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Friday May 10, 2024

Riverside Valedictorian & Salutatorian Overcome Challenges to Accomplish Academic Excellence



Riverside High School Valedictorian Kayley Rodriguez, right, and Salutatorian Ebenezer Wontumi

By Dan Murphy

Congratulations to Riverside High School Valedictorian Kayley Rodriguez and Salutatorian Ebenezer Wontumi. Valedictorian Kayley Rodriguez will graduate with a 98.5 GPA. One of her favorite members of the Riverside HS staff is School Counselor Scott Silverman. "If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't have become Valedictorian. He is easy to talk to and truly tries to understand you. He gives you advice and options and keeps bothering you to keep you on track," s

continued on pg 13-

Yonkers Welcomes New Superintendent



YPS Superintendent Anibal Soler Jr. with a student at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Academy

Superintendent of Schools Anibal Soler, Jr. set the tone for the week as he toured the Barack Obama School for Social Justice for students in grades 7-12 and neighboring school Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Academy for students in

continued on pg 14-

Bowman Fundraises with Muslim Leader who was "Happy" for Oct. 7 Hamas Attack on Israel



Rep. Jamaal Bowman



Nihad Awad

See story on pg 10

Yonkers First Legal Marijuana Dispensary Opened May 9



By Dan Murphy

Westchester County is home to more than 1,000,000 residents, yet its adult population still has very limited access to tested cannabis products from licensed stores. That will soon change when The Plant officially opens in Yonkers on May 9, and become Yonkers first legal marijuana dispensary.

The locally owned and operated premium cannabis dispensary will provide Yonkers and Westchester residents with access to the highest quality cannabis brands and products New York has to offer in a comfortable environment designed for people to quickly pick up favorites or take the time to explore something new. Photos of The Plant can be found here.

Located at 2595 Central Park Avenue, The Plant has crafted a shopping experience for cannabis experts, curious newcomers and everyone in between. Its knowledgeable staff is available to direct the canna-curious to specific products tailored to their needs and desired effects, while also making the shopping or pickup experience seamless for customers who already know what they'd like to purchase.

"Opening The Plant is the culmination of a lifetime dream. The Plant is more than just a retail location, but a way to use cannabis to bring together people, culture, and community," said Anthony Bannister, CEO and co-owner of The Plant. "Our neighbors can look to The Plant not just for high-quality, tested cannabis products, but for a forum to learn more about cannabis and explore the multitude of benefits it can have on individuals and society."

The Plant will celebrate its official opening with a ribbon cutting at 3:30pm on May 9. It will include remarks from Yonker's Mayor Mike Spano.

The Plant is an independently owned premium cannabis dispensary in Yonkers, New York. With local ownership and an emphasis on serving the sur-

continued on pg 4-

Westchester DA Candidate William Wagstaff Didn't Pay Taxes for Six Years



By Dan Murphy

Westchester Democrats "Extremely Concerned" and "Disappointed" Blindsided by News

"If he can't manage his own finances, how can he run the office of District Attorney?"

-Westchester Democratic Committee vice-chair Ximena Francella

Westchester District Attorney candidate Williams Wagstaff did not pay his Federal Income Taxes over a six year period, totaling more than \$189,000. The story broke in the Journal News, by reporter David Mackay Wilson. www.lohud.com/story/news/politics/2024/05/01/westchester-ny-da-candidate-william-wagstaff-irs-tax-debt-paid-after-campaign-launch/73512765007/.

Wagstaff did not pay off his tax bill until the middle of his campaign for District Attorney. Wagstaff, Susan Cacace, and Adeel Mirza are running in an upcoming Democratic primary on June 25.

Wagstaff did not find his tax troubles worthy of mention to Westchester

continued on pg 15-

Mayor Spano Appoints Retired Police Officer Felix Rios to Board of Education



L-R: Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano swears in new Yonkers Board of Education Trustee Felix Rios Photo by Maurice Mercado

Mayor Mike Spano today swore in retired Yonkers Police Officer Felix Rios to the Yonkers Board of Education. As trustee of the Yonkers Board of Education, Rios is part of a nine-member Board, which is the official policy making body of the School District.

“As we continue to provide our students with the best education possible, I am proud to appoint Felix to the Board of Education as he brings unique perspectives as a parent, an alumnus and dedicated public servant. Felix is a decorated law enforcement officer who is passionate about education in Yonkers, and his experiences will be valuable assets to our District and our students,” said Mayor Spano.

Working in law enforcement for over 20 years, Rios served as a patrol officer and member of the Yonkers Police Department’s Anti-Crime and Traffic Units. During his tenure with Yonkers Police, Rios was the recipient of five law enforcement commendations, six certificates of excellent police work, eight unit citations, the Yonkers PBA Harold Woods Award and numerous letters of appreciation. Rios recently served as a board member of the Yonkers Parking Authority. Raised in Yonkers, Rios is a Yonkers Public Schools alumna and parent of two current Yonkers Public Schools students.

“I am very proud to be appointed by Mayor Mike Spano. I look forward to working with the Yonkers Board of Education in continuing the quality education that is available to our Yonkers community,” commented Felix Rios.

Superintendent of Yonkers Public Schools Aníbal Soler, Jr., commented, “I am incredibly excited to welcome Felix Rios to the Yonkers Board of Education. Mayor Spano’s appointment is a testament to the Mayor’s commitment to our schools and the broader community. Mr. Rios brings a wealth of experience and a unique perspective that will greatly benefit our district. His dedication to Yonkers and our children’s future aligns perfectly with our goals, and I look forward to the innovative and insightful contributions he will bring.”

Rios will serve the remainder of a five-year expired term through 2028, held by Rev. Steve Lopez, former Yonkers Board of Education President.

Mayor Spano added, “I want to extend my deepest gratitude to Rev. Lopez for his dedicated years of service to the Board of Education who served our City and our students with loyalty, professionalism and distinction.”

City Council Digs Into Proposed Budget

By Dan Murphy

The Yonkers City Council has begun their budget review of Mayor Mike Spano’s budget proposal for fiscal year 2025.

Spano’s budget plan calls for total spending of \$1.46 billion and a property tax levy increase of 5.2%.

The Finance Department and Budget office took the council through the budget. “We all knew that Fiscal Year was going to be a challenging year. The Mayor showed a strong commitment to the schools to help mitigate the loss of federal funding in the budget,” said Finance staff.

The proposed budget will exceed the property tax cap by \$11.3 Million.

Because the budget is over the cap, 5 council votes would be required to adopt a budget.

The proposed budget also uses \$63 Million in fund balance-surplus.

Each department in City Hall will now come before the council and review their individual budgets.

The big council budget meeting will come when they review the Yonkers Public Schools proposed budget for the upcoming 2024-25 school year.

Even with the Mayor’s additional proposed contributions to the YPS, “there is a huge deficit in the Board of Education budget,” said Finance Commissioner John Liezewski.

What the YPS budget hole has not been made public, but is expected to be around \$40 Million. Many of the staff that YPS was able to hire from the federal COVID funds, are in danger of being cut.

There are councilmembers who would like to see more education funding for YPS. But with a 5.27% property tax increase already proposed, additional property taxes seem to be out of the question.

There are also councilmembers who might want to cut the proposed tax increase.

Look for parents, students and educators to come to the council for more funding.

Councilman Anthony Merante asked if homeowners will lose their STAR property tax credit if the City goes over the budget, as happened a few years ago. The answer was no, homeowners will not lose their STAR tax relief.

Council President Lakisha Collins-Bellamy how the budget will impact homeowners. The average home in Yonkers would see their property taxes go up by \$40 per month, or \$480 per year.

New York State government has completed its budget process, but will be returning for a final month before summer recess. Additional funding coming from Albany are not expected.

Also unclear is whether there are five council votes to adopt the budget as is, and over the tax cap.

The two republicans on the council, Minority Leader Mike Breen and Councilman Merante, are inclined to lower the property tax increase before voting yes.

And, Council democrats might be looking for additional funding for YPS before voting yes.

The deadline to adopt a budget is July 1.

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Assemblyman Gary Pretlow Talks Delays in Getting Casino Licenses for Downstate

MGM Yonkers in Westchester May Have to Wait until 2026

– New Yorkers could be gambling legally at downstate casinos by October of this year, but it is more likely that they will have to wait until 2026. The reason: Politics.

That is the reading from state Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow, head of the state's racing and gaming commission. He disclosed it to SportsBoom.com on Friday in an interview at his office.

"It depends on the mood of the political class," Pretlow said. "If they want to do it, it could be October of this year. If not, it'll be January of '26. Rumor has it that Governor (Kathy) Hochul wants to do it in her re-election year, which is 2026."

The delays in issuing three downstate casino licenses have been frustrating to executives at some of the biggest casino companies in the world. New York law calls for three licenses to be issued for the downstate region that includes Westchester and Rockland counties north of New York City, the five boroughs of New York City, and the counties of Nassau and Suffolk on Long Island.

A total of 17 entities have expressed interest in acquiring those licenses and have submitted a first round of questions to the state gaming board, which has answered those questions. A second round of questions also has been submitted, but those answers are on hold indefinitely, which has brought the process to a halt.

"I have a solution," Pretlow said, explaining that uncluttering the process and getting it back on the fast track would lead to \$1 billion in revenues annually for the state from licensing fees and taxes on casino winnings. "But if they (the governor and her cronies) don't want to do it, it won't happen, and I don't know why. I told her 'We could bring in \$1 billion right now,' and she said 'no.'"

Pretlow said the leading candidates for the three licenses are MGM Resorts, which owns the Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway, Malaysian-based Genting Inc., which owns Aqueduct Racetrack, and New York Mets owner Steve Cohen, who wants to build a casino complex on the footprint of the old Shea Stadium alongside City Field in Queens.

"The only ones I know are not dropping out are MGM, Genting and Cohen," Pretlow said.

Other proposals have come from some of the top companies in the business: Hard Rock has taken over the gambling component of a proposed Times Square casino from Caesars, but there is resistance from the Broadway Theater community.

Las Vegas Sands wants to put a casino at Nassau Coliseum in Nassau County, but there is community opposition, and there is no way for buses to reach that facility because the bridges on Long Island parkways were purposely built low to prevent busloads of city dwellers from overrunning those communities when traveling to New York's beaches.

Two groups are trying to put a casino at Coney Island in Brooklyn, where there also is community opposition.

Wynn Gaming is trying to out a casino at the Hudson Yards complex on the West Side of Manhattan, but the proposal is still in its infancy and has not gotten past the drawing of architectural plans.

A development south of the United Nations building would have a casino and parking complex underground but also is in its infancy, and a proposal to build a high-end casino on the top floors of Saks Fifth Avenue has gone dormant over the past couple of years.

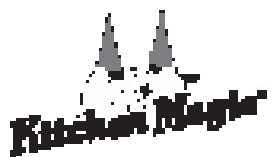
Bally's has taken over ownership of the former Trump Links golf course in the Bronx with an eye toward building a casino there near the Bronx entrance to the Whitestone Bridge, but Bally's has had more troubles with its online sportsbook rollout over the past two years than any of the nine companies that have been licensed to provide online sports gambling.

New Yorkers are used to having a dysfunctional state government, but the companies that are trying to do business in the Empire State are not used to dealing with such a high level of frustration. Complicating matters, there are lawsuits challenging a recent New York City law that states that any company winning a gambling license will be automatically zoned to operate a casino in the five boroughs.

Every company trying to build a casino also must complete environmental impact reviews, which are time-consuming and have been held up by the delays coming from the state capital in Albany.

Under state law, applications must be submitted within 30 days of the gaming commission responding to the second set of questions posed by the gaming companies. About 40 such questions have been submitted, and there is no timetable as to when a response will be forthcoming.

continued on pg 6-



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It's Mothers Day, and I Miss My Mom!



By Eric Wolf Schoen

With so much going on in the world, make sure you celebrate your Mom on Mother's Day this Sunday. Make her a special meal. Remember how fortunate you are to be able to celebrate with her in your company. If she is no longer with us, remember all the good times you had. Take time out of your schedule to do something she liked to do with you or something good for someone else. She will be smiling in Heaven.

It's over 30 years since the passing of my mom, and I miss her everyday. I miss her but something happens everyday to remind me about her. I was thinking about those many things as I sat down to write this column. For some of you who knew my mom the events I hope will wax nostalgic. If you didn't, think about the special memories that come to mind about your mother.

Last Friday I had, for lack of a better word a podiatric episode. When you have two artificial knees you have to take these things seriously. I needed to see a podiatrist that day, called at least 10 in Yonkers off of the internet with no luck. It dawned on me that mom use to see a podiatrist on Valentine Lane. Could he still be in business after over 30 years? Yes he was, and his partner saw me within 20 minutes. Mom was looking out for me.

After Covid I rarely wear suits. I pulled one out of the closet at 5 p.m. for a 6 p.m. affair and the pants were severely wrinkled. Mom never ironed. She would pay someone to iron for her. She never showed me how to iron. I had an iron in one of my drawers, pulled it out, put it on the highest setting and voila, without burning myself or my pants I was able to get the wrinkles out of the pants. Mom gave me the inspiration to do it, and her and her best friend, Antoinette Costantini, a fine dress maker were smiling in heaven knowing I could figure out how to iron, something which for most of you is a periodic event.

When microwave ovens came out, I bought mom the biggest one that would fit in the space she had. It was big, and mom said she would never use it. It took her a while but eventually she used it several times a day. When I cook I use it several times a day. Most of my friends know that if I can 'nuke' it I can eat it. Every time I use the microwave with various built in ovens I think of mom.

I learned to shop from my mother, and how to find a bargain whether it was on the white, square display tables people use to crowd around at Alexander's on Fordham Road in the Bronx and later in Yonkers, or in John Wanamaker's at Cross County Center. Mom was the queen of finding a bargain, a good habit that I have with prices as crazy as they are now.

If mom saw something she liked she would buy it in every color. I was shopping in Target not too long ago, and they had tee shirts on sale at a very good price. They fit well, and 5 colors later I went home with a bargain like mom would want me to.

Tuesday was Teacher Appreciation Day in the United States. Mom and Antoinette Costantini, her co-PTA President at School 13 in Yonkers always facilitated a luncheon for the teachers accompanied by a small gift of appreciation. I thought of mom when I posted a thank you on my Facebook to the many teachers I have had from Elementary School through Grad School and even when I went back to school midlife to obtain my Paralegal status.

continued on pg 6-

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Yonkers Native, Army Veteran, Named 2024 Valedictorian at Manhattan College



James Washington

James Washington, a May 2024 graduate of Manhattan College majoring in Exercise Science and a U.S. Army veteran, has been selected as the undergraduate valedictorian for the class of 2024. He will be the student speaker at the May 18 Undergraduate Commencement to be held on the College campus.

Washington, a Yonkers, NY native, attended two years at Lincoln High School before he and his family moved to South Carolina where he completed his high school education at Lancaster High School. After working for one year, he joined the U.S. Army in 2012 where he honorably served until 2020. Washington's first assignment was at Fort Carson, CO through 2018. While there, he had two overseas rotations, first in Kuwait (2013-2014) followed by Kosovo (2016). This was followed by a tour in Vilseck, Germany and the completion of his Army career in Oklahoma in 2020.

With a strong interest in exercise science, he returned to the New York area and sought council from the Bronx Veterans' Administration about schools catering to his interest. This led him to Manhattan College where he started in January 2021. Never having been on the campus itself prior to his acceptance, Washington was unsure what to expect. "As an Army veteran, an older student, and a member of the LGBT community, I certainly had some apprehensions," he said. "However, I was welcomed immediately and have felt comfortable at Manhattan College throughout my time here. Being a Military Friendly School and having a Veteran Success Center dedicated to veterans like myself where we congregate, share experiences, and motivate each other was essential to whatever success I have thus far achieved."

Going forward, Washington is deciding upon which school he will attend for his ABSN – an Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing which is a degree specifically for those who already have earned a bachelor degree. His interest in nursing likely will keep this extraordinary person in the New York area for a bit longer, but the beauty of Colorado may also be beckoning.

Milo Rivero, Ph. D., President of Manhattan College said, "Having a student such as James highlights the diversity and true spirit of community that is so integral to Manhattan College. His life experiences thus far have been extraordinary, and we all know that he will continue along a path of helping others succeed as he has."

Yonkers First Cannabis Dispensary, continued from pg 1-

rounding community, The Plant's role in the community goes far beyond selling the widest variety of high quality, New York-grown cannabis products. The Plant's highly trained staff is committed to making the cannabis shopping experience as convenient and comfortable as possible. To learn more visit: <https://fanoftheplant.com/>

The location on Central Park Avenue is across the street from Barnes & Noble, and next to Pizza Beat Restaurant, near the Scarsdale border.

County Executive Latimer Signs Legislation to Enhance Senior Property Tax Exemptions



County Executive Latimer signs Senior Property Tax Exemption into law, with County Legislators looking on

Westchester County Executive George Latimer signed into law legislation aimed at bolstering Senior Citizen Property Tax Exemptions. This move expands eligibility criteria by excluding social security income from the adjusted gross income calculation for benefits.

Latimer said: "This legislation marks a step towards ensuring our senior citizens receive the support they deserve. By excluding social security income from the calculation, we are providing substantial relief to seniors on fixed incomes, enabling them to better manage their expenses and maintain their homes. It's crucial that we prioritize the well-being of our elderly residents, and this adjustment reflects our commitment to their financial security and comfort."

The legislation, which was recently passed unanimously by the County Board of Legislators, aims to alleviate financial strain among senior citizens, empowering them to age in place with dignity and ease.

Department of Senior Programs and Services Commissioner Mae Carpenter said: "Enhancing senior citizen property tax exemptions is a vital aspect of supporting our aging population. This adjustment not only provides much-needed financial relief but also reinforces our dedication to fostering an inclusive and supportive community for all residents."



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The Mothers Set to Host 2024 Butterfly Release Ceremony on June 8



"Your wings were ready but my heart was not"

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Butterfly Release Ceremony

Saturday, June 8th, 2024 at 12:00 PM
Live-Streamed from Yonkers City Hall Plaza
Unity Fountain on Facebook.com/TheMothers2016

Hosted by The Mothers
The Mothers are a group of women who are living with the impact, effect and aftermath of the unnatural life occurrence of losing a child under various circumstances. We are here to support, embrace and encourage one another and others who have endured this life changing experience.

TheMothers2016@gmail.com
#TheMothers2016



In Participation with The City of Yonkers

The Mothers, a support group for grieving parents who lost their children, is set to bring back the Annual Butterfly Release Ceremony at Yonkers City Hall by the Unity Fountain. This ceremony is held every year to remember all of our loved ones who grew their wings, and remind every mother (and mother figure) that they are not alone.

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, and the Yonkers City Council, has from day one been a big supporter of this cause, and we thank them for coordinating with us to host this event outside of City Hall every year. The event will kick off at noon. Because it will be on June 8th, and weather is always expected to be on the warmer side, water will be available, and tents will be set up to keep attendees cool.

The event will commence with some heart warming speeches and blessings. Sometimes we are blessed with some singing performances, (TBA if confirmed). Mothers are encouraged before the event to fill out a form online on <https://matthewwallace.org> to make sure every loved one is remembered, and their names are called during the main part of the ceremony. The event will then close out with a beautiful release of butterflies.

Each participating Mother will receive a butterfly in a container that they will release at the end of the ceremonies. All of these supplies are organized and funded by The Matthew Wallace Foundation®.

Weekend Event at Westchester County Park in Yonkers

Saturday May 11 Lenoir Preserve, Yonkers: (914) 968-5851

Migratory Bird Watch, 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. It's World Migratory Bird Day! Join us to learn about the wonders of migration, the birds who travel vast distances every year and the successes of the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act. We'll start inside and then take a short walk around the Preserve. For all ages.

On This Day in Yonkers History...



A photo of the Cross County Shopping Center in the 1950's

By Mary Hoar, City of Yonkers Historian, President Emerita Yonkers Historical Society, recipient of the 2004 Key to History, Member of the Yonkers Landmarks Preservation Board, and President Untermeyer Performing Arts Council

Monday, May 13th:

May 13, 1921: Keeping a promise, Mayor William Wallin appointed Yonkers' first two women Justices of the Peace! He announced weeks earlier he would appoint women experienced in welfare or legal aid work as Justices of the Peace, believing they would do much good for the poor. Florence Parsons, General Secretary of the Woman's institute, and Dee Griswald Atkinson were to fill the vacancies.

Parsons co-founded the Civic League with Mary Marshall Butler, was a Director of Yonkers Charity Organization Society, and studied Philanthropy in the (NY) School of Social Work.

Besides having a background in business, Atkinson was Regional Director of the Immigration Division of State Ed, and taught Americanization skills to foreign women. She was State Director of the DAR Americanization program, and a state Director of the American Red Cross.

Tuesday, May 14th

May 14, 1932: Mile Square Road's Martha Jones opened the Yonkers office of the "Repeal Week" movement at 15 North Broadway; the movement was part of the national mobilization of women who wanted Prohibition repealed.

May 14, 1946: Saunders students, unhappy because electrical classes were consolidated, formed a picket line outside of the school on South Broadway. Principal Patrick

McHugh explained it was so close to the end of the school year, he had a "problem getting teachers for electrical courses." He merged tenth-grade classes into one class, and eleventh-grade classes into a second course. This consolidation forced some students to drop electrical studies. When the leaders of the strike tried to meet with McHugh, they were told to "return to class or there would be a court decision."

Wednesday, May 15th

May 15, 1924: According to The Yonkers Herald, the Common Council and the Board of Estimate went out of existence. They were to be replaced by a Municipal Assembly, an Upper House (Board of Estimate) and a Lower House (Common Council), following the Home Rule Act passed by the NY State Legislature.

Mayor Wiesendanger met with the Corporation Council Daniel Cashin and City Clerk John Kettell to determine new protocols and procedures; they concluded they couldn't proceed with the conversion. The Legislation required the

continued on pg 13-



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PUBLIC NOTICE

A GENERAL ORDINANCE AMENDING PART IV: BUSINESS REGULATIONS, LICENSING AND CONSUMER PROTECTION OF THE CODE BY ADDING CHAPTER 40 TO THE CODE, ENTITLED "REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPEDITORS"

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Yonkers has adopted the abovementioned legislation that amends the City Code to create a registration requirement for persons who act as expeditors in various City departments. A registration requirement for expeditors will allow for greater transparency and efficiency throughout the permitting process in various City departments. Furthermore, this registration requirement will also allow the City of Yonkers to hold expeditors accountable and suspend or revoke the registration of expeditors where there is a finding of misconduct as defined in the legislation.

The penalties for violation of this ordinance are as follows:

A violation of any provision of this chapter shall constitute a Class II offense. Any person who provides expediting services without first obtaining a registration certificate from the City of Yonkers or who shall continue to provide expediting services after having had his/her registration suspended or revoked shall be deemed to have violated the provisions of this chapter. Each expediting service performed by a person without a valid registration certificate shall be deemed a separate offense.

The complete text of the ordinance is on file and may be examined at the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 40 S. Broadway, Yonkers, NY 10701.

Dated: May 3, 2024 Vincent Spano
City Clerk

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

It might be something little, but mom always believed in giving a token of her appreciation to the nurse in the doctors office or the school nurse who would take care of me when I was sick. Following in mom's footsteps, whether it be to my doctors nurse, the lady at 7-11 who serves me everyday making sure my items are the freshest and best tasting to the USPS and UPS carriers delivering to my apartment, I always find something to grace them with!

Mom loved reading newspapers. The New York Times, the Daily News, the Post and the local paper, The Herald Statesman (aka Journal News) were delivered to the apartment. When mom got the Herald when paperboys delivered it after school, the first question my sister and I would ask her was, 'Who died.' With the exception of the Daily News I get the papers delivered to my iPad daily, and looking to see who died is usually the first thing done by my sister and yours truly. Even though we are Jewish, mom had a box full of different sizes of Mass Cards we would send or deliver in person. I still have them!

Greeting cards for Birthdays, Anniversaries and other special occasions would be sent out like clockwork by mom to family and friends. If someone didn't get a card on time they would check to make sure mom was ok. My sister sends out occasion cards to family and friends names which are listed in a book she refers to. I also have a large number of cards I send out, in keeping with my mother's tradition.

Mom use to love trying new products at the grocery store. Particularly when they were purchased with a cents off coupon. I was at Stop and Shop earlier this week, and they had a clearance sale on watermelon yogurt. I love watermelon and I love yogurt, bought several of them and will give you a review in the future.

Dad had high blood pressure. Mom would cook everything adding no salt to it. Dad's spice was pepper. Mom never put a salt shaker on the table. The other day I was looking for a bit of salt to add to something I was eating, and could not find the salt shaker in my apartment. A good habit mom taught her children.

Mom and dad and I went to Atlantic City in 1978, the first year casino gambling was legal. Whether it was the slot machines of Atlantic City or the card games, nickel and dime my parents loved to play with friends, they loved gambling, always within their means. Mom liked the lottery. My sister plays various games daily, and Monday through Sunday I play the lottery big games, Powerball, Cash for Life and Mega Millions allowing me to become a millionaire 7 days a week. I always think of mom when I play the lottery. One day I will become the big winner!

Mom was a strong believer in Unicef collecting the Trick or Treat money on Halloween. She felt bad for the starving children in the world, and wanted to see all students contribute to the cause. She was the School 13 Unicef Chairwoman. There was some controversy about Unicef and they would not let her collect the trick or treat boxes inside School 13. On a cold October day, mom sat outside the school and collected the orange coin boxes for UNICEF. I always try to send them a check with the hopes that they are still feeding hungry children around the world.

My mom had matching pocketbooks and shoes for every outfit she wore. Though I am colorblind, before I dress I make sure everything matches out of respect to mom. If she saw someone like one of her doctors wearing a tie she did not like or did not match what he was wearing, the next visit she would gift the doctor with a matching tie.

Mom hated the color brown, and would never let my me wear it. Anything I bought that was brown I had to return. To this day even if the price is right brown is not in my wardrobe.

People, yes over 30 years later will come up to me and ask how is your mom. Others will come up to me and tell me wonderful stories of their experiences with mom. People mean well, though well meaning will bring a tear to my eyes.

If your mother is still with you treat her special on Mother's Day this Sunday. If she is an angel in heaven, think about the wonderful times you had together and how you like me do so many things that she did. I miss my mom everyday. Happy Mother's Day to all the Mothers out there!

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 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.

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.



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Letters to the Editor:

Letters to the Editor:

Jamaal Bowman: A Congressman of Vision and Transformative Change

Nearly 4 years ago, as a Democratic Party district leader in the village of Bronxville, I wrote an editorial supporting the candidacy of Jamaal Bowman for Congress. Then a little known principal of a middle school in the Bronx, Bowman stepped forward to run against Eliot Engel, a Democrat who had served in Congress for over 30 years. In my piece, I wrote that the time was ripe for transformative change in our district. We were struggling through a global pandemic, amidst a summer of turmoil marked by nationwide protests against police brutality in the wake of the killing of George Floyd.

Congressman Engel had grown increasingly remote and disconnected from his constituents, particularly those in underserved neighborhoods in the Bronx and Westchester. Worse yet, his foreign policy views as chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, had grown more and more hawkish and more out of touch with the views of Democratic primary voters (albeit very much aligned with well-heeled defense contractors!)

I described Mr. Bowman as a leader with energy, vision and progressive purpose, and I feel the same way today. As a savvy community activist who had forged ties with grass roots networks and multi-racial social justice coalitions, Jamaal struck me as the right candidate to take on the longtime incumbent Engel. A candidate unafraid to speak out forcefully on the evils of militarism and systemic racism. And a candidate who could win! In a David-beats-Goliath moment, despite being outspent 2 to 1 in the primary, Jamaal Bowman defeated Congressman Engel, carrying all major demographic groups across the district. He went on to win handily in the general election. In 2022, Congressman Bowman triumphed again in a contested primary before winning re-election by a large margin.

As Jamaal faces yet another stiff primary challenge on June 25, this time from an opponent bankrolled by Republican megadonors and millions in AIPAC dollars, I believe that Congressman Bowman more than ever deserves our support. He remains the candidate of progressive change. While, as the Daily News, the Intercept, and other publications have reported, his primary opponent wines and dines with donors who support Donald Trump and who finance election-denying GOP Congressmen, Jamaal continues to deliver on-the-ground results for his constituents, securing more than \$1 billion in funding for his district. Unlike his opponent, a career politician who prides himself on cutting back room deals, Congressman Bowman is that rarest of politicians: not only a man of conviction and courage, but one who brings home the bacon.

Jamaal's opponent consistently accuses Congressman Bowman of trafficking in "divisive" rhetoric. Never mind that he himself traffics in baseless and slanderous accusations, such as his statement that Jamaal accepts " Hamas money". He claims that Congressman Bowman has failed to work across the aisle. If elected, this opponent promises that he --as a freshman Congressman! -- would be better positioned to deliver results than Jamaal.

How? By "working with Republicans."

And, pray tell, who would he be working with? Marjorie Taylor Greene? Mike Lawler? House Majority Leader "MAGA Mike" Johnson? Bowman's opponent would have you believe he would "stand up to MAGA Republicans," never mentioning that his campaign is bankrolled by MAGA donors busy electing MAGA Republicans across the country. In short, Jamaal's opponent has no rationale for his campaign, except to drive a wedge through the Democratic Party and to enable the worst instincts of his reactionary backers.

The stakes of this upcoming primary election could not be more significant. Democracy (small "d") is on the line. 4 years after Congressman Bowman's historic win in 2020, primary voters are faced with a clear choice: a play-it-safe establishment MAGA-funded "Democrat" or a proven leader of transformative and generational change who has delivered for his district. Let us not go back to the days of play-it-safe Democrats. I urge you to vote for Congressman Bowman on June 25th.

Bill Gaston, Bronxville

Mr. Gaston is a Democratic Party District Leader in the Village of Bronxville. The views expressed in this article are his own, and do not represent the views of the Bronxville Democratic Committee, which has not endorsed any candidate in the race.

NOTES FROM THE WORKING CLASS: The Third Candle

By Patricia Vaccarino

Katherine Sheedy attended noon mass every day at St. Mary's Church in Yonkers. Going to church was more than a religious rite. It was how she expressed herself—Irish Catholic, good natured and kind, except when she was vexed by something she did not understand. And she did not understand me, her rebellious granddaughter, the third in line.

Among her ten grandchildren, I was the troublemaker, the one who questioned everything, especially the holiest tenets of the Roman Catholic Church. Hellbent on fixing injustice in the world, I didn't like hypocrisy, dishonesty and unfairness back then, and I still don't like those things now. My grandmother told me she prayed for me, a notion I found strange, because I thought I didn't need anyone's prayers, not even my own.

She dressed up to go to church and wore a small hat and gloves, even in warm weather. Fastidious with her appearance, vain and shallow, she wore perfectly applied pink lipstick and frequently powdered her nose. Her pink lips were enhanced by her silver pageboy bob and intense blue eyes. Looking well put together made people think everything was okay, even when it wasn't.

As a toddler, she lost two sisters to the Great Influenza. Her husband and daughter were both afflicted with schizophrenia. Later, she lost her son. She lost others, too, but she never lost her heart. Laughter concealed her sadness, or maybe she smiled through her tears. I don't know what she really thought about. She talked about things and people, not issues and ideas.

Not dumb but she was definitely unschooled in the ways of how the real world functioned outside of the narrow ken between her tenement in South Yonkers and St. Mary's Church. She once told me she voted for President John F. Kennedy because he was Irish Catholic. She was uneducated and deeply religious. I was embarrassed of her and kept my distance.

After mass she went to St. Joseph's Nursing Home to listen to the old timers, the sick and the shut ins. She used to tell me the Irish had compassion, that they cared about other people, even people they didn't know because everyone had it hard, and no one gets out of this world alive.

The last time I saw her was at St. Joseph's Nursing Home, in the very place where she had volunteered for thirty years. Now I was listening to her the way she used to listen to the sick and shut ins. She wore pink sweatpants and a matching sweatshirt. Her tiny feet were ensconced in pristine pink and white athletic shoes. She told me she had just come in from jogging and pointed outside her window below to a circular track.

She could be very funny and I knew she played pranks on people, but I had no reason not to believe her. She panted a bit and looked flushed. A nurse shook her head and told me otherwise. My grandmother had not left the nursing home that day or any other day within the past few weeks. I don't think she was lying to me. I believe, in her mind, she had jogged the entire course.

I was three thousand miles away when she died. I saw her face as surely as I can see it now, bathed in red light from rows of red glass votive candles at St. Mary's Church. Every day she symbolically lit a candle for each of her grandchildren and said a prayer. Some need more prayers than others, she had told me with a wink and a grin. I was her third candle.

I guess I believed her story about the candles because through the years, I found myself caring about what happens to other people, even if they are far off in the distance, and not at all connected to my immediate world. I'll also confess to being somewhat fastidious with my appearance, even at the risk of appearing vain and shallow. Looking well put together does make people think everything is okay, even when it's not.

Every so often she shows up in my dreams, usually early in the morning when my bedroom is filled with blue light—the time before the sun comes up and there are no shadows. When I fully wake, the sunburn on my heart is chafed from losing her again. But I've become too much of a believer to think she has been stopped by death.

This story appeared online at <https://www.prforpeople.com/life-style/spirituality/notes-working-class-third-candle>. It was reprinted with the permission of Patricia Vaccarino, a Yonkers native who wrote The Yonkers Trilogy, historical fiction, which takes place in Yonkers from 1969-73.

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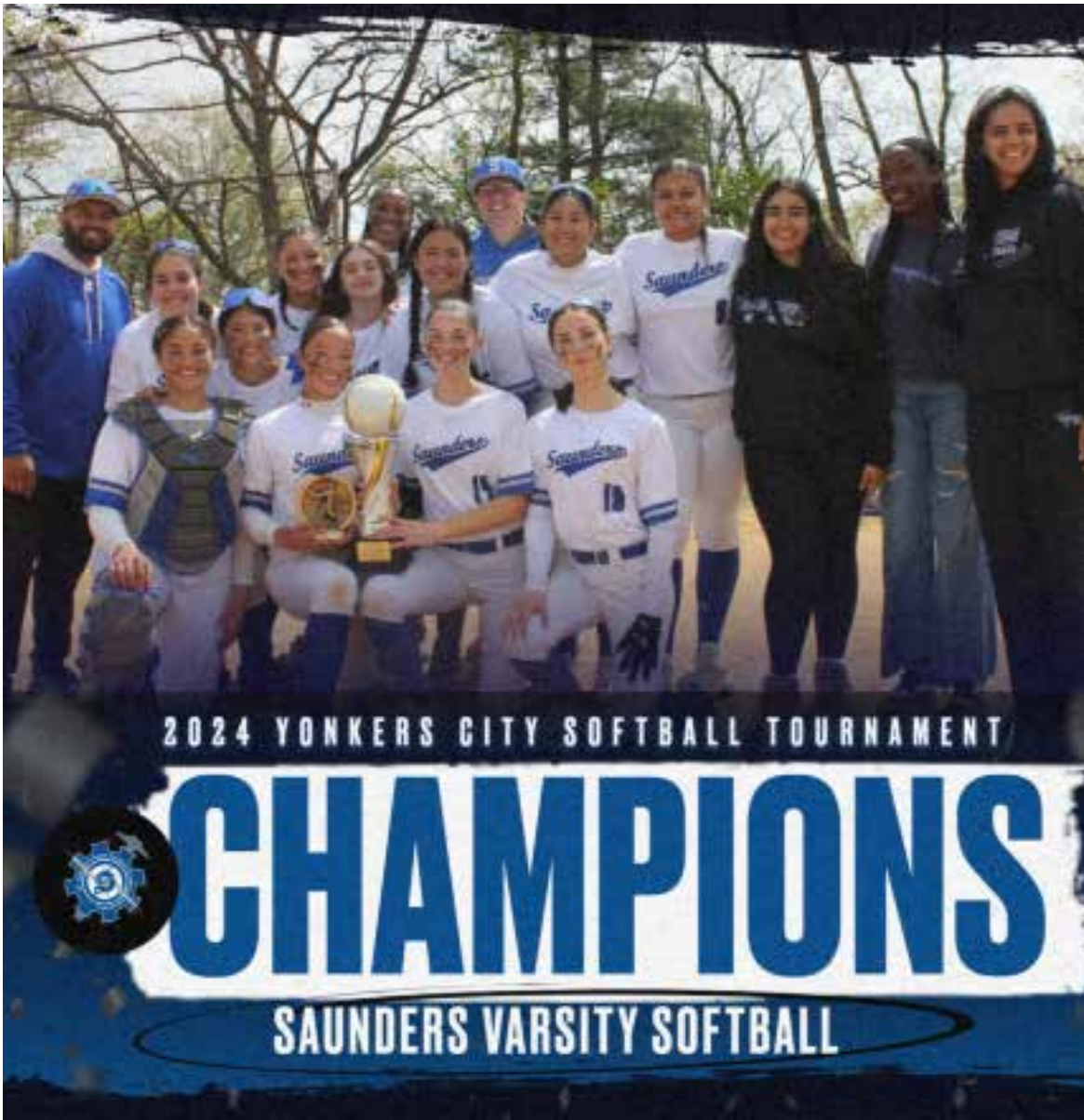
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Congratulations to Saunders Girls Varsity Softball -Yonkers City Champs!



Congratulations to Saunders Trade & Technical High School (Section 1) in capturing the 2024 City of Yonkers High School Softball Tournament Championship.

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YHS Varsity Cheer Team: A Season of Success



As the new cheerleading season dawned upon us, the YHS Varsity Cheer Team was faced with a significant change transitioning from a co-ed team to an all-girl team. This change brought a series of challenges, but their determination and unity prevailed as they embarked on their season of success.

One of the initial obstacles encountered was the lack of practice space. With other teams in their usual gym area, they were left scrambling to find alternative areas for practice. Despite this setback, the YHS Varsity Cheer team refused to let it hinder their progress. They utilized any available space to perfect their routine and sharpen their skills. Their hard work paid off when they secured a first place victory at Arlington and a third place victory at Westchester County Center, showcasing their dedication and talent on the mat.

However, their season was not without its share of setbacks. During their last practice before their senior competition, they faced a last-minute change due to unforeseen circumstances. Their main back spot in the pyramid suffered a concussion leaving them with a crucial gap in their formation and needing to change their pyramid days before competition. Hours before the competition one of their other stunt groups' base, had to be replaced due to sickness further complicating their routine and chances of winning. Yet, their team rallied together with motivation and adaptability by adjusting their formation, reorganizing their routines, and providing support to their injured teammates and those who stepped in at the last minute, leading them to a well-deserved victory of first place at Somers.

As the season came to an end, the team had the opportunity to showcase their hard work and skills to their family, friends and school community. Their end of season showcase was a celebration of all their accomplishments. Amidst the excitement of their showcase, they also took a moment to honor their senior, Caitlin Pinto, who was nominated for and received a WPRDDCA Cheerleading Senior Scholarship, a prestigious award that recognizes outstanding achievements in cheerleading and provides support for higher education. Their journey was not just about winning competitions, but about overcoming obstacles and growing stronger as a team.

Last Home Game for Lansdowne Yonkers Tibbets Brook Park-May11-8pm Free!



Lansdowne Yonkers, Yonkers' semi-professional soccer team, sits in first place and are 3 points, effectively 1 win, from winning the Eastern Premier Soccer League (EPSL) Metropolitan Conference title. They face Manhattan Celtic at Tibbets Brook Park at 8 PM, and if they win the game, they get to lift the Metropolitan Conference trophy in front of the home fans. Lansdowne made this scenario possible by restarting a new winning streak, in which they defeated Hoboken FC, Central Park Rangers, and their title rivals NY Pancyprian Freedoms to move back into first with 51 pts and a record of 16 wins, 3 draws, and 1 loss.

It's not going to be an easy match. Manhattan Celtic happens to be the former club of Lansdowne Yonkers head coach Matt Kane. The Belfast native made the blockbuster switch to Yonkers in the summer of 2023 after nearly leading Manhattan into the EPSL playoffs for the first time at the end of the 2022-23 season. Lansdowne Yonkers' recruited Kane to rebuild their first team and create a new culture among the boys, who hadn't advanced past the first round of EPSL playoffs since winning everything in 2021. The move created an atmosphere of mixed feelings among the Celtic players, and it's likely the case that they will throw the kitchen sink at Lansdowne to prevent them from clinching the title on Saturday. It's possible that Lansdowne will have already clinched the title by the time they face Celtic, but it's unlikely. Yonkers' title rival, the 2nd place NY Pancyprian Freedoms, face SC Vistula Garfield on Wednesday night, and if they lose, then Lansdowne will be declared cham

continued on pg 14-

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72 Arrests Made at SUNY Purchase During Palestinian Protests

By Dan Murphy

Palestinian protests on college campuses across the country came to Westchester last week at SUNY Purchase, as about 200 protestors began their vocal opposition against the war by Israel in Gaza, as a result of the Oct. 7 terror attack by Hamas.

Purchase college issued the following statement about what happened on May 2. "Students were allowed to protest peacefully, which they did for several hours, as long as they followed SUNY's rules for the maintenance of order and the student code of conduct. Outsiders/non-students were turned away from campus although it is believed that several snuck back on to join

the protest. At 10 p.m., once campus quiet hours started, protestors were given multiple opportunities to disperse peacefully as ordered more than 10 times by the campus police and other local police forces who were on the scene to assist. Those who didn't disperse after multiple warnings of consequences, were arrested for trespass violations, most without incident. Protestors were brought to local precincts for processing as the University Police Department couldn't hold that many individuals. Students will also be going through the student code of conduct process. As the investigation continues, a few individuals may face additional charges. There were approximately 70 individuals arrested including students and faculty members."

Several videos have emerged of the police clearing the protestors out. In one video, police officers are lined up, explaining to the protestors that they have to leave. Another video has police taking down one protestor.

The SUNY Purchase police, State Police and the Westchester County police were among the departments responding.

"Students were allowed to protest peacefully, which they did for several hours, as long as they followed SUNY's rules for the maintenance of order and the student code of conduct." Betsy Aldredge, assistant director of public relations for the college said.

"Those who didn't disperse after multiple warnings of consequences, were arrested for trespass violations, most without incident," Aldredge said.

"Protestors were brought to local precincts for processing as the University Police Department couldn't hold that many individuals. Students will also be going through the student code of conduct process. As the investigation continues, a few individuals may face additional charges."

WESPAC, (Westchester People's Action Coalition) issued the following release. "At 5 pm on Thursday, May 2nd dozens of students gathered in the Purchase 'quad' and, with the support of some Faculty and local Westchester community members, created a camp which they labeled the "The Purchase Gaza Solidarity Encampment". It is the first such encampment in Westchester county, and is part of a growing student anti-war movement which has seen similar peaceful protest actions at over 100 universities across the United State in the past weeks, many of which have faced brutal police violence.

The Purchase Gaza Solidarity Encampment was organized by student groups Purchase Jews for Palestine and Raise the Consciousness, as well as dozens of individual Purchase students activists as an escalation in response to the college administration's refusal to listen to students' concerns about the state school's financial ties to and complicity in the Israeli occupation, apartheid and genocide via their President, Milagros Pena's public political support for Israel and complete silence faculty and staff pension investments as well as financial contracts with companies profiting off of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Students, after waiting months for their President and administration to acknowledge their demands amidst the increasingly hostile environment for pro-palestinian students on campus.

Protesters are demanding that the Purchase administration call for an immediate and permanent humanitarian ceasefire, as well as implement a strategy for the college's complete financial disclosure of their investments and financial partnerships, and divestment from all companies, organizations, and entities that support or profit off of the Israeli occupation, and have vowed to continue the protest until those demands are met. "Throughout the academic year, there have been dozens of protests, peaceful actions, and attempts at communicating with the administration in the hopes that they would acknowledge our community's overwhelming support to end our college's complicity in genocide.

The student protesters were joined by local community members who came out to show solidarity with the students and support for their demands. "We know the media may spin us as outsiders or agitators, but we came out today because as Westchester county residents, and New York State taxpayers, we want to uplift these students' voices as they call on SUNY Purchase to divest from a war machine that has killed over 14,000 children in the last seven months alone," said Jessie Dean, a Purchase alumnus and member of Jewish Voice for Peace's local Westchester chapter. Faculty members, who also took part in the protest, said they were proud of their students for standing strong in their moral convictions, despite an increasing culture of repression and censorship at Purchase and in the country at large," end of WESPAC release.

After the arrests, the Purchase Faculty wrote a letter to SUNY Purchase President Milagros Pena. "We the faculty at Purchase College, are outraged and condemn the violent and disproportionate actions taken by campus authorities against our students and faculty. Our students were participating in a peaceful protest, an act protected by their constitutional rights to free speech and assembly. This represents a catastrophic failure by the administration."

This week, Purchase students were celebrating what they called "a victory" claiming that the college has agreed to many of their demands, including disinvestment in Israel.

Editor's Note: There has been no public release of information on those arrested, and what they are charged with and whether they are students, teachers, or outsiders. Based on the video's available to view online, while police had to use force to remove a few of the protestors, there appears to be no unlawful arrests made by police. As one of our friends in law enforcement told us, "These things never look good. But after being told by the College that they had to leave, and then by police several times that they have to leave, the police have to do their job and remove the students."

Bowman Fundraises with Muslim Leader who was "Happy" for Oct. 7 Hamas Attack on Israel

Westchester congressman Jamaal Bowman held a fund raiser in Virginia last week with an American-Muslim leader who has criticized by President Joe Biden for comments made after the October 7 attacks on Israel by Hamas. Nihad Awad, co-founder of CAIR, the Council on American Islamic relations, said after October 7, "the people of Gaza only decided to break the siege, the walls on the concentration camp, on October 7, and yes, I was happy to see people break the siege and yes the people of Gaza have the right to self-defense and yes Israel, an occupying power, does not have that right to self-defense," said Awad, at the Annual Convention for Palestine on Nov. 24, 2023."

After the comments, The White House cancelled its collaboration with CAIR. "We condemn these shocking, antisemitic statements in the strongest terms. The horrific, brutal, terrorist attacks committed by Hamas on October 7 were as president Biden said abhorrent and represented unadulterated evil the atrocities of that day shock the conscience, which is why we can never forget the pain that Hamas has caused for so many innocent people," said Deputy White House Press Secretary Andrew Bates, last December.

Five months after these comments were made by Awad, Bowman decided to attend a fund raiser co-hosted by Awad.

A few months ago, Bowman's opponent, County Executive George Latimer, criticized Bowman for taking money from Hamas supporters. Latimer was criticized for the comments then and has been criticized by the Bowman campaign for taking campaign contributions from republicans.

"For Bowman to criticize Latimer for taking contributions from Westchester residents, while he goes to a fund-raiser co-hosted by someone who was happy about October 7 is shocking. And Bowman is getting 90% of his contributions from outside the district," said a Sound View democrat.

Another Westchester democrat opined that if Bowman can beat Latimer in the democratic primary on June 25, "it will send a chilling message about where the democratic party is headed, and will result in the far left, Working Families, Justice Dems, WESPAC, will plan on primarying every mainstream democrat for state legislator, seeking to force the party to embrace "transformational left-wing change."

"Latimer has been progressive and effective, but moderate and inclusive in tone. If that is not enough for democratic primary voters, Jamaal's radicalism will become the new democratic standard."

Bowman also criticized the NYPD for arresting and breaking up a Palestinian protest at Columbia University, after the college president requested it.

"I am outraged by the level of police presence called upon nonviolent student protestors on Columbia and CCNY's campuses. As an educator who has firsthand experience with the over-policing of our schools, this is personal to me. We must stand with our students to demand liberation for Palestinians and everyone in this world.

"The militarization of college campuses, extensive police presence, and arrest of hundreds of students are in direct opposition to the role of education as a cornerstone of our democracy," said Rep. Bowman.

Bowman also attended another fundraising event drawing interest. Co-hosted by Columbia Law School professor Katherine Franke, the event last week at a Manhattan home

Franke has made comments criticizing Israeli students attending Columbia. The New York Times reported that Franke said that Israeli students at Columbia who were former members of the Israeli Defense Force, IDF, were "harassing" Palestinian protestors, and that Columbia University was "waging war on dissent."

"First Congressman Jamaal Bowman denied the sexual violence against Israelis on October 7th. Now, he's raising money at an event hosted by a Columbia professor who justified that terrorism against Israeli civilians.

It's not surprising that Bowman would rely on her for help, but it is disgusting. Actions like this are an important reason Bowman is running behind his opponent, DMFI PAC endorsee and Westchester County Executive George Latimer," said DMFI PAC Chairman Mark Mellman.

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Yonkers Pride Announces Upcoming Celebrations

Classifieds

Festivities include Kick-Off Party, Flag Raising, Festival featuring Xunami Muse, RuPaul's Drag Race-Season 16 and Mini Ball Vol. II in collaboration with the House of De La Blanca International.

Yonkers Pride is gearing up for another year of embracing joy and unity through an exciting lineup of events throughout the month of June. On Friday, June 7, the annual Flag Raising with Yonkers Pride, Yonkers LGBTQ+ Advisory Board and Mayor Mike Spano will take place, followed by an official Kick-Off Party at 86 Main Street in Downtown Yonkers. Saturday, June 8, is the main event, Yonkers Pride Festival, featuring Xunami Muse, one of this season's RuPaul's Drag Race's contestants. Coming back for a second year of fun and revelry is Yonkers Pride Mini Ball Vol. II, which will take place on Thursday, June 27.

Yonkers Pride is hosting a series of mixers to fundraise and bring the community together before the festival begins. Two more are coming up in April and May: April 25 at Yonkers Brewing and May 9 at El Cantito Cafe. Be sure not to miss the fun!

More than just celebrations, Yonkers Pride is once again running a scholarship program supporting the local LGBTQ+ teen community. Yonkers Pride will be giving away a \$1,000 scholarship to a member or ally of the LGBTQ+ from the Yonkers Public High Schools who will be attending an accredited college, university, or vocational school in the US or Canada. The deadline to submit an application is May 19. For more information about the Yonkers LGBTQ+ Pride Scholarship, visit <https://www.yonkerspride.org/scholarship>.

Pride Month Festivities

The festivities commence with the iconic Flag Raising ceremony, where Yonkers Pride, the LGBTQ+ Advisory Board and Mayor Mike Spano will raise the rainbow flag high above the city. This symbolic act underscores the importance of unity and LGBTQ+ visibility within our vibrant community. Join us at City Hall's Unity Fountain on Friday, June 7, as we collectively raise our voices and spirits. Later that night, dance the night away at the official Kick-Off Party at 86 Main Street from 7:00 PM to 12:00 AM.

Celebrations continue at Yonkers Pride Festival on Saturday, June 8 from 1:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Prepare to be dazzled by celebrity entertainment, headlined by none other than the sensational Panamanian drag performer, Xunami Muse. Her electrifying performances fuse fierce fashion, outstanding makeup, and spotlight dance moves, leaving an unforgettable mark on the world of drag. Local drag talents will also grace the stage, adding their unique flair to the festivities. The Yonkers Pride Festival is a celebration of love, acceptance, equality, and joy. In addition to celebrity entertainment, the festival showcases food, merchandise, activities, and numerous community organizations.

Yonkers Pride is celebrating all month long. On June 27, 2024, Yonkers Pride and the House of De La Blanca International presents the Mini Ball Vol. II. The dazzling affair pays homage to the ballroom scene, an artistic movement that emerged from the fierce creativity and resilience of African American and Latinx LGBTQ+ communities. There will be trophies and cash prizes for all categories, which include open to all Runway OTA (European & American), Old Way vs. New Way, BQ Voguing Femme: Homage, FQ Voguing: C'mon Barbie, Sex Siren OTA: First Responders, Realness OTA: Return to Arms, Face OTA: Commencement, Bazaar OTA: Recycle, Hands Performance OTA: Paint the Town Red, and Realness With A Twist: 90s Streetwear. This year's judges will be Legendary Father Julian De La Blanca, Legendary God Mother Veronika Mugler, Legendary Overall Mother Koppi Mizrahi, Frida LaBejia, and Gorgeous Danny Gucci. Advanced tickets are priced at \$28.52 via Eventbrite, and \$30 door tickets.

"This year, we are taking Yonkers Pride to another level. With the addition of a Kick-Off Party, the amazing talent we have lined up, including Xunami Muse, and the return of our wildly successful Mini Ball with House of De La Blanca, this year is a Yonkers Pride that is not to be missed," said Angel Castro, Festival Chair of Yonkers Pride. "By bringing together our diverse and vibrant community through these events, we hope to spread love, joy, and unity and create a real sense of inclusivity for everyone in the area."

"The Yonkers Pride Festival is a day to celebrate love and the individuality of who we are," said Mayor Spano. "Yonkers' greatest strength continues to be our diversity, and what better way to demonstrate that than by our LGBTQIA+ neighbors, friends, and allies coming together for this festive event. We invite all to join us."

Event Schedule:

Pride Mixer at El Cantito Cafe, May 9, 7 pm – 9pm, El Cantito Cafe, 1550D Central Park Ave.

LGBTQ+ Flag Raising Ceremony, Jun 7, 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM
The Unity Fountain at City Hall, 40 S Broadway

Kick-Off Party
Jun 7, 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM Location: 86 Main St., Ground Floor

Yonkers Pride Festival
Jun 8, 1 pm – 7pm Downtown Yonkers

Follow @YonkersPride on social media or visit [YonkersPride.org](https://www.yonkerspride.org).

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Events

ANTIQUÉ 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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John D. Rockefeller Jr. Park Preservation to Honor Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins

Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve will honor New York State Senate President Pro Tem & Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins at their 2024 Gala on Saturday, June 29, 2024, at the Rockefeller Estate in Pocantico Hills. She will receive the prestigious John D. Rockefeller Jr. Park Preservation Award for her unwavering support of New York State Parks and commitment to environmental stewardship.

"Andrea Stewart-Cousins has championed not only the Rockefeller State Park Preserve, but all parks in New York State since she was elected to the New York State Senate in 2007," said George Gumina, Founder and President of the Friends, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and maintaining the Preserve's land and historical features. "Her tenure as the longest serving Democratic Majority Leader in New York State Senate history, and the first woman and African American woman in this role, make her an unstoppable force committed to addressing the needs of all New Yorkers."

Resources raised by the gala will continue the next steps of a major project at the Preserve's Rockwood Hall section. This unique 88-acre section of the park directly overlooking the Hudson River has become increasingly popular with visitors. The improvement project will provide a formal entrance with a courtyard, an informational kiosk, restroom facilities and much needed improved and expanded parking.

The event will be held in the majestic Playhouse, the two-story, Tudor-style mansion that John D. Rockefeller Jr. built in 1927 as a place for his family to gather, host events and enjoy.

"I am deeply honored to receive this recognition from the Friends of the Rockefeller State Preserve for our collective efforts in environmental stewardship and unwavering support of New York's cherished parks," said Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins. "As we celebrate the centennial of the New York State Parks system, it is a poignant reminder of the legacy we are entrusted to uphold and the future we must safeguard. As Senate Majority I have championed critical legislation, enhancing transparency in parkland use and introducing innovative programs like the state parks passport and resident curator programs. These initiatives aim to enrich our connection to nature and deepen our commitment to education and inclusivity. Furthermore, we have enacted historic legislation, including the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, and made significant investments to combat climate change, ensuring countless more generations of New Yorkers can enjoy places like the Rockefeller Preserve. This accolade belongs to all New Yorkers who value our natural heritage and strive for a greener, more sustainable future. Together, we continue to fortify our dedication to preserving our state's natural beauty and environmental integrity."

Under the leadership and guidance of Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, in the last year alone the Senate passed specific parks-related bills, including:

\$1 billion for the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation -- included \$300 million in Capital for enhancing and improving parks statewide.

An investment of \$400 million to support climate priorities across New York State

Ensuring transparency in the use of parkland by requiring reports on any changes or "alienations" of municipal parklands are made public.

Establishing the State Parks Passport program to encourage residents and visitors to explore the wonders of the state parks.

Creating the resident curator program to promotes the restoration and preservation of state park buildings.

Creating a task force focused on outdoor environmental education and recreation, which is a step towards enhancing educational programs within our state parks.

Offering free access to state parks for members or citizens of state or federally recognized Native American nations, acknowledging and honoring the cultural and historical significance of these lands.

As Majority Leader, Senator Stewart-Cousins has played a critical role in the state's Climate Change plan by establishing The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. In line with her commitment to and legislation on Environmental Justice, the CLCPA ensures that disadvantaged communities receive at least 35% of all benefits. With her strong support, the Environmental Protection Fund has provided over \$10 million for Environmental justice projects.

The Friends award reflects the extraordinary contributions that John D. Rockefeller Jr. made in the form of financing, maintaining, and protecting the land that now comprises the Rockefeller State Park Preserve, a national treasure enjoyed by more than 400,000 visitors each year. With his father, John D. Rockefeller, Sr., John D. Jr. designed the Preserve's unique 65-mile network of carriage roads. These 16-foot-wide crushed stone pathways give the Preserve its elegant look and overall appeal. The well-engineered loops traverse open fields, dense forests, and wetlands, offering stunning vistas of the Hudson River and surrounding landscape. Through the Friends tireless efforts, the New York State Historic Review voted unanimously to include the Preserve and its carriage road system in the State Register of Historic Places in 2018.

Since 1983, more than 1,700 acres have been deeded over to New York State as gifts from the Rockefeller family. The Preserve is open year-round for strolling, hiking, jogging, horseback-riding, fishing (in season) and wildlife-watching and photography.

To purchase tickets, tables and sponsorship packages for the Friends 2024 Gala, please visit www.friendsrock.org or call Jessika Creedon at 914-762-0209.

Maria Regina HS Student from Yonkers Invited to Vatican to Meet Pope Francis

at Inaugural Scholars Summit of Meaning



Angelica

Almanza

Nearly a year ago, Angelica Almanza, a senior at Maria Regina High School, had what she described as a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" to meet Pope Francis virtually when she participated in His Holiness' Scholas Occurrentes Global Conference, in Miami.

As a devoted Catholic who has always "admired the Pope's humility, compassion, and dedication to social justice," it was unimaginable that the experience of encountering Pope Francis could be topped. But in just a few short weeks, it will be - Angelica will be among a select group of students from around the world— and one of only TWO students from the Archdiocese of New York — who will get the chance to meet Pope Francis in person when she partakes in the Inaugural Scholas Summit of Meaning to be held at the Vatican, May 21-23.

Angelica was invited to the summit in a letter she received recently from Maria Martha Barreneche, Executive Director of Scholas US. Barreneche wrote Angelica that the "summit represents a monumental stride in the pursuit of fostering greater understanding and enlightenment. It serves as the grand inauguration of the University of Meaning, a visionary initiative crafted by His Holiness through Scholas Occurrentes, his esteemed foundation."

Barreneche added: "Your unwavering dedication to the principles espoused by Scholas USA and your exemplary contributions to its noble cause have not gone unnoticed. Therefore, it is with utmost reverence that we cordially invite you to apply for this esteemed opportunity to represent Scholas USA on the international stage."

Since her junior year, Angelica has been actively involved with Scholas, an organization founded by Pope Francis that encourages students from all backgrounds to come together and discuss meaningful topics and service projects. In addition, the renowned all-girls Catholic Maria Regina has been one of Scholas's New York pilot schools.

The experience has made a profound impact on Angelica. She noted: "Scholas not only taught me about changing the world, but they also empowered me to become an agent of change. Their commitment to education, empathy, and action inspires me today. I am grateful for the invaluable lessons and opportunities they provided, and I am determined to use my knowledge and skills to contribute to a better, more compassionate world."

Recently, Angelica had the honor of serving as a "Words of Gratitude" speaker at the Archdiocese of New York's Class of 2024 Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral which highlighted the importance of Catholic education. She addressed an audience of over one thousand of her peers who will be graduating this spring from Archdiocese of New York high schools. The mass was celebrated by Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York.

Maria Carozza-McCaffrey (Class of '99), Principal, affirmed: "It is an immense honor for Angelica to represent Maria Regina and we are unbelievably proud of all her amazing accomplishments in the areas of academics, service, and leadership. You continue to make us proud!"

When Angelica returns from the historic Scholas session, she will graduate with honors on May 31 during Maria Regina's annual Commencement exercises. She will continue her education at University of Connecticut studying Animal Science on a Pre-Veterinary Track.

To learn more about Maria Regina High School, visit www.Stepinac.org.

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Riverside High School Valedictorian, Salutatorian, continued from pg 1-

aid Rodriguez, whose favorite course is History. "I enjoy learning about the past, especially US history, and relating it to what is happening now."

Kayley took advantage of Riverside's P-Tech (Pathways of Technology) program where students take one college course each year, and two courses in 11th grade, and in senior year they take a course at Westchester Community College in Yonkers.

One of Kayley's extracurricular activities at Riverside was tutoring her fellow students in Math. "I love math and numbers, and I enjoy helping out other students who were studying for their regents." The peer tutoring program at Riverside has junior and senior students volunteering and helping students struggling in understanding and comprehending math and other subjects.

Kayley was also a member of Junior Achievement, and three times a year, she would volunteer at a local school. She also babysits her cousins and toddlers for her neighbors.

Rodriguez is still considering which college to attend in the fall but has narrowed the choices down to Lehman College or the Macauley Honors program at Hunter College. "I like being in the city and the excitement about everything, and seeing how woke people are at both schools."

Kayley wants to become a Nurse and maybe a doctor in the future. "My mom had cancer and there was a point in my life where I visited her in the hospital for a year, and I saw how the nurse took care of her and other patients."

"When she got out of the hospital, I became her caregiver for a month and had to help her get around and give her medications and food. That is why I want to be a nurse."

"Even though she passed away in my sophomore year, she pushed me to get to this point. I promised her that I was going to make it and do it for her. She pushed me to be stronger and that I can do anything if I'm determined. I wanted to do this for her."

"I learned that I was ranked #1 in my sophomore year but I didn't think much about it. My classmates are amazing so anyone could have been ranked #1 and it would have been fine with me. We all worked hard."

Her advice to young students, "When the hardest moments in life come, do not give up. You can achieve greatness with your determination to succeed."

Riverside High School's Salutatorian, Ebenezer Wontumi, will graduate with a 97.97% GPA. Wontumi acknowledges the invaluable support and guidance provided by his English teacher, Kathryn Kaufman, during his freshman and sophomore years. He credits Kaufman for her unwavering encouragement, stating,

"She was there for me from the start, and without influencing me to be my best, I wouldn't be here."

"Sometimes you need people other than your family to push you to do better. I consider her another parent for her encouragement."

One of Ebenezer's favorite courses in math because "I like problem solving and I enjoy learning the different possibilities in answering a question. I also like how math is a part of computer science and engineering."

Ebenezer enjoyed the Financial Literacy Club at Riverside, where he learned about day trading. "We learned how to pay for our expenses, and how to grow your money."

He also played on the Yonkers Brave football team for two years.

Ebenezer has committed to the University of Connecticut. "It was between UCONN and SUNY Albany, but after a visit to UCONN it opened my eyes, the grass is a lot greener and different from New York. Sometimes we all need to experience new things."

Ebenezer said that Riverside High School helped him "start over." "I have experienced a lot of failures and setbacks in my life. I got held back a grade in middle school, but that helped me shape who I am today. I worked hard in high school and proved to myself that I can do anything I want to."

He thanked his family and teachers for "influencing me to do better. If you listen to your teachers, they can change your life. And my family has been motivating me to do better."

Ebenezer was ranked #2 for three years. "I didn't care at first, but secretly I wanted to be #1. It motivated me to continue to work hard."

He hopes to pursue a degree in computer science and engineering, and become a software engineer.

Any advice for aspiring Valedictorians? "Starting over can be painful, but it's also a chance to rebuild yourself and change your life."

Yonkers History, continued from pg 1-

Upper House, or the Board of Estimate, have five members; Yonkers' Board only had three.

May 15, 1935: Ending a twenty-year fight for Sunday baseball, the Yonkers Common Council passed a law making it legal.

Thursday, May 16th

May 16, 1923: Captain Felix Reisenberg of Palisade Avenue was appointed Commander of the New York Nautical school and Captain of the Schoolship Newport!

Previously with the American Bureau of Shipping and Editor of "The Nautical Gazette," he authored several technical books on seamanship. Today, New York Nautical School is the State University of New York Maritime College.

In 1907, Felix was navigator on the three-man airship America on its failed attempt to reach the North Pole by dirigible.

May 16, 1942: The Common Council gave permission to US Shipbuilding Corporation of Brooklyn to use 10 acres of city-owned land to construct buildings for a shipyard. The firm was to build all-welded vessels for the war effort and planned to hire at least 300 workers.

Friday, May 17th

May 17, 1924: After a lengthy morning meeting discussing the Yonkers Home Rule situation with W. P. Capes, Secretary of the State Conference of Mayors, Corporation Counsel Cashin, First Assistant Counsel Harry Laragh and other city officials, it was decided Yonkers couldn't have a Municipal Assembly! Capes gave a lengthy explanation of the requirements and reminded them of all the "second class cities," only Yonkers, Troy and Syracuse objected to an elected Board of Estimate. He pointed out other cities with a bicameral system of government phased it out as ineffective.

May 17, 1952: The Yonkers Main Street Post Office sent out an "in distress" signal! A staff member inadvertently flew its roof flag upside down, the distress signal used by ships in trouble, ships needing help. As soon as a Herald Statesman employee spotted the error, the notified the PO; it was immediately corrected.

Saturday, May 18th

May 18, 1948: Vice Mayor Jimmy Sullivan's attorney Paul Bleakley and District Attorney George Fanelli gave their closing arguments, with Fanelli arguing Sullivan used the "dead men defense" since defense attorneys blamed the crime on people who were dead. County Judge Elbert Gallagher sent the jury to deliberate after 104 minutes of instruction on the jury's responsibilities and duties to decide if Sullivan was guilty of the three charges of forgery. Fanelli argued Sullivan used the "dead men defense" as Sullivan's attorneys blamed the crime on people who were dead.

After deliberating for about four hours, the jury came back with the verdict; the eight men and four women found Sullivan guilty on all three counts. He was convicted of signing the name "C. J. Arnold" to a Maritime Oil Company certificate; this "dummy company" was created to install phones at a book-making center.

Sunday, May 19th

May 19, 1923: Ten nurses graduated from St. Joseph's Hospital Nursing School after three years of intensive coursework. Dr. George Mooney, head of the hospital's medical staff, presided at the ceremony held in the Nurses' Home; the main address was made by attorney Benjamin Moore.

May 19, 1952: The National Production Authority in Washington released steel and other materials needed to build the Cross-County Shopping Center. This was the last barrier for the multi-million-dollar development. Developer Cross Properties had materials for 50% of the project, but they had been turned them down for the remainder needed. Cross indicated there was no problem finding materials, as long as they had federal permission to get them.

Questions or comments on this column? Email YonkersHistory1646@gmail.com. For information on the Yonkers Historical Society, Sherwood House and upcoming events, please visit our website www.yonkershistorical-society.org, call 914-961-8940 or email info@yonkers.org.

Con Ed Student Athlete, continued from pg 16-

Since 2012, Claire has been a Caregiver & Aide for her 27-year-old brother who has cerebral palsy and is 100% dependent on others. I Assist him with eating, seizure management, and all his daily living skills. Help him get ready for the day at 6am and then in the evening with his nighttime routine.

During COVID, Claire stepped up for her community. She founded a charity - Pretty Skin Against Covid-19, to thank nurses for all their hard work during the pandemic. This charity continues today and has distributed over 51,000 pcs of skincare products to both nurses & caregivers at group homes throughout the tristate area. In 2024, she transitioned the project post-covid to 'Nurses are SuperHeroes' and has donated 10,000 items this year to both nurses & caregivers at group homes for special needs adults.

Also, during COVID, Tierney created Claire's Backyard Clinic, where she trained K-8th grade students in basketball/lacrosse. "I love working with kids and enjoy making the sport that I love fun for them, hoping that they will share my same passion."

As an Altar Server at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ardsley, Claire would livestream daily Mass during quarantine for the parishioners to watch during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Academically, Claire has a 3.8 GPA, and is a member of the National Honors Society. She made the High Honor Roll in all four years of high school.

"It's not often that we have the opportunity to enjoy student-athletes such as Claire who is not only your best athlete, but also your best leader and teammate on and off the field. When talking to coaches about Claire, it is almost always the same reaction our department respects and loves her," said Coach Scott Miele.

"Coach Resavey, head Basketball coach, describes Claire as; "the hardest working and most reliable player he has had in the basketball program hands down". Claire is also well respected by teachers and the school administration. Claire has been a leader of both the varsity basketball program and varsity lacrosse programs for the past 3 years. Both teams were young and struggling until Claire came into the picture.

"Claire demonstrated the unique ability to perform at a high level and live up to the expectations of a captain and leader. Most importantly, Claire has left the Ardsley community a better place than she found it! "

Bicycle Sundays Returns for 50th Year



Westchester Parks Foundation and Westchester County Parks joined together on the steps of the County Center to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Bicycle Sundays season. Since July 21, 1974, Westchester County residents have been enjoying the popular Bicycle Sundays program that opens a 6.5-mile stretch of the historic Bronx River Parkway to bicyclists, skaters, joggers, and walkers on a series of Sundays throughout the warmer months each year.

Bicycle Sundays annually attract 60,000 participants on weekend dates in May, June and September except Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends. The event runs through six municipalities including: White Plains, Hartsdale/Greenburgh, Scarsdale, Eastchester, Tuckahoe, and Yonkers. Starting May 5, residents and visitors can enjoy the iconic event on the following dates between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.:

May- 5, 12, 19

June- 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

July - 7, 14, 21, 28 (*Note earlier time 8am-12pm)

September- 8, 15, 22, 29

October- 6

Since 2012, Westchester Parks Foundation has raised funds from private sources to sponsor the closures. Generous donations from long standing co-presenting sponsors Con Edison and NewYork-Presbyterian Westchester make the event possible this year, along with Jen's Cycles in Yonkers, the official Bicycle Sponsor.

To mark the occasion, six hand cycles will be available to those who need extra assistance, thanks to a grant from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation to expand the WPF Trails Without Limits. Westchester Parks Foundation and the Westchester County Parks Department are also encouraging residents to share their memories by posting old photos and tagging both organizations on social media and using the #BicycleSundaysTurns50

Each year, thousands of cyclists, joggers, and others come out to enjoy the curves and wooded scenery that make the nation's first parkway a national historic landmark. The path winds alongside the wooded Bronx River Reservation. For more information visit: <https://www.thewpf.org/bicycle-sundays>

Lansdowne Yonkers, continued from pg 9-

pions. The Pancyprians have kept a very tight race with Lansdowne Yonkers, and it took their recent matchup on May 2nd to give Lansdowne the scenario to win this Saturday.

The Pancyprians, who have battled with Yonkers for supremacy in local pre-professional soccer for the better half of the last decade, traveled up to Yonkers on Thursday May 2nd, for what is believed to be the effective title deciding match. In front of a crowd of over 100, Lansdowne Yonkers put on a thrilling display of soccer. The "Bhoys" had only one regular season win against the Pancyprians in their previous 6 matchups, but it was newcomer Liam Salmon, who headed in the first goal that caused the young children and fans to explode in excitement. The Pancyprians quickly equalized, and the match turned into a massive game of chess. Yonkers restored their lead in the beginning of the 2nd half; as a result, they began to break down the Pancyprians' lethal wingers who were creating the main attacking threats. When Lansdowne scored the 3rd goal, the youth players who aspire to be like their first team counterparts ran onto the field and celebrated with Liam Walsh, who slid to slot the insurance goal into the net.

Saturday is Lansdowne Yonkers' last regular season home game. If they don't win the conference title on Saturday, they can still win it on the road on May 18th when they travel to Garfield, NJ and face SC Vistula. Ideally, the bhoys would love to just win it in front of their home fans. They last won the Metropolitan Conference at St. John's University in 2021 and celebrated by bringing the trophy to The Heritage on McLean Avenue. To have the entire party at Tibbetts Brook Park would be a lot more convenient. Attendance is free, kick off is at 8 PM, and if you cannot be there in person, the match will be livestreamed on New Logical Sports.

grades PreK-8. #Dash, the robot students are learning to program and control, greeted him at MLKA.

Soler also thanked the 2,000 teachers in the YPS for teacher appreciation week. "Thank you for your countless time and effort that you put in into our kids and our district. Nothing happens in Yonkers without the dedicated teachers and staff that we have. This is your week and I hope you feel appreciated."

Soler also joined with 1,500 YPS Students who attended the Annual Holocaust Remembrance. The 5th - 12th grade students heard from children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors during the Yonkers Public Schools Annual Holocaust Remembrance, held this year at the Lincoln Park Jewish Center. The Holocaust and Human Rights Center in White Plains collaborates with the District in presenting the program. Superintendent of Schools Anibal Soler, Jr. joined the students today to hear testimony. Soler's first stated meeting of the Board of Education will be on May 15, and at that meeting the trustees and Soler will begin their discussions on a budget for the 2024-25 school year.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT SHARES SUMMER CAMP TIPS

As families look forward to the start of the summer season, the Westchester County Health Department is sharing tips to help parents plan a safe camp experience for their children.

Westchester County Deputy Commissioner for Environmental Health Chris Ericson said: "When choosing a day camp, Westchester families have so many options. It's a good idea to ask whether the camp has a valid permit from the Health Department, because we inspect the 235 camps we regulate before and during the season. This sets the camps up for success, and helps to reinforce the rules in place to keep children safe."

Ericson said parents should provide their child's camp with accurate emergency contact numbers, their child's medical history including immunization records, and any special dietary, behavioral or health concerns. Once camp begins, parents should apply sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more to their child daily, send sunscreen with them to reapply throughout the day, and perform a tick check once their child returns home at the end of the day.

Ericson said: "Check your child's clothing for ticks. Have them shower soon after they come home. That's a great time for a tick check and it may help wash off any unattached ticks. Pay close attention to the scalp, ears, under arms, back of the knees, belly button, waist and between the legs. In most cases, a tick must be attached for 36 to 48 hours or more before the Lyme disease bacterium can be transmitted, so daily tick checks and showers can greatly minimize the risks."

If you do find a tick on your child, don't panic. Use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible, but do not squeeze the body of the tick. Pull the tick gently upward. Wash the area with a disinfectant. If the tick's mouthparts break off, don't worry. They cannot transmit Lyme disease, because the infected body is no longer attached. They will fall out by themselves, or can be removed like a splinter. Although not routinely recommended, taking antibiotics within three days after a tick bite maybe beneficial for some, so consult your child's healthcare provider.

Watch the site of a bite for the appearance of a rash three to 30 days after the bite. The rash will usually be at least two inches in diameter initially and will gradually expand. If your child develops this kind of rash or flu-like symptoms, contact your child's physician immediately. For more information, go to www.westchestergov.com/health.

Peekskill Cab Driver Gets 16 Years for Engaging in Sexual Contact with a Child

Jury convicted defendant for repeated sexual abuse of a child that started when the victim was 10 years old

Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced today that a Peekskill man was sentenced to 16 years in state prison for engaging in sexual conduct with a child for nearly a year.

DA Rocah said: "The survivor in this case, just a young child, demonstrated remarkable resilience and courage in coming forward. Sexual abusers often prey upon their victims by exploiting their role as a person in a position of trust. As we commemorate Child Abuse and Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month during April, I remind Westchester residents that my Office is fully committed to bringing sexual predators to justice, as we have done today, and ask everyone to speak up and report any suspected abuse."

After a three-week trial, a jury on March 19 found the defendant, Luis Urgiles, 46, guilty of Course of Sexual Conduct Against a Child in the First Degree, a felony, and Endangering the Welfare of a Child, a misdemeanor. The defendant, who has a prior felony conviction, was also sentenced to 20 years of post-release supervision and is required to register as a sex offender.

As detailed during the trial, the defendant, a cab driver in Peekskill, met the victim's family while they were passengers in his cab. The defendant befriended the family and began grooming the then 10-year-old victim in order to sexually abuse and assault her.

The defendant repeatedly subjected the victim to multiple sexual acts between October 2021 and July 2022.

The Peekskill Police Department arrested the defendant on Oct. 30, 2022, following a police investigation that ensued when the child reported the abuse.

The District Attorney thanked the Westchester Institute for Human Development's Children's Advocacy Center (CAC), and members of the DA's Office Special Prosecutions Division, including translator Martha Arango, Senior Domestic Violence Aide Christine Aquino, and Domestic Violence Aides Christina Viera and Sherly Vera.

Anyone who may have been victimized or may have information about other possible victims of the defendant can contact the DA's Office Special Prosecutions Division directly at (914) 995-3000. Language assistance is available.

The case was before Judge Robert Prisco in Westchester County Court and prosecuted by Child Abuse Bureau Chief Christine Hatfield and Senior Assistant District Attorney Mollie O'Rourke, both of the Special Prosecutions Division.

New Superintendent, continued from pg 1-

Wagstaff taxes, continued from pg 1-

democratic leaders we spoke to, who were concerned and disappointment and had no knowledge of this before the story broke.

Mackay Wilson's story includes one year, in 2020, where Wagstaff didn't pay \$112,712. The tax liens filed against Wagstaff by the IRS is public record in the County Clerk's office.

Wagstaff's staff tried to explain the unpaid taxes in the story by claiming that Wagstaff was waiting for settlements, from civil rights cases that Wagstaff represented, to come in.

Westchester democrats we spoke to had two concerns: One, that Wagstaff's explanation doesn't make sense, and that members of the Westchester Democratic Committee should have been informed of this matter while they were interviewing Wagstaff for their nomination.

I: Tax and Income Questions Remain: Wagstaff earned a nice salary during the years when he did not pay his taxes. How do we know about his income? Because he filed a 2020 return in which he estimated that he owed the IRS \$112,712. If Wagstaff owed \$112k in taxes, his income was 3-4 times that, estimated around \$350,000. That type of income would raise the question, if you made that much money, why couldn't you pay your taxes?

"When I read the article, I was extremely concerned," said Westchester Democratic Committee vice-chair Ximena Francella. "The position of District Attorney is someone who enforces the law, and the fact that he didn't pay his taxes for six years says that he has difficulty managing his own finances. If he can't manage his own finances, how can he run the office of District Attorney?"

"If he wasn't running for office, was he going to pay his taxes? None of us are happy paying our taxes but it's the responsible thing to do. He was not being responsible."

II-Wagstaff has also been earning a salary from the City of Mount Vernon as a special prosecutor concerning disciplinary proceeding for Mt. Vernon police officers. That salary has not been released or disclosed.

III-Wagstaff loaned his campaign more than \$50,000 before he paid his tax bill.

"I'm extremely disappointed that the candidate didn't see fit to bring this up much earlier in the campaign," said Eastchester Democratic Chair John Filiberti. "This is the kind of information that democrats who participated in the convention should have been made aware of. And if he had an explanation, then he should have shared it with all of us who were there."

"The explanation in the LOHUD article that highlighted the six years' worth of tax liabilities, also doesn't make sense. If you haven't received payment for settlements to be made later, you don't incur a tax liability until you receive the funds.

"How can you make the argument that you weren't making enough money to pay your taxes, when you apparently had income of over \$300,000?" "If the people of Westchester want to vote for somebody with this type of tax delinquent history, they can, but they should know all the facts before they vote."

Yonkers Democratic Party Chair Tom Meier said that Wagstaff has touted in his campaign how he can manage a business better than his opponents. "What business owes the IRS that much money and can't pay their taxes?"

"He should have shared this with us. He made money from the City of Mount Vernon in addition to his law firm, but he chose to do something else with the money. Instead, he should have settled his debt with America."

Wagstaff has received a number of endorsements from several Westchester democrats, including State Senator Jamaal Bailey, Assemblymember Dana Levenberg, Assemblymember Chris Burdick, Peekskill Mayor Vivian McKenzie, Westchester County Legislator Tyrae Woodson-Samuels, and Mount Vernon Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard.

"I think all of the democrats who endorsed him need to take a second look at who they endorsed and figure out if this is the person you want to be District Attorney of Westchester," said Meier.

The LoHud story states that testimony from a recent election law court case where Wagstaff was allowed to remain on the ballot included information about his tax troubles.

Social Security Faces Serious Financial Shortfalls; Takeaways from Trustees Report

from The Peterson Foundation, www.pgpf.org

The Social Security Trustees released their annual report on the program's trust funds, showing that the largest component of the federal budget is on an unsustainable path. Without reform, the Social Security Trust Funds will soon be depleted and unable to pay full benefits.

Below are the key takeaways from today's report:

Social Security's Old-Age & Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund would be depleted by 2033, at which point benefits would be reduced by 21 percent. The program's Disability Insurance (DI) Trust Fund would not be depleted over the 75-year projection period. If the two trust funds were hypothetically combined, they would be exhausted by 2035 and lead to a 17 percent reduction in benefits at that point.

Social Security faces large and rising imbalances. Relative to the size of the economy, the combined annual cash shortfall for Social Security will climb from 0.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2024 to 1.0 percent in 2035. Social Security faces a 75-year actuarial imbalance of 3.5 percent of taxable payroll, down from 3.6 percent as reported in last year's report.

The program's financial shortfall is caused largely by an aging population. As a result of the nation's changing demographics, the number of workers contributing to the program is growing more slowly than the number of beneficiaries receiving monthly payments. In 1964, there were 4.0 workers per beneficiary; that ratio has dropped to 2.7 today and will continue to fall in the future.

Delaying reform to Social Security is costly. If lawmakers act soon to address the trust fund shortfalls, they will be able to phase in changes gradually and responsibly in a way that does not harm vulnerable populations. However, delaying reform would require larger changes to the program. If action is not taken until 2035, the tax increases or benefit reductions required to stabilize the program's financing would be nearly 20 percent larger than if action were taken today.

Social Security is the largest single line item in the budget and a key driver of the national debt; it is also an essential component of our economy and society. If reforms are not enacted soon, recipients could see a large decrease in their benefits. Americans are united in their desire to avoid those automatic cuts, with 95 percent of voters believing it is important to elect lawmakers who are committed to strengthening Social Security. The leaders that voters elect this fall will face critical decisions in coming years about the future of Social Security, and the good news is that there are many available options to strengthen and secure the program.

Pretlow, Casino Licenses, continued from pg 3-

"The gaming commission does not want to answer those questions because they so not want the clock to start," Pretlow said. "It has been eight months and they are prepared to wait another year.

"So what I am trying to do to speed up the process is to get legislation written by June 6 to get responses to those questions out so that everyone can get their applications in, and the bidding starts from there," Pretlow said, adding that Genting has already made it known that they are willing to pay \$1 billion rather than the mandated \$500 million in order to secure one of the three licenses.

"Even if they don't issue the actual licenses, we will know who is in the game," Pretlow said. "The legislation will force the gaming commission to answer the companies' questions."

Pretlow laughed when asked to set an over/under date on the issuance of those licenses. A pragmatist who has been working out of the state capital for several decades, he is trying to fix a problem that may not be fixable in the short term but eventually will lead to New Yorkers being able to gamble on casino games. With the amount of money and institutional wealth concentrated around New York City, the best bet is that the casino companies will be routing for him to succeed sooner rather than later.

"Genting is ready to be up and running. They say it will take up to six months; I believe it'll take them about six days. They built that casino at Aqueduct practically overnight working double shifts, and I imagine they will just bring in experienced dealers and be in business quickly. The floor plan for converting to a casino is already laid out," Pretlow said, adding that MGM has similar floor plans for Empire City Casino on hold.

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Claire Tierney, Ardsley High School, Named a Con Edison Scholar-Athlete of the Week



By Dan Murphy

Congratulations to Claire Tierney, left, a senior at Ardsley High School, for being named a recent Con Edison scholar-athlete of the week. Claire is an All-League standout on both the Ardsley Girls Lacrosse Team and Basketball team.

She has been Captain of the Ardsley Girls Lacrosse team for both her junior and senior years, and the Captain of the Basketball team in her senior year.

Claire Tierney hit the 100 goals milestone in the Ardsley Girls Varsity Lacrosse game on Friday, April 26, against Valhalla High School. She also reached the 1,000 milestone this year in basketball on December 13, 2023.

She was pulled up to Varsity basketball in 8th grade and has been a starter all 5 years. In her junior year of basketball, Claire Tierney was an All-State, All-Section, All-League, and All-Tournament player.

In her Junior Year of lacrosse, Claire Tierney was an All-League Player and received MVP honors, despite suffering a season-ending injury in the middle of the season - she scored 41 goals in less than 10 games, before being sidelined after breaking her right hand in two places after going for a ground ball.

Claire has been an advocate for those that do not have a voice. "My brother is non-verbal and at a young age I saw how many medical professionals did not acknowledge him at appointments. I was the little girl who made them stop and say Hi and to give Kevin that 5 seconds he needed to get out an "O" sound to say Hi. My goal when I become a nurse is to acknowledge 'everyone' in the room, we all belong and deserve respect and compassion.

continued on pg 13-

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