLLC**

## Indivisible NYCD 16 Supports Stewart-Cousins and Keeping Bail-Criminal Justice Reforms As Is

**Editor's Note:** Members of Indivisible NYCD-16 recently wrote a letter criticizing the comments made by Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano about Congressman Jamaal Bowman. Included in that letter were comments about bail reform. Below are that portions of the letter, which can be found in its entirety at [YonkersTimes.com](https://www.yonkers.com/news/2020/02/16/indivisible-nycd-16-rejects-spano-criticism-of-bowman/)

"Bail Reform is about creating an equitable criminal justice system. #JusticenotFear! Bail Reform only applies to nonviolent felonies and misdemeanors. Historically, poor people who were disproportionately black and brown, were kept in jail because they couldn't afford to pay bail. Our state legislators consulted extensively with district attorneys and judges before putting forth this historic bail reform legislation. It has kept hundreds of thousands of people out of jail who cannot afford to pay bail.

"Ninety eight percent show up for their court hearings. There is NO connection between bail reform and crime rates. There IS a connection between gun violence and crime rates, however. We would love to hear more from our Mayor about getting guns off our streets and engaging in thoughtful conversation with gang members who are associated with most of the shootings in our city. Rep Bowman knows that people want a fair criminal justice system, a living wage, affordable housing, food to eat, public safety & access to good health care during this pandemic.

"It is troubling to hear Mayor Spano make such provocative statements. Remarks from him about putting our Black Congressman in jail stoke fear and anger in certain communities. We have yet to understand what he means by "changing bail reform."

"Most constituents look to our democratically elected officials for reasoned and calm governance in these troubling times. Dog whistle statements from Yonkers Mayor Spano don't reflect the type of leadership that we need from him," wrote Indivisible CDNY16.

## Protect Yourself from a Bad Tax Preparer

The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance today announced that the Consumer Bill of Rights Regarding Tax Preparers has been bolstered to better protect the public from dishonest tax preparers who prey on unsuspecting New Yorkers.

"While most tax return preparers are honest professionals, some take advantage of their position of trust and access to sensitive information to scam customers out of their hard-earned money," said Acting Commissioner of Taxation and Finance Amanda Hiller. "Before hiring a tax preparer, I urge taxpayers to take steps to protect themselves, such as by making sure their preparer follows ethical practices and recently enhanced rules of conduct."

Tax return preparers must:  
Post their New York State Tax Preparer Registration Certificate and price list;  
Tell you up front whether they will represent you if your return is audited later;  
Ask you about your income, expenses, family, and any other information or documents needed to accurately complete your return;  
Allow you to review your completed return – including your bank account information – and ask questions before you sign it;  
Give you a written statement of any interest and fees you will be charged if you choose a refund anticipation loan (refund advance) or a refund anticipation check (refund transfer) instead of having your refund deposited directly into your bank account;  
Sign your tax return and enter the preparer tax identification number (PTIN) and New York tax preparer identification number (NYTPRN), if applicable; e-File your tax return;  
Give you a year-round address and phone number you can use if you have questions or concerns about your return; and  
Provide you with a copy of your filed return. If your tax preparer does not follow these requirements, you may file a complaint with the Office of Professional Responsibility at [www.tax.ny.gov](http://www.tax.ny.gov) (search: tax preparer complaint).

Tax return preparers must also:  
Post Publication 135.1, Consumer Bill of Rights Regarding Tax Preparers; and  
Provide you with a free copy of this pamphlet Publication 135, Consumer Bill of Rights Regarding Tax Preparers, or the New York City Consumer Bill of Rights, prior to any discussions. Tax Department investigators will be conducting compliance checks throughout the personal income tax filing season, which is currently underway, to ensure tax preparers are following these requirements. Tax preparers who fail to do so will be subject to fines and the potential suspension of their tax preparer registration.

Verify your tax return preparer's credentials  
Certain tax return preparers must register annually with the Tax Department and post copies of their current Registration Certificate.

To confirm your tax return preparer's credentials, visit [https://www.tax.ny.gov/tp/reg/tpreg\\_list.htm](https://www.tax.ny.gov/tp/reg/tpreg_list.htm)

If your tax preparer does not comply with the requirements in the Consumer Bill of Rights Regarding Tax Preparers, you can file a complaint online with the department's Office of Professional Responsibility at this link:

<https://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/opr/tax-preparer-complaint-instructions.htm>

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## County Executive Latimer Gets COVID Booster



On Feb. 9, Westchester County Executive George Latimer received his third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Latimer said: "I want to continue to encourage people to get their full vaccination series. I contracted COVID-19 before I was scheduled to take my third and final shot. Thankfully it was a mild case because I was vaccinated, but I want to continue to curb the spread of this virus in our communities throughout this great County and that is why I made it a point to get my third shot. We all want to get back to living life before the pandemic and getting the third shot is the best way to do that. Let's continue to keep each other safe and healthy."

Westchester County Health Department Commissioner Dr. Sherlita Amler said: "While the definition of being fully vaccinated against COVID does not currently include having a third shot, it is important that residents understand that being fully vaccinated is not the same as being optimally protected. Data has shown that getting the third shot increases a person's immune response, which offers improved protection against becoming infected. To be optimally protected against COVID, everyone should get a third shot when they are eligible."

Latimer received the Moderna vaccine. Vaccines continue to be available at the Westchester County Center and Yonkers Armory. To make an appointment, visit this link.

<https://app.squarespacescheduling.com/schedule.php?owner=24841628&calendarID=6348560>

## March 1 Deadline to Upgrade to Enhanced STAR

### March 1 Deadline to Upgrade to the Enhanced STAR Property Tax Exemption

For seniors turning 65 this year, the deadline to apply in most localities is March 1

The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance today reminded seniors that, for most localities, the deadline to apply for greater property tax savings through the Enhanced STAR property tax exemption is March 1.

To be eligible for the 2022 Enhanced STAR property tax exemption, seniors must: currently receive the Basic STAR property tax exemption; have one owner of the property who will be at least 65 years of age by December 31, 2022; and have had 2020 income equal to or below \$92,000.

"We want every eligible senior to receive the increased property tax benefit," said Acting Commissioner Amanda Hiller. "To help ensure that seniors don't miss out on this valuable benefit, we recently sent letters to 27,000 seniors who may be eligible for additional savings."

Eligible seniors should apply to their assessor's office by the application due date, which is March 1 in most towns and some cities, but there are exceptions. Seniors should verify their exact due date with their local assessor.

To apply, seniors must provide the following to the assessor:

Form RP-425-E, Application for Enhanced STAR Exemption

Form RP-425-IVP, Supplement to Form RP-425-E

Proof of income: 2020 New York State or federal income tax forms. (If the senior wasn't required to file an income tax return, the assessor can guide them on how to provide proof of income.)

In 2021, 577,000 seniors received a total of more than \$800 million in savings from the Enhanced STAR property tax exemption.

Seniors who receive the STAR credit instead of the STAR exemption don't need to apply or take any other action. The Tax Department will automatically upgrade them to Enhanced STAR if they qualify.

Seniors with questions about the STAR exemption can contact the Tax Department's STAR Hotline from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays: 518-457-2036.

*Eric Schoen continued from pg 3-*

government. Con Edison is a wild beast that should have been tamed years ago. Put too much power in one company and you have the highest rates in the country. With talk of higher rates. And those who don't opt out of Sustainable Westchester will anxiously await to see what their bills look like.

Another homeless career criminal killed an Asian woman this week. And our legislators in Albany sit on their tuchases (rear ends) and do nothing to change the bail situation crippling our State. I just don't get why they don't get it!

Attorney General Letitia James will sail to victory over any former official who runs against her. Look at the great work she has done while in office!

Bed Bath and Beyond getting more generous with coupons. \$20 off \$80 just don't cut the mustard. Shots fired at a Jewish Mayoral Candidate in Louisville. Barely hear about it. Anti-semitism alive and well in this country. U.S. Avocado inspector gets threatened in Mexico. No more Mexican avocados. Thank god we had no avocado shortage Super Bowl Sunday! \$13.45 is the average donation to the Bowman campaign. Wonder why?

For those of you who couldn't get through on my radio show last week, even my sister could not get through to check on the emotional state of her brother. I love callers. But please, don't call if you are going to tell me you spoke to Judges and bail reform is not the problem with the crime wave in our midst if you are not big enough to say which judges you spoke to. Did you speak with Judge Wapner? Judge Judy? I know it wasn't Judge Jeanine!

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

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

Notice of formation of Gelpdawg Media LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the New York Department of State on 12/01/2021. Office location: Westchester County. The New York Secretary of State is designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served upon him or her to the company c/o United States Corporation Agents, Inc., 7014 13th Ave, 202, Brooklyn, NY 11228. Principal business address: 428 Marlborough Rd., Yonkers, NY 10701. Purpose: Any lawful acts.

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## Westchester Elected Officials Discuss Legislative Priorities with Larchmont-Mamaroneck Summit



*L-R State Senator Shelley Mayer, Assemblyman Steve Otis, County Legislator Catherine Parker*

### Discuss Legislative Priorities Led by Education and Flooding

By Larry Thaul

On Tuesday, February 8th, our local legislators addressed a number of topics at a Zoom meeting of the Larchmont/Mamaroneck Local Summit, including their priorities and the impact of current legislation in the State Senate, State Assembly, and County Legislature. The meeting was co-hosted by LMC Media.

#### EDUCATION

NYS Senator Shelley Mayer, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, reported that Gov. Hochul, working closely with the legislature, is proposing a \$100M program for mental health and student social/emotional health to be matched with federal funds. She said the Governor also proposes expansion of full day pre-K, priority for special education, and substantial investment in SUNY and CUNY to make higher education more affordable. The Mamaroneck and Rye Neck school districts will receive their full foundation aid over the next three years. To bridge the digital divide, Assemblyman Steve Otis is seeking money for the STEM Alliance to expand the availability of computers and training along with expanding broadband service. In response to a question about mask mandates in schools, Otis replied that mandates may be lifted, but districts will have to respond to outbreaks as they arise. Mayer has discussed with the Governor developing a metric to provide statistically significant guidance to parents and school administrators.

#### FLOODING

According to NYS Assemblyman Otis, the good news is that the federal government will now pay the entire \$88M cost of the Mamaroneck flood project, saving the village and the county their respective 12.5% shares. He proposes grants for storm water projects to address areas not directly near waterways. Senator Mayer advocates the establishment of a NYS "Flood Czar" to centralize efforts to obtain coverage for losses, and a state-level flood relief program to augment the federal program. She also wants a flood expert on the state building codes council. They both seek a mechanism for municipalities to buy out untenable properties at pre-flood values. County Legislator Catherine Parker reintroduced legislation mandating landlord disclosure to tenants of flood events within the past 10 years.

#### HOUSING

Parker announced that the County increased affordable housing funds from \$25M to \$50M. Students from the popular Mamaroneck HS civics program asserted that the \$35M that NYS has allocated towards legal representation in tenant eviction cases is insufficient. Mayer pointed out that NYC guarantees the right of counsel for every tenant, a worthy goal for the county.

#### SUSTAINABILITY

Gov. Hochul has proposed that new school vehicles have zero emissions by 2027 and current ones by 2035. Otis pointed out the need for more charging stations and stated that area businesses, schools and municipalities have made progress with food scrap recycling. He added that installation of solar panels atop school buildings has already begun via an existing program. Parker added that money is currently being invested in clean technology.

#### OTHER ISSUES

Legislator Parker noted that the county budget is healthy with 3 consecutive years of tax cuts, including \$7M this year coupled with an increase in reserves. Senator Mayer explained the configuration of the new Congressional District #3 as primarily the coastal suburban areas of Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties. She also wants to see Long Term Care insurance premiums restructured to remain affordable. Parker noted that \$24M is in the budget for economic development to attract new business as well as for workforce education and training.

The Larchmont-Mamaroneck Local Summit is an informal community council that seeks to make a better life for the community by keeping it informed of major issues of concern. The next Zoom program, co-hosted by LMC Media, will be Tuesday, March 8th at 8:00 a.m. In time for spring, panelists will discuss "Healthy Yards/Health People." Visit the Local Summit online: <https://www.local-summitlm.org/> LMC Media: <https://lmcmedia.org/>

Notice of formation of Aiyana's Creations LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 12/20/2021. Office: Westchester County. United States Corporation Agents Inc., 7014 13th Avenue, Suite 202, Brooklyn, NY, 11228 designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. US Corporation Agents Inc shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 127 Ramsey Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10701. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number 1339572, for Beer, Liquor, Wine & Cider has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer, Liquor, Wine & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 188 Waverly Street, Yonkers, NY 10701, NY, Westchester County, for on-premises consumption. JESMYR CORP. d/b/a EL CALVARIO COCINA MEXICANA

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TOWN OF EASTCHESTER  
LEGAL NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that sealed bids will be received at the Office of the TOWN CLERK, TOWN OF EASTCHESTER, 40 Mill Road, Eastchester, New York, 10709 on FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2022, at 11:00 o'clock A.M., relating to 2022 Ground Maintenance Operations: Mowing, Leaf Blowing, Fall Cleanup and Vine Control on Town property within the Town of Eastchester, in accordance with the specifications on file in the Office of the Town Clerk. Said bids will be publicly opened and read at said time and place.

The Town reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

BY THE ORDER OF THE SUPERVISOR AND THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF EASTCHESTER, NEW YORK  
LINDA LAIRD, TOWN CLERK

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF  
NEW YORK – COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER  
INDEX # 67098/2018 FILED: 1/7/2022  
SECOND SUPPLEMENTAL SUMMONS

Plaintiff designates Westchester County as the Place of Trial. Designation of Venue is based upon the situs of the Subject Property. Subject property: 15 S Kensico Avenue, White Plains, NY 10601. U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR J.P. MORGAN MORTGAGE ACQUISITION CORP. 2005-OPT2, ASSET BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-OPT2, Plaintiff, against ARIANA ALVARADO AS ADMINISTRATRIX AND HEIR OF THE ESTATE OF JORGE E ALVARADO A/K/A JOSE ALVARADO, DIANA ALVARADO AS HEIR OF THE ESTATE OF JORGE E ALVARADO A/K/A JOSE ALVARADO, if they be living and if they be dead, the respective heirs-at-law, next-of-kin, distributees, executors, administrators, trustees, devisees, legatees, assignees, lienors, creditors and successors in interest and generally all persons having or claiming under, by or through said defendant(s) who may be deceased, by purchase, inheritance, lien or inheritance, any right, title or interest in or to the real property described in the Complaint, SARA ZARI, THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION AND FINANCE and “JOHN DOE” and “JANE DOE” the last two names being fictitious, said parties intended being tenants or occupants, if any, having or claiming an interest in, or lien upon the premises described in the complaint, Defendant(s). TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS: YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the Complaint in this action and to serve a copy of your answer, or, if the Complaint is not served with this Summons, to serve a notice of appearance on the Plaintiff’s Attorney within twenty (20) days after the service of this Summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within thirty (30) days after the service is complete if this Summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York) in the event the United States of America is made a party defendant, the time to answer for the said United States of America shall not expire until sixty (60) days after service of the Summons; and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the Complaint. NOTICE YOU ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING YOUR HOME. If you do not respond to this summons and complaint by serving a copy of the answer on the attorney for the mortgage company who filed this foreclosure proceeding against you and filing the answer with the court, a default judgment may be entered and you can lose your home. Speak to an attorney or go to the court where your case is pending for further information on how to answer the summons and protect your property. Sending a payment to your mortgage company will not stop this foreclosure action. YOU MUST RESPOND BY SERVING A COPY OF THE ANSWER ON THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PLAINTIFF (MORTGAGE COMPANY) AND FILING THE ANSWER WITH THE COURT. The foregoing summons is served upon you by publication pursuant to an order of the Honorable Janet C Malone, a Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, Westchester County, granted on the 6th day of January, 2022, and filed with the Complaint and other papers in the office of the County Clerk of Westchester County. The object of this action is to foreclose a mortgage upon the premises described below, executed by JORGE ALVARADO to OPTION ONE MORTGAGE CORPORATION, bearing date September 14, 2005 and recorded in Control No. 452910566 in the County of Westchester on October 27, 2005, which was modified by Loan Modification Agreement on September 1, 2010 creating a new principle amount of \$646,397.52, which was assigned to U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR J.P. MORGAN MORTGAGE ACQUISITION CORP. 2005-OPT2, ASSET BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-OPT2 by assignment executed August 1, 2018 and recorded on August 6, 2018, in Control No. 582153544. Said premises being known as and by 15 S Kensico Avenue, White Plains, NY 10601, bearing tax map designation Section: 126.53, Block: 4, Lot: 6, which is more fully described in the Schedule “A” attached to the Complaint. Aldridge Pite, LLP. Attorneys for the Plaintiff, 40 Marcus Drive, Suite 200, Melville, NY 11747 Our File 1221-2159B

**Classifieds**

Attorney: DIVORCE \$389 - Uncontested divorce papers prepared. Only one signature required. Poor person Application included if applicable. Separation agreements. Custody and support petitions. 518-274-0380

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**Malware , continued from pg 1-**

opened.

Browsers are software to surf the internet such as Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox and Microsoft Edge for Windows, and Apple Safari for macOS. Malware (a contraction of the phrase “malicious software”) is software that is harmful. One type of malware is a virus, self-replicating software designed to spread from computer to computer. Viruses typically infect computers through “phishing” (think of “fishing”) whereby users accept a computer prompt ostensibly from reputable sources that really is from scammers; scammers seek unauthorized access to digital devices such as a home computer, often with the aim of hijacking online banking or credit information to make purchases.

“Once you let someone with bad intentions into your machine, it’s usually downhill from there,” says Jonathan Hauff, a computer consultant based in Larchmont NY who is a former WPCUG president and current WPCUG workshop moderator. Regarding telephone calls from scammers, “these are not nice people, though they try to sound nice on the phone. It’s a con game to them. They really are heartless criminals out to take advantage of people, especially older people” who are often too trusting.

On Jan. 27, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued an alert that scams involving online social media climbed a staggering 18-fold from 2017 to 2021.

Here are a few tips to avoid the growing threats of malware and viruses:

When in doubt about a phone or computer message for a bank transaction or online purchase such as with Amazon, don’t use links or phone numbers provided. If from scammers, those connections are not legitimate. Instead, independently dial or connect to a bank/retailer website to check the real status of an account.

Beware of popups messages when browsing websites urging software updates, which are sometimes legitimate but also can be phishing disguised to download malware.

Some computer security firms say that they can remove ransomware, which may be true; but once a ransomware executes a computer takeover, just removing some of the core malware software may not unlock computers and data.

Sometimes legitimate antivirus companies blast hard-sell messages online to push consumers into buying high-price protection. WPCUG recommends simple anti-virus software from reputable companies that typically is offered in a free version to home users or upgraded “premium” version at modest cost.

In what is a rare scam from the most sophisticated hackers, computers infected by malware can be used as listening devices to literally picking up sounds keystrokes from other devices within audio range. These aim to capture passwords being typed and are referred to as an “air gap,” a reference to two computers that are not directly connected.

It’s advised to check with professionals if encountering persistent malware on personal devices, because simply making malware disappear from screens doesn’t necessary mean it’s really gone.

The bad actors are active in several areas, says George Hauss, a Yonkers resident who teaches computer classes at Westchester Community College. They “are basically trying to get information from you such as banking and other financial passwords so they can transfer money out of your accounts. Some are trying to get your personal information for marketing purposes and are more benign so you’ll just get more targeted emails, although those can drive you crazy. Others are hackers who are trying to get into your computer without your consent to extract information or install encryption programs to make the computer inaccessible, and then hold the access for ransom,” said Hauss, a WPCUG member and semi-retired chemist and computer programmer.

Hauff, when speaking to consumer groups about tech, frequently asks the audience by show of hands to see who is doing full backups frequently and also who has ever suffered important data loss. He finds the same hands go up for both questions. “Unfortunately, few people do proper backups on a regular basis unless they have experienced a major data loss themselves,” Hauff observes.

He recommends making backups of personal data as insurance in the event of data loss; this creates a copy of data as of that moment. A full backup, when installing software and external hardware storage devices, can be complicated. But just duplicating personal data is a simple with online subscription backup services and free cloud storage offered by software companies. Having a duplicate of personal photos, Word files and an address book is a blessing in the event of a data loss.

Other safety measures include:

Stay up-to-date on software updates, which will include patches to block the latest viruses.

Realize that ALL software on a home computer needs to be updated, not just the core Microsoft or Apple operating systems. For example, hackers are known to target browsers and their extensions, and specialized home management software (controlling household lights, door cameras, etc.) on smart phones.

If one does get on a phone call or computer connection that raises suspicion, immediately terminate the phone call or the online connection, which means hanging up or shutting down the computer. If challenged by a victim becoming suspicious in a phone conversation, the scammer will simply accelerate installation of malware.

It’s usually better not to respond to suspicious emails and calls (“This is Amazon notifying you that a \$990 purchase billed to your account will be shipped momentarily...”) because doing so confirms to the scammer that contact information is valid. Simply disconnect. Contact Amazon to check without using links or phone numbers provided in the alarming messages.

Don’t use short, easy-to-guess passwords for online accounts, and especially don’t employ identical passwords across multiple accounts, because these are easy to hack. Multi-word phrases that are easy-to-remember (peppered with a few obscure characters) are one way can help keep track of different passwords.

Take the time to set up two-factor authentication (2FA)—security questions—on any account that offers, because that can defeat hackers.

For more information, visit the Westchester PC Users Group (<https://www.wpcug.org/>)

Notice of formation of JGS Notary Services LLC Articles of Organization filed with the SSNY Office on 10/28/21 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 : C/O JGS Notary Services LLC , 588 Warburton Apt 2 Yonkers, NY 10701 Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of LOREDANA VICARI PHOTOGRAPHY LLC Articles of Organization filed with the SSNY Office on 10/6/21 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 : C/O LOREDANA VICARI PHOTOGRAPHY LLC , 125 Dunwoodie Street Yonkers, NY 10704 Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice is hereby given that a license , # pending has been applied for by Dazzles Restaurant & Lounge, Inc to sell liquor at retail in a restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 130 132 S. 4th Ave. Mt Vernon NY for on premises consumption.

Notice of Formation of HSKickz Company LLC. Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 12/09/2021. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 3 Bainton Street, Yonkers, New York 10704. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Formation of BARK BARK BROTHAS LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State (SSNY) on 02/09/2022. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 50 Riverdale Avenue, 2H, Yonkers, NY 10701. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

*Con Ed, continued from pg. 1-*

consider a rate hike, coming off of a three-year rate hike, during these times just proves how out of touch and insane New York State has become.”

Councilman Tom Diana said he spoke with the mayor of Buchanan this morning about the Indian Point Energy Center, the nuclear plant that state officials closed last year. “This is one of the big signs of the consequences that these past elections have had,” said Diana. “You have a 200 percent increase in your electric bills, minimum.”

Utilities have argued that normal winter demand for power and fuel, combined with supply chain disruptions, have caused the price spikes in natural gas, which is used to create most of the electricity in New York.

“They’re passing on the cost of energy to our consumers. That’s always been the answer from the utility companies,” said state Assemblyman Kevin Byrne. “When they shut down Indian Point, they said they were going to replace the power with natural gas. The price of natural gas is a very big reason why the cost of energy has gotten so high.”

The Yorktown Town Board sent letters to the Public Service Commission requesting the Special Counsel for Ratepayer Protection on an investigation into the high bills consumers are receiving. The Town Board also sent a letter opposing ConEdison’s request for an 11.2% electric rate increase as well as an 18.2% increase. The Town Board is requesting the entity that regulates New York State’s utilities hold a public hearing at Yorktown Town Hall so ratepayers in Northern Westchester can have their voices heard.

In a letter, NYS Public Service Commission Chair Rory Christian recommended that ConEd:

Mitigate the recent high customer bills by providing the full values of its hedged commodity procurements to customers in the next billing cycle.

Reassess its approach of forecasting its hedge value in billing cycle updates to reduce the likelihood of dramatic and sudden price volatility.

Improve communication to electric and gas customers to better explain forecasted commodity price changes.

On Feb. 10, State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and State Senator Shelley B. Mayer sent a joint letter on Feb. to Consolidated Edison and the Public Service Commission demanding that recent rate increases be suspended and other measures be taken to mitigate the impact of the dramatic jump seen in Con Edison ratepayers’ bills.

“We have grave concerns about the financial shock these high costs will have for our constituents and others across New York State,” said the Senators in their letter. “The rise in charges will result in serious challenges for many New Yorkers, particularly those already struggling to make ends meet.”

Recent spikes in energy prices coinciding with a planned rate increase approved by the Public Service Commission have resulted in some ratepayers’ bills more than doubling between December 2021 and January 2022. Both Senators had opposed the planned rate increase.

In the letter, which is attached to this press release, the Senators said the “situation is unacceptable” and called on the Public Service Commission and Con Edison to take immediate action to provide relief to ratepayers.

“Both the Public Service Commission and Con Edison have a responsibility to ratepayers, and such dramatic and unexpected cost increases demand action on your part in order to fulfill that responsibility,” the Senators wrote.

Congressman Jamaal Bowman stated on Feb. 11,

“Just in the last three days, I have heard from many of our neighbors who are calling and writing in about Con Ed’s outrageous price hikes that have led to New Yorkers receiving energy bills that have doubled or even tripled in price,” said Congressman Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D. (NY-16). “To drop these kinds of increases on families at any time is unacceptable, but to do so during a pandemic and in the middle of winter when families are using heaters to stay warm is unconscionable. Con Ed has made record profits while our neighbors, even before the rate increase, were forced to choose between staying warm and paying more or battling the cold to avoid a higher energy bill. While Con Ed points to a rise in fuel prices and jumps to pass this cost onto consumers, this is caused by one thing and one thing only: corporate greed that puts profits before people.”

“Calling out this blatant show of corporate greed is not enough though “I support our community in calling for an investigation into Con Ed’s decision to raise prices on our neighbors and will continue working with the Biden Administration to stop companies like Con Ed from using the increased cost of fuel to implement unfair rate increases on consumers. I am calling on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to protect consumers from high energy costs this winter, and am urging my colleagues to immediately pass my Heating and Cooling Relief Act that will provide millions of people with assistance to pay their energy bills. We also need to have a deeper conversation about access to clean, affordable energy as a human right — not an opportunity for profit — which I believe can be facilitated by public ownership of utilities. I will keep fighting for our neighbors every step of the way.

### *Stewart-Cousins, Bail Reform continued from pg. 1-*

national republicans are saying don’t look at the pandemic and the proliferation of guns. Let’s look at progressive democrats who wanted to change the criminal justice system. They want to take the focus off guns and stoke fear and create a republican backlash. And democrats in NY State and nationally are in danger of losing their majorities if we don’t respond head on to this effort.”

“They want to link the fear with democrats being in charge. Our reforms on bail was about misdemeanors and non-violent felonies. Shooting people is still aailable offense, but no matter what the crime is they blame bail reform,” said Stewart-Cousins, who contrasted two criminal cases that most New Yorkers know about. Kalief Browder and Kyle Rittenhouse.

“Kalief Browder was held in jail for three years at Rikers Island because he was accused of stealing a backpack and didn’t have money (for bail). He ultimately killed himself. We will not criminalize poverty for non-violent misdemeanor offenses. Kyle Rittenhouse shot at three people and killed two people and he was out on bail. “

“It is clear that the police are not happy, but if we can’t beat back this effort, and allow people who are accused of non-violent offenses and misdemeanors to keep their jobs and keep their homes and keep their families while they await their court date, then we won’t be able to start having other conversations, if we can’t step up now.”

“The reality is that black and brown kids have been suspended from school and put on a pipeline to prison over the years. Black people are disproportionately overcharged and oversentenced. We can’t have justice and equality without changes in the system,” said Stewart-Cousins.

“I will sit down with any clear minded person to help make things better, but I will not respond to the republican coordinated campaign that refuses to understand the impact of the pandemic and guns, and refuses to pass a voting rights act, and is taking back women’s rights. We are not the problem, they are suppressing our votes and it has to stop.”

“Do not be fooled by this coordinated republican campaign of fear. Crime is up nationally, not because of bail reform in New York. They refuse to recognize the proliferation of guns.

“You know who the vigilantes are (in the police department) now. Your mad that we did the 50a reform that put police records out there, but if they would weed out there own bad apples, i wouldn’t have to do it. But there is no willingness to do it. They don’t want to change it from inside, and they are mad when its changed from the outside,” said Stewart-Cousins.

“I don’t think there is any kind of national democratic strategy, but there are people like me who have a national voice. I will try to hammer the message. It needs to be crystalized on a grass roots level. We have to be clear that this is a national republican coordinated effort of fear, and they want to get us out of office.

“Joe Biden hasn’t been able to figure out his message. We (democrats) are all over the place. If we don’t correct this nothing else is going to happen. We are the only people who are going to destroy our ability to lead. Push back hard, because right now we could get wiped out nationally and in terms of the senate, here in New York,” said Stewart-Cousins.

## *Letters to the Editor & Email Comments*

*To: Eric Schoen and Dan Murphy, Editor*

Bravo to Eric Schoen for speaking out against the absurd, shameful attack on Yonkers Mayor Michael Spano and his statement about Rep. Bowman.. This is just a smear tactic effort by Bowman supporters to stop Spano from being a challenger for his Congressional seat. The entire premise was ridiculous: Congress members don’t get ‘arrested’ for how they vote - everyone know this. If Bowman was White NONE of this would be spewed; but because Bowman is Black the word ‘arrest’ can never be mentioned?? And Spano certainly wasn’t ‘calling for Bowman’s arrest’ like some of the biased lunatic media reported.

Furthermore, Mayor Spano has been outstanding in his advocacy, assistance and promotion of the Black community. This pitiful race-baiting hysteria is what will cause Democrats to lose seats in the next election. The public isn’t stupid: If Black leadership yells ‘racist’ every time they don’t like something, the word becomes meaningless; and in this case its truly distressing and sad.

Maria Cortez, Portchester

*To The Editor, Dan Murphy, Rising Media Group*

It is very distressing to read of Rep Bowman and Senator Stewart Cousins’ baseless attacks on Yonkers Mayor Michael Spano. If I understand them correctly, a white person referring to any black person with the word ‘arrest’ is somehow racist - are they for real? This is just a convenient deflection from Spano’s criticism of Bowman’s questionable vote on Build Back Better. Both need to apologize to Mayor Spano, who is well-known to treat everyone with respect and the utmost consideration - in Yonkers and in all his dealings.

Maria Goodwin, Yonkers

### *Make Changes to Bail Reform continued from pg. 1-*

complicated problem. There are many factors to be considered when finding a real solution to solving this dilemma. Certainly, the proliferation of guns and the pandemic are among those factors. Other factors include the recently instituted criminal justice reforms including bail reform, raise the age and changes to the discovery laws. But let’s be clear. This should not be portrayed as a partisan problem.

“In a recent interview with NYCD-16 Indivisible, NY Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins stated over and over again that any implication that criminal justice, police and bail reform has led to a rise in crime is nothing more than a “Republican nationally coordinated campaign of fear.” This statement, no matter how often repeated, is simply preposterous. The Senator ignores many facts, including that several notable Democrats are also asking for change to these reforms, specifically bail reform. This includes high profile Dems such as Rep. Tom Suozzi, a candidate for NY Governor and newly elected Mayor of New York City Eric Adams. Both are petitioning Albany for changes to these reforms.

“It is high time that our elected officials honor the rights and needs of crime victims and law-abiding citizens instead of pandering to the wants of criminals. The constant vilification of police officers, who risk their lives day in and day out while protecting all members of our society, must stop as well. If these electeds continue to be tone deaf, they may soon see themselves looking for a new job,” said Olson.

Several elected officials in Westchester have also called for bail reform. Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano said, in a recent interview on the Yonkers Voice with Ru Ros, “I’ve been saying for a while now that while I supported the concept of bail reform because the system has been unfair to black and brown people, especially with cash bail, the law was written with no input from District Attorneys, Mayor’s, law enforcement and judges.

It took a lot of judicial discretion away. You have to believe in the system and in the ability of judges to make these decisions. The average new yorker is saying what’s going on here? We need to protect the residents of our city, some of who where guns are, can’t walk out of their home when it gets dark.”

“Under the old laws, there was an ability to keep some repeat offenders in jail. Some of our leaders are saying its a republican thing. That’s insane. Eric Adams, (NYC Mayor) and the Mayors of Syracuse and Rochester, and me, are all saying that we need to take another look at these laws. We are on the front lines and we see what’s happening,” said Mayor Spano.

County Legislator James Nolan said, “I wrote a letter to the Governor and our Albany representatives to recommend that they repeal or amend to The Cashless Bail Reform, The Raise The Age Law and other criminal justice laws. The revolving door of crime needs to come to an end and it must come now. Innocent people are becoming victimized more and more. I will not stand by and allow the constituents I represent of District 15, Westchester County, and New York State live in fear.

This past week, I discussed the laws with my fellow Westchester County Board of Legislators members. My brother was murdered by someone that shouldn’t have been released, I have attended funerals for people I have never met to support the families because I know the pain, and the District I represent have spoken which I have no problem to speak up for them. Westchester County and New York State residents deserves to live in a safer community.

I have spoke to many local officials and these repeals and changes are recommended to reduce crime and protect the innocent in our community. Repeal or amend The Cashless Bail Reform to allow the Judges to have discretion if they should release an individual or hold them especially for violent offenders. Repeal or amend The Raise The Age Law so that only the Judges can see the arrest history of the minor so that they can properly hand down a sentence. Fix the family court so that they can sentence the minor correctly,” said Nolan.

Yonkers City Councilman Mike Breen said, “These violent crimes committed with illegal guns have been occurring on a regular basis and the NYS legislators who refuse to change our laws to protect the law abiding are to blame. Day after day we are under attack by those that have no fear of punishment. The NYS legislature must act NOW before more innocent lives are lost.”

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Notice of formation of a Limited Liability Company Love Jones 360 Experience LLC Articles of Organization filed with the SSNY Office on 9/23/21 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 : C/O Love Jones 360 Experience LLC , 41 Ridgeview Terrace Elmsford, NY 10523 Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

## Richard Gere Loves Westchester!

## HBO's The Gilded Age Films in Westchester



Above: Richard Gere's Pound Ridge Home for sale at \$28 Million  
Below: Gere's new home in North Salem that he bought for \$9.9 M



Filming of HBO's The Gilded Age at Glenview Mansion at the Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, above, and at Lyndhurst in Tarrytown, below



If you are looking for another TV series to watch with your partner every week, HBO's *The Gilded Age* is definitely worth a try. *Downton Abbey* creator Julian Fellowes has brought the concept of the wealthy and their servants and staff, from England to New York City. Set in 1882, the 10 episode mini-series used several historic filming locations from Westchester County as backdrops for a recreation of late 19th Century New York City.

Filming for "The Gilded Age" took place over several months in late 2020 and early 2021. Scenes were filmed on dirt roads and in historic cabins at the Edith Macy Conference Center in Briarcliff Manor, Glenview at Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, Sleepy Hollow Country Club, and inside the mansion and on the grounds at Lyndhurst and Belvedere Estate in Tarrytown.

The new show is set in the rapidly changing world of 1880s New York, during a time of unprecedented industrial growth in America. The story follows the millionaire titans at the upper echelons of New York society engaged in a battle between the nouveau riche and old money. It's the latest creation from Julian Fellowes, the writer and producer best known for "Downton Abbey," and a showcase for glamorous costumes and beautiful backdrops — many of right here in Westchester.

County Executive George Latimer said: "It's no surprise that producers of "The Gilded Age" chose to film in Westchester. We have fantastic locations — including several historically significant sites — and a huge diversity of spaces that can be used creatively to accommodate everything a production needs."

The story starts with a young Marian Brook, played by Louisa Jacobson, who moves after the death of her father from rural Pennsylvania to live with her rich aunts, Agnes van Rhijn and Ada Brook, acted by Christine Baranski and Cynthia Nixon, respectively. The plot follows Marion as she becomes enmeshed in a social war between one of her aunts, a scion of the old money set, and her rich neighbors, a ruthless railroad tycoon and his wife.

Seeking a variety of looks that would recreate 1880s New York, producers scouted Westchester County, where wealthy New Yorkers actually escaped city life during the Gilded Age, according to David Crockett, executive producer. "We were committed to an authentic feel and wanted the show to be a New York show, an American show. And Westchester came through for us. We created Manhattan locations of the era including a grand mansion and hotel exteriors, the interior of coffee and cake saloon, a downtown printing press, tavern, and the exterior of a ferry terminal. Westchester offered unbelievable assets and we will be back."

Filming during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic presented production challenges that were eased by filming in Westchester, according to Lauri Pitkus, location scout. "On any given day our production involved 150 to 300 people. So, we were not only looking for historic looks but larger properties where we could park our trucks, construct tents for cast and crew operations, and have park-like grounds where we could operate like a campus. Westchester offered flexibility in that we could stay for multiple days, find as many creative looks as possible in one place, and observe COVID protocols."

Lyndhurst, for example, is one of the places open to the public that people can visit after seeing the show. "The period of the Gilded Age is a major part of Lyndhurst's history and we worked closely with the production team to bring this to life," said Howard Zar, executive director. "Our staff has a long history of helping our film industry collaborators achieve their objectives and succeed. Working with the Gilded Age and other marquee productions over the years has been a positive experience for us. It allows Lyndhurst to reach new audiences in a completely different way."

Latimer added: "Productions like *The Gilded Age* showcase the amazing assets Westchester has to offer to film and television productions. They also shine a light on the importance of the film industry, which generates \$45.7 million in economic impact in Westchester."

Four episodes of *The Gilded Age* are On Demand, so if you liked *Downton Abbey*, or are interested in the history of New York City, give it a try.

One of Westchester County's most famous residents is selling his Pound Ridge mansion but only moving down the road to North Salem. Hollywood actor Richard Gere, 72, has listed his Pound Ridge estate for \$28 Million. The home is listed with Muffin Dowdle of Ginnel Real Estate, and features 11,658 square feet, 8 bedrooms, 9 baths and several smaller houses that Gere acquired as he bought neighboring properties to accumulate 49 acres. The property taxes on the property are \$220,000 and adjoins 4,300 acres of protected land.

The North Salem property, purchased for just under \$10 Million, is a downsizing move for the couple. But the Gere's enjoy their privacy and immediately purchased adjacent property for \$700,000 to expand their red-brick, seven-bedroom, nine-bathroom home to have 35-acres surrounding it. The home was built in the 1930's for a member of the Woolworth family.

Gere, best known for starring in "An Officer and a Gentleman," and "Pretty Woman," bought the new home with his wife, Alejandra Silva, 38, who he married in 2018. The couple both have a son from a previous marriage and have two young children together. Gere lived in Pound Ridge for 20 years with his second wife Carey Lowell.

Gere uses a Trust company to conceal his name in the purchase and sale documents, but several real estate websites, including dirt.com, sift through all Westchester million dollar real estate transactions. Both properties have what attracts many of the rich and famous to Westchester, privacy, and neighbors who won't bother you.

Jennifer Gates was married last year at her North Salem horse farm. Georgina Bloomberg also owns a horse farm near the Gere's new home.

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