

Pope Foundation- The Largest Charities Fraud Judgement in NY History



David Pope, left, Betrayed His Own Family Foundation for \$82 Million; Jude Wood Adds \$52 Million in Punative Damages, \$138 Million total Judgement Against David Pope

By Dan Murphy

For those of us who have lived in Westchester for decades, the Generoso Pope Foundation has been an important part of the charitable giving to many worthy local organizations.

On January 20, State Supreme Court Judge Charlie Wood issued a judgment and order in favor of the Gen-

eroso Pope Foundation for \$138 Million against David Pope, a family member and President and CEO of the Pope Foundation, during a period of time when the foundation misused millions, lost \$16 Million, and generously paid David Pope

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Harckham and Hochul Disagree on the Energy Future of New York State



Governor Kathy Hochul has called for additional nuclear power, including nuclear power plants upstate, as a way to help bring Westchester's energy bills down. But Westchester State Senator Pete Harckham has called for Solar power and more Solar Power as the way to New York's energy future needs.

Harckham and Environmental and Labor Advocates recently called for passage of ASAP Act and a Solar Powered NY. New York State Senator Pete Harck-

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Black American Fashion Changed the World Without Permission



Clockwise from top left: Dr. Infinite "Dr. Finny" Henry, Christian Simpson, Cardier Underwood, and Dr. Kierra Oliver

By: Dennis Richmond, Jr.

Black American fashion has never just been about clothes—it has always been about identity, resistance, creativity, and power. From the tailored suits of the Harlem Renaissance to today's streetwear and

luxury brands, this Black History Month reminds us how Black style has consistently shaped what the world sees as "cool," even when Black creators were not always given credit. Dr. Infinite "Dr. Finny" Henry, a 27-year-old Yonkers

continued on pg 9-

While Lawler Raises \$5 Million, Conley Claims "Far Left Lies" In Davidson Attack Memo



Cait Conley



Beth Davidson

By Dan Murphy

Democratic insiders we spoke to say the race for Congress in NY-17, which includes northern Westchester County and Putnam County, has been narrowed down to Cait Conley and Beth Davidson, with a 3rd candidate, Peter Chatzky, deemed a dark horse possibility only because of his vow to spend \$5 Million of his own money to win the democratic primary set for June.

Waiting in the wings is Congressman Mike Lawler, who recently announced he raised \$5.2 million for his reelection.

Cait Conley is a West Point graduate and Army Veteran who served as the Director of Counterterrorism on the National Security Council and at the Cyberse-

continued on pg 10-

Mount Vernon Man Gets 13 Years For Sex Trafficking A Minor



DOJ Photo of Rai Thomas, left

Rai Thomas Sold a Female Minor Victim for Sex at Hotels in the Bronx and Brooklyn

United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Jay Clayton, announced that RAI THOMAS, a/k/a "Bandz," was sentenced today to 160 months in prison for sex trafficking of a minor and use of interstate facilities to promote sex trafficking and prostitution. In October 2025, THOMAS was convicted at trial before U.S. District Judge Nelson S. Román, who imposed today's sentence.

"Rai Thomas preyed on a child for profit, advertising her to strangers on the internet and selling her for sex

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Artificial Intelligence: Promise, Peril, and the Path Forward



L-R-Elaine Chapnick, Lee Huang, Gloria Golle, Dave Ingram Larchmont-Mamaroneck Local Summit – February 10

By Randal Ikeda

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming how we live and work. From drafting emails and generating images to assisting with retirement planning, AI tools are becoming part of everyday life. But as their capabilities expand, so do concerns about ethics, risk, and societal impact. At the Larchmont/Mamaroneck

continued on pg 8--

Westchester Missing Child Rescue Operation Successfully Locates 43 Children and Teens

Our Readers Have Questions and Want to Know More



43 MISSING CHILDREN AND TEENS LOCATED THROUGH WESTCHESTER MISSING CHILD RESCUE OPERATION

More than 70 local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations and private partners leverage their resources and provide critical investigative support to police departments in Westchester County

The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) announced that 43 children and teens reported missing to police in Westchester County have been located through the Westchester Missing Child Rescue Operation. The operation, coordinated by the DCJS Missing Persons Clearinghouse in partnership with the state Office of Children and Family Services, and the National Child Protection Task Force, leveraged the experience, expertise and resources of more than 70 local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private partners to provide critical investigative support to local police departments.

The three-day operation, which concluded Thursday, convened public, nonprofit and private partners with one goal: to explore new leads, review case notes and leverage technology to find children who are at risk of endangerment, exploitation and harm. The 43 children and teens ranged in age from 8 to 17 years old when they were reported missing.

The Office of Children and Family Services coordinated with nonprofit organizations and victim assistance programs throughout the Downstate Region to assist the investigations and provide services and support for children who were recovered, with the goal of addressing their needs and preventing future missing episodes.

A total of 10,629 children younger than 18 were reported missing to police across the state in 2025, with 94 percent of them reported as runaways. Last year, police closed 10,672 cases involving children reported missing in 2025 or years prior. At the end of 2025, there were 1,079 active missing children cases statewide.

Westchester County District Attorney Susan Cacace said, "As chief law enforcement officer in Westchester County, the plight of missing and exploited children has always been a top priority for me. Efforts like this week's operation help bring theoretical leads into the realm of the practical, giving our investigative partners the resources and expertise needed to solve their most challenging cases. Thanks to these collaborations, we are able to work together to more effectively protect children from harm and reunite them with their families and loved ones. I'm so proud of the work we are doing with our local and state government partners to keep children safe and look forward to working with them on future operations."

City of Mount Vernon Police Chief Marcel Olifiers said, "We were proud to take part in this operation and to help locate missing children from our community. This effort shows the real impact of agencies working together

continued on pg 8-

SafeWise Names Yorktown One of the Safest NY communities for 2026



In a year where safety concerns are mounting across the Empire State, Yorktown has once again distinguished itself as a sanctuary of security.

According to SafeWise's 12th annual Safest Cities in New York report, Yorktown has been named the #8 safest community in the state for 2026. This recognition comes at a critical time for New York, as the latest data reveals a challenging landscape for public safety statewide.

While statewide numbers are trending upward, Yorktown's local statistics tell a story of steady improvement and rigorous vigilance. With a population of 34,899, Yorktown has maintained crime rates that are a fraction of the state and national averages.

Yorktown has a violent crime rate of 0.3 and a property crime rate of 6.4 per 1,000 people. State and national figures are much higher, according to the findings:

Violent Crime: The violent crime rate in New York has climbed to 5.73 incidents per 1,000 people, significantly higher than the national average of 4.43.

Property Crime: The Empire State also saw a surge in property crime, jumping from 14.1 incidents per 1,000 people in 2022 to 23.72 this year—surpassing the national rate of 22.89.

"This ranking is a direct reflection of the professionalism and dedication of the men and women of the Yorktown Police Department," said Police Chief Robert Noble. "Our officers hold themselves to the highest standards, and their proactive approach to keeping our streets safe is why Yorktown remains a premier place to live and work. It also demonstrates the strong partnership between our agency and the Yorktown community that we serve."

Notably, Yorktown's property crime rate has seen a steady decline over the last three reports, falling from 7.5 in 2024 to 6.4 in the current 2026 report.

"I want to congratulate our police department for their excellent work and for consistently putting the safety of our residents first," said Supervisor Ed Lachterman. "Being named one of the top ten safest communities in New York doesn't happen by accident; it's the result of a police force that is deeply integrated into our town and a community that supports them."

A Note From Eric Schoen:

Note: We were slow to get Eric's thoughts up, our apologies but wanted to let all of his readers know he is still fighting

I hope this finds you're in better shape than I am and getting ready for Valentine's Day, I hope you're eating healthy and not over sugarizing yourself.

I wish I were in better shape, I'm praying I get better soon. It's hard to believe I'm still in the hospital and hard to believe you're following me on the internet.

I have some wonderful friends helping me through this process and before I forget I want to wish you and your loved ones a happy Valentine's Day

So what are you doing for Valentine's Day my friends? It's so nice to have a Valentine's Day pizza and I hope you have the opportunity to have one. I wish I could have a pizza with you

I hope the snow washes away and the weather is nice by you and your pizza is as good as the ones are in Yonkers

I'm glad I'm able to talk to you and its good you're able to hear me.

Be Happy!

Eric

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Regional Impacts of the July 2026 Essential Plan Cliff
46,000 Hudson Valley Resident Will Lose Health Insurance
in Four Months Unless Hochul Takes Action

LM Lions Celebrate Service & Centennial
Present Community Service Recognitions

Region	EP 200-250 Enrollment	Total EP Enrollment	Population	Share of Set to Lo
New York City	233,477	1,028,412	8,478,072	2.8%
Long Island	69,748	231,297	2,928,347	2.4%
Mohawk Valley	10,490	26,542	480,328	2.2%
Finger Lakes	26,247	66,825	1,211,447	2.2%
Central New York	15,605	39,828	775,701	2.0%
Southern Tier	12,443	32,174	629,791	2.0%
Hudson Valley	46,736	146,473	2,428,157	1.9%
North Country	7,851	19,571	412,691	1.9%
Capital District	21,005	56,021	1,115,663	1.9%
Western New York	26,341	73,613	1,407,051	1.9%
Total	469,943	1,720,756	19,867,248	2.4%



From the Fiscal Policy Institute,

New York State can and must step in to offer alternative coverage. FPI has estimated that it would cost the state less than \$1 billion in FY27 to prevent coverage loss for this population.

This July, 470,000 of the 1.7 million New Yorkers currently enrolled in the Essential Plan (EP) will lose their current health insurance.

Hundreds of thousands will become uninsured. As we wrote last week, the State can and should step in to prevent this healthcare catastrophe—but Governor Hochul’s Executive Budget proposal fails to address this.

Unless the legislature takes action, New York will see the most rapid loss of healthcare coverage in its history.

In this post, we break down the potential impact by county and region. We find that, while New York City will see the largest coverage loss—with 233,000 residents impacted—every part of the state will see a dramatic loss of insurance. Long Island, for example, will see nearly 70,000 people lose coverage, including 38,000 in Suffolk County alone. Western New York will see 26,000 lose coverage.

Statewide, 2.4 percent of New Yorkers will lose their health insurance coverage—likely the largest and most rapid loss of insurance in the State’s history. Medicaid work requirements beginning in January 2027 will further decimate New York insurance rolls.

<https://fiscalpolicy.org/regional-impacts-of-the-july-2026-essential-plan-cliff>

Coughlin Awardees & Presenters: LM Lion Nancy Borzain, LFoF Ann DuMoulin, LM Lion & GS Leader Pat Allen, LM Lion Prez Lina Pasquale

The Larchmont Mamaroneck Lions kicked off their celebration of the Larchmont Lions 100th anniversary year and recognized and honored over 50 community service groups at their January 11th Points of Light Celebration of Service at the Orienta Beach Club in Mamaroneck.

Past International Lions President Douglas Alexander was the keynote speaker. The centerpiece was the presenting of the Lions Jack Coughlin Community Service Awards to Pat Allen – Girl Scouts leader and Larchmont Friends of the Family. This award, named in memory of long time Lion and founder of Coughlin Insurance, Jack Coughlin, recognizes a group and an individual for outstanding and dedicated service to the Larchmont Mamaroneck community.

The event also featured the induction of 3 new members

The Points of Light celebration of community service is the primary fundraiser for the LM Lions Foundation – the 501c3 financial resource at the center LM Lions support of many of these service groups. Of importance is that the Foundation grows donated funds as seed money to attract matching grants and other partnerships to deliver more support for local and Lions service. All donations are 100% tax deductible.

The LM Lions would like to thank Roaring Sponsors Pat Allen & Nancy Joselson, Visionary Sponsors The Coughlin Group & Orange Bank and all the other sponsors and donors for their support.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TOWN OF EASTCHESTER ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town of Eastchester will hold a public hearing on: Tuesday March 10, 2026 at 7:00PM

At the Town of Eastchester Town Hall, 40 Mill Road, Eastchester, NY , in the Court Room / Auditorium on the application of: Giacomo Borgognone for Variance related to:

Impervious surface coverage and rear yard setback. The existing raised rear patio exceeds the maximum allowed impervious coverage (62.15% vs. 50%) and encroaches into the required rear yard.

Affecting the premises identified as the following Section(s), Blocks(s) and Lot(s) on the Tax Map of the Town of Eastchester.

Section 56: Block 5: Lot 28

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Blakeman Accepts Republican Nomination for Governor, Pledges to End Hochul's Tax Hikes, Restore Affordability



Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, left, accepted the Republican nomination for Governor of New York, delivering a sweeping indictment of Kathy Hochul's record and pledging to fix Hochul's affordability and public safety crisis.

"I am honored to receive this nomination to be your next Governor of the great State of New York," Blakeman said. "Millions of New Yorkers rejected Kathy Hochul four years ago, and after four more years of soaring taxes, rising crime, and reckless spending, families simply cannot afford her failed leadership any longer."

Blakeman cited more than \$8 billion in tax hikes under Hochul, which has given New York the highest tax burden in the nation. He pointed to electric bills that are approximately 50 percent higher than the national average, as a result of the Hochul Administration's 36 utility rate hikes, blocked energy infrastructure projects, and costly green energy mandates that have left nearly 70 percent of some utility bills going toward fees, delivery charges, and state-imposed costs.

He also sharply criticized congestion pricing, which charges drivers up to \$27 to enter Manhattan. "In Hochul's New York, you now pay a tax just to drive on a public road you already paid for," Blakeman said. "And if she gets four more years, congestion pricing won't stop in Manhattan — it will expand."

Blakeman emphasized that while middle-class families, seniors, and small businesses struggle with rising costs, Hochul has prioritized billions in spending on hotel rooms, prepaid debit cards, and benefits for illegal migrants. "That is not right," Blakeman said. "What Kathy Hochul spends on waste, Medicaid fraud, and benefits for illegal migrants who've been here for fifteen minutes, I will redirect to better schools, roads, hospitals, infrastructure, and meaningful tax relief for the people who built this state."

On public safety, Blakeman slammed Hochul for siding with criminals over law-abiding citizens by signing laws that release dangerous inmates, erasing criminal records, weakening parole standards, refusing to repeal cashless bail, and failing to fix the "Raise the Age" law as youth crime rises. "Kathy Hochul has turned her back on the rule of law," Blakeman said. "As Governor, I will stand with our police, not against them. I will fight to keep violent criminals and cop-killers behind bars, because the safety of our children and neighborhoods demands it."

Blakeman contrasted Hochul's record with his own as Nassau County Executive, where he stopped a \$150 million tax hike, has not raised taxes, secured seven bond upgrades, and worked with law enforcement to make Nassau County the safest county in America. He hired more than 600 police and corrections officers and invested heavily in public safety. "Imagine bringing that level of fiscal discipline and commitment to safety to the entire state," Blakeman said.

Blakeman also pledged to cut middle-class income taxes, roll back Albany's "hidden taxes and mandates" driving up energy costs, defend Second Amendment rights, and protect girls' sports by ensuring biological males cannot compete against female athletes.

Blakeman emphasized that service is personal to him. The son of two World War II veterans — his mother served in the U.S. Army and his father in the Merchant Marines — Blakeman has long advocated for veterans. As County Executive, he partnered with Tunnel to Towers to expand housing for homeless veterans. "No one who fought for America should ever be without a home," Blakeman said.

Blakeman also reflected on his time as a Port Authority Commissioner during the September 11th attacks, when his nephew, Court Officer Tommy Jergens, was killed in the line of duty. "I've seen what happens when government fails, and I've seen what leadership matters," he said. "Now my grandchildren are growing up here. This is their home. I refuse to accept that New York's best days are behind us."

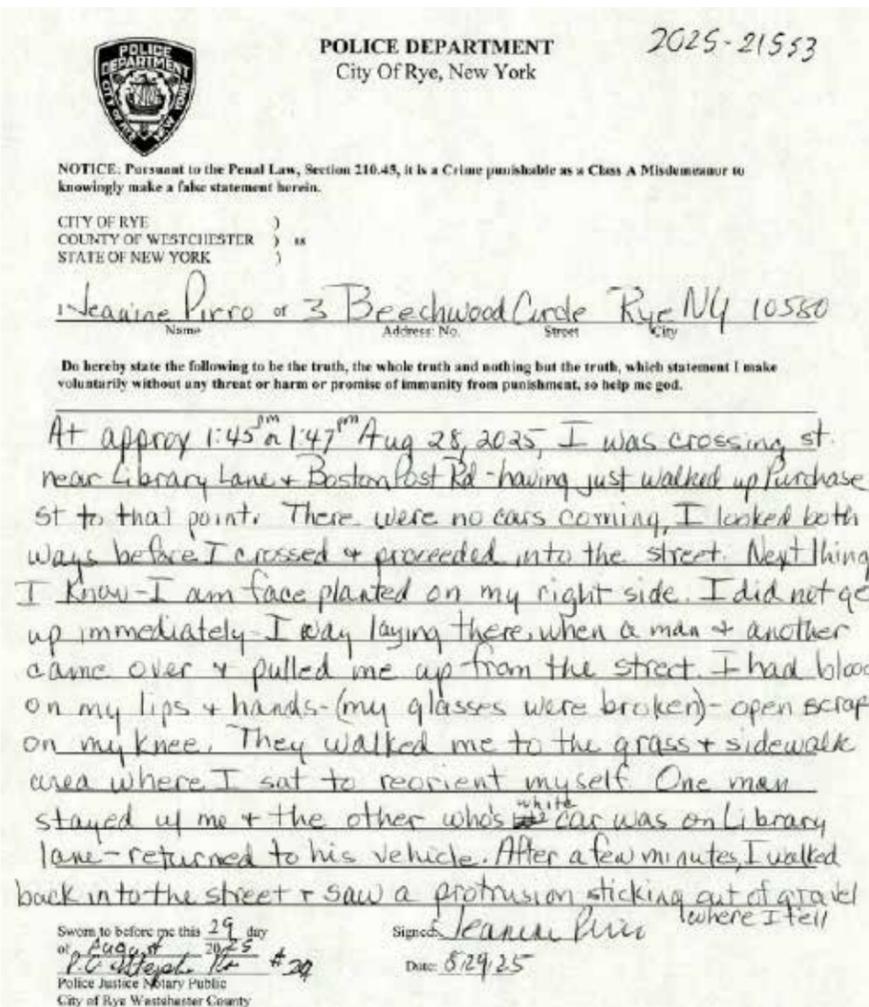
Blakeman recognized his running mates, Joseph Hernandez for State Comptroller, Saritha Komatireddy for Attorney General, and Todd Hood for Lieutenant Governor. He praised Hernandez's business background and personal story as a Cuban immigrant, Komatireddy's experience as a federal prosecutor and national security leader, and Hood's 22-year career in law enforcement and leadership within the New York State Sheriffs' Association.

"Together, we will bring fiscal responsibility, accountability, and public safety back to New York," Blakeman said.

Blakeman concluded by pledging to serve as "a governor for all people — regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, abilities, or lifestyle" and vowed to restore opportunity, affordability, and pride in the Empire State.

"We can fix this crisis. We can make New York affordable again. And we can make it safe again," Blakeman said. "But it will take leadership that puts New Yorkers first. That's the choice this November."

Al and Jeanine Pirro Want \$250K From Rye & Con Ed For Slip and Fall by Outside Crosswalk



Jeanine Pirro, the prominent former Fox News host, former judge, and current U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, has filed a \$250,000 negligence lawsuit against the City of Rye, New York—her hometown—and utility giant Consolidated Edison (Con Edison) following a slip-and-fall incident in August 2025. The accident occurred on August 28, shortly after Pirro's confirmation as the Trump administration's top federal prosecutor for D.C. While walking in downtown Rye near the intersection of Purchase Street and Library Lane (or along Boston Post Road near Rye City Hall, per some accounts), the 74-year-old alleges she tripped over a large wooden block protruding from beneath a steel plate in the roadway. This plate reportedly covered an excavation tied to Con Edison's gas-main work in the area. She was reportedly confined to bed for a period, required medical treatment, and continues to suffer pain, discomfort, and limited mobility. The lawsuit accuses both the City of Rye and Con Edison of recklessness in maintaining safe conditions, particularly given the construction site's proximity to pedestrian areas. Pirro seeks at least \$250,000 in damages, plus court costs, arguing the obstruction created an avoidable danger. Defendants have pushed back in court filings. An attorney for Rye argued the city bears no negligence since the spot "was not a pedestrian walkway." Con Edison's counsel contended the risks were "open, obvious and apparent," implying Pirro should have noticed them.

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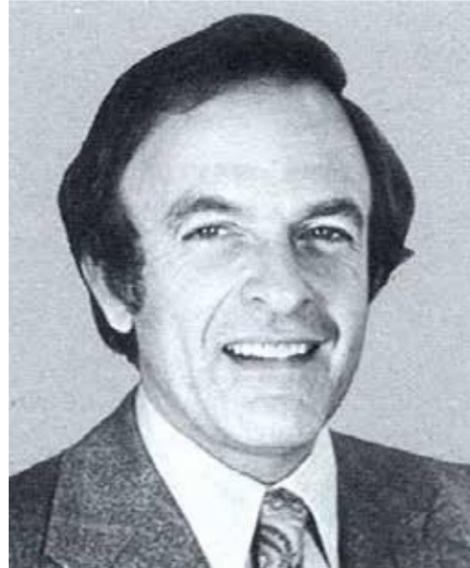
Back Row (L to R) - Angel De La Cruz, Alejandro Giraldro, & Grady McGee
Front Row (L to R) - Richie DeMarco, Elias Murray, & Julani Graham

Archbishop Stepinac High School proudly celebrated our 2026 uniball National Signing Day, honoring members of the Class of 2026 who have officially committed to continue their academic and athletic careers at the collegiate level.

Surrounded by family, friends and alumni, these student-athletes were recognized for their hard work, dedication, and achievements both in the classroom and on the field.

Congratulations to our signees who will compete at the Division I, II, and III levels across the country. Once a Crusader, always a Crusader!

Remembering Westchester's First Green Advocate: Congressman Dick Ottinger



Richard Ottinger, left

"We place him alongside Ogden Reid and Nita Lowey as the very best Westchester has sent to DC to represent us. He was a giant in Westchester's political history."

Congressman George Latimer

Richard Lawrence Ottinger, a distinguished American politician, lawyer, and legal educator, passed away on February 16, 2026, at his home in Mamaroneck, New York, at the age of 97. Ottinger dedicated his life to public service, leaving an indelible mark through his extensive career in the U.S. House of Representatives and his pioneering work in environmental law. His commitment to progressive causes and environmental protection shaped significant legislation and inspired future generations.

Born in New York City on January 27, 1929, Ottinger was the son of Lawrence Ottinger, founder of U.S. Plywood, and nephew of former New York Attorney General Albert Ottinger. He pursued a robust education, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree from Cornell University in 1950 and an LLB from Harvard Law School in 1953. Following his legal studies, he served his country as a Captain in the United States Air Force from 1955 to 1957, an experience that further solidified his dedication to public duty.

Ottinger's career in public service began notably as a co-founder and the second staff member of the Peace Corps, where he directed programs for the west coast of South America from 1961 to 1964. This international experience laid the groundwork for his entry into electoral politics. He was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1964, serving three terms from 1965 to 1971. After a brief hiatus, he returned to Congress in 1974, serving five additional terms until his retirement in 1985. During his time in Congress, he became a prominent voice for environmental issues, notably founding the bipartisan Environmental Study Conference in 1975.

Upon retiring from Congress, Ottinger transitioned to a distinguished academic career at the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. He founded an influential environmental law program there and served as the law school's dean from 1994 to 1999. His leadership helped establish Pace as a leading institution in environmental legal studies. In recognition of his lifelong contributions, he received the American Bar Association's Award for Distinguished Achievement in Environmental Law and Policy in 2017.

Richard Ottinger will be remembered as a tireless advocate for the environment and a dedicated public servant whose vision and efforts profoundly impacted American policy and legal education. His legacy of environmental stewardship and commitment to justice continues to resonate. End of Obituary.

In the 1970 elections, Ottinger gave up his House seat to run for US Senate from New York. In a three-way race, Ottinger split the liberal vote with the Republican incumbent Senator Charles Goodell. Yes in those days, there were indeed Liberal Republicans. The Conservative candidate in the race, James Buckley beat both.

Congressman George Latimer said, "The passing of Richard "Dick" Ottinger is yet another loss of a giant in Westchester's political history. He was a substantial member of Congress – eight terms, a leader in environmental causes – a brilliant educator in the law – and a role model for all who followed him. We mourn his loss, and place him alongside Ogden Reid and Nita Lowey as the very best Westchester has sent to DC to represent us. We grieve with his family and friends."

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Thousands Attend EagleFest 2026 at Croton Point Park



Teatown Lake Reservation welcomed thousands of visitors to Croton Point Park on Saturday, February 14 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the 22nd Annual Hudson River EagleFest® 2026. The event celebrates the majesty of Bald Eagles during their annual winter migration along the Lower Hudson Valley with live bird-of-prey shows, educational exhibitions, crafts and games, food trucks, music and more family-friendly programming. “EagleFest is one of Westchester’s great winter traditions. For over two decades, EagleFest has brought families together to celebrate the incredible environmental comeback story of the bald eagle in the Hudson Valley. Seeing thousands of people gather at Croton Point Park to learn about conservation and appreciate the natural beauty around us speaks to the strong environmental values that define Westchester,” said Westchester County Executive Ken Jenkins.

Groundwork Hudson Valley Welcomes New Executive Director Karin Sosis



After an extensive and highly competitive search, the Board of Directors of Groundwork Hudson Valley announced that Karin Sosis, left, has been appointed Executive Director, with her tenure beginning February 2nd. Karin brings a global perspective to the environmental justice work that has defined Groundwork for the past 25 years.

After earning her bachelor’s degree from Duke University, Karin began her career in finance and book publishing in New York City. During that time, she developed a deep concern about environmental degradation and climate change. Motivated to align her work with her values, she pursued a master’s degree in Environment and Development at the London School of Economics – at a moment of rising global urgency following

Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth* and Lord Nicholas Stern’s landmark review on the economics of climate change. Karin went on to spend 15 years in Africa working as a technical advisor and project manager focused on renewable energy, energy efficiency, climate change adaptation, energy access and financing, regenerative agriculture, green infrastructure, and environmental justice.

“Karin brings a unique set of skills to a unique organization,” said Board Co-Chair Natasha Fapohunda. “Her international experience aligns seamlessly with Groundwork’s long-term commitment to improving climate resilience, enhancing quality of life, and expanding economic opportunity in partnership with local stakeholders at the forefront of climate and equity challenges. Her dedication to strengthening communities and shaping bold solutions makes her exceptionally well prepared to lead this organization.”

Originally from New Rochelle, Karin has lived in London, Liberia, Zambia, and Kenya. She returned to the United States with her family in July 2025 and shared that she is “delighted to join Groundwork at a time when climate action is more important than ever.” She looks forward to leading Groundwork’s seasoned team and collaborating with its partners, counterparts, and supporters to build more vibrant, resilient communities throughout the region. Visit groundworkhv.org to learn more.

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Guest Speaker:
DAMON K. JONES
NY Representative of Blacks in Law Enforcement of America

HOW TO SURVIVE POLICE CONFRONTATION

Topics Include:

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- Staying safe during police encounters
- Practical guidance for individuals, families, and communities
- Accountability, awareness, and self preservation

The Youth Council has prepared a spoken word piece in celebration of Black History Month

<p>IN PERSON: SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE CENTER FOR THE DREAN RIVER AT BECZAK 35 Alexander Street, Yonkers, NY 10701 Phone: 914-294-4913</p>	<p>ATTEND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM Meeting ID: 881 1279 6070 Passcode: NAACP Contact Us: YonkersNAACP@gmail.com</p>
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WCA to Host Educational Webinar on Early Intervention in Westchester County-Feb. 26

Sex Trafficking a Minor, continued from pg 1-



Marina Yoegel

Valley Bank–sponsored webinar will highlight challenges and advocacy needs for New York State’s Early Intervention Program

Westchester Children’s Association (WCA) will host the first event in its Educational Webinar Series on Thursday, February 26, 2026, from 12:00–1:00 PM, focusing on New York State’s Early Intervention Program (EIP), a critical program supporting infants and toddlers ages 0–3 with developmental delays and disabilities. The webinar, which is free and open to the public, is sponsored by Valley Bank.

Titled, Early Intervention in Westchester: Understanding the NYS EIP, the webinar will be presented via Zoom. The session’s featured speaker is Marina Yoegel, Assistant Commissioner for Children with Special Needs at the Westchester County Department of Health. Registration is required and can be completed at this link https://secure.everyaction.com/-AYfy_R7kE-3EOENkwCewg2

The Early Intervention Program plays a vital role in identifying and addressing developmental delays during a child’s earliest years. This webinar will explore how EIP operates in Westchester County, the current challenges placing stress on the program, and the advocacy needed to strengthen and sustain these essential services for children and families.

WCA’s Educational Webinar Series brings together experts, advocates, and community members to raise awareness of issues impacting children and young people ages 0–25 across Westchester County.

About Westchester Children’s Association: Westchester Children’s Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of Westchester’s young people by shaping policies and programs to meet their needs, and by keeping the county’s decision-makers and the public informed about the issues affecting youth.

Missing Kids Found, continued from pg 3-

to protect young people and support families.”

Town of Mt. Pleasant Police Chief Paul Oliva said, “I am proud of the work that the team is doing to conduct such organized and focused work to find these at-risk youth.”

Yonkers Police Commissioner Christopher Sapienza said, “The Yonkers Police Department is honored to have been part of this operation, which proved the power of concentrated, coordinated law enforcement efforts. By bringing together local, state, and federal partners with a singular focus, we were able to locate vulnerable children and teens who may have been at serious risk. This outcome underscores why missing-person investigations must remain a top priority. When agencies work side by side with purpose, lives are protected.”

914Cares CEO Lisa Horten said, “914Cares is honored to play a small role in supporting this incredible operation by providing basic essentials for the children who are being found this week. The work that National Child Protection Task Force does with their Missing Child Rescue Operations truly showcases the power of collaboration at its best.”

Note: After posting this story at Yonkerstimes.com, our readers had several questions. Some asked “Where were these missing kids found? Will anyone be arrested? And this is good news, but more details needed for this story.

again and again so he could enrich himself,” said U.S. Attorney Jay Clayton. “New Yorkers want child sex traffickers off our streets, never to return. Today’s lengthy prison sentence is indicative of this Office’s commitment to continuing to work tirelessly with our law enforcement partners to remove sex traffickers like Thomas from our streets and communities.”

According to the allegations in the Indictment and the evidence at trial:

Between January and February 2022, THOMAS trafficked Minor Victim-1 to engage in commercial sexual activity across multiple hotels within the Bronx and Brooklyn, New York. Minor Victim-1 had been living in a children’s group home at the time that THOMAS trafficked her. THOMAS facilitated and benefited from the scheme in numerous ways, including by enticing Minor Victim-1 to engage in commercial sex; coordinating the transportation of Minor Victim-1 to hotels; reserving the hotel rooms in which she engaged in commercial sex; facilitating the advertisement of Minor Victim-1 on the internet to customers for commercial sex; and profiting from the sex trafficking scheme.

In addition to the prison term, THOMAS, 31, of Mount Vernon, New York, was sentenced to five years of supervised release.

Mr. Clayton praised the outstanding investigative work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Hudson Valley Safe Streets Task Force, the Town of Poughkeepsie Police Department, the Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office, the City of Poughkeepsie Police Department, and the New York City Police Department.

The case is being handled by the Office’s White Plains Division. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Qais Ghafary, Kaiya Arroyo, and Jorja Knauer represented the Government at trial, with the assistance of Paralegal Specialists Gabriela Salerno, Samantha Olsen, and Shannon Becker.

AI Summit, continued from pg 1-

Local Summit on February 10, Lee Huang, an AI coach, and Dave Ingram, retired risk management consultant and Managing Editor of the Society of Actuaries’ AI Bulletin, explored both the promise and the pitfalls of this powerful technology.

Their shared message: AI is a remarkable tool—but it requires thoughtful use.

AI as an Everyday Resource

Lee Huang began by making AI approachable. While often associated with big tech, today’s AI tools require no coding skills. “You just need to know how to ask good questions,” he explained.

AI can help plan travel, summarize complex topics, identify plants and animals from photos, compare products, and assist with financial planning. It can generate presentations, refine communications by adjusting tone, and even help users write creative works—such as a sequel to a favorite novel. Used well, AI can save time, reduce costs, and open new possibilities.

However, Lee cautioned that AI is not a substitute for professional advice. “All AI makes mistakes.” It can inform decisions, but it should not replace lawyers, doctors, or financial advisors in high-stakes matters.

Understanding the Risks

Dave Ingram highlighted a critical distinction: AI sounds human, but it does not think or understand truth. Large language models are trained to generate sentences based on patterns in data—not to determine what is true or false. “AI does not know when it is making mistakes,” he noted.

Because of this, users must double-check conclusions, particularly when numbers or complex analysis are involved. Overreliance can lead to diminished critical thinking and what some fear may become “mental laziness.” Human judgment remains essential.

The Rise of AI-Enabled Scams

A major concern discussed at the Local Summit was the growing sophistication of AI-driven fraud. Scammers now use AI to craft convincing emails and messages by skimming personal information online. Even more troubling, AI can replicate a person’s voice with increasing accuracy.

Traditional cues—how something “looks and feels”—are no longer reliable indicators of authenticity. Scammers often create urgency and request hard-to-trace payments such as cryptocurrency.

Both speakers emphasized slowing down. Verify email origins. Avoid responding to unknown callers. Confirm financial requests directly with institutions. Some families have adopted “safe words” to confirm identity during emergencies. There is no single solution, but caution and patience are powerful defenses.

Misinformation and a Changing Society

Audience members raised concerns about fake news and deepfakes entering AI systems. While efforts are underway to improve data quality, misinformation remains a challenge. AI-generated images, videos, and even online “influencers” can be entirely fabricated—and are increasingly difficult to detect.

There are also broader societal questions. Younger generations are growing up with AI-integrated tools and even digital companionship. As technology evolves, so does the way we relate to information—and to one another.

Jobs, Skills, and the Human Role

Despite the risks, both panelists expressed cautious optimism. AI will reshape the workforce, but it will also create opportunities—particularly for those who can guide AI effectively and critically evaluate its outputs. Skills such as interpersonal communication, sales, personal care, and critical thinking remain distinctly human strengths.

AI may enhance decision-making, but it should remain a tool—not a co-pilot that replaces human responsibility.

Artificial intelligence is neither inherently good nor bad. It amplifies human capability—and human vulnerability. As our community adapts to this new landscape, the challenge is clear: embrace innovation while preserving discernment.

The future of AI will depend not just on the technology itself, but on how wisely we choose to use it.

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. Our next meeting, on March 10 at 8 am at the Nautilus Diner in Mamaroneck, will discuss “Complete Street and Traffic Safety.” For more information: <https://www.localsummitlm.org/>. To view recorded programs on LMC Media: <https://lmcmedia.org/>.

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Waste Reduction Study Reinforces Westchester County's Environmental Leadership

Westchester County has released its comprehensive Waste Reduction Study, and the findings confirm that the County is leading when it comes to waste reduction. The study has also outlined a forward-looking strategy to further increase recycling, reduce waste and was commissioned to identify strategies that could significantly reduce the volume of waste requiring disposal within the County, including the Refuse Disposal District No. 1 (which encompasses approximately 90% of the County's population).

County Executive Ken Jenkins said: "Westchester County has long been a leader in environmental stewardship. This Waste Reduction Study lays out a clear path forward, one that builds on our success, strengthens our partnerships with municipalities and businesses, and ensures we continue protecting our environment for future generations."

Department of Environmental Facilities First Deputy Commissioner Louis Vetrone said: "Westchester is a recognized leader in waste reduction and recycling, having reduced its residential waste by 27%. We are proud of the considerable success that the County has achieved in reducing waste. The Waste Reduction Study provides the roadmap for continuing on that path by enhancing our successful waste and recycling programs and adding new strategies designed to divert additional materials from the waste stream. The DEF team is excited to get started on this next chapter."

Findings: Westchester consistently achieves a recycling rate of at least 50%, surpassing the current New York State average of 43%. The County operates significant waste diversion infrastructure, including:

- The Daniel P. Thomas Material Recovery Facility (MRF), which processes approximately 64,000 tons of recyclables annually;
- The Household Material Recovery Facility (H-MRF);
- Transfer stations and specialized recycling programs for e-waste, textiles, boat wrap and document shredding;
- Residential Food Scrap Transportation and Disposal (RFSTAD), now serving 26 municipalities and diverting more than 1,100 tons of food scraps in 2024;
- Nearly 93,000 tons of yard waste diverted in 2024.

Recommendations include:

- Expand Organics Management (Both Food & Yard Waste Materials)
- Get Back to Basics – Recycling Education Campaign
- Increase Multi-Family Building Outreach
- Promote Reuse and Repair Cafes
- Support Municipal & Commercial Construction & Demolition Diversion
- Maximize Diversion from the Commercial Waste Stream and Strengthen DEF's engagement with businesses to increase diversion, reduce contamination, and ensure compliance with the County's Source Separation Law (SSL).

According to The Recycling Partnership, states with EPR Extended Producer Responsibility policies can see significant increases in their recycling rates. For example, Colorado went from a 21% recycling rate to a 70% recycling rate, and an increase in Washington State from 52% to 75%. Theoretically, with EPR legislation at the state level, Westchester County could see an increase in overall residential recycling rates by 23 percentage points.

Read the report at <https://environment.westchestergov.com/waste-reduction-study>

Notice of formation of Monte Builders Group, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 02/18/2026. 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, 23 Bronxville Ln Yonkers, NY 10708. Purpose: Any lawful activity

Notice of formation of DoubleStripe Associates LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 2/7/2026. 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, 23 Mt. Joy Ave., Scarsdale, NY 10583. Purpose: Any lawful activity

Notice of formation of MPMX, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 02/06/2025 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, 8 Lane Street Fl. 1 Yonkers, NY 10601 Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of Infinity Strategies Group LLC. Arts of Org. Filed with SSNY on September 1, 2025. Office location: Westchester County, New York. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 255 Huguenot Street, Apt 913, New Rochelle, NY 10801. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

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

Black American Fashion, continued from pg 1-

native and Lincoln High School graduate, explains, "Fashion, to me, is a reflection of how I feel and who I am on any given day. When you look good, you feel good, and I believe every outfit is a carefully selected puzzle of pieces that come together to tell a story."

In the 1920s and 1930s, during the Harlem Renaissance, fashion became a statement of pride and dignity for Black Americans. Men wore sharp suits, polished shoes, and fedoras, while women embraced elegant dresses, fur coats, and bold accessories. This was more than style—it was a response to racism and stereotypes. Dressing well was a way of saying, "We are more than what society says we are." In cities like New York, Chicago, and Detroit, fashion reflected a new era of Black confidence, art, and intellectual life.

As time moved into the 1970s, Black fashion began to shift alongside music and culture. The rise of new music genres brought a completely different aesthetic. Bell-bottom pants, afros, large-collared shirts, floral designs, and bold accessories became symbols of identity and expression. By the 1980s, brands like Adidas and Puma gained popularity—not because of advertisements, but because of their connection to the streets and to Black youth culture. As 23-year-old Cardier Underwood of New Jersey shares, "Fashion is a way of exercising what control I can have over how I feel about myself and how I want other people to perceive me. It lets people know who I am as a person."

By the 1990s and early 2000s, streetwear exploded into mainstream culture. Oversized clothing, jerseys, Timberland boots, sweatbands, wristbands, and fitted caps became staples, heavily influenced by rappers and athletes. Black designers and entrepreneurs also began creating their own brands, such as FUBU, Sean John, Rocawear, and Phat Farm. These brands were important because they represented ownership—Black people creating for themselves, not just influencing others. As Christian Simpson, 27, from Mississippi, explains, "Fashion means dressing in a way that represents an aesthetic you feel comfortable with."

Today, Black fashion continues to lead global trends, especially through streetwear and luxury collaborations. Designers such as Telfar Clemens have created highly sought-after lines of clothing and accessories, while Virgil Abloh, who led Louis Vuitton's menswear division, helped bridge the gap between street style and high fashion. Sneakers, hoodies, and everyday wear have become part of luxury fashion, showing how styles once labeled "urban" are now celebrated on runways around the world. As Dr. Kierra Oliver, 30, of South Carolina, reflects, "Fashion smiles for you when you don't feel like doing so yourself."

However, the story of Black fashion is also about recognition. For decades, Black culture has been copied without credit or respect. Today, more people are calling this out and demanding that Black designers, stylists, and creators receive the acknowledgment they deserve.

From New York to hip-hop to high fashion, Black style has always been more than just clothing—it is a powerful form of expression that continues to shape culture across the globe.

Dennis Richmond, Jr. (@NewYorkStakz) is a journalist, historian, and educator from Yonkers, NY. He writes to uplift unheard voices, honor history, and inspire change.

Digital Infrastructure Services LLC, Arts. of Org. filed with NY Dept. of State on 10/22/25. Office: Westchester County. NY DOS designated as agent for service of process; DOS shall mail copy of process to 7 Ridgeway Cir White Plains, NY 10605. Purpose: any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of FOREVER JADE LLC, filed with SSNY on 02/10/2026. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC: ZENBUSINESS INC. 41 State Street, Suite 112, Albany, NY 12207. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of formation of Hardcore In The 914 LLC Arts. Of Org. filed with SSNY on 1/5/2026. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Hardcore In The 914 8 Arden Drive, Hartsdale New York 10530. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Formation of Israelov Law, PLLC. Articles of Organization filed with SSNY on 01/27/2026. Office Location: Westchester. The SSNY has been designated as agent of the PLLC upon whom process against it may be served. The address to which the SSNY shall mail a copy of any process against the PLLC is: 51 Nethermont Ave, White Plains, NY 10603. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of formation of Senara & Co, LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 01/29/2026. NY office location: Westchester County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. The address to which the SSNY shall mail a copy of any process against the LLC served is 455 Tarrytown Road, Suite 1307, White Plains, NY 10607. Purpose/character of LLC: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of Schmoose Pack Projects LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 09/20/2024. 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 Bruce Wong 10 Station Square Forest Hills, NY 11375. Purpose: Any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Formation of S.I.T. Staying In Touch LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the New York Secretary of State on December 25, 2025. Office location: Westchester County. New York Secretary of State designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process may be served. New York Secretary of State shall mail process to: Donald George McIntosh III, 137 Morningside Pl, Yonkers, NY 10703. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Read it all Online at Yonkerstimes.com

Conley, Davidson, continued from pg 1-

security and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). She lives in Chappaqua.

Beth Davidson is a Rockland County legislator.

Conley's campaign got into a bit of hot water in recent weeks, concerning an attack memo that a reporter claims he got from the Conley campaign. Conley has recently denied any involvement by her campaign in the memo, calling it "Far Left Lies."

Timmy Facciola, with the Judge Street Journal, wrote two detailed stories on the memo. We are inclined to believe his coverage and not Conley's denial. The memo reads: Beth Davidson's nearly 30-year career as a political operative will be an unparalleled opportunity for Mike Lawler to save his seat. Davidson has spent years working for and being paid by progressive Democrats, providing Republicans with ample fodder to paint her as a far-left extremist political consultant. One of Democrats' top lines of attack against Mike Lawler has been his status as a slimy swamp creature – a career political operative who has made his money as a partisan hack working to elect career politicians who have sold out New York since he graduated from college.

As a potential nominee against Lawler, Beth Davidson would not be able to make this attack or present a clear contrast, as above the political swamp. Davidson has been a career political operative for decades. Working for national political campaigns and organizations since the 1990s, before a stint as a publicist for Donald Trump in the 2000s, she remains a working political operative today.

Campaign finance records and Davidson's personal financial disclosure show that Davidson has earned more than \$86,000 over the last two years alone from this work, including work for both Democratic political campaigns and consulting firms. Records show Davidson has worked for: Senate campaigns for Gary Peters, Angela Alsobrooks, and Patty Murray; Political consulting firms Dover Strategy Group, Avalon Consulting Group, Burdick Consulting Group, and Run the World

Progressive political organization Emily's List; The New York State Nurses' Association, and New York candidates Judah Holstein and Bill Batson. This work will allow Republican opponents numerous angles of attack against Davidson, including her positions and those of the candidates she has worked to elect, as well as the clients of the organizations with which she worked.

Davidson's clients have worked to defund the police, abolish ICE, support allowing transgender individuals to play on the sports team with which they identify, and pass Medicare for All, which would ban private health insurance and double taxes.

Davidson was also paid by the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), which has promoted Medicare for All and defunding the police. The organization also endorsed socialist candidates for office, such as New York mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani, Sen. Bernie Sanders, and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Davidson's more than a decade of work for Emily's List will also allow Republicans to connect her to hundreds of progressive candidates across the country that the organization endorsed in that period and attack Davidson for their views.

And it will allow Republicans to raise questions and demand greater transparency about the work she's done, distracting voters from Lawler's shady career and failing to present a clear and contrasting choice for New York voters. End of memo.

Cacciola writes, "In the crowded Democratic primary to decide Mike Lawler's challenger, Cait Conley's campaign is working behind the scenes to tar one of her closest competitors, Rockland county legislator Beth Davidson, as a "far left political operative" who is "going to make Democrats lose this seat," because she worked with progressive groups like Emily's List and the "New York State Nurse's Association" (sic), according to a memo it sent the Judge Street Journal.

"The main thing I want to highlight in the attached doc is that Beth's clients have worked to defund the police, abolish ICE, supported allowing transgender individuals to play on the sports team with which they identify, and pass Medicare for All that would ban private health insurance and double taxes," a Conley strategist wrote in an email titled "No prints pitch - Beth Davidson's 30-year far left political operative career."

Westchester democrats we spoke to were surprised that Conley's campaign would attack Davidson for her work with traditional progressive groups. "Davidson's work for Emily's List isn't newsworthy—but Conley's campaign plotting behind the scenes to attack her for it certainly is. Emily's List is the largest pro-choice organization in the country and has a record of a wide array of centrist and progressive endorsements. Conley's aversion to the organization is particularly striking for a candidate who is said to be the Democratic Congressional Committee's favorite in the race.

"Let us get this straight...Cait Conley is attacking Beth Davidson for her work with EMILY's List - which works to elect women and protect a woman's right to abortion - and historic women Senators like Angela Alsobrooks and Patty Murray? Interesting choice," Davidson's campaign manager, Ellen McCormick, told the Journal," writes Cacciola.

Conley attended an Indivisible Westchester meeting in Bedford on Feb. 11 at which she denied any involvement by her campaign in the memo. Cacciola covered that meeting and wrote, "In response, Conley delivered a series of fierce diatribes smearing the reporters, accusing them of coordinating with her opposition, and dismissing the substance of their stories as outright 'lies,'" according to a recording obtained by the Journal.

"Mike Lawler has been attacking me nonstop for the last four weeks. He has been planting opposition stories. He has been spreading lies. So there was a series of articles this week trying to literally, completely misrepresent the work that I have done—lies. And these 'reporters,'" Conley said, making air quotes, "didn't contact me when we did engage them and try to correct the record, didn't do a thing about it, and continue to publish lies."

"When one attendee voiced concern about her strategy to accuse the reporters of lying, Conley dismissed him. "I understand you are supporting a different candidate. The recent one tried to say that I slammed Emily's List and the nurses' union. I am literally a huge supporter of Emily's List. I post about it. I'm trying to earn their endorsement," Conley said. "It's fucking bullshit, and it's going to keep coming... When we talk about what this fight is going to be like, it is going to be an ugly few months," said Conley, writes Cacciola.

Politico recently reported a new poll in NY-17 that shows Conley at 18%, Davidson at 17%, and former Briarcliff mayor Peter Chatzky at 12%, with 41% undecided. Several dems we spoke to support Davidson because "she has won elections and is an incumbent legislator. Cait has never run for office." But another Westchester dem told us, "Cait Conley is the type of democrat that has been winning elections in Virginia and New Jersey. She is a military Veteran who can beat Lawler."

Harcckham, Solar, continued from pg 1-

ham hosted a press conference today in the State Capitol with advocates and members of the New York Solar Energy Industries Association (NYSEIA) in support of the Accelerate Solar for Affordable Power (ASAP) Act, which aims to advance the successes of New York's solar energy sector.

The ASAP Act (S.6570 / A.8758), sponsored by both Sen. Harckham and Assembly-member Didi Barrett, would raise New York's distributed solar target from 10 gigawatts (GW) to 20 GW by 2035 and implement common-sense reforms to lower costs and streamline deployment. It also advances critical interconnection reforms that will reduce costs, shorten project timelines, and allow for proactive grid investments to accommodate more solar capacity efficiently.

"The ASAP Act will save consumers over \$1 billion annually, enhance grid reliability and create economic multiples of well-paying jobs and new industries in New York," said Harckham. "Additionally, by ramping up the implementation of solar energy systems statewide we will provide cleaner, healthier air to breathe in communities statewide. Simply, codifying our commitment to solar energy is needed more today than ever before."

"A clean energy future is an affordable future and it's time to lean into our successes with distributed solar — the only climate goal we've hit so far," said Barrett. "Facing an unprecedented affordability crisis and federal blows to renewable energy projects, I am proud to sponsor the ASAP Act to expand our distributed solar goals and streamline the complicated interconnection process to get more of these projects built — lowering utility costs while creating good-paying jobs. Let's pass the ASAP Act as soon as possible (ASAP)!"

A new report from Synapse Energy Economics found that meeting New York's energy storage goal and achieving the expanded solar goals outlined in the ASAP Act will lower electricity bills for New Yorkers by \$1 billion per year, delivering savings across the state and all year-round.

New York's solar industry employs over 15,000 workers statewide. Right now, the state is ahead of schedule toward its 10 GW by 2030 rooftop and community solar goal. Building an additional 10 GW of distributed solar over the next decade will boost New York's "affordability agenda" with ratepayer savings and revenue for municipalities and school districts while doubling the number of solar industry jobs. Solar's success can help fill the gap at a time when New York State is otherwise falling short of its energy goals."

The ASAP Act requires reforms to the utility interconnection process in order to streamline processes and lower costs for ratepayers. The legislation requires electric utilities to report and publish their actual distribution upgrade costs, enabling greater accountability and fairer cost estimation for solar developers. It also creates guardrails to protect against cost overruns, providing market clarity and reducing price volatility and surprise charges.

In terms of streamlining solar projects, the legislation directs utilities to establish a self-performance option, allowing qualified solar developers to complete certain interconnection upgrades themselves, lowering costs and avoiding utility bottlenecks.

Prevailing wage requirements in the bill will ensure solar expansion creates high-quality local jobs. Additionally, it is meant to support local solar supply chains, electricians, and construction workers—stimulating green job growth and attracting private-sector investment in New York's clean energy economy.

The ASAP Act also directs New York's utilities to expand upon their successful flexible interconnection pilot programs, an innovative approach that leverages smart grid technology to integrate more solar and energy storage capacity while avoiding cost-prohibitive traditional distribution system upgrades.

Lastly, the ASAP Act promotes equitable access by requiring at least 35% of solar program investments to benefit disadvantaged and low-to-moderate-income communities.

Anshul Gupta, Policy & Research Director for New Yorkers for Clean Power, said, "Removing bureaucratic barriers and easing interconnection and permitting for home and community solar are long-overdue measures that New York can take to reduce energy costs for all New Yorkers, create local clean energy jobs, and unleash much needed new electricity generation fueled by free in-state sunshine. We hope that the legislature and the Governor will act this year to pass these common-sense bills to help improve the economics of distributed solar and storage to compensate, at least in part, for the loss of federal incentives."

Notice of Formation of Sets n Sweats LLC, filed with SSNY on August 24, 2025. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to LLC: 515 Boston Post Rd, #1034 Portchester, NY, 10573, USA Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Formation of YureeshStyle LLC, a domestic LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secy of State of NY (SSNY) on 2/10/26. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of any process to the LLC at 35 S Broadway, K6, Irvington, NY 10533. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of JB HUDSON LINE LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 01/20/2026. Office location: Westchester County, NY. SSNY is designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may bse served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to: 59 Alta Vista Dr, Yonkers, NY, 10710. Purpose: any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of Lifestyle Rehabilitation, LLC filed with SSNY on 10/27/2025. 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, 56 Martha Place, Chappaqua, NY, 10514. Purpose: Physical Therapy.

Notice of formation of JJ VILL, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 11/29/2025. 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, 64 Mountaindale Road, Yonkers, NY 10710. Purpose: Any lawful activity

and his family.

Judge Wood's \$138 million total comes from: \$82M from the foundation for improper uses, charities that benefited David Pope's family, and his personal use.

Judge Wood increased the judgment by \$55.4 Million for David Pope's willful, wanton, and reckless nature of his conduct.

The suit was filed in 2023 by Marie-Therese and Ted Pope. Plaintiff Marie Thérèse Pope ("Ms. Pope") is the great-granddaughter of Generoso Pope (the Foundation's founder) and a member of the Foundation. Plaintiff Ted Pope ("Mr. Pope") is the great-grandson of Generoso Pope (the Foundation's founder) he complaint reviews the history of the Pope Foundation and all it has done for Westchester over the years. "Seventy-five years ago, Generoso Pope, an Italian immigrant who became a millionaire working in the New York sand and gravel business, and who owned Italian-American newspapers, including *Il Progresso* and a radio station, established the Generoso Pope Foundation, a charitable organization with the mission to respond to requests for funding from educational, health, cultural, human service, and civic institutions. Generoso – whose name fittingly means "generous" in Italian – served as President of the Foundation until his death in 1950. Following Generoso's death, his wife, Catherine Pope, took over and served as President for the next 48 years. Subsequently, their son Anthony J. Pope became President and CEO in 1998 and remained so until his passing in 2005."

Over the decades, recipients of funds from the Foundation included Lawrence Hospital, White Plains Hospital, Hospital for Special Surgery, New York University Medical Center, Blythedale Children's Hospital, Greenwich Hospital, New York University, Fordham University, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guggenheim Museum – and –Free Arts NYC

In 2006, the Foundation had over \$32 million in assets. Following the passing of Anthony J. Pope, his wife, Edith Pope, became the President. However, her time as President was short-lived. Anthony's and Edith's grandson, David Anthony Pope ("Defendant Pope"), one of Generoso's great-grandchildren – and the Plaintiffs' brother – convinced Edith to step down and name him President and CEO of the Foundation. Unfortunately, the self-serving course he set for the Foundation would have outraged Generoso. For starters, Defendant Pope began to consolidate his power with the goal of using the Foundation's funds for his own, self-interested, and improper purposes. In 2007, he pushed Plaintiff Ted Pope out of the Foundation. Defendant Pope followed this action by marginalizing Plaintiff Marie Thérèse Pope and their very own mother (who also served as an officer and director), and eventually also improperly removed Plaintiff Marie Thérèse Pope as an officer and director of the Foundation in 2010.

Defendant Pope's wrongdoing can be divided into no less than five categories:

- Diverting substantial Foundation funds to organizations in which Defendant Pope had a financial, personal, professional, and/or other interest;
- Funneling significant amounts to other non-profit organizations, including the Defendant Westchester Italian Cultural Center, from which Defendant Pope, in return, received significant payments and/or other benefits;
- Orchestrating and accepting excessive compensation for himself, far above the value of his services;
- Placing his wife and two sons on the Foundation's payroll for little to no work; and
- Looting the Foundation and failing to properly manage the Foundation's assets, contributing to a tremendous decline of assets from \$32 million in 2006 to approximately \$4 million in 2019 and, upon information and belief, even less today

In his role as a director, Defendant Pope had significant discretion and authority to run the Foundation and to make grants. However, Defendant Pope also has a fiduciary obligation to exercise his discretion and authority in the best interests of the Foundation, and not for his own personal interests. Instead, Defendant Pope has committed self-dealing and has allowed rampant self-dealing to occur; he has made false and/or misleading statements and/or omitted material information in the required tax disclosures to the federal government and New York State; he has not and is not inviting all Foundation Members to the required annual meetings; and he is flouting the mission of the Foundation.

As described below, Defendant Pope engaged in conduct inconsistent with the Foundation's tax-exempt purpose and in violation of its Guidelines and the law. The Guidelines expressly forbid the Foundation from making grants to "Disqualified Persons," defined to include (i) Foundation officers, directors, and trustees, (ii) the spouses and children of the Foundation's officers, directors, and trustees, and (iii) entities in which Foundation officers, directors, trustees, their spouses, and children own 35 percent of the total combined voting power, profits interest or beneficial interest.

After Defendant Pope became the Foundation's President, the Foundation began phasing out grants to its traditional grant recipients and began (or substantially increased) funding to organizations in which Defendant Pope, his immediate family members, and his close friends had a significant financial or other interest.

For example, Defendant Pope and his wife have lived in the Village of Tuckahoe, New York, for many years, where his three children (the "Pope Children") attended school. Between 2009 and 2018, Defendant Pope caused the Foundation to grant nearly \$780,000 to the Tuckahoe Union Free School System, Middle School, and High School, including during the years the Pope Children attended those schools. Defendant Pope also caused the Foundation to grant over \$918,000 to the Tuckahoe Tigers Youth Football and Cheerleading squads, the very sports teams on which the Pope Children participated, including during the years that they participated. Defendant Pope served as the principal officer of the "Tuckahoe Tigers Youth Football and Cheerleading Inc." organization.

In addition, Defendant Pope caused the Foundation to grant over \$68,000 to the Lighthouse Youth Theater, where one of the Pope Children, "AJ," obtained various acting roles. The focus of the Foundation's giving, in essence, followed the Pope children as their education progressed. Defendant Pope caused the Foundation to grant over a million dollars to the Pope Children's College at Fairfield University, including during the time that the Pope Children applied to and attended the college.

In 2001, two of the Foundation's largest grants went to hospitals for medical research: \$175,000 to Blythedale Children's Hospital and \$135,000 to Lawrence Hospital.

By contrast, in 2019, the largest grant from the Foundation went to the Pope's Children's football team: \$199,811 to Tuckahoe Tigers Youth Football. Generoso would surely cringe if he knew that the Foundation was funding youth football. The second largest grant in 2019? \$98,250 to Fairfield University, the Pope Children's College.

Historically, and prior to Defendant Pope's becoming President, the Foundation paid its Presidents a fair and reasonable compensation for their services. For example, in each of the years 2001, 2002, and 2004, the Foundation paid Anthony Pope (its then CEO and President) an annual salary of \$60,000 in exchange for his dedicated work advancing the Foundation's mission.

Following Anthony Pope's death on February 12, 2005, the Foundation paid its new President, Defendant Pope, an annual salary of \$98,000.

This increase in 2005 was just the tip of the iceberg.

David Pope's salary rose to \$133,335 in 2006, \$154,000 in 2010, \$191,000 in 2014, \$200,000 in 2015, and \$224,750 in 2016.

In 2017, for the first time, the Foundation decreased Defendant Pope's annual salary to \$198,193. The Foundation decreased Defendant Pope's salary after learning that the Foundation, Defendant Pope, and/or others connected with the Foundation were under criminal investigation by the government.

David Pope's salary was reduced to \$147,583 in 2018 and \$ 58,833 in 2019 due to the ongoing government criminal investigation.

As shown above, between 2005 and 2019, the Foundation paid Defendant Pope over \$2.36 million, most of which was unjustified and excessive.

In the early 2000s, the Foundation established the Westchester Italian Cultural Center (WICC) to promote Italian culture through classes, lectures, and other programs.

However, Defendant Pope used the WICC as another way to profit from his insider roles at the Foundation. Specifically, after assuming control of the Foundation, Defendant Pope caused the Foundation to grant significant sums of money to the WICC year after year, from which he continuously received additional compensation, payments, and/or other benefits to which he was not entitled.

In 2005, after Defendant Pope became President and CEO of the Foundation, the Foundation dramatically increased its contribution to the WICC from \$15,000 to \$205,000.

The next year, in 2006, the Foundation more than tripled its contribution to the WICC, granting it \$705,000. In 2007, the Foundation contributed \$999,000 to the WICC. In 2008, the Foundation contributed \$1,192,000 to the WICC. Between 2009 and 2019, the Foundation contributed approximately \$3.4 million to the WICC, bringing the total known contributions from the Foundation to the WICC to approximately \$6.5 million.

David Pope received \$49,000 in compensation from the WICC for several years, reportedly for 20 hours per week as its "Director." David Pope also placed his wife and two sons on the Foundation's Payroll for Little to No Work.

The Pope Foundation's assets dropped from \$32 million in 2006 to approximately \$4 million in 2019. (the last year of financial/tax information reported by the Foundation) and are likely even less today. For the years 2011-2019, the Foundation's expenses exceeded its revenue by an average of nearly \$1.8 million per year, and most of the Foundation's revenue, year after year, came from its substantial sale of assets (i.e., a reduction in its endowment), rather than by other means, such as fundraising or board member contributions, both of which are typical in the non-profit world (including for foundations). The total losses incurred by the Pope Foundation during this time were \$16 Million.

A Footnote to the Complaint reads, " In addition to the misconduct set forth herein, Defendant Pope has also stolen millions of dollars from his grandparents' trust, which is the subject of a separate, pending lawsuit styled Accounting of Theodore Pope as Successor Trustee of Anthony J. Pope Revocable Trust as Amended and Restated on February 4, 2003, File No. 56959/2022 (N.Y. Sup. Ct. Westchester Cnty.)."

Now, the foundation appears to be close to bankruptcy, with its only asset being its legendary building in downtown Tuckahoe.

Some questions that we hope to answer in a future story.

1-What were the criminal investigations that resulted in the reduction of David Pope's salary? What happened to those investigations? As far as we can deduce, no criminal charges were ever filed.

Also unclear is which law enforcement agency is responsible for the criminal investigation and prosecution.

2-Could the financial abuses by David Pope been stopped sooner? What monies, if any, could have been preserved?

3-Who was reviewing and approving the financial transactions of the Pope Foundation made under David Pope? A deposition was taken of the accountant for the foundation, and, as you can imagine, his answers do not satisfy the family members who want to save their great family foundation and their great-grandfather's memory.

4-Will the accountant and David Pope face criminal prosecution for their actions now?

Anyone with information can email us as dmurphy@risingmediagroup.com The Pope Foundation is located at One Generoso Pope Place in downtown Tuckahoe.

We asked Plaintiff's attorneys Mark Lucarelli and Andrew Tomback about this decision. "From my understanding, this is the largest charity fraud judgment in New York History. And it's warranted. This case shows David Pope to be a self-dealing and looting racketeer. The family members objected in 2010, but David Pope then kicked them out, leaving himself, his wife, and son as the only board members. Anyone who objected to his operations of the trust got booted," said Lucarelli.

Andy Tomback said, "David caused irreparable damage to the Foundation and to Generoso Pope's legacy. Judge Wood held him accountable, and his crimes are now fully exposed. Instead of helping those in need, he used the Foundation's funds for selfish purposes and indulgences like expensive wines, jewelry, and foreign trips. We are moving forward to take back what he stole. And we are investigating the Foundation's board, accountant, and lawyers. They were asleep at the switch."

Frankie Has Recovered from Slashing, Now He Needs a Home



Yonkestimes.com has reported in detail about Frankie the Dog, who was slashed by its owner and abandoned in Yonkers without food or water. Frankie is now in the loving care of the SPCA of Westchester, and needs a home.

Westchester DA Susan Cacace posted, "Now that Frankie is safe and our office is prosecuting his former owner, let's help get this beautiful pup adopted! Please like and share and contact the SPCA Westchester if you're interested in adopting Frankie!"

The SPCA of Westchester posted, "His tail never stops wagging. Frankie is a true testament to resilience, strength, and unwavering positivity. After being cruelly dumped in Yonkers with a severe cut to his throat, Frankie endured unimaginable pain. Yet through it all, he never lost his joyful spirit and faith in people. Fortunately, the SPCA's Humane Law Enforcement Unit arrested Frankie's owner. Now that this sweet 1-year-old mix has made a full recovery, he's officially ready to find his forever home! If you're looking for a super outgoing, loving and playful pup, please stop in to meet Frankie."

Call, email or stop in at the SPCA of Westchester if interested.

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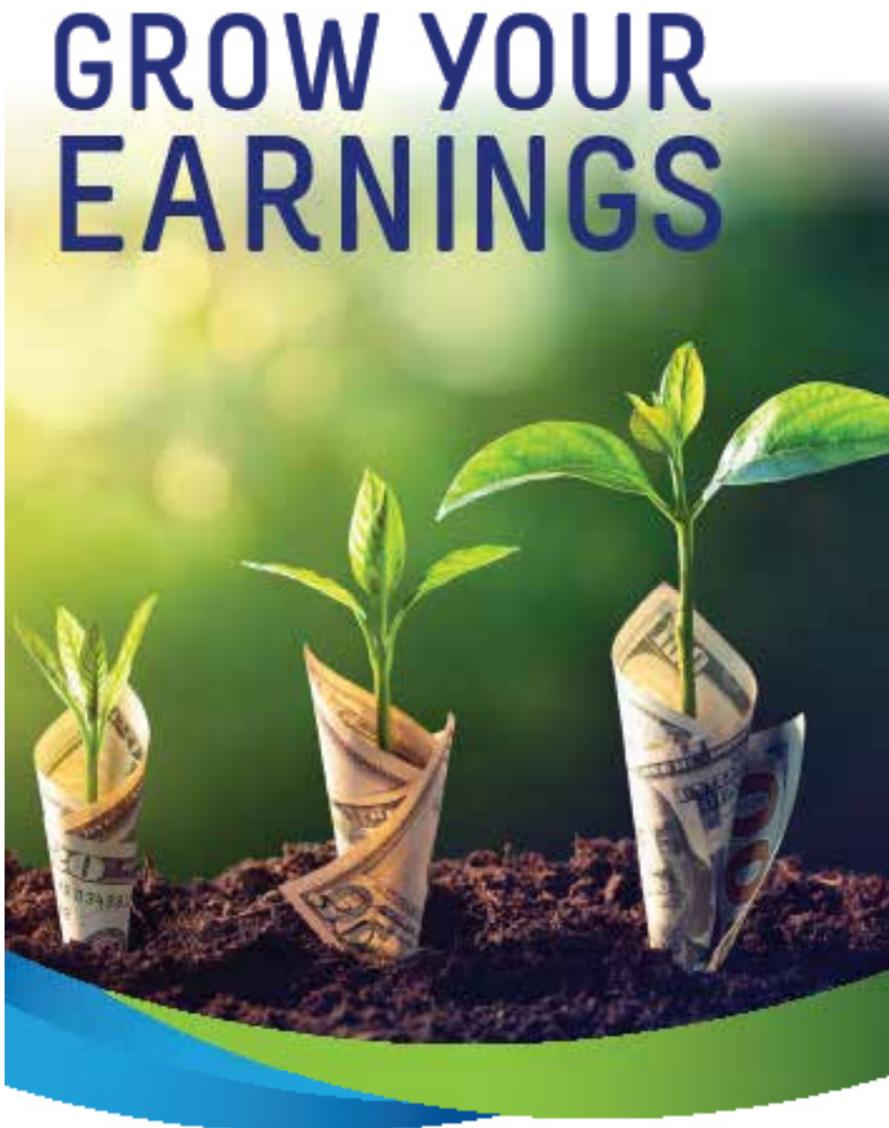
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