

# Westchester Rising

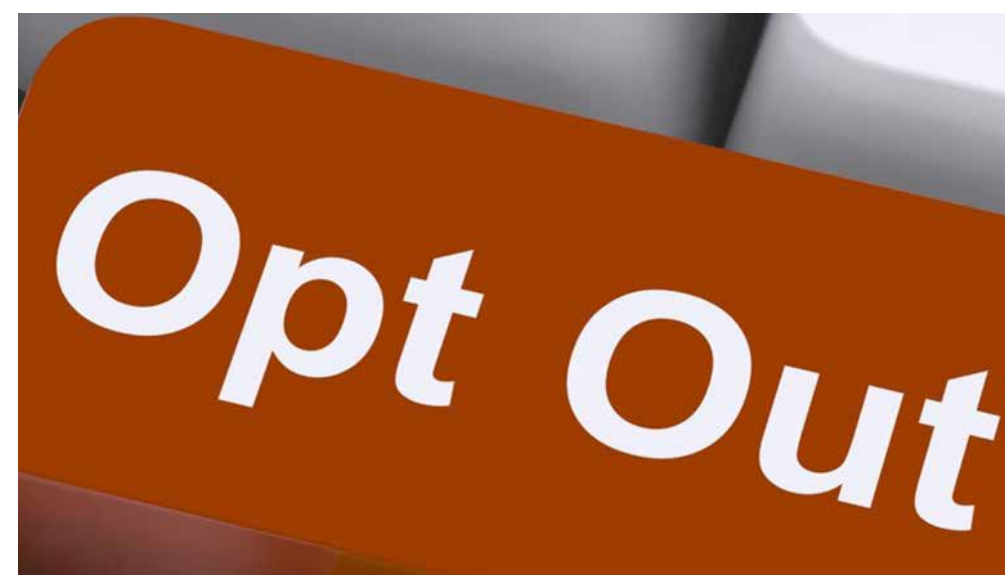
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Friday July 23, 2021

## Town of Yorktown Joins Eastchester in Opting Out of Marijuana Dispensaries



By Dan Murphy

On July 13, the Yorktown Town Board voted unanimously Tuesday to opt out of state regulations that permit marijuana dispensaries.

"It would be irresponsible for us to allow for a business when we don't know what the rules of engagement are," said Supervisor Matt Slater. "We still have questions on enforcement. We still have questions on breathalyzers."

The New York State Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act became law in March and it made marijuana consumption legal. The act also allowed municipalities to decide whether they will permit dispensaries in their jurisdictions.

"I cannot in good conscious vote yes for this," said Councilman Tom Diana, who cited the dangers of driving under the influence of marijuana, which remains illegal. The new marijuana law allows adults 21 and over to consume marijuana products legally. Yorktown cannot opt out of the provisions that make adult use of marijuana legal.

"Look at the problems we have with the illegal drugs," said Councilman Ed Lachterman. "What does this say to our children?"

Several Town Board members cited concerns that marijuana is a gateway to substance abuse. "Our children are the biggest accomplishment of our life's work," said Councilman Vishnu Patel. "You don't want any child to die or get into the habit."

Town Board members said Yorktown's future leaders could reconsider dispensaries once there is more clarity on regulations and enforcement. "I would be going against everything that I told my two kids," said Councilwoman Alice Roker. "My feeling is once we have a real law with real regulations, the next Town Board can consider what it wants to do."

The Town of Yorktown joins the Town of Eastchester as two Westchester communities that have already opted out of marijuana dispensaries and cafes starting in 2022 at the earliest. Local governments have until the end of 2021 to opt out, after which supporters of opting in can petition for a referendum.

## Matt Damon Endorses Harvard Roommate Clark Petschek for Bedford Town Justice



Clark Petschek, left and Matt Damon, right

Academy Award winner and actor Matt Damon has intervened on behalf of his old Harvard roommate in an attempt to help get him elected to the Bedford Town Court. Damon released a video on July 14, endorsing Clark Petschek for Bedford Town Justice.

"Hi this is Matt Damon. I have known Clark Petschek for well over 30 years, since we were undergraduates together at Harvard. We were roommates there, so I know Clark really well. He is one of the most exceptional people that I have met in my life. Clark was in the Army and found his way into the Special Forces, where he led a team hunting war criminals in Eastern Europe following the Bosnian war. This sense of justice in Clark is something that runs so deep that it was something to risk his life for. It makes sense that Clark wants to take some of this hard fought hard won wisdom from this incredible life that he has led and bring it to the bench and become a judge. This is something that I think he will do incredibly well. It gives me a great deal of pride to wholeheartedly endorse him," said Damon, at <https://www.facebook.com/clark4bedford/videos/827058461569952>.

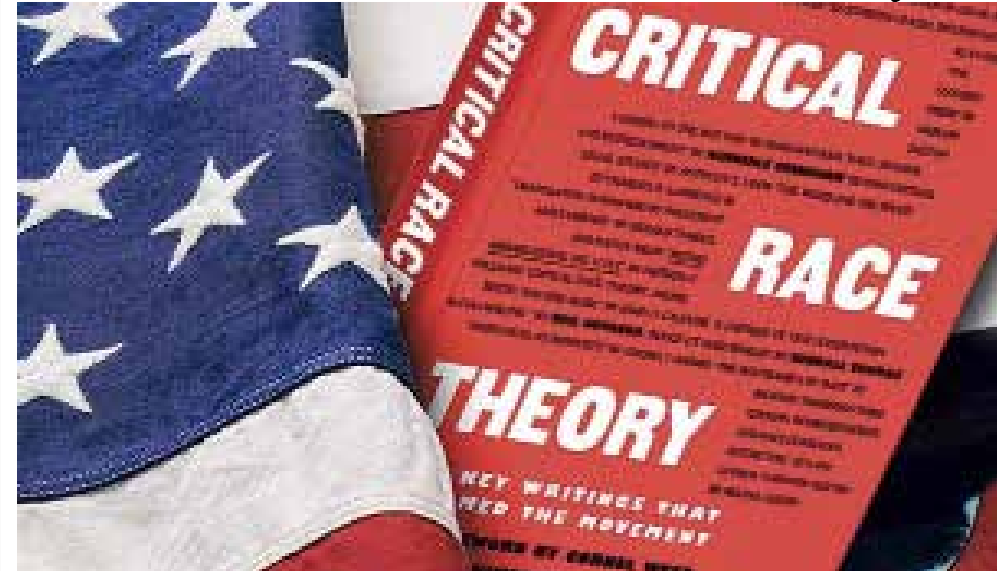
Damon's appeal has brought interest from many in the media, including this reporter, who would not normally be covering a local race for Town Justice. Damon and Paetschek were roommates at Harvard for their sophomore and junior years.

Petschek, who is running on the Republican and Bedford United lines, is facing Democrat Jodi Kimmel this November to replace Judge Erik Jacobsen, whose term is up at the end of this year. Petschek, who has lived in Bedford for 40 years and has practiced law for 20 years, said that Damon reached out once he announced his candidacy.

Most interesting in the Good Will Hunting writer and actors endorsement is the fact that Petschek is a republican and Damon usually endorsed democratic candidates and causes across the country. While acknowledging

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## Two Westchester Superintendents: We Do Not Teach Critical Race Theory



The discussion and debate over Critical Race Theory, CRT, landed in Westchester recently at two school board meetings in Northern Westchester. The Lakeland and Yorktown school boards heard public comments in opposition to CRT, and in support of the New York State Department of Regents Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, DEI, initiative

Lakeland Superintendent Dr. Brendan Lyons and Yorktown Superintendent Dr. Ronald Hattar both told the public that CRT is not being taught in their schools. "The Yorktown School District is not teaching Critical Race Theory. Any suggestion to the contrary is false," said Yorktown School District Superintendent Dr. Ron Hattar.

"Our core values, and what our task force is working on, are around understanding, kindness, respect and empathy for all individuals. Every child should feel respected."

"There are some questions that have landed in my in box. Will the state document result in an anti american perspective? That will not be the case in the work of our task force. Will the work be an anti police rhetoric? That will not be the case here. We have a great relationship with law enforcement and they help keep us safe. Unfortunately schools are targets and my number 1 job is to keep your children safe and I rely on the police to do that," said Hattar.

"Recently there was an allegation of an employee in our district sharing their political views with students. That will never be acceptable, they are not permitted to project. But outside of our school district, our faculty and staff are freely allowed to express their views. They have every right to do that. It's wonderful that there are different perspectives, but inside our schools we are not permitted to project our views and that has happened in the past. Once we are made aware we do address it," said Hattar.

The national debate over CRT resulted in a Facebook video posted by a Carmel resident, Tatiana Ibrahim, who accused the Carmel Board of Education of "emotionally abusing" students through the political indoctrination of CRT.

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## Mt. Vernon Mayor Declares State of Emergency



Mt. Vernon Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard can't get the Comptroller to pay bills for DPW Truck maintenance to pick up the garbage

By Dan Murphy

On July 15, Mt. Vernon Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard declared a State of Emergency in her city because of a lack of payments by City Comptroller Deborah Reynolds. "This State of Emergency is declared due to a public health and safety crisis. that has threatened the public health of the City of Mt. Vernon. Due to the gross negligence and dereliction of duty by the Comptroller, who has failed to process and pay invoices of approximately \$500,000 for critical parts and maintenance of police, fire and public works vehicles. As a result, nearly our entire fleet of vehicles has been impacted by this crisis," stated Mayor Patterson-Howard.

The problems with maintaining vehicles in the Mt. Vernon Department of Public Works became so severe that the City had to cancel garbage collection for several days until assistance was given by New York City, Yonkers and the State of New York. "Mount Vernon's citizens are suffering as the city resolves longstanding issues over the funding of its services, and this administration is stepping in to ensure government continues to function," Governor Cuomo said. "State agencies will deploy trucks to Mount Vernon to make sure the city is able to keep the streets clean and collect its trash for the next two weeks. Residents and their families deserve better, and I am hopeful that this situation is resolved as soon as possible."

Mount Vernon Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard said, "On behalf of the residents of Mount Vernon we are grateful to the state for stepping in to provide emergency assistance in maintaining the public health of our community. Local government services have been drastically impacted due to fiscal mismanagement on behalf of our elected comptroller. I agree with Governor

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## 2021 Ice Bucket Challenge Set for August 1, In Memory of Pat Quinn



Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts executives and the family of late Yonkers Native Pat Quinn announced today that the 2021 ALS Ice Bucket Challenge will take place on Sunday, August 1, trackside at Empire City Casino. The annual event, co-founded by Quinn after his diagnosis of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) in 2013, became a global phenomenon in 2014 as thousands of people from around the world participated in the challenge on social media.

Though Quinn unfortunately passed away from ALS in November 2020, his drive and determination to find a cure lives on through his family, community and beyond. Leading the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge charge this year is Quinn's dad, Patrick Quinn Sr., who will also pay tribute to his son and ensure his mission continues to live on. Quinn Sr. also released a video encouraging everyone to support the effort, which can be viewed here.

Since 2015, Empire City Casino has hosted the annual challenge in support of Quinn and to continue generating awareness for ALS research (the 2020 challenge was canceled due to the pandemic). Each year, Empire City Casino donates the space, set-up and staffing, as well as over 1,300 pounds of ice. The festivities begin at 1:00 p.m. Ice Bucket Challenge participants can pre-register in-advance online at [YonkersNY.gov/IBC](http://YonkersNY.gov/IBC).

ALS, often referred to as "Lou Gehrig's Disease," is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. With no known cure, Quinn began the Ice Bucket Challenge to put ALS on ice by raising awareness as well as donations for research. The challenge has remained a catalyst of the efforts to find a cure for ALS, with Quinn helping inspire billions of dollars in donations for ALS research, which has helped produce significant discoveries and breakthroughs.

Recently, Major League Baseball (MLB) celebrated the inaugural Lou Gehrig Day to continue raising awareness about ALS.

"Empire City Casino is proud to again host the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge and is committed to continuing the legacy of the beloved Yonkers-native Pat Quinn in the fight for awareness and a cure for ALS patients the world over," said Ed Domingo, MGM Resorts Northeast Group Senior Vice President and CFO. "We are incredibly humbled to be part of a community that always shows up and supports each other."

"Pat Quinn's fight and determination to combat this horrible disease has been so inspirational and we are proud to carry on his legacy," said Mayor Spano. "Pat and his organization, Quinn For The Win, have courageously and selflessly turned his battle with ALS into one of the most successful social media fundraising movements this world has ever seen. We encourage everyone to join us on August 1st so we can continue the fight to find a cure for ALS."

"I'm so grateful for the continued support from Mayor Mike Spano, Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts, and the entire City of Yonkers as we march onward towards a cure. The community that Pat has been able to build to raise awareness for ALS research and his Quinn for the Win Foundation is nothing short of remarkable. Pat laid the groundwork to find a cure, and now it's our job to finish his mission and find a cure to defeat ALS once and for all. I look forward to seeing everyone in August," said Patrick Quinn Sr.

Recent years have also shown significant advances in research. A recent Oregon State University study showed a copper compound can help slow the progression of ALS after recent testing in mice. Just a few short years ago, researchers discovered a new gene associated with ALS that may hold the key to one day finding a cure. Additionally, new technology is allowing individuals affected by ALS to regain their voice. ALS usually strikes people between the ages of 40 and 70. Approximately 20,000 Americans currently suffer from the disease.

For more information, please visit [YonkersNY.gov](http://YonkersNY.gov), [Quinn4theWin](http://Quinn4theWin) and [Facebook.com/QuinnForTheWin](http://Facebook.com/QuinnForTheWin).

## Town of Eastchester Supports Girl Scout Troop #1531 Hometown Hero Banner Program



**Eastchester Supervisor Anthony Colavita, with Veterans and Girl Scouts from Troop #1531**

The Town of Eastchester will be supporting the Junior Girl Scout Troop #1531 Hometown Hero Banner Program. The Junior Girl Scouts have developed a banner program to pay tribute to past and present service men and women. People can purchase a banner recognizing a service man or woman. The banners will have photographs of the veteran, active duty member or deceased service member together with other additional information.

The banners will be erected around town on brackets for pedestrians and motorists to see. People interested in participating can reach out to the Scouts at [GIRLSCOUTTROOP1531@gmail.com](mailto:GIRLSCOUTTROOP1531@gmail.com)

Eastchester Veterans will also be involved in the program which they support as well. Veteran Josh Gaccione thinks it is a great program and thanked the Scouts for doing it.

Supervisor Colavita thanked our Veterans and Troop 1531 as well and said that this Veterans Day will involve a greater degree of recognition thanks to the Hometown Hero banners located all around the town.

## Science Barge Re-Opens for Your Visit



On July 17, Groundwork Hudson Valley will celebrate the re-opening of the Science Barge, which is the only fully functioning demonstration of renewable energy supporting sustainable food production in New York.

The Science Barge is a floating environmental education center on the Hudson River that has been in Yonkers since 2008. The Science Barge grows an abundance of fresh produce including tomatoes, melons, peppers, eggplant, and lettuce with zero net carbon emissions, zero pesticides, and zero runoff.

All of the energy needed to power the Barge is generated by solar panels, wind turbines, and biofuels while the hydroponic greenhouse is irrigated solely by collected rainwater and purified river water, thus operating completely "off the grid." The Science Barge engages in organic growing process which eschew the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The end result is a self-sustaining farm with zero net water consumption, zero greenhouse emissions, and no harmful runoff.

The Science Barge was originally developed by NY Sun Works, an environmental nonprofit who conceived of the barge as a mobile way to demonstrate a prototype for rooftop farming technology. The barge's inaugural tour of New York City took place between May and October of 2007, during which time it hosted around 9,000 curious visitors. In 2008 the barge was purchased by Groundwork Hudson Valley for a grand total of \$2 and moved to its permanent home in Yonkers where it continues to educate school groups, volunteers, and the general public on sustainable growing practices. Produce grown on the Science Barge is donated to a local church.

The greenhouse grows fresh produce including tomatoes, melons, popcorn, peppers, eggplant and lettuce.

The Science Barge is a public education destination and hosts school groups from the tri-state area during the week, and the general public on weekends.

The Science Barge is open for weekday educational programs and field trips for school groups grades 1-12, camps, university-level students, as well as teacher training. There are two full-time sustainability educators with many volunteers assisting. There are tours ranging from 30 minutes to 3 hours with onboard activities as well as a lunch program.

For more information on how to plan your visit to the Science Barge, visit, [groundworkhv.org](http://groundworkhv.org), or call 914-375-2151.

## Westchester Rising

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## Mount Vernon Entrepreneur Uses County Program to Help Combat Food Insecurity



From left to right, Jaquetta Jenkins, Lisette Gongora, Marion Henson, Deborah Novick, Caroline Vance, Trecilda Larmond, Tirlena Lugo

### Seeds of Success Planted at Launch 1000

Launch Business and Combat Food Insecurity foFresh organic fruits and vegetables were delicately placed in what Marion Henson calls “Bloom Boxes.” The Mount Vernon native entered the Westchester County Office of Economic Development’s Launch1000 Program in November 2020 and her dream of filling neighbors in need with food, is already growing.

She’s set up shop at 595 Main Street inside the now-closed historic Loew’s Theater. Calling her business, “Bloom Healthy,” customers can purchase boxes of fresh produce for themselves or pay-it-forward and buy a box for someone in need. On Henson’s first day, there were already 40 online orders with half of them pay-it-forward boxes.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said: “Ms. Henson’s business is more than a business. It’s a community partnership. Here’s an entrepreneur that absorbed the resources of the Launch1000 Program to give back and it’s heartwarming to see so many people taking to task the idea of helping others have nutritious meals.”

Director of Entrepreneurship and Innovation for the Westchester County Office of Economic Development Deborah Novick said: “It’s truly unbelievable how the richness of people’s life experiences have become so accessible through this program. With so many Launchers participating, and sharing their expertise, there is magic happening within this program, which provides encouragement, support and networking. It is such a benefit to offer training to make a living while continuing to build the economy. To see Bloom Healthy literally just bloom, is inspirational.”

Henson connected with other Launchers who volunteered to pack boxes and even provide food from their garden. Henson chose New Rochelle to start her business because she is a graduate of the College of New Rochelle and connected with the neighborhoods in the city.

Henson said: “I have a real love of the community. I know there are different groups of people here in New Rochelle, from those who are food insecure and those who are not. I wanted to help wherever I could.”

To sign up to purchase or provide a Bloom Box, visit <https://www.bloom-healthy.org/>. Pick-ups are every Wednesday and Friday from 11am to 5pm.

More than 700 Westchester residents have applied to Launch1000. The final cohort will be admitted on July 26th. Applications are still open, and interested participants can learn more about the program and apply [[westchestercatalyst.com/launch1000](https://westchestercatalyst.com/launch1000)]here.

## Get the Dam Vaccine Already!



By Eric W. Schoen

I apologize to those of you who have already received your COVID vaccinations. I hope you still find this column informative. Sadly, over 30% of your friends, your neighbors, your relatives, people you love dearly have not gotten their vaccines. In some parts of the country including right over the Mario Cuomo-Tappan Zee Bridge the number of unvaccinated is much greater.

Isn’t it a shame that after the early shortage of vaccines we have more vaccines and we are not using them? Remember the scramble to get an appointment for a vaccine, sitting for hours at your computer and spending hours on the phone to get an appointment. That craziness is all gone now.

Simply no one can say they don’t know where to get the vaccine. CVS, Walgreens, even many small, old school pharmacies that are not part of a conglomerate offer the vaccine free of charge. Many organizations like the Yonkers Office for the Aging and Scarsdale Fire Department have partnered with health organizations to bring vaccines to the home bound elderly. You can get a vaccine at Grand Central Station while you are waiting for a train!

I’m tired of the politicians saying people don’t know where to go for a vaccine. Maybe that’s a problem in Arkansas, one of the states with the lowest vaccine rate. But no one in this neck of the woods can say they don’t know where a vaccine is available. Sadly, at press time Governor Cuomo closed the vaccine facility at Jones Beach due to lack of business. I was hoping that sun worshipers would be able to get the vaccine as they worked on their tan.

Let me be clear. If you have a medical reason why you can’t get the vaccine I hear you. Religious reasons I’m a little skeptical about. But the numbers of people who claim they can’t get vaccinated because of religious reasons are very small.

I think President Biden’s key Covid advisor said it best. ‘If we had had the pushback for vaccines that we’re seeing in certain media ... we probably would still have smallpox and we’d probably still have polio in this country if we had the false information that’s being spread now,’ Fauci told CNN’s Jim Acosta in an interview over the weekend. “If we had that back decades ago, I would be certain that we’d still have polio in this country.”

The internet. A wonderful device to get information. Sadly there is a lot of misinformation out there. Don’t blame former President Donald Trump. He got vaccinated. Don’t blame President Biden. He got vaccinated. Don’t blame Conservative television and radio host Sean Hannity. As we go to press he is encouraging his minions to get vaccinated.

Blame idiots like Robert Kennedy, Jr. for spreading the anti-vaccination message. His poor father who we lost so young and his uncles are rolling over in their graves when he tells people not to get the common vaccines that have kept this country safe. Sadly because he is a ‘Kennedy’ (and I have

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## A Diverse Workforce for a Diverse County



Dr. Dial Hewitt and his colleagues in the Westchester County Department of Health have been on the front lines of the Covid-19 pandemic for the past year, working exhausting hours and putting their own health and safety on the line to serve others.

Despite the risks and the challenges they face, the Department’s doctors, nurse practitioners, public health nurses, lab techs and support staff remain firmly committed to their mission: protecting the health and safety of the people of Westchester.

“You go into this field because you care about people and you get gratification from helping them,” said Hewlett, who is board certified in Internal Medicine and in the sub specialty of Infectious Diseases.

“I am fortunate and blessed to work with such dedicated professionals,” he said of his colleagues at WCDOH. Most recently, he has been helping oversee the County’s vaccination clinic on Court Street in White Plains.

Hewlett noted that Westchester was ground zero for the Covid-19 pandemic, where an outbreak occurred in New Rochelle.

The virus spread through houses of worship, congregate care settings and other locations – and the Health Department staff mobilized swiftly to respond.

“They were willing to put their lives on the line when we didn’t know very much about this disease,” Hewlett said of the entire Health Department team. “Whatever we have asked of them, they do it.”

Dr. Hewlett has also been involved in outreach to Westchester’s minority communities to provide “accurate, scientific information” and encourage people of color to get vaccinated. He said he hopes to alleviate the hesitation of some Black and Latino residents to get the vaccine.

The executive team at the Health Department has been praised for its leadership during the pandemic, including: Dr. Sherlita Amler, commissioner; Renee Recchia, first deputy commissioner; Dr. Hewlett; Dr. Marisa Montecalvo, Dr. Ada Huang and Lori Smittle, PhD (doctor of nursing).

To receive notifications of all upcoming civil service exams, people can sign up to receive email notifications at <https://exams.westchestergov.com/webexam/emailSubscription/subscribe.htm>.

## County Board Recognizes 2021 Jandon Scholarship Recipients

On Monday evening, the Westchester County Board of Legislators celebrated the generosity of the Jandon Foundation and the accomplishments of the 15 recipients of scholarships in the 2021 Jandon Scholars program.

In his opening remarks, Board Chair Ben Boykin thanked the Jandon Foundation for its continued generosity and commitment. "Recognizing this important program has become a cherished tradition here at the Board ... the Jandon Scholars program isn't just a college scholarship – it is a guiding and generous hand through a student's college career. It is set up to provide support and to reward effort and excellence. In addition, these students become part of a community of past Jandon Scholars with a shared experience for the rest of their lives, providing valuable mentoring and key contacts."

In a video presentation, Alec Cecil, son of Jandon founders Don and Jane Cecil, said, "My sister, Leslie, and I have been honored with the opportunity to continue in our parents' footsteps. My parents were huge believers in the value of education and in assisting others to achieve success in life ... Now to the graduates -- welcome to the community of Jandon Scholars ... You have all achieved much, yet you have much more to do. While this scholarship is a reward for what you have accomplished so far, it is really designed to enhance your opportunity to succeed in college and beyond. Much is now expected of you: to work hard, complete school, pursue careers, families, community service, help others ... Consider this as our investment for the enterprise that is the rest of your life. We hope to be your partners for the next four years and to help you succeed."

You can view the video presentation, which includes photos of each of the 15 scholars as well as Mr. Cecil's remarks here: <https://vimeo.com/574157718>

The program awards \$12,000 over four years to academically-qualifying Westchester public high school seniors with limited resources to help them realize their dream of a college education. Since the beginning of the program, 320 scholarships have been awarded totaling \$2 million dollars.

The Jandon Scholars program is unique in that it follows students through their college careers. Awards are provided in annual, increasing increments as incentives, and scholarship recipients have access to a network of hundreds of alumni who have come through the program.

Below is a list of this year's Scholars, the high schools they graduated from and the colleges they will be attending.

- Luis Aguilar, Ossining High School -- Mercy College
- Diamond Brown, Roosevelt High School Early Childhood Studies -- NYU-Tandon School of Engineering
- Malik Hylton, Gorton High School -- Lehman College
- Martinez Jean Claude, Mount Vernon STEAM Academy - Emory University
- Kevin Leak, Woodlands High School -- Syracuse University
- Opeyemi Majiyagbe, Riverside High School -- Skidmore College
- Katherine Mora, Hendrick Hudson High School -- Columbia University
- Katherine Quezada, Peekskill High School -- John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- Evelyn Rios, Riverside High School -- Northeastern University
- Isac Sacoto, Peekskill High School -- Cornell University
- Nicole Santana, Riverside High School -- Hunter College
- Gabrielle Sylvester, Mount Vernon High School -- New York University
- Luisa Urgiles, Peekskill High School -- Binghamton University
- Navaiya Williams, Yonkers Middle High School -- Brown University
- Kayla Yan, Mamaroneck High School -- University at Buffalo

### GLEN ISLAND BEACH AND THE ENTIRE PARK OPEN TO PUBLIC

Glen Island Beach and the entire Glen Island Park are set to reopen Saturday, July 3, 10 a.m. after being closed to the public over year. The Park was utilized as a COVID-19 drive-thru testing site since March 2020.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said: "This is another sign that we are winning the war against COVID-19. It was here in New Rochelle that the first case of COVID-19 in the Westchester was detected, at the time the drive-through testing was what we needed but now what we need is for our residents to have their park back. I am thrilled that Glen Island will be open for the summer. I'm thrilled that families will once again enjoy the cool breeze off the sound and that kids will splash in the water."

Westchester County Parks Commissioner Kathy O'Connor said: "We are so excited to reopen Glen Island in time for residents to enjoy it during the summer months. I'm proud of the staff for all of the hard work put into getting Glen Island back into shape."

The beach will be open daily from Saturday, July 3 through Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 6, 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. with the last entry at 6 p.m. Westchester County residency required for admission with either County Park Pass or a valid New York State driver's license with a Westchester county address.

Group picnicking by reservation will resume later in July. For information or questions, call: (914) 231-4575.

Parking is \$5 with Park Pass, \$10 without Park Pass, daily through Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 6, then weekends only. Glen Island Park is located at Weyman Avenue, New Rochelle, NY 10805.

## The Many Members of the Political Flip-Flop Club



By Ann Muro, former Chair Yonkers Democratic Party

Now that we have the long-awaited results of the Yonkers Democratic Primary, some political realities may also come into play. As former chair of the Yonkers Democratic Party and one who has remained active for many years, I was "turned off" by the nature of some of the campaigns.

Many who won had been the anticipated victors. Then those who lost may be going through what I always referred to as the "could have, would have, should have" syndrome.

I took issue in particular with one of the campaign pieces sent out against Mike Khader. That was the one that referred to Council President Khader as "Flip Flop Mike." Now whether or not someone was supporting Mike was not the issue.

The piece voters received blasting him for changing parties was one that Mike could have easily addressed. Perhaps "would have, could have, should have" fits right in here.

Mike was not the only "Flip Flopper" There were many past and present that took the same step whether they were local "Flip Floppers," state "Flip Floppers" and even national "Flip Floppers."

For your information here are some of the Flip Floppers who either sought nominations or received nominations, were elected or even served long term. So here goes!!!

- Donald Trump – President
- Bernie Sanders – Vermont Senator
- Mayor Bloomberg – NYC Mayor
- Janet DiFiore – Westchester DA
- Angelo Martinelli – Mayor of Yonkers
- Mike Spano – Mayor of Yonkers
- Hank Spallone – Mayor of Yonkers
- Bernice Spreckman – City Council & County Legislator- 3 times!
- Nader Sayegh – NY Assembly
- John Rubbo – City Council
- David Tubiolo – County Legislator
- Charles Wood – Supreme Court Judge
- Brandon Neider – Former President Young Republicans
- Zehy Jereis – Former Chair Yonkers Republican Party
- Tim Hodges – Candidate 6th Council District
- Mario DeGiorgio – Candidate Mayoral Primary
- Frank Spotorno- Candidate City Council

And the list goes on. Many of these politicians had wonderful, successful careers. So Mike Khader was not alone; he only joined the "Flip Flop Club."

### PART TIME BUS DRIVER WANTED

North Yonkers Preservation & Development Corporation is looking for a part time Bus Driver, to transport seniors to the grocery stores, doctor appointments, special trips, and a shuttle to Lake Ave. A CDL license with a passenger endorsement is required. Please call Angela at 914-423-9754 for information.

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**Owner of Recycled Paws Rescue Arrested for Stealing Money Meant for the Rescue of Dogs**



On July 14, the SPCA Westchester announced that their Humane Law Enforcement Unit (HLE), under the direction of Ernest Lungaro and in a joint investigation with The Economic Crimes Bureau of the Westchester District Attorney's Office, arrested and charged Lisa Marie Birdsall, 55, with Grand Larceny on July 13, 2021.

Birdsall's Recycled Paws Rescue operates out of 1851 E. Main Street, Mohegan Lake, NY. From January 5, 2020 to December 31, 2020, Birdsall stole over \$3,000 from Recycled Paws Rescue, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit dog rescue organization, without permission or authority to do so. More specifically, Birdsall stole over \$17,000 from Recycled Paws Rescue by taking monies intended for the not-for-profit organization and instead spending it for her own personal purposes. Her next court appearance in Yorktown Heights is scheduled for August 03, 2021.

If you suspect animal cruelty or neglect, call the Police or SPCA Westchester's Confidential Animal Cruelty Hotline at 914-941-7797.

SPCA Westchester is a no-kill animal welfare organization located in Briarcliff Manor. The SPCA is not affiliated with the ASPCA. Visit us at [spcawestchester.org](http://spcawestchester.org)

**TWO BRONX MEN PLEAD GUILTY FOR IDENTITY**

**THEFT AND FRAUD IN TJX STORES**

Two Bronx men pled guilty for their part in a more than yearlong scheme that included using fraudulently obtained credit cards to steal from several Westchester County TJX Companies, Inc. stores, including TJ Maxx, Marshalls, and Home Goods, Westchester District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced July 16.

Patrick Onogwu and Asanimo Riesa, and their associates stole more than \$50,000 opening TJX Rewards credit cards by using victims' personal identifying information, including Social Security numbers, forging victims' signatures on credit applications, and presenting forged United States passport cards and driver's licenses as identification. The defendants then used these fraudulently obtained credit card accounts to purchase merchandise and then returned some of the stolen merchandise to other TJX stores to obtain cash refunds.

"This fraud scheme was detailed and extensive," DA Mimi Rocah said. "But thanks to our law enforcement partners from the Westchester Department of Public Safety, the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the victim's retail crime investigative team, the fraud scheme was stopped."

Onogwu and Riesa have been ordered to pay restitution to the TJX Companies and Synchrony Bank and forfeited a 2013 Mercedes Benz SUV that was used to travel from store to store committing the fraud, as well as various electronic devices used to commit the fraud, and monies in bank accounts that were used in connection with the scheme.

Other defendants in the case, Hassan Miller and Dawn Anderson were sentenced in September to 1.5 to 4.5 years each in state prison after pleading guilty in November 2019.

The case was before Judge David S. Zuckerman, AJSC, in Westchester County Court, and was prosecuted by Senior Assistant District Attorney Stefanie DeNise.

**Apply for Your Passport Six Months Before Your Departure**



Greenburgh Supervisor Paul Feiner thanked US Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer for intervening in the case of a Greenburgh woman waiting for her Passport. Feiner writes, "One family won't be devastated by the Passport authorities negligence Last week News 12 aired a story highlighting a Greenburgh woman who was very worried that she would miss her brothers wedding in Bulgaria. She was scheduled to fly to Europe this past Thursday but did not have the passport. She and her mom had purchased non refundable airline tickets. Unfortunately, even though she had applied for an expedited passport in late May - the Passport agency had not processed the application. Without a passport she would miss her brothers wedding in Europe. She and her family would have been devastated.

"I reached out to Senator Chuck Schumer's regional office and am pleased to report that their office was extremely helpful. On Tuesday night I received word from Senator Schumers office that the passport had been approved and was being mailed priority to the constituent. On Wednesday I contacted the government liaison I deal with at the US Postal Service who arranged for the passport to be delivered immediately. No postal service delays in this case Good news: The family was able to celebrate this important family event together.

"A big thank you to Senator Schumer and his staff for their help in expediting the passport. There are other constituents who also are experiencing problems getting their passports - due to problems with the Passport Agency. Many people are devastated because they have to cancel weddings, vacations and business trips.

"If you plan a vacation abroad and don't have a passport - don't want for the last minute. Even expedited applications take a very long time for the passport agency to process. I will continue to try to help residents and contact everyone I can think of when constituents contact me about passport problems but some members of Congress report that even Congressional intervention can't always get the passports delivered in time. And - some people will be disappointed. I'm happy to try. My e mail is [pfeiner@greenburghny.com](mailto:pfeiner@greenburghny.com)

"Finally, I think there is no excuse for the passport agency delays in processing applications. I believe that there should be congressional investigations as to the reasons and that the passport agency should be provided with the resources they need to effectively and efficiently process all applications.

According to the State Department, general passport services can now take up to 18 weeks, compared to six to eight weeks before COVID, while expedited service, which costs an additional \$60, and took anywhere from days to three weeks before Covid-19, can now take up to 12 weeks.

"Some say, 'kiss the bride,' not your honeymoon or other memorable moments goodbye. Simply put, this passport backlog must end," said Sen. Schumer.

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Notice of formation of Daphne Cuts, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 05/10/2021. 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, 59 Fairmont Ave, Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of The Vision Junkie 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 The Vision Junkie LLC, 100 Riverdale Ave., Apt. 8C., Yonkers, NY 10701 Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of formation of SaucyGuava, LLC Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 05/21/2021. 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, 332 Palisade Ave Apt C1, Yonkers, NY 10703-2918. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of iFantasy, LLC. Arts of Org. filed with the SSNY on 6/8/2021. 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, 7014 13th Avenue, Suite 202 Brooklyn, NY 11228 . Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of THE LAST PACK LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 03/05/2021. Office: Westchester County, New York. SSNY has been designated as Agent of the LLC upon whom the process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to the LLC, Joseph A. Candelario 74 Radford Ave., Yonkers, NY 10705. Purpose: Any lawful act.

Notice of Formation of Capital Efficient Strategies LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with SSNY on May 10, 2021. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to 128 Fuller Road Briarcliff Manor NY 10510. Purpose: any lawful act or activity

Notice of Formation of Pumpkin Vine Publishing, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with SSNY on 6/11/21. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Pumpkin Vine Publishing LLC, 22 Boulder Trail, Bronxville, New York 10708. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of formation of MJV Construction LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 03/29/2021. Office location: 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, 455 Tarrytown Road, Mailbox 1135, White Plains, NY 10607. Purpose: any lawful purpose.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: TRUCK & CAR REPAIR CENTER LLC, LLC Articles of Organization were filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 06/01/21. 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: United Corporate Services, Inc. 10 Bank St Ste 560. White Plains, NY 10606. Purpose: any lawful business activity.

Notice of Formation of Joyful Ventures LLC. Filed with the SSNY on 06/07/2021. 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, 145 Valentine Lane apt#4E, Yonkers, NY 10705. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of SUHANA HOLDINGS LLC. Filed with the SSNY On 05/10/2021. Office location: Westcheter 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, 27 Ravine Avenue, Apt. 2B, Yonkers NY 10701. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

## SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Manufacturers and Traders Trust Company, a/k/a M&T Bank, successor by merger with Hudson City Savings Bank,

Plaintiff

AGAINST

Nigel B. Kelly a/k/a Nigel Kelly a/k/a Nigel Brian Kelly, Defendant(s)

Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly dated November 4, 2020 I, the undersigned Referee, will sell at public auction in Courtroom 200 of the Westchester County Courthouse, 111 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, White Plains, New York on July 23, 2021 at 9:30AM, premises known as 221 Betsy Brown Road, Rye Brook, NY 10573. All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the Village of Rye Brook, Town of Rye, County of Westchester, State of NY, Section 135.44 Block 1 Lot 12. Approximate amount of judgment \$956,569.17 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index# 50722/2019. The auction will be conducted pursuant to the COVID-19 Policies Concerning Public Auctions of Foreclosed Property established by the Ninth Judicial District.

Ralph D. Amicucci, Esq., Referee

LOGS Legal Group LLP f/k/a Shapiro, DiCaro & Barak, LLC

Attorney(s) for the Plaintiff

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*Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-*

(and I have great respect for the rest of his family) he gets media coverage far beyond what he deserves.

Before we put some myths to rest, let's take a moment to thank the scientists and medical professionals who so quickly developed the Covid 19 vaccine. Do you remember how many lives were lost before the vaccine was widely distributed. And a big thank you to the health care professionals and those who put their lives at risk to keep us healthy, safe and secure. Everyone who was honored at the ticker tape parade in New York City deserved the accolades they received.

Now let's put some myths to rest. Misinformation you may have gotten off the internet. Or from someone you know. If you get the Covid vaccine you are not going to grow 2 heads. You may need a booster shot after 6 months or a year. Do you get a flu shot every year. It's the same thing.

If you had the coronavirus you still should get vaccinated to protect you from the new variants. Vaccines can not make you infertile or cause issues in pregnancy. People who are pregnant are at much higher risk of severe symptoms or death if they get COVID-19. That's why specialists recommend anyone who wants to conceive in the future get the shot now, as well as anyone currently pregnant or breastfeeding.

The vaccine can make you sick. Yes, you might not feel good--but that's just your immune system at work. "It's a small one to two day sense of illness. It is usually lasts about a day and it is far, far, far better than having a disease," said Patsy Stinchfield, head of the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases. "Those things are to be expected. And what is happening is your immune system is responding. It sees the bad guy. It's making the good guys."

The vaccine does not change your genetic makeup. It does train your cells to respond to infection, but it doesn't change your DNA. Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine does not cause you to be magnetic. For females, your menstrual cycle cannot be affected by being near someone who received a COVID-19 vaccine.

None of the COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States shed or release any of their components. Vaccine shedding is the term used to describe the release or discharge of any of the vaccine components in or outside of the body. Vaccine shedding can only occur when a vaccine contains a weakened version of the virus. None of the vaccines authorized for use in the U.S. contain a live virus. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

Some feel The vaccine was developed too quickly to be safe. There were no shortcuts in the vaccine process, but Operation Warp speed (occurring during the Trump administration. Again, he took the vaccine) made it more efficient. "The emergency use authorization, all it did was speed up the administration and production parts, it actually did not cut any corners on safety," said Dr. JoAnn Jose, St. Louis University Hospital infectious disease specialist.

If you have been vaccinated and by chance are around someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to get tested or stay away from others unless you have symptoms.

Companies can mandate employees be vaccinated. Fine with me. As far as I am concerned they should have that right. The Bruce Springsteen Show was the first show to open on Broadway. Want to see it? You better bring proof of vaccine when you go to the theater. As far as I am concerned, you want to go to theater, attend concerts, attend indoor and outdoor events with large crowds? The organizers should demand proof of vaccination.

I am not a doctor. You need to contact yours to see if there is any reason you should not be vaccinated. Do we really want to be 'locked down' as we were a year ago. Do you care about the health of the ones you love? And your own health?

As the Governor of New Jersey said, 'we have a pandemic among the unvaccinated.' Get the damn vaccine already!

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

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## **OP ED: The Missing Puzzle Pieces: Beaveridge/Senior Center/Soundview**

The puzzle box has been opened and some pieces appear to be missing. I'm referring to the puzzle of the area between Allan Avenue and Underhill Avenue along Rt. 118 better known as Beaveridge and Soundview.

And since the Yorktown Town Supervisor has presented the puzzle to the Town, I'm asking him to provide the missing pieces.

There are at least six missing pieces.

### **Missing Piece One – Free?**

Piece One went missing on November 10, 2020 when the Supervisor told us that there would be a new Senior Center/Parks & Recreation office built on the Beaveridge property on Allan Avenue. "The challenge has always been, 'How do you pay for it?'" Slater said, adding that as part of a public-private partnership, Beaveridge would pay for the new center.

The agreement between the Town and Beaveridge states that Beaveridge will pay up to \$880,000 for the design and construction of the new 4,000 square foot building. But what is the plan if the cost is more than \$880,000? Well, the agreement between the parties executed on November 20, 2020 states that the Town will finance any additional coverage.

But that's not all! The agreement between Town and Beaveridge has two financial exhibits. Exhibit B lists the continued annual PILOT payment (payment in lieu of taxes) Beaveridge will pay for another 35 years if the new Senior Center is not built. Exhibit C lists the PILOT payments for each of the 35 years once the new Senior Center is built.

Exhibit B shows the PILOT payment for year 1 at \$135,881, increasing to \$250,054 in year 35. But – once the Senior Center is built and Exhibit C goes into effect — the yearly payments are reduced, beginning with only \$133,466 in year 1 and ending with just \$171,161 in year 35.

If the Senior Center is built, the loss of income to Yorktown over the term of the agreement could be as much as \$1,416,098 which is much more than the \$880,000 to build.

So, who exactly is paying for the new Senior Center?

### **Missing Piece Two – Maintenance?**

The Yorktown Town website has an announcement entitled, "Yorktown Approves Affordable-Housing Agreement." That announcement clearly states "Beaveridge will be responsible for all maintenance and repairs at the new Senior Center."

However, the actual agreement states, "Town tenant shall be responsible for all interior maintenance, cleaning, utilities, etc."

### **Missing Piece Three – Parking?**

Parking for the new Senior Center and Parks & Recreation offices would be located on the adjacent Soundview property because there is no space for the necessary parking at Beaveridge. I have not found any study determining the required number of parking spaces. Soundview is expected to provide parking but there should be a study stating how much parking is needed.

Another question related to the number of seniors and employees coming and going during the day has to do with whether those vehicles will enter through the Allan Avenue entrance to Beaveridge, or through the Underhill Avenue entrance to Soundview. If through Soundview, has the Soundview traffic study included these trips?

### **Missing Piece Four - Liability?**

With Town employees and seniors parking on the Soundview property, if there is ever an accident of any manner (i.e. a slip on the ice by a senior or by a Town employee, one car hitting another car, etc.) which organization has liability? Will liability rest with the new owner or manager of the Soundview property, the Beaveridge owners, or the Town? To enter into a public-private partnership, a local government has to know the potential magnitude of risk, particularly risks that feel like outliers.

The same liability issue exists for seniors and Town employees in the proposed Senior Center on Beaveridge property. Should there be any accident at the Senior Center or on the walkway to the Senior Center, does Beaveridge have liability, or does the Town which is using the property for Town purposes, or do they have joint liability?

### **Missing Piece Five – The Nutrition Center?**

Will the Nutrition Center located at the Community Center move to the new Senior Center, or will lunch be trucked over? Or, will the seniors wanting lunch have to go back and forth to the Community Center for lunch? If the Nutrition Center moves to the new Beaveridge Senior Center that will create even more traffic.

### **Puzzle Piece Six – Interconnections?**

The sixth puzzle piece is what happens if the current version of the Soundview project does not move forward as planned.

Although Soundview is not a signatory to the Beaveridge agreement, it certainly appears as though they were at least consulted. According to the agreement, "The Town and/or the developer of the Soundview property shall be responsible for the siting and the construction costs for all parking, parking lot site-lighting, parking lot paving and parking lot access, including the main vehicular approach/entrance, for the Senior Center Building, all of which shall be located on the Soundview Property ("Building Access and Parking")."

When the Supervisor signed the Beaveridge agreement without an approved parking plan in place, he must have been confident that the current Soundview plan would be approved as is. Why else would he approve the Senior Center at Beaveridge, which is dependent on the Soundview project, before the Soundview project is approved? And the Soundview project is dependent on the proposed Overlay District Zoning plan, which has not been approved as of yet either.

It appears as though all these announcements must be out of sequence, unless everything has already been agreed to.

Looking for the missing puzzle pieces? Let's hope it's not a Jingo puzzle.

**Leslie Hochberg, Yorktown, Beaveridge Resident**

MDG Design + Construction is currently seeking construction Section 3 eligible applicants for a moderate rehabilitation project, Calcagno Homes Located in Yonkers, NY.

Section 3 eligible applicants are invited to submit a resume for the work in the following trades:

- Electrician Mechanic, Junior Foreman, & Helpers.
- Duct Installer & Refrigeration Piper.
- Plumber
- Elevator Repair and Maintenance (union)
- Roof Laborer
- Masonry Laborer
- General Laborer

Work is to be performed in Westchester County under Davis Bacon Act (prevailing wage) requirements.

Section 3 residents are:

- Public housing residents or
- Persons who live in the area where a HUD-assisted project is located and who have a household income that falls below HUD's income limits.

For more Section 3 information: <https://www.hud.gov/section3>

Eligible applicants must have an active Osha 30 card. If interested in applying, please send a resume with the position desired to:

Jeffrey Goritz; [jgoritz@mdgny.com](mailto:jgoritz@mdgny.com)

## **Letter to the Editor:**

### **Hezi and Commissioner Gardner, Say It Ain't So**

Mr. Murphy,

I am a reader of your newspapers, and all media in Yonkers and across Westchester County. I knew that Mr. Aris was being sued by three Yonkers Police officers for defamation, from the story that you wrote last year.

And, as a reader of the Yonkers Tribune over the years, including the Blue Trush series of stories, I was actually not surprised to hear that Aris is in legal troubles, because I did not believe some of the Blue Truth stories that I was reading.

But what did surprise me and actually shock me, was that former Yonkers Police Commissioner Charles Gardner was revealed by Aris as one of his primary sources for his stories. I actually doubted the story that you wrote, Mr. Murphy, so I contacted some of my friends in Yonkers law enforcement, who verified this fact.

Now I want to know how far did Gardner go in trying to ruin the careers of two of his fellow police officers in Yonkers? Did he confirm some of the stories that Aris has now admitted were not true?

Has Gardner been called in for a deposition in this case? I'm sure that he is hiding under a rock after this fact was revealed. My friend in Yonkers law enforcement told me that he is now considered 'A Rat' by his fellow members of the YPD.

Back in 1919, after members of the Chicago White Sox were found guilty of throwing the World Series, a little boy went up to Shoeless Joe Jackson and said, Say it Ain't So Joe!

I would have the same comment to former Commissioner Gardner. Say it Ain't So Chuck! Why did you try to ruin the careers of two leaders in the Yonkers Police Dept.? One of who is now Commissioner?

**Gene Tierney, Yonkers**

### **Mt. Vernon State of Emergency, continued from pg 1-**

Cuomo that Mount Vernon residents deserve better and we appreciate his assistance and look forward to a permanent solution with our garbage collection."

Reynolds has denied any blame for the crisis, blaming Mayor Patterson-Howard for "holding back checks and payments in her office." "She (Patterson-Howard) lies on the news blaming others. It shows that Mt. Vernon needs a responsible Mayor who can do the job," Reynolds added in a long Facebook video that the Mayor was spreading "false news" and called the attacks against her "defamation." But Reynolds may have herself defamed Mayor Patterson-Howard when she accused her of "misappropriating" city money and spending funds elsewhere on raises for Commissioners, calling it a "recipe for disaster."

Most believe that Reynolds is to blame. Patterson-Howard has called for the arrest of the Comptroller. "If she refuses to utilize the city funds to pay for emergency service vehicles then I would expect any law-enforcement agency in the state of New York to execute their powers to the highest level of their abilities. That would be not just a dereliction of duty's it would be criminally negligent," says Patterson-Howard.

### **Matt Damon Endorsement , continued from pg 1-**

that the endorsement from an "A List" Hollywood actor is unusual in Westchester, Petschek is also correct in noting that Damon's endorsement helps "voters to understand who I am professionally and personally."

Petschek is running on a "Bedford United" Party line, in addition to the republican party line, as a way for disaffected republicans and "never Trumpers" to vote for him on another line.

Petschek is running against democrat Jodi Kimmel to replace Erik Jacobson, who served as a Bedford Judge until he was arrested for DWI in 2019 and resisted arrest in Mt. Kisco, forcing police officers to have to use a taser to restrain him.

Kimmel touted the fact that she has been endorsed by many prominent democrats, including County Executive George Latimer, State Senator Shelly Mayer and Assemblyman Chris Burdick. "Endorsements come in many different varieties and some are more difficult to get than others. And for what it's worth, my college roommate thinks I'd make for a great Town Justice," noted Kimmel, who has also practiced law for more than 20 years and has lived in Bedford since 2008. She practices law with her husband in their law practice, and has wisely handled the Damon endorsement with some humor.

Another judicial race of note in Westchester is for State Supreme Court in the 9th Judicial District which includes Westchester and five other counties. More on those races in the weeks to come.

### **CRT Debate in Westchester , continued from pg 1-**

Ibrahim is shown in the video speaking with a Yorktown parent about Daks Armstrong, a Yorktown High School Guidance Counselor, who has spoken at Black Lives Matter, BLM, protests last year.

Ibrahim accused Armstrong of attempting to indoctrinate students and called for him to be fired. She also called Armstrong, "Daks-boy", in the video, an unfortunate comment that many at the Yorktown School Board meeting on July 12 took notice of.

"We should not let people who do not live in this community put up videos calling somebody that looks like me a boy. I'm offended by that. I'm a grown man. He is a grown man," said Yorktown parent George Price.

90% of the speakers at the Yorktown meeting supported the DEI initiative and many spoke favorably of Armstrong. Four of the speakers said that both CRT and DEI "demonized the white race," and "white students were being shamed for being white, and that it encouraged "the stereotype that all white people are racist."

The school board meeting in Yorktown was controlled and civil. The Lakeland school board meeting held on May 20 was more boisterous. Lakeland Superintendent Dr. Brendan Lyons said, CRT "is not a term that the team is using or a framework that has been explored at this time," Lyons said. "A concept that has been explored is Culturally Responsive Teaching," which, he explained, "is about forming relationships with your students and knowing who they are as learners and individuals, with diverse backgrounds, interests, passions, strengths, hopes, fears, and areas for growth."

Culturally Responsive Teaching has been taught in the Lakeland Elementary Schools for several years, through the districts Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team.

More speakers at the Lakeland meeting commented against CRT, and the topics of white privilege and systemic racism. Judy McLaughlin, Save our Schools (SOS), Westchester leader pleaded the board to resume the "fundamental education" of the general student population. Eight more parents firmly but calmly insisted that the board address their children's urgent everyday needs.

Last year, a group of Lakeland students formed Lakeland for Justice, which calls for implementing an anti-racism policy and work toward hiring and retaining more teachers of color.

The CRT debate is also underway in Westchester school districts including Pelham, Scarsdale, Rye, North Salem and New Rochelle.

The group Save Our Schools for Westchester Children, [saveourschools-forwestchesterchildren.org](http://saveourschools-forwestchesterchildren.org) is leading the effort to "exclude any theory based on the premise that the United States and its citizens are inherently racist, including: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI), Critical Race Theory (CRT), Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework (CR-S), and Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), in all of its forms," as its website states.

More on the CRT debate in Westchester, and the opinions of your elected officials, in the weeks to come.

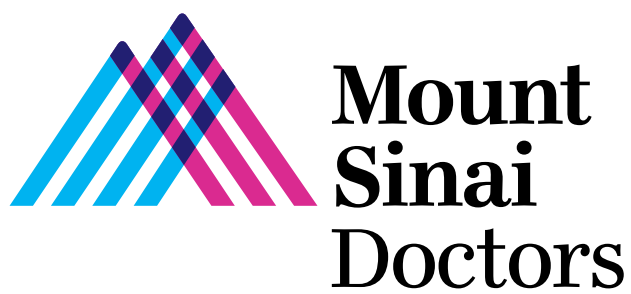
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