

# Yonkers Rising

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## Yonkers Student Excellence: Yonkers Middle-High School Valedictorian, Salutatorian



Valedictorian Nirel Ayerty and Salutatorian Leah Dourmashkin.

By Dan Murphy

We begin again a yearly tradition at Yonkers Rising and Yonkerstimes.com, where we congratulate and interview each of the Valedictorians and Salutatorians from the Yonkers Public High Schools and Sacred Heart High School.

This year we start with Yonkers Middle-High School, and Valedictorian Nirel Ayerty and Salutatorian Leah Dourmashkin.

Nirel Ayerty will graduate with a weighted GPA of 103.72. Nirel's favorite teacher is Ms. Rivas who taught religion. "She is very nice and warm and she makes learning easier.

Favorite course is IB Biology. "I've been a bio nerd since elementary school. I like learning about human biology, and how minor parts work together and interconnect, in a DNA path."

Ayerty was able to take advantage of YPIE, Yonkers Partners in Education. "I was able to get access to science research and went to Texas last summer."

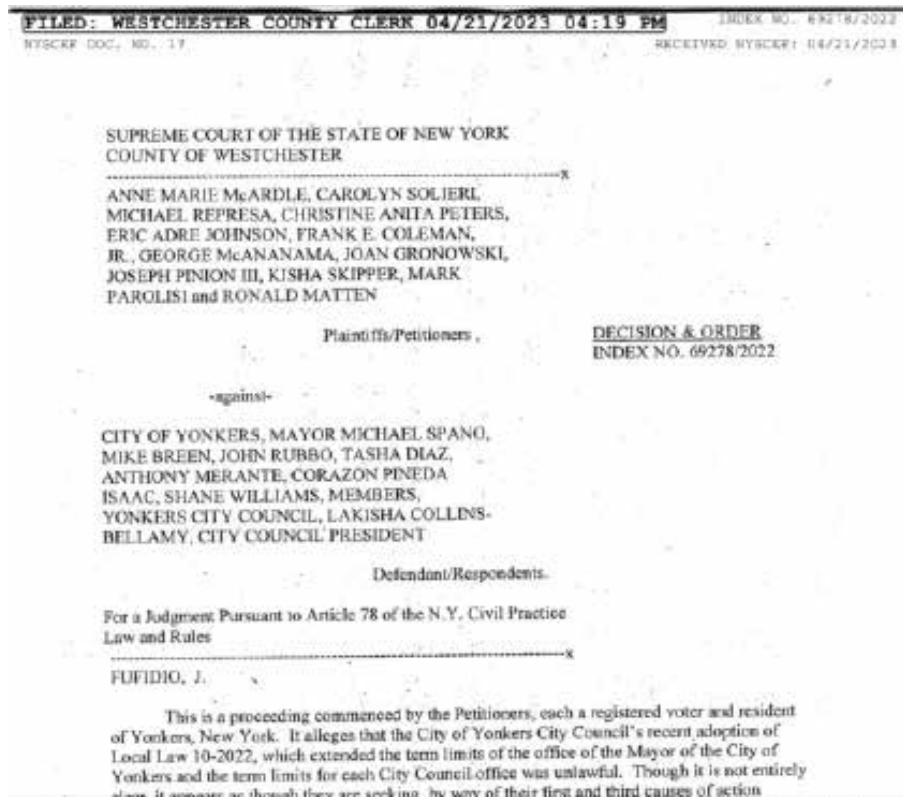
Extra curricular clubs included the Gardening club. "I tried it out and community service is interesting. We worked on a garden near out school and cleaned it up."

Having completed 12 IB and AP courses during high school, Nirel applied to 14 colleges and will be attending Brown University in the fall. "I wanted an open cirriculum, and I wanted to be in a school where I can explore my interests non competitive environment. And do my best without having to be the best.

After majoriing in Biology, Nirel hopes to go to Medical School and become

*continued on pg 7-*

## Judge Rules That Term Limits Extension, Passed by Yonkers Council & Signed by Mayor, is Lawful



By Dan Murphy

State Supreme Court Judge George Fufidio ruled on April 21 that changes made to the City of Yonkers Term Limits law in November 2022 by a vote from the Yonkers City Council, and signed into law by Mayor Mike Spano are lawful. The vote changed the number of terms that the Mayor and Councilmembers from 3, four-year terms, to 4 four-year terms.

Judge Fufidio ruled on a motion to dismiss by attorneys for Mayor Spano and the Council on April 21. While Fufidio denied the motion to dismiss, he went on to rule that "there were no ethical violations committed by the Yonkers City Council by increasing their own and the Mayor's term limits."

In addition to finding no ethical violations in the vote to extend term limits, Judge Fufidio ruled "this Court does not find that the increase in term limits for the City of Yonkers Mayor and the Yonkers City Councilmembers violates the Yonkers City Charter."

"The Court agrees with the Respondents that this case is, factually and legally, almost identical to the Molinari case (Molinari v Bloomberg in which the Federal Eastern District and Second Circuit courts found that the increase in term limit for the New York City Mayor, City Councilmembers and other city officials was lawful. "

"More specifically, using the same analysis as the Molinari court did, this Court does not find that the increase in term limits for the City of Yonkers Mayor and the Yonkers City Councilmembers violates the Yonkers City Charter section CIA-6 ethical standards. Section CIA-6 prohibits a city employee from using their official position in a manner that they either know or have reason to know may

*continued on pg 5-*

## Hispanos Para Spano Endorse Mayor Mike Spano for Reelection



Mayor Mike Spano, accepting endorsement from Hispanos Para Spano photo by Donna Davis

Hispanos Para Spano, a coalition of Hispanic residents in Yonkers, today announced their endorsement of Mayor Mike Spano in his bid for re-election. The announcement was made at a rally held in the heart of the Southwest corridor of city, where approximately 150 community members and leaders gathered to show their support for the incumbent Mayor.

"I am honored to have the support of Hispanos Para Spano," said Mayor Spano. "Their endorsement is a testament to the work my administration has done to support the Hispanic community in Yonkers, and I am committed to continuing to work together to ensure a brighter future for all Yonkers residents."

The rally featured speeches from several members of the coalition, who highlighted Mayor Spano's record of supporting Hispanic-owned businesses, promoting diversity in local government, and advocating for the Yonkers school district, which is majority Latino. They also praised his commitment to investing in infrastructure and public safety in the city.

Millie Gutierrez, Community Activist, said, "Mayor Mike Spano's interest in serving the Hispanic community is unmatched by any other. His flawless track record and his undeniable love for all people of Yonkers is why I feel he is the best Mayoral candidate for our great City."

Wilson Soto, Community Advocate, said, "Mike Spano has done a great job leading our city in the right direction. His forceful dedication to addressing quality of life issues benefits the residents of Yonkers immensely and in particular, the growing Hispanic community."

The Mayor's re-election campaign is focused on building on the progress made during his tenure, including expanding economic opportunities, improving access to affordable housing, maintaining a low crime rate and investing in Yonkers' infrastructure and school district. With the support of Hispanos Para Spano, Mayor Spano is well-positioned to continue moving Yonkers forward.

## Yonkers Police Warning: Beward of Card Skimming Devices at Local ATM Machines

**Tips When Using an ATM or POS Terminal**

- Inspect card readers before using. Look for anything loose, crooked, damaged, or scratched.
- Cover the keypad when you enter your PIN and beware of false keypad overlays.
- Use ATMs in a well-lit, indoor location, which are less vulnerable targets.
- Be alert for skimming devices in tourist areas, which are popular targets.
- Contact your financial institution if the ATM doesn't return your card after you end or cancel a transaction.

*If you suspect the presence of a skimming device or were defrauded, call the Yonkers Police at (914) 377-7900*

The Yonkers Police is presently investigating two incidents of card skimming devices having been found installed on the Webster Bank ATM machine located at 760 McLean Avenue. These devices are utilized to steal people's bank card information and often leads to fraudulent account charges. Customers who used this ATM in the past month should check their accounts for suspicious activity and report the same to their financial institutions.

Skimming devices can be present at ATM machines, gas station fuel pumps, and outdoor point of sale locations; they can sometimes be installed at indoor locations as well. Consumers must be vigilant and check their accounts frequently, even daily, to protect against electronic fraud and theft.

Please see the attached infographic for some helpful tips to stay ahead of the criminals. If you suspect a skimming device or have been victimized, please call the Yonkers Police at (914) 377-7900; emergencies dial 9-1-1.

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## Eagle Scout Honored for Service to Community



Congratulations to Sean Godfrey of Boy Scouts of America Troop 5! Sean earned the rank of Eagle Scout by leading a team of volunteers to refurbish the lower baseball field at Welty Park for the Bryn Mawr Boys & Girls Club. Thank you for helping to improve our community!

## Mother's Day Warbler Walk by Hudson Audubon

Mother's Day Warbler Walk. Sunday, May 14 8:00-10:00 a.m. Lenoir Nature Preserve, 19 Dudley St., Yonkers

## Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins Leads Earth Week Cleanup

With Her Youth Advisory Council at Tibbets Brook Park



Sixteen members of Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins' Youth Advisory Council (YAC) joined her as she sponsored an Earth Week cleanup on Saturday, April 22 at Tibbets Brook Park in Yonkers. For the third straight year, the Senator sponsored Westchester County's Pitch in for Parks program leading a YAC Pitch in team at Tibbets.

The high school students who participated come from Yonkers, Scarsdale, Hastings-on-Hudson, Tarrytown, Irvington, Valhalla, Pleasantville and New Rochelle. From Yonkers, Helena Cruz, Tyrone D. Woodson Jr., Kyle Skipper-Pugh, Jillian Maher, and Sakina Star; from Scarsdale, Maison Smith; from Hastings, Riya Chandra, Sophie Berman; from Tarrytown, Aidan Balkin and Lillian McCarthy; Mohun Desai and Jared Rodnick of Irvington; Logan Schwan of Valhalla; Kolby Moody of Pleasantville, and from New Rochelle, Christian Krause and Annie Gombiner.

Students volunteering with the Westchester Youth Alliance worked alongside the Senator and her YAC. Also participating on the Senator's team were members of the YWCA Yonkers Pearl Program, youth members of the NAACP Yonkers Chapter, and students from Saunders Trades and Technical High School.

"It was such fun pitching in with these students who care so much for the environment," said Senator Stewart-Cousins. "We are cleaning up the park, but it's also a learning experience. The YACs talked about invasive species and other plants while working together and making new friends. I commend the Westchester Parks Foundation and its Executive Director, Joseph Stout, for hosting Pitch in for Parks. It's a wonderful way to get the community involved in preserving our parks' natural beauty."

Kyle Skipper-Pugh, a Junior at Yonkers Montessori Academy said, "I was excited to have the opportunity to work with Senator Stewart-Cousins and my fellow Youth Advisory Council members to make a positive impact on our local environment which is consistent with my commitment to Environmental and Climate Justice. As young people, we understand that we have a responsibility to protect our planet, and this Earth Day cleanup was a great way to demonstrate our pledge to doing so."

Joseph Stout, Executive Director of the Westchester Parks Foundation said, "Westchester Parks Foundation has hosted Pitch in for Parks since 2013, the largest volunteer event of the year in Westchester County, in celebration of Earth week. Each year the event reaches over 10 County Parks and 500 volunteers to prepare the parks for spring. For the last three years Senator Stewart-Cousins has supported the event and brought over 50 youth volunteers who work alongside her and her staff to enhance Tibbets Brook Park in Yonkers. The Senator is a champion for the environment, and we appreciate her support of this program every year."

Nisa Geller, Executive Director of Westchester Youth Alliance said, "Westchester Youth Alliance teens were excited to join Pitch in for Parks and connect with Senator Stewart-Cousins and her Youth Advisory Council in celebration of Earth Day. WYA's mission of building community and understanding through leadership and service was empowered by the Senator's commitment to the future of our youth, our ecosystems, and our community. We are proud to work alongside the Senator and her YAC on this important initiative."

**YONKERS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA**

44th Annual  
*Young Artists Concerto Competition Concert*  
Steven Huang, Guest Conductor

**SUNDAY MAY 7, 2023 • 3PM**  
Saunders Trade and Technical High School  
183 Palmer Road, Yonkers

**1ST PLACE:**  
**MELODY SHEN-FLUTE**  
Carmen Fantasy - Francois Borne  
Scarsdale High School, Teacher: Carol Wincenc

**2ND PLACE:**  
**FJORD DEDA-TRUMPET**  
Concerto for Trumpet and Piano - Alexander Arutunian  
Harrison High School, Teacher: Deanna Lortshoer

**3RD PLACE:**  
**ANIKETH ARVID-PIANO**  
Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor - Ludwig van Beethoven  
The Hackley School, Teacher: Dr. Martin Zieger

**4TH PLACE:**  
**ARIANA THOMAS-PIANO**  
Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16: 2 & 3 - Edvard Greg  
Briarcliff High School, Teacher: Rie Matsumoto

**5TH PLACE:**  
**MICHAEL STOICA-FLUTE**  
Flute Concerto in D minor - CPE Bach  
The Masters School, Teacher: Bart Feller

This concert was made possible by a Community Development Block Grant from the City of Yonkers.

We extend special thanks to the Comm. Steve Sansone of City of Yonkers - Department of Parks and Recreation and the Board of Education for the use of Saunders Auditorium.

Covid restrictions and guidelines are in effect.

# 2nd Annual WALK AGAINST SEXUAL ABUSE of our children

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# Philpse Manor Hall Presents: FDR in Westchester



“Nothing to Fear: FDR in Westchester” a program by Anthony Czarnecki, co-hosted by Westchester County Historical Society will be presented on Sunday, April 30, 2023 at 2:00 PM at Philipse Manor Hall State Historic Site in Yonkers. Learn more and reserve your spot at [www.philipsemanorhall.com](http://www.philipsemanorhall.com)

Throughout his long career in public service, Franklin D. Roosevelt made many visits to Westchester County. One of his favorite places to deliver a speech was Philipse Manor Hall in Yonkers.

Over his long career in public service, FDR made 24 official visits to Westchester County. One of his favorite places to deliver a speech at was Philipse Manor Hall, in Yonkers.

The speeches he delivered are well represented by the three events that took place at Philipse Manor Hall: A November 1, 1928 campaign address as a candidate for NY State Governor; an October 28, 1930 re-election campaign address as NY State Governor; and a June 14, 1931 Flag Day celebration with members of the Yonkers-based National Guard Unit. At this event he praised the work of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for their efforts to maintain and preserve historic sites like Philipse Manor Hall.

In this compelling illustrated talk, Anthony Czarnecki reveals his extensive research into FDR’s many connections to Westchester County. This in-person program is sponsored by the Westchester County Historical Society and hosted by Philipse Manor Hall State Historic Site. “Nothing to Fear” is free to the general public.

Seating is limited, reservations recommended. Call (914) 231-1437 or email [bdavis@westchesterhistory.com](mailto:bdavis@westchesterhistory.com) to reserve your spot.

# Walter Cronkite Has Left The Air !

By Eric Wolf Schoen



Television seemed so simple when Walter Cronkite and Chet Huntley and David Brinkley presented the evening newscasts years ago. None of this fighting, no conservative and liberal labels, just straight news.

Well friends, that’s not the case anymore. Television is as competitive as the horses at the racetrack, particularly now that there are some 400 channels on the television to choose from. Anchors and reporters are in a constant competition that you reach the point where you wish for the simpler days of a Walter Cronkite!

CNN canned Don Lemon and FOX NEWS did the same to Tucker Carlson earlier this week. Lemon was an egotist who never had good ratings whether it be at night or in the morning. He said some bizarre things on the air which irritated woman and many men. His dismissal is no loss to CNN viewers.

Tucker Carlson at Fox replaced Bill O’Reilly after O’Reilly’s behavior at the station toward women and his colleagues became public. He went conservative to improve his ratings. I was never much of a fan and didn’t care for his presentation which ran the gamut from confrontational to egomaniacal. His program lost the lively nature of O’Reilly’s, and got boring at the first commercial break. He was also involved in scandals related to January 6 which cost FOX millions.

So are you crying your eyes out over the loss of Lemon and Carlson. They will find other platforms I am sure, and just like Chris Cuomo and all those before him will be distant memories in several weeks. That’s the nature of television news in 2023, and it looks like it will get more cut throat as the years go by. Walter Cronkite was worth crying your eyes out over. Not these clowns of the moment like Lemon and Carlson which today are yesterday’s news.

### Biden Announces

Totally unimpressed with the Biden Presidential announcement on Tuesday morning. What has happened to this man in a short period of time? As Vice President he impressed us, standing for hours at the casket of his son who died greeting those paying their respects. His energy level just isn’t there like it was in the campaign and his years in the Obama administration. The announcement had little energy and was accompanied by weird music.

But then you have Trump. Can our country put up with 4 more years of his behavior. Dividing and causing chaos on a daily basis.

Strange thing that both men are involved with family members in so many investigations you wonder where this is all going to go. But hark, here comes Robert Kennedy, Jr., son of a prominent family announcing he is going to primary Biden. A bigger meshugah over the vaccination process one could not find. He has little party support, those supporting his father long gone. I would vote for Biden over Kennedy any day.

continued on pg 7-



# Citizen Vigilance Center



## Coming Soon To New York

A new We The People of New York Citizen Vigilance Center office building (photo left) designed after Thomas Jefferson’s Virginia House of Burgesses, to be constructed on a 5.3 acre site in upstate New York. Fully staffed to watch and hold governments accountable in the capital and every town, city county and school district and whenever government policy is made.



# Freedom Drive, 2023



### WHAT WOULD LIFE IN AMERICA BE LIKE WITHOUT A CONSTITUTION ?

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The Constitution is all that stands between the people and total government tyranny and despotism. This a set of principles meant to restrain our corrupt government and guarantee the protection of the people’s inalienable rights. The Constitution does not defend itself. We the American people must defend it. When the institutions of the Congress and the courts fail to protect the people from tyrannical acts, the people must rely on the first amendment guarantee of our inalienable right to petition for redress of grievances and the government’s obligation to respond.

### WEDNESDAY DRIVE-2023



Wednesday Drive 2023 will be a nationwide event to help “The People” recognize the violation and importance of our right to petition the nation, and how to use the right as both a shield — and a sword — against a corrupt government that has stopped outside the boundaries the people have drawn around its power to govern.



## Yonkers Educators Rally For Fair Contract at Board of Education Meeting



The Yonkers Federation of Teachers rallied at Saunders Trades and Technical High School Wednesday to demand a fair contract that protects students amid nine months of minimal progress with the city school district. The union's last contract expired June 30, 2022.

YFT was joined by New York State United Teachers, the American Federation of Teachers, educators from neighboring districts, other local unions and community members as they marched into the Board of Education meeting and put pressure on the Board and superintendent to come to an agreement by the end of this school year.

For nearly a year, the union has been fighting for a contract that addresses what students need including smaller class sizes so they are more in line with the state average; adequate staffing to meet students' social-emotional needs; support staff caseload caps; and incentives to recruit and retain educators, especially those who are bilingual, amid a national teacher shortage.

"We love our students and we love to teach," said YFT President Samantha Rosado-Ciriello. "Our children deserve quality education in a safe environment conducive to learning. That all starts by giving teachers the support and respect they deserve as professionals. It is time for the school district to do the right thing and work with us to ensure a bright future for Yonkers students."

YFT represents 3,600 in-service and retiree members including classroom teachers, teaching assistants, substitute teachers, school counselors, psychologists, social workers and other certificated personnel.

## YPS to Conduct Superintendent Search

Yonkers Board of Education President Reverend Steve Lopez announced that the Trustees of the Board of Education have initiated a national search for a new Superintendent of Schools to join the District on July 1, 2023.

Yonkers Public Schools, New York State's 4th largest school district, is seeking a dynamic Superintendent of Schools experienced in urban education.

Located along 4.5 miles of the Hudson River, Yonkers is a vibrant urban and suburban community, the largest city in Westchester County and serves as the gateway between New York City and the Hudson Valley. Yonkers Public Schools has a diverse student population of more than 25,000 students in grades prekindergarten through 12 with families from over 100 cultures and nationalities. It is one of the largest employers in Westchester County with over 3,900 full-time employees and an operating budget of over \$700 million.

The Yonkers Board of Education is seeking candidates with exceptional credentials and a proven track record of visionary and aspirational leadership. The successful candidate must be prepared to build upon the strong progress made by the current Superintendent over the past eight years in student achievement outcomes and educators' professional growth. The candidate should demonstrate the ability to provide cutting-edge leadership and strategies that promote student achievement aligned to the District's action-driven diversity, equity, and inclusion belief system.

The successful candidate must have the requisite skills to develop and communicate a vision of quality education consistent with the Board of Education's policies as well as the interests and needs of students, staff, families and the community.

Additional information is available at [yonkerspublicschools.org/superintendent-search](http://yonkerspublicschools.org/superintendent-search) or by contacting the Office of the Trustees at 914-376-8095.

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and current resume to [Trustees@YonkersPublicSchools.org](mailto:Trustees@YonkersPublicSchools.org) by Thursday, May 18, 2023.

## Life @ the Library:

## YPL Launches New Logo, New Website



By Nancy Maron, President, Board of Trustees, Yonkers Public Library

Just when you thought you knew everything about the Yonkers Public Library, look again! This week is National Library Week and to celebrate, YPL is unveiling its new logo and a fresh new website.

The new YPL logo may surprise some people. It is a little abstract. It is a little off-center. It is solid but includes lots of space. It looks like a "Y"... or is that a bird taking flight? A book with wings? A Tangram puzzle? The answer is ... Yes!

The logo employs bold colors recalling the mid-Century design and colors of the Will Library and its iconic sunshades, while nodding to the hues of the Hudson River. We loved the way the design takes the letter "Y" and modifies it to suggest motion and transformation. And the way that no two people see the exact same thing when they first look at it. This logo embodies both the solidity of YPL as an institution that people have come to depend on, as well as the sense of creativity and inspiration that we want YPL to continue to foster in all who engage with it.

You'll start to see this new logo on all of our promotional materials, and... on the newly redesigned [YPL.org](http://YPL.org) website, which also launches this week. The new logo and website were designed by the award-winning design firm LibraryMarket, with input from YPL leadership, staff, and the YPL Board.

The library is celebrating its new look all week. Patrons are invited to come to the library to exchange their old cards for new ones with the fresh new look. Library cards with the new logo are available in English and Spanish. See you at the library!

**Take Flight! The Annual Gala for the Foundation for the Yonkers Public Library is May 10. Tickets and Sponsorships are still available. Visit: <https://www.foundationforypl.org/post/tickets-on-sale-for-our-annual-gala>**

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# On This Day in Yonkers History...



*Lou Gehrig visited Yonkers Boys Week in 1928*

*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 Untermyer Performing Arts Council*

**Monday, May 1st**

May 1, 1929: After being interrogated all night by Yonkers Police, Earle Peacock confessed to the torch murder of his twenty-year-old wife Dorothy Peacock. YPD believed Earle became jealous after reading a letter friend Eugene Bussey wrote to her and killed her. Bussey regretted writing the letter and planned to help the Peacock defense.

May 1, 1939: Several Park Hill property owners were dismayed to learn the deed for the former Valle Mansion on Park Hill Avenue in Lower Summit (original map showed not technically Park Hill) was filed with County Clerk Harold Mercer; this confirmed the rumor the mansion would be used as a "heaven," or a residence for Father Divine's followers. A few neighbors were upset, but their soon-to-be next door neighbor Maurice Blinken said he was not. He stated, "If Father Devine has taken the house, I might observe he is a neighbor, also, of President Roosevelt. I feel honored to be placed in the same class as the President."

Blinken, grandfather of Secretary of State Antony Blinken, was former President of the Yonkers Board of Education and Chairman of the Yonkers Public Library Board.

**Tuesday May 2nd**

May 2, 1939: Earle Peacock was brought back to Police Headquarters to identify a dress mailed to the police station allegedly belonging to his wife; he couldn't.

May 2, 1961: Yonkers City Clerk William Gray testified before the State Investigations Committee (SIC) studying bingo licensing. While being questioned by the Commission's Chief Counsel Carl Vergari, Gray stated he asked for a \$500 loan from bingo games operator William Buckner. Gray became distraught while repeatedly denying he had taken any money and claimed not to remember when asked questions about Buckner. A Commission investigator took the stand after Gray and testified Gray received \$500. State Lottery Control Commission investigators admitted accepting money from Buckner.

**Wednesday, May 3rd**

May 3, 1929: District Attorney Frank Coyne announced Eugene Bussey would not be useful to the prosecution of Earle Peacock as Bussey sold both his story and the letters he received from murder victim Dorothy Peacock. Bussey was held as a material witness.

May 3, 1961: Acting Mayor Michael Nugent asked First Corporation Counsel John Trainor to acquire a transcript of City Clerk William Gray's testimony before the State Investigation Commission (SIC) inquiry on bingo licensing in Yonkers; the investigation focused on William Buckner.

While being questioned as a witness when called before the SIC, Buckner refused to answer on constitutional grounds 55 times during questioning, including whether he knew several high-level known members of organized crime.

**Thursday, May 4th**

May 4, 1942: Seventy women started national vocational training in the Aviation Defense School in the old School Ten; this ten-week intensive course would qualify them for vital war industry skilled labor jobs. Most women signed up for the 7:30 am to 4 pm shift, but others wanted the 4:00-11:30 pm or the 11:30 pm to 7 am section. Assistant Principal Earl Carroll said the women were "keenly interested" and were fully aware the course work was "not a child's play or game but a serious thing." The course was an eight-hour-a day, five-days-a-week commitment. And yes, there was homework!

May 4, 1961: Mayor Kristen Kristensen immediately acted on a City Council request to create a committee to examine testimony of City Clerk William Gray, Jr., before the NYS Investigation Committee. The Mayor, a Republican, created a four-member committee of two Democrats and two Republicans to avoid the appearance of partisanship as Gray was a Republican. Democrat Vice Mayor Michael Nugent, who asked for the committee, was named Chairman. Councilmen Alice Allen and Gordon Burrows were the Republicans and Edward O'Neill was the second Democrat. Gray testified he asked former Yonkers resident and ex-convict William Buckner for a \$500 loan.

**Friday, May 5th**

May 5, 1961: Four Yonkers sailors were on the USS Lake Champlain, the primary recovery ship for the Naval pickup operation for the first US astronaut Commander Alan Shepard when he landed the Project Mercury space capsule Freedom 7 in the waters off Cape Canaveral. Serving on the Champlain were: Signalman Third Class Edward Delapp of William Street; Seaman Robert France of Walnut Street; Seaman Neil Graner of Corley Street; and Shipfitter Third Class Paul Savage of Hudson Street.

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# Local Builders Among Annual Gala Honorees



*Joseph Sisca, Jr, left, and Joseph Sisca III of The Sisca Organization*

The Foundation in Support of Educational Excellence will honor local builders and leaders in health care, education, and government at its annual gala on May 18.

The gala honorees are Joseph J. Sisca, Jr., CEO of the Sisca Organization, and Joseph J. Sisca, III, President of the Sisca Organization; Dr. Andrew D. Pearle, Chief of the Sports Medicine Institute at the Hospital for Special Surgery and Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College; Ken Jenkins, deputy Westchester County executive; and Eva Fernandez, provost and vice president for academic affairs at Mercy College.

The 6 p.m. gala at X20 Xaviars on the Hudson benefits the Charter School of Educational Excellence (CSEE).

"Our five honorees have made significant contributions to our school and to public education in Yonkers," said Sobeida Cruz, vice-chair and treasurer of the Foundation in Support of Educational Excellence. "We are grateful for the continuing support we receive from these honorees as our K-12 school reaches a significant milestone with the graduation of our first senior class."

The Brewster, N.Y.—based Siscas are longtime developers in the Hudson Valley. They built the CSEE's \$27 million new high school at 220 Warburton Ave., which opened in 2021. The Sisca Organization's other noteworthy Yonkers work includes Schoolhouse Terrace, 121 affordable housing apartments at 33 Ashburton Ave., and the outdoor water park at Tibbets Brook Park.

The Hospital for Special Surgery has a longtime sports medicine outreach program with the CSEE, helping to reduce the incidence of injury among the school's sports teams. Mercy College partners with the CSEE to help its students prepare for college, while Deputy County Executive Jenkins has tirelessly supported public education in Yonkers in all its forms.

The CSEE's new high school will graduate its first senior class in June. Some of the graduating seniors received acceptances from Cornell University, Fordham University, the Rochester Institute of Technology and Seton Hall University. The most popular schools with the CSEE's Class of 2023 are Mercy College, Pace University and Manhattanville College.

Tickets for the gala are available at the school's website.

# City of Yonkers Dedicates Martin Ginsburg Park

## In Greystone Neighborhood Liking Warburton Ave. to Old Croton Aqueduct Trail

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano joined Ginsburg Development Companies and city officials to celebrate the dedication of the Martin Ginsburg Park in the Greystone neighborhood that links Warburton Avenue to the Old Croton Aqueduct State Trail.

The new park, which is named after the GDC Founder and Principal Martin Ginsburg, features a stairway and paths that wind through the park that is beautifully landscaped with benches, gardens and shrubs. It is located across the street from GDC's River Tides at Greystone luxury rental development. The \$1 million cost of the project was shared equally by GDC and the City of Yonkers with GDC having done the design and a portion of the construction work.

The new park is named after Martin Ginsburg in recognition of his significant contributions toward the creation of one of the preeminent apartment living neighborhoods in the County. His first project in the Greystone neighborhood was The Esplanade in 1969 followed by Riverhill Tower, Riverhill Condo, Riveredge Apartments, and most recently Rivers Tides at Greystone. 1177@Greystone and Stratus on Hudson. Martin Ginsburg Park becomes the 81st neighborhood park in the Yonkers Parks system.

A ceremony unveiling the new sign to Martin Ginsburg Park was attended by city officials at the entrance to the park off Warburton Avenue. Among those joining Mayor Spano and Martin and Irene Ginsburg were Steve Sansone, Commissioner, Department of Parks and Recreation; Council President Lakisha Collins-Bellamy; Council Majority Leader Tasha Diaz; Council Minority Leader Mike Breen; Council Member Shanae Williams and Deputy Mayor Anthony Landi.

"Working with GDC, Yonkers is repurposing underutilized land, reimaging our public, green spaces and reconnecting communities," said Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano. "Thank you to Martin Ginsburg for his continued vision and partnership in enhancing public amenities and improving the quality of life for Yonkers."

"Developing this beautiful new public park with Mayor Spano is an example of a successful public-private partnership. It's a win/win for the city and the residents of the Greystone neighborhood who now have direct access to the Old Croton Aqueduct State Trail," said Ginsburg. "Creating public greenspace is vitally important for enhancing the quality of life in our communities. At Ginsburg Development Companies, we have a proud tradition of designing attractive public spaces at many of our developments," he added

*See Photos on Pg 8*

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Notice of Formation of Lee Lux Co, LLC. Arts of Org. filed with the SSNY on 2/14/2023. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as an agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 41 State Street, Suite 112, Albany, New York 12207. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

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### Classifieds

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#### Miscellaneous

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DISH TV \$64.99 For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation, Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some restrictions apply. Promo Expires 1/31/24. 1-866-595-6967

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Notice is hereby given that a license, 1361004 for beer, wine, & liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell beer, wine, & liquor at retail in a Catering Hall under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at the business known as Grand Encanto Event Venue at 18 Guion Street, Yonkers, NY 10701 for on premises consumption.

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Motives Thru Fabric LLC. Filed with Angel Luis Morales III. Office: Westchester County. Angel Luis Morales III designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. Angel Luis Morales III Shall mail a copy of process to the LLC, 35 Montague Street, Yonkers, NY 10703. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

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#### YONKERS POLICE DEPARTMENT NOTICE OF ABANDONED VEHICLE

I, Christopher Sapienza, Commissioner of the Yonkers Police Department, do hereby issue the following notice pursuant to Sections 109-144 and 109-147 of the Code of the City of Yonkers:

A 2015 Honda Civic, bearing South Carolina license plate KLV8213 (and identified by VIN # 19XFB2F51FE265030) has been lawfully impounded since 05/22/22 and to this date no owner has come forward to claim any interest in this vehicle.

Any persons having a legal interest in this vehicle may seek recovery of said vehicle by contacting Lt. Gregory Forshey no later than 05/12/23. If such person has a legal right to the vehicle, they shall be responsible for all costs incurred by the City to remove and store said vehicle and for the cost to publish any notice.

If this vehicle is not claimed by 05/26/23, the vehicle shall be deemed abandoned and title shall vest with the City on 05/26/23, (20 business days from the date of publication)

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#### YONKERS POLICE DEPARTMENT NOTICE OF ABANDONED VEHICLE

I, Christopher Sapienza, Commissioner of the Yonkers Police Department, do hereby issue the following notice pursuant to Sections 109-144 and 109-147 of the Code of the City of Yonkers:

A 2017 Volkswagen GTI, bearing South Carolina license plate QPS461 (and identified by VIN # 3VW447AU4HM002887) has been lawfully impounded since 01/13/23 and to this date no owner has come forward to claim any interest in this vehicle.

Any persons having a legal interest in this vehicle may seek recovery of said vehicle by contacting Lt. Gregory Forshey no later than 05/12/23. If such person has a legal right to the vehicle, they shall be responsible for all costs incurred by the City to remove and store said vehicle and for the cost to publish any notice.

If this vehicle is not claimed by 05/26/23, the vehicle shall be deemed abandoned and title shall vest with the City on 05/26/23, (20 business days from the date of publication)

result in a financial benefit for themselves or enumerated others (Yonkers City Charter sec. CIA6). Financial benefits are defined by the Yonkers City Charter as a pecuniary or material benefit that is not available to the general public (Yonkers City Charter sec. CIA-4(I)).

“Simply put, the term limit increase and the concomitant salary is not the kind of “financial benefit” contemplated by such rules. First, it is a benefit which is not guaranteed to Mayor or any of the Councilmembers. Each still needs to win their seat in a general election, which leads to the second point, that is the seat, salary and term limited office is potentially available to anyone who is eligible to run for office in the City of Yonkers.

“Third, the Yonkers City Charter authorizes the City Council to vote on, among other things, their own and the Mayor’s salary increases without that being considered a “financial benefit”. That they are able to do so is entirely consistent with the New York City Conflicts of Interest Board’s (COIB) advisory opinion that was heavily relied upon in Molinari and which also cited to New York State case law, Golden v New York City Council, 305 AD2d 598 [2nd Dept. 2003].

“The COIB held that the New York City Council had the authority to enact laws regarding term limits. Critically, the COIB concluded, and the Molinari court agreed, that a reading of the New York City ethics regulations, which are arguably more restrictive than the Yonkers equivalent, prohibiting sitting Councilmembers from voting on increasing their own term limits would effectively deprive them of authority granted to them by State and local laws and a fortiori would prohibit them from voting on anything affecting their office, such as salary increases and, ironically, ethics regulations; resulting in governmental standstill (Molinari II, 564 F3d at 616).

“Here, the Court sees no difference between the authority the New York City Council had to increase the Mayor and City Council term limits and the authority that the Yonkers City Council has to do the same and thereby declares that there were no ethical violations committed by the Yonkers City Council by increasing their own and the Mayor’s term limits.

“Next, although Municipal Home Rule Law sec. 23 requires that changes to the laws of succession of certain offices (MHRL sec. 23(2)(d)) and changes to the term of an elected office (MHRL sec. 23(2)(e)) be put to the people in the form of a referendum, New York State decisional law has held that a change to the length of term limits that does not change the length of a term of office does not need to be enacted by a referendum.”

“Finally, although the City of Yonkers voters have twice in the recent past, in 1994 and 2001, voted directly on the establishment of term limits, there is no requirement that the referendum process be applied to future term limit modifications and it is recognized that, “laws proposed and enacted by the people under an initiative provision ... are entitled no greater sanctity or dignity” that those passed by the legislature

“As the Molinari court explained using Caruso as its rationale, neither the Municipal Home Rule Law nor the New York City Charter restrict the legislature’s ability to modify laws passed by referendum. Here, again, this Court does not find that the Petitioners have shown the law in the Yonkers City Charter to be otherwise and thus declares that the City was not required to hold a referendum vote on whether to raise the term limits in question despite having done so in the past.

“Accordingly, the Respondents motion to dismiss is denied, however the Petitioners victory is pyrrhic because the court ultimately finds that the petition must be denied as well,” wrote Judge Fufidio.

The lawsuit was filed by ANNE MARIE McARDLE, CAROLYN SOLIERI, MICHAEL REPRESA, CHRISTINE ANITA PETERS, ERIC ADRE JOHNSON, FRANKE, COLEMAN JR, GEORGE McANANAMA, JOAN GRONOWSKI, JOSEPH PINION III, KISHA SKIPPER, MARK PAROLISI and RONALD MATTEN.

---

### Valedictorian, continued from pg 1-

a Pathologist.

What did you enjoy about Yonkers Middle High School? The strong bonds that I was able to form with my peers.

Advice for future Valedictorians? Don't get yourself worked up about being the best, or beat yourself up if you fail. I didn't do that and I wished I had."

Who helped you get to this achievement? I am more of an independent learner, and no one actively helped me. But I treasure the encouragement and motivation from my parents, who are immigrants. I wanted to make them proud and work hard to have a better life. They instilled a good work ethic at a young age. My twin brother has also always been there for me with support. “

The calculations to determine who will be the Valedictorian-Salutatorian are sometimes very close. Nirel at unweighted 97.99 and Yonkers Middle High School Salutatorian Leah Dourmashkin at 97.79, But the two are friends, who know each other, and take many of the same classes together in high school and are happy about their achievements.

Leah Dourmashkin's favorite subject is Biology and her 3 favorite teachers are Dr. Lesia Kaszczak, BIO, Dr. Jordan Salhoobi, CHEM, and Dr. John Krajovan, English. “All were understanding, encouraging and I enjoyed how they made learning.” She completed 11 AP and IB courses.

Leah is a very good soccer player. She served as the Captain of the Yonkers High School Girls Varsity Soccer team and plays and coaches on a local team, and traveling soccer team. “I have been able to use my love of soccer to give back and teach soccer to young girls.”

While Leah could have pursued a soccer college scholarship, “I didn't want to sacrifice my education for soccer.

Leah applied to a dozen colleges and was accepted into most that she applied to. She plans on attending Vassar College in the fall. “Vassar is a beautiful campus with a smaller school feel. Their summer research programs were attractive and the financial aid was just right. It was the right decision.”

Leah is on the wait list at Harvard, so... let's see what happens. She will major in Biology and plans on following her family into the medicine and STEM careers. “My dad is a PA (physicians assistant) and my mom is a speech pathologist. I share their love for biology and genetics, and hope to be a Dr., but not sure whether in research or patients care.

“My parents would sit me down when I was young and read to me every night and help with my homework. The value of teaching me a positive, encouraging attitude, when I was young, helped me

“I like the dedication of my teachers at Yonkers Middle-High. They all shared a commitment to go above and beyond,” said Dourmashkin, who left a few words of advice for future Salutatorians.

“You are going to fail, but you have to learn to fail to learn. Let failure drive you to succeed.”

Congratulations to both Valedictorian Nirel Ayerty and Salutatorian Leah Dourmashkin.

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### Yonkers History, continued from pg 5-

May 5, 1961: After an absence of two days following testimony before the Yonkers bingo inquiry by State Investigation Commission, City Clerk William Gray reported to his office in City Hall. No one had any idea as to where he was or how to reach him during his absence.

Saturday May 6th

May 6, 1914: Mayor James Lennon gave Yonkers resident William Mangels an official Yonkers welcome at City Hall; Mangels had been wounded in the fighting at Vera Cruz.

May 6, 1929: Defense attorney Sidney Syme accused Captain Silverstein of beating client Earle Peacox during questioning and causing a toothache. The charge was “vigorously denied” by DA Coyne and Silverstein. Several pieces of furniture were smashed during questioning, but, according to the DA, the damage was caused by Peacox. Coyne said Peacox threw a chair across the room and ripped up notes the stenographer was taking.

Sunday, May 7th

May 7, 1919: The three hundred soldiers camping at Van Cortlandt Park were given free privileges to the Yonkers YMCA and its swimming pool to get relief from the May heat wave.

May 7, 1928: More than 3,000 people came to greet New York Yankees star Lou Gehrig at Glen Field as Yonkers closed the 1928 Boys Week with athletic games.

**Questions or comments? Email YonkersHistory1646@gmail.com.**

**For information on the Yonkers Historical Society, Sherwood House and upcoming events, please visit our website www.yonkershistoricalsociety.org, call 914-961-8940 or email info@yonkershistoricalsociety.org.**

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## BOL Chair Borgia Won't Resign After Dems on County Board Ask, Due to Anand Singh Scandal



*Westchester Board of Legislators Chair Catherine Borgia*

By Dan Murphy

The fallout from the scandal involving Anand Singh, former staff member at the Westchester County Board of Legislators who was caught in an online, undercover underage sex sting, continues after 14 democrats on the Westchester County Board of Legislators have called on Board Chair Catherine Borgia to resign.

BOL Chair Borgia, in a statement on April 25, refused to resign. "During my time on the Westchester County Board of Legislators, and more recently as Chair, we have indeed passed historic and life-changing pieces of legislation. Make no mistake about it – my record is indeed unprecedented. Additionally, during my time on the Board, I have faced numerous challenges, but none more troubling than the situation in which we find ourselves today.

"Instead of the facts of the situation, some of my colleagues have been distracted by politics and personal advancement. They believe a political witch hunt against me will advance them individually.

"We all agree that the staffer who was fired displayed conduct that was deeply disturbing, that is clear. We have the opportunity to use this situation to make our institution stronger and more resilient, instead it is being weaponized for personal benefit.

"Targeting me is an example of pervasive misogyny and political hubris that will destroy this institution. This is not just about one incident or one individual – it is about a culture of disrespect and disregard for women's contributions and voices.

"I have followed the law. I have upheld the County Charter. I have followed the ethics laws and Rules that govern this body. I am proud of my unparalleled record of legislative accomplishment and leadership in the service of the people of Westchester. I will not resign."

On April 24, the statement from the democratic legislators on the BOL reads, "We, members of the Westchester County Board of Legislators, are asking Chairwoman Catherine Borgia to resign from her position as Chair. While she has been a leader that has guided us through historic and life-changing pieces of legislation, we have lost confidence in her ability to lead this body and the staff that supports it. Government's job is to protect people and ensure those ideals are clear in our words and actions."

Also prior to Borgia's statement, a story from The Yonkers Ledger claims that Westchester County Police Commissioner Terrance Raynor recommended that Singh be fired. The story reads, "Being unable to secure the video evidence he sought, even from Ramy, Raynor still made a recommendation to Chairwoman Borgia. Commissioner Raynor told Borgia that while not able to fully corroborate the claims, that she should still terminate the employment of Anand Singh. He even assured her that he would handle it personally saying, "I'll come up there and escort him out myself." <https://www.theyonkersledger.com/news/police-advice-to-legislators-chair-borgia-on-accused-sex-predator-fire-him/3258/>.

The FBI and Westchester DA Mimi Rocah are investigating the Singh matter. Singh has yet to be charged with a crime or arrested.

*Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-*

So we sit and wait for more candidates to appear on both sides of the aisle. Let's hope that in the Presidential primary next year at least we have a choice of candidates in both major political parties!

### Board of Legislators Pervert

Anyone whether they be public official or political leader who knew about the disgusting behavior of Board of Legislators employee Anand Singh and didn't make it public the minute they knew should resign and or be fired. When I read one place that this mess goes back to early December and another place that it was public in March or April, what were Board of Legislators leaders who were aware of this thinking by keeping it a big secret.

Who is this guy and who is covering his rear end? Any situation with a government employee similar to this has been addressed properly. Workers like Singh serve at the pleasure of the Board who hires and fires them. This matter was handled inappropriately and the District Attorney and Attorney General should be called in to punish those that covered up. Mr. Singh should repay any salary he received since the story broke and receive as much punishment as the laws allow.

New Elevator at the Will Library: It's a bird, no it's a plane, no it's a new elevator at the Will Library. My spies tell me Construction began this week on this long overdue project. Friends of the Library of which I am President have been waiting at least 25 years for the commencement of this project critical to our book sale operations. Thank you City Council and Library Administration for finally getting this project moving.

Just a reminder. You can enter the lower level auditorium from the parking lot and the handicapped accessible elevator will bring you down if you can't do the steps. There is a door directly to the parking lot from the auditorium which is much easier than the handicapped elevator.

The first level can be reached steps free from the doors on Central Avenue. If you need to for whatever reason to reach the administration top level, the shortest steps are as you enter the main reading room to your right before you reach the book stacks. There are railings on both sides to make your climb that much easier.

Friends will be sponsoring a little reception when the new elevator project is complete.

### Briefs:

No stamps at the Post Office on Central avenue and Tuckahoe Road (10710) Monday afternoon, so a little birdie told me. Prices of stamps keep going up and the Post Office is not prepared. Never been to a Post Office with no stamps. The 10704 Post Office (across from Racetrack) if the computer is working will print out colorful stamps with different designs 24 hours a day. We should have machines like this at all our Post Offices for 24 service. Raise the prices, get with the times.

Stores like CVS should install locks or bars on their shopping carts so they don't disappear. CVS wants you to buy more but how can you carry it without a shopping cart. Monday, none at CVS at Sadore Lane.

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

## Food Insecure Westchester Families: "This is Not Enough"



By Dan Murphy

Tens of thousands of Westchester residents and families are "Food Insecure," which means that they are unsure where their next meal will come from?

We recently received a message from Feeding Westchester and their distribution manager

### NO LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL...

By Peter Pozo, Mobile Food Pantry Manager, pictured above

We were at a distribution in Shrub Oak. It was a drive-thru, and we asked each vehicle, "How many families do you have?" We often need to measure ourselves because the line keeps on getting longer as time passes. One particular SUV had five families. We couldn't give them what they needed.

The gentleman driving was very frustrated. He said, "This is not enough."

People are already frustrated because they can't make ends meet. Now, they come to a distribution where they think they'll get enough food and there's not always enough. And they need it. It was upsetting. It's hard to say, "No."

The lines are getting longer, by about 30%. Some places a little bit more. The SNAP benefits have been cut and this lady was receiving almost \$300 per month. Now she's receiving \$66. What can you buy with that? It's a sad situation. No light at the end of the tunnel as of now. This is not something that everybody sees. It's unfortunate. Hopefully we can get more people to support us," writes Pozo.

Every Sunday, on our way to church, my wife and I drive by the Peekskill-Cortlandt 7th Day Adventist Church in Cortland Manor. This Feeding Westchester mobile food pantry gives away a food bag every week, and we have noticed the lines of cars starting earlier and stretching longer.

And food insecurity for many Westchester families is expected to increase now that emergency SNAP benefits has now come to an end, after two years of additional benefits during and after COVID.

Westchester families, seniors, and individuals receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits will experience a minimum reduction of \$95.00 in their monthly benefit amount, with some households experiencing a much higher reduction, up to \$250 a month, beginning in March.

This will be a significant loss of food assistance for the over 74,000 people in Westchester who participate in SNAP, leaving many to struggle to afford nutritious food and pay other bills. This devastating loss is coming on top of a sharp year-over-year increase in the cost of food and utilities, which has already led to more people seeking emergency food from Feeding Westchester and our partners than this time last year.

A senior in Westchester County who is receiving SNAP benefits expressed her concern over this significant negative impact on her ability to buy food: "How [can they] expect me to live on \$23? What can I buy for a whole month?"

Since March 2020, Congress temporarily increased SNAP benefits because of the COVID-19 public health emergency to address food insecurity challenges exacerbated by the pandemic. These increased benefits will end after February 2023 and return to pre-pandemic levels in March. The reduction in SNAP benefits is a result of a federal policy change (due to cuts in the 2023 Omnibus spending bill), not because of changes to individual SNAP cases.

Older adults, who are typically part of smaller households and receive the minimum benefit level, will likely feel these cuts the hardest. The national anti-hunger organization, Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), estimates that seniors will see their allotments fall from \$281 to pre-pandemic levels, just \$23 per month.

These extra benefits have been a lifeline for families who are already struggling with high costs of food and increased utility bills. With this dramatic decrease in benefits, there will be more pressure on Feeding Westchester and their partners when they are already dealing with long lines and higher fuel and food prices due to inflation. In fact, 80% of Feeding Westchester's partners said they are already feeding more people and serving more food this year than last year.

Feeding Westchester along with their partners are doing everything they can to prepare SNAP recipients for the decrease in benefits, alert them to emergency food resources in their communities, and connect them to other services to help them meet their basic needs. If you live in Westchester and need help navigating your SNAP benefits or to connect with other help with food and basic needs, visit <https://feedingwestchester.org/find-help/#foodbenefits>. If you are able to help bridge this significant gap for the community, visit <https://feedingwestchester.org/why-donate/>.

In fiscal year 2022, Feeding Westchester provided more than 19 million pounds of food equivalent to nearly 16 million meals through soup kitchens, food pantries, schools, shelters, residential programs, and mobile distributions. That fed 200,000 people – including children, seniors, veterans, and hardworking families – every month. The nonprofit, a 4-star Charity Navigator organization, is committed to creating a community where all people have access to the food they need today, and the fundamental resources to build a better tomorrow. You can volunteer, make a donation, or help in other ways. For more information, visit [feedingwestchester.org](http://feedingwestchester.org).

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### As Holtec Delays Toxic Dump into Hudson, The Blessing of the River for Earth Day

### City of Yonkers Dedicates Martin Ginsburg Park

In Greystone Neighborhood Liking Warburton Ave. to Old Croton Aqueduct Trail



On Earth Day 2023, Tony Moon Hawk Langhorn and Marcey Stefancik-Langhorn from the Lenape Nation, came to the banks of the Hudson River in Yonkers, for the 17th Annual Blessing of the Hudson River, with the Friends of Habirshaw Park

“My grandmother used to say the river is our food, it’s our water, it’s our life. And without water and food, we’re no longer here. So, we have to respect it and keep it clean,” says Marcey Langhorne, of the Ramapough Lenape Nation

The group tossed wampum shells, which were once used as money, into the river as a way of giving back.

Tony Moonhawk Langhorn, led the blessing, pictured left, where participants lit white sage and used a special turkey feather to fan the smoke, which they say helps carry prayers up to God.



photos by Joe Panella

See story on pg 4



## Are you suffering from pain?



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