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Heart Health and Your Diet, During COVID



"Its time to think not only about survival during COVID, but that this is my life for now and I need to be concerned about my diet, and my health,"

Alon Gitig, MD, Director of Cardiology at Mount Sinai Doctors-Scarsdale and Mount Sinai Doctors-Yonkers.

By Dan Murphy

February is American Heart Month and cardiologists from the Mount Sinai Health System are sharing tips on heart disease prevention to lower the risk of heart attack, stroke, and COVID-19.

According to the American Heart Association, about one in three people with COVID-19 has cardiovascular disease, making it the most common underlying health condition. COVID-19 patients with underlying conditions are six times more likely to be hospitalized and 12 times more likely to die than patients without any chronic health problems. Nearly half of adults in the United States—more than 121 million people—have some type of cardiovascular disease. It is the leading cause of death among men and women in the United States; nearly 650,000 die from it every year. Yet heart disease is preventable 80 percent of the time.

Alon Gitig, MD, Director of Cardiology at Mount Sinai Doctors-Scarsdale and Mount Sinai Doctors-Yonkers, has agreed to share with our readers his thoughts on how to maintain a healthy heart during COVID.

This week Dr. Gitig discusses the relationship between your diet and the heart. "There are lots of fad diets out there, and many that claim that there diet will lower your risk of heart disease by lowering your weight quickly. But these studies and diets are plagued with problems because its difficult to monitor a persons diet for a long period of time and people's recall of what they eat is unpredictable.

"So the studies are all over the map, one may say that eating eggs are good for your heart health, while another says that eggs are bad. But that

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Mt. Vernon Mayor Calls on NY AG & DA Rocah to Investigate City's Finances



"Mount Vernon has reached the financial cliff", and "is under seige" from Comptroller Reynolds

Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard

By Dan Murphy

Mt. Vernon Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard has called on State Attorney General Letitia James, and Westchester District Attorney Mimi Rocah to "investigate the city's finances."

The pleas for help come after the City faces a late budget, a budget hole, and has no idea how much money is in the City's bank accounts or fund balance. Mayor Patterson-Howard may have no choice but to make cuts to City services and employees AND raise property taxes, but she has been stymied at finding out about the true financial health of the city by Comptroller Deborah Reynolds.

In another drastic move which shows how dire the situation is, the Mayor has also called on the City Council to call for an Emergency Financial Control Board to come into Mount Vernon and take over the financial duties of the City.

"This letter serves as a request to City council to enact legislation in the support of the New York State Legislature to advance the request for an Emergency Financial Control Board for the City of Mount Vernon. to assist with the financial duties of the City of Mount Vernon. This request does not come lightly, but as the Mayor, I've witnessed the dereliction of duty and gross fiscal malfeasance by our current Comptroller and have grave concerns about the financial state of our city.

"Financial Control Boards are not a new idea and currently there are several communities, including Yonkers, who have utilized them in the past. We can not afford to sit idly by while the financial status of our city remains in mystery while thousands of residents and our city workforce suffer from the inability of one person within our government. While this restricts Mount Vernon's fiscal sovereignty, we are in a dire situation that requires immediate intervention. Mount Vernon has reached the financial cliff, without a full investigation into the obstruction and negligent actions of the Comptroller, Mount Vernon will face some difficult decisions in our immediate and near future that will have irreparable harm on our public health and safety," writes Mayor Patterson-Howard.

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2021 Black History Month Series Part I: Black Power in 2021



Clockwise: Dennis Richmond Jr, Alajah Whitehead, Tullehsa Burbage, and Javonte Spencer

By: Dennis Richmond, Jr. (@NewYorkStakz)

My father, Mr. Dennis Richmond, Sr. came of age during the 1970s. In 1973, when my father was 18 years old, the United States president was Richard Nixon. American prisoners of war are released from Vietnam that same year. My dad told me plenty of stories about his adolescence. He remembers meeting The Godfather of Soul, James Brown, in California. There's one movement that my dad witnessed as a young man that entrances me. That movement is the iconic Black Power Movement.

Perhaps the most recognizable Black Power concept today is the powerful cultural expression of the 1960s and 1970s. People held their fists in the air as a sign of Black Power. People wore their natural hair as a sign of Black Power. People even attended HBCUs as a sign of Black Power. People followed ideologies from The Honorable Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and The Black Panther Party's Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. With all the fashion statements, natural hair, and cultural leaders of the 1970s, I had to ask myself, "What does Black Power look like in 2021?" To answer this question, I had conversations with young adults from across the country.

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Eric DiBartolo's Arrest: For the Greedy Its never Enough



Eric DiBartolo

By Dan Murphy

The Bible tells us, "So are the ways of everyone who is greedy for gain."

Eric DiBartolo is a longtime resident of Yorktown, my hometown. He graduated from Yorktown High School and stayed in town, rising to become the Highway Superintendent, from (1995-2013) head of the volunteer fire department and frequently seen on News 12 when a snowstorm would be coming.

DiBartolo also served as the President of the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce, and was a powerful member of the Yorktown Republican party. To say that DiBartolo was a prominent and respected member of Yorktown would be an understatement... until last week, when he was arrested for a petty scheme to steal \$15,000 worth of building supplies from Home Depot.

DiBartolo, who many believe is a millionaire based on his large salary for years as Highway Superintendent, his pension, and his other business ventures over the years including a local funeral home, was arrested on Jan. 6, but the news of this did not come out until late January.

He was arrested by Westchester Police because the crimes occurred at the Home Depot in Cortlandt Manor. He faces charges which could put him in jail, the most serious of which are four counts of felony grand larceny, and 19 misdemeanor counts of petit larceny.

Published reports have police stating that DiBartolo worked with a

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Cluxatawney Henrietta Predicts an Early Spring at Muscoot Farm



Muscoot Farm Curator Jonathon Benjamin with Cluxatawney Henrietta

On Groundhog Day, February 2, 2021, standing inside the Activity Barn and out of the snow at Alfred B. DelBello Muscoot Farm, Curator Jonathon Benjamin lifted Cluxatawney Henrietta out of her coop and found an egg, signaling an early spring.

Benjamin said: "As you know Punxsutawney Phil is a groundhog who has predicted the weather in Pennsylvania for years and years. We don't have a groundhog on the farm, so we use the next best thing – Henrietta, our weather predicting chicken."

This was Alfred B. DelBello Muscoot Farm's third annual egg laying in honor of Groundhog Day. Cluxatawney Henrietta, a 3-year-old Ameraucana Chicken, predicted an early spring in both 2019 and 2020.

Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Conservation Kathy O'Connor said: "Each year we await Cluxatawney Henrietta's Groundhog Day prediction. Although Winter Storm Orlena makes spring seem far away, we look forward to the days becoming longer and hope you will take some time to explore our many parks."

Henrietta agrees with Groundhog Staten Island Chuck, who didn't see his shadow but Punxsutawney Phil the longtime prognosticator of the winter weather did see his shadow. Remember the movie Groundhog Day with Bill Murray, Phil is in that movie.

So we will have to wait and see who got it right, and if its 6 more weeks of winter or an early spring.

I love the idea of Henrietta the Hen! Go Muscoot!

Heart Health and Diet during COVID, continued from pg 1-

doesn't mean that all of the studies are useless, and there are large enough studies that show the same strengths and statistics for the reduction of risk of heart disease.

"In general, populations around the world have the lowest risk of heart disease, (heart attack and stroke) and some near 0 that share comment threads of diet. All of these groups have not been inundated with processed foods. American diets have a majority of processed food, and we need to eat more whole foods in their original form.

"Other commonalities of a good diet in people's around the world is that they eat mostly plant based foods. They are eating more vegetables, grains, beans, legumes and fish. They do eat some poultry and meat but in small amounts. The Mediterranean Diet is an example of this type of diet, and can be used in making salads and cooking vegetables in olive oil. The Japanese also eat a low risk diet, with a lot more fish. Sushi is a whole food. When eating rice, brown rice is preferred," said Dr. Gitig, who added that sugar and flour based products should also be avoided or scaled back considerably.

"We all know that sugar is not good for our heart, but what is not commonly known is that flour is also bad for our diet, and is ubiquitous in people's diet in this country. Flour is not a whole food, the grain has been pulverized and the powder that results has lost its nutrient value and creates a rise in blood sugar."

Dr. Gitig said that all of us should examine our diets after almost one year at home under COVID. "You have an opportunity while working from home to eat healthy. You can prepare healthy lunches at home. The other way to eat while at home that I see in my patients is to eat more sandwiches and make a quick PBJ and snack all day.

"There are two different directions that you can go. But now after almost one year, its important for all of us to give what we are eating some conscious thought. Don't kick the can down the road because we don't know how long we will be at home. It's time to think not only about survival during COVID but that this is my life for now and I need to be concerned about my diet and my health," said Dr. Gitig.

More next week from Dr. Gitig, and from Mount Sinai Doctors of Westchester, about heart health. For more information, visit MountSinai.org, or MountSinaiDoctors.org/Westchester

Nursing Home Bombshell: "A Larger Number of Nursing Home Residents Died From COVID Than DOH Reflected"

Attorney General Letitia James Report



NY Democrats Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Attorney General Letitia James

By Dan Murphy

Many of our readers, and New Yorkers, may not know the name Letitia James...until now. James, the Attorney General of New York State, issued a report on Jan 28, which found that "A larger number of nursing home residents died from COVID-19 than DOH data reflected."

In her 76-page report, AG James accused Governor Andrew Cuomo's Department of Health of "undercounting" the number of seniors in nursing homes that died from COVID. Hours after James issued the report, the State revised their number of Nursing Home COVID deaths to 12,743 up 43% from the original number of 8,914, basically admitting to the finding in the James report.

Prior to the change, Cuomo and DOH Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker have been adamant that the number of New York nursing home residents who have died from COVID has NOT been underreported. The higher number resulted from adding in residents who caught COVID in nursing homes and then went to hospitals where they later died.

Attorney General James' office received more than 950 complaints about Nursing homes last year. The report also lays blame on the 304 nursing homes in New York and their operators. 20 of those NY Nursing homes are now under investigation by the State AG. The report found that operators failed to properly isolate COVID-positive residents; failed to adequately screen or test employees; forced sick staff to continue working and caring for residents; failed to train employees in infection control protocols; and failed to obtain, fit, and train caregivers with PPE.

Cuomo's handling of the nursing home COVID crisis has been widely reported on, most notably a directive on March 25 from the Dep. Of Health requiring nursing homes to accept COVID-19 patients if hospitals didn't have room for them anymore. The result was more than 6,000 positive patients returning to nursing homes between March and May of 2020, which accelerated the spread of COVID to others in nursing home residents.

Gov. Cuomo and Dr. Zucker have always stated that they were following federal guidelines from the CDC, Centers for Disease Control, and that the number of COVID nursing home deaths in other large states have been similar, including: Pennsylvania with 10,287 nursing home deaths (49% of their total deaths), Florida with 9,273 nursing home deaths (35% of their total deaths), Massachusetts with 7,944 nursing home deaths (56% of their total deaths) and New Jersey with 7,733 nursing home deaths (36% of their total deaths).

Many are also analyzing AG James report in the prism of politics. While Cuomo requested the investigation by the AG of the COVID nursing home deaths, many in Albany surprised that the AG would put herself in direct conflict with Gov. Cuomo, who was said to be surprised by the report.

Republicans jumped to blame Cuomo for the deaths. Upstate NY Congresswoman Elise Stefanik said, "This is now more than a nursing home scandal. This is a massive corruption and cover-up scandal."

Democrats wanted more information, and time to review the report. State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "The tragic situation in our nursing homes remains a heartbreaking reminder of the toll this pandemic took on this state. Nothing will bring back our loved ones that we lost but it is crucial that information guides our responses so this will not happen again."

NY U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand called for a full investigation of nursing home deaths across the country. Some have wondered why Cuomo and Zucker didn't release the information when it was available, in May 2020. Other New Yorkers are praising AG James for going where the truth lies, no matter what.

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Higher Risk, HS Sports Can Return, But Up To Each School District



Will HS Championship Basketball Return to the WP County Center?

Westchester school districts now have the choice to re-open their higher-risk sports, football, wrestling, ice hockey, rugby, basketball, contact lacrosse, volleyball, martial arts, and competitive cheer/dance, on Feb 1, after six Hudson Valley County Executive's including Westchester County Executive George Latimer approved the decision. On Jan 22, the New York State Department of Education giving the option to local school districts.

Westchester County Executive Latimer said, "Since early March Westchester County has grappled with the realities of COVID-19. While the bodily threats of the virus are clearly documented – the mental impacts of COVID-19 are also equally devastating. Children in particular have suffered significant mental harms due to the isolation of not being in school consistently, not socializing with friends and family, and not partaking in extracurricular activities. We know there is not a quick fix, but we also know that science has shown us, time and time again, that certain activities can resume with proper precautions put in place. Today, I stand with my fellow Hudson Valley County Executives in support of sports resuming in schools. To be clear, there will be protective protocols in place, and these additional precautions are to protect the athletes. But, I am in favor of providing our children with some normalcy so that they can begin to heal from this horrific pandemic. The resumption of sports will be important for the continued development and mental well-being of our young people – we must never forget them in the decisions we make."

County Executives from the seven counties of the Hudson Valley issued the following joint statement, "The Hudson Valley region has reviewed the updated "Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency," dated January 22, 2021 published by New York State. Following discussion with the New York State Association of County Health Officials, regional County Executives, and area public health officials, the Hudson Valley region will authorize "Higher-Risk" sports — both scholastic and non-scholastic — to proceed, effective February 1st, 2021, at the sole discretion of the governing school district or non-scholastic athletic organization.

"These activities include, but are not limited to, football, wrestling, ice hockey, rugby, basketball, contact lacrosse, volleyball, martial arts, and competitive cheer/dance. In accordance with the state guidance, county health departments in the region will also monitor whether there has been a more-transmissible variant of COVID-19 identified in the area, as well as the percent of local residents that test positive.

"School districts and non-scholastic organizations that will be organizing sporting activities are responsible for oversight and compliance with all published state guidance, including relevant safety protocols. All requirements outlined must be followed by sports teams, recreation activities, and facilities where games and practices are held. League staff, school athletic directors, sports facility directors, coaches, and parents are strongly encouraged to review this guidance and take steps to make sure current team and league operations align with this updated guidance."

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The Shadow of Your Smile



Eric Schoen, with Tony Bennett, right

By Eric W. Schoen

So, Staten Island Chuck didn't see his shadow. He predicts an early spring. Punxsutawney Phil did see his shadow in Pennsylvania. That means 6 more weeks of winter weather. As far as I am concerned, this weeks storm provided us with all the winter we need. I'll leave it up to the meteorologists who got it right this time. As we dig out our cars, we remember Yonkers own Ella Fitzgerald who said it best. Simply, this storm was 'Too Close for Comfort!'

Which brings us to another musical icon, Tony Bennett. It was announced on Monday that Bennett has Alzheimer's disease. He has been suffering for 4 years which included the time when he graciously agreed to have his picture taken with me in August 2017. The event celebrated the 50th Anniversary of WCBS Newsradio 880 and took place at the PlayStation Theater in Times Square.

I've always enjoyed Tony Bennetts singing, and his performance at the event was nothing short of spectacular. Talk about being in the right place at the right time. I came out of the theater, walked to the right and who did I see in the underpass that leads from 44th street to 45th street but none other than Bennett himself with an assistant waiting for their car. I walked up to him, told him how I admired him and how much I enjoyed his performance and asked if I could take a picture with him.

Without a bit of hesitation he agreed to the picture. Boy was I a happy camper. He was so kind. His music lives on as part of the Great American Songbook.

My parents both died very young. Dad was 59 and mom was 65. Dad died of a heart attack and mom had been ill for several years. I am sad that they died so young but grateful that neither of them had Alzheimer's. Mom was in a coma 2 days before she died, I knew I would not see her the next day as I was a cohost at the Will Library of a program featuring Mayor Koch. I held her hand and asked her if she knew who I was. She looked at me with that look only my mother could give as to say you idiot, of course I know who you are!

I am grateful neither of my parents had Alzheimer's and sympathize with those of you whose parents, relatives and friends are afflicted with this terrible disease. All we can do is pray and contribute toward Alzheimer's research. So I ask you to pray for our great crooner Tony Bennett and all of the other people who are suffering from Alzheimer's.

And now, as Paul Harvey, the late great radio commentator would say, 'The Rest of the Story!'

-Was New York Mayor Bill deBlasio crazy when he said outside dining is suspended earlier this week because of the storm? Who in their right mind was going to sit outside in 20 degree weather followed by over 18

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News in Yonkers and around Westchester

Senator Mayer's Youth Council Collects Coats for People in Westchester Who Need Them

United Way Awards Ruth Taylor Scholarships to Four Westchester Residents



Youth Advisory Council Members with Senator Shelley Mayer and Maria Imperial, CEO of the YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester (Left).

On Saturday, January 30th, Senator Shelley B. Mayer and her Youth Advisory Council (YAC) braved frigid temperatures to host a Coat & Toiletries Drive in commemoration of the MLK Day of Service.

The collection took place at the YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester. Donors were encouraged to bring new or gently used coats, socks, gloves, cloth face masks, soap, toothpaste, and toothbrushes.

Donations will benefit people in need working with the Westchester Labor Alliance (WLA). The WLA is a coalition of five community-based worker centers throughout Westchester defending workers and helping workers fight wage theft. Special thank you to Maria Imperial, CEO of the YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester for her support of the initiative.

Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, "I am so grateful for the dozens of community members who donated so generously. During this time of great need, it's heartwarming to see the community rally to help others who are struggling. My Youth Advisory Council members, managed by my staff Perla Arellano, took the lead on this initiative, and I am so impressed by their work, deep empathy, and their desire to contribute. Thank you also to my dear friend Maria Imperial for allowing us to host the Coat & Toiletries Drive at the YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester and for her generous contributions!"

The YAC members who participated in the Coat Drive were: Allegra Acevedo (Hunter College), Erik Hernandez Torres (Norwalk Community College), Viana Soto (Port Chester Middle School), Sophia Sabelja (Eastchester High School), Alex Sabelja (Eastchester High School), Isabel Tiburcio (Rye Country Day School), Brian Hernandez (Port Chester High School), and Fredy Iasenza (Harrison High School).

Senator Mayer's YAC is composed of high school and college-aged young adults interested in civic engagement and serving the community. Those interested in joining the YAC should email Perla Arellano at arellano@nysenate.gov or call (914) 934-5250.

New Yorkers Invited to Join Community Schools Advocacy Day: Feb 8, 5-7pm

Community members are invited to join students, parents, teachers and legislators to discuss the need for funding to protect and expand quality community schools in New York. A virtual briefing will be held on Community Schools Advocacy Day, February 8. Advocates will discuss critical state budget restorations essential to preserve afterschool programs and School Based Health Centers (SBHCs), and seek investment to enhance Early Childhood Education Programs.

Supporters and those interested in community schools are invited to join the virtual briefing on Monday, February 8, at 5:00-7:00 pm. REGISTRATION: Members of the public may register for the Zoom meeting using this link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/nys-community-schools-advocacy-day-2021-tickets-136724634061>. Questions may be addressed using the chat feature and speakers will be available for further discussion with reporters after the meeting.



2021 Ruth Taylor Scholarship recipients include Emma Kaishian, left, and Stefanie Nolli Gaspar, right.

United Way of Westchester and Putnam announced the awarding of \$3,500 scholarships from its Ruth Taylor Fund to four Westchester graduate students pursuing master's degrees in social work or public health.

The four recipients are Emma Kaishian of Sleepy Hollow, Holly Fink of Larchmont, Joseph Benanti of Eastchester, and Stefanie Nolli Gaspar of White Plains. Kaishian is pursuing her Master of Public Health degree from Columbia University. Fink and Nolli Gaspar are earning their Master of Social Work degrees from Fordham University, and Benanti is seeking his Master of Social degree from CUNY Lehman College.

"We at United Way of Westchester and Putnam strongly believe in investing in the leaders of tomorrow and these individuals demonstrate their commitment to the Westchester community by already working or volunteering for a local nonprofit," said Tom Gabriel, president and CEO of United Way of Westchester and Putnam. "We are impressed with the work these recipients have done and look forward to watching them grow."

Benanti is a volunteer at the Humane Society of Westchester at New Rochelle and interns at R.A.I.N. Total Care. Fink is the founder of Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration, vice president of Neighbors for Refugees, board member of Westchester Jewish Council and Westchester Jewish Center, and advocates for Indivisible Westchester. Kaishian completed an internship for the United Way of Westchester and Putnam in December 2020 and is the Women 4 Women president. Nolli Gaspar is the founder and co-director of White Plains Still Dreaming, secretary of Teens Under Construction, and is a domestic violence counselor for My Sisters' Place.

"I am honored to be a recipient of the Ruth Taylor Scholarship," said Kaishian. "This scholarship will support my access to higher education, which will enable me to embark upon a career where I hope to improve access to healthcare. COVID-19 has hindered opportunities for students, such as me, to make ends meet financially. I am so grateful to United Way for the much-needed relief."

The fund was established in tribute to Ruth Taylor upon her retirement as Westchester County's Commissioner of Public Welfare, recognizing her nearly four decades of outstanding service.

United Way of Westchester and Putnam, Westchester County Government, and the Urban League of Westchester County sponsor the annual awards. Applicants must be residents of Westchester County and enrolled in graduate studies in Social Work or Public Health on a full-time basis.

Since the 2008-2009 academic year, 64 students from Westchester have received a collective \$175,000 in Ruth Taylor scholarships.

For more information, visit www.uwvp.org.

There's always something happening on WVOX!

WESTCHESTER RISING

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Section 3 Work Opportunity

MDG Design + Construction is currently seeking construction Section 3 eligible applicants for a moderate rehabilitation project, Kingsley House Located in White Plains, NY. Section 3 eligible applicants are invited to submit a resume for the work in the following trades:

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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:

Jennifer Monaghan at JMonaghan@mdgny.com

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Alzheimer's Association Virtual Educational & Social February Programs



The Alzheimer's Association Hudson Valley Chapter will host the following virtual events via Zoom in February. To register for any of these programs, call the Alzheimer's Association at 800.272.3900 or by visiting [visit alz.org/hudsonvalley](http://alz.org/hudsonvalley).

Living with Alzheimer's: For People with Alzheimer's (part 2) will be held from 3-4 p.m. Monday, Feb. 1. This program, offered in partnership with St. Luke's Montefiore will offer information about what you need to know following a diagnosis with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia, what you need to plan and develop and how to work with your care team.

10 Signs of Alzheimer's will be held from 1-2 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 2, in partnership with Yonkers Library. Learn about typical age-related changes, common warning signs of Alzheimer's, how to approach someone about memory concerns; early detection, the benefits of a diagnosis and the diagnostic process and Alzheimer's Association resources. To register, visit the library's online calendar www.ypl.org.

Effective Communication Strategies will be held in partnership with Marlboro Library at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3. Learn how communication takes place when someone has dementia, how to decode verbal and behavioral messages from someone with dementia and identify strategies to connect and communicate at every stage of the disease.

Living with Alzheimer's: For People with Alzheimer's (part 3) will be held from 3-4 p.m. Monday, Feb. 8. This program offered in partnership with St. Luke's Montefiore will offer information about what you need to know following a diagnosis with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia, what you need to plan and develop and how to work with your care team.

Dementia Conversations will be held as a Lunch and Learn event in partnership with The Bristol from noon to 1 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9. Get tips to assist with difficult dementia-related conversations, such as going to the doctor, deciding when to stop driving and making legal and financial plans. This program is primarily for those who have a family member or close friend beginning to experience Alzheimer's or another dementia.

10 Signs of Alzheimer's will be held in partnership with LaGrange Library from 7-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10. Learn about typical age-related changes, common warning signs of Alzheimer's, how to approach someone about memory concerns; early detection, the benefits of a diagnosis and the diagnostic process and Alzheimer's Association resources. To register, visit the library website.

Healthy Living for your Brain and Body will be held from 3-4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10. This program in partnership with Manhattanville College will offer information about diet, nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity and social engagement and get hands-on tools to develop a plan for healthy aging. To register, contact Craig Donnelly at 914.323.5223 or craig.donnelly@mville.edu

Living with Alzheimer's: For Middle-Stage Caregivers will be held from 1-3:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 13. This program offers helpful strategies for providing safe, effective and comfortable care in the middle stages of Alzheimer's.

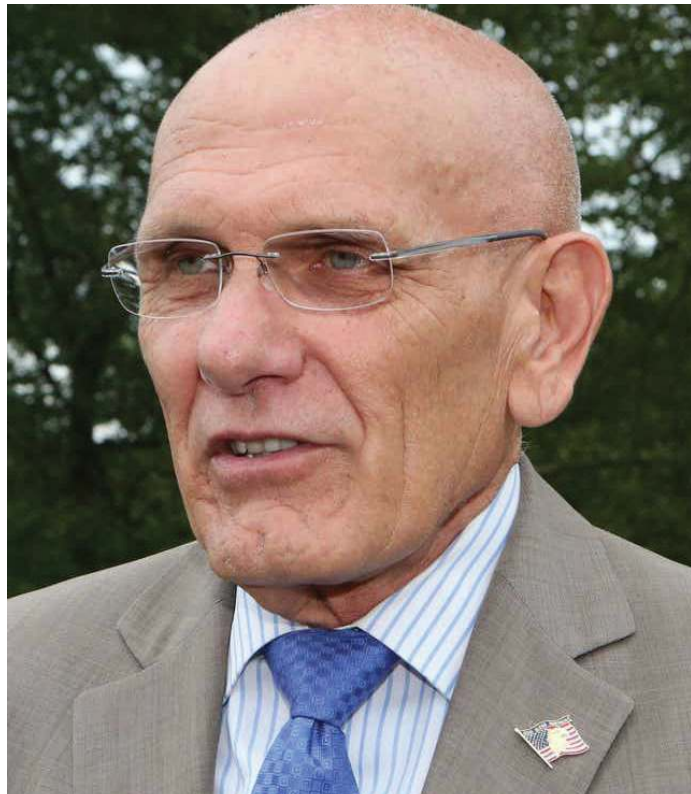
Virtual AlzWell Social Club will be held 1-3:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 13. This social program for people with dementia and their family caregivers featuring movement to music, a support group with art therapists, dance and other activities.

for more upcoming events and information, visit alz.org/hudsonvalley.

Notice of formation of Everglow Consulting LLC. Arts of Org. Filed with the SSNY on 12/8/2020. Office Westchester County. SSNY designed as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC: 300 Gramatan Avenue Apt G81 Mount Vernon, N.Y 10552. Purpose: any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of SAN PROPERTY HOLDING, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 12/28/2020. 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, 28 HIGHLAND AVE, EASTCHESTER, NY 10709. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Harrison Mayor Ron Belmont Won't Seek Re-Election



Harrison Mayor-Supervisor Ron Belmont

By Dan Murphy

Harrison Mayor-Supervisor Ron Belmont told the members of the Harrison Republican Party on Jan. 26 that he will not be seeking another term. Belmont, who served for decades at the Harrison Recreation Commissioner, defeated Mayor Joan Walsh in 2011, and has served as Mayor-Supervisor since 2012.

First let us thank Mayor Belmont for his service to the people of Harrison. His work with so many in the recreation department gave him the experience, and interactions with so many residents and taxpayers to continue his service as Supervisor.

Belmont was a trusted and honest public servant, and he leaves office with the same admiration. The only knock on Belmont was that he had earned a pension and wanted to continue serving. The people of Harrison made the final determination on that and re-elected him five times.

Belmont is one of only three remaining local republican leaders in their Westchester communities, and his departure opens up the possibility that Harrison democrats could take control of Town Hall.

Harrison Councilman Rich Dionisio will be running for Mayor and will have two women running for town council on the ticket, along with Jackie Greer running for Town Clerk and Mike Gigardano running again for receiver of taxes.

Belmont was a registered Independent for a long time before switching to republican, where he led the ticket in Harrison, the Belmont Team for a decade.

Democrat Councilman Frank Gordon, who ran against Belmont two years ago, is the leading democrat rumored to be reading to run again.

Belmont's departure from the political stage in Westchester adds to the continued decline and troubles for county republicans, who don't have a candidate for County Executive, had their candidate for DA drop out last year, and don't have 1 member on the County Board of Legislators. The 16-1 supermajority that democrats hold includes Legislator Margaret Cunzio, a conservative.

Eastchester Supervisor Tony Colavita and Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater are the two remaining Westchester republicans leaders in office.

Black Power in 2021, continued from pg 1-

Alajah Whitehead, Tulleehsa Burbage, and Javonte Spencer were all my interviewees. Spencer, from Blythewood, SC, said that Black Power in 2021 is "influence." He went on to say that "other cultures copy Black culture [and] mostly Black people start everything influential on social media." While Javonte Spencer reminds us that social media plays a significant role in Black Power, Tulleehsa Burbage, out of Philadelphia, PA, says Black Power in 2021 is "standing up for someone who can't stand up for themselves." She had done this financially when she paid for a stranger's tab when she was out one day.

Spencer uses social media, Burbage helps people financially and with their well-being, and Alajah Whitehead does both. A Yonkers native, a Mercy College graduate, and my oldest niece, Whitehead, is an essential worker. She works at a hospital in White Plains, NY. To her, Black Power in 2021 is "success." It's "being free to accomplish whatever you want, without people trying to hold you down," she said. Like Tulleehsa Burbage, with Alajah Whitehead, Black power isn't just about individualism. Black Power is "being where we want to be in life as a collective," she said.

While the younger generation may have their views on Black Power in 2021, it's my father's view that resonates the most with me. Now, a 65-year-old Bronx resident, my dad reflected on what America saw in 2020. "People of all social-economic backgrounds, sexual orientations, genders, and religious practices came together for peaceful Black Lives Matter protests in 2020," he said. "It's no longer Black Power. It's social unity."

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Notice of formation of Studio 160, LLC. filed with the SSNY on 10/13/2020. 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, 160 West 3rd Street, Mount Vernon, NY, 10550. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of Miss DQ, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 01/19/21. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY is designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 154 Buena Vista Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10701. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of Simple Wishes LLC. Filed with the SSNY on 01/05/2021. Office Westchester County. SSNY designed as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC: 300 Gramatan Avenue Apt G81 Mount Vernon, N.Y 10552. Purpose: any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of Modern Day Luxe LLC. Arts. Of Org. filed with the SSNY on 9/3/20. Office: Westchester County. United States Corporation Agents Inc. designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to United States Corporation Agents Inc. at 7014 13th Avenue, Suite 202 Brooklyn, NY 11228. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of Ayo Holistic Care, LLC. Filed with SSNY 7/22/2020. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC, P.O. Box 1201, New Rochelle, NY 10802. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of Brazilian Bistro LLC . Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 7/22/2020. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 491 Ellendale Ave Port Chester, NY 10573. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of formation of Panza NY LLC filed with the SSNY on 10/13/2020. 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, 640 Van Cortlandt Pk Ave Yonkers, NY 10705. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of Byrd Enterprises, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 12/21/20. 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, 249 Hoover Road, Yonkers NY. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of Rella Electric, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with SSNY on 12/1/2020. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Christian Farella at 186 Stone Ave., Yonkers, NY, 10701 Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Formation of 11 Lincoln Avenue LLC filed with the Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/22/2020. Office loc.: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to 1354 Seneca Ave., Bronx, NY 10474. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of formation of EVERYDIMECOUNTLLC. filed with the SSNY on 10/23/2020. 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. 442 North Avenue New Rochelle Ny 10801 . Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of MASSIVE ATM LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 10/30/2018. 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, 1 Glenwood Ave, apt 6D, Yonkers, NY 10701. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of Empowered Wealth, LLC. Art. Of Org. filed with SSNY on 10/1/2020. Office Location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: Empowered Wealth, LLC. 41 Dellwood Road, Bronxville, NY 10708. Purpose: to provide financial planning purposes.

Notice of formation of ThirdByrd, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 12/23/2020. 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, 249 Hoover Road, Yonkers NY 10710. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of ROTTINGPUMPKINLLC. filed with the SSNY on 11/30/2020. 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, PO Box 186 Armonk, NY 10504. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of formation of HAPPINESSJONESLLC. filed with the SSNY on 11/30/2020. 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, PO Box 186 Armonk, NY 10504. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

JAMES HARDEE ENTERPRISES LLC. Art. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 02/01/2021. 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, 20 Bonnefoy Place Apt.3 New Rochelle, NY 10805. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to law, that the Mayor of the City of Yonkers, New York, will hold a Virtual Public Hearing on Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 5:15pm, to hear all interested parties and citizens regarding the adoption of the following Local Law, to wit:

A LOCAL LAW AMENDING CHAPTER 47 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF YONKERS ENTITLED 'OUTDOOR SIGNS'.

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

To participate in the public hearing via ZOOM please join using the following information:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9148217764?pwd=QzIxZUVYbEtyK0VjZk43U1VSVOV5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 914 821 7764

Passcode: 451083

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,9148217764#,,,,*451083# US (New York)

+13017158592,,9148217764#,,,,*451083# US (Washington DC)

MIKE SPANO Mayor Date: January 29, 2021

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

inches of snow? Granted I sat at the top of the Spanish Steps in Rome drinking vino all bundled up when the weather was in the mid to high 40's. You would really have to be crazy sitting outside dining in the weather we had particularly when snow started coming down.

-On the Covid front, 10% of the people nation wide are apparently not coming back for their second shot! Are they crazy? Do they realize how many people are waiting for their first shot. What's wrong with people? There are no appointments downstate but yes Potsdam, Plattsburgh and Syracuse have appointments available. For a second week. Schedule the appointments not being filled upstate downstate.

One of the things listeners to the Westchester Rising Radio Show on January 28 learned is that people are finding about locations where vaccines are available via word of mouth. So make sure your friends, pharmacist, anyone you come in contact with knows you are looking for a shot. The rollout of the vaccine by New York State has been a disgrace, but I do hear once you get an appointment and get to the site things particularly at the Westchester County Center are going very smoothly.

As for Attorney General Latisha James Nursing Home Report, I have one simple question. Governor Cuomo and State Health Commissioner Howard Zucker (an anesthesiologist by trade) would not let the Covid-19 vaccine reach the arms of New York State residents until the state verified the efficacy of the vaccination. Every decision that came out of Washington and the then Trump White House was questioned and verified.

No one in the Cuomo administration questioned the directive from Washington to send those with COVID-19 from hospitals back into Nursing Homes causing over 8000 deaths? And it took the Attorney General's report for the state to admit more more deaths occurred. All of a sudden after her report came out Zucker 'finished' his report accurately counting the number of deaths.

Heads have to roll. I'll let you figure out those responsible for very bad decisions.

-Another Yonkers snowstorm. As I like to remind you every year (particularly for those new to our great city) as long as we allow cars to park on Yonkers streets you will never have good snow removal we see In communities everywhere around us. Yonkers great hills add to the equation. Plows plow the snow onto the parked cars, cars want to get out so their owners illegally throw the snow back into the street, and this vicious cycle continues until the weather gets warmer and the snow melts.

What particularly galls Public Works employees is when people have driveways and instead of parking their cars in their driveways they park the cars in the street. Happens every snow storm.

An idea. Can we have those giving out tickets for failure to put money in meters on city streets dig out the meters so motorists don't have to kill themselves trying to get to the meter. Go to the City of Yonkers website and refresh yourself as to what the streets are where no parking is allowed during a snow emergency. Yonkers Avenue from Seminary Avenue to Central Park Avenue is chock full of cars as my column deadline approaches and the city is under a Snow Emergency!

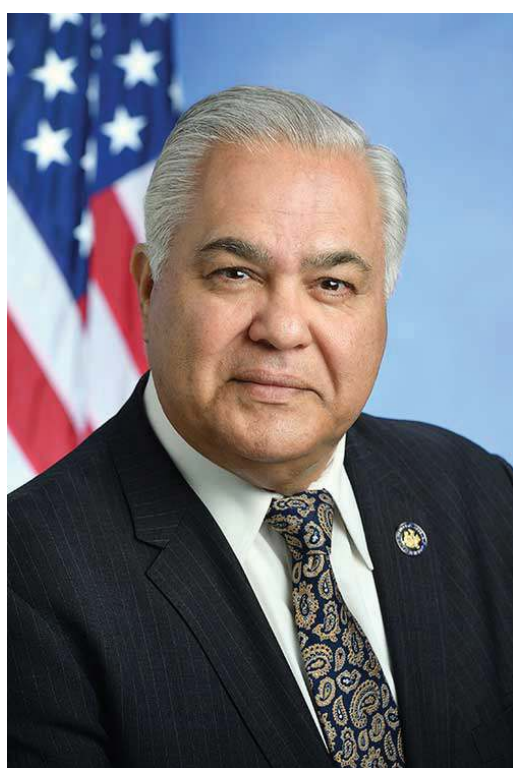
-Having worked in Yonkers City Hall when the city was under an Emergency Financial Control Board imposed by the State in 1988, the only advise I can give to my friend Mayor Shawyn Patterson Howard and the people of Mount Vernon is that you don't want one. The Board, whose issues were with the elected officials use to humiliate city hall employees, many long time civil servants who ran City Hall. Take it from me it was no fun!

-Yonkers City Councilwoman Corazon Pineda Isaac votes against the extension of term limits from two to three. At the time she says two terms are enough. And the Yonkers Democratic Party nominates her for a third term, and she accepts. Only in Yonkers friends, only in Yonkers.

Despite the doom and gloom, let's end with a quote from a tune Tony Bennett is so famous for: 'Gray Skys are Gonna Clear Up! Put on a Happy Face!'

Reach Eric Schoen at 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 and click the arrow to listen to the live stream or download the WVOX app from the App Store free of charge.

Assemblyman Sayegh: Let Bars-Restaurants Stay Open Late for "The Big Game"



Assemblyman Nader Sayegh

Yonkers State Assemblyman Nader Sayegh is calling on New York Governor Andrew Cuomo to extend Super Bowl Sunday restaurant and all applicable venues IE. bars and lounges etc. closings from 10 pm until midnight. By Executive Order, New York's COVID-19 restrictions require restaurants and all applicable venues to end in person dining and alcohol service at 10 p.m.

"Football is a major sport, and the Super Bowl in the most anticipated game of the season in American culture. A typical Super Bowl Game lasts 4 hours, so the event will not be over by 10 p.m." said Assemblyman Sayegh. "Our Yonkers establishments that have managed to stay open are struggling financially due to the COVID-19 pandemic and desperately need the financial help they would receive if closing times were extended."

Sadly, New York State will not be represented in the big game but the Buffalo Bills did make it all the way to the American Conference championship game and are to be congratulated for an exciting season. Congratulations also go to the Kansas City Chiefs and Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the two teams that will face off in the Super Bowl Sunday, February, 7 at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa Bay, Florida.

Assemblyman Sayegh has invited his fellow State Assembly members and State Senators to sign on to his letter to Governor Andrew Cuomo, urging him to extend the venue moratorium on closing time for this one night.

Editor's Note: Bah Humbug to the National Football League, who will not allow the use of the two words Super Bowl, without their permission and without paying them for it.

Eric DiBartolo, continued from pg 1-

Home Depot clerk to steal goods from the store by having the clerk NOT scan many items, in essence, giving them to DiBartolo for free. The clerk involved in the scam was also arrested. Tyrone Bass faces similar charges.

One example, from Westchester County police spokesman Kieran O'Leary, was when DiBartolo is charged with not paying for \$1,200 worth of merchandise while being billed \$89 for a few items in his cart.

Bass is said to have received a few hundred dollars total for the 23 times that this happened, or the 23 times that Home Depot knows it happened. How many times the two worked the scheme before somebody figured it out is unknown. Both will be charged in Cortlandt Town Court this month.

Another interesting twist to DiBartolo's thefts is that it cost the taxpayers in the Town of Cortlandt, and the Lakeland School district more than \$1,300 in lost sales tax revenues. So all of us in these districts were also taken by DiBartolo, making this reporter wonder what other schemes and scandal are in DiBartolo's long history working for the taxpayers, we don't work for you sir.

Yorktown Supervisor Matt Slater said, "It is always disappointing and disturbing when a public official is accused of wrongdoing. It's now in the hands of the justice system to investigate and determine the outcome."

One of DiBartolo's campaigns for Highway Superintendent was against Stephen Gardner in 2008. Gardner who works in the construction industry called it "hard to believe," that DiBartolo would stoop this low and try to steal from Home Depot 23 times. "It sounds so ridiculous for someone like him to get involved in something so petty," said Gardner, echoing the sentiment of many in Yorktown, who are asking Why Did He do This?

DiBartolo also has a few other "strange occurrences" in his history, two of which have been reported and reshaped in the local media.

DiBartolo sued former Yorktown Supervisor Susan Siegel in 2010 for defamation, based on an off handed comment made to only one other person in the Yorktown School District. DiBartolo alleged in court that Siegel's comments, (all that she said was that DiBartolo had "a relationship" with the sister of a school district employee that works in the highway department) were allegations that he was having a "sexual relationship" with the same women. No evidence was found that Supervisor Siegel, who was an honorable Town official, had alleged a "sexual relationship."

More legal battles included a laborer in the Highway Department, Kyle Gultz, accusing DiBartolo of allowing a continuous barrage of anti-Semitic remarks. That case never made it to trial.

And another involving William LaPierre, owner of Clark Funeral Home. DiBartolo worked for Yorktown Funeral Home, a new funeral home in town directly competing with the longtime, well-known and respected Clark.

LaPierre had filed a taxpayer's lawsuit against DiBartolo based on a 2011 State Comptroller's audit which raised concerns about a \$100,000 contract between the Town and a company where two of DiBartolo's brothers worked. That case was withdrawn and never addressed in court.

Yorktown Town Board member Vishnu Patel said, "I think he'll (DiBartolo) be gone once and for all,"

The other unknown question at this time is, how did Home Depot find out about this?

Patch.com printed this headline back in 2011, Critics of Yorktown Highway Superintendent Allege Corruption, Criminal Activity to DA's Office.

It appears that Mr. DiBartolo, with his foolish thefts, may have opened a larger 'can of worms' into his history. More on this story in the weeks to come. Any information can be emailed to dmurphy@risingmediagroup.com.

Mt. Vernon Mayor, Comptroller, continued from pg 1-

In a letter to the Westchester District Attorney Mimi Rocah, the Mayor writes, "The City of Mount Vernon is facing a potential furlough/layoff of critical public safety, civil service and public works employees. For the last year we've documented and highlighted this issue and called on our Comptroller to provide financial information that is mandated by the charter. To this end, the Comptroller has been unwilling to come to the table and present documentation to help with the completion of the 2021 budget. The lack of cooperation from the Comptroller during this entire budget process is troubling. She continues to hide where the money of the City is being held through 39 different bank accounts that she refuses to shed light on, only allowing access to three of those accounts at Chase Bank.

"Her actions are a direct threat to the public safety of our community. Additionally, the Comptroller is spending unauthorized money on her personal attorneys outside of the view of the Board of Estimate and City Council, she has installed illegal firewalls to block outside access to the city's internal records using MUNIS, and she has entered into illegal contracts with vendors, all outside the purview of governmental oversight.

"Furthermore, the Comptroller has shown her interference to provide this access to any members of the public and continues to obstruct the day to day governance of our city. I am asking for the Westchester County District Attorney's office to utilize the Public Integrity Bureau to investigate the City of Mount Vernon's finances and to prosecute to the full extent of the law any crimes committed by the Comptroller or employees of the city in regards to corruption, fraud or any other crimes. We do so under the suspicion that our Comptroller has violated the following NY Penal Laws:

Official Misconduct, Obstructing governmental administration in the second degree, Obstructing governmental administration in the first degree, Obstructing firefighting operations, Obstructing emergency medical services, Defrauding the government

In a letter to NYS Attorney General Letitia James, Mayor Patterson-Howard writes, "Mount Vernon is under siege. For more than three years, City Comptroller Deborah Reynolds has operated above the purview of the City of Mount Vernon with impunity. As Mayor, I'm reaching out to formally request direct intervention from the Public Integrity Bureau within your office. The fate and future of Mount Vernon is at stake.

"Ms. Reynolds began her abuse of power by sealing off the financial and purchasing system (MUNIS) from the executive and legislative branches with the installation of an illegal firewall in her office, illegally wire transferring money to her personal attorney, and has essentially operated as a rogue agency within City Hall. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she has refused much needed financial resources from HUD that could be allocated for re-opening Mount Vernon and ensuring public safety & health of our residents.

"Instead of operating with the transparency that befits her office, the Comptroller personally accepts, receipts, deposits and reconciles money cloaked in secrecy. For more than 35 months, she has refused to provide any financial reporting to either the legislative branch or executive branch. As a result, our City operates in financial darkness, and is unaware of the financial impact from COVID, nor are we capable of forecasting an accurate financial recovery plan. Frankly, Ms. Reynolds has failed to carry out her duties as an elected official and is instead causing Mount Vernon irreparable harm.

"I call on your Public Integrity Bureau to look into the City of Mount Vernon's finances and to prosecute to the full extent of the law any crimes committed by the Comptroller or employees of the city in regard to corruption, fraud or any other crimes."

In both of her letters to AG James and DA Rocah, Mayor Patterson-Howard identified 25 of Reynolds most egregious actions, including:

- Failure to accept tax payments from residents for months. It takes months for these payments to be accepted and processed.
- Failed to accurately budget for health insurance in the prior years, we are now 7.2 million behind in payments to the NYS Health Insurance Program.
- Rejected 4 million dollars in invoices that have been submitted for 2020 that have gone unpaid incurring potential lawsuits for non-payment and hampering the delivery of service.
- Failed to process step increases for CSEA and Teamsters and all of our unions have been without a contract for 2018, 2019, 2020
- Failed to process transfer taxes, which caused NYS title companies to send a letter threatening to stop doing business in Mount Vernon. This unprecedented action endangers local homeowners, buyers and realtors.
- Failed to accept funds owed and paid to the city. Turning away hundreds of thousands of dollars from revenue generating departments, including parking tickets, a \$482,000 sewer bill in 2019 from the school district and money from PILOTS tax payments (\$183,000) and various departmental revenues.
- Failed to transfer nearly 12 million dollars of federal money from HUD and the URA to the City for critical social needs.
- Failure to disperse millions of dollars of HUD/URA money in a timely manner, nearly 12 million dollars to the City which obstructs the delivery of critical social needs.
- Failed to process school taxes, causing the school district to take over the collection of school taxes and costing the City of Mount Vernon \$600,000+ in revenue.

Mayor Patterson-Howard also outlined the difficult budget that she is trying to pass without having the financial facts before her and the City Council. "We are on the precipice of passing a budget that will eliminate 33 positions that are vacant and layoff an additional 60 personnel at minimum. This initial group of 93 layoffs includes, 30 police officers, 25 firefighters, 19 DPW workers, and administrative staff. We believe we can utilize 8 million in our fund balance reserve, but we can't confirm this with our comptroller and local banks. It would be irresponsible to decide to eliminate critical services, raise taxes at double digit levels and layoff people because we lack financial information to make these decisions. Stop the suffering of Mount Vernon residents from the Comptroller who is incompetent, immature, and displays blatant malfeasance similar to the levels of Donald Trump, a man you stood up to vociferously."

High School Sports, continued from pg 3-

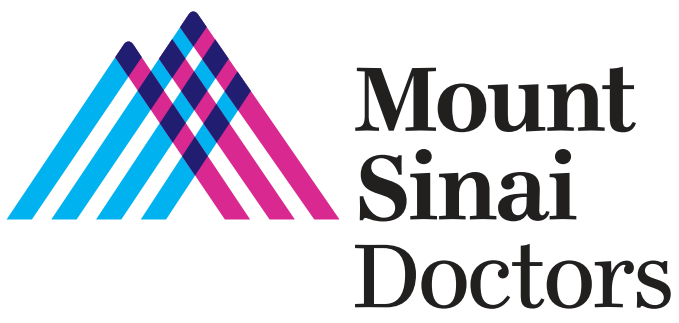
social, physical, and emotional wellbeing and should be authorized whenever possible. However, COVID-19 transmission rates around the state and throughout the Hudson Valley region demonstrate the critical nature of proper safety precautions to limit the continued spread of the virus in our communities. The following must be taken into consideration as school districts and athletic organizations in the Hudson Valley region make their individual determinations on how to proceed:

• School districts and non-scholastic organizations that will be organizing sporting activities are responsible for oversight and compliance with all published state guidance, including relevant safety protocols. All requirements outlined in the January 22, 2021 update to the Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation must be followed by sports teams, recreation activities, and facilities where games and practices are held. League staff, school athletic directors, sports facility directors, coaches, and parents are strongly encouraged to review this guidance and take steps to make sure current team and league operations align with this updated guidance.

• Parents, coaches, and athletes should be fully informed and affirmatively consent to the participate in these activities understanding the risk of disease transmission.

• Surveillance testing programs may be considered, but are not required as a means to minimize the spread of disease within these activities.

Send us your letters, stories, photos and announcements to dmurphy@risingmediagroup.com



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