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Friday December 16, 2022

Tis the Season, Yonkers!



Untermyer Gardens Conservancy's, Grand Illumination, above



Santa, the Grinch, and friends at the DWBID Tree Lighting



Councilman John Rubbo, with family, at Conor Park Tree Lighting



Frosty, Rudolph and an Elf were spotted downtown by the Saw Mill River

Read it all
online at
[Yonkers
times.com](http://Yonkers.times.com)

Twelve Yonkers Residents File Lawsuit Against Term Limits Change

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

-----X
ANEE MARIE McARDLE, CAROLYN SOLIERI
MICHAEL REPRESA, CHRISTINE ANITA PETERS,
ERIC ANDRE JOHNSON, FRANK E. COLEMAN, JR.
GEORGE McANANAMA JOAN GRONOWSKI,
JOSEPH PINION III, KISHA SKIPPER, MARK
PAROLISI and RONALD MATTEN,
Plaintiffs/Petitioners,

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

vs.

CITY OF YONKERS, MAYOR MICHAEL SPANO,
MIKE BREEN, JOHN RUBBO, TASHA DIAZ,
ANTHONY MERCANTE, CORAZON PINEDA ISAAC,
SHANAE WILLIAMS, MEMBERS, YONKERS CITY
COUNCIL, LAKISHA COLLINS-BELLAMY, CITY
COUNCIL PRESIDENT,

Defendants.

-----X
By Dan Murphy

Twelve Yonkers residents have filed a lawsuit in Westchester County Supreme Court claiming that the actions of the Yonkers City Council on Nov. 22 extending term limits for the Mayor and Council members was illegal. The suit, filed by noted civil rights attorney Michael Sussman, asks the court to find that the vote by the council on the change to the term limits law, based on three causes of action.

1-“The local law extending the term limits for elected office in the city of yonkers which was supported by a member of the city council and signed into law by the Mayor, persons standing to directly benefit from the same, is null and void.”

2-“that the adoption of the amendment to the City Charter was adopted by persons violating said City Charter and is, therefore, contrary to law and must be annulled.”

3-if the court finds that the adoption of the law was lawful, “a declaratory judgement..requiring defendant City of Yonkers to schedule a mandatory referendum before said extension of term limits becomes effective.”

The suit claims cites Yonkers Ethics Code, C1-A-6 states, “A City officer or employee shall not use his or her official position or office, or take or fail to take any action, which he or she knows or has reason to know may result in a financial benefit (financial remuneration for another 4 or 8 years) for himself or

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Yonkers Dems Divided as Latimer Vetoes Flavored Tobacco Ban BOL Doesn't Have Votes for Override

“The cultural objections raised must be forthrightly addressed, and where possible remedied. The bill...has been vigorously opposed by a significant number of African-American groups and leaders...all who assert their communities would be negatively impacted,”

-County Executive George Latimer

“I can speak for a lot of colleagues in saying we are shocked, disappointed and astonished... that the County Executive would dismiss the judgement of such a clear majority of the Board of Legislators,”

-Legislator Damon Maher

“There were too many ways that this bill didn't make sense for communities of color. We made sure that our voice was heard and thank the County Executive for his veto. Now lets work to get a fully operational hospital in Mount Vernon.

-Damon Jones, Black Westchester Magazine

“Westchester County Executive George Latimer's veto of the comprehensive flavored tobacco law was an act of cowardice...Any elected official who puts the profits of businesses ahead of the health of their constituents should be ashamed.”

-Michael Davoli, American Cancer Society Network NY

By Dan Murphy

Westchester County Executive George Latimer vetoed a law that would have banned the sale of flavored tobacco products in Westchester County. Latimer delivered the veto on Dec. 12 at 4:55 pm, just five minutes before the bill would have become law. The Westchester County Board of Legislators passed the bill by an 11-6 vote, with 11 democrats voting yes, and 4 democrats and 2 republicans voting no.

Democratic legislators who supported the bill, including the bills sponsor, Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson, were not informed that the veto was coming and were shocked when it landed.

Latimer held a press conference on Dec. 13 to announce a \$3 Million plan to educate the public on the dangers of smoking--and to enforce the law to prevent minors from smoking menthol tobacco products.

In an email to this reporter, Latimer explained his Veto, writing “Some proponents sought to frame this as a battle against “Big Tobacco”... well I don't know how Big Tobacco “wins” when we launch a marketing effort to reduce tobacco consumption or to better enforce the Tobacco 21 law. That's what we did today of substance and it should not be overlooked.

“Further: while worrying about Big Tobacco , some ignore the voices of prominent people in the African American and Middle Eastern American communities. Prominent local black ministers who opposed the ban; prominent elected officials including the mayor of Mt. Vernon, the City Council President of Yonkers, the publisher of a major black newspaper; Al Sharpton and the mother of Eric Garner. These aren't the voices of Big Tobacco ... these are the voices of everyday people in Westchester. The cultural outcry from the Middle Eastern community was forceful; there were voices as well in the Hispanic community such as El Centro Hispano. If the issue was something else, some proponents would have taken the side of those minority voices as a matter of social justice.

“In this case, some proponents are invested in “making a statement”, seeking to connect into a nationwide advocacy movement more than understanding the grass-roots disagreements many had with a legal ban. Some think only legislative action matters. I know differently. We can use executive implementation of sound strategies

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Mezuzah Rededication at Classic Touch Barber Yonkers PAL is Back! Opens Kids Shop-Cuts Prices for Customers Fighting Inflation Clothes



Yonkers barber Slava Shushakova with Chabad of Yonkers Rabbi Mendy Hurwitz
 Photo and story by Robert Kalfus

Yonkers barber Slava Shushakova's mezuzah had been on his shop's door for many years. Chabad of Yonkers Rabbi Mendy Hurwitz checked the old mezuzah, fixed any of the Hebrew letters which might have been damaged, checked that every single letter was properly formed and written, certified that it was kosher, and installed it on the barbershop's doorway at 797A Yonkers Avenue, across from Yonkers Raceway, bringing great delight and joy to him.

A mezuzah parchment scroll contains the Hebrew words of the Shema, handwritten by a scribe, and is attached to the doorpost of Jewish homes and businesses to fulfill the mitzvah, Biblical commandment, to "write the words of God on your home and upon your gates." A mezuzah must be affixed on the right side of the doorpost as you most usually enter a room, as can be seen in the photo of Rabbi Hurwitz and Slava Shushakova. Judaism is not confined to just the synagogue, and a mezuzah on the doorpost reminds everyone who passes through that a Godly life and Torah observance accompany them wherever they go.

Kings sit on their throne with their guards standing outside, protecting them. Jews believe that by affixing the mezuzah to the doorway, our King is outside, protecting us as we are inside.

It is customary to have a mezuzah checked twice within every seven years, as human error, or cracks can develop, and Rabbi Hurwitz was glad to fulfill this important mitvah.

Mr. Shushakova noticed that other barbers had raised their haircutting prices, and that customers were hurting from the higher prices. In response, Mr. Shushakova lowered his basic haircut price to \$15, which attracted a great many more customers who had been letting their hair grow longer in between haircuts.



On Dec. 10, Mayor Mike Spano, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Police Commissioner Christopher Sapienza, and Police Athletic League CEO Marisol Mancebo announced the Grand Opening of the YPD – PAL | Community Kids Closet, a collaborative effort to provide free clothing for kids in our Yonkers community, from newborns to age 18. The Community Kids Closet is an outreach program designed to act like a physical retail clothing store: parents and kids can make an appointment to "shop" in our Community Kids Closet for a week's work of clothing – that's up to 14 items, plus a coat, pair of shoes, new socks and new undergarments. Items are free of charge to any Yonkers family.

Mayor Mike Spano stated, "During this season of giving, it's important for all of us to come together and help one another. Thank you to the Yonkers Police Community Affairs Division and Yonkers PAL for going above and beyond, seeing the need and taking action.."

Commissioner Christopher Sapienza stated, "The Yonkers Police Department is always looking for innovative ways to assist our community and residents, and with today's grand opening of the Community Kids Closet, it is our hope to provide a degree of comfort and support to families in need this Holiday season. I would like to thank our Community Affairs Division and the Police Athletic League for their hard work in putting this program together

The Community Kids Closet is located in the Yonkers Police Athletic League at 127 North Broadway. For more information and to schedule an appointment, please visit

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On This Day in Yonkers History...



Yonkers First Police Headquarters, left

By Mary Hoar, Yonkers Historian, President Emerita Yonkers Historical Society, recipient of the 2004 Key to History, and President Untermyer Performing Arts Council

Monday, December 19th:
 December 19, 1963: Mayor John Flynn announced his appointments to redistrict Yonkers twelve wards: Chairman, Edmund McCormick, former Chamber of Commerce president and 1961 Charter Revision Committee member; Jesse Eisen, Fourth Ward Councilman and Council Democratic Minority Leader; Frederick Martin, Sixth Ward Councilman and Council Republican Majority Leader; Arthur Rozett, member of the Yonkers Citizens Union, Lincoln Park Taxpayers Association and general critic of government; and Abraham Spector, a CPA. The new ward boundaries had to have no more than 10% of Yonkers registered voters; the number of eligible voters were 101,946. Voters protested vociferously after the previous 1962 redistricting, resulting in the Democratic Council majority being turned out.

Tuesday, December 20th
 December 20, 1945: Fire routed more than 500 Christmas shoppers and employees from Genung's Department Store on Main Street! Eight employees, veterans who had returned from war a few months earlier, led the shoppers to safety. Arthur Alterwisher, Robert Brown, Don Cuozzo, Harold Dullum, Salvatore DiGirolomo, Michael Dirgs, Thomas Logue, and James McGinn had done such a great job evacuating the store, when YFD arrived within a few minutes, just a few staff members still were in the store.
 Although damage to the building was estimated at approximately \$4000, the building reopened after windows on the east side of the building were boarded up, and smoke and debris were cleaned up. Fire Chief Garvin believed it was caused by a short circuit.

Wednesday December 21st
 December 21, 1901: Yonkers Police Captain Woodruff assembled the entire force of thirty men at the station house, marched to the Manhattan Hotel on Warburton Avenue, and surrounded it. They raided an alleged poolroom in the Hotel, arresting more than 240 boys and men, including the hotel owner Edward Stack. Eight men claimed to be New York Police Officers.

December 21, 1946: A woman wishing to remain anonymous shyly approached the Salvation Army Kettle near Woolworth's on South Broadway. She spoke to Captain Norman Sampson and Band Master Budd and told them she was a soloist at a local church. A friend had just challenged her to sing with the band; they agreed and began playing "Silent Night." Her clear, beautiful voice gathered a crowd. After finishing, she returned with a \$5 bill, saying it was the money she had won, and tucked it into the kettle. Several people touched by her singing added their contributions to hers.

Thursday December 22nd
 December 22, 1925: Patrolman James Hollis engaged in pistol battles with two men attempting to rob Park Hill Lunch on South Broadway. Thirty shots were fired, no people were injured, but store windows showed the after effects of the battle. Hollis entered the restaurant to ask about a running car, and immediately faced

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We Get Letters



By Eric Wolf Schoen

One of the fun parts of writing a column (and giving the folks your email address and living locally) is that people respond to what you write. Whether they like what you say or they every once in a while hate it, people have no problem coming up to you with their thoughts.

Every year certain issues stand it out and this year it was the City Council playing games with term limits at the very last minute and passing legislation within one week. I would say 90% of the people who spoke with me or wrote are solidly against increasing term limits. Even people who came out to the hearings supporting term limits are against it, but they were told by their bosses whether it be Union Leaders or the folks that run City Hall to show up. It's amazing how one day the unions are supportive of the Mayor, and the next day the cork pops and they are not.

The next topic people are upset about is the death of Sergeant Frank Gualdino at the hands of a 16 year old who just got his learner's permit. No matter whether I was in Yonkers, New York or New York City, everyone knew of the death of a police officer particularly in this situation and found it upsetting. People agreed with me when I asked, 'where were the parents' particularly when the kid was driving a fancy BMW. People are concerned because the driver was a minor and if he was older he would get the book thrown at him and maybe get some serious prison time. Let's hope they lock him up and throw away the key. Don't you just wonder what he could have been thinking when he did what he did?

Mention Red Light Cameras and everyone has a story. Yonkersites and those who visit our city hate them. This will be on the list of topics people are upset about until they are taken down. Very few people fight them, and given the timing schedule the lights are on or lack of one they are ripe to be fought. The problem is to fight them you have to take time off of work, pay for parking in the Government Center Garage and waste a half a day. Is it worth all that to fight the \$65 ticket? It's a hard decision to make.

The cost of things at the supermarket comes next. \$4.29 for a package of Philadelphia Cream Cheese? That price blew my mind earlier this week. Remember when they were 99 cents a package and sometimes on sale 2 for \$1. People are not buying that costs have gone up and that's the cause of the increase. The sale flyer is more and more important, and though the prices are high at least they are not crazy high and you feel like you are getting a bargain when you buy something in the sale flyer.

I got a big response to 'Toy Guru' Richard Gottlieb when he was on the radio show. Everyone wants to know where to get those hard to get toys, and Richard gave them some good ideas. With the Internet and Amazon they run around the stores for you looking for that hard to get toy. And Richard gave them the list of top toys children will ask for so parents and grandparents can be prepared and not show up with monopoly.

Cars speeding on our nation's roadways are on everyone's mind. And being 'honked' at is particularly annoying when you are going the speed limit. Many people are simply afraid to drive with the animals on side streets and big parkways. One reader came up to me and said she gave up her car and is using ride services as people are driving way above the limit.

The reusable grocery bags Are more of a joke than reality. Supermarkets have paper bags instead of plastic but occasionally your groceries will be packed in a plastic bag. Enforcement is non-existent, and supermarket realize not everyone is going to remember to schlep their recyclable bags and they need a vessel in which to carry their groceries. For a while stores did not give out bags but nowadays it's the rare store that doesn't have a bag for your goodies.

When I wrote about the celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Will Library, I got questioned as to why they tore down the beautiful Carnegie Library on Broadway and Nepperhan. And everyone has their theories from a businessman making money to a deal involving a City Council person. Yes it was a beautiful library but I doubt they could make it handicap accessible in this day and age. And we did wind up getting a magnificent library on the Yonkers waterfront.

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Yonkers Woman Arrested at Walmart Cortlant Manor for Using Child to Steal \$3,500 in Merch



On November 21, 2022, the New York State Police with the assistance of the Westchester County Police Department arrested Rosa J. Margolla, age 58, and Rosa M. Margolla Rivera, age 40, both of Yonkers, NY, for Grand Larceny in the 3rd degree, a class D felony, and Endangering the Welfare of a Child, a class A misdemeanor. Troopers were dispatched to Walmart on East Main Street in Mohegan Lake for a report of larceny at approximately 10:40 p.m. Investigation determined Margolla and Margolla Rivera stole over \$3,590 worth of merchandise and utilized a child to commit the larceny. Both suspects were arraigned before the Honorable Judge Ragazzo of the town of Cortlandt Court and released on their own recognizance to reappear before the court on December 12, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.

Term Limits lawsuit con't from pg 1-

herself.”

“By enacting a change which allows two currently sitting councilmembers to seek a fourth term, and the Mayor to do the same, defendants, Council President Lakisha Collins-Bellamy, Majority Leader Tasha Diaz, Minority Leader Mike Breen, Councilman John Rubbo, each of whom voted in favor of the extension of term limits for the offices they currently hold, and defendant Mike Spano, who signed the measure into law on Dec. 2, violated the terms of the City Charter.”

The suit continues to claim that the 12 plaintiffs, all residents of Yonkers, “is aggrieved by the unlawful self-dealing which these defendants engaged in by extending term limits.”

The Council voted 4-3 to approve the change in the term limits law from three, 4 year terms, to four, 4-year terms. Council Minority Leader Mike Breen was one of the votes in favor of the change and the lawsuit said, “one member directly benefitted from this vote.”

The lawsuit also argues that because the change to the term limits law changed the City Charter, according to Section 23 of New York’s Municipal Home Rule law, “it is subject to a mandatory referendum.”

“Defendants have deprived each of the plaintiffs who oppose the change (to term limits) the opportunity to properly contest the amendment to the City Charter through a mandatory referendum.”

Plaintiffs request a declaratory judgement requiring City of Yonkers to hold a mandatory referendum pursuant to state law before the subject amendment to the charter becomes effective.”

This means that a Judge could order a Referendum be held in 2023, before Spano, Breen or anyone could run for a fourth term.

Notable plaintiffs in the lawsuit include former City Councilwoman Joan Gronowski, Joe Pinion, who ran last month as the republican candidate for U.S. Senate, Ron Matten, republican candidate for City Council President in 2021, and Kisha Skipper, Vice-Chair of the Yonkers NAACP.

Sussman has a storied history in Yonkers. He served as the lead attorney for the Yonkers NAACP in their desegregation lawsuit against the City of Yonkers in the 1980’s, memorialized in the HBO Miniseries Show Me A Hero.

We spoke to Sussman about the suit, which will be filed today, Dec. 12. “For a very long period of time in Yonkers, there has been a desire to take short cuts. Yes the Mayor is doing good things, but that’s not the issue. This issue is always for me equity and the rule of law. And there is a problem in making the changes without a mandatory referendum. The Charter says you can’t change it with your own vote. There is an obligation not to vote on something that will benefit you.”

When we asked Sussman why the legalities of changing the term limits law weren’t made four years ago, when the Council voted to extend from 8 years to 12 years, Sussman said, “Nobody called me four years ago. I’m not a roving Attorney General.”

Westchester Residents Get Sticker Shock from Home Heating Bills

Editor’s Note: As NY Governor Kathy Hochul releases an statewide energy plan on Dec. 19, New Yorkers are taking a look at their first heating bill for the winter, and regardless of whether you heat your home with Oil, Natural Gas or electric, prices are through the roof, with some bills doubled from last year.

Can anything be done? John Ravitz, from the Business Council of Westchester asks this question about the future of energy policy in New York State in the Op-Ed below.

New York requires a balanced and practical energy policy to preserve and protect our economy and quality of life

By John Ravitz

Is there anyone who is not in favor of improving the climate of our nation and the globe? Of course not. That’s the easy part. The more vexing questions are how and how quickly can we reach this ambitious goal?

In New York State this challenge is about to be put to the test. On December 19, the state-appointed Climate Action Council will issue it’s final “scoping plan” outlining how New York will transform its energy supply systems. It is impossible to overstate the impact of the program’s mandate that by 2040, just 17 years, 100 percent of our electricity will be required to come from renewable power sources.

Over the last four years, the Business Council of Westchester has been laser-focused on the changing landscape of our renewable energy future. We have actively followed the push to impose a hard deadline on the cut-off of fossil fuel sources. We have carefully assessed the impacts both economic and personal it will have on every aspect of life in our state. No resident or business sector will not be affected. We remain deeply concerned about and the unintended but inevitable consequences of setting a self-imposed deadline.

In Westchester County we have witnessed firsthand the impacts of sudden, dramatic changes in energy policy and production. The BCW was at the center of the debate over state-imposed closing of the Indian Point Nuclear Power plant that provided 25 percent of the power for New York City and Westchester and called for relicensing of the plant. Governor Cuomo, however, refused. The financial and reliability ramifications of this decision continue to be felt not just in the local communities and school district, but in the scramble to find sufficient power to make up the difference, and the inflated costs that come with it.

Currently we are continuing to cope with Con Edison’s moratorium on new natural gas hookups in southern Westchester. This is a direct result of the unwillingness of the state to allow additional natural gas pipelines or even expansions of existing lines. The reasoning is that new building construction should use electric versus power not natural gas. Another example of a goal that cannot be met in practical terms and timeframes.

And that takes us to the heart of the relentless push by green energy activists to impose a hard deadline on the ending the use of fossil fuels, often with the acquiescence of state officials. They simply ignore the fact that the capacity to replace fossil fuels doesn’t currently exist and that developing alternative sources in the time frame New York has set forth is simply not possible.

In this environment, there is great reluctance to be seen as a naysayer. Unfortunately, unless common sense and reality prevail, we are going to find ourselves in an energy crisis of our own making. Wind and solar power are nowhere near being developed to a level that will come close to offsetting the loss of fossil fuel power in the time frame that’s being established.

Hydropower from Canada, often talked about as a significant source of added clean energy, has become a less certain. Hydro Quebec has indicated that its surpluses have diminished in recent years, and it cannot guarantee consistent large-scale year-round supplies.

For the last 20 years the BCW has thoughtfully examined the issues surrounding the availability and cost of our electric power supplies, and for good reason. Without a reliable, consistent, abundant, and affordable supply of power we cannot have a successful and thriving economy, plentiful jobs and a quality of life that we enjoy. The energy supply uncertainties being seen in Germany and other European nations, and to a growing extent in California and other states are harbingers of how quickly the situation can deteriorate.

Richard Ellenbogen, a BCW member, is an engineer and business owner in New Rochelle who has operated both a factory and his own home “off the grid” for decades, long before most people had even heard the term. An expert on energy technologies, we are fortunate to have him serving with us as a consultant and a respected authority. His invaluable input, he has helped the BCW emerge as a leading voice for the business community on this challenging subject. Over the last four years he and I have met with state elected officials, regulators and policy makers to express our concerns about the strong potential of creating a debilitating energy shortage of our own making.

We join with those who aspire to see a cleaner energy future, and to address the complex issues posed by climate change. At the same time, we will remain a voice of reason and reality. Setting green energy goals and timeframes that cannot possibly be met, while effectively undermining our ability to assure the basic electricity supply needs of New York’s residents and business can be met, is irresponsible and unacceptable.

The Business Council of Westchester strongly urges Governor Hochul and the State Legislature to take a deep breath and begin the process of having honest conversations with all stakeholders statewide on how we can achieve the goals to ensure New York has a strong and reliable energy plan in place. Those conversations must stress that the state has a long way to go to create the renewable energy infrastructure that is needed to support the state’s power grid, and that natural gas will be required to support the system until the renewable energy infrastructure is in place.

It is imperative that New York continues to attract and retain businesses to keep our economy strong. This means demonstrating that we have a clear, smart and secure energy delivery plan in place now and in the future. Achieving this will require a tremendous amount of work, mutual understanding, and cooperation on everyone’s part. It’s not an option and the time to begin is now.

John Ravitz is Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Business Council of Westchester and oversees energy issues, policies and planning.

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Latimer Signs County Budget, Passed BOL 17-0 Tax Decrease of \$6 Million; \$65.9 M Surplus

Westchester County Executive George Latimer signed his 2023 Westchester County Budget, cutting the County Property Tax Levy by \$6 million dollars, flanked by members of the Westchester County Departments of Emergency Services, Corrections, Probation and Public Safety. The Budget was passed by the County Board of Legislators earlier in the day, bipartisan 17-0.

Latimer said: "I am signing this budget today and thinking of all the families who are preparing for the holidays – this budget is for them. We have cut taxes again and have done so while also expanding the programs and services they have come to depend on. Our collaboration with the Board of Legislators; this is what honest and fair governing is, that is who we are as an administration and as a County."

The total budget is \$2.365 billion and includes Latimer's fourth County property tax cut in a row. Highlights include: Closing 2022 with projected \$65.9 million operating surplus. No borrowing for tax certs, No borrowing for pension, and No use of fund balance. The 2023 Budget contains no borrowing or one-shots. No borrowing for tax certs, No use of fund balance, and No borrowing for cash flow.

County Board of Legislators Chairwoman Catherine Borgia: "Westchester County is stronger and in a better state financially, and we are paying it forward to our residents. We've prioritized meaningful investments in areas that affect our constituents every day. Parents receiving subsidies can now pay less out of pocket to afford better quality childcare. We're closing the digital divide by expanding internet access throughout the County. We've increased funding for community-based organizations providing services directly to those who need them. I am excited for all that we will accomplish in 2023 through mutual commitment and collaboration with the County Executive's Office."

Majority Leader Christopher Johnson said: "The funding we've allocated in the \$2.4 billion budget will provide critical aid for Westchester County residents, and help us actualize the goal of creating the Office of Police Accountability. We are even more focused on addressing social justice equity now that an allocation has been made for the establishment of this much-needed public safety division."

Westchester County Legislator Margaret Cunzio said: "The 2023 budget not only cuts the County property tax levy, but it also invests in the areas of Public Safety, Emergency Services, Corrections and Probation – all of which have proven to be essential in the operation of our County. I am pleased to support this unanimous budget to help keep Westchester moving forward."

Vice Chair County Legislator Nancy Barr said: "I am pleased that today, the Board of Legislators unanimously passed the 2023 fiscal year budget. This tri-partisan support is a testament to the strength of this well-balanced, fiscally-responsible budget, which cuts the tax levy for the fourth straight year without borrowing for operating costs and with an increase to the fund balance. The 2023 budget continues to support our non-profit partners who provide services to Westchester residents, which is particularly important as many are still recovering from the impact of the COVID pandemic. This budget provides increased funding for mental health services, and a focus on digital equity, with designated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to increase internet access to under-served residents."

Budget Director Larry Soule said: "For five consecutive budgets, the County Executive has prioritized getting this County back onto sound fiscal footing, while funding all essential programs, public safety and navigating a pandemic – all while cutting taxes."

The 2023 Budget funds the Departments of Corrections, Public Safety, Probation and Emergency Services at the highest levels in Westchester County history: Correction \$156.6 million, Public Safety \$59.1 million, Probation \$50.2 million, and Department of Emergency Services \$13 million.

The Budget has \$2 million in funding for Feeding Westchester and food pantries around the County. Additionally, for Child Care, the Budget reduces the parent share from 27% in 2018 to 5% in 2023. The Budget allots \$218.7 million for the County Health Department, that includes \$1 million for maternal mortality. Additionally, the budget is expanding funding to Federally Qualified Health Centers/Neighborhood Health Centers by \$1 million bringing the total to \$3 million.

The 2023 Budget has \$17.2 million for the Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH), specifically the Project Alliance Mobile Crisis Response Team, \$6.1 million for Crisis Network and 988 Suicide Crisis Lifeline, \$565,000 for Opioid Response and Overdose Prevention Initiative and \$737,892 Early Childhood Mental Health Services.

The Budget has \$1.3 million for the Human Rights Commission, including funding for an additional investigator, and Youth Bureau funding is \$4.7 million, including \$3.1 million for Invest in Kids and funding for new programs based on the youth needs assessment.

Virtual Music Program Offers Away for People With Dementia to Connect With Loved Ones

Music Therapist Tim Doak leads a free virtual program offered by the Alzheimer's Association Hudson Valley Chapter for people with dementia and their loved ones called Something for Alz: Musical Moments.

"It's completely remote, and what the goal of the group is to provide music experiences with dementia and Alzheimer's and their loved ones – whether it's their spouse, their child or a caregiver," he said. "It's a space for them to create connection together and have experiences with music."

He said he generally starts the group off with songs that help him get to know the participants. "I use some songs that are from generic eras, really popular songs from various decades. I'm also asking, 'What are some of your favorite songs? What are some of your favorite things to do?' That develops into a conversation."

Participants may share their wedding songs or other tunes connected to special times in their lives. Doak said they also sometimes do themed sessions, such as in the summer focusing on songs by the Beach Boys, or songs with summer references, such as "Summer Loving," which then can lead to various activities ranging from singing to light exercise or conversation.

"I gather songs that are meaningful or are favorites or are significant to everybody, and I then intertwine those songs into various experiences. It can be that we're singing, we're moving around, or we're talking about the songs and why they are significant. I ask them, 'What does this song remind you about?'"

He said that often when he brings in songs, stories arise that can be shared with the group. The music and memories can also help caregivers have meaningful interactions with their loved ones that can be very difficult when someone has Alzheimer's or another dementia.

Another activity he does with the group is lyric substitution. "We come together; we do some songwriting. I do some modified lyric substitution. One of the songs that is kind of the go-to is from The King and I, 'Getting to Know You,' and I substitute various words and lyrics for them to put in their favorite things. They can tell their preferences from the song itself. It's creating uniqueness; it's creating a unique experience for them. It turns a song that's familiar to them into their own."

Doak said he first started doing his Something for Alz group at the beginning of the pandemic, and has always done it virtually. He thinks the virtual format is preferable to an in-person format because it makes it easier for people to participate. To register for Something for Alz: Musical Moments, call the Alzheimer's Association at 800.272.3900 or visit www.alz.org/hudsonvalley/helping_you/social_programs/something_for_alz_musical_moments.

NYAG James Announces \$458 Million Settlement for New York with CVS and Walgreens for Failing to Regulate Opioid Prescriptions

On Dec. New York Attorney General Letitia James announced two multistate settlements totaling \$10.7 billion with CVS and Walgreens for the pharmacies' role in the opioid crisis in the United States. Attorney General James co-lead a coalition of attorneys general in negotiating the settlement, which will provide \$10.7 billion to communities nationwide and will require significant improvements in how CVS and Walgreens handle opioids prescriptions. CVS will pay \$5 billion, and Walgreens will pay \$5.7 billion. The state attorneys general on the executive committee, CVS, and Walgreens have agreed to this settlement, which will now be sent to other states for review and approval. New York will receive up to \$458,210,563.35 as part of the settlement, bringing the total amount secured by Attorney General James to combat the opioid crisis in New York to more than \$2.5 billion.

"In New York and across the nation, communities continue to mourn family, friends, and loved ones lost to the opioid crisis," said Attorney General James. "Though we cannot reverse the devastation, my fellow attorneys general and I are committed to holding those who allowed this epidemic to run rampant through our country to account. We have now recovered \$2.5 billion for New York from opioids manufacturers and distributors, and with those funds we will continue to support and expand abatement, treatment, and prevention efforts statewide."

In addition to securing \$10.7 billion to be divided among sign-on states, local governments, and tribes for opioid treatment, recovery, and abatement, the settlement announced today will include broad, court-ordered requirements CVS and Walgreens must comply with, including robust oversight to identify and prevent fraudulent or suspicious prescriptions.

The terms of the agreement will now be sent to the states for review. Each state will have until the end of 2022 to sign on, after which local governments nationwide will be able to join the deal in the first quarter of 2023. Further details regarding how the money will be distributed among localities is forthcoming.

Under the agreement, the payments are structured to ensure critical support in early years and sustained resources over time. Payments from CVS will be spread out over a period of 10 years, and payments from Walgreens will be spread out over a period of 15 years. Payments are expected to commence in the second half of 2023.

Joining Attorney General James in leading the executive committee that negotiated this agreement are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Texas.

Westchester County Government Belives Clinic Access Law is Constitutional

Editor's Note: A story which ran in Westchester Rising on Dec. 9 titled, Thomas More Society Files Lawsuit Against Westchester Abortion Clinic Access Law resulted in the following email comment from Catherine Cioffi, Spokesperson for County Executive George Latimer.

"We believe the law is constitutional. The law allows for protestors to exercise their first amendment right, while also protecting the rights of women who seek reproductive healthcare without harassment or obstruction."

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NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER DYNASTY, LLC, Plaintiff AGAINST CGSRE ACQUISITION CORP, ET AL., Defendant(s) Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly entered October 22, 2021, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Lobby of Westchester County Courthouse, 111 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, White Plains, NY on January 11, 2023 at 10:30AM, premises known as 68 Runyon Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10710. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the City of Yonkers, County of Westchester and State of New York, Section 3 Block 3112 Lot 59+60. Approximate amount of judgment \$1,792,943.78 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index #50855/2019. The aforementioned auction will be conducted in accordance with the WESTCHESTER County COVID-19 Protocols located on the Office of Court Administration (OCA) website (<https://ww2.nycourts.gov/Admin/oca.shtml>) and as such all persons must comply with social distancing, wearing masks and screening practices in effect at the time of this foreclosure sale. Anthony J. Centone, Esq., Referee CLAIR GJERTSEN & WEATHERS PLLC 4 New King Street, Suite 140 White Plains, NY 10604 50855-2019 74515.

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

On the topic of bail reform, people can't understand how our representatives supported it whereas most Yonkersites and Westchesterites simply don't. Your neighbors don't want those who cause trouble out on the streets. In particular when the violence involves weapons.

Other topics people were talking about were Covid, respecting a Presidential visit, naming a Yonkers Public School after a Jewish man who lived in Yonkers, Sid Caesar or a Jewish woman, Ruth Bader Ginsburg just like the School Board has named many schools after prominent Hispanic men and woman.

Seasonal flavored items like pumpkin lasagna and harvest flavored sodas and sauces are something certainly talked about on the streets. And I am amazed how many people like their food with pumpkin spices or their water seasonally flavored. Ya' know ya' never know what will tickle peoples fancy.

I hope these topics were of interest to you. Based on my random conversations, they were to your neighbors and friends!

Briefs: I drove by the memorial for the Sergeant who was killed on Tuckahoe Road and the bridge. It would be nice if you put some flowers or candles at the sight of this tragedy,

Lite FM106.7 is all Christmas music through December 25, Christmas Day. My friends are always amazed at this Jewish boys knowledge of Christmas songs. I Learned these songs from Lillian Ruzow, music Teacher at School 13. May she Rest In Peace.

Can you believe Charlie Brown Christmas, a staple is not on network TV this year? Shoppers are you rushing home with your treasures?

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

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Latimer Vetoes Flavored Tobacco, continued from pg 1-

and reduce tobacco consumption further here - we are already the lowest county in NYS for tobacco usage.

I did not categorize the support by Legislators and advocates in a negative light; it is wholly unfair to do the same to my decision. They came to their decision for their own reasons and did not Telegraph that to me in advance. We are all disappointed sometimes in public policy disputes; I've learned to move forward, win or lose.

I've delivered a path to move forward for robust education and enforcement, to persuade people, much as we did during COVID. We had success with a strategy that kept mandates to a minimum. I understand in a free society we must convince people of the rightness of a cause - not simply to mandate them against their will," wrote Latimer.

Supporters of Latimer's decision point to his reluctance to mandate, but instead to educate the public, as was evidenced in his COVID policies for Westchester County.

Latimer's comments to us by email, and in his veto message, point to the fact that many members of the black community in Westchester did not support this legislation, including Damon Jones, Publisher of Black Westchester Magazine, and Black Law Enforcement.

After the vote, we called Jones to discuss what we see as a political victory for opponents to this law. Jones told us, "There were too many ways that this bill didn't make sense for communities of color," said Damon Jones, Publisher of Black Westchester and a member of Black Law Enforcement. "We made sure that our voice was heard and thank the County Executive for his veto. Now lets work to get a fully operational hospital in Mount Vernon."

Several Westchester democrats told us that others supported Latimer's decision. "I don't support the Nanny State of telling us what to do with our lives. And this law, if adopted, would have resulted in people going to the Bronx or Connecticut for their Menthol cigarettes, or buy them on the black market here. I support the County Executive's decision," said a Sound Shore Democratic leader.

Several democrats we spoke to said that Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins played a large role, behind the scenes, to support the veto but also to make sure that there were not enough votes on the County Board to override.

"Legislator Terry Clements was the vote that tipped the balance," said one Westchester Democrat. "Her decision to vote no was the 6th vote ensuring that it was Veto proof. And Terry is very close to the Deputy County Executive."

Supporters of the ban were, as Legislator Damon Maher said, "I can speak for a lot of colleagues in saying we are shocked, disappointed and astonished, after putting in so much work to try and help reduce the availability of this insidiously marketed, dangerous product in the community, that the County Executive would dismiss the judgement of such a clear majority of the Board of Legislators. Today, Big Tobacco claims another victory over the people."

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids said, "We are deeply disappointed by Westchester County Executive Latimer's decision to veto vital legislation to end the sale of flavored tobacco products in Westchester County. With this veto, County Executive Latimer missed a tremendous opportunity to take an important step towards protecting the health and safety of young people and communities of color in New York.

"For too long, the tobacco industry has relentlessly targeted Black communities - particularly Black youth - with flavored tobacco products. They've unleashed aggressive marketing campaigns and deceptive advertising, and made menthol cigarettes widely available and extremely cheap. They've pushed out kid-friendly flavors that mimic desserts or candies to get kids hooked on nicotine, enticing them to a lifelong struggle with addiction. This is a public health crisis that demands our attention now - and Big Tobacco will not stop targeting kids and communities of color unless we stop them.

"We are grateful for the continued leadership of Health Committee Chair Jewel Williams Johnson and her colleagues on the Board of Legislators, who passed this legislation last month with a vote of 11 to 6. We strongly urge the Board to override the veto and push back against the tobacco industry's decades-long campaign to get kids addicted to tobacco."

The American Cancer Society's NY Director of Government Relations Michael Davoli said, "Westchester County Executive George Latimer's veto of the comprehensive flavored tobacco law was an act of cowardice. By ignoring the deadly impact that flavored tobacco has on his constituents, the County Executive has cast his lot with those who have peddled their deadly product with lies for generations. The justification given in his veto message could have been written by a tobacco industry lobbyist. His willingness to accept the lies presented by opponents of the bill demonstrate the interests that matter to him most. Any elected official who puts the profits of businesses ahead of the health of their constituents should be ashamed."

The split in the democratic party over this issue is not only on race. Two black County Legislators, including the bills sponsor, Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson, and Majority Leader, Legislator Christopher Johnson, supported the ban.

In Yonkers, Majority Leader Johnson, and Legislator Jose Alvarado, supported the ban, while Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins and legislators David Tumbiolo and James Nolan opposed.

Others claim that a compromise was proposed and rejected, and that the ban goes too far, and that banning all tobacco was the next step.

One comment from County Executive Latimer that this reporter agrees with is the oddity found in trying to ban Menthol Cigarettes while at the same time, New York State and Westchester, are about to legalize Marijuana.

"This intersection between making certain tobacco products illegal to sell at the same time we are allowing Cannabis to be legally sold, creates a societal concern that must be more fully researched and addressed," said Latimer.

And the topic of legal marijuana in Westchester will be our focus in the weeks to come. Where will the Pot stores be allowed and when will they open in Westchester? More on this topic in 2023

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YONKERS IDA A Driving Force Behind the Yonkers Renaissance.

Building on a nearly decade-long economic renaissance, the Yonkers Industrial Development Agency (YIDA) under the leadership of Mayor Mike Spano has been instrumental in providing financial incentives for development projects representing nearly \$5 billion in private investment and more than 9,100 multifamily units planned, completed, under construction and approved for development.

To learn more about the financial incentives provided by the Yonkers IDA, visit yonkersida.com or call (914) 509-8651.



YEDC

Yonkers Economic Development Corporation

James Joyce Inducted Into Yonkers Sports Hall of Fame



On Saturday, December 10, Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano along with the Department of Parks, Recreation & Conservation, inducted Athletic Coach/Administrator James Joyce, Sr. into the Yonkers Sports Hall of Fame. The Sports Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding professionals and amateurs in the field of sports, living or deceased, who have gained prominence or make substantial contribution to sports in the City of Yonkers.

Born and raised in Yonkers, James Joyce, Sr. left his mark on the sports and Yonkers community as a trailblazer in his field. His career as an Athletic Coach and Administrator at Lincoln High School is highlighted by his decades of coaching that spanned from Track and Field, Varsity Baseball, Girls Softball, Basketball to Athletic Director and all have brought pride and recognition to the City of Yonkers and its residents.

"Our Sports Hall of Fame is a memorable way of honoring past and present residents who have enhanced Yonkers through their athletic accomplishments," said Mayor Spano. "Throughout the years, many of our outstanding local citizens have gained prominence and fame within world of sports. The pride and honor they brought to themselves and others should live on as symbols of achievement and examples of hard work for future generations in our community."

Making Yonkers Proud: New Police Cadets Take the Oath



For the past six months, YPD's 2022 Cadets have undergone strict discipline and training. We hope this experience will help you continue in academics and know that our police department is here with you every step of the way.-Mayor Mike Spano

Yonkers History, continued from pg 3-

a gun. Ordered to go into the back room, he drew his gun and fired five shots. The robbers ran out firing. Their car stalled, and they grabbed a taxi, forcing the driver to leave. Hollis caught up with them in Van Cortland Park, the scene of a second gun battle. One got away, and he took the second one into custody.

December 22, 1965: The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation announced Cetadiol, a new drug designed to treat alcoholism, was developed using experimental material created by the Nepera Chemical Company. The Foundation used Cetadiol to treat 43 patients hospitalized with advanced alcoholism, claiming all were "put back on the road to recovery."

Friday, December 23rd

December 23, 1901: More than 240 prisoners appeared before Judge Kellogg after having been arrested in a raid of the Manhattan Hotel poolroom. The courtroom was filled with spectators as NYC police officers had been swept up in the raid. The eight officers arrested, however, did not give their own names; they claimed Yonkers' residences and lied about their occupations. As soon as these New York policemen were released on bail, they high-tailed it to the Bronx border. Several spectators were detectives from NYPD Headquarters. Not only did they recognize the men, they notified police superiors who they really were.

December 23, 1941: Employees of the Cameo Curtain Company received surprise Christmas bonuses of Defense Bonds. According to company president Marvin Rosenberg, the bonuses were awarded on the basis of length of service and responsibility. In all, the one hundred-fifty employees shared more than \$3,000. The company's main plant was in Yonkers, where they manufactured curtains, related products, and mosquito bars for the government.

Saturday, December 24th:

December 24, 1916: Yonkers held its first Community Christmas Tree Lighting, starting a long tradition of neighborhood tree lightings. The "Tree of Lights" was placed in the children's playground at Radford Street and South Broadway, warming the hearts of the nearly 3,000 people who attended. Festivities began with a Christmas Procession to the playground; 300 boys, girls, and choir singers marched along South Broadway, singing carols. Just as the group reached the tree, the lights were turned on to the sounds of cheers from the audience. Topped with a large "Star of Bethlehem," the tree had more than 200 red, white and amber lights cascading down the tree.

Sunday, December 25th:

December 25, 1887: The St. Aloysius Boarding Academy for Boys was destroyed by fire. Opened in 1868 by the Sisters of Charity on the South Broadway property of the late Judge Aaron Vark, St. Aloysius prospered right from the start, as there was a need for a good school for pre-college boys. Among its students were notables such as John and Lionel Barrymore. Sadly, the school burned down Christmas Day 1887. A notice appeared in the Yonkers Statesman ten days later informed the public "the loss by the burning of St. Aloysius Academy will be considerable, and that it is only partially covered by insurance." The school was to be no more. The property later was used to build St. Joseph's Hospital.

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.



MAYOR SPANO PRESENTS SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT AWARD TO ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - EARLY COLLEGE STUDIES



Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano today joined Yonkers Board of Education President Rev. Steve Lopez and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Edwin M. Quezada to present his School Spotlight Award for December 2022 to the deserving administration, faculty, staff, parents and students at Roosevelt High School-Early College Studies. Under the leadership of Principal Edward DeChent, Roosevelt High School - Early College Studies is being recognized for its continued rising graduation rate, supportive early college program and their outstanding level of hospitality provided to the 600 students and staff of Family School 32 who were evacuated as a result of smoke in the school from a minor contained fire.

“Roosevelt High School - Early College Studies continues to place a strong focus on the overall quality of education given to our students,” said Mayor Spano. “I would like to commend Principal DeChent, as well as the administrators, teachers, staff and students for providing a safe space and refuge for the 600 students and staff of Family School 32. When our students step up to care for and look out for the well-being of another without hesitation, we know we are fostering well-rounded and exemplary young people.”

On October 28, 2022, 600 students, faculty and staff of Family School 32 were evacuated as a result of smoke in the school from a minor, contained fire and were sent to Roosevelt High School-Early College Studies for the remainder of the day. Roosevelt students were paired with the elementary students to assist them by monitoring indoor and outdoor activities, distributing lunches and escorting the students to their buses during dismissal.

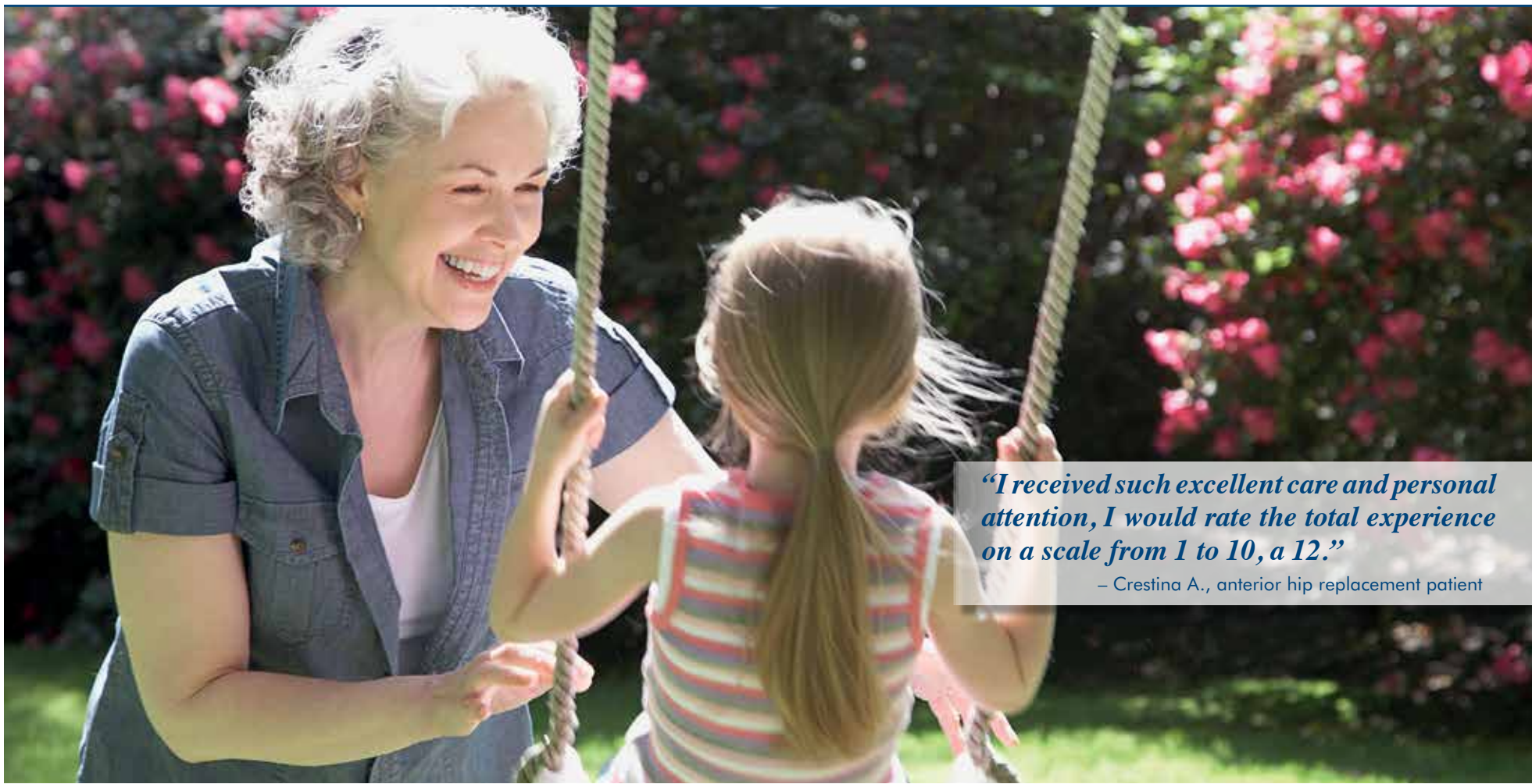
In addition, for the past four years, the school’s graduation rates remain consistent at 94% or better, which can be attributed to Roosevelt’s Early College High School Program and students participation in the Smart Scholars program. Students have the opportunity to complete their high school studies while simultaneously earning between 24 to 60 transferable college credits towards their college Associates Degree. This program serves to increase high school graduation and college completion rates by reducing student tuition costs when they become full-time college students after graduating from high school.

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NOT SHOWN: Evan Gaines, MD; Vishal A. Mehta, MD; Patrick Murray, MD; Paul S. Ragusa, MD; Daniel Shein, MD; David Shein, MD; Eric Spencer, MD; Mario Voloshin, DPM, FACFAS



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