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Pineda-Isaac Lays Out Crime Agenda in Race for Mayor



City Councilwoman and Mayoral candidate Corazon Pineda-Isaac

By Corazón Pineda-Isaac

By the current Mayor's own admission, crime is increasing in Yonkers. The Yonkers Police Department says property crimes are up 10% over last year and shoplifting has doubled in the same period. There is a palpable sense of unease that I feel as I go door to door talking to residents.

But for several years, the Mayor has been telling us that Yonkers is among the "safest City in America" while doing nothing to address the issues that reduce crime over the long term. Crime is increasing today because Mike Spano has ignored the issue for three terms.

What he fails to recognize is the issue of crime is nothing new for many residents of Yonkers, especially in Black, Latino and poor neighborhoods. It's a common refrain I've heard in my council office for years – the senior citizen afraid of getting assaulted, the clergy member worried about hate crimes at their place of worship, the parents worried about their child walking to school, the shopper worried about their car getting broken into or the business owner worried about getting robbed. All while he's lectured us on how safe we were, the Mayor, a former Republican, has been out of touch with the real experiences of Yonkers residents.

He's only waking up to it now because it's a political threat to his attempt at a fourth term, one he needed to overturn term limits a second time to run for. But the solutions he is offering come from the same tired playbook that Yonkers politicians have deployed since the 1970s: hold a press conference, talk tough and blame the State government.

This is the wrong approach. The way we make Yonkers safer – long term – is by addressing the root causes of crime. Yonkers must invest in community service-

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Yonkers Police Close Another Illegal Marijuana Store -This One on South Broadway



"Another unlawful smoke shop shut down! Members of the The City of Yonkers Smoke Shop Task Force inspected this location at 262 South Broadway last week and confiscated numerous unlicensed products for sale including illicit cannabis and unlawful synthetic cannabinoid products. The store was shut down for Building and Fire code violations.

Many of these products are designed in appearance to mimic candy, such as the THC infused "Wonka Bar" that comes in Jelly Doughnut and M&M flavors.

These items are in our community - please keep a watchful eye on young kids who could potentially have access to them," writes the YPD.

Remember, it is legal to possess and to smoke marijuana now in NY state, but the only place that you can legally buy or sell marijuana is from a dispensary that is licensed by New York State, and currently there are only 3 legal dispensaries in the state, with none in Yonkers, and none in Westchester so far.

Westchester Residents Asked to Sign Up For GridRewards; Get Paid & Save the Planet



Mayors from Hastings to Sleepy Hollow are engaging in a friendly competition; encouraging residents to sign up for GridRewards to illustrate the importance of synchronicity when it comes to energy reduction. The challenge takes place now through April 28, 2023.

GridRewards, owned by Logical Buildings, AI tech leader in sustainability, is an app designed to get large numbers of people to lower their energy consumption at the same time by getting paid to do so. In order to alleviate stress on the grid when high energy demand is forecasted (think summertime heat waves), GridRewards users are prompted (via the app) to take simple, energy-saving actions, such as raising their thermostat a few degrees, or running dishwashers at off-peak hours. They are then compensated for their efforts — in cash.

Mayors from around the Rivertowns are urging residents, nonprofits and commercial property managers alike to sign up for GridRewards, especially as we near Earth Day on April 22nd. Niki Armacost from Hastings is leading the charge for her Village. "We're very excited to participate in another Mayor's Challenge this year using GridRewards!

There are many actions people can take to reduce their carbon footprint, but GridRewards is one of the very simplest we've seen. And if we all work together – which is of course the real trick and the brilliance of the app, it is not only Rivertowns residents who win, but every person living within a few miles of a horrible Peaker Plant".

When so many users reduce their energy consumption at the same time, or in a synchronized manner, it effectively creates a distributed virtual power plant (VPP) and reduces the need for expensive, polluting, fossil-fuel-powered Peaker Plants — for those hot summer days or when the grid is overworked.

On days with extreme weather, like heat waves or sub-zero temperatures, residents consume more energy to stay cool and warm, which puts excessive demand on the grid. In response to this increased demand in electricity, highly polluting power plants known as "peakers" fire up in the South Bronx, Sunset Park, and other communities of color throughout New York City. These inefficient peakers spew harmful emissions into neighborhoods already overburdened by pollution, exacerbating widespread health problems. Peaker plants are a prime example of how low-income communities and communities of color bear the brunt of a host of energy and industrial infrastructure that poses significant public health and environmental hazards. Most of these fossil fuel peaker plants are very old, some dating back to the 1950s, and many have been operating in the city for decades without any modern pollution control equipment. Some plants run on highly pol-

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Caseworker Arrested for Stealing \$300K+ from 95-Yr Old with Dementia; Nolan Wants Answers



"This demands an explanation from the Commissioner of Social Services and the managers in charge."

County Legislator James Nolan

Westchester County Caseworker Chantel Chenault Fraudulently Withdrew Funds Belonging to a 95-Year-Old Suffering from Dementia Under Her Care

On March 24, New York Attorney General Letitia James announced the indictment of Chantel Chenault, 46, of Danbury, CT, on charges of grand larceny and identity theft for stealing more than \$300,000 from a 95-year-old woman with dementia while she was under Chenault's care. The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) alleges that from March 2017 through April 2022, while employed as a caseworker with Westchester County Adult Protective Services (APS), Chenault transferred over \$500,000 from the elderly woman's retirement accounts to the woman's checking account and would bring the woman to the bank to make withdrawals multiple times per month. Chenault also regularly used the woman's ATM card at casinos without permission. Chenault was arraigned today in Westchester County Court before Judge Maurice Williams. Her next appearance in court is scheduled for June 15, 2023.

"Chantel Chenault used her position as a caregiver to steal from someone who trusted her and who couldn't protect herself. This betrayal harmed the victim and harmed the reputation of the Westchester County Adult Protective Services," said Attorney General James. "All New Yorkers deserve safe and secure services to support autonomy later in life. My office will always defend our seniors against those who attempt to exploit their vulnerability and will ensure bad actors are held accountable."

"There is nothing more insidious than exploiting the most vulnerable among us, especially when families put their trust in a caseworker they believe will treat their loved one with the respect and dignity they deserve," said Suzanne Miles-Gustave, Esq., Acting Commissioner, New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) "OCFS has zero tolerance for this type of abuse and referred this case directly to Attorney General James' office for investigation. I commend the subsequent caseworker who reported the alleged criminal activity to the appropriate

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MAYOR SPANO PRESENTS YONKERS “WOMEN OF DISTINCTION” AWARDS IN HONOR OF WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH



Mayor Mike Spano, with Women of Distinction Honorees, with flowers, Michelle Benson, Marilyn Lopez, Sade Gilcrest, Alonda Hassell, Celeste Hughes, and with Council Minority Leader Tasha Diaz and Councilwoman Shanae Williams

On March 22, in honor of Women’s History Month, Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano presented “Women of Distinction” Awards to Yonkers women whose distinct achievements have improved the lives of others in the community and whose impact has changed Yonkers for better. “Women’s History Month recognizes the historic accomplishments of women, and now it is Yonkers’ turn to pay tribute to the local leaders who either live or work among us each day,” added Mayor Spano. This year’s honorees range in talent and service. They include:

Michelle Benson :Michelle Benson was born and raised in Yonkers, NY. She entered the world of construction at 13 years old, through her father, Michael Sawyer’s company that worked throughout Westchester County. Michelle began her philanthropic efforts through the Ronald McDonald House Charities with the Yonkers Fire Department to inspire her children to appreciate what they have and how healthy they are. She followed up her volunteer work with PCNY during their backpack drives, turkey giveaways, feeding the less fortunate and assisting in securing nearly 300,000 pounds of when supply chains were impaired. Her commendable volunteer work is truly an asset and she’s grateful for the opportunity to help others. She was taught to give without complaining, while inspiring and teaching her children to give to others, choose kindness and always think of others. Even while battling many illnesses, she still remains involved. Michelle says, when you see her, you will experience her kind nature, her laughter, her smiling face and loud voice. After all, she is from Yonkers.

Marilyn Lopez Marilyn Lopez is the co-owner of the newly opened Yonkers Knockouts Boxing Team. She has provided a sanctuary for Yonkers youth, helping to develop skills as she uplifts and empowers them. She teaches self-respect and respect for one another through focus groups, implementing healthy lifestyles through healthy eating habits and athletics. In addition, Marilyn has created an exercise program for the Yonkers youth, including calisthenics and various cardio exercises. Yonkers Knockouts is specifically targeting misled youth to assist them in controlling anger and respond to anger they face.

Sade Gilcrest: Sade Gilcrest has done great work with the YMCA, first as a youth leader for various programs and as a key player in the development of its Teen Center. She became a media trainer for their youth employment, assisting youth in learning video development, photography skills and early use of social media. Eventually, Sade, transitioned into the violence prevention program known as SNUG, helping the youth in Yonkers who had a history of violence. Her entrepreneurial spirit lead her to owning a photography business where she often brings the youth in to learn the trade. Sade has had an impact on many, however her passion is helping the youth in Yonkers, defending their rights and in supporting opportunities available to them, while putting herself aside for the sake of the youth.

Alonda Hassell: As a leader in the community, Alonda serves as co-pastor alongside her husband, Dr. James Hassell at the Kingdom Christian Cultural Center in Yonkers, NY. In addition to serving in these roles, Alonda Hassell is also an author and soon to be a certified life coach. With her sense of humor, down to earth personality, and her ability to share in a way that encourages self-reflection and change, women often leave her sessions revived and prepared to embrace their worth. Alonda provides inspirational, pragmatic and alluring talks on various subjects, with her focus on empowering women and helping them overcome various obstacles. She is a strong advocate for the empowerment of women, from various backgrounds learning and growing together. It’s clear that her passion for connecting and inspiring women sowed the seeds of the “Know Your Worth Movement” and “Tuesday Truth.” Through her workshops, brunches, and seminars she provides women with the knowledge, skills, and self-confidence necessary for boosting self-esteem, and social and economic development.

Celeste Hughes Celeste is one of six children born and raised in the City of Yonkers. Celeste served as a Den Leader and has been the Packs Cubmaster since 2004. During this time the pack doubled its size. She has been Troop 1 Crestwood’s Committee Chair since 2007. Celeste, with the assistance of others, has grown an extensive and dynamic Scouting program in Northeast Yonkers and at Annunciation Our Lady of Fatima Parish. She also spends non-scouting Saturdays serving the community at a Yonkers Food pantry. Celeste goes above and beyond, is a good listener and makes sure to get everyone involved.

““These women have demonstrated excellence, leadership and integrity within their community, serving as role models for other successful women,” stated Mayor Spano. “We are truly inspired by these women who continuously strive to make a difference amongst our residents.”

New Alzheimers Association Report Finds Half-Million Caregivers in NY



The Alzheimer’s Association 2023 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures report, (<https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/facts-figures>) finds the burden on New York Alzheimer’s and dementia caregivers is growing. The new report released on March 15 shows there were an estimated 546,000 dementia family caregivers across the state in 2022, providing 884 million hours of unpaid care valued at \$19.09 billion.

The new report also reveals that New York caregivers and those across the country face significant emotional, physical and health-related challenges as a result of caregiving as well, including:

Dementia caregivers report higher rates of chronic conditions, including stroke, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer compared to caregivers of people without dementia or non-caregivers. In New York state, 59 percent of caregivers reported at least one chronic condition.

The prevalence of depression is higher among dementia caregivers when compared to caregivers for other conditions. In New York, nearly one-quarter of caregivers reported depression.

Seventy-four percent of dementia caregivers report they are “somewhat concerned” to “very concerned” about maintaining their own health since becoming a caregiver. In New York, 12percent report frequent poor physical health.

Across the country, 59 percent of dementia caregivers report high to very high emotional stress due to caregiving and 38 percent report high to very high physical stress due to caregiving.

“This year’s Facts and Figures report underscores the considerable physical and emotional toll New York caregivers experience when caring for someone living with Alzheimer’s,” said David Sobel, executive director of the Alzheimer’s Association Hudson Valley Chapter. “It clearly underlines the need for caregiver support in New York and across the region. The Alzheimer’s Association offers free local support throughout our state including support groups and education, as well as the Association’s 24/7 Helpline. This support can be a lifeline to caregivers.”

The annual Facts and Figures report provides an in-depth look at the latest national and state-by-state statistics on Alzheimer’s disease prevalence, mortality, caregiving, dementia care workforce and costs of care. According to the report, there are 6.7 million people 65 and older living with Alzheimer’s dementia in the United States, including roughly 410,000 in New York state.

More on this report next week. Visit <https://www.alz.org/hudsonvalley> for more information.

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Congressman Bowman: Don't Ban Tik Tok



By Dan Murphy

Westchester Congressman Jamaal Bowman became one of the first members of congress to support Tik Tok, as Congress debates whether to ban the popular mobile App. The Chinese-owned platform has come under scrutiny and criticism for its widespread use by millions of young americans, some to their detriment. Others in Congress claim that Tik Tok is being used by the Chinese Communist Party, (CCP), as an information collection and data mining tool.

"Tik Tok has become a community for free speech for 150 Americans. That includes many of the content creators that I just met with. They talk to me about a sense of family. They talk to me about a sense of community. They talk to me about a place that is helpful to their mental health, and to their sense of belonging. They talk to me about finding a place where they can communicate with others like them.

"Tik Tok is used as an educational tool where you have professors and teachers providing content for students to engage with and learn from. That is what Tik Tok is for so many Americans," said Rep. Bowman, who pushed back on claims that Tik Tok is hurting Americans, or that it is involved in spying for the CCP.

"Why do we need to ban a platform that 150 million Americans now use?" There are many apps on our phones right now that are Chinese apps. And so the idea that, 'Oh, Tik Tok is the boogeyman' — it's just part of a political fearmongering that's happening."

Bowman added that the accusations made against Tik Tok are more of the same "fearmongering" coming from the Republican Party, who he says is "xenophobia around China."

"I haven't seen any hard evidence that TikTok is committing some form of espionage," he said. "What I've heard is speculation. And what I've heard is innuendo."

Rep. Bowman, who frequently posts on Tik Tok and has a large number of followers, said that Facebook is more of a security risk than Tik Tok. "When we look at American companies like Facebook looking the other way in 2016 when Russia colluded to impact our election — Facebook is a national security risk. We're not talking about a ban on Facebook."

Bowman also said that young democrats could take a Tik Tok ban under the Biden administration as a political danger for the President, as he prepares for a reelection run in 2024. "I think the more we learn, the more you'll see people stand up and defend Tik Tok. Let me say this: If information comes out that clearly shows Tik Tok as a problem, I will say I was wrong. I have no problem saying that. I just haven't seen that information as of yet.

The Race for Mayor of Yonkers, Again?

By Eric Wolf Schoen



Yes, it's that time every 4 years when Yonkersites select a new Mayor. Or re-elect the current Mayor. Or re-elect an old Mayor. As the candidates are out getting signatures as we speak, what better time to reflect on this year's race.

Add a wrinkle this year with lawyer Michael Sussman, Lawyer Extraordinaire de Yonkers taking the City Council to court for again for attempting to change the City Charter without a public vote as it has always been changed in the past. He wasn't asked to the third time but a group of active citizens asked him to challenge the Council's vote this year.

Changing the City Charter without a public vote or a vote by a Charter Revision Commission appointed by the Mayor is a bad precedent for Yonkers to get into. It takes away the checks and balances a Commission or public vote gives the citizens of Yonkers. Years ago the Council tried to do this and was fought successfully by a group of spirited citizens headed by Andrea Olson, a civic leader and Democratic activist. Andrea is probably turning over in her grave when she sees what a majority of this City Council has done.

What infuriates this writer is that current Mayor Mike Spano practically swore to me at a program at the Will Library that he wanted no part of a third term. He said to me, 'Eric, if there's anyone in Yonkers you of all people understand how difficult the job of Mayor is and how much it takes you away from your family. I would never want a third term!' Weeks later he signed legislation giving him a third term, and once again signed legislation giving him the opportunity to run for a fourth term this year.

Was Spano telling me a lie? Or just not telling me the truth? I know Spano a long time, and in Yonkers when you say one thing and do something else we call that a lie.

I'm not criticizing Spano because he has done a good job as Mayor. However, in the third largest city in New York State there are plenty of people in our 200,000+ population who could easily do the job of Mayor. What happened to business-people, lawyers like Al DeBello, Gerry Loehr, Terry Zaleski and Nick Wasicko. Business people like Angelo Martinelli and Dr. James O'Rourke. Law enforcement like Hank Spallone. I'm sure I have left someone out, but my point is there are plenty of qualified people to serve as Mayor of Yonkers.

The Democratic Party had a convention for the Mayoral nomination and Spano won unanimously. The convention could be considered a roll call for people who work for the Spano Administration. Councilwoman Corazon Pineda Isaac is challenging Spano's party nomination, and rest assured the Spano folk will challenge her nominating petitions. You see Spano has a successful history challenging Primary challengers, where Pineda Isaac is fairly new to the political 'game' process.

Pineda Isaac has done a decent job as Councilperson but again, here we go with the same people this time running for another City Hall position. She certainly is as qualified as anyone to be Mayor, but again I say that in the difficult times ahead after the pandemic monies are depleted we are going to need a leader who can read, understand and interpret a budget. Wasn't it the State Controller who criticized Yonkers for using the same auditor and budget advisor for over 20 years without going out to bid.

The chances of Pineda Isaac beating Spano in a primary are not good. Just about the same as Republican Anthony Merante beating him in the general election. But I give Pineda Isaac and Merante kudos for taking a shot at it!

And yes, among the items the City Council is voting on again this Tuesday (actually for the second go round this time as the firm's name was spelled incorrectly the first time) is the same auditor the city has used probably for 25 years at this point. Some says it's campaign donations that butter the bread. I say it's time we start examining Yonkers Government for change. Remember, don't complain your taxes are high if you don't take an active role in lowering them. And watch what I tell you. In a year or two, not this year you will be surprised by a big tax increase. Non-election year, of course!

Briefs: FLACO

As of March 28 Flaco the Owl from the Central Park Zoo has been on the loose for 54 days. Isn't it impressive that in New York he's been on the loose that long and no one has caught him or tried to change his location to a more secure and safer one. Only in New York kids, Only in New York!

Can you believe that New York Subway Stops will not be fully elevator accessible until 2055! How many people in WESTCHESTER are left by accessible Bee-Line buses at subway stations with no where to go. MTA (Money Taking Agency) what's up.

Politicians that support Book Banning are doing the same thing as Book Burning. This is how the Nazis started. Florida Governor DeSantos has been public about the desire to ban books. So has a 101 year old holocaust widow talking about book banning recently on television

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Yonkers "Bail Reform" Double Murderer from 2021 Commits Suicide in Jail



By Dan Murphy

On October 26, 2021, Luis Ramos was charged with Felony Arson in Wappinger Falls. Eight days later, he stabbed a mother and daughter in their Yonkers home, killing both. He was charged with two counts of murder, and was awaiting trial in the Westchester County jail when he committed suicide on March 17, 2023.

Elected officials in Yonkers, and members of the Yonkers Police Department questioned why Ramos was allowed to walk free after committing felony arson, and blamed it on the bail reforms passed in Albany.

The same debate over bail reform and criminal justice reform continues today.

Read our story below from 2021.

Suspect Luis Ramos Arrested, Released for Arson One Week Prior to Double Homicide

The issue of bail reform in New York State is back in the news and in the public debate after a double murder in Yonkers on Nov. 1. Two women were found dead in the Wakefield Park section of Yonkers, after concerned neighbors called the police.

On Monday, November 1st, 2021, at approximately 4:30 PM, members of the Yonkers Police Department responded to 68 Shipman Avenue to conduct a welfare check of the residents at the request of a concerned third party: a mother and daughter who live at location were not heard from in several days. Responding officers were unable to make contact with anyone inside the home and forced entry. Within the home officers discovered the lifeless bodies of two females, both having died from apparent multiple stab wounds.

Officers cordoned off the scene and initiated a criminal investigation. Detectives from the Major Case Squad and Crime Scene Unit responded to the scene and canvassed for subjects and witnesses, recovered surveillance video, and processed forensic evidence. Within hours Detectives identified a person of interest, and in collaboration with local, state, and Federal authorities, tracked him to the area of the Arizona, Mexico international border. Working together with prosecutors from the Westchester County District Attorney's Office, investigators developed information and probable cause to charge that person of interest with felony crimes.

Murder charges and an arrest warrant were filed against Luis Gabriel RAMOS, a 27-year-old resident of Saw Mill River Road this City. Investigation yielded that RAMOS was known to the victims and allegedly stabbed them to death the week-end prior, sometime between Friday evening and Saturday morning. RAMOS then fled the area to the southwest United States to allegedly escape capture; he was apprehended by the FBI Phoenix Fugitive Task Force in the unincorporated community of Salome, Arizona Tuesday evening without incident.

The victims were a mother and daughter, Isabella Triano, 70, and Trisha Miller, 38, both from Yonkers.

One week prior to allegedly stabbing both victims, on Oct. 26, Ramos was arrested in Wappingers Falls, for Felony Arson. He was released and 8 days later he was arrested by the YPD for murder. "We have made a case about the difficulties of bail reform. The suspect was arrested for a serious charge a C Felony and released, and a week later two women were murdered. We are working with our state legislators to try and make modifications to bail reform," said Mueller.

Mueller praised the work of the Detectives of the YPD who worked the case, and the cooperation from the Westchester DA's office, the US Attorney's office in the SDNY and the FBI. "This is such an amazing job by our Yonkers detectives, and our partners in the DA's office, the FBI, and the SDNY to all do this and come together in 24 hours.

Ramos' ex-girlfriend had contacted police the day after Ramos had borrowed a car from a friend and failed to return it. Ramos spoke to the ex-girlfriend and confessed to the murders, explaining that he confronted Tirano and Miller about money they owed him and after, stabbed them both to death.

Why Ramos set fire to a 1999 Toyota Camry on the Taconic State Parkway at 4:10 AM is a mystery. New York State Police responded to a call of a vehicle on fire in a wooded area just off the Taconic in the Town of LaGrange. Ramos was located a few miles away from the fire and charged with third-degree arson. He was immediately released and was scheduled to appear in court on Dec. 21.

The response to Ramos' release, and the problems with bail reform, have been loud. "Two people are dead now because of these laws, and they need to be severely, severely changed," says Keith Olson, president of the Yonkers Police Benevolent Association. "Luis Ramos was arrested for felony Arson less than a week before he allegedly stabbed a mother and her daughter to death in Yonkers. As a result of the new bail reform laws, he was released on his own recognizance when he committed a brutal double homicide. Luis Ramos may have killed these women but bail reform allowed him to do it."

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano Tweeted, "No bail for arson – you've got to be kidding me!"

Empire City Casino by MGM: A Decade of Support for the Yonkers St. Patrick's Day Parade



Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts Marchers in the 2023 Yonkers St. Patrick's Day Parade

Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts ("Empire City") has been a supporter of the Yonkers St. Patrick's Day parade for over a decade. Over the years, Empire City has provided critical resources such as free parking, staging, shuttle services to and from the parade, and more to support the success of this annual event. This year Empire City team members took to the streets and joined the procession along with over one hundred community organizations at the highly anticipated annual parade, which welcomes nearly 30,000 attendees each year. The Yonkers St. Patrick's Day Parade on McLean Avenue continues the tradition of honoring the heritage and contributions of the Irish community in Yonkers.

"MGM Resorts prides itself on its commitment to supporting the communities we serve and we are so honored to be able to continue to support this celebration that brings residents of this great City together," said Ed Domingo, Empire City's Senior Vice President and General Manager.

Ursula McIntyre, a longtime employee of Empire City, holds a leading role in organizing the parade as co-chair of the Yonkers St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee. McIntyre, born and raised in Ireland, has resided in Yonkers for more than forty years and is deeply engaged in the community. She has received many recognitions over the years for her philanthropic contributions, including being honored by the City of Yonkers as a Women of Distinction in 2022 for her staunch commitment to the community over the years, as well as her professional achievements. In 2018, the Yonkers Chamber of Commerce presented McIntyre with the Women of Excellence - Above and Beyond Award, and in 2014 the Aisling Irish Community Center recognized McIntyre for her contributions to the broader Irish-American community. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Westchester/Hudson Valley Chapter named McIntyre Women of Year in 2014 for her phenomenally successful fundraising efforts where she raised nearly \$120,000 for the organization.

"It's such an honor to work, live and be part of this incredible event in the City I call home," said Ursula McIntyre, Empire City's Assistant Director of Racing. "I am grateful to work for a company that truly recognizes the importance of giving back to our friends and neighbors and allows us to serve our in City both personally and professionally."

This year, Fr. Brendan Fitzgerald led the parade as the 66th Grand Marshal. The Parade Board recognized Fitzgerald's contribution to the greater St. Barnabas neighborhood in Yonkers and Woodlawn. Fitzgerald has demonstrated great leadership and involvement in the broader community.

For more information on Empire City, please visit www.empirecitycasino.com.

Letter to the Editor:

The George Santon Blues

I am in total agreement with Eric Schoen's May I See Your Resume column. How does a George Santos get to Congress? Bipartisan inaction.

The GOP should have done a better job vetting their nominee. And Democrats should have conducted bare minimum opposition research. How did they miss this glaring target?

As early as September 2022, a local Long Island weekly, run by a Republican, was reporting about Santos' wild fabrications. The political parties need to do better. Let the candidates battle it out in the actual election campaign.

The answer is not Westchester County's proposed legislative cure placing majority party appointed county bureaucrats and staff to review and judge whether or not a candidate can be on the ballot.

Who watches these watchers? It is a sure recipe to backfire with charges and counter-charges of incumbent protection, all at taxpayer expense.

John Vorperian, White Plains

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Joy and Brotherhood Music Performed in Hindi celebrating India's 75th Independence



Mr. Abner Bishamber Lall, told of seeing the Union Jack flag lowered and India's flag raised for the first time in 1947 when he was 15 years old

photo (c) Robert Kalfus

By Robert Kalfus

The Westchester Music of India (MOI) Group, founded as an all-volunteer group in 2014, has successfully performed to an Indo-American model for MOI combining Western style chorus singing with fusion of Indian and Western instruments.

This past Sunday was the ninth and a historic performance, performing with a live orchestra of Western instruments augmented with certain Indian instruments, billed as "A Celebration of India's 75 Years of Independence with Joy and Brotherhood", at the PepsiCo Theatre, SUNY at Purchase, NY. In 1947, India and South Asian nations found freedom from colonial rule, when Great Britain's Union Jack flag came down and India's flag was raised.

Jawaharlal Nehru was sworn in as India's first Prime Minister by Great Britain's Lord Mountbatten, on August 14, 1947. Later that night, Independence night, August 14, 1947, Prime Minister Nehru spoke at midnight, saying "At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom." The first morning of an independent India was August 15, 1947.

Mr. Abner Bishamber Lall, age 91, delivered a rousing and heartfelt speech to the hundreds attending the performance, remembering "I was a 15 year old boy, in 1947, when I saw the two flags of the Union Jacks descend, and then the twin flags of India's Independence raised for the first time."

In the summer of 1785, German composer Friedrich Schiller wrote the poem Ode to Joy as a celebration of the unity of all mankind. Ludwig van Beethoven chose it for the fourth movement of his Ninth Symphony, and Ode to Joy was first performed May 7, 1824 in Vienna. The Ode's theme of humans as free and rational beings and the sanctity of brotherhood and peace closely aligned with Beethoven's own beliefs. Symphony No. 9 was also the first time ever that human voice was included in a symphony.

Over the years, Beethoven's Ode to Joy has remained a protest anthem and a celebration of music and an expression for freedom of the human spirit. Protesters in Chile sang the piece during a demonstration against the Pinochet dictatorship. Chinese students broadcast it at Tiananmen Square. Leonard Bernstein, the former conductor of the New York Philharmonic, conducted it at a special concert in the German capitol on Christmas Day after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The Joy and Brotherhood program displayed twelve different songs, all sung in India's national language of Hindi, and after an intermission, Ludwig van Beethoven's Ode to Joy was featured its historic first world's premiere performance, sung in Hindi! and conducted by Avinash Lall, who worked for months with the assistance of David Baranowski, conductor of the Hudson Chorale, and Wil Dannenberg, assistant conductor, for preparing the chorus to sing in Hindi for this performance. MOI gratefully thanked the Hudson Chorale, the Westchester Choral Society, Hudson Valley Singers, Westchester Chordsmen, Christ Church Tarrytown, the Yonkers Philharmonic Orchestra, the India Center of Westchester, and the MOI Orchestra, all whom contributed to this magnificent performance.

MOI welcomes all singers and instrument players to contact the website www.WestchesterMOI.org and at info@WestchesterMOI.org, and can be viewed on Facebook.

Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

When will the D.A. Brag vs Trump escapade come to closure. Fish or cut bait. Either indict the man or put this saga to an end. We are all tired.

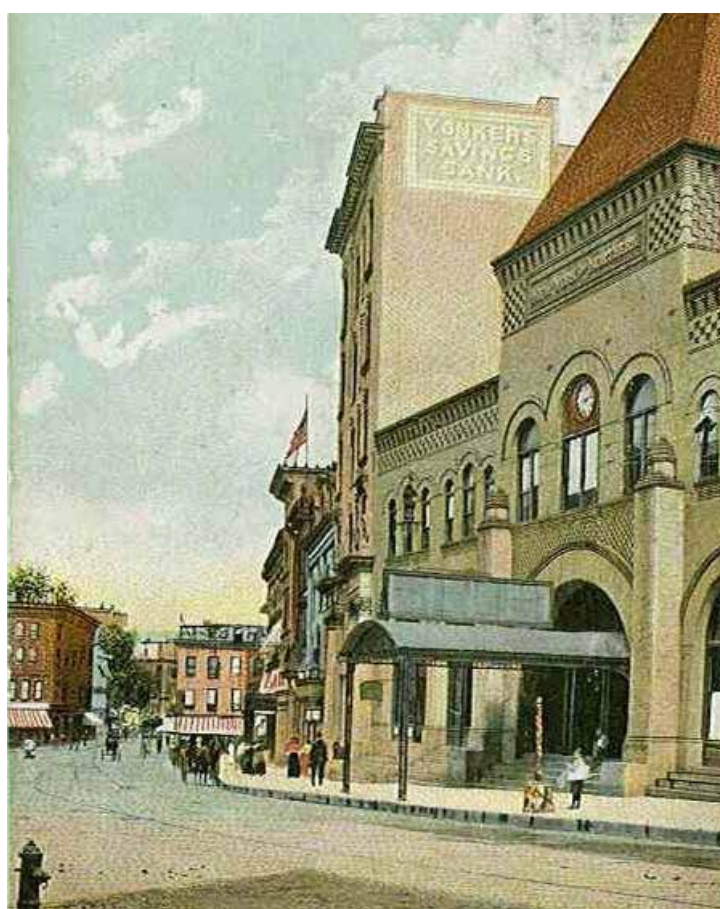
Ny lifeguards paid \$20 an hour and they still have a hard time finding candidates. Remember when a lifeguard job was a dream job?

Another year with no theatrical musical presentation in Yonkers Public School while most schools in Westchester offer semi professional productions reviewed and rated by the Journal News. It's hard to believe the district can't come up with \$25,000 per school so our students can enjoy, no pun intended, 'The Sound of Music.'

A Joyous Passover and Happy Easter to all of my readers and friends. My cousin Dr. Fred Meyerowitz, long time Yonkers dentist passed this year so sadly he will not be leading our service but we look forward to being with his family and friends to enjoy a delicious Passover meal.

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. Reach him at thistoosyonkers@aol.com.

On This Day in Yonkers History...



location of

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, April 3rd:

April 3, 1917: Yonkers based Company G, 10th Regiment Infantry, New York Army National Guard, was replaced! They had been guarding the Catskill Aqueduct ever since US diplomatic ties with Germany were broken. Not only were they dismissed from duty after experiencing some of the worst winter weather NY has seen in years, they also were dismissed from the Army and once again civilians!

This was the third time in the past twelve months they had been called to duty; the first was the strike at National Conduit and Cable Company in Hastings; the second was the Mexican conflict after Pancho Villa attacked the border town of Columbus, New Mexico. The third was the water system guard duty.

The men were not off the hook, however. Division Headquarters fully expected the entire NY National Guard would be called to duty when Congress declared war a few days later.

Tuesday, April 4th

April 4, 1915: Officials of the Putnam Railroad announced a new timetable for the Getty Square Branch because of the high demand for increased service on the line.

April 4, 1945: With few exceptions, the hostesses at the YWCA USO went crazy for a handsome male... a wooly, brown and white fox terrier! Two sailors came to the dance after buying the dog and left it with Carolyn Pursche at the front desk. The young furry lad became upset and wanted more company, so Carolyn took him into the dance, where he was a huge hit with all the ladies! Because the puppy was such a sensation, the sailors named him after the favorite dance that evening. Yes, he was named "Hokey Pokey!"

Wednesday, April 5th

April 5, 1923: Major Samuel Hubbard, Jr. of Park Avenue, who served with the American Expeditionary Forces in France during the World War, received the Distinguished Service Medal at a ceremony at Governor's Island.

April 5, 1953: The Yonkers Railroad Company gave free transportation to people going to Easter Sunday services; all they had to do is tell the driver they were going to church! Approximately 4,000 people took advantage of the free rides, with the highest number of riders on the #1 Warburton route and the #6 Tuckahoe Road route.

Thursday, April 6th

April 6, 1917: Arthur D. Lawrence, a former Yonkers Chamber of Commerce Real Estate Board Chairman, offered Yonkers Mayor James Lennon the use of every plot of unimproved land he owned in Yonkers, including a 70-acre plot, to use for agricultural purposes or other needed purposes, free of charge. President Wilson had signed Congress' war resolution at 3 am that morning.

April 6, 1926: After being "rapped" by Dan Nolan at the Yonkers Naval Militia's annual banquet for hiring "outside people," Mayor William Walsh responded. He stated Commissioner Van Keuren also was on trial in the "undue influence" trial of Captain Charles O'Mara. All Walsh wanted was for people to give his administration "a square deal."

Friday, April 7th

April 7, 1926: Patrolman David Whalen and Third Precinct Desk Officer Lieutenant William Higgins' testimonies on the arrest of a beer truck driver was believed to have helped defendant Captain Charles O'Mara.

Public Safety Commissioner Van Keuren accused O'Mara of trying to use influence on behalf of prisoner Isadore Finkel of Lawrence Street; he alleged the captain went to his (Van Keuren's) home on Purser Place to ask the prisoner be "let off easy" after Finkel was arrested. Whalen testified O'Mara told him to park the truck in the Precinct garage and to have Higgins put a special lock on the garage door. The Lieutenant corroborated his statements during his testimony.

Van Keuren's daughter's testimony corroborated her father's version of events. She swore she overheard the conversation between her father and O'Mara, stating the captain tried to get her dad to release the beer runner.

Former Deputy Commissioner Bernard Reardon had resigned his position weeks earlier because he didn't want anything to do with "the cruel and inhuman machine the commissioner was preparing for YPD." Reardon appeared for the defense.

Saturday, April 8th

April 8, 1936: Because fisticuffs broke out on the strike line at Hudson Dress Company at 226 South Broadway, Yonkers Police arrested two men involved in a

continued on pg 6-

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New York Working Families Party Announces Endorsements in Yonkers

The New York Working Families Party today announced their endorsements in Yonkers and New Rochelle. “We’re very proud to endorse a slate of candidates in Yonker who will work to make our region more affordable for working families,” said Sochie Nnaemeka, Director of the New York Working Families Party. “With housing becoming more and more expensive, we need leadership that will center everyday people in housing and development decisions.”

“Our chapter is excited to support Corazón Pineda-Isaac for Mayor of Yonkers,” said Peter Bernstein, Chair of the Westchester-Putnam Chapter of the New York Working Families Party. “As a City Councilmember, Corazón has been a champion for quality public schools, living wage jobs, and fair and affordable housing for families. We look forward to working with Corazón as Mayor to build a Yonkers that is safe, healthy, and affordable for everyone.”

Yonkers Endorsements:

- Corazón Pineda-Isaac, Mayor of Yonkers
- Shatika Parker, City Council District 1
- Hector Santiago, City Council District 1
- David Tubiolo, County Board of Legislators District 14
- Ruth Walter, County Board of Legislators District 15
- Chris Johnson, County Board of Legislators District 16
- Jose Alvarado, County Board of Legislators District 17

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Miscellaneous

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Grid Rewards, continued from pg 1-

operating in the city for decades without any modern pollution control equipment. Some plants run on highly polluting fuels like kerosene or oil, at least part of the time.

“Since launching the first demand-response offering in Westchester three years ago, Sustainable Westchester and Logical Buildings have seen highly impactful results driven by County residents, businesses and municipalities using GridRewards,” said Jim Kuster, Interim Executive Director at Sustainable Westchester.

“The growth in participants committed to engaging with the platform and taking action when prompted validates our shared goal of reducing carbon emissions and also providing valuable grid services.”

On April 12, at 12:00 - Join the New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce and Nonprofit Westchester for a 30 minute webinar about Sustainable Westchester’s GridRewards, a demand response tool that can pay your business or nonprofit to reduce electricity usage at key times. Learn how to enroll your buildings and show the community your business/nonprofit is taking action on Earth Day! Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/GridRewards>

For more information visit Gridrewards.com, or sustainablewestchester.org/gridrewards.

Bowman Tik Tok, continued from pg 1-

Bowman also said that young democrats could take a Tik Tok ban under the Biden administration as a political danger for the President, as he prepares for a reelection run in 2024. “I think the more we learn, the more you’ll see people stand up and defend TikTok. Let me say this: If information comes out that clearly shows TikTok as a problem, I will say I was wrong. I have no problem saying that. I just haven’t seen that information as of yet.

Yonkers Rising

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Pineda-Isaac, continued from pg 1-

es like mental health, intervention strategies like violence interrupters, affordable housing, education, after school programs, good jobs and community centers. These investments would make a major impact on the lives of our residents and keep us safer in the process.

Imagine a child who turned six when the Mayor first took office. That child grew up without adequate access to after school programs, sports and art. Her family may have had a hard time finding stable housing. And she may have endured trauma with no tools to manage it because there is little access to mental health services in the school or community. Today that child is almost 18 years old and has missed out on so many opportunities to enrich her life because Mike Spano has done nothing for her.

The police department plays a critical role, to be sure. I support providing them the tools they need to keep our communities and themselves safe, whether its financial resources, personnel, training or equipment. We also need to take a hard look at the department’s structure. Under the current Mayor, Yonkers does not have a dedicated domestic violence unit, gang unit or burglary unit. Police often find themselves bogged down by paperwork, which takes them away from time in the field where they could be building relationships and keeping the community safe. Restructuring the department by adding new dedicated units will help the police target their efforts more effectively.

At the same time, police officers are and should be held to a higher standard. The police community relationship works best when there is trust, and the onus to create that trust lies with the department and the officers themselves. It happens by building relationships, recruiting from within the community and making sure the officers look like and speak the language of the people and understand the perspectives of the communities they serve. The Mayor does not understand this dynamic.

People need to feel safe if Yonkers is going to reach its true potential. I agree with the Mayor that crime is one of the most important issues in our City, but I disagree on his approach. His policies may play well to his base, but they are out of touch with the reality that so many people of Yonkers face. We need a long-term plan and real investment in the community, not empty rhetoric and a play-book from half a century ago.

The writer is a Yonkers City Councilmember and Democratic Candidate for Mayor.

theft from 95-year old continued from pg 1-

authorities immediately. Reinforcing what we know in OCFS, the vast majority of human services professionals approach their work with the utmost care and compassion.”

Chenault became the elderly woman’s caseworker in 2017. As the woman’s physical and mental health declined, Chenault was responsible for arranging home health aides from a third-party provider to provide care. Chenault went on medical leave in March 2022, and the new caseworker at APS assigned to the elderly woman noticed there had been a substantial drop in her assets in just a matter of months. Further investigation revealed that the woman’s bank accounts and retirement accounts were entirely depleted and as a result, she could no longer afford home health care. A forensic audit of her bank accounts identified a pattern of suspicious withdrawals and transfers, and the use of her ATM card at times when she was homebound. In total, Chenault is alleged to have stolen more than \$300,000 from the woman over a five-year period.

A Westchester County Grand Jury indicted Chenault on charges of Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, Identity Theft in the First Degree, and Official Misconduct.

Westchester County Legislator James Nolan called for an investigation by the Board’s Committee on Human Services, Human Rights and Equity of the practices of the Department of Social Services relating to the protection of the assets of adults under the care of its Adult Protective Services division.

“Last Friday’s shocking allegations by the Attorney General’s office revealing how a Westchester County caseworker looted \$300,000 from the assets of a 90-year Yonkers woman with dementia over the course of five years demands an explanation from the Commissioner of Social Services and the managers in charge,” Nolan said. “Above all, the public needs to be assured that measures have been put in place since the fraud was discovered in 2022 to ensure this happens to no one else.”

“A simple solution is to mandate that caseloads rotate yearly,” Nolan continued. “This fraud was discovered by a co-worker but only after five years. An annual rotation of cases within APS would prevent fraud on such a massive scale.”

Yonkers History continued from pg 5-

“hand-to-hand tussle” in the middle of the street in front of the plant! Louis Reiff, Westchester Local 143 International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union, attended a conference the day before with Chief Quirk, accused the dress company of hiring thugs to threaten strikers, and charged Hudson Dress President Anthony Vaccaro, also at the conference, threatened to accuse the women of taking relief illegally while employed by him if they joined the strike. Lawyer Irvin Klein and other union organizers backed Reiff’s story. Vaccaro made no comment

Sunday, April 9th

April 9, 1943: Arthur Doran, President of the Yonkers Lawyers Association (YLA), appointed Anthony Cerrato, Erwin Magenheim and Supervisor Adolf Grossman to a special committee to figure out how Yonkers attorneys could assist local industries in the war effort. The trio would contact Yonkers war plants to determine both manpower needs and how the association could help promote the war effort.

Albert Kelly, Principal of our Yonkers Defense School, told the gathering several Westchester lawyers worked shifts at a area war plants, mentioning Eastern Aircraft and Sonotone Corporation plants.

April 9, 1953: After a series of small fires, vandalism, and health hazards started popping up, YPD began making 24-7 tours of the Veterans’ Housing Project in the former Yonkers High School building on South Broadway, across Nepperhan Avenue from the Carnegie Library.

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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Let's Not Weaponize Gas Stoves and the Grid Against Climate Action

*A Ford F-150 EV Truck could power a home
for a couple of days in case of a power outage*



OP-ED By Anshul Gupta

What's the rapidly growing trend that Germany, Washington State, New York City, Ithaca, Montreal, and now the City of Beacon have joined?

In all these places, new homes and small buildings will stop installing most appliances fueled by polluting methane gas by year-end, extending the practice to larger buildings within three years or less.

Energy, climate, and building experts from municipalities to states to nations are all reaching the same conclusion that the most cost-effective and energy-efficient way to tame the health- and climate-destroying pollution from burning fuels in buildings and vehicles is to power them with electricity. Electric vehicles and heat pumps use only a fraction of the energy of their fuel-based counterparts and will see their environmental footprint continue to decline as the electric grid transitions to cleaner generation.

Like most climate solutions, eliminating combustion also comes with tremendous public health benefits due to reduced pollution. New York currently leads the nation in premature deaths from pollution caused by burning fossil-fuels in buildings that disproportionately impacts people with lower incomes, people of color, pregnant women, children, and older adults.

With the US becoming the world's largest exporter of liquified natural gas, we now see both gas and gasoline prices soar in response to geopolitical disturbances. EV sales are already booming because owners prefer their handling, fuel efficiency, and low maintenance. Many builders and home buyers are choosing all-electric buildings that are superior in comfort, health, affordability, and emissions.

None of these benefits have prevented the fossil-fuel industry and its allies from attempting to sow fear, uncertainty, and doubt about our clean energy future with culture wars over gas stoves and scaremongering over grid capacity and reliability.

Research highlighting the health risks from gas stoves has been accumulating for decades. American Medical Association, American Lung Association, NYS Public Health Association, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, and all NYS chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics deem gas stoves a health hazard, particularly as asthma triggers for children. A recent public statement by a US Consumer Product Safety Commissioner just served to bring a long standing issue into limelight that some saw as an opportunity to help spark an anti-electrification backlash.

New York's climate scoping plan recommends a prohibition on new gas stove installations starting in 2035. The provocateurs of the controversy seem to be missing the point that by next decade, New Yorkers may want a gas stove as badly as they want lead paint or asbestos in their homes today. According to the Energy Information Administration, more than a quarter of US homes are already all-electric and a majority of Americans do not cook on gas.

Major utilities like Con Edison support electrification of our transportation and buildings and are confident in the electricity generation, transmission, and distribution systems to keep pace with the demand. Our electric grid is stressed in the summer while the heat pumps add to the winter electricity demand. Programs like SmartCharge help steer EV owners' charging behavior towards off-peak hours.

Cold-climate heat pumps and EVs would be just fine in upstate New York; much-colder Montreal's ban on fossil fuels in new construction starts next year, and 80% of new cars sold in Norway are now 100% electric. By the time the climate law's mandates fully take effect in the middle of the next decade, these technologies will be much cheaper and more versatile with advances in microgrids and vehicle-to-grid and vehicle-to-vehicle charging.

Even fossil-fueled heating doesn't work during power failures without expensive generators. Electrification of our homes and vehicles actually has the potential to improve safety. Just like we stock up on groceries before storms, we'll be able to stock up on electrons. A fully charged Ford F-150 Lighting can power basic cooking and heating equipment for 2-3 days in an emergency. Anyway, the climate plan doesn't prohibit backup generators or pellet stoves.

On the road, a half-charged battery of a stranded EV can run the seat warmers for a couple of days – something that will deplete a conventional vehicle's fuel in hours even if a snow-covered tailpipe doesn't turn it into a lethal gas chamber first.

During the holiday blizzard in the Buffalo area, four people died in gasoline powered cars, at least 11 in their homes with fossil-fueled heating that doesn't work in power outages, and one from carbon monoxide poisoning. Generators couldn't keep up with blowing and drifting snow. A clinic was damaged from a catastrophic failure of their gas heating system. During the same cold snap, and also amid the terrible 2021 Texas winter storm, widespread gas network failures shut down power plants and caused millions of downstate customers to receive emergency warnings to curtail heating. Hundreds of residents of the New York City Housing Authority are without gas, some for weeks and months, due to dangerous leaks.

While power failures may not warrant delaying electrification, they indeed are a cause for serious concern. No amount of gas can help with electrically powered medical equipment, for instance. The frequency and duration of storm-related outages have been creeping up due to the worsening climate crisis and lackadaisical maintenance of our power distribution infrastructure. Inadequate winterization of substations caused widespread power outages in the Buffalo area during the historic Christmas blizzard. Our aging grid needs significant investments regardless of our climate goals.

Similarly, electrification isn't just about the climate; it's also about doing more with less, more cleanly, more healthfully, and more reliably. Instead of assailing this beautiful future with disinformation and divisiveness, let's use beneficial electrification as a reason to unite for cleaner, safer and healthier energy and demand a robust, world-class electric grid.

Westchester resident Anshul Gupta is a steering committee member of the NYS chapters coalition of the Climate Reality Project.

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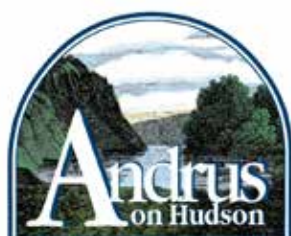


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