**Peekskill Opens Strong in Win over Mahopac...**

By Rick Pezzullo

The Democratic majority on the Peekskill Common Council approved a 2016 city budget on December 1 with a 3.6% tax increase, less than three hours before the state deadline.

It took three tries for the council to pass the $37.2 million spending plan after it voted last Monday to exceed the state imposed tax levy cap of .74%. However, Mayor Frank Catalina and Republican councilmen Vincent Vesce and Joe Torres did not participate in the final budget vote last Tuesday after an emergency meeting was called by Deputy Mayor Drew Claxton after 5 p.m.

The special meeting became necessary after the city’s Deputy Corporation Counsel Melissa Ferraro discovered the previous night’s vote was deficient based on an improper motion made by Councilman Darren Rigger.

Notice of the emergency meeting was posted at approximately 7 p.m. by Ferraro on Facebook, a procedure Catalina claimed was not in compliance with the City Charter.

“Neither I nor councilmen Torres or Vesce were contacted by any two other council members, in writing, by phone nor in person, so the provisions of the City Charter and Code have not been complied with,” Catalina stated in the City Hall chambers last Tuesday from the audience microphone before walking out.

Continued on page 2

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**11th Hour 2016 Peekskill Budget Raises Taxes 3.6%**

By Rick Pezzullo

By Rick Pezzullo

Jared Heller, a Somers High School freshman, knows all too well about living with arthritis.

Heller, 14, was diagnosed with juvenile idiopathic arthritis when he was three years old. He took oral medications for three years, but when they proved to be ineffective, he was forced to receive weekly injections, which he still receives today.

Nationwide, more than 50 million adults and 300,000 children suffer from arthritis, and Heller is determined to spread the word about the leading cause of disability. Two years ago, he learned about the Arthritis Foundation and the programs they offer to families. He and his family participated in the 2013 Jingle Ball Run/Walk for Arthritis at Purchase College.

Last year, for his Bar Mitzvah project, Heller raised enough money for six kids to attend Camp JRA, one of the Arthritis Foundation’s summer camps for children with juvenile arthritis.

For his efforts, Heller was named the 2015 Jingle Bell Run Youth Honoree for the annual run/walk which will take place on Saturday, December 12 at 10 a.m. at Purchase College.

“My purpose is to raise awareness that arthritis doesn’t only affect adults. Kids get arthritis, too,” he stated.

Fifty-one people have joined with Heller be part of his team, Jared’s Jinglers, which has already exceeded its goal of $10,000 by raising $10,281 to date. Overall, more than $123,000 has been pledged for the run/walk.

Anyone who plans on attending the event is asked to wear a holiday themed costume and tie jingle bells to their shoelaces. To make a donation to Jared’s Jinglers or for more information, visit www.arthritis.org/new-york.

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**Somers High Freshman Helps Raise Awareness for Arthritis**

By Rick Pezzullo

By Rick Pezzullo

Jared Heller (second to right) with his parents and siblings.

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**An Electric Evening in Yorktown**

The Yorktown High School Marching Band was part of the festivities at the 4th Annual Holiday Electric Lights Parade in downtown Yorktown Saturday. For more photos, see page 9.

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**Shop Local for the Holidays...**

Pages 13-15
"I do not deem Facebook as an official means of notification of the public of important business of this city," he said. "In discussing this matter with the city’s corporation counsel, there is no question the requirements of the Charter and City Code have not been complied with, thereby making this meeting lawful, valid and binding. I have concluded that this meeting has not been called pursuant to the statutory authority contained in the Charter and constitutes an illegal meeting of the Common Council."

Nonetheless, Claxton, Rigger and council members Vivian McKenzie and Kathy Talbot continued with the meeting and approved a budget that will cost the average single-family homeowner in the city about $77 more in taxes next year.

If the vote did not occur, City Manager Richard Leins’ tentative budget that carried a 5.9% tax increase would have gone into effect by default, which would have cost residents another $50 next year.

"It’s a balanced budget," Leins said later in the week. "It’s not the end of the process. It’s definitely a step in the right direction."

Leins said the council was able to slash the tax increase by not funding a laborer he had proposed for the waterfront and making some "adjustments" in some revenue and expense lines.

The council did go along with Leins’ recommendation to pay its current outstanding balance of $4,278,000 to the New York State Pension system, instead of only its deferred obligation of $360,000 under a previously agreed upon repayment schedule.

Last Monday, in a 5-2 vote, the council voted to exceed the tax cap, with only McKenzie and Talbot opposing. The next vote on the budget, with a 3.59% tax increase, then failed 5-2, with only Claxton and Rigger supporting it.

Vesce contended with only a 3.59% tax hike Peekskill would be starting off with a $1.2 million deficit in 2016, which would likely lead to a double-digit tax increase in 2017.

"You will put the city in fiscal stress," Vesce said. "The budget is not fiscally sound."

Catalina argued by the vote on the budget failing, the city automatically would operate next year under Leins’ proposed budget, which Vesce said would only start the city with a $500,000 deficit.

"You’re playing politics Mr. Mayor," Claxton replied.

McKenzie defended the Democratic majority’s actions, saying, "This was done to protect our taxpayers to make sure we had a budget in place. I stand by this budget as being the best for the City of Peekskill."
Residents Lobby Yorktown to Utilize $1.5M from Pipeline

By Rick Pezzullo

Seven months ago, the Town of Yorktown reached an agreement with Spectra Energy and Algonquin Gas Transmission, LLC for the controversial expansion of the gas transmission pipeline project.

In a 3-2 vote, the Yorktown Town Board allowed access and utilization of 7.5 acres of temporary workplace in Sylvan Glen Park Preserve and Granite Knolls Park West on Stony Street for 11 months and post-construction monitoring for five years, in exchange for $1.5 million plus approximately $600,000 in public improvements at Junior Lake.

Yorktown has received the $1.5 million and now town officials and residents are speaking up on how the funds should be utilized.

During last week’s Town Board meeting, several residents in the Huntersville section of town called on the board to allocate a portion of the funds to pave Hunterbrook, Baptist Church and Old Logging roads, which they maintained had been neglected for years.

Another resident, Jane Daniels, made a pitch to use the $1.5 million for park improvements throughout the town.

Councilwoman Susan Siegel, who in May joined with Councilman Vishnu Patel to oppose the deal with Spectra and Algonquin, agreed last week the $1.5 million should be dedicated to special projects instead of placed in the town’s general fund. She said seven miles of roadway could be paved by just using half of the Spectra loot.

“The Spectra money should be used for infrastructure and not hoarded,” Siegel said. “We can hoard it in our fund balance and lower our taxes, but then it’s gone, and we have nothing to show for it.”

Supervisor Michael Grace agreed more funding was needed for paving projects and other infrastructure improvements but stressed it was important to balance making improvements and keeping property taxes under control.

“There is an enormous amount of infrastructure improvements that need to be done. We have to look at non-real estate tax revenue to do that,” he said. “There’s (also) bonding you can do.”

Councilman Greg Bernard said he was in favor of increasing funding for highway paving.

“Everybody wants a piece of the pie,” he said. “We will try to do it as less political as possible. Come January I promise there will be a whole new dynamic on this board.”

With Siegel losing her bid for a full four-year term in the November election and Ed Lachterman prevailing, the Republicans will hold a 4-1 edge on the Town Board.

A public hearing on the 2016 budget will be held tonight (Tuesday, December 8) at 6 p.m. at Yorktown Town Hall.

PHOTO BY DANIEL LEFKOWITZ

A Chanukah menorah lighting ceremony was held at DeVito Field in Yorktown.
Mixed Use Development Proposed in Baldwin Place

By Neal Rentz

A local developer is proposing a mixed use development and infrastructure improvements in the Baldwin Place section of Somers.

At the December 3 Somers Town Board work session, Ken Kearney, founder and president of the Mahopac-based The Kearney Realty & Development Group, unveiled his Crossroads at Baldwin Place project.

The development would be located on the site of the National Golfworx driving range. Kearney told the town board he had not yet purchased the property.

Kearney is proposing a roughly 25,000-square-foot commercial office building. He is also seeking to construct three residential buildings, totaling about 60,000 square feet. The first building would consist of 24, one-bedroom units of senior housing; the second building would contain 28 one-bedroom units of senior housing; and the third building would consist of 12 two- and three-bedroom units, with eight of the units to be set aside for affordable housing, which Kearny said could become part of the county’s housing settlement with HUD or for the town to use toward its requirements under the Angle Fly Preserve agreement.

The senior housing is intended for those 55 and older, said Rich Williams, an engineer employed by Kearney. The development would have a “village like” feel, Kearney said.

Kearney is also proposing a series of infrastructure improvements to the Baldwin Place area, including construction of about 4,000 feet of sidewalks along Route 6 to connect the northern and southern portions of the road, two pedestrian crosswalks on the road, and the extension of the current Westchester County sewer line in area to Mahopac Avenue. The infrastructure improvements would be helpful to not only his development, but would encourage future commercial development in Baldwin Place, Kearney said.

Town Board members expressed support for Kearny’s concept. “We’ve seen what you’ve done for Somers” and Kearney’s project would be positive for the town, Councilman Thomas Garrity Jr. said.

Supervisor Rick Morrissey added he was “very impressed” with the project.

The project would need a zoning text change from the town board, planning board approval and approvals from Westchester County.

Police Emergency Training Discussed in Somers after Massacre

By Neal Rentz

One night after the San Bernardino, CA massacre that claimed the lives of 14 people, Somers town officials explained how its police are trained to deal with such emergencies as mass killings.

The question came during a public hearing on next year’s proposed town budget. Somers Supervisor Rick Morrissey is proposing an $8.76 million 2016 general fund budget that includes no major program cuts or additions and meets the state-mandated property tax cap.

The proposed tax rate increase is 2.7 percent and the tax levy hike is 2.48 percent.

During last week’s public hearing, resident Michael Blum asked if next year’s town budget includes spending on training for Somers police to prepare them to respond to situations such as the mass killings in California.

Councilman Thomas Garrity Jr. said Somers police receive training on how to deal with major emergencies on an annual basis. Supervisor Rick Morrissey explained police officers from around the area recently received training from the Westchester County Department of Public Safety recently at Lakeland High School. Part of the training drills local police received is how to handle lockdowns at schools for such potential emergencies as shootings.

In the event of a major emergency, local police would first respond to the scene and then receive backup, Morrissey said.

Garrity said most of the Somers police are retired New York City officers who are trained in how to respond to major emergencies.

Another resident, Chris Zaberto, said he had questions about spending proposed for the fire department next year. Garrity said, “We have no control over the budget” of the fire department.

Morrissey said the fire department has its commissioners that determine the department’s annual budget and the commissioners are elected by town residents.

Though the state tax cap for next year is .7 percent, town Director of Finance Robert Kehoe said last month the tax hike would be in line with the tax cap because the state provides a Tax Base Growth Factor for each municipality and that allows communities like Somers to go above the .7 percent increase without breaking the cap.

The town board voted unanimously to close the public hearing. The board is slated to approve next year’s spending plan when it meets on December 10.
Gun Violence to host The Interfaith Vigil Foundation and Faiths United to Prevent of Chappaqua is joining the Newtown in Newtown but throughout the nation. site of remembering not only those lost United States this week that will be the of hundreds of venues throughout the area where homeowners can expect refunds if certain conditions are met.

Vigil to End Gun Violence Scheduled Sunday in Area Church

By Martin Wilbur
The tragedy of losing 20 children and six faculty members at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. on Dec. 14, 2012, was the kind of seminal moment where many people remember where they were when they first heard the news.

In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, there were many calls for change but nearly three years later the epidemic of losing Americans to gun violence continues almost unabated.

On Sunday, a local church will be one of hundreds of venues throughout the United States this week that will be the site of remembering not only those lost in Newtown but throughout the nation.

The First Congregational Church of Chappaqua is joining the Newtown Foundation and Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence to host The Interfaith Vigil for Victims of Gun Violence this Sunday, Dec. 13 at 4 p.m. The church has invited the entire community for a roughly hour-long service that will feature prayers, music and remarks from those affected by gun violence, said Rev. Dr. Martha Jacobs, the church’s senior minister.

She said as deaths across the United States continue to mount because of firearms, people are desperately searching for answers and hope.

“It’s something that has to be addressed because across the United States over 90,000 people have been killed by gun violence over the last three years,” Jacobs said. “Certainly, it impacts certain communities disproportionately and affects people because many victims are innocent bystanders.”

Jacobs said that clergy and congregations from surrounding areas that include a variety of faiths and denominations are scheduled to participate.

She stressed that the vigil is not a rally for gun control. The program’s intent is to remember and honor the victims of those whose lives were cut short rather than encouraging political speeches, Jacobs said.

More than 350 vigils will be held throughout the United States leading up to next Monday’s anniversary of the Sandy Hook shooting, said Po Murray, chairwoman of the Newtown Action Alliance. There will also be vigils in Mexico and Beijing, China, she said.

The goal of the alliance, a grassroots organization formed in Newtown shortly after the shooting, is to reverse the escalating gun violence that kills an average of 30,000 people a year across the U.S., she said.

“Our hearts are warmed that so many people want to support the victims of gun violence,” Murray said.

Several other vigils in Westchester have been organized, according to the Newtown Action Alliance, including at the Chatterton Hill Church United Church of Christ in White Plains and the Scarsdale Congregational Church.

The First Congregational Church of Chappaqua is located at 210 Orchard Ridge Rd.

Homeowners to Receive Property School Tax Refunds

By Rick Pezzullo
Qualifying homeowners in area school districts will be receiving a refund check from New York State over the next few months.

This is the second of a three-year program for a Property Tax Freeze Credit where homeowners are reimbursed for increases in local property taxes on their

To receive the refund, property owners must receive the STAR property tax exemption, the property must be a primary residence and the total household income must be $500,000 or less.

Homeowners do not have to apply for the refund as state officials will determine who is eligible.
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Obituaries

Brett Alcaro

Brett Guarneri Alcaro, a former farmer at Hilltop Hanover Farm in Yorktown Heights, died December 2 at his home in Monmouth Beach, New Jersey after a courageous battle with cancer. He was 37.

He was born in Missoula, Montana and lived most of his life in New Jersey. He was a graduate of Christian Brothers Academy and the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He was also a licensed commercial pilot. He worked side-by-side with his family at Rumson Market.

His true passion was the outdoors and he found his calling as an organic farmer, working on farms in Maine, New York and New Jersey. Mr. Alcaro was motivated to make the land a better place for his family, community and future generations. His legacy will be preserved by the impact he has had on many lives.

He is survived by his lifelong partner, Germaine Murray Alcaro, his two-year-old son Oliver, and his expected child due this month. He is also survived by his loving parents, William and Patricia Alcaro and Anthony Guarneri; his sister, Jaime and brother-in-law Dan McKeever; his mother-in-law Laura Murray; Nana Rose; sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law Keara and Christopher Welteme and Eamon and Stephanie Murray. He was a devoted and loving uncle to many nieces and nephews and is also survived by loving aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Zita V. Losey

Zita V. Losey, formerly of Peekskill/Cortlandt and Yonkers, died November 30. She was 78.

She is survived by her husband, William A. Losey, Jr.; children, Zita Kurtzman-Yennie (Bill), Jennifer Polk (David), William Lossey III (Tori), and Andrew Losey (Joan); grandchildren, Tyler, Matthew, Megan, Daniel, Connor, Kyle, Hannah and Andrew; former son-in-law, Gary Kurtzman; and foster son, Joseph Crothers.

Angelo “Tank” Milano

Angelo “Tank” Milano, a resident of Cortlandt, died December 1. He was 80.

He was born May 12, 1935 in Croton to Angelo and Marcella (Corea) Milano. He is survived by his wife and soul mate Carole of 42 years, children Angelo "Jay-R" and wife Heather, Nicholas Caputo and wife Maria, Janine Caputo and husband Thomas, Marcella "Marcie" Cascino and husband Peter. "Poppi" had 11 adoring grandchildren: Matthew, Alexandre, Nancy, Joseph, Sal, Christina, Dylan, Nicholas, Angelo and Spencer.

Mr. Milano, who was affectionately known as "Uncle Tank," has many beloved nieces and nephews. He owned and operated A. Milano & Sons Trucking, with his brothers Louis, who predeceased him, and Nicholas "Chubbby," who survives. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army and served in Germany. He was a long-time Operating Engineer and member of Local 137. He co-founded and ran for several years the St. Augustine's Italian Festival. He was a devoted family man and friend, who loved life and lived it to the fullest. To know him was to love him.

Robert Tighe, Sr.

Robert A. Tighe, Sr., a resident of Somers, was born November 29. He was 93.

Mr. Tighe was born on October 20, 1922 to Edward A. and Florence (Forbach) Tighe, Sr. in New York City. During World War II, he proudly served our Country with the US Marines Corps, 4th Division, serving on Iwo Jima, Saipan, and Tinian.

On May 23, 1948, he married the love of his life Marion Burghardt in Yonkers. Mr. Tighe owned and operated Tighe Floor Service in Somers. He is survived by his four loving children, Teresa (William D. Sr.) Galligan, Jacky Tighe and David Gardner, Robin (Michael) Wynne and Robert A. (Maureen), Tighe, Jr., seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his beloved wife Marion.

Jaquelyn Ringer

Jaquelyn "Jackie" Hope Ringer, a resident of Granite Springs, died November 30. She was 72.

She worked as an elementary school teacher in Ithaca, N.Y. and as a substitute teacher and librarian in the Somers School District. She was born in 1943 in Ithaca, N.Y. to James Stewart and Ruth Ellis Hope. She graduated from Ithaca High School in 1961 and earned a Bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education from Ohio University in 1964. In 1965 she married James M. Ringer at St. Paul’s Methodist Church in Ithaca.

She became a P.E.O. sister in 1967, was a dedicated member of Chapter K, Yorktown Heights, served as president of New York State Chapter for 1997 and 1998 and is a lifetime member of the International Chapter of the P.E.O. Sisterhood.

She was a devoted member of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Granite Springs. She is survived by her husband James M. Ringer of Granite Springs; her daughter Dr. Carolyn Hope Ringer Lepre, son-in-law Todd Robert Lepre, granddaughters Sarah Hope and Ainsley Elizabeth of Pleasant Valley, NY; her son James Matthew Ringer, daughter-in-law Christina Dawn Ringer and grandson Jack Matthew of Steamboat Springs, CO.

Jaquelyn Ringer

Catherine Siciliano

Catherine L. Siciliano, a lifelong resident of Ossining, died November 29. She was 83.

She was born in Ossining on December 7, 1931 to Michael and Viola ( Gioio) Lobus. She was a former school secretary at both St. Augustine’s and St. Theresa’s Parochial Schools. She was also a former secretary at Sing Sing Prison. She was a member of St. Ann’s Church.

Mrs. Siciliano is survived by her two daughters Anne Zimmerman (Gary) and Valerie Doyle (David); two sisters Mimi Robinson (David) and Gail Fiero (George); four grandchildren Ryan and Colin Zimmerman, Christopher and Jonathon Doyle; Many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her husband Peter and her sister Rose Stephens.

Richard Zeoli

Richard D. Zeoli, a resident of Briarcliff Manor and formerly of Yonkers, died tragically from injuries he sustained in an automobile accident in Croton on December 3. He was 58.

Mr. Zeoli was born on September 17, 1957, to the late Sebastian and Rose (nee Cornacchio) Zeoli in the Bronx. He was a self-employed hairdresser at Ze’s in Buchanan and was the founder and former owner of Cagney’s Hair Studio. He was also a member of a motorcycle club in the Bronx.

He is survived by his former wife, Joanne Zeoli, of Briarcliff Manor; his girlfriend, Lynda Rodriguez, of Carmel; children Richie Zeoli and Jaime Zeoli, both of Briarcliff Manor; one sister, Marilyn (Mike) Galfin of Yonkers; one brother, Joseph (Diane) Zeoli, of Pleasantville; and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by one sister, Loretta Carmody, in 2006.

Frank Gatto, Jr.

Frank Joseph Gatto, Jr., a resident of Cortlandt, died November 30. He was 48.

He was born on October 2, 1967 to Frank Joseph Gatto and Irene (DiGenaro) Gatto in New York City. He is survived by his loving wife, Branca Gatto; beloved parents Frank and Irene J. Gatto; his loving sisters and brother, Lisa Kevin Keon, Thomas (Thammasack) Gatto and Linda Gatto and his adoring nieces and nephews, Danny, Jayclyn, Isabella, Thomas, Jr., Samantha and Nicholas.

Police Blotter

State Police

November 23 - Robert Weyrauch, 59, of Ossining, was charged with driving while intoxicated, a Class B felony, after striking the rear of a police vehicle as troopers were performing traffic control following a crash on the Sprain Brook Parkway at about 8 p.m. Despite having the patrol vehicle’s emergency lights activated, Weyrauch failed to move over to the right lane. Weyrauch was charged with felony DWI when a criminal history check revealed he was convicted of a DWI-related offense in June 2011.

November 28 - Amanda Nichols, 22, of Cortlandt, was charged with driving while intoxicated, a misdemeanor, after she was stopped on Carhart Avenue for speeding on Route 9.

Yorktown Police

November 21 - 8:40 p.m. – Octavia Matthews, 40, of Peekskill, was charged with petit larceny for allegedly removing two coats, valued at $277.50, from a store display at Macy’s and exiting without paying.

November 22 - 6:34 p.m. – Juliana Khoury, 53, of Yonkers, was charged with petit larceny after allegedly concealing items in a shopping bag and a large box containing a vacuum (all valued at $905) and leaving Macy’s without paying.

November 23 - 9:55 p.m. – Ryan Mahoney, 20, of Yonkers, was charged with possessing a forged driver’s license and a quantity of marijuana after being stopped on Pine Brook Road for driving with only one headlight illuminated.

November 27 - 9:35 p.m. – Ryan Mahoney, 20, of Yorktown, was charged with possessing a forged driver’s license and a quantity of marijuana after being stopped on Pine Brook Road for driving with only one headlight illuminated.
Guest Commentary

Assessing A Client’s Capacity

By Salvatore DiCostanzo

Nearly every aspect of estate planning and elder law requires an attorney to assess a client’s legal capacity. As elder law attorneys, we are regularly working with individuals who have some form of cognitive impairment such as dementia or Alzheimer’s Disease. A common assumption is that someone with dementia or Alzheimer’s cannot sign a Last Will and Testament (“Will”) or Power of Attorney with Statutory Gifts Rider. This assumption can have grave consequences if the opportunity to draft necessary estate planning documents is foregone.

Mental capacity is different than legal capacity. A person diagnosed with a cognitive impairment may very well have the legal capacity to execute documents, especially in cases where they are in the initial stages of the disease. Each case must be analyzed based on its own particular facts and circumstances.

Legal capacity generally falls into two categories: testamentary capacity and contractual capacity.

Testamentary capacity is the requisite capacity to sign a Will. A person has testamentary capacity if he understands, in a general way the property he owns, the identity of the natural objects of his bounty, and the disposition he is making of his estate. This is a very low standard and much lower than the requisite capacity to create a trust or execute a Power of Attorney and Statutory Gifts Rider.

Contractual capacity is the requisite capacity to create a trust or execute a Power of Attorney and Statutory Gifts Rider. Contractual capacity focuses on whether the person was able to understand the nature and consequences of a transaction and make a rational judgment concerning it. Thus, contractual capacity is a higher standard.

It is not uncommon for a client to have the capacity to execute a Will but not a trust or Power of Attorney. This is akin to someone being acquitted in a criminal matter and found liable in a civil matter (do the letters O.J. sound familiar?).

There is no bright-line test for an elder law attorney when assessing a client’s capacity. Quite frankly it is often difficult to determine and I must make a determination using my best judgment. A major factor in assessing capacity is the likelihood of the documents being challenged. Where there is a black sheep in the family, I am more conservative in my assessment. However, I will take every measure to make the case for capacity.

For instance, I was recently consulted by a client whose spouse has diminished capacity due to dementia and Alzheimer’s. In order to protect the couple’s primary residence, I recommended that the residence be transferred to the well spouse. Rather than resorting to the Court system in the form of a guardianship, I am making a personal visit to the nursing home in order to properly assess my client’s spouse. This is an integral part of how I practice.

If you or someone you know has diminished capacity, please do not be hesitant to contact us. There still may be an opportunity to execute important legal documents. We are sensitive to the issues involving diminished capacity and might be able to make an assessment resulting in significant preservation of assets in the long run.

I can be reached at 914-245-2440 or by e-mail at smd@mfd-law.com.

A paint night to raise funds for the family of Cadence (3) and Asher Adams (2), who were born with the rare genetic disorder Hunter Syndrome, was held Saturday at the Elks Club in Yorktown. Their mother, Lori, grew up in Yorktown. For more information, visit www.ourlittleironmen.com.
4th Annual Yorktown Holiday Electric Lights Parade

Float participants get into the spirit of parade.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL GIULIANO

Signs Ink had a colorful display.

An illuminated fire truck.

North Highland’s Polar Express won the parade’s top prize, below.

Highway Superintendent Dave Paganelli and two “Things”, above.

Christmas tree that was lit up at DeVito Field at the YCCC.

Yorktown Supervisor Michael “Santa Claus” Grace presents an award to the Yorktown Leos.

Yorktown GOP Chairman Matt Slater hands out candy to children, bottom.
Yorktown Heights Fire Dept. Santa Claus Candy Cane Run Sat., Dec 13

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ROUTE 3

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By Neal Rentz

Peekskill resident Kecia Palmer-Cousins and New Rochelle resident Gay Wheeler-Smith said they created the Peekskill-based G&K Sweet Foods LLC, in part, to pass along the legacy of the southern baking which they grew up with.

But the eight-year-old business has resulted in much more than continuing their families’ baking traditions. Their Momma’s Legacy Licious Sweet Potato Pies were served at the 2014 Super Bowl VIP Tailgate Party at Met Life Stadium and through their company they have met a variety of celebrities, including First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Oz.

The co-owners were interviewed last week at the Peekskill offices of the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce. They are both Chamber members.

The sweet potato pie recipe was created by Wheeler-Smith’s late great-grandmother, whom she affectionately called Mama.

The co-owners and longtime friends did not start their careers in the food industry. Wheeler-Smith was a nurse who continues to work in the medical field as a quality manager, and Palmer-Cousins was an IT project manager for Verizon before retiring.

“In 2007 we attended a Women’s Enterprise Development Center Entrepreneur’s Breakfast (in White Plains),” Palmer-Cousins recalled. “In the parking lot right after the breakfast Gay asked me if I would partner with her to help can her great-grandmother’s pie filling. So I said yes because I have entrepreneurship in my blood. I have parents who are entrepreneurs.

“It was a desire that I’ve had since I was about 16-years-old,” Wheeler-Smith said. “I always wanted to can the filling of my great-grandmother’s recipe. The sweet potato pie was really my favorite dessert. We made many desserts.”

Wheeler-Smith said she often baked a variety of desserts with her great-grandmother since the age of six. Her great-grandmother died when she was 16.

Like Palmer-Cousins, Wheeler-Smith said she was raised in a family of entrepreneurs who have inspired her. She also wanted to start the business to pay homage to work of her family, Wheeler-Smith said.

“After I got married and after I had my daughter (Joh’Vonni) you start thinking about what it is that you want to pass down in terms of legacy,” Wheeler-Smith said. “We’ve been able to market this project and really bring a dream to life.”

Palmer-Cousins, who has sons Kendall and Kyle, said her family is from South Carolina and Wheeler-Smith’s family is from North Carolina. Her family’s favorite dessert was sweet potato pies. Her grandmother, Loretta Palmer, who died earlier year, baked and sold sweet potato pies on the weekends at New York Hospital where she worked as a cleaning lady, Palmer-Cousins said.

The co-owners want to pass the business to their children after they stop...
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Wishing you a Happy Holiday Season and a Joyous New Year
Solaris Sports Club Debuts Cutting Edge Core Training

You can cover up a soft stomach with a shirt or a sweater, but you can’t hide from a weak core. That’s precisely why Solaris will unveil a dynamic new and challenging core workout, CXWORX, in early January.

CXWORX is a 30-minute workout created to tone and tighten core muscles, and improve mobility, balance and help prevent injuries.

“CXWORX is fun and fast, which is what Solaris is all about these days,” said Elizabeth Chang, Solaris’ Director of Fitness. “Our cores connect our legs to our upper body, and that’s where our power is generated from. Yet we still see so many fit people who don’t concentrate on their cores.”

Following the success of its Grit workouts—which emphasize power and strength—Solaris went back to Les Mills, the group fitness gurus, to further the club’s reputation for delivering cutting-edge, results-oriented programs.

“Most times when we see back injuries, they’re a result of weak muscles that we need to support our backs,” said Chang. “CXWORX strengthens your abdominals, glutes, obliques as well as our ‘sling’ muscles, which connect the upper and lower body.”

CXWORX includes a combination of isolation exercises, which target specific muscles, and integrated moves that use two or more muscle groups together.

“Everything we do—whether you’re a housewife or a competitive athlete—we can do more effectively and safer with a strong core,” said Jenn Gannon, a Solaris trainer. “This program is truly for everyone—and not only will it make you look and feel better, this is functional training that works for anyone and will literally make their day-to-day life easier.”

CXWORX will debut as demonstration classes to members and mid-December, and will be added to an already robust group fitness schedule. For further information, call (914) 962-4094.

G&K Sweet Foods LLC

Peekskill

Continued from page 11

working. The duo decided to expand its original concept to sell baked goods, such as sweet potato pies and cookies and recently introduced frozen sweet potato pie filling.

The duo outsources much of the baking. Palmer-Cousins said she is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the business and Wheeler-Smith said she works in the business after work and on weekends.

Some of the company’s regular customers include the Peekskill Farmers Market and the Hudson Valley Hospital Center Farmers Market in Cortlandt. The products are also available in Mamaroneck at the Chocolations store and through the G&K Web site.

The company was chosen to serve its sweet potato pies at the 2014 Super Bowl VIP Official Tailgate Party at Met Life Stadium. Shortly after the 2012 Super Bowl, the NFL Host Committee sent out an e-mail to certified businesses owned by women and minorities in New York and New Jersey and the duo met regularly with the committee before being chosen.

G&K served at the pre-game party football players including Lynn Swann, coaches and their wives, as well as such other celebrities as Michelle Williams from Destiny’s Child and Dr. Oz. “It was very exciting,” Palmer-Cousins and Wheeler-Smith said. Thousands of pies were baked for the event.

The duo also met Obama at a luncheon about five years ago in Manhattan and they were interviewed on the “Today Show.”

Palmer-Cousins said she and Wheeler-Smith have enjoyed running their company. “We’ve been able to grow. We’ve been able to expand our product line,” Palmer-Cousins said. “We’ve been able to meet a lot of fabulous people.”

Wheeler-Smith stressed all of the G&K employees are vital to the success of the company. “You have to have a team,” she said. “In order to move forward you have to have team players.”

For more information about G&K Sweet Foods LLC, call Gay Wheeler-Smith at 914-649-8889 or Kecia Palmer-Cousins at 914512-4373. The company Web site is gksweetfoods.com.
Buying Holiday Gifts for the Smart Home

Come holiday time, my wife Margaret and I have always engaged in a practice I suspect many homeowners share: in addition to buying gifts for each other, we also buy gifts “for the home.”

Over the years these have ranged from practical choices, such as new appliances, to objets d’art found during our frequent visits to antique stores and auctions. A gift I was considering for this holiday was an antique decorative screen that would have been perfect for covering a central air control panel in our dining room, but Margaret is now fonder of modern décor so I agreed to let it go.

After so many years of gifting our home, we’re hard pressed to think of anything more for it. But thinking back, if I had it do over again I would have invested more in purchasing gifts that would be not only modern but technologically advanced enough to turn our abode into a “smart home.” I checked around for what I might recommend to others to accomplish this goal.

First I considered temperature control. Of the many options available, the Nest Learning Thermostat has won over many users by putting its sleek digital appearance in service toward ease of use, even for only moderately wired individuals like myself. After a short time tracking the temperature adjustments you make to the Nest, the device will learn your patterns and begin to anticipate them. What’s more, if it doesn’t sense your presence via a motion detector for several hours, it will assume you are not home and will adjust the climate accordingly to save energy.

All well and fine, although I hope that binge-watching “Breaking Bad” for an afternoon won’t inadvertently cut the heat off.

Lighting was next on my exploration list, and the choices grew more complicated. Should the bulbs themselves be smart, linked in small groups via a hub or your wireless device? They are the easiest to install, but I will have to overcome decades of habit and remember to leave the switches on when I leave the room. Turning them off will render the smartest bulb inoperable.

Smart switches require more expert installation, but allow for more variety of bulbs and fixtures. No matter which system you choose, there is still a learning period. One Forbes Magazine reporter recently discovered that the system may decide to turn on all your lights in the wee hours of the morning.

In the area of security, the August Smart Lock seems promising, allowing you to open and close the deadbolt on your door through your smart phone or send a visiting guest or service person an invitation allowing them access. It sounds like a lifesaver for parents and homeowners who need to be at work all day, but be certain to use a strong password that resists hacking. In fact, I would personally hold off on this one until the security standards in the smart home industry develop further.

In the meantime you might go for the Ring, the smart video doorbell. It sends a video image of your visitor to your phone – even alerting you of their approach before they ring the bell – and allows you to converse with them from inside via a speaker. You can see and speak with the person at your door even if you aren’t home, while still giving the impression that you are inside.

Are you ready to make your home a smart home? Well, I suppose it depends on your tolerance for technological systems that still have some bugs to be worked out. For example, if you try to install a new app on your phone and get a message saying it can’t be done, do you quickly hop onto Google to see how others solved the problem or do you call up the “computer person” in your family for yet another favor as I do? Maybe you do neither, and instead give up on the app altogether while saying “this is why I hate computers!”

If you are in the third group, or if you don’t have a resident computer genius in your family, you may want to wait a few years for smart home technology to become more standardized. However, if you find that the benefits and excitement of this technology outweigh the occasional hassle of trouble-shooting, then proceed with appropriate caution.

As for me, I will step back for this year and try to talk my wife into some decidedly non-smart décor for our home, possibly from another century – if I can find the room, that is.


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Fieldhome Blood Drive: Fieldhome and the American Red Cross are holding a blood drive at Field Home – Holy Comforter, 2300 Catherine St., Cortlandt, from 1 to 6 p.m. Donating your blood is a simple thing to do and it can make such a big difference in the lives of others. We recommend scheduling an appointment to avoid a wait: Please contact Lynn Teczio at 914-739-2244 Ext. 5613. For more information on donating blood, please visit http://www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood.

Bethel Tree Lighting: Bethel The Pines, 19 Narragansett Ave., Ossining, will hold its 16th Annual Tree Lighting from 5:30 to 7 p.m. The event will include a visit from Santa, traditional caroling, music from Ossining’s Rachel Alexander and her students and refreshment. To RSVP or receive more information, call 914-739-6700 Ext. 1220.

Wednesday, Dec. 9

Seniors’ Fitness Classes: Free fitness classes are being offered to seniors who reside in Peekskill. The schedule is: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday – The WorkOut – 10 to 11 a.m. Thursday – Fall Prevention Class – 10 to 11 a.m. – Zumba Gold – 10 to 11 a.m. – 6700 Ext. 1220.

Temple Beth Am Programs: Two programs have been scheduled for this week at Temple Beth Am, 203 Church Pl., Yorktown. Wine with Weiner will be held on Dec. 10 at 7:45 p.m. Come to Beth Am for an informal conversation with the Jewish community on the issues that affect our lives. With welcoming wine (or other beverages people bring), Rabbi Weiner facilitates a fascinating “laid-back” discussion while bringing us closer as a Jewish community. Congregants and non-congregants alike are invited to take this journey with our Rabbi. No previous knowledge is required, and all backgrounds are welcome. For information, please call our Rabbi at 962-7500 or e-mail him at rabbi@optionline.net Welcoming Shabbat for Tots will be held on Dec. 11 at 5:30 p.m. Filled with movement, music, and ruach (spirit), Rabbi Robbie and Rebbeztin Ellen help bring in the Shabbat with that special “Shabbat Spirit” followed by a Shabbat dinner. The only cost of the dinner is a Shabbat Shalom smile. To RSVP or for more information, please email Rebbeztin Ellen at rebbeztinellen@gmail.com.

Ugly Sweater Fundraiser: Gullotta House is presenting its First Annual Ugly Sweater Contest Fundraiser at 7 p.m. at the Taco Dive Bar, 55 Hudson Ave., Peekskill. A special guest performer will be featured from 7 to 8 p.m. and Unborn Mind will perform from 8 to 11 p.m. All proceeds will go to Be First Boxing, a Peekskill family in need and Gullotta House. Tickets are $25 and include one free drink and Hors d’Oeuvres from 7 to 8 p.m. For tickets call 914-525-0744. To make a donation to Gullotta House, visit gullottahouse.org.

Friday, Dec. 11

Candlelight Christmas Concert: Please join us at 7 p.m. for our annual concert of joyful Christmas music at the Church of the Assumption in Peekskill. Performers will include internationally acclaimed vocal artist Mary Mancini, world renowned accordion virtuoso Mario Taca and The Victor Lionti String Quartet. Tickets are $17 for adults, $15 for seniors; and $7 for children under 17. Light refreshments will be served after the concert in the Fr. Wilson Hall beneath the church. For more information contact the Assumption rectory at 914-737-2071 or Gioia Productions at 914-737-8872.

First Hebrew Dinner: First Hebrew’s new Sharing Shabbat Dinner initiative begins tonight. Whether or not you are religious or a synagogue member, there’s a seat for you at the Friday night dinner table in the homes of First Hebrew members. The program launches December 11 at sunset, when the Jewish Sabbath begins each Friday. Shabbat, as it’s called in Hebrew ends after sunset every Saturday. To attend a Sharing Shabbat Dinner, contact Rabbi Dana at rabb@firsthebrew.org or call 914-739-0500. Visit www.firsthebrew.org for more information.

Jewish Center Services: At the Yorktown Jewish Center, 2966 Crompond Rd. Friday night Sabbath services in the spring will begin at 8 p.m. and Sabbath services on Saturdays will be held at 9:15 a.m. On most Saturdays, after the services Rabbi Sternstein conducts a learning session based on the Torah portion of the week. Light refreshments are served and everyone is invited to join us as we share in the warmth, knowledge and friendship within our congregation. Info: 914-245-3234 or yorktownjewishcenter.org.

Elks are presenting A Holiday Moment Christmas Concert: The Yorktown Elks are presenting A Holiday Moment Christmas Concert in the Fr. Wilson Hall beneath the Field Home. Performers will include internationally acclaimed vocal artist Mary Man-
cini, world renowned accordion virtuoso Mario Tacca and The Victor Lionti String Quartet. Tickets will be $10 and $5 for children 12 and under, and can be obtained at the Yorktown Elks lodge, 590 Waverly Rd. or by contacting jodycole@gmail.com. There will be café-style seating, snacks during the performance and cookies and punch will be served following the show. Seating is limited and advanced ticket purchases are recommended.

Sunday, Dec. 13

Somers Library Art Exhibit: Susan Haas will be the featured artist at the Somers Library during the month of December. She will focus her exhibit on winter photography and invites you to join her at the opening reception today from 1 to 5 p.m. Haas’ work reflects an intimate insight and intense love of nature. Her photography captures the beauty throughout the northeast and Nova Scotia. The Somers Library Art Gallery is open during normal library hours. Please call the library for additional viewing times in the program room at 914-232-5717.

Gingerbread Festival: The Somers Historical Society has announced the Holidays at the Homestead Gingerbread Festival Decorating Contest. Create a gingerbread decoration or house utilizing food materials, affix to a base no larger than 12” x 12” in size, include an elephant continued on page 19
continued from page 18

somewhere in the design and deliver it to the Wright Reis Homestead today between noon and 12:30 p.m. The entry fee is a non-perishable food item for St. Luke’s Episcopal Church Food Pantry. Entry forms will be available online at Somers Historical Society’s Facebook page, Somers Historical Society, located on the 3rd floor of the Elephant Hotel, or in the Somers Library’s Jean Reidy Children’s Room. This year’s theme is The Elephant Rocks; Celebrating 190 Years of the Elephant Hotel. There will be several judging categories, based on age. There will be one “People’s Choice” award in each category and one overall “Pastry Chef” award. Winning entries will be displayed in Somers Library from Dec. 14 through 30. In the event of inclement weather, the festival will follow the same schedule as the Town of Somers Holiday Tree Lighting Festivities. Non-winning entries must be picked up between 3 and 4 p.m. on Dec. 13. Winning Entries must be removed from Library by close of business on Dec. 30.

**Holiday Sale/Wine Tasting:** Peekskill Clay Studios is hosting its annual Wine Tasting Fundraiser for the Peekskill Education Foundation in conjunction with our holiday pottery sale. The Peekskill Education Foundation provides opportunities for special, grant driven enrichment projects within the Peekskill City Schools. The wine tasting will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. and requires a $25 donation. In addition to the funds raised by the wine tasting, our studio will give a portion of all sales made this weekend to the PEF. The holiday pottery sale is open from 11-5 each Saturday and Sunday from Dec. 20. Info: peekskillclaystudios.com.

**Somers Holiday Concert & Sing-Along with the Joey D. Jazz Ensemble** will be held at 2 p.m. at the Somers Library. The concert is being sponsored by the Friends of the Somers Library. Registration is not required for this free concert. Seating will be on a first-come, first-seated basis. Info: 914-232-5717.

**Healing Yoga:** Yoga classes for women with breast cancer are held at 5 p.m. on Sundays at Hudson Yoga, 5 Old Post Rd., Croton-on-Hudson. Weekly classes are being conducted by rotating instructors. The suggestion is $15. Info: Ellisha Simpson at 914-319-4010 or send an e-mail to info@laughingheartsyoga.com.

**Yorktown Menorah Lighting:** The Yorktown Menorah Lighting Ceremony will be held at 4 p.m. at the Jack DeVito Gazebo on Veterans Road (next to the Yorktown Stage). Enjoy an amazing fire juggling show. Traditional latkas, doughnuts, chocolate gelt and dreidels will be available. Free light-up Menorah necklaces will be given to all participants. No Charge. Come and bring a friend. For more information call 914-962-1111, or visit www.ChabadYorktown.com.

**Somers Menorah Lighting:** The Somers Public Menorah Lighting Ceremony will be held at 6 p.m., outside the Elephant Hotel, located on Routes 100 and 202. Traditional latkas, doughnuts, chocolate gelt and dreidels will be available. For more information e-mail Mitchel at NY-C1Mitch@aol.com.

**First Hebrew Hanukkah:** Two Hanukkah programs have been scheduled for First Hebrew, 1821 Main St., Peekskill, just west of the Beach Shopping Center. Celebrate the beginning of Hanukkah on Dec. 6 at 4 p.m. for songs and a celebration as the first candle is lit on the giant outdoor menorah. No RSVP is necessary but call 914-739-0500 or e-mail fhc@firsthebrew.org for information. A Hanukkah Family Dinner with the Jewish Learning Experience will be held on Dec. 8 at 6 p.m. Bring the family for some delicious chicken (or vegetarian option), latkes, salad and desserts. Hanukkah songs and games. Cost: $18 per person or $10 for children under 13. RSVP to rabbi@firsthebrew.org or call 914-739-0500. Visit www.firsthebrew.org for more information about the programs.

**Russian Christmas Concert:** A Taghkanic Chorale’s Russian Christmas Concert featuring Russian choral music by classical masters Bortniansky, Katalsky, Stravinsky, Chesnokov, Rachmaninoff, Gretchaninoff and Taverner will be held at 4 p.m. at the Trinity Episcopal Church, 7 S. Highland Ave., Ossining. Adults: $25. Seniors: $22. Students: $12. Children under 12 accompanied by an adult will be admitted for free. Info and tickets: 914-737-6707 or taghkanicchorale.org.

**Bingo:** Bingo will be played tonight at the Yorktown Jewish Center, 2966 Crompond Rd. The doors will open at 5 p.m. and play begins at 6:30 p.m. There will be $3,000 in prizes awarded during each Sunday session. Food will be available. Info: 914-245-2324 or yorktownjewishcenter.org.

**Monday, Dec. 14**

**Pirkei Class:** First every first and third Monday of the month at 11 a.m. at the Yorktown Jewish Center, 2966 Crompond Rd., Rabbi Urbas conducts a Pirkei class which discusses Jewish ethics. Everyone is welcome. Info: 914-245-2324 or yorktownjewishcenter.org.

**Free Jazz Sessions:** Free Jazz Jam Sessions are being held every Monday at The Winery at St. George, 1715 E. Main St., Mohegan Lake. Info: 914-455-4272.

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15 Target
16 Saudi Arabian money
18 Curving, twisting line, shape or form or Mahopac frozen yogurt shop
20 Anticlimax
22 Stuff to be crunched
23 Say again
26 Campaigner’s greeting
29 Moguls
32 The Grinch’s season
33 Detergent brand
34 Best guess: abbr.
36 Rest
37 Skipping contraction
38 ___plasm
39 Put the kibosh on
40 Palindromic Bobbsey twin
41 Pig paddock
42 Lawyer’s thing

DOWN
1 Like the weakened Samson
2 Sentence ender
3 Secrets
4 Cassowary’s cousin
5 Cue stroke
6 Brought forth
7 Tolerate
8 Train track
9 Prepares for battle
10 “Hands off me!”
11 The ___ and Scratchy show
12 Attention
13 Evil warrior in “The Lord of the Rings”
14 Mexican neighbor (abbr.)
15 Target
16 Saudi Arabian money
18 Curving, twisting line, shape or form or Mahopac frozen yogurt shop
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34 Best guess: abbr.
36 Rest
37 Skipping contraction
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Solution on page 26
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LEGALS

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NOTICE of Formation of M&R Account Services LLC Art. Of Org. filed with SSNY on 10/14/2015. Office Location: Westchester County. SSNY is designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: M&R Account Services LLC, 29 Scenic Dr Apt O, Croton on Hudson, NY 10520 Purpose: any lawful purpose.

NOTICE of Formation of Frawley Coach- ing, LLC. Arts of Org, filed with NY Secy of State (SSNY) on 9/4/2015. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 7014 13th Avenue, Suite 202, Brooklyn, NY 11228. Purpose: any lawful activity.

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The Putnam Humane Society
Peekskill senior G Lanay Rodney was swishing and dishing last Wednesday when the 2015 Class A runner-up Red Devils opened the season with a 56-32 victory over Class AA Mahopac and Carly Pease (trailing).

Rodney, a 2015 first-team All-NYS selection, looked to be in mid-season form, finishing with a game-high 17 points while teammate Sandra Murphy added 16 and looked like a powerful paint presence... see Girls’ Hoops Notebook.
Put Valley Guts out Lakeland Tourney Title over Carmel

Ossining’s Griffin Bursts onto Scene, Snags Sleepy MVP nod

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor
@Directrays

Class B Putnam Valley (2-0), by far the smallest school in the Carolyn Conroy Memorial Tournament at Lakeland High last weekend, conquered a pair of Class AA schools – Horace Greeley and runner-up Carmel -- to waltz off with the tournament title behind an MVP performance from senior G Anders Spittal, an All-Tournament nod from senior G Harrison Deegan and an all-around solid team effort.

Without putting the cart before the horse, it can be said that Coach Mike McDonnell’s Tigers asserted themselves as serious Class B title contenders after a solid second-half effort that led to a 37-27 victory over Carmel last Saturday and a 61-39 thumping of the Quakers last Thursday.

After a moribund first half against Carmel, the Tigers were a revenant pack against the Rams in the second half, spearheaded by senior F Joe Spinola who scored five quick point to trigger an 18-4 third-quarter run that sealed the deal for PV. Carmel smothered the Tigers in the first half, making the Tigers pay for every shot they took with a tough, aggressive brand of defense the Rams will need to play with all season. Carmel is short on pure finishers this season, and a tough defensive mindset is THE ONLY THING that is going to keep them competitive throughout.

“We don’t have a whole lot of scoring we can rely on, so we need to bring it defensively,” said All-League Carmel swingman Ryan Train (7 points), sporting a welt above his eye and some evident pain below the belt after mixing it up with the Tigers.

PV finally got things going in transition in the third quarter, with G Kevin Gallagher (4 points, 5 assists) sifting through the Rams to find open teammates; Spittal (12 points), Deegan (10) and Spinola (7). Charlie Pagani was a force on the boards for the Tigers. Dan Walsh (2 3’s) led the Rams with eight points. Quinn Willman added five points while Train and Matt Spittal went for 19 points, hitting on 4 of 5 shots.

In the Valley’s opening-day romp of Horace Greeley, Deegan dropped a game-best 20 points, including a pair of slam dunks that electrified the PV crowd, which turned out strong both nights. Spittal went for 19 points, hitting on 4 of 5 downtown.

Carmel is going to need well-round contributions like the one the Rams got in a 42-38 win over the Hornets in the opening round of the Lakeland tourney, including Ryan Train (10 points, 4 assists, 4 steals), Matt Haughney (11 points, 6 assists), Isaiah Fredericks (6 points, 3 assists), Dan Walsh (6 points) and Ryan Sullivan (4 points, 1 assist).

Lakeland was led by Nick Fazio (13 points, 8 boards), Trevor McCarthy (5 boards, 5 assists), Nick Jarosz (4 points, 7 boards) and Jaz Burton (8 points). We certainly expected a better showing from the Hornets, and fully expect them to turn around the disappointing start.

Yorktown 53, Panas 46

It was the Nick DeGennaro show as the Husker hotshot torched cords for 24 points (3 treys) while grabbing five boards and dishing five assists on opening night. Junior F Tanner Dyslin impressed in his debut with 11 points. Panas was led by Brandon Ramos, who scored 15 points and grabbed six rebounds. Brandon Hodge and Shakiem White went for 10 points each.

“Kind of what I expected; some good, some bad,” Panas boss Shawn Sullivan said. "Offensively, we need to make much better decisions with the ball and find a few consistent scores. Defensively, our intensity needs to pick up. We can’t let teams do what they want and expect to win. Like last year, we are going to go through some growing pains this month. I see a lot of potential with this group.”

Croton 49, Pal. Prep 45

Charlie Goldberg dropped 17 points to lead the Tigers. F Garrett Lynch notched a double-double with 14 points and 11 rebounds. F Eli Reyer added seven points while Frank Addeo grabbed six rebounds. F Garrett Lynch notched a double-double with 14 points and 11 rebounds.

Putnam/NWE Top 5 Pre-Season Hoops Poll

No.1 PUTNAM VALLEY – Coach McDonnell’s first six players are as well-rounded as any in Class B and I’ll be shocked if they fail to reach a fourth-straight Final 4 this March.

No.2 OSSINING – I like Coach Casey’s 2-0 Pride’s chances of being 4-0 before their huge early-season showdown with Fox Lane on Dec. 16, which should be a true indicator of whether or not Ossining is a ready-for-prime-time player. Allen Griffin had 25 points and Obie Toppin added 14 and A.J. Stokeley had 12 in season-opening 74-44 win over Gorton. Toppin then had 29 in 67-60 tourney win over rival Sleepy Hollow and Griffin secured an MVP nod. This Griffin is truth and the kind of addition that could have the Pride snagging a league title in early Feb.

It’s been a number of years since the Pride were truly relevant on the boys’ hoop circuit, having long lived in the vast
Boys’ Hoops Notebook

shadow of Coach Dan Ricci’s three-time reigning NYS champion girls’ program. But ya get the feeling this year could be a special one if Ossining can continue to evolve under Casey, a first-year coach who the players really like playing for.

“It was a nice tournament win for the program,” Coach Casey said. “Gorton who was athletic like us and were able to use a late first-half run to gain confidence, which led us to the win. We were in for a battle playing Sleepy at Sleepy for their tournament championship, so it was a good test for us. We wanted to match their intensity the entire game and we felt like we did a nice job of that. The game was close throughout, and we expected them to make a run and they did, taking the lead with a couple minutes to go. We were proud of the way our kids responded, not getting frustrated and understanding that basketball is a game of runs and we were confident we had one left in us. It was a battle though.”

No.3 YORKTOWN — DeGennaro’s stat line was well rounded and dynamic in win over Panas: 24 points, five rebounds and five assists and three steals. This Husker program and its players exudes a collective mind-over-matter mentality now and it’s evident from the opening tip, I’m told.

No.4 HEN HUD — Nick Marra scored 10 points and copped eight steals while Thomas Maloney added nine points for the Sailors in a 58-40 win over Somers (0-2). Marc Maestri led the youthful Tuskers with 10 points, and things got a little testy in the end. As a result, the Sailors will be without All-Section swingman Jesse Breeding when they tip off in the opening round of the Roosevelt tourney. J.B. cannot get baited like that in the future, he’s too dang valuable.

No.5 CROTON — No real stars here but Coach B.T.’s Tigers (2-0) have some chemistry and a yeoman’s effort each night out, and it was on display in a 60-53 win over Bronxville. Goldenberg and Lynch had 12 points each. Reyer was key with 10 in the first half. Rory Parker and Connor Moore had nine points each. This unit will only improve.

HM CARMEL — Opening-day win over Lakeland put the Rams on the map and blows the Hornets, who placed last in their own tourney, clear off.

HM PEEKSKILL — Until the Red Devs show us what they can do, all we have to go off of is last year, which was unspectacular at best. My guess is swingman CJ Redd keeps them close most nights and their success is dependent upon whether or not they commit to defense the way ghosts’ of Peekskill past used to.

HM MAHOPAC — Without F Dan Foley (back injury) in the lineup until after the holiday break at the earliest, the Indians will be without their No.1 option for quite some time, so we’re gonna pull the plug on the tribe being a top 5 team until further notice. Let’s see if the next man up can hold his own during Foley’s absence.
Girls’ Hoops Notebook

Mahopac Snags Lakeland Tourney Title, Pease MVP

Panas Opens Strong in Win over Yorktown; Ossining Opens with Lourdes

By Tony Pinciaro

Following a loss, especially to a high-caliber opponent, a coach is always anxious to see how his or her team responds in its next game.

MAHOPAC opened the season with a loss to a Peekskill team that reached the 2015 Section 1 Class A Girls’ Basketball championship semifinals. The Indians proved that, collectively, they have a short memory showing that the Peekskill game was a distant memory in responding by winning the Lakeland Tournament with victories over Clarkstown North, 47-41, and Horace Greeley, in the final, 46-29.

“Peekskill is a tough team to open with,” Mahopac coach Chuck Scozzafava said. “We had some trouble putting the ball in the basket in the first quarter, but after the first quarter I was happy with our effort and our play.”

Carly Pease, who scored 28 points in the two games, was named the tournament most valuable player. Amanda Geyer, who finished with 23 points in the tournament, was chosen to the all-tournament team.

“Our defense was good, although it is still a work in progress,” said Scozzafava of the win over Clarkstown North. “Offensively, we played well in spurts. I was happy with our effort.

Against Greeley, we played well defensively and shot the ball better,” he added. “Tara Ravoli’s play on the boards and on defense was big for us.”

Pease netted a game-high 17 points against Greeley and Geyer added 11.

PEEKSKILL was simply too much for the Indians in the season opener for both clubs, as All-NYS G Lanay Rodney dropped 17 points and Sandra Murphy added 16 for the Red Devils.

LAKE LAND, like Mahopac, lost it season-opener, 47-42 in a first-round game of the Hornets’ tournament, but the Hornets rebounded with a 46-39 triumph of Clarkstown North in the consolation game.

Colleen Walsh pumped in a game-high 25 points against Clarkstown North. She also had 13 points against Greeley.

“We were successful against Clarkstown North because everyone contributed,” Lakeland coach Miranda Lustig said. “Colleen led the way, but our other players came off the bench and stepped up when we needed it. Val Potenza and Jess Ascencio gave us extra energy we needed to push forward when we were in a lull.”

Alexa Cole and Walsh each had 13 points and Rieley Walsh added eight points.

RAY GALLAGHER/RICK KUPERBERG PHOTOS

Mahopac’s Kim Schiera takes a run at Peekskill’s Lanay Rodney in Indian loss to Red Devils.

Alyssa Francese led Yorktown’s rally, finishing with a game-high 24 points.

Kristen Kelly paced Panas with 16 points, Carlyn Mucci chipped in with 11 and Danielle Meranted added 10.

Evangelista and Yorktown coach Kevin Clark both cited their respective teams for not converting at the free-throw line.

Despite the loss, Clark was pleased with his team’s determination.

“It was really a superior effort,” Clark said. “It would have been easy to stop playing being down by as many as 19 points in the second half, but the girls dug deep and fought back right until the final horn.”

WALTER PANAS opened its season with a 52-51 victory over YORKTOWN. The final score was indicative of Panas’ control as the Panthers held an 18-point lead midway through the third quarter. However, the Cornhuskers had a determined second-half charge which threw a scare into the Panthers.

“We shot the ball well, early, and handled their pressure,” Panas coach Matt Evangelista said. “Honestly, credit Yorktown as they increased their intensity and pressure.”

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Girls’ Hoops Notebook

Sports

against Greeley.

"It was a close game all the way through, but we went 10 for 24 from the foul line which hurt us and our inexperienced youth showed during the final two minutes," Lustig said.

BREWSTER cruised in its season-opener – 63-20 over CROTON – as Dayja Medina finished with a game-high 19 points, along with four assists and three steals. Frannie Merkel added 10 points, 14 rebounds and four blocked shots, Julia Borsari also had 10 points, and three steals, and Maggie DePaoli contributed eight points.

"We did a good job of forcing turnovers and getting ahead in transition," Brewster coach Mike Castaldo said. "The girls also did a great job of sharing the ball on offense and we shot extremely well from the outside."

Brewster followed this up with a 62-46 win over rival, CARMEL, in the Ronnie Weaver Memorial Tournament.

Unfortunately for the Rams, neither Harrison nor Brewster were very accommodating guests as the Huskies prevailed, 61-52, and Brewster won, 62-46.

"Opening our season against two very good teams was a tough test for our young squad," Carmel coach Dan O’Hare said. "Offensively, we were consistent, but plagued by turnovers. I think we will see a lot of improvement from game to game as our freshmen and sophomores become more acclimated to varsity play."

Freshman Claire Cody had 17 points and six assists against Harrison and 14 points against Brewster. Senior Hana Riddle scored 13 and 12 points, respectively, against Brewster and Harrison.

HALDANE, the 2015 Section 1 Class C champions, began the season with a 52-24 victory over Palisades Prep as Marissa Lisikatos scored a team-leading 13 points. Hanna Monteleone and Alery Ciquanta scored 10 points apiece.

The Blue Devils have a busy week ahead and will be traveling. They will have played R.C. Ketcham, Monday, Woodlands, Tuesday, and John Jay-Cross River, Thursday, in a first-round game of the Hamilton Tournament.

OSSINING is the lone area team that did not play. The Pride begin its defense of the sectional and state championship, Tuesday, against Our Lady of Lourdes. Ossining has beaten Lourdes in the last two Section 1 Class AA title games.

Senior Shadene Samuels is looking forward to Tuesday, especially after a promising preseason.

"I believe that we have a very strong team from the first person off the bench to the last and if we play like we are capable of playing, we will have a great season," Samuels said. "Lourdes is a very good team so we have to come into this game confident. We have played them multiple times. They know our style of play so this won’t be easy. But, I am excited."

As is the better part of Ossining, which is expecting to pick up right where it left off.

Local girls’ basketball coaches are strongly encouraged to contact beat writer Tony Pinciaro at tfinch23@optonline.net after each game or no later than Sunday mornings with a weekly recap.
Lakeland’s Eric Pombo (11) and the Hornets came out flying against Carmel’s Matt Haughney and the Rams last Friday night, but the Rams closed out strong and sent the Hornets packing in a 42-38 opening-round loss at the Carolyn Conroy Memorial Tournament where the hosts finished fourth after falling to Greeley in Saturday’s consolation round... see Boys’ Hoops Notebook

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