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Friday May 3, 2024

President Biden Visits Irvington, with Gaza Protest Encampment Coming to One Westchester College?

Mt Vernon Mother-Daughter Get 2 Years Each for COVID Fraud; Too Harsh?

Mamaroneck Library Business Manager Gets Probation for Theft of \$40,000, & budget error for library of \$1.4 Million: Not Enough?



Irvington home of Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones



Alicia Ayers



Andrea Ayers

Alicia Ayers and Andrea Ayers Were Convicted for Submitting More Than 300 Fraudulent Applications for U.S. Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loans

Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that ALICIA AYERS and ANDREA AYERS were sentenced today to two years in prison followed by six months of home confinement and 42 months in prison, respectively, for conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and making false statements in connection with a scheme to defraud the U.S. Small Business Administration (“SBA”), resulting in a loss to the SBA of approximately \$1.7 million. ALICIA AYERS and ANDREA

continued on pg 12-

Assemblywoman Paulin: Pass My Bill and Harvey Weinstein Stays in Jail



See story on pg 10



Assemblywoman Amy Paulin

State Budget Passes How Did Westchester Do?

By Dan Murphy

State legislators and Governor Kathy Hochul agreed on a \$237 Billion spending plan and budget for NY state for the next year. While the budget was passed three weeks late, local Assemblymembers and State Senators were able to get the Governor to agree to some of her proposed changes to the budget which would have affected Westchester school districts.

State Senator Shelley Mayer provided a detailed explanation of the budget. “The road to this year’s budget was challenging, but my colleagues and I were determined to fight for the best possible overall outcome for New Yorkers. As with all budgets, the FY 2024 - 2025 New York State Budget is the result of compromise. But I choose to celebrate what we did do, not what we could not.

Since the Governor announced the Executive Budget Proposal in January – her proposal for how the state will spend its money – I have heard from so many of you about the Governor’s proposals, including proposed cuts to Foundation Aid for public school funding.

continued on pg 14-



Protestors in Irvington opposed to US policy on Israeli war in Gaza

By Dan Murphy

President Joe Biden visited Irvington for a fund raiser for his reelection at the home of Actors Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones on April 25. The Presidential visit closed Route 9 for several hours, as more than 100 guests attended, including former Congresswoman Nita Lowey, former Congressman Mondaire Jones and Congressman Jamaal Bowman were among those in attendance.

Zeta-Jones was away for the event, filming a movie in Ireland. Co-hosts for the event included Elicen Fisher and Rodge Cohen, both Irvington residents.

Biden’s comments included:

continued on pg 15-

Holtec Sues NY Over Indian Point Waste

Environmental Groups Want On-site Radioactive Storage



Protestors outside of Cortlandt Town Hall

Push for on-site storage comes as Holtec sues NYS over Save the Hudson Bill, passed last year to protect the environment, communities and economy from dumping radioactive waste into Hudson

On April 25, environmental advocates and organizations held a rally in support of on-site storage of the radioactive wastewater currently held at the decommissioning Indian Point nuclear facility. The push for on-site storage comes as Holtec, the company in charge of the plant decommissioning, announced a lawsuit against New York State for passage of the 2023 of the Save the Hudson Bill (S6893/A7208), which outlaws radioactive waste dumping into the Hudson River at Indian Point.

continued on pg 15-

County Exec. Latimer and County BOL Express Concerns Over Lithium Battery Farm on Westchester-Putnam Border

“Don’t Put Illegal Immigrants Before Taxpayers” Assemblyman Slater Votes No on State Budget



Assemblyman Matt Slater

Statement from Westchester County Executive George Latimer Regarding Proposed Battery Storage Facility

“I have been in touch with Putnam County Executive Kevin Byrne regarding the proposed battery storage facility in Carmel, particularly its proximity to Somers. I have genuine concerns about this project and will be closely following its development. It’s crucial to me that any potential risks to our communities are thoroughly addressed. We trust that the Town will address this matter in its land use deliberations, and we eagerly anticipate participating in the process by providing further comments as it progresses.”

Westchester’s Watchful Eye: Addressing Constituent Concerns for Safety & Sustainability in Carmel’s Battery Facility Proposal

On April 22, Westchester County Board of Legislators Chair Vedat Gashi (D- New Castle, Ossining, Somers, Yorktown) and Legislator Erika Pierce (D- Bedford, Lewisboro, Mount Kisco, North Salem, Pound Ridge, Somers) submitted a letter to Chair Praeprer and Members of the Carmel Planning Board in response to comments from their constituents, as well as those from municipal and County Department officials, expressing their concerns in connection with the proposed action for a 116 megawatt battery storage facility.

The subject property is not only adjacent to Westchester County and the Town of Somers, but the proposed battery storage enclosure is within 200 feet of several Somers homes, with some Somers residences closer to the facility than any Putnam County homes.

Chair Gashi said, “We applaud the development of energy storage systems as part of an effort to decrease reliance on fossil fuels and contribute to a cleaner and more sustainable environment. However, it is important to consider the impact of such projects on the health and well-being of affected residents. While the Town of Carmel seems to have taken into account the effects of the project on Putnam County residents, the impact on many Westchester families seems to have been ignored. Our primary concern is to ensure that there is a comprehensive and equitable review of the proposed action, ensuring the safety of all our residents.”

Legislator Pierce said, “All of the research we did on this issue, including reviewing the draft recommendations made by New York’s Inter-Agency Fire Safety Working Group and guidelines adopted in other states, underscore the importance of a full review of safety and environmental impacts and needed protocols, including all stakeholders, which in this case should include those most proximate to the proposed facility, the residents of Somers.”

The letter says, “We want to ensure the safety of all nearby residents, as well as the volunteer and paid firefighters and ambulance workers from adjacent municipalities and Westchester County Emergency Services. We need to better understand how these organizations will be staffed, trained, equipped and funded to provide the crucial services which will protect Putnam and Westchester County residents and workers. This includes incorporating and maintaining best practices for hazard detection, fire suppression and cybersecurity. In addition, we are concerned about environmental impacts to wetlands, soil, air and water quality and potential contamination, all of which extend beyond municipal boundaries. Further, we want assurances that the facility would be able to withstand environmental hazards such as heavy snow, flooding, lightning and earthquakes.”

See the full letter at <https://www.westchesterlegislators.com/images/Newsroom/2024/battery-farm-letter.pdf>

“New York Democrats’ multi billion dollar allocation to pay a migrant crisis fueled by New York’s sanctuary policies is more than the approved investments in critical areas such as childcare, mental health services, increase in aid for public schools, state road repairs, and support for overworked New Yorkers. This disparity underscores the backwardness of prioritizing migrants over the needs of our taxpayers and local communities. It is unacceptable and truthfully an embarrassment from our state Legislature to put illegal immigrants before hardworking taxpayers,” said Assemblyman Matt Slater, who voted No on the adopted NY State budget.

Slater wrote the following commentary on the adopted budget and the process. “Since Democrats took control of both houses of the legislature and the Governor’s Office, New York State has increased its spending by \$74 billion over the past six years. Meanwhile, our state has led the nation in outmigration, ranked as having the highest taxes and the worst economic outlook of all 50 states. The 2024-2025 budget was an opportunity to recalibrate and correct course but sadly it was business as usual.

While Governor Hochul has been running around the state taking victory laps before the budget was even passed, notice how she avoids talking about property tax relief. That’s because nowhere in this ginormous and far reaching spending plan is any attempt to deliver property tax relief to an overworked and overtaxed state. So while Governor Hochul is giving out high fives she’s really giving taxpayers more of the same: the nation’s highest taxes and worst economic outlook. At least U-Haul will be pleased.

As New Yorkers plan their exits to neighboring states, illegal immigrants will continue to be incentivized to come in thanks in large part to the continued sanctuary state policies that are now being funded by New York taxpayers. In this year’s budget, New York Democrats gave a \$2.4 billion dollar handout to pay for the ongoing migrant crisis fueled by New York’s sanctuary policies. Based on the debate I engaged in on the floor of the Assembly, our partners on the other side of the aisle have no idea how much we have already spent, plan on spending or even how many migrants are currently benefiting from taxpayer-funded services. But this much is clear: this budget spends more on services to illegal immigrants than the investments made in childcare, mental health services, or desperately needed state road repairs.

Speaking of our state roads, my office hears more about the poor condition of our infrastructure than any other issue – and rightfully so. Earlier this year, I joined a bipartisan coalition of Hudson Valley state lawmakers to demand that \$400 million be included for state roads as part of this year’s budget. Despite overwhelming data (Hudson Valley being rated the worst state roads in New York State), advocacy by building and trades unions, and a bipartisan coalition, Governor Hochul simply refused to approve this desperately needed allocation. So when you hit a pothole on a state road give Governor Hochul a call and thank her 518-474-8390.

Now despite these glaring omissions and disappointments, some positive measures were included in this year’s budget. I was very pleased to see foundation aid fully restored for our public schools as well as avoiding Governor Hochul’s proposed cuts to the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program which our local towns and villages rely on to pave local roads. The flat allocation is better than a cut but once again fails to acknowledge the escalating construction costs and will inevitably force our Highway Superintendents to do more with less.

I was also pleased to see Democrats finally take some action regarding public

continued on pg 15-

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Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins & Senator Mayer Announce New Laws in State Budget to Stop Retail Theft & Illegal Cannabis Shops



Retail Theft and Cannabis Enforcement

- Created new crime of assaulting a retail worker.
- Allowed aggregation of value of multiple larcenies to hold repeat offenders accountable.
- Created new crime of fostering the sale of stolen goods.
- Added tax credit for small retailers for additional security costs.
- Expanded power of local law enforcement to padlock illegal cannabis stores.

Pictured above, L-R: County Executive George Latimer, President of the Retail Council of New York, Melissa O'Connor, State Senator Shelley Mayer, Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Mayor Mike Spano, Deputy County Exec. Ken Jenkins outside of Best Buy Yonkers

New York State Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Senator Shelley B. Mayer announced today that the FY 2024-2025 New York State Budget provides resources to police, prosecutors and small businesses to combat retail theft and crack down on illicit cannabis shops. Included within the budget were the following new provisions:

Assault of a Retail Worker: Creates a new class E felony of assault of a retail worker. A person is guilty of assault on a retail worker if they cause physical injury to a person whose usual workplace is a retail establishment, while they are performing a task within the scope of their duties, with the intent of preventing them from performing said duties.

Larceny Aggregation: Allows prosecutors to aggregate the cost of stolen merchandise over multiple offenses if there is a single, ongoing criminal intent. A person found guilty with \$1,000 in total stolen value can be charged with larceny in the 4th degree, a class E felony; a person found guilty with \$3,000 in total stolen value can be charged with larceny in the 3rd degree, a class D felony; a person found guilty with \$50,000 in total stolen value can be charged with larceny in the 2nd degree, a class C felony; and when a person is found guilty of \$1 million in stolen value they can be charged with larceny in the 1st degree, a class B felony.

Fostering the Sale of Stolen Goods: Creates the crime of fostering the sale of a stolen good; a class A misdemeanor.

Tax Credits for Small Businesses: Provides a commercial security tax credit to businesses with 50 employees or fewer that have at least one physical retail location in New York State. Businesses with fewer than 25 employees are eligible to receive a tax credit if they spend more than \$4,000 on security expenses within the last year; and businesses with more than 25 employees are eligible if they spend more than \$6,000. Eligible businesses can claim up to \$3,000 per location.

Shutting Down Illicit Cannabis Shops: Provides new tools for local governments to establish their own local laws to shut down illicit cannabis stores, seize products and impose civil penalties.

continued on pg 11-

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GENERAC

GOV & NYS & NYC Officials to the Public: DROP DEAD!



By Eric Wolf Schoen

Hard to believe it was almost 40 years ago when in the midst of a fiscal crisis in New York City, the headline in the NY Daily News read, 'FORD TO NYC: DROP DEAD.' Then President Gerald Ford refused to bailout New York City in the midst of a fiscal crisis stating he would veto any bill calling for "a federal bail-out of New York City."

It was announced late last week that the date Congestion pricing will begin in New York City is June 30, 2024. Drive your car below 60th Street in Manhattan and you will be hit with a \$15 fee. Better yet let's call it a fine. There are numerous lawsuits seeking to stop this from occurring. The State of New Jersey filed one of them. We will look at the cost of a ride from New Brunswick, New Jersey to 42nd Street by car that a friend of mine makes five days a week in few short moments.

As far as I am concerned, Congestion Pricing adopted by the MTA after approval by the New York State Assembly and Senate and the Governor is just like President Ford saying to a cash strapped New York City 'DROP DEAD!' Congestion pricing will make you think twice about making that trip to New York City to enjoy all that the greatest city on Earth has to offer.

We hear ridiculous statements like that made by MTA boss Janno Lieber that 'As congestion pricing starts at midnight on the morning of June 30, the first users will only be charged the nighttime fare of \$3.75. Drivers will not have to pay the \$15 fee until 9 a.m. Sunday morning.' People like Lieber think folks in this region are stupid. I hate to inform you pal but we are not.

Let's take a look at the tolls my friend from New Brunswick, New Jersey will face every time he enters Manhattan below 60th Street. He drives a passenger car. New Brunswick, New Jersey on the New Jersey Turnpike to George Washington Bridge. \$11. Crossing the George Washington Bridge is another \$16. That's \$27 dollars. Add the \$15 Congestion pricing fee and you are talking about \$42 to drive into Manhattan. That's a lot of money, and he hasn't even had a bagel with a schmear to eat.

Remember friends that the money Mr. Lieber and gang collect from the Congestion Pricing program will not be spent fixing the roads we travel on. The Congestion Pricing dollars will be spent on trying to improve mass transit in New York City. My friend will see no repairs to the potholes that cause

continued on pg 6-

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02 NEW ROCHELLE Thursday, May 2: 7 PM – 9 PM
Trinity St. Paul's Episcopal Church - 311 Huguenot St., New Rochelle, NY 10807

07 YONKERS Tuesday, May 7: 7 PM – 9 PM
St. John's Episcopal Church - 100 Underhill St., Yonkers, NY 10710

09 VIRTUAL MEETING Thursday, May 9: 6 PM – 8 PM

In-person venues are ADA, transit, and parking accessible.

Thoughts? Questions? Comments?
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Providing Shelter: In Memory of Roy Echols and Jackie Robinson



Whitney M. Young Jr. (far right) with Jackie Robinson (left) and Chief Justice Earl Warren (center). Photo credit: Columbia University Office of Public Affairs photograph collection, University Archives

By John Nolon

Watching Major League Baseball celebrate Jackie Robinson day on April 15 reminded me of when I once met him along with Roy Echols, a community organizer in Yonkers, NY.

When I returned from serving in the Peace Corps in Guatemala in 1969, I had been accepted as a Reginald Heber Smith Community Law Fellow to work in an Office of Economic Opportunity funded legal services program. I was randomly assigned to work in Yonkers providing legal assistance to the Community Action Program and its staff. During my first week there, Roy Echols, a very large and determined CAP staffer came into my office, slapped his large fist on my small desk, cursed the lack of affordable shelter, and told me we were going to build affordable housing and that I needed to figure out how to do it.

We formed a not for profit called the Yonkers Community Improvement Corporation (YCIC) and rented a storefront on Warburton Avenue. I boned up on housing development and finance, we found a deteriorated park in the Hollows neighborhood, got it released by the state legislature from the state's public trust requirements, and found a developer cosponsor to build two 12 story buildings with 195 low income housing units on that parcel.

We spoke to Whitney Young's widow and got her permission to use the name of her late husband, an American civil rights leader, for the project. She asked that we interview Jackie Robinson who, by then, was long retired from baseball and had a construction company. Our storefront was small, the Warburton Avenue neighborhood was littered and poorly lighted (frankly scary) at night, but it was there early one evening in 1971 that we met with Jackie, his wife, and construction manager and agreed to a term sheet for a contract to construct Whitney Young Manor. It provided shelter to lower income families for over 30 years, was purchased by a new developer, Omni New York, in 2006, underwent an 11 million dollar restoration, and continues to be rented to low income households. Today a 1,320 sq. ft. apartment rents to a family of four with income under \$77,000 for rents of around \$2,000/month. I'd estimate that over 600 individuals have obtained shelter in the Manor for nearly 50 years. Roy, (if you are reading this), that's 10,950,000 individual nights of shelter.

Having learned about affordable housing development, I was hired by the City of Yonkers as Deputy Corporation Counsel and the Deputy Director of the Department of Planning and Development and helped develop more housing. In 1974, I was recruited to set up and run the Housing Action Council, which is still working today building and rehabilitating lower income housing. I'd estimate that the Housing Council's work has resulted in 15,000 units of low and moderate housing in the nearly 50 years it has existed, providing shelter for another 45,000 individuals.

Jackie Robinson's contributions are well known and widely respected. Roy's hand slap on my desk and the contagious energy of his determination, not so much. It was a small chance event that resulted in significant change, providing shelter for so many and teaching that our individual actions can count.

John R. Nolon is Distinguished Professor of Law Emeritus at the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University where he supervises student research and publications regarding land use, sustainable development, climate change, housing insecurity, racial inequity, and the coronavirus pandemic. He is Co-counsel to the Law School's Land Use Law Center, which he founded in 1993. He served as Adjunct Professor of land use law and policy at the Yale School of the Environment from 2001-2016. Before he joined the law school faculty, he founded and directed the Housing Action Counsel to foster the development of affordable housing.

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Screening of 9/11 Documentary "Dust" Highlights Urgency of Implementing the 9/11 Notice Act



L-R: Hezues R., Westchester Legislator David Tubiolo, Westchester Legislator Shanae Williams, 9/11 Legal Advocate Michael Barasch, "DUST" Doc writer, producer, director Bridget Gormley, and NYS Assemblyman Nader Sayegh

A poignant screening of the 9/11 documentary "DUST" took place on Friday, April 26th, 2024, at the YoFi Fest Digital Media Art Center, aimed at elevating awareness of the 9/11 Notice Act and its impending implementation.

Hosted by NYS Assemblyman Nader Sayegh in collaboration with The Social Impact Content Film School, the event attracted key legislators, legal advocates, and members of the community to discuss the essential legislative changes needed to protect 9/11 survivors, inclusive of the creation of a 9/11 curriculum for New York State elementary, middle, and high schools.

Assemblyman Nader Sayegh, the author of the 9/11 Notice Act, emphasized, "It's imperative that federal, state, and local governments, along with educational institutions, comply fully with the notification requirements of the 9/11 Notice Act. We must ensure no one who was in the exposure zone is left uninformed."

Michael Barasch, managing partner of Barasch McGarry, which has represented more than 40,000 members of the 9/11 community, pointed to new data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control revealing a 17 percent increase in victims of 9/11 reporting at least one type of cancer from 2022 to 2023. Worse, he noted, CDC data confirmed a 16 percent increase in Responders and a staggering 38 percent increase in Survivors dying from 9/11 toxins over the last twelve months, underscoring the urgent need for awareness and action.

This led Barasch to share compelling stories, including that of a young student who attended school near the World Trade Center and is now facing uncertain health conditions. He said, "One of my youngest clients went to elementary school near the World Trade Center and now attends college but is fighting cancer due to their exposure to 9/11 toxins. Young adults in the containment zone need to know their rights and should register with the Federal 9/11 programs."

The event also highlighted the need for a detailed briefing by the NYS Economic Development and the U.S. 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund on their plans to conduct extensive outreach for the implementation of the 9/11 Notice Act, as requested by Assemblyman Sayegh and supported by local leaders.

The film "DUST," directed by Bridget Gormley, who lost her father to cancer linked to 9/11, powerfully illustrated the ongoing health crises faced by first responders and survivors.

She said, "My inspiration for 'DUST' stemmed from witnessing the silent suffering and significant struggles that the 9/11 toxins inflicted on my family, as the toxic exposure tragically claimed the life of my father, FDNY Firefighter Billy Gormley."

The screening was followed by a panel discussion led by Hezues R., founder of The Social Impact Content Film School, who moderated a deep dive into the themes of the film and the legislative impact.

Hezues R. remarked, "Today's discussion is not just about remembrance but about action. It's about ensuring that the stories told in 'DUST' lead to tangible changes in how we support our 9/11 survivors and heroes."

When discussing situations where companies closed or went bankrupt, such as J&R Music and Computer World—which was adjacent to Pace University across tp rescue forgotten workers, Barasch said, "We must also engage agencies like the IRS or Department of Labor to assist companies that have closed, to support our 'Go Find Me' campaign under the 9/11 Notice Act.

Gormley expanded the conversation and issued a challenge to the New York State Department of Education to create a mandatory 9/11 curriculum for grades Kindergarten through 12 to ensure New Yorkers never forget the terrorist attacks and its lingering effects. Assemblymember Sayegh along with Westchester County Legislators David Tubiolo and Shanae Williams expressed support for the concept.

The event concluded with acknowledgments and a call to engage further with the cause championed by the documentary "DUST" and the 9/11 Notice Act. The community left empowered, informed, and ready to support the necessary outreach and legislative efforts.

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Stepinac High School Names Valedictorian and Salutatorian for Class of 24' 2024 Commencement set for May 23



Owen Dowicz



Giancarlo Lagana

Stepinac High School has announced that Owen Dowicz of White Plains and Giancarlo Lagana of Port Chester have respectively been named Valedictorian and Salutatorian of the Class of '24.

Both members of Stepinac's groundbreaking The Susan and Daniel P. Mahoney Finance and Economics Honors Academy, Dowicz and Lagana will deliver their addresses during the 74th Annual Commencement exercise of the renowned all-boys Catholic high school at 4 PM, Thursday, May 23. Fr. Thomas Collins (Class of '79), President, will present the diplomas and congratulate the graduates during the ceremony which will be attended by parents, guardians and other family members.

Dowicz was accepted to University of Michigan (Ross School of Business), Georgetown University, Cornell University, NYU, University of Virginia, SUNY Binghamton, Fordham University and Providence College.

Lagana was accepted to Boston College, Bentley University, Fordham University, Providence College, University of Connecticut, Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University, and SUNY Binghamton.

The students will be making their college choices in the near future.

World Cup Gymnastics' Athletes Take Home Gold at the 24' Eastern National Championship



L-R- Victor Dyakin, Sawyer Robertson, Gabriel Zybert,

World Cup Gymnastics, Chappaqua, NY May 1, 2024 – World Cup Gymnastics' finest competed April 26 – 28th at the 2024 Men's Eastern Developmental Program National Championship held at the Cleveland Public Auditorium in Cleveland Ohio.

Along with the Western Championship which took place in Chandler, AZ, more than 1,400 gymnasts competed in this prestigious event.

World Cup Gymnastics' Level 7, Boys Team competed in the Men's Level 7, Junior Division. Victor Dyakin of Scarsdale, NY earned a gold medal for his outstanding performance on Floor with a 12.05. He finished 8th All Around, with a score of 65.8. His teammate, Gabriel Zybert of Pleasantville, NY also took home Gold for his outstanding Vault earning a 12.55. Sawyer Robertson, of Mount Kisco, NY added to the medal collection receiving a Silver medal for High Bar with a score of 11.1.

"Brushing their nerves aside, the boys were able to complete their mission and perform their best routines of the year," said Jason Hebert, Director of World Cup Gymnastics. "We are so proud of all their hard work and dedication. Winning medals at nationals is just the icing on the cake," he added.

World Cup Gymnastics has been training State, Regional and National Champions for 30 years and is deemed one of the most revered recreational and competitive gymnastics programs in the state. They also offer mommy and me classes for infants, pre-school gymnastics and tumbling for cheerleaders. Visit us at www.worldcupgymnastics.com.

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Notice of formation of Lee & Mazie's LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the SSNY Office on 04/02/2024 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 : Lee & Mazie's LLC 1 Sherwood Terrace Apt 5D Yonkers, NY 10704 Purpose: Any lawful purpose. Latest date upon which LLC is to dissolve: No specific date.

Notice of Formation of KW Services NY LLC. Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 3/30/24. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to 875 King Street Chappaqua NY 10514. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice is hereby given that a license, number Pending for beer, wine and cider has been applied for by the undersigned to sell beer, wine and cider at retail in a Summer Tavern under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 8000 Mall Walk, K035, Yonkers, NY 10704, Westchester County for on-premises consumption.

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

flat tires on his car. The uneven roads that destroy the alignment on his car will remain the same.

Some call the MTA the Money Taking Agency. There is no accountability at the MTA. It's just give us more money, give us more money. Add a tax dedicated to the MTA and all our problems will be solved. And they never are.

Why doesn't my friend take mass transit to New York City? He's tired of the New York subways filled with homeless people urinating in the seat next to his on the subway. He doesn't want to throw up because of the smell of marijuana that seems to accompany everyone riding on the subway. At press time the White House is proposing relaxing the marijuana rules. Just what we need in the country right now. He might see a cop on the train, but quite often he does not. He feels unsafe riding the subways. He is not going to risk his life or the life of his family riding on the subway. Do you blame him?

Legislators usually vote for things to benefit their districts. Why any suburban legislator would vote for Congestion Pricing boggles my mind. Suburban legislators can easily stop this Congestion Pricing. Why are they not doing this and support it? These are the questions that you must ask your legislators at public meetings, via email and on the phone prior to" Election Day.

There is little congestion on the streets of Manhattan after 5:30 p.m.-6 p.m. Monday through Friday. So why charge motorists this fee after 6:00 pm to 7 a.m the next day. And why charge this fee on weekends. What do people do after 6 p.m. and on weekends? Visit Manhattan to see a Broadway Show, enjoy a fine dinner in a New York City restaurant, visit the Christmas Tree and Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall and a myriad other things.

Add a congestion pricing fee to high gas prices, high ticket prices, expensive parking, baby sitters, etc. and people are going to skip the visit to the Big Apple. Or certainly go a lot less. This will hurt the economy of New York City and hurt the great many businesses who not only rely on foreign tourists but count on visitors to New York City from the suburbs to patronize their establishments.

The haphazard way this toll is being introduced? No one knows all the exemptions and new ones come out everyday. The MTA puts all the cameras and equipment up. They try to make it hard for any judicial body to turn the program off. New details come out about the program everyday. Because the MTA is ready for your money and has a plan to spend it only they know the details of.

The Governor and State Legislators and New York City elected officials are simply saying 'Drop Dead' to the people who elected them to office. They don't care that you haven't gotten a raise in years. They don't care that people will not visit museums and other cultural institutions, the latest Broadway shows, concerts, parks because the costs of driving into Manhattan are simply to dam high!

And watch consumer prices for everything from apples to oranges skyrocket. Trucks pay an even higher fee when entering the congestion zone, and manufacturers are certainly going to pass those costs on to the consumer.

People in Westchester need to get on the phone and tell your legislators Congestion Pricing will do nothing for the suburbs. If we don't stop it many good hard working people are going to lose their jobs. And sadly, New York City will become emptier than it was during the pandemic. Certain areas of the city that were once bustling have storefronts that have sat empty since the beginning of the pandemic and will remain empty.

Residents of Westchester it is in your hands. Don't let your elected official say 'Drop Dead' to you as President Ford said to New Yorkers almost 40 years ago!

ANTISEMITISM AND DESTRUCTION OF CAMPUS PROPERTY MUST STOP

Let's be very clear. If it were not for the Jewish Community in New York and around this country, students today would not have a Columbia University or New York University or many of the schools where outside agitators are stirring up students as we speak. Students should kiss the ground they walk on in appreciation of the contributions Jews made to make their institutions learning palaces.

When students and outsiders destroy buildings they should be expelled immediately from the institutions they attend. And University Officials need to get rowdy, destructive students off campus property using the police department whether it be NYPD or other departments in this country.

Parents of college students must know that after all the money they spent on their children at prestigious institutions of higher education that everything can be lost if the student breaks the law and is part of the out of control mobs we see on television.

Don't cancel graduation ceremonies school officials. The students who act like they are supposed to should not be deprived of the pomp and circumstance they worked so hard for.

Columbia University waited way to long to corral those destroying school property. For public safety the police should have been called in much earlier. The sad thing is many of the protestors could not find Israel or the Middle East for that matter on a map!

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

**LEGAL NOTICE
YONKERS MUNICIPAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held on May 9, 2024 5p.m. in the office of the Civil Service Commission located at 1 Larkin Center, Riverfront Library – 2nd floor Community Center room on the matters of amending the Appendices of the Yonkers Municipal Civil Service Rules.

Such proposed changes are available for inspection during business hours in the office of the Yonkers Civil Service Commission located at 1 Larkin Center – 2nd floor Yonkers, N.Y. 10701.

EATZTOUR LLC Arts. of Org. filed with SSNY on 05/23/2023. Office: WESTCHESTER COUNTY. SSNY designated as agent of LLC for process and shall mail copy to R/A: US CORP AGENTS, INC., 7014 13TH AVE, #202, BKLYN, NY, 11228. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of EM SLEEP CONSULTING LLC. Arts. Of Org. filed with the SSNY on 02/08/2024. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 53 Windsor Place, Pelham, NY 10803. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of formation of Bosco Home Improvements LLC, . Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 03/15/2024. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC 716 Loomis Ave Peekskill, NY 10566. Purpose: Any lawful activity

Notice of Formation of Northern Lights Massage Therapy PLLC. Arts. of Org. filed with SSNY on 8/21/23. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to 409 North Broadway Apt 38 Yonkers NY 10701. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of formation of Studio Elise LLC filed with the SSNY on 04/05/2024. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whole processes against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of processes to the LLC, 3 Ward Street, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706. Purpose: Any lawful activity.


NOTICE OF FORMATION of Intentional Journey Psychotherapy, LCSW, PLLC. Arts of Org filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 4/8/24. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served and shall mail copy of process against PLLC to 1374 Midland Ave, Suite 410, Bronxville, NY 10708. Purpose: any lawful act.

TRUSTEES NOTICE TO BENEFICIARY *MARIE K. (GEORGETTE) MOORE*

Trustee Kathy Whately, of the HARRIET C. WHATELY IRREVOCABLE INSURANCE TRUST and of the HARRIET C. WHATELY IRREVOCABLE INSURANCE TRUST, II, has identified MARIE K. MOORE a/k/a MARIE GEORGETTE K. MOORE a/k/a MARIA GEORGETTE KOUMLIKIS MOORE, born on or about April 30, 1947, Daughter of Rosa Lee Whately Koumlikis and George James Koumlikis, mother of Cheryl Marie Moore, as a Beneficiary of the Trusts entitled: HARRIET C. WHATELY IRREVOCABLE INSURANCE TRUST and HARRIET C. WHATELY IRREVOCABLE INSURANCE TRUST, II. The said Trustee has used diligent efforts to locate the Beneficiary with last known addresses being in Yonkers, NY and Bronxville, NY. This Notice shall serve as the last measure by the Trustee to locate the Beneficiary, or her heirs, and demands that she contact the Trustee's attorney at the below address on or before July 8th, 2024, or Beneficiary shall be deemed to have waived her interest under the Trust and the Trustee shall proceed in disbursement of the Beneficiary's interest in accordance with the Trust terms or pursuant to Virginia Law.

MARIE K. MOORE, or her heirs, Contact:

Whitaker R. Johnston, Esq.
Attorney for Kathy Whately, Trustee
20580 Timberlake Rd.
Lynchburg, VA 24502
1 (434) 237-6458



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Letters to the Editor:

National Day of Prayer May 2nd: Lets Get Prayers Answered

By Judith Niewiadomski, Yonkers

How often do we get around to praying only when we have exhausted ourselves and are at our wits' end from trying to fix things by ourselves? Looking to God as a last resort is why we're so often stuck in our problems and challenges. How skilled can we be at anything if we only do it once in a while or simply repeat memorized words?

The the Apostle James tells us (James 5:16) "The effectual fervent [active] prayer of a righteous man availeth [prevails] much." But we diminish the power of prayer, praying as a last resort without much hope of an answer—or a secret conviction that the answer will be, "Nope. You're not good enough, nothing for you." We don't have to be good enough because God is good all the time and wants above all things that we prosper and be in health even as our soul prospers. (3 John 2).

To get prayers answered we must believe that God answers prayer and rewards those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

Some sneer when people whose hearts are touched offer thoughts and prayers in a tragedy, revealing their belief that prayer does no good. That mindset is why many don't get answers to prayer. What you believe, you receive.,

Prayer is connection with God; a bond with He Who heals the broken hearted, Who desires above all things we may prosper and be in health even as our soul prospers.(3 John 2) Prayer girded with focused believing, can help and heal even from a distance because it is not limited to our resources but connected to the Father Who is all powerful and present everywhere.

God knows what we need, all the details of our circumstances, and the long term effects of our choices even before we ask.

Prayer is not passive, prayer is aggressive Prayer is not a last resort, prayer is a battle plan that does not go all to hell when it confronts the enemy. Prayer is you and God working together to overcome the enemy and the circumstances to bring about godly results that are better than we hoped for. (Ephesians 3:20) How can we lose when we are tapped in to Someone who knows every thought of every heart?

Many of us grew up saying repetitive prayers, and while we meant well, we all know how it goes: you memorize something and even with your best intentions, it often becomes mindless repetition, repeating the words from memory without understanding how those words apply to what we face now.

Every person is unique. Different needs and challenges arise every day. So, to be effective, our prayers need to be focused on those specific needs and challenges.

Jesus Christ demonstrated what we call "The Lord's Prayer," as a model, an example. How does it begin? Not with hesitation toward a distant and unknowable deity, not with chanted repetition, but with heartfelt reaching out to God as a Father Who is bigger than all those needs and problems. It was different from how the scribes and Pharisees prayed; they weren't people you'd walk up to and hug and ask for help. In fact, they would have considered themselves to be defiled and made unclean by your touch. They focused on obedience to the letter of the law, not the heart behind it. Without the power of God energizing their prayers their country, Israel, was occupied by a pagan army, and the people were desperately in need, of wholeness, healing, and peace.

Prayer is opening your heart to your Father God about your fears and pains and challenges and needs, as Jesus Christ did in Gethsemane, and allowing Him to lead and comfort and provide a way for you to have His best.

Now if God knows everything, why do we need to pray? Good question. Prayer is personal communication between the individual and God. Prayer is for us to get our minds calm and focused on what God has done and can and will do for us as individuals. Prayer actively takes our focus from the mud we're stuck in and the chaos that surrounds us and lifts our thoughts up to focus on the delivering hand of God.

How can we pray effectively? We use our minds and what we know of the Word of God:

We look to God as a loving Father.

We recall and focus on His ability to do.(Study the records of what He has done for others.)

We cut through the mental and emotional clutter and confusion and narrow our focus to what we need.

We get specific as to what we want and need. Leave the how to God's infinite diversity. He has a solution for every problem.

We do not limit God, recognizing that He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:30)

We take action on what we know to do.

The key to receiving answers to prayer is believing, holding your mind, despite the circumstances, to what God has promised. You don't have to be in church. You don't have to be good enough because He is good enough. You don't have to be a particular religion, but only believe what God has promised in His Word..

Let's make this National Day of Prayer the first day of a more effective prayer life.

Don't forget to be thankful. If you're getting your prayers answered, isn't that the least you can do? So tell other people what God has done for you so they can live more abundantly too.

Judith Niewiadomski, Yonkers

Westchester Rising

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

Student Protests Are A Tradition, and Michael Rappaport is worse than Donald Trump

By Clifford Jackson

Student protests around this country against the ongoing genocide of Palestinians by the Israeli government is not only morally right but a tradition for generations. During the 1960's there were demonstrations on these same Ivy League campuses against Americas killing of more than 3 million men women and children who were Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians. There were tens of thousands of these civilians that were killed with napalm and were burned alive. This same kind of barbarism by the United States is happening to Palestinian Civilians including hundreds of thousands who are being starved to death by the Israelis. What is more disturbing is that these facts are being treated by supporters of Israel as being "you can't listen to social media and the Palestinians killed are being used as human shields ". These depraved comments has come from more than a few Jews on various websites. That is not antisemitism it is a statement of fact that demonstrates how the so-called Judeo Christian ethic is a such a FRAUD in this society. Something that Judith Niewiadomski with her searing ignorance doesn't understand. What these students are doing is being applauded around the world especially from holocaust survivors. Stephen Kapos is a holocaust survivor and this is what he said about the student protests " Netyanhu's statement that the student demonstrations are reminiscent of what the nazi's did in the 1930's is an insult to every holocaust victim and survivor. We holocaust survivors demonstrate against The conflating of Zionism with Judaism and that this genocide feeds antisemitism ." He along with my Jewish brothers and sisters that I know personally have also said in terms of the evil of Zionism " not in our name". Michael Rappaport is absolutely despicable in his comments about the student demonstrations calling them " low life's, skum bags" as well as other things. He is a racist and certainly a pseudo liberal. Standing next to him while he made these deplorable comments were Nassau County executive Bruce Blakeman and congressman Michael Lawler. There support for this genocide shows how disgusting and disgraceful these elected officials are. Jamal Bowman is on the right side of history by saying that "we need a permanent cease fire and to stop the slaughter of Palestinians and bring home the hostages and provide a safe place for Palestinians and Israelis ". Michael Lawler was more morally reprehensible when he in conjunction with speaker Johnson used their platform as a photo opportunity, even though they were resoundingly booed by the students, and called Hamas a terrorist organization that needs to be wiped out talking about their alleged atrocities and yet ignored the fact that more than 30,000 Palestinian men women and children have been butchered and killed with many more starving.

Republican politicians are not the only ones with this despicable behavior journalist Bill Ritter and his colonized colleague Joe Torres on WABC have been particularly disgraceful with their descriptions of the student demonstrations and, in Torres view, that the president of Columbia University was not responding to antisemitism on campus, and ignoring what holocaust survivors are saying about the unbridled evil of the Israelis and not bringing home in their reporting how evil this treatment of Palestinians are. When they talk about anti semitism and couch this conflict as a " Hamas Israeli war " and not report in the same vein the atrocities and genocide of Palestinians then Torres and Ritter are showing their racism on the part of Ritter and sycophant behavior on the part of Torres. Yes antisemitism against Jews on campus should be categorically rejected. But to make this the issue of these student demonstrations across the country is not only a canard but is an egregious lie as far as what these students are fighting for. Namely divestment from companies supporting this evil apartheid regime in Palestine. These students demonstrated against apartheid in South Africa, they were, from the many sit in demonstrations in the south in this country, fighting American Apartheid that went on for more than 100 years here that many whites and republicans are trying to bring back. These students are continuing this tradition of resistance against evil apartheid in Palestine. But to be clear this is what America does. When Putin invaded the Ukraine that was United States 101 as far their sanguinary and jingoistic foreign policy. Denis Halliday, an Irish diplomat at the UN quit his position back in the 1990's because he was incensed and outraged by a United States foreign policy sanction against Iraq that led to close to the starvation of hundred's of thousands of Iraq men women and especially children. He and the Irish parliament members in the United Kingdom have always been on the right side of history in their daily condemnation of the evils going on in Gaza. They can teach Michael Lawlor a few things about humanity and compassion. Something that these student protesters are trying to make people understand.

Clifford Jackson, Larchmont

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Pepsi Launches Pepsi X-Mary J. Blige Strength of a Woman Partnership with \$100,000 Fund to Empower Yonkers Women



The Fund Supports Non-Profit Organizations Empowering Women in Yonkers, NY in Honor of the Music Icon's "Strength of a Woman Festival and Summit"

As a returning co-presenting partner of Mary J. Blige's "Strength of a Woman Festival and Summit," Pepsi is launching the Pepsi x Mary J. Blige Strength of a Woman Community Fund, with \$100,000 available as grants to local organizations whose work elevates and educates underserved women in Yonkers.

The fund created in partnership with United Way of Westchester and Putnam, which helps residents become self-sufficient and thrive in a stronger community, is open to Yonkers-based non-profit organizations addressing the needs of women who are underserved, marginalized, or living paycheck-to-paycheck. The funds will be distributed via grants between \$5,000 to \$20,000 to qualifying organizations supporting programs in education, financial stability, and food security. Applications can be submitted online by June 1, 2024 at www.uwwp.org/pepsi-soaw.

As the Festival and Summit comes to the Big Apple for the first time, Pepsi is honoring the global icon by giving back to women in her hometown of Yonkers, NY and bringing the event's purpose of empowerment, elevation, and education to life for the community.

"Pepsi has been an incredible partner for the Strength of a Woman Festival and Summit since the start. Now, with their support, being able to come home to Yonkers to give back to and invest in the community I grew up in is all I've ever wanted. We hope to provide resources for local organizations striving

continued on pg 11-

The Osborn (Rye) Hosts Centenarian Luncheon



The Osborn senior living community in Rye, NY recently held a festive Centenarian Luncheon, honoring 18 of its residents who were celebrating milestone birthdays this year. Each of them is now between 100-106. Pictured are two of these esteemed Centenarians with Michele Schreer (center), Director of Sterling Park at The Osborn. The Osborn, which was named as one of the nation's "Best Continuing Care Retirement Communities" by Newsweek for 2024, offers Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care, and Skilled Nursing on its 56-acre arboretum campus.

Visit theosborn.org for more information.

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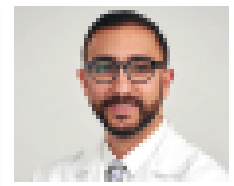
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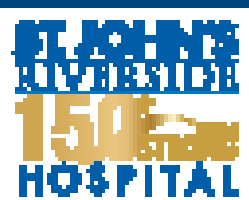


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Somers High School Grad Nick Gargiulo Picked by Denver Broncos in NFL Draft



Nick Gargiulo

Congratulations to Nick Gargiulo, a graduate of Somers High School, for being selected in the recent NFL draft. Gargiulo, a 6'5", 318 pound offensive lineman, was drafted in the 7th round by the Denver Broncos, with the 256th overall pick.

Gargiulo started his college career at Yale, but then transferred to South Carolina for his senior year. He started all 12 games for South Carolina in two offensive lineman positions, center and left guard. He was a team captain for both Yale and South Carolina, and was named third-team all SEC in 2023.

A scouting report for Gargiulo before the draft said, "Gargiulo is athletic, with great strength, good hands and footwork in addition to his useful wingspan. He's versatile position-wise, with solid body control and coordination. He has the size, length and play strength for center/guard roster flexibility."

"I am excited for the opportunity to play for such a great franchise," Gargiulo said. "Regardless of when my name was called, I am really thankful to them for the opportunity."

At Somers High School, Gargiulo was a member of the 2016 Tuskers team that won the State Championship for the first time under legendary coach Tony DeMatteo.

**Read it all Online at
Yonkerstimes.com**

Anastasia Byrnes, Bryam Hills High School, A Con Edison Scholar-Athlete of the Week



Anastasia Byrnes

Congratulations to Anastasia Byrnes, a senior at Byram Hills High School, for being named a Con Edison Scholar-Athlete of the week. Anastasia is a 5-year Varsity starter for the Byram Hills Lacrosse Team and a 2-year Captain. She is also a four-year Soccer Star as well, and also ran Winter Track for three years, earning 12 Varsity letters.

Last month, Anastasia became the first player in Byram Hills High School history to score 250 goals in lacrosse, and is currently on pace to score over 300 goals, which only 19 players in the history of the state of New York have ever accomplished. The current Westchester County record is held by Lindsay Toppe with 301 from Fox Lane High School. Plus, she lost a year due to covid making the record even more spectacular!

In a recent stretch of games in April, Anastasia scored 17 goals with 10 assists to lead the young team. She was chosen as a Senior Mentor for Freshman Class (Only 9 women in School Get This Spot).

Anastasia finished first in the National Changemaker Project, a global competition that featured over 200 competitors to come up with ideas on how to change society. She created a project to raise awareness on political polarization and used this project to teach local middle schoolers about how to have political discourse.

Anastasia is the recipient of the Sylvia Rogers Memorial Scholarship Award Winner, selected by the administration in the district, recognizing the "unsung hero" on the sports field and the leader who understands the merits of being a strong teammate and captured a \$1000 scholarship. She was also named an AP

continued on pg 13-

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Assemblywoman Paulin Urges Legislature to Pass Her Legislation, After Weinstein Rape Conviction Overturned

On April 25, the New York Court of Appeals overturned Harvey Weinstein's 2020 rape conviction in a 4-3 decision, concluding that "the trial court erroneously admitted testimony of uncharged, alleged prior sexual acts against persons other than the complainants of the underlying crimes."

In 2020, Weinstein was convicted in New York of a criminal sexual act in the first degree and rape in the third degree for offenses against two women. The judge in his trial allowed for the admittance of evidence of his prior sexual assaults under the Molineux Rule, which allows prosecutors to bring in proof of a defendant's prior bad acts or crimes to establish motive, intent, or other relevant issues.

However, in February, Weinstein's defense argued that Justice James Burke influenced the trial by allowing three women to testify about allegations that weren't part of the case. Today, in a 4-3 decision, New York's highest court overturned the 2020 decision and determined Weinstein had not received a fair trial.

The NY Court of Appeals is composed of seven judges, but for this case, two judges recused themselves. While it would be standard practice to allow the remaining five judges to vote, the Chief Judge appointed two new judges which provided the 4-vote majority that overturned the conviction. The three judges that voted to uphold the conviction were all permanent judges on the court.

"I am deeply disheartened by the NY Court of Appeals decision today and urge the legislature to pass my bill to allow NY courts to admit evidence that a defendant has committed any prior sexual assaults in a criminal proceeding in which a defendant is accused of sexual assault" said Assemblywoman Paulin, "we must ensure that victims are able to rely on this type of evidence in future cases."

Assemblywoman Paulin has introduced legislation, A.4992, that would codify the Federal Rules of Evidence (FRE) in New York State law. Pursuant to FRE 413, the court may admit evidence that the defendant committed any other past sexual assault. Sex offenders are far more likely overall, as compared to non-sex offenders, to reoffend with a sexual crime. Sexual assault is an especially heinous crime and given the likelihood of recidivism, it is necessary to codify FRE 413. If New York enacted this legislation, we would join the sixteen other states that have adopted the FRE to protect victims of sexual assault.

"The stunning reversal of Harvey Weinstein's conviction shows a failure by New York's highest court to recognize the relevance of an abuser's pattern of serial sexual assault. It is time for New York to do what 16 other states and the Federal Rules of Evidence have done, and allow juries to hear evidence of a sexual abuser's pattern of similar conduct. We applaud Assemblywoman Amy Paulin for leading the way by introducing a bill to right this injustice," said Jane Manning, Director of Women's Equal Justice.

Hon. Judy Harris Kluger, Chief Executive Officer for Sanctuary for Families, said, "Sanctuary for Families and the survivors we serve are deeply troubled by the reversal of Harvey Weinstein's conviction for rape, a decision that exposes a critical gap in our legal system's response to sexual violence. Assembly Member Amy Paulin's bill, A4992, which permits the admission of evidence of the defendant's prior sexual assaults in sexual assault prosecutions, is precisely the legislative response urgently needed to address this gap. This reform, adopted by California and fifteen other states, would help ensure that serial sex offenders are held accountable and prevented from continuing to perpetrate harm while strengthening the rights of survivors to access justice. Sanctuary for Families urges New York State lawmakers to act decisively and pass this bill."

"We are profoundly disheartened by the Court's decision to reverse Harvey Weinstein's case. For survivors to have a chance to achieve justice, these cases should have the ability to include evidence of prior sexual assaults perpetrated by the abuser," said Robyn Mazur, Executive Director of the Joyful Heart Foundation. "Overturning this ruling and forcing survivors to endure the retraumatizing effects of another trial will also create a chilling effect on other survivors in the future."

State Senator Pete Harckham Comments on State Budget

On April 24, New York State Senator Pete Harckham announced today that the newly enacted FY2024-2025 State Budget includes \$4,084,738 in Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) funding for Senate District 40 (SD40), an increase of \$362,836—9.75%—from last year's budget. Outstanding in the AIM funding is \$2,477,102 for the City of Peekskill, a \$257,718 increase—11.61%—from the prior budget.

"This increase in enacted AIM funding is a win for our local governments," said Harckham. "It gives municipalities more spending power at a time when rising costs have been impacting programs, services and various initiatives. I think this record-high funding is a meaningful benchmark that will benefit our residents in many ways and ease some of the burden from our taxpayers."

"The City of Peekskill is extremely grateful for the generous AIM support afforded to us by our partners in state government," said Peekskill Mayor Vivian McKenzie. "As we move forward with a spectrum of civic improvements, having this source of unrestricted funding available will give us some flexibility in spending on important projects without having to raise taxes to do so."

The FY2024-2025 state budget agreement includes \$758.1 million for the AIM program statewide, a \$43.4 million increase. The main source of unrestricted state aid for local governments, AIM funding has been frozen at about \$715 million since the FY2011-2012 budget, and this year's increase is the first since then.

In SD 40, the 13 towns and six villages all received 6.99% or 7% increases in their enacted AIM funding. Among recipients are the Town of Cortlandt, which is getting \$202,702 in AIM, and the Town of Yorktown, which is getting \$189,144. The Village of Ossining will be getting \$216,573.

The Aid and Incentives for Municipalities (AIM) program was instituted first in the FY2006-2007 State Budget, replacing a number of revenue sharing programs, each of which had targeted municipalities that often overlapped. Funded at \$849 million (an increase of nearly \$56 million, or 7 percent, from pre-AIM revenue sharing in the FY2005-2006 State Budget, AIM combined six revenue sharing programs into one program, representing the largest appropriation of unrestricted aid to local governments in a decade. The funding dropped to the \$715 million level during the Great Recession.

Town of Cortlandt Supervisor Dr. Richard Becker said, "On behalf of the Town of Cortlandt, I would like to thank Senator Peter Harckham for his ongoing support of the Town of Cortlandt. Once again, he has been instrumental in securing additional financial resources for the Town via the Aid and Incentives for Municipalities (AIMs) funding program. This ongoing support will assist us in our efforts to provide vital services to residents."

Slater, No on State Budget, continued from pg 2-

more with less.

safety. While I would have loved to have seen all of their pro-criminal policies rolled back there were modest enhancements that do acknowledge the true state affairs in communities across our state. Enhancing penalties for crimes against retail workers, implementing additional judicial safeguards and expanding hate crime offenses are great steps forward but there is still a lot left on the table that will further improve public safety. And of course, despite three police officers being killed in the line of duty in the last month, absolutely nothing was done to enhance protections for our law enforcement officers.

Another win that can be highlighted is cracking down on the illegal sale of cannabis. This is another topic I worked with a bipartisan coalition in the Assembly to address and I am pleased to see both of our measures approved in the final budget which will strengthen the enforcement authority of the Office of Cannabis Management to combat the thousands of unlicensed businesses selling cannabis illegally. The new measures will suspend correlating state licenses to sell lotto, cigarettes, and alcohol, and more importantly, finally allow local law enforcement to act in accordance with local laws our towns will be able to pass.

Looking ahead, I will continue to work with my colleagues to pass common-sense reforms that combat New York's affordability crisis, enhance public safety, and give everyone an opportunity to succeed, "writes Slater.

Read it all Online at Yonkerstimes.com

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LEGAL NOTICE

CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YONKERS
PUBLIC HEARINGS
2024/2025 PROPOSED BUDGET

I, Lakisha Collins-Bellamy, City Council President of the City of Yonkers, do hereby call a public hearing on the proposed 2024/2025 City of Yonkers Operating Budget and Capital Budget as follows:

Thursday, May 9, 2024
City Council Chambers
City Hall- 4th Floor
40 South Broadway
Yonkers, New York

7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 22, 2024
Auditorium
Saunders High School
183 Palmer Road
Yonkers, NY 10701
7:00 p.m.

Anyone wishing to speak may sign up on the day of the hearing at the hearing site. Each speaker shall be permitted three minutes and speakers shall be called in the order in which they have signed up.

LAKISHA COLLINS-BELLAMY
CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

April 26, 2024

City of Yonkers
Summary of FY24-25 Executive Budget

Property Taxes:	\$437,882,124
Special Taxes:	\$226,370,666
State and Federal Funding:	\$113,706,719
City Departments:	\$54,811,194
Other Revenues:	\$49,498,103
Appropriated Fund Balance (General):	\$63,371,957

Total Revenues Sub-Total:	\$945,640,763
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Library Fund:	\$565,175
Water Fund:	\$55,443,083
Sewer Fund:	\$12,529,276
Board of Education:	\$450,541,530

\$1,464,719,827

City Departments:	\$394,565,927
Fringe Benefits:	\$215,423,860
Special Items:	\$31,859,938
Board of Education:	\$708,871,156
Total Operating Expenditures:	\$1,350,720,881
Debt Service:	\$113,998,946

\$1,464,719,827

Revenues vs. Expenditures	\$
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<u>Property Tax Levy</u>	
Board of Education Property Tax Levy	\$227,462,663
City Property Tax Levy	\$160,419,461
Total Property Tax Levy	\$437,882,124

<u>Property Tax Rate per \$1000 of Assessed Valuation (AV)</u>	
Board of Education Tax Rate per \$1,000 AV	\$591.04
City Tax Rate: per \$1,000 AV	\$341.94
Tax Rate: per \$1,000 AV	\$932.98

<u>Capital Budget</u>	
City Total:	\$43,398,086
Board of Education Total:	\$15,400,000
Total:	\$58,798,086

The FY25 Executive Budget is available for review by the public at:
[https://www.yonkersny.gov/government/departments/finance/city-budget/city-budget-2025-executive/-fsiteid-1#//](https://www.yonkersny.gov/government/departments/finance/city-budget/city-budget-2025-executive/-fsiteid-1#/)

Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Senator Mayer were joined by County Executive George Latimer, Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins, and President of the Retail Council of New York, Melissa O'Connor.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "Through decisive action in the State Budget, we're equipping local law enforcement with the necessary resources to combat retail theft and eradicate illicit cannabis shops, safeguarding both our communities and our economy. These new measures affirm our commitment to protecting our local businesses and ensuring the safety of both retail workers and consumers. I am proud to have led the Senate in the passage of these budget measures, and to stand with Governor Hochul and Speaker Heastie in prioritizing the safety and prosperity of all New Yorkers."

State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, "I am proud New York is taking action to address the ongoing challenge of persistent retail theft and illicit cannabis sales. The budget passed this year provides prosecutors and police with the tools necessary to crack down on retail theft and illicit cannabis shops, keeping New Yorkers safe and giving businesses the tools necessary to support and grow their stores. I thank Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for her leadership and dedication to protecting New Yorkers and I thank our local leaders and law enforcement for working with us to find the appropriate measures to address these challenges."

Assemblymember Nader Sayegh said, "Passing the 2024-2025 New York State Budget with new legislation to combat retail theft and assault on retail workers sends a clear message: New York prioritizes the safety and prosperity of its neighborhoods. These new measures not only protect both small and large businesses from the economic strain of theft, but also safeguard consumers and employees, fostering an environment where everyone can thrive. With these new laws in place, New York is taking decisive action to protect and preserve our retail sector whilst ensuring that justice is served. I am happy to have joined my colleagues in both the Assembly and Senate in voting for this Budget and thank Governor Hochul for signing these bills into law. It is a step in the right direction to keep our communities safer and quality of life high."

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said, "I want to thank my partners in government for coming together to combat an issue we have all seen facing our communities. The retail thieves who are behind crime sprees like smash-and-grabs, or those trying to profit from the sale of stolen goods deserve to face harsher penalties. They are cheating not only store owners, but the hard-working people who pay for the goods they purchase. By the same token, our business owners and retail workers should receive the support of additional patrols and tax credits if they incur costs from further securing their stores. We want to back our retail community, help reestablish a sense of trust, and put an end to retail theft in Westchester County."

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano said, "I commend State Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and State Senator Shelley Mayor for taking action on cracking down on illegal smoke shops. We have long advocated for better state regulation of cannabis. We are not against legalization but rather direct marketing to children and its impact on the quality of life of the residents of our City."

Yonkers Police Commissioner Christopher Sapienza said, "In Yonkers, we take the quality of life of our residents seriously. The Yonkers Police Department continues to aggressively combat all forms of retail theft and the unregulated sale of illegal marijuana, both of which are a detriment to our local businesses, shoppers, and residents. Thank you to Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Senator Mayer for advocating for these important resources that will aid our Police Department in continuing our success with these local issues."

Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah said, "We applaud the legislature for providing necessary updates to the laws that will help prosecutors across the state hold individuals accountable for retail theft, which has greatly impacted businesses, merchants, workers and shoppers."

Pepsi, Mary J. Blige continued from pg 8

to support and uplift women for even greater impact this year," said Mary J. Blige.

Blige announced the fund with a surprise appearance at Westchester Community College-Yonkers on Thursday, April 25, as part of the Pepsi x Strength of a Woman Community Day, made possible by PepsiCo Foundation, Pepsi and YWCA of Yonkers.

PepsiCo Foundation also donated \$50,000 to YWCA of Westchester and Westchester Community College to support and uplift the local community.

"We're excited to deepen our partnership with Mary J. Blige by investing in the very community that has shaped her remarkable journey. The launch of the Pepsi x Mary J. Blige Strength of a Woman Fund exemplifies our shared vision with Mary to empower women, by enabling organizations to continue their valuable work," said Kent Montgomery, Senior Vice President, PepsiCo Industry Relations and Multicultural Development.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS AGENDA

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

THE CITY OF YONKERS ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024 AT 6:00 PM, WILL BE HELD IN YONKERS CITY HALL, 40 SOUTH BROADWAY, 4TH FLOOR (building is handicapped accessible).

PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION AND UPDATES WWW.YONKERSNY.GOV .

OPEN/CONTINUED HEARINGS

5790 – Area Variance - James Veneruso, Esq., on behalf of Mehranco Limited Liability Co., owner, on premises known as 1999 Central Park Avenue, Block: 4385, Lot: 42.43, Zone: BR

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1luzt1lO9IzkF1bUNhKvFBj6CNy_bLXR5?usp=sharing

5810 – Use & Area Variance – David S. Steinmetz, Esq. & Jacob E. Amir, Esq., on behalf of TCP Realty LLC, owners, on premises known as 143-151 Woodworth Avenue, Block: 2102, Lots: 4, 5, 11, 39 & 41, Zone: C

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1H-uwlm1nZ67PdqnXin47LX7kkvY8uWUh?usp=share_link

5836 – Use & Area Variance – Mastrogiacomo Engineering PC, on behalf of My Main Man LLC, owner, on premises known as 47 High Street aka 102 Park Avenue, Block: 2167, Lot: 1.3, Zone: MG

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KcvFoSwZw6ljqBkVUcJQsWyXq4z4Pn-x?usp=sharing>

5849 – Area Variance - Andrew Romano, Esq., on behalf of Sherena Doldron, owner, on premises known as 26 Cornell Ave, Block: 111, Lot: 22.32, Zone: A

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QWuIINnN5i53ma16tWqHsKu5cfNX2d6B?usp=sharing>

5850 – Area Variance – Kathleen Bradshaw, Esq., on behalf of 194 Yonkers Avenue LLC, owner, on premises known as 182 Fillmore Street aka 194 Yonkers Avenue, Block: 405, Lots: 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, Zone: BA

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rndP3X61js_cy3P25c-FkrsMpUyXHf34?usp=sharing

NEW HEARINGS

5851 - Area Variance – Maximillian Mahalek, Esq. of Cuddy & Feder LLP, on behalf of Islamic Community Center of Mid-Westchester, owner, on premises known as 20 aka 2 Grandview Boulevard, Block: 4600, Lot: 114, Zone: S-100

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15E-kh7_GSXNeKgLGHZoeWbH6XSDiylq9?usp=drive_link

5852 – Area Variance – Jared Smith, R. A., on behalf of Rupert Clarke, owner, on premises known as 115 Morris Street, Block: 156, Lot: 26, Zone: M

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13nnXrp9qZaPxaKFnYN61xT2D2595Y_-O?usp=drive_link

5853 - Area Variance – Kevin Solli, P.E., on behalf of Chipotle Mexican Grill, owner, on premises known as 1201 Nepperhan Avenue, Block: 3395, Lot: 64, Zone: BA

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ofRPXeeFGkxwAOLaaeRIrPQ-2yN95Xa?usp=drive_link

COVID Fraud, continued from pg 1-

AYERS previously pled guilty before U.S. District Judge Nelson S. Román, who imposed today’s sentences.

U.S. ATTORNEY DAMIAN WILLIAMS SAID: “THESE DEFENDANTS STOLE FROM A TAXPAYER-FUNDED PROGRAM INTENDED TO HELP SMALL BUSINESSES THAT WERE IN DESPERATE NEED OF ASSISTANCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. AS THEIR CONVICTIONS AND SENTENCES REFLECT, MY OFFICE IS DETERMINED TO CONTINUE TO WORK TO BRING TO JUSTICE THOSE WHO EXPLOIT AND DEFRAUD GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS DURING A NATIONAL EMERGENCY. I THANK THE FBI AND THE CAREER PROSECUTORS OF THIS OFFICE FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING WORK INVESTIGATING AND PROSECUTING THIS SCHEME.”

According to the Indictment, other public filings, and statements made in court: The SBA is a federal agency of the Executive Branch that administers assistance to American small businesses. This assistance includes making direct loans to applicants through the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (“EIDL”) Program. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress expanded the SBA’s EIDL Program to provide small businesses with low-interest loans of up to \$2 million prior to in or about May 2020 and up to \$150,000 beginning in or about May 2020 in order to provide vital economic support to help overcome the loss of revenue small businesses were experiencing due to COVID-19. Applicants seeking a loan under the EIDL program were also permitted to request and receive an advance of approximately \$1,000 per employee, for an amount up to \$10,000, which the SBA generally provided while the loan application was pending.

In June and July 2020, ALICIA AYERS and her mother, ANDREA AYERS, a former Code Enforcement Officer for the City of Mount Vernon Police Department, used the identities of approximately 300 other individuals (the “Applicants”) to submit approximately 315 online applications to the SBA, seeking over \$3 million of funds through the SBA’s EIDL Program (the “EIDL Applications”). In connection with the EIDL Applications, ALICIA AYERS and ANDREA AYERS falsely represented to the SBA that the applicants were the owners of businesses with 10 or more employees. However, that was a lie – as ALICIA AYERS and ANDREA AYERS knew, the applicants did not employ the number of people reported, and the majority of the applicants did not own businesses or have any employees. Based on the fraudulent EIDL Applications, the SBA made advance payments of approximately \$1,690,000 to the applicants, who then kicked back a portion of the advance payments to ALICIA AYERS and ANDREA AYERS.

In addition to the prison terms, ALICIA AYERS, 37, and ANDREA AYERS, 57, both of Mount Vernon, New York, were each sentenced to three years of supervised release and ordered to pay forfeiture in the amount of \$1,690,000 and to pay restitution to the SBA in the amount of \$1,690,000.

Mr. Williams praised the outstanding investigative work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case is being prosecuted by the Office’s White Plains Division. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jeffrey C. Coffman and Courtney L. Heavey are in charge of the prosecution.

The Ayers’ had requested no jail time. Some are wondering if the sentences were too harsh.

In Mamaroneck, Mary Soto, the Business Manager for the Mamaroneck public library, pled guilty to stealing over \$40,000. Soto, 62, admitted the thefts occurred over several years, and pled guilty to grand larceny.

Soto pled guilty after being told that she would receive 3 years probation and restitution of the \$43,900.

More important to the residents and taxpayers of Mamaroneck was the fact that Soto, who had almost complete control over the Library’s finances and books, underrepresented the operating funds in the Library budget by \$1.4 Million, over a two year period, (2022 and 2023).

A statement from the Mamaroneck Library Board of Trustees included, “For many years, Mary Soto functioned as the Mamaroneck Public Library’s Business Manager. She was in charge of ensuring that the financial books and statements were properly maintained and reported.

“Instead, she presented false records to the Boards of Trustees, the Treasurers, Library Directors, and the public representing that the Library had a multi-million dollar fund balance that did not actually exist.

The data provided to the Boards of Trustees by the Business Manager, the Library Directors and the Board Treasurer was trusted but not verified. In February, 2023, the current Board of Trustees and Library Director finally learned of the deception and that the fund balance did not exist; The Board immediately placed Ms. Soto on leave.

There were years when the Library did not raise taxes believing these funds existed. Because the library’s budget for the past two years was balanced utilizing the misreported fund balance, the Library found itself without \$1.4 million in anticipated operating funds (577K for 2022 and \$866K for 2023) that were believed to exist.

A forensic accounting firm was hired and the situation was reported to the Village Board of Trustees and the Village Police Department. The forensic accounting firm, while working with the Library Director and her team, determined that in addition to misrepresenting fund balances that never existed, Mary Soto had also been siphoning Library funds for personal use. The case was subsequently turned over to the Westchester County DA’s Public and Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau. The results of the forensic audit were provided to the District Attorney.

On December 14, 2023 the District Attorney arrested Mary Soto. She was arraigned on a felony charge of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree before Judge Christie L. Derrico in Mamaroneck Village Court for the theft of \$44,769.

The Library has borrowed the \$1.4 Million through a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) to stay open, and has implemented changes to their financial oversight. Some believe that the probation to be given to Soto is too lenient.

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Grinton I. Will Public Library
Mezzanine Room

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Visit our website at <https://mitoastmasters.toastmastersclubs.org/> and select the Contact Us tab to connect with us.

Con Ed Scholar-Athlete, continued from pg 9

Scholar (College Board)- Grade 10, 11 granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams.

She is a member of the Fighting Against Anti-Semitism Club (FAAS), serves as a Peer Tutor at BHHS, and volunteers at St. Patrick's Church in Armonk's CCD classes.

Anastasia holds a 3.86 GPA. She has signed to play Lacrosse at the American University in Washington DC where she will major in Political Science. She was also awarded the University's Presidential Scholarship.

"We had a few students join us as refugees from the war in Ukraine. Anastasia's family background is Russian, so she was identified as a student who might be able to help these students transition to Byram. Not only did she oblige, but she also made a pointed impact on her new Ukrainian peers and the community at large," said BHHS Counselor Keara Hunt. "She is academically minded, talented on the field, and always willing to lend a helping hand. Anastasia is simply a joy to be around."



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THE CITY OF YONKERS/YONKERS PUBLIC SCHOOLS, BUREAU OF PURCHASING, One Larkin Center, 3RD Floor, Yonkers, New York 10701 (Located in the Yonkers Riverfront Library Building across from the Metro-North train station) will receive sealed Bids and Proposals for the following projects until 2:00 PM, on the dates below.

Sealed Bids will be publicly opened and read at the address above in the 3rd Floor Finance Conference Room.

The building is open from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM for receiving packages via courier services and in person. If delivering bids in person, individuals must see the Public Safety Officer in the library atrium, who will contact Purchasing to meet the individual at the 3rd floor elevator.

Those interested in listening to the bid opening and the reading of bids can dial Conference Call number 1-701-802-5221 and enter Access Code 1354203 when prompted.

Solicitation documents are available for downloading from the Empire State Purchasing Group website at <http://www.empirestatebidsystem.com/>. The City welcomes and encourages participation by local and minority and women owned business enterprises.

1. Bid 7153 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase One RZA760 Stihl Batter Powered Zero Turn Mower w/60" Deck, or Yonkers approved equal (KAS).
2. Bid 7154 – Opening date 5/17/2024: Pick-up, removal, and lawful disposal of construction and demolition debris from the City of Yonkers lots and yards as needed (VB).
3. Bid 7155 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase Various Specialty gases for Water Treatment Laboratory as needed (KS).
4. Bid 7130A – Opening date: 5/17/2024: Purchase of nine cases of DuoDote Auto Injectors – Re-Bid (VB).
5. Bid 7156 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase Microsoft Surface Pro 9 or better, Keyboard and Accessories (KS).
6. Bid 7157 – Opening date: 5/17/2024: Purchase up to 1500 tons of ¾ Stone (VB).
7. Bid 7158 – Opening date: 5/17/2024: Purchase check advice forms (KS).
8. Bid 7118 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase Cafeteria Equipment (AC).
9. Bid 7119 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase Small wares Kitchen Equipment (KAS).
10. Bid 7159 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Twelve-month contract, with option to renew 12-months, to purchase bulk quantities of 25% Caustic Soda, membrane grade as needed (AC).
11. Bid 7160 – Opening date: 5/17/2024: Twelve-month contract, with option to renew 12-months, for the purchase of Mueller and Kennedy water distribution products as needed (KAS).
12. Bid 7161 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Maintenance, Repairs and Parts for Ross Control Valves as needed
13. Bid 7162 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase Toyota Model 50/8FGCU25, Internal Combustion Lift Truck, or Yonkers approved equal (VB).
14. Bid 7163 – Opening date: 5/17/2024: Herbicide Weed Control Services (NG)
15. Bid 7164 – Opening date: 5/17/2024: Pick-up, removal, and lawful disposal of rock and dirt from the City of Yonkers lots and yards as needed (NG).
16. Bid 7165- Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase Cybersecurity routers and accessories (KAS)
17. Bid 7166 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase Various paper and cleaning supplies for Yonkers Public Schools 2024-2025 School Year (VB)
18. Bid 7167 – Opening date: 5/22/2024: Purchase Various Food Products for Yonkers Public Schools 2024-2025 School Year (DC)

Classifieds*State budget, continued from pg 1-***Attorney**

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Events

ANTIQUUE LOVERS TAKE NOTE! BRIMFIELD IS HERE - ALL SHOWS! May 14-19. New shows open daily! www.brimfieldantiqueweek.com. 2024 dates: May 14-19, July 9-14, September 3-8

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Public School Funding Restored - No School District Funding Cuts

As Chair of the Senate Education Committee, funding for our public schools was my number one priority throughout budget negotiations. The Governor proposed devastating cuts to our schools in January. Her proposal for school aid fell far short of what our students, teachers, and school communities need and deserve. Over the past several months, I have stood with my colleagues, teachers, parents, students, administrators, and advocates to oppose these proposals.

I am proud that my colleagues and I prevailed. Under the FY 2024-2025 budget, every district will receive at least as much money as last year. We also fought for, and won, a higher inflationary factor than the Governor proposed, delivering more aid to many districts. The budget increases school aid by \$1.3 billion, or 3.8%, over the current school year and adds more than half a billion dollars to the Governor's proposal.

This win is a testament to the parents, teachers, school board members, superintendents, and advocates across the state who made their voices heard over the last four months. This budget reflects a necessary investment in the work our schools are doing to support students post-COVID, both for learning loss and mental health needs.

Other Education Investments for Our Schools

\$70 million Non-Public Safety Equipment Grants to help our non-public schools pay for security needs, particularly for our Jewish and Muslim schools after October 7.

\$30 million for capital projects for New York State Schools for the Blind and Deaf, including the New York School for the Deaf in Greenburgh.

\$180 million to continue the historic investment in school meals.

For the first time since 2000, we increased the minimum award for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and expanded the eligibility requirements to make college more affordable for more families. For dependent students, we raised the household eligibility threshold to \$125,000.

Responding to Hate Crimes

I am pleased we also took action against the deeply concerning rise in hate crimes throughout New York State, by expanding the list of offenses categorized as hate crimes, including gang assault, sexual abuse, sex trafficking, falsely reporting an incident, and more.

Last fall, I was proud to have served on the NYS Bar Association Task Force on Combating Anti-Semitism and Asian Hate, which endorsed a substantial increase in the list of crimes subject to enhanced penalties as hate crimes, and this Act adopts many of their recommendations. This new Hate Crime Modernization Act reinforces our commitment to protecting all New Yorkers and our belief that New York is home to everyone.

Support for Working Families

I am also proud that this budget affirms our commitment to making New York affordable for working and middle-class families. We invested \$350 million in a new supplemental tax credit that will provide direct support to working families who are eligible for the Empire State Child Tax Credit. Families will be eligible to receive additional support if they are married and file jointly with a household income of less than \$110,000; if they are single and have a household income of less than \$75,000; or are married but file separately with an income of \$55,000.

We invested \$50 million for customers enrolled in the NYSEDA EmPower+ Program to help low and moderate-income households save energy and money when making energy improvements to their homes.

Healthcare

The state budget also makes critical investments relating to healthcare. We are supporting struggling hospitals by increasing Medicaid reimbursement to help struggling hospitals and we included \$150 million in capital funding for SUNY Hospitals. We invested \$285 million in nursing homes and \$15 million in assisted living programs. The budget includes provisions to allow children ages 0-6 to remain continuously enrolled in Medicaid or Child Health Plus without having to redetermine eligibility, to ensure children have stable and affordable health insurance for their early years. Additionally, we eliminated cost-sharing for insulin in commercial health insurance plans, to ensure it remains affordable and accessible.

Lastly, we provide a 2.84% cost of living adjustment for workers in human services, including a 1.7% targeted salary increase for specific support, direct care, clinical, and non-executive administrative staff. These people provide care for our most vulnerable, particularly those in group homes or group settings.

Housing

I am pleased that this budget includes groundbreaking protections for rental tenants and the much-needed investments to encourage the development of new affordable housing. This includes new protections for renters from unreasonable rent increases or unjust evictions. Cities, towns, and villages outside of New York City may "opt-in" to these tenant protections by passing a local law and will have the flexibility to determine which units are covered.

Additionally, we invested \$75 million to support public housing authorities outside of New York City, which we anticipate will benefit our public housing in Yonkers, New Rochelle, Tuckahoe, White Plains, and Port Chester.

In addition, the final budget includes new incentives for developers to build affordable housing. We also modified the law to allow owners of rent-regulated buildings to recoup more money when they renovate or improve individual units, while including protections for tenants.

These are modest changes, particularly in the suburbs, that provide local governments with significant control and incentives to build more affordable housing. I hope to see the communities I represent opt-in to the protections and opportunities in this bill and I will continue to fight on behalf of tenants and homeowners in my district and around the state.

As many of you know, one solution proposed was the "faith-based affordable housing act" to allow existing religious institutions to more easily build a limited number of affordable units on their property. I believe this is a modest proposal worthy of consideration. However, this act was not included in the final budget housing plan and is unlikely to get further attention this legislative session.

Dedicated Funds for the Army Corps of Engineer Project in Mamaroneck

With my colleague Assemblyman Steve Otis, we secured \$10.58 million in the budget specifically designated to fully fund the State's increased share of this long-standing project to address flooding in Mamaroneck. Because the cost of the project increased over time, the State had to increase its share to meet the requirements and move the project ahead. I'm very pleased that we could get this funding added, in addition to last year's funding of \$17.5 million.

Roads and Bridges

While we could not get all I wanted, we did secure \$60 million in additional funding through the State's CHIPS programs, which fund local road improvements. I'm keenly aware that our region needs additional attention from the NYS DOT, and I intend to be a strong advocate for our roads and bridges.

I am pleased the budget included my proposal to require that all large-scale SUNY construction fund projects use project labor agreements. It also included important reform to Tier VI to change the final average salary calculation to an employee's three highest years of pay, not five. For our police, fire, teachers, municipal service workers, and other critical public employees, these changes represent a true victory," writes Sen. Mayer.

Governor Kathy Hochul said, "This budget agreement represents the most significant improvement in housing policy in three generations. It includes transformative investments in health care and education that will put our State on the path to fiscal stability. It will end co-pays for insulin, establish first-in-the-nation paid prenatal leave, and launch the EmpireAI consortium. This budget cracks down on retail theft and gives us new tools to shut down illicit cannabis storefronts. It helps the children of New York City by extending mayoral accountability for public schools. And we got it all done without raising income taxes by a single cent. I'm grateful to Speaker Heastie, Leader Stewart-Cousins and my colleagues in the Legislature for their collaboration on this agreement,"

continued on pg 15-

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Indian Point Waste, continued from pg 1-

Following the rally, nuclear engineer and decommissioning expert Arnie Gundersen outlined a solution for on-site storage at a meeting of the Indian Point Decommissioning Oversight Board. The Board requested Gundersen's participation in the meeting and submitted questions to him after viewing a video and an in-depth webinar sponsored by the Stop Holtec Coalition.

Food & Water Watch Senior New York Organizer Santosh Nandabalan said: "New Yorkers scored a tremendous victory when we successfully passed the Save the Hudson Bill. Radioactive nuclear wastewater does not belong in our water. We call on state leaders to stand strong and ensure on-site storage of radioactive waste at Indian Point, as the safest option for our environment, communities, and regional economy."

Governor Hochul signed the "Save the Hudson" bill into law in August 2023, after it passed the NYS Senate 63-0, and the NYS Assembly 100-44. The legislation makes it illegal to discharge any radiological substance in the Hudson River in connection with the decommissioning of a nuclear power plant. This legislation was the culmination of advocacy by the Stop Holtec Coalition, a grassroots umbrella group of over 138 environmental organizations, over three counties and 35 municipalities calling for a halt to the dumping, and 450,000 online petition signers.

Holtec filed the lawsuit in Federal Court on April 18, and argues that Federal law, and the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, supercedes New York State law in regulating nuclear waste, and that New York overstepped its authority when it passed the Save the Hudson Bill.

New York Attorney General Letitia James will represent NY State in the lawsuit. The discharge of nuclear waste into waterways has been approved in the past, and that is Holtec's legal argument, that there plan to dump into the Hudson "satisfies NRC regulations and is well within federal limits on radiological discharges," according to he lawsuit.

Safe Energy Rights Group cofounder Courtney M. Williams, PhD. said: "Holtec's lawsuit is not surprising. They're here to make money, not be a responsible neighbor. They don't care if dumping hurts the rejuvenation of our riverfronts and the tourism it could bring. They don't care if their dumping hurts the health of this community. The Union of Concerned Scientists has predicted Indian Point will flood twice a month by the year 2060. Given that there is nowhere for the nuclear waste to go, we must force Holtec to plan for storing the waste properly onsite. We need the state to stand strong. The Hudson River is the largest Superfund site in the nation thanks to GE and their dumping of PCBs in the river. Imagine if we could go back and stop that contamination. This moment is the closest we'll get; we need to seize it."

Tracy Brown, President of Riverkeeper, said: "Federal law allows for states to regulate their own interests, including economic interests. The Save the Hudson legislation is not only an appropriate use of state power, it is necessary to protect New York from the economic damages that would come from using the Hudson River as a dumping ground. Riverkeeper continues to advocate for storing the radioactive wastewater on site for at least twelve years, which is one half-life of tritium, while reasonable and advantageous disposal methods can be determined."

Tina Bongar, co-organizer STOP HOLTEC Coalition, United For Clean Energy, said: "Now a leading national nuclear engineer and decommissioning expert Arnie Gundersen has said Holtec is capable of storing the wastewater safely on site without jeopardizing tourism and recreation along the Hudson River. Who wants to kayak, fish, swim, drink milk and eat apples from the Hudson Valley if fuel pool water is dumped in the Hudson River? Holtec needs to respect our communities and store the wastewater safely on-site."

The Indian Point Decommissioning Oversight Board (DOB), is holding public hearings in Westchester to consider options. On its website, DOB writes, "On April 18, 2024, Holtec Decommissioning International filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court – Southern District of New York challenging New York State's 2023 enacted legislation pertaining to wastewater discharges from nuclear decommissioning sites on the Hudson River (S. 6893 / A. 7208). The Office of the Attorney General will review the complaint and represent the State. Given the active litigation, it is anticipated that Decommissioning Oversight Board meetings will forego discussion of the litigation and legislation. However, the DOB plans to continue planned presentations on 4/25 regarding alternative methods of wastewater removal."

Alternative options other than dumping in the Hudson include, shipping the waste to licensed disposal facilities, or keeping the waste on site. The tanks would hold 400,000 gallons of waste, and after 12 years, the radioactivity of the waste is reduced by 50%.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said, "As County Executive of Westchester County, I firmly stand behind the New York State law aimed at protecting the Hudson River, a cherished gem for recreation and tourism in our region. The State has rightfully taken measures to safeguard the health and integrity of our waterways.

"The law passed in 2023, which prohibits the movement of any radiological substance into the Hudson River during the decommissioning of a nuclear power plant, reflects our shared commitment to environmental protection and public safety. The Hudson River holds ecological and economic value for our communities, and it is our responsibility to ensure its preservation for current and future generations. Five County Executives, of both political parties, have stood up for protecting this river. We firmly believe that the State has acted in the best interest of our residents and the environment."

Indian Point closed in 2021.

State budget, continued from pg 14-

Other budget highlights include:

To-go cocktails: A law which was about to expire, which temporarily allows bars and restaurants to sell take out alcohol, was extended for five years. Movie theaters are now also allowed to sell alcohol.

Migrant funding: The budget includes \$2.4 Million to help New York City with the influx of more than 100,000 migrants. The state spent \$1.9 Billion last year.

AIM Funding to Cities: Funding to help Cities like Yonkers was increased for the first time in more than a decade, from \$715 Million to \$758 Million.

Opioid Addiction Funding: Almost \$1 Billion was allocated to help local governments combat Opioid abuse and addiction. \$960 Million was allocated for treatment centers and prevention and support services.

DA Rocah Charges Peekskill Councilman with Filing Fraudulent Petitions



*Peekskill Councilman
Rob Scott*

The defendant, who was seeking to get on the ballot for a county legislator seat in the June 2023 Democratic primary, allegedly signed his petitions as a witness verifying forged signatures

On April 17, Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced that Robert Scott, 44, of Peekskill, was arrested and charged with filing designating petitions containing forged signatures for a seat on the Westchester County Board of Legislators in the June 2023 Democratic primary election.

DA Rocah said: "Free and fair elections are the foundation of our democracy. Undermining the petition process in an attempt to get on the ballot in an election violates the public's trust."

The defendant, who is currently a Common Council member in the City of Peekskill, was arrested April 16 by the Westchester County District Attorney's Office and charged with Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a felony. The defendant was issued a Desk Appearance Ticket for an April 30 arraignment in White Plains City Court.

It is alleged that on April 10, 2023, the defendant filed, with the Westchester County Board of Elections, designating petitions containing forged signatures of eight individuals, who told DA's Office investigators that they never signed a petition for the defendant. The alleged forged signatures appeared on three of the 37 sheets that the defendant signed as a witness

The defendant was seeking to get on the June 27, 2023 ballot as a candidate in the Democratic primary election for Westchester County Board of Legislators District 1, which encompasses Peekskill and parts of Cortlandt and Yorktown.

The Criminal Investigators Squad of the DA's Office launched an investigation in July 2023 after receiving complaints from individuals who attested their signatures were forged.

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

President Biden Visits Irvington continued from pg 1-

"Look, and, of course, Michael was a great "American President."

"The biggest threat that Trump poses is to our democracy. Above all, what's at risk in 2024 is our freedom — basic freedoms and democracy. I've been doing this a long time. I know I only look like I'm 40, but I'm a little older. (Laughter.)

"Representative Bowman, thanks for welcoming me into —into your district. I got a passport to come in. (Laughter.)

I also include Rodge and Barbara and all of the co-hosts of this event to thank them for their support.

And, Mondaire Jones, who needs to win in November — Mondaire, you know — (applause)

"One of my best friends in Congress for — she's much, much younger than I am, but — (laughter) — Nita Lowey. (Applause.) Nita, I love you," said President Biden.

Michael Douglas called this November's election "the most critical time in our democracy."

Those in attendance said that the President was on message, strong and energized.

Outside of the President's visit, protestors who opposed the Israeli war in Gaza protested and outnumbered supporters of Israel.

The protests underscored the continued, deep disagreements that many Westchester residents have about the war in Gaza, and the prisoners who remain from Hamas' attack on Israel on October 7 of last year.

While campus protests and camps have engulfed many colleges including Columbia in New York City, there has yet to be a protest-encampment set up on a Westchester college.

Another Irvington resident and Congressional candidate, Marty Dolan, attended the fundraiser. Dolan is running in a democratic primary against Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, AOC, in NYC.

Westchester's other Congressman, Rep. Mike Lawler, has called out Jones and NY US Senator Chuck Schumer for not speaking out against the protestor's antisemitic views.

"There's a difference between a free exchange of ideas and antisemitic rhetoric designed to threaten Jewish students. When Hamas has endorsed your protest, you're doing something horribly wrong. These students who are intimidating their Jewish peers should be arrested and they should be expelled - and if they aren't American citizens they should be deported. We must take a firm stand against hate on our campuses.

"I mean, look at Chuck Schumer, the Senate majority leader from New York, the highest-ranking Jewish official in America. It's often said the most dangerous place in America is between Chuck Schumer and a microphone, and yet, he has been utterly silent about these protests.

"Let's not mince words here - if you're chanting "from the River to the Sea" or "Globalize the Intifada" on college campuses, you're parroting Hamas talking points, you're intimidating Jewish students, and you should face the consequences," said Rep. Lawler.

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Westchester Launches Craft Beverage Trail

Ninja Games Coming to Croton Point Park



Westchester County Tourism & Film launched the Westchester Craft Beverage Trail connecting more than 23 distilleries, craft breweries and cideries from throughout Westchester. Residents and visitors age 21 and older are now able to discover the rich tapestry of Westchester’s liquid craftsmanship and local artisans with support from a free new online passport (no app downloads required). Once registered, users will be able to earn rewards for fun items that reflect Westchester’s booming beverage scene while savoring their favorite sips along the trail.

The lower Hudson Valley’s diverse and vibrant craft beverage scene—just a “pint’s pour away” from New York City—takes center stage with the Westchester Craft Beverage Trail, featuring an array of brews, hops, lagers, ciders and more, crafted right in Westchester County. Metro-North provides a safe and reliable transportation option, making it easy for participants to join the adventure without the hassle of driving. Along the trail, participants can earn points with each check-in at the featured merchants, using them to claim unique rewards like smartly designed caps and mugs. Participating spots include beloved Westchester staples like Broken Bow Brewery (Tuckahoe), Captain Lawrence Brewing Company (Elmsford) and Barrel House (Mt Kisco), Hardscrabble Cider (North Salem), River Outpost Brewing Company (Peekskill), Wolf & Warrior Brewing Company (White Plains) and plenty more.

Learn more at <https://www.visitwestchesterny.com/things-to-do/dining/craft-beverages/trail/>.



Race, swing and move through obstacle courses at Croton Point Park in Croton-on-Hudson, and compete in the first ever Grit Ninja Games, presented by The Grit Ninja, Saturday, May 18. Children and young adults ages nine and up can compete in various tournaments in divisions based on age. Celebrity ninjas from American Ninja Warrior and American Ninja Warrior Jr. including Daniel Gil, Vance Walker, Isaiah Thomas, and Isabella Wakeham will be available for meet and greets. The entire day will be fun for the whole family as there will be local food trucks, beginner ninja obstacles suitable for all ages, raffles, and a professional ninja racing competition for everyone to watch. Rain date is Sunday, May 19.

Parking is \$10 per car, with or without a Westchester County Parks pass.

Founded in 2019 by Westchester residents Allison and Eric Meltzer, The Grit Ninja is a family-owned business that provides innovative obstacle-course based fitness programs for kids and adults alike, including classes, open gyms, competitions and parties. The Grit Ninja has an indoor facility in Pleasantville. Visit www.thegritninjagames.com for more information about the event. To register, visit <https://www.thegritninjagames.com/register>

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