Ex-Carmel Cop Charged in Fatal Crash that Killed Somers Teacher

By Rick Pezzullo

A former Carmel police officer and town councilman was charged with aggravated vehicular homicide following a Saturday evening three-car crash on Route 6 in Mahopac that claimed the life of a Somers elementary school teaching assistant.

Richard O’Keefe, 57, of Mahopac, was allegedly driving while intoxicated heading north on Route 6 in a Dodge Caravan when his vehicle struck a Jeep Patriot, operated by Anna Estrada, 53, of Carmel, who exited a parking area to make a left hand turn onto Route 6 south and failed to yield the right-of-way to O’Keefe, according to State Police.

O’Keefe’s vehicle struck the Jeep on the driver’s side, causing it to overturn. A third vehicle, driven southbound...

continued on page 8

Carmel Town Board Cuts Mahopac Fire Dept. Budget

By David Propper

The Carmel town board is expected to vote on the town’s 2016 spending plan Wednesday night, which includes a reduction in money toward the Mahopac Volunteer Fire Department.

The town board confirmed during a meeting at the start of the month it plans to cut funding for the department by 32 percent, which is equivalent to $550,000 as fallout from a probe into a missing $5 million from the department’s coffers drags on. The department requested the town fund the volunteer department to the tune of $1.7 million, but Carmel Supervisor Ken Schmitt said the department can expect only the amount it would cost to operate, which is $1.2 million.

In an interview, Schmitt said the ongoing probe into the department’s finances certainly played a part in the board’s decision to slash the funding. The Mahopac Fire Department is one of three departments that serves the Town of Carmel.

“Yes, just based on the number, the sheer significance of the amount of the money that we’re talking about that’s been allegedly misappropriated or however you want to describe it,” Schmitt said. “We would very much be interested in determining at the end of the day when the investigation has been concluded and the state comptroller office has completed their forensic audit and accounting of the finances and the money that was stolen, we’re certainly interested in learning what was stolen.”

continued on page 8

Colley Remembered Fondly by Brewster-Carmel Garden Club

By David Propper

Lois Colley was considered the matriarch of the Brewster-Carmel Garden Club.

Last week, that tightknit club lost its leader when Colley, 83, was discovered dead in her home in North Salem from an apparent homicide that sent shock and grief all the way up to Putnam County where Colley started her life with her husband Eugene.

Colley, who used to live on Route 124 in Brewster, was found bludgeoned to death on the laundry floor of her hilltop estate in Northern Westchester on Nov. 9. There have been no arrests made as of Monday.

In a Facebook post, the Brewster-Carmel Garden Club stated it was saddened by the loss of their beloved...
By David Propper

Patterson’s next supervisor has finally been confirmed.

After it went to absentee ballots, Republican and current town planner Rich Williams topped Democrat Andy Falk by a tight 18 votes (968-950) after nearly 100 absentee votes were counted last Tuesday at Putnam County’s Board of Elections. Going into the absentee counting, Williams was only up by 32 votes as he and Falk looked to replace outgoing Supervisor Michael Griffin.

Williams, who attended the counting, admitted his nerves were “a little rough, but we made it through,” Griffin, a Republican who will step away from office after more than two decades on the job, congratulated Williams after the vote total indicated he’d win by a squeaker.

“I’m very pleased and humbled by the voters of Patterson supporting me and all the people that helped me,” Williams said. “There are countless people that came and helped me to get where we are and I look forward to serving all the people of Patterson moving forward.”

Falk, who almost pulled off a huge upset in a Republican town, said he was proud of his campaign and “if I had to do it all over again, I wouldn’t change a thing.”

Falk said moving forward, Williams should work to save the town’s Sanitation Department (there’s been some discussion of privatizing it) and he should put an end to apparent cronyism and nepotism at town hall.

“We fought for things we believed in and we had a lot of fun. I truly believe that working together we can be the change that we wish to see in the world,” Falk said in a statement. “I do not know what the future may hold but I do know that if there is a cause that needs to be fought for, if there are doors that need to be knocked, if there are new friends to meet and selfies to be taken I will be there and I hope you will join me for the ride.

The other race that was decided by absentee ballots—the Brewster trustee election—saw one newcomer get in and one longtime trustee remain. Incumbent Christine Piccini beat out fellow trustee Teresa Stockburger 114-108. Piccini was ahead by just two votes going into Tuesday evening, but pulled in ten additional ballots to best Stockburger who only collected another six.

Piccini said she was “thrilled” to earn another two years. Last time she ran, she was able to overcome as only a write-in candidate to win and this time around, with only one minor line she again got the necessary support.

“I have a reputation for doing what needs to be done in the best way possible,” the more than 30-year resident said. “I’m well known for that so I think the support I have has not so much to do with what I’m currently doing, but a faith that people have that I continue to do what I have always done.”

Piccini, who is the deputy mayor, called the campaign she and the Best for Brewster team ran as “accurate, truthful, and right.”

“I don’t respond to squeaky wheels, I’m looking out for the entirety of the board,” Piccini said. “The efforts are about doing what’s good for the village from end to end, from valley to hill for each and every resident because we’re all part of the village. I’m not a divisive person, I don’t play the divisive hand.”

Falling short, Stockburger said she and her husband, Rick, prayed prior to the absentee counting that whatever the result, it would be God’s will.

“And it wasn’t God’s will for me to be (a trustee),” Stockburger said. “I’m going to have a lot more free time.”

Erin Meagher retained her title as top vote getter, earning another six absentee votes to reach 117 votes.

Meagher, who is in her mid-twenties, said it was about time there was a younger voice on the village board.

“My hope is that the mayor and the rest of the board can work with me because I have a lot of fresh ideas for the village,” Meagher said.

Mayor James Schoenig ran uncontested to earn another two years in office.
Resident’s Call to Ban Hunting in Putnam Strongly Squashed

By David Propper

Hunting is alive and well in Putnam County and that won’t be changing anytime soon.

A proposal by a concerned resident requesting the county explore banning hunting was quashed by Putnam lawmakers during a Protective Services Committee meeting when the question was brought forward. With nearly 50 gun-right advocates squeezing into the meeting room on the third floor of the county office building on Nov. 9, legislators made clear their support for the 2nd Amendment and the sport that goes along with it.

The issue came up from one resident’s concerns about apparent hunting going on near his home in Brewster on Ridgetop Lane. Resident Paul Saloon said in a letter to the county Legislature that hunting with shotguns and firing weapons in the county should be banned, with an exception to licensed gun ranges.

“I do not need to tell you that this county has grown dramatically in the 20 years I have lived here,” Saloon said. “Development has encroached on all open space and with that, the likelihood of an individual being injured or killed by an errant shot has also increased.”

Saloon did not appear at the legislative committee meeting to further discuss the matter, but plenty of gun advocates did.

Sheriff Don Smith sent comments that were read at the meeting by Undersheriff Peter Convery in which he said Putnam is a county that “strongly supports” the Constitution and by extension the 2nd Amendment while simultaneously having a small crime rate. The sheriff’s office provides gun license applicants with handgun safety course and has numerous sportsmen clubs that promote proper weapon use, the sheriff wrote.

“...I believe we must have hunting in our county in order to keep the growing deer population under control, which helps keep our motorists safe,” Smith wrote. “Resident Paul Saloon said in a letter to the county Legislature that hunting with shotguns and firing weapons in the county should be banned, with an exception to licensed gun ranges.”

He added people from other counties travel to Putnam to hunt, bringing in additional commerce.

Legislator Roger Gross said hunting was an important part of the Putnam’s history, which is still in many ways a rural area. He reiterated what the sheriff said about hunters doing a good job of limiting the deer population, which leads to fewer collisions between animals and vehicles on the road.

“Residents of New York, we’re under attack by the state administration,” Gross said. “They have a very anti-gun attitude and it’s important to be strong on the 2nd Amendment issue because their goal is to ban guns. That’s what they want to do with a national registration.”

John Greene, the Hudson Valley Regional Director for the National Rifle’s Association and former Kent councilman, said the gun shots the Brewster resident is hearing are probably from waterfowl hunting, which may sound closer to a home than it really is because those shot guns are louder.

Greene said hunters could legally shoot within 500 feet of a household as long as the shooter is pointing away from the home. When deer are hunted with a slug gun, those shell casings will travel “at best” 150 yards and when ducks are hunted, those shell casings go at most 70 yards.

He added people from other counties travel to Putnam to hunt, bringing in additional commerce.

Nick Pagliuca of Putnam County Fish and Game advocates for 2nd Amendment rights last week.

“...and Game stressed hunting is a critical aspect of conservation because instead of more dangerous animals hunting deer, it instead falls on hunters. He considers the call to ban hunting a “city mentality.”

“They want to create New York City up here and it’s not,” Pagliuca said. “This is a rural county and it’s different up here.”

 datos
Legislators Continue to Explore Taxi and Limo Regulations

By David Propper

As the Putnam County Legislature continues to look at a mechanism to better oversee taxi companies operating in the county, Legislator and Rules Chairwoman Toni Addonizio said there are, “a lot of questions that need to be answered,” at a committee meeting last Thursday.

While Westchester County has a taxi commission that has an appointed commissioner, Putnam County Chambers of Commerce president Bill Nulk said Putnam wouldn’t necessarily mirror what Westchester does. Instead, the county should seek permission from New York State into how to properly regulate the taxi business within Putnam’s borders.

“Some sort of regulations at the county level is probably preferable and we should at least have the mechanism to start that regulation,” Nulk said.

Carmel Taxi and Car Service owner Ruth Ayala-Quezada, who gets her licenses from Westchester County, was also at the committee meeting.

In small towns in Westchester, all taxi businesses needed to do before the county commission was set up, was show an insurance card, registration card and a sticker would be given to display. The individual driver needs to have a Class E license.

She said at a past meeting nobody in Putnam is checking licenses and the overall safety of vehicles like if it has proper tires or seatbelts for passengers.

Legislator Dini LoBue suggested the county Law Department examine whether the county can begin its own commission, rather than going through the state, which can be a “long and arduous process.”

While lawmakers agreed taxis and limousines need to be better regulated, they stressed they didn’t want to add another layer of government.

“I don’t want to bite off more responsibility,” LoBue said.

Legislator Carl Albano suggested taxis would only need to produce their insurance and a list of their licensed drivers.

Consumer Affairs Director Jean Noel said the county doesn’t have the ability to monitor a background check or fingerprint drivers. Any criminal activity would be referred to county law enforcement.

Legislative Counsel Clement Van Ross said the legislature should seek permission from all nine towns and villages to take over regulating the taxi industry because right now, it’s the municipalities’ responsibility.

Nulk noted last year he verbally received consent from all municipalities that they were willing to cede the authority to the county and let them explore, at the very least, solutions.

Nulk noted the taxi business continues to evolve, with ride-share services like Uber becoming more of a presence. The company has expressed interest in going statewide.

“So there may be some functionality in the state winding up doing some regulation,” Nulk said.

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Several regional Democratic officials are calling for a halt to construction on the Algonquin gas pipeline until the plan to clear-cut hundreds of trees in Blue Mountain Preserve is reviewed by state officials.

“We are at a really critical moment in this whole issue.” - Assemblywoman Sandy Galef

State Assembly members Sandy Galef (D-Ossining), who represents part of Putnam County, and David Buchwald (D-White Plains), joined several Westchester County legislators and members of Stop Algonquin Pipeline Expansion (SAPE) at the county building in White Plains last Friday morning where they announced they were submitting a letter to County Executive Rob Astorino calling on him to rescind a work permit granted to Spectra Energy for the planned expansion of the Algonquin gas pipeline in the 1,538-acre county park in Cortlandt and Peekskill. Work on the project has just begun at the site.

“There is a parkland alienation law here in the state of New York,” Galef said. “If you have designated parkland, and you want to turn it into something else like the Algonquin Pipeline, you need to get state legislative approval. Also, if you remove parkland from the rolls you also need to find other parkland property to put on it.”

Galef said Astorino had signed a contract with Spectra Energy to allow the work to begin without getting proper state approval. Time was of the essence.

“We are at a really critical moment in this whole issue,” Galef told those on hand. “As you know, many of us, including Congresswoman [Nita] Lowey and Congressman [Eliot] Engel, have been working very hard to try to get an independent safety assessment of the whole Algonquin Pipeline. As Spectra goes forward digging up land, cutting down trees – maybe a thousand trees this weekend up in the Blue Mountain park reservation – once you put that underground pipeline in, it’s very hard for it not to go into effect.”

The pipeline expansion project would run from Stony Point, under the Hudson River, through Peekskill, Cortlandt, portions of Yorktown and Putnam and into Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The project will remove an existing 26-inch gas pipeline and replace it with a 42-inch one. The gas pressure would also increase by 25 percent.

Buchwald said the county executive needs to immediately act to preserve the county land from being cleared.

“Government officials should be working to preserve that trust the public has, that when parkland is dedicated, it’s preserved for parkland,” Buchwald said. “I feel that all of us are like the Lorax, we speak for the trees. But we also speak for the residents of Westchester County.”

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Mrs. Genez's classes. "We know that Mrs. Genez was an assistant in Mrs. Maliniak and who had daily contact with her," Blanch said. "We all knew Mrs. Genez, but will be especially so for those families in the district via email Sunday evening alerting them about the fatal accident and offered advice on how to break the news to students.

"As is expected, this news is shocking to us all, but will be especially so for those who had daily contact with her," Blanch and Winter stated, noting Ghelarducci was an assistant in Mrs. Maliniak and Mrs' Genez's classes. "We know that Mrs. G touched many of our students' lives at Primrose."

Estrada and her passengers, Ernest Estrada, 57, and Steven Ghelarducci, 54, were transported by EMS personnel to Westchester Medical Center with non-life threatening injuries. O’Keefe, his passenger, Michael Guarilloff, 30, and Kossin were not injured. Troopers who interviewed O’Keefe observed clues that he was intoxicated and placed him in custody, police said. O’Keefe was charged with DWI, a misdemeanor, aggravated vehicular homicide, a Class B felony, and vehicular manslaughter in the second degree, a Class D felony. He was arraigned Southeast Town Justice Richard Vercollone and remanded to Putnam County Jail in lieu of $50,000 cash bail or $100,000 bond. He’s expected to be back in court on Dec. 1.

O’Keefe’s sister is Suzi McDonough, a current town councilwoman and his ex-brother-in-law is Supervisor Ken Schmitt. O’Keefe was also a past Mahopac Board of Education member. He was at the center of the advertising on the county trailway controversy - a proposal eventually voted down - as the vice president of the company, Bikepath Country, hoping to earn a contract with the county.

Carmel Town Board Cuts Mahopac Fire Dept. Budget

continued from page 1

Schmitt said he hasn’t heard from the Mahopac fire department about the decrease and no one from the department spoke at a public hearing at the start of the month. According to an article in The Journal News, department spokesman Ed Scott said the cuts would disrupt the department’s annual capital investments that are used to keep up the department’s three firehouses and 11 pieces of apparatus.

A vote about the entire budget is scheduled for Wednesday at 7 p.m. at Carmel town hall.

Schmitt also alluded to changes coming in the contract between the town and department. Because it is part of contract negotiations, Schmitt can’t reveal much but did stress, “Changes will be made to the contract for 2016.”

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DaVinci Inspired Gallery
Brewster

By Neal Rentz

Brewster resident Doug DePierro has been inspired by the legendary Leonardo DaVinci since he was a boy.

“When I was eight-years-old I had a book on Leonardo DaVinci,” DePierro recalled last week. “The things he did were just amazing.”

DePierro, who has read many books on the master artist, has had what could be considered an amazing life creating a variety of artworks and even following in the footsteps of DaVinci by creating various inventions.

Not surprisingly, the name of his new business is the DaVinci Inspired Gallery, which opened in Brewster in April. The gallery’s walls are covered with the owner's paintings, which are available for purchase.

His former business was known as DaVinci Inspired Studios when he was very active as a freelancer in advertising and he also has a business called DaVinci Inspired Design.

DePierro began his passion for art when he was three, drawing with crayons. At the age of 12, he received airbrush and compressor and he began airbrushing motorcycle tanks. As a youth he also learned how to retouch photographs.

Though DePierro said he has created art using every medium, his current specialty is paintings on canvas using acrylic paints.

He began his formal professional career as an apprentice for an illustrator who worked in New York City.

For many years DePierro worked in car body shops painting the vehicles, as well as doing mechanical work. “My whole family is into building cars, restoring old cars,” he said. Cars are the subject of many of his paintings.

DePierro has been working in the advertising field for more than three decades, though he has recently been scaling back his freelance efforts in that field.

His advertising career has included doing photo realism illustrations using air brushes. The paintings he has done for print and television ads are made to resemble photographs, he said.

He worked with the renowned model maker Mike Miller for many years using fiberglass, resins and paints to create models for ads. For example, the duo created 17 bottles for Absolut Vodka ads.

DePierro and Miller created a series of bottle for Budweiser’s Super Bowl ad that was broadcast in 2007. “That’s the pinnacle for an artist in advertising,” DePierro said, adding the bottle was 50 percent larger than the typical beer bottle. The project took weeks to complete, he said.

He has also created logos for businesses. Among the things DePierro is know locally for is the painting of windows for residences and businesses. The window paintings take between one and four hours to complete, he said. Painting windows have “honed my skills,” DePierro said, noting it has helped many people to learn about his skills. “It’s the best thing ever.”

DePierro has also created many murals inside of homes, including a six-year stint doing so in Naples, Italy.

The new gallery offers paint parties. DePierro originally began offering paint parties at the 121 Restaurant & Bar in North Salem two years ago.

At the paint parties, “It’s better when you don’t have experience,” he said. “I simplify everything.”

At the parties, DePierro provides everything, including appetizers, unless attendees want to provide their own food and drink.

All persons have the capability to create art, DePierro said.

“Everyone’s an artist,” he said. Everyone learns how to write the alphabet from a young age and eventually youths learn to create sentences, he said. “Those letters in the alphabet are a lot harder than drawing a picture,” he said. “You have to remember every letter then you have to put them together as a word.”

DePierro has also played a variety of musical instruments and is a drummer for a local band.

Though he has spent a life creating art, DePierro said music is the greatest creative form. “I think music is more important than art by far,” he said. Children who are taught to play an instrument learn many skills, he said. “They have to learn discipline. They have to read. It’s math. It’s everything,” he said.

DaVinci Inspired Gallery is located at 192 Route 22 in Brewster. For more information, call 914-557-7761.

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June M. Hillery
June Mary (Mahany) Hillery of Mahopac, died peacefully surrounded by family on Sunday, November 8th at the age of 82. June is survived by her devoted and loving husband, Herbert Hillery, and their children and grandchildren: - Terry and Louise Hillery of New Fairfield, CT and children Charlotte, Karen & Stephen Scherer, and Christopher - Chris and Jane Hillery of Redhook and children Grace, Maria and Kevin - Cathy and Mike Truschelli of Mahopac and children Tara and Mikey - Colleen and Mark Strawderman of Cranston RI and children Stephen, James and Kelly - Susan and Rick Groth of Mahopac, and children Meghan and Brendan - Kevin and Trish Hillery of Greenville, RI and children Fiona, Lia and Kieran - Sean Hillery of Mahopac - Grandson Timothy Hillery (Jr.) of Plano, TX. June was predeceased by her son, Timothy Hillery, in 2004. June was born on June 22nd, 1933 and was raised by her parents Catherine and Ralph Mahany in Buffalo. At the young age of 13, she would find her soul mate. A courtship and enduring love story all began when she met Herb at a middle school event. She was then educated at Mount Mercy High School and Daemen College where she received a degree in Music education. A life-changing event took place on her last day of student teaching when a horrible fire broke out in the classroom where she was teaching at Cleveland Hills elementary school. The blast and fire that ravaged the annex building was the worst school fire in NY history. While she was considered a hero for helping to save many of the children, it took several years to heal from emotional scars and sorrow for the 15 children that died. Nevertheless, from that moment on she was devoted to teaching and working with children throughout her life. Soon after graduating college, June and Herb were married at St. Thomas Aquinas church in Buffalo on June 12th, 1954. They moved to Mahopac in 1969 and immediately became active community members. June was a softball coach for the Mahopac Sports Association and volunteered with CYO basketball. She was a teacher's assistant at Lakeview Elementary School. June continued sharing her love of music by teaching piano to numerous Mahopac children and provided the music for Mrs. Seneca’s dance studio recitals for many years. June was a devout Catholic and active parishioner at St. John the Evangelist Church. She joined the Folk Group music ministry in 1974 and later became the director for several years. She was also a Eucharistic minister and a member of the Columbiettes. There are numerous examples of June’s love and compassion that extended beyond the borders of Mahopac. Her desire to recognize and help others in need was another wonderful gift she gave to this world. Despite all she did for the community and others, June’s greatest legacy is being an incredible and amazing wife, mother and grandmother. Her love and devotion to her family and friends is immeasurable and will be sorely missed. Even in her later stages of Alzheimer’s disease, she was able to smile and dance her way through adversity. Her laughter and love of life continued to touch all those around her. Just 5 days after being diagnosed with cancer, she returned to the Lord, her Savior.

Joseph Tandoi
Joseph Tandoi, 76, of Carmel, died on November 14. Mr. Tandoi was born on June 7, 1939 to Alfonso and Rose (Esposito) Tandoi in the Bronx. During the Vietnam Era, he proudly served with the US Marines. On June 9, 1963 he married the love of his life Marianne Milazzo in the Bronx, NY. Before he retired, Mr. Tandoi was a District Manager for Stella Doro in the Bronx. He is survived by his devoted wife of 52 years, Marianne, his two loving daughters; Laura Tandoi and Karen Martucci, his sister Anna Conte and his brother Anthony Tandoi and two adoring grandchildren; Albert Martucci and Megan Martucci. A visitation will be held on Wednesday, November 18, from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. at Cargain Funeral Home, 1 Putnam Ave., Brewster. Interment following at Union Valley Cemetery, Mahopac. Friends may call at the funeral home on Friday November 20, 2015 from 2 p.m.– 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Memories of Joann will be shared at 8 p.m. on Friday, www.beecherfuneralhome.com Contributions in Joann’s memory may be made to: The Salvation Army and Green Chimneys (Brewster).
Crossword Puzzle

Across
1 Motel booking
5 Show piece?
8 Feel
12 Last word of Gilligan’s theme song
13 Vital life force
14 Grimm beast
15 Dart here and there
16 A Great Lake
18 Storage box used by soldiers or JV
Mall sportswear shop
20 Tai language
21 Gym-wear
25 Quickly, in music
29 Unbroken
30 “Back to the Future” actress ___
31 Day before
33 Lennon’s Lady
34 Rubberneck
36 Opposed to
39 Stocks and such
42 Elect
43 Tried out, perhaps
48 Huge city in China
51 Macabre
52 The best
53 Belonging to something
54 Thin
55 Blue-green
56 Loud thud

Down
1 Repeated melodic phrase
2 Where Ibsen worked
3 Grab bag
4 Heart
5 Art & Craft retailer in Mohegan Lake
6 Snappy
7 Watch noises
8 Party
9 Grade A item
10 Time frame
11 1997 Will Smith film “___ in Black”
17 Chop
19 Trail
22 Cosmetic caller
23 Some bills?
24 Bratty child (slang)
25 Sea veggie
26 Grasslands
27 Community rules
28 Some germ cells
32 Antithesis of humility
35 Unpopped popcorn
37 Do like
38 The “se” in per se
40 Dress (up)
41 Master in old India
44 What Google is made of
45 Binge
46 Marine flier
47 Causeway
48 Was in session
49 Tiller’s tool
50 Alicia of “Falcon Crest”

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Across
Motel booking
Show piece?
Feel
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Vital life force
Grimm beast
Dart here and there
A Great Lake
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Time frame
1997 Will Smith film “___ in Black”
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Trail
Cosmetic caller
Some bills?
Bratty child (slang)
Sea veggie
Grasslands
Community rules
Some germ cells
Antithesis of humility
Unpopped popcorn
Do like
The “se” in per se
Dress (up)
Master in old India
What Google is made of
Binge
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Astorino Unveils 2016 $1.8B Westchester Budget With No Tax Increase

By Arthur Cusano

Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino introduced his 2016 budget Friday to county officials and the press, his sixth consecutive spending plan without a tax levy increase.

The $1.8 billion budget maintains what Astorino called his two key goals: no tax levy increase and no use of the county’s unrestricted fund balance. As in the past five years, tax increases were not an option, he said.

“I will veto any budget with a tax increase,” Astorino said.

The 2016 budget includes a $180 million capital fund, $18 million for water, sewer and refuse districts and another $18 million for county airport improvements.

Astorino used the presentation to criticize unfunded state and federal mandates that Westchester is forced to comply with. The county is required to spend $1.35 billion for such programs, Astorino said, but only receives $424 million to fund them.

“That $926 million difference, 100 percent of it, every dollar we take in from property taxes, goes right out the door to pay for that,” Astorino said. “And 70 percent of our sales tax is now being paid to these mandate costs.”

Sales tax revenue declined this year due to inclement winter weather that kept consumers homebound along with dropping gas prices, he said.

Under the proposed budget there will be no cuts to county Bee-Line bus routes, libraries or childcare programs, which will keep the current parent contributions at 27 percent. Some late-night and weekend bus stops may be eliminated due to low ridership.

However, some nonprofit organizations will see their funding slashed. There will be 20 percent funding reductions for Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and the Hudson River Museum and a 70 percent cut to Cornell Cooperative Extension funding. In addition, 25 positions in various departments are slated to be eliminated. Those cuts follow a buyout of 158 employees over the summer. Another 60 vacant county positions will be eliminated.

To minimize layoffs, Astorino’s budget plan calls for bonding $11 million to pay for tax certiorari settlements.

“Because of our very strong credit ratings, it will cost about $60,000 a year in interest, which relatively speaking, is fairly low,” Astorino said. “If we decided to pay off the entire $11 million in cash, which I’m open to to if that’s what the board chooses to do, it would require about 110 additional layoffs.”

Astorino also called for state pension amortization of $3 million, down from $15 million this year.

“Going forward we will cash up and pay in full our pension obligations every year,” he said. “We still have to pay back the original borrowing, but we’ve now stabilized.”

Legislator Ken Jenkins (D-Yonkers), in a statement released Thursday afternoon in advance of Astorino’s presentation, called the bonding “fiscally irresponsible” and said it would lead to another credit downgrade for the county. The Westchester County Association and Business Council of Westchester have objected to the reliance of borrowing for operating costs. Representatives from both organizations have stated the budgeted sales tax increases were overly optimistic, he said.

Jenkins said a downgrade would cost Westchester residents millions on the $1.3 billion worth of capital projects. The county’s AAA credit rating has been maintained by both Standard & Poor and Fitch Ratings, while Moody’s recently downgraded the county to an AA1 rating.

“The Astorino administration’s continued reliance on fictitious revenue when budgeting has led Westchester to this credit precipice,” Jenkins stated. “Those responsible for these budget projections should be first on the list of any proposed layoffs in 2016.”

Board of Legislators Chairman Michael Kaplowitz (D-Somers) said the board supported keeping tax rates level, but said cuts to nonprofits and layoffs needed more review. The proposed $11 million tax certiorari bond also needed to be carefully considered, he said.

“That cost, in an ideal world, should be included in our operational expenses,” Kaplowitz stated.

The Board of Legislators has until Dec. 27 to adopt a 2016 budget. Board members began the budget review process at their meeting last night (Monday).

Mahopac Rotary and Chamber Team up for Putnam CAP Thanksgiving Food Drive

Lake Mahopac Rotary and The Greater Mahopac-Carmel Chamber of Commerce are teaming up to hold a Thanksgiving food drive on behalf of Putnam Community Action Program, more commonly known as Putnam CAP, on Saturday, Nov. 21 and Sunday, Nov. 22 at the Tompkins Mahopac Bank Community Center, located at 953 South Lake Blvd in Mahopac.

Lake Mahopac Rotary participates in the food drive annually, but this year it needed to be held in a different location.

Unfortunately many of the supermarkets in Putnam County are going through a transition this year, so we have had to make some adjustments as to where we can host the Thanksgiving Food Drives,” said Putnam CAP Executive Director Callahan. “I am so thankful to the Lake Mahopac Rotary for once again volunteering to run the food drive and to the Mahopac-Carmel Chamber of Commerce for being the drop off location.”

They will be collecting donations of traditional Thanksgiving food, including turkeys, fresh produce, and non-perishables. Last year, Putnam CAP distributed over 400 baskets containing all of the items needed to make a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner as well as some additional items such as breakfast foods and food for another meal during the week.

Suggested Food Items for a complete basket: juice, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, cereal, pancake mix, syrup, stuffing, crackers, cookies, cranberry sauce, soup, yams (fresh or canned), potatoes, (fresh or canned), butter or margarine, gravy (canned, jar or package), fruit (canned or fresh), pie (fresh or frozen) and/or other desserts, vegetables (fresh or canned), dinner rolls (fresh or frozen), aluminum roasting pan, or other appropriate miscellaneous foods. Frozen turkeys are gratefully accepted.

Putnam CAP also has food drives going on at the Shop Rite in Carmel, DeCicco’s Family Market in Brewster, Acme Supermarket in Brewster, Kobacker’s Market in Brewster and Putnam Lake Market.

All locations will hold the food drive from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
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County Executive MaryEllen Odell was joined by local elected and appointed officials to recognize the efforts of a Bob Palmer, a World War II Veteran from Brewster, and Ryan Lepore, an Iraq Veteran from Putnam Valley, during the opening ceremony of the Veterans Day Row of Honor, held on Monday, Nov. 9 along Lake Gleneida. Up-and-coming music sensation Hailey Knox, a Carmel High School senior, sang the National Anthem.

“Veterans Day is about remembering the efforts of all the men and women who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces,” said Odell. “We decided to honor one of our oldest Veterans and one of our youngest Veterans to recognize the Veterans who walk amongst us every day.”

Palmer, a third-generation military service man, served in the United States Army from August 1942 to December 1945, achieving the rank of Platoon Sergeant and commanding a 16-man gun section. He was part of the 445 Anti-aircraft Artillery Battalion in the 8th Infantry Division during the European campaign of World War II. During his service, Palmer earned the American Service Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Service Medal, the World War II Victory Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.

Following his WWII service, Palmer worked for Conrail for 41 years. He is a Life Member of the Brewster Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 672 and served as its Chaplain for 20 years.

For three decades, Palmer categorized and placed over 1,200 American flags on Veterans graves from Southeast—mostly by himself. In 2012, the torch was passed and the “The Bob Palmer Project” was started—not to duplicate his singular effort—but to follow his intent. The Brewster/Southeast community now places the more than 1,200 American flags on the graves of Veterans before Memorial Day, to not only honor and remember our veterans, but to honor Bob Palmer and his commitment to the community and Veterans.

Lepore who was a freshman at Putnam Valley High School on September 11, 2001, felt it was his duty to serve his country. After graduating in 2005, he followed his older brother Richard’s footsteps and joined the Army.

Stationed in Vilseck, Germany, Lepore was deployed to Iraq for 15 months in between 2007 and 2008, during “The Surge.” He was a cannon crewmember on a Howitzer Cannon and his unit conducted combat patrols and raids in a hostile environment. Lepore was honorably discharged with the rank of private first class in 2010.

After returning home, Lepore joined Putnam Valley VFW Post 391. In 2015, he became the Commander of Putnam Valley VFW Post 391 to help Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans transition and cope with civilian life. Lepore is the first post commander who served in the current Iraq War and one of the youngest VFW commanders in the country.

“Our freedom isn’t free and that is what Veterans Day is all about,” said Sheriff Donald B. Smith. “It is the day we honor all the Veterans and we say ‘Thank you.’ We remember not only those who made the ultimate sacrifice but those who put their lives on hold and marched to the sound of the gun shots. On Veterans Day we need to also remember those soldiers who are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.”

The Row of Honor is the installation of over 250 American flags with the names of Veterans, law enforcement officers and first responders, lines along the shores of Lake Gleneida to honor the men and women who served, or continue to serve, to protect us and defend our freedoms. It is on display twice a year to observe Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

“We have 250 flags here on Lake Gleneida,” said Odell. “The program has been very successful and it has been noted nationally and throughout the Hudson Valley region. Visitors are stopping by and spending time admiring the flags and honoring those whose names appear on the tags. It is a touching way to show your respect to our Veterans and our veteran First Responders.”

The Row of Honor began in 2013 and was so well received by the public that Odell decided to make it a semi-annual event. The Row of Honor is a fundraising venture among the Joint Veterans Council, Putnam County Tourism and Putnam County government. This year, money raised through sponsorships of the flags will be used to support the Putnam County Veterans and Military Museum, which is located in Veterans Memorial Park in Kent.

“Seeing the sea of American flags is incredible,” said State Senator Terrence Murphy. “I am honored to stand here today. It is important that we do what we can for our Veterans. That is why I am so pleased to announce that the passage of the Vietnam Veterans’ Equality Act has been signed into law by Governor Cuomo. The Vietnam Veterans of America will now be recognized by New York State as an official benevolent organization. It will now have the status and resources to better serve our New York Veterans, along with the other rights and privileges conferred to other traditional Veterans service organizations.”

In addition to the colorful display of American-made Stars and Stripes there will be flags representing the five branches of the United States Armed Forces: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard. There will also be flags representing the Army and Air National Guards, Merchant Marines, Fraternal Order of Police, POW/MIs and a special 9/11 flag.

Sponsorships may be purchased for $100 per flag. Checks should be made out to the Joint Veterans Council and sent to the Putnam County Veterans Affairs Office, Donald B. Smith Government Campus, 110 Old Route 6, Bldg. 3, Carmel, NY 10512. For further information, call Art Hanley at (845) 808-1620 or go online to putnamcountyny.com/roh.
Mid-Hudson Brain Injury Grand Opening Held in Carmel

The Mid-Brain Injury Center hosted a grand opening and ribbon cutting celebration on Thursday, October 29.

The Mid-Hudson Brain Injury Center (MHBIC) is located at 1961 Route 6, Suite 2B, Carmel and will focus on skills and strategies for individuals with diverse forms of brain injury that will assist in maximizing strengths, and remediating cognitive and social/emotional deficits. Targeted skill areas will include attention, memory, executive functions, emotional regulation, communication, academic, and vocational. The objective is to help facilitate reintegration to family, home, and community by giving people the tools they need to maximize their choices.

MHBIC, a division of Putnam ARC, will also offer training programs and support for caregivers, schools, agencies, and other providers of services within the brain injury community. Additional services offered at MHBIC include Waiver program NYSDOH Service Coordination, OPWDD Medicaid Service Coordination Services, Community Integration Counseling (CIC) Services, and multiple support groups for survivors and caregivers.

Local elected officials, members of area Chambers of Commerce, brain injury survivors and their family members attended the ceremony. Welcoming comments were made by PARC’s Executive Director Susan Limongello, PARC’s Assistant Executive Director Darby Walsh, and MHBIC Director Dr. Lois Tannenbaum. Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell also addressed the crowd and welcomed the center to the area.

To learn more about MHBIC’s programs and services or to enroll, please contact Lois Tannenbaum at 845-225-3972.

Cardillo Donates Toward 5th Annual Veterans Thanksgiving Dinner

Lou Cardillo of the Lou Cardillo Home Selling Team donated $500 to the Purple Heart Homes NY Downstate Chapter for the 5th Annual Veterans Thanksgiving Dinner.

In July, Lou Cardillo announced that he would be partnering with the Purple Heart Home NY Downstate Chapter and Carmel Town Councilwoman Suzi McDonough to continue the annual Veterans Thanksgiving Dinner that Senator Ball started five years ago.

The annual event has become so popular that nearly 500 veterans and their guests have already RSVPged for the dinner, which will take place on Saturday, November 21, 2015 at the Putnam Golf Course.

Lou Cardillo is urging other members of the community to donate needed funds to make this free meal possible now in its 5th year. Members of the community can donate turkeys, their time or make a financial donation on behalf of the event directly to the Purple Heart Homes NY Downstate Chapter and mail to P.O. Box 27 Croton-on- Hudson, NY 10520.

“I am so happy to partner with Purple Heart Homes NY Downstate Chapter and Suzi McDonough to keep this wonderful tradition going,” said Lou Cardillo. “We have a wonderful team that is volunteering to help run this event, but we are still need the community’s support to make this all possible.”

“It’s great that the community is coming together to host this dinner that honors and pays tribute to our Veterans for the fifth year. I thank Lou Cardillo for his generous donation to help us obtain the needed funds for this wonderful event,” said Eugene Parrotta, executive director of Purple Heart Homes NY Downstate Chapter. “I always look forward to the Veterans Thanksgiving Dinner each year, as it is truly an incredible event for everyone who attends.”

Event organizers are still seeking donations for the event, including turkeys. If you are interested in volunteering or donating goods, please contact Suzi McDonough at suzi5mcdonough@gmail.com or (914) 403-8463. Please send all financial donations to: Purple Heart Homes NY Downstate Chapter and mail them to P.O. Box 27 Croton-on- Hudson, NY 10520.
Brewster High School Salutes Local Veterans

On November 10th, Brewster High School presented “A Salute to Veterans” concert to honor veterans and their families for their personal sacrifice. The Marching Band began the concert with a rousing rendition of J.P. Sousa’s “Stars and Stripes” followed by the Presentation of Colors by NJROTC. The event included heart warming vocal performances by the various choirs of Brewster High School, lead by Choir Director, Patricia Taylor. Speakers included students explaining the origins of Veteran’s Day, John Brawley describing jobs in the military and keynote speaker SMgt. Matthew Castellano detailing the sacrifices and rewards of serving our country. Msgt. Scott Lowery read the beautiful poem “Freedom isn’t Free” by Kelly Strong. Justin Ferrara explained the POW/MIA Remembrance followed by Taps played by Sarah Comer & Sarah Mitchell.

The highlight of the evening was the performance by the featured musical guests, “The U.S. Fleet Forces Woodwind Quintet,” Former member and Master of Ceremonies, Chris Vlangas, joined them to perform with the Brewster High School Wind Ensemble. To show their thanks to all those veterans in attendance, the BHS Combine Choirs, BHS Wind Ensemble & The U.S. Fleet Forces Woodwind Quintet performed the “Salute to the Armed Forces” where veterans were asked to stand when their heard their song for their particular branch of the armed forces. The event concluded with “God Bless America.”

This annual tradition is a combine effort that not only teaches students to thank those who serve our country but also give them the opportunity to personally express those thanks.

Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES Superintendent to Retire

Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES District Superintendent Dr. James Langlois has announced his intention to retire at the end of this school year, concluding more than 50 years in public education and leaving behind a legacy of innovation and service.

Dr. Langlois, who was named the 2015 New York State School Superintendent of the Year, has served as BOCES Superintendent for 11 years and served the previous eight years as Superintendent in Goshen. Before that, he was an Assistant Superintendent on Long Island and worked in a number of leadership positions in the public schools of Manhattan and the Bronx. He began his career in public education as a high school English teacher in Connecticut.

Dr. Langlois has led Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES to become a responsive, innovative and collaborative agency, providing special education, curriculum creation, career and technical education, professional development and other services to some of the most highly rated and respected school districts in the nation and helping school districts meet the rapidly changing challenges of education reform and tight budgets with flexible, cutting-edge, high-quality and cost-effective service.

Dr. Langlois has served as President of the New York State Council of School Superintendents (THE COUNCIL). He has also served on THE COUNCIL’s Executive Committee, its House of Delegates, Commissioner's Advisory Council, on many of its committees, and is a co-author of its recent vision statement, Public Education Matters.

He served for seven years on the national governing board of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), THE COUNCIL’s national affiliate, and for several years on the national Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA) Executive Committee.

Dr. Langlois holds two Masters Degrees and a Doctorate in Educational Communication from Columbia University Teachers College. He has taught graduate educational leadership courses at Fordham University and SUNY New Paltz. He is the author of several national and regional conferences.

Under his leadership, Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES has received national and regional recognition as a model of excellence in such areas as developing independence in multiply handicapped students and incorporating entrepreneurship into career and technical education.

“During Jim’s tenure, PNW BOCES has advanced in many areas with excellent hiring practices, program growth, budget efficiencies and excellent student performance,” said Board of Education President Richard Kreps. “Programs continue to excel under Jim’s leadership and he will be missed.”

Kreps said succession planning was underway. As a BOCES, the agency must receive approval from the state Education Department to fill the position. That approval is based on a consensus of the 18 component districts that this BOCES continues to fill a need. Once the agency receives the green light, Kreps said the board will begin getting input from staff and component districts on the qualities and characteristics they would like to see in a new superintendent.

In his retirement, Dr. Langlois said, he was looking forward to having more time to read, write, garden and travel. Asked what he expected the greatest challenge in education to be in the near future, he said he suspected that it would be the same as it has been in the past: to respond thoughtfully to education reform while protecting those aspects of local school culture that serve students effectively in the classroom and prepare them for the constant changes of our new century.
Taking Steps to Avoid (or Embrace) Steps

Steps. Some people seek to avoid them in their housing choices, preferring one-level living, while others insist on having sleeping quarters on a second level. The reasons for either preference can be quite different.

When I was five or six years old, I had a recurring dream of tumbling down an endless flight of steps, but they were of a rubbery consistency and I just bounced like a ball the entire way. Maybe my subconscious had absorbed the story my mother had told me about how as a toddler I miraculously survived a fall down the steps to a concrete basement floor.

The experience never dampened my enthusiasm for a beautiful staircase, however, from the time I discovered that I could enjoy a bumpy ride down the bare wooden steps on my romp from our second floor.

When we moved from a two-story row home in Philadelphia to a ranch-style home in the south, I remember, even as an eight-year-old, it seemed strange that when it came time to climb to my weary trundle bed, there were no steps to climb. It just didn't feel right that I was sleeping on the same floor where I ate. From my experience in real estate, I’ve found that many people feel the same way.

Let’s face it, steps are a necessity in most housing situations. While it may be easier to build a one-story house, it makes more sense economically to have two stories rise above one foundation and to be tucked in under one roof. Then, there is the argument for the raised ranch, which is basically a two-story involving a split staircase, and the split-level also involving steps, but not in one long run.

While early in my real estate career I thought that only senior homebuyers would have a preference for avoiding steps, I found many young buyers with the same avoidance issue because they had young children and were afraid they would be injured by falling or being too far removed if the master bedroom was on the first floor.

Older buyers may prefer homes without steps, and indeed for many with mobility issues the need for level floors is inarguable. But assuming one must live with stairs, is there any benefit?

A set of stairs in the middle of the home might be an annoyance for people who aren’t used to them, but I have lived with them for most of my life. There were times in New York City when I lived in four- and five-floor walk-ups. In the country, I’ve lived in a two-story home with laundry and storage in the basement. I’ve looked at the stairs as exercise. In fact, the workout that comes from regular stair climbing may help to keep us young.

As a case in point, I think of my mother-in-law. My wife was initially relieved when her parents, upon retiring to Hyannis, Mass., selected a single-story bungalow to live in. Her relief turned to irritation, however, on the first visit. The house was indeed one story – with a basement. This dim lower level was deeper than the first story of the house was high, with a steep set of rough-sawn wooden steps leading straight down into it. My petite mother-in-law flew up and down those stairs several times a day.

With every visit my wife would try to firmly make some suggestion to her mother that she not use the basement so often, but then Mamyté would run off again, carrying down laundry, bringing up line-dried linens (she had both outdoor and indoor clotheslines), putting food into storage or bringing up the good dishes for the many parties she hosted. Occasionally she would even make an extra trip down to use the rowing machine she had set up by the dryer. Well, it drove my wife crazy, but her mother lived to be nearly 92, and she was able to keep using the stairs until her last few years.

Even without the involuntary exercise stairs give us, they also benefit homeowners in other ways, whether by helping shape the design of a home or patio into a hilly property, offering a means to build up on a smaller parcel or helping keep the bedrooms away from the sounds – and smells – of the first floor.

Yes, steps are here to stay, whether we can make them or not and, lately, as I feel an occasional twinge in one knee or the other, I wonder when my day will come.

There is a song by George Gershwin called “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise.” Notice that he didn’t say he’d get there by strolling across to it or taking an elevator.


Do You Sip or Swig Your Wine? Here’s Why it Really Matters

Have you ever wondered why the person sharing a bottle of wine with you has a completely different perception of the wine? Ever wonder why the aromas of a wine can be so divergent and dissimilar from the taste?

Ever wonder why you may detect aromas of almonds in a white wine but your drinking companion picks up a citrus aroma?

Ever wonder why your first small sip of wine can change dramatically as you dive deeper into the bottle and pour larger portions?

Well, I have. And even more baffling to me is that the same phenomenon occurs in a group setting. I conduct numerous wine tastings each year, and invariably participants have significantly different experiences of aroma and taste.

Recently, I solved this conundrum.

The advances of science in the realm of wine over the past few years are mindboggling. Scientists have discovered aroma and taste receptors we didn’t know we possessed, new ways to bring out the best traits in a wine, and the role of our sense of smell in experiencing a wine.

Last week I learned something else I often wondered about but hadn’t been able to intellectualize. According to a study by the University of Naples conducted by Dr. Paolo Piombino, a wine consumer’s perception of a wine, among all of the factors that influence it, is indelibly marked by the size of a sip.

“The release of some volatile markers, involved in the fruity and oxidative characters of wine, was mainly affected by the sip volume after wine–saliva interaction,” the study said.

In past columns, I’ve reported on numerous factors that influence our perception of a wine, such as the shape of the glass, serving temperature and the size of a pour. But I had never considered there was a difference in my sensory receptors of a glass of wine if I sipped or swigged it.

When conducting my wine tastings, I explain to participants that our perception of wine is influenced more by our sense of smell than by our sense of taste. While this may sound counterintuitive, consider this: our physiology has five elements of perception of the wine.

The Italian study concluded that the larger the sip – more like a gulp – the smaller the air pocket that remains in the mouth. Since the mouth has a finite volume, the more highly volatile markers fill the void and dominate the senses. A smaller sip allows less volatile markers to escape and fill the larger air pocket, thus able to influence our olfactory senses before the highly volatile markers can respond.

The Italian study analyzed 22 volatile compounds emitted by a white wine. They concluded that floral and apple aromas (an ethyldecanoate marker) were dominant in smaller sips, while berries, grapefruit and honey aromas (a 2-phyllethyl acetate marker) dominated in larger sips – of the same wine. Numerous other relationships were discovered.

If the air bubble in our mouths wasn’t sufficiently bewildering to me, the Italian study further concluded that the level of salvia in our mouth adds another element of uniqueness to each sip of wine we consume. Just as air space affects aromas, so too the amount of salvia that interacts with the volume of wine we sip.

While each of our palates perceives wine from a unique-to-us perspective, our impression of a wine goes beyond this physiological profile. As the volume of our sips varies, so does our perception of a wine. Thanks to science, our wine tasting experiences may never be the same again.

Nick Antonaccio is a 40-year Pleasantville resident. For over 20 years he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. He also offers personalized wine tastings and wine travel services. Nick’s credo: continuous experimenting results in instructive behavior. You can reach him at nantonaccio@theexaminternews.com or on Twitter @sharingwine.

By Nick Antonaccio

You Heard It Through the Grapevine

Another advance in the science of wine

The Italian study concluded that the larger the sip – more like a gulp – the smaller the air pocket that remains in the mouth. Since the mouth has a finite volume, the more highly volatile markers fill the void and dominate the senses. A smaller sip allows less volatile markers to escape and fill the larger air pocket, thus able to influence our olfactory senses before the highly volatile markers can respond.
**Tuesday, November 17**

**Professional Women of Putnam Annual Gift/Gala Thanks Networking Benefit for Putnam/Northern Westchester Women’s Resource Center.** The event will take place from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. at the Chophouse Grille located at 957 Route 6 in Mahopac. PWP is asking everyone who attends to bring an item from the wish list of the Women’s Resource Center. Some items that are needed are: diapers, snow boots, gift cards to local supermarkets, Kmart, Walmart, CVS, Rite Aid, Gas cards and hair cut gift certificates. For a complete list email info@professionalwomenofputnam.com. The cost to attend is $15pp PWP Members $20pp Non Members. Includes appetizers and cash bar. To register please visit: www.professionalwomenofputnam.com.

*Intro to Hatha Yoga: Patterson Library, 1167 Route 311 Also: December 1 at 11:30 a.m. Experience the benefits of Hatha Yoga in these peaceful, hands-on introductory classes. Certified Yoga instructor Julia Calabrese-Harrer, RYT, will lead you through gentle poses and teach you breathing techniques that will help bring the mind and body closer together. Register for one or both classes! Registration required. Separate registration for each class. To register or for more information, visit us online at www.pattersonlibrary.org and click on calendar or call 845-878-6121 x10. Free program.*

Bring your dogs, cats and ferrets to a free rabies vaccination clinic: 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Sponsored by the Putnam County Department of Health, the clinic is being held at Brook Farm Veterinary Center, Routes 22 and 164 in Patterson. Open to all Putnam County residents. Please bring photo ID as proof of Putnam County residency, as well as proof of prior rabies vaccination. Tags are not acceptable. If you do not have proof of prior rabies vaccination, your pet will receive a one-year rabies vaccine. All dogs must be leashed and in control at all times, and cats and ferrets must be in carriers. For more information and directions, please call the Putnam County Department of Health at (845) 808-1390 ext. 43127.

**Wednesday, November 18**

**Newbery Book Club at Kent Library:** At the Kent Public Library, the Newbery book club will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. 4:30 p.m.-5:15 p.m. We will be reading The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate. These books are often on lists of summer reading, they are favorites of parents and teachers. We’ll have fun reading them, and doing book related activities. Registration is required. You may register for the program by going to www.kentlibrary.org or calling the Kent Public Library at 845-225-8858. The library is located at 17 Sybil’s Crossing, Kent Lakes.

**The Book Club for Cooks:** from 6 p.m.-7 p.m. This group is for those who love to cook and try new foods, or the same old foods you love, made in different ways. Our meetings will be themed. Our November theme is “A twist on a traditional Thanksgiving dish”. You may end up trying a new favorite to share around your Thanksgiving table. Make a dish to share (bring the recipe, too) Registration is required. You may register for the program by going to www.kentlibrary.org or calling the Kent Public Library at 845-225-8858. The library is located at 17 Sybil’s Crossing, Kent Lakes.

**Thursday, November 19**

**Adult crafts at Kent Public Library, Sugar Scrubs:** It is never too late in life to discover arts and crafts. 2 p.m.-3 p.m. and following on every 3rd Thursday of the month, the Kent Public Library will hold crafts for adults. The November craft will be making your own exfoliating sugar scrubs. Make some for yourself, or give it as a gift. Don’t miss out on the fun! Registration is required. You may register for the program by going to www.kentlibrary.org or calling the Kent Public Library at 845-225-8858. The library is located at 17 Sybil’s Crossing, Kent Lakes.

**Saturday, November 21**

Holiday Bazaar: Come visit our annual Holiday Bazaar: There will be Christmas items for sale, crafts for the children, a White Elephant sale and raffle baskets. Bazaar is 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and lunch will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Gilead Presbyterian Church, 9 Church St in Carmel. Lake Carmel Park’s Annual Holiday Craft Fair, Lake Carmel Community Center. Vendors wanted. Contact lcpdclerk@townofkentny.gov or 845 306-5602.

Christmas Bazaar: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (Snow Day 11/28.) Crafts, Baked Goods, Gift Items, Decorations, & Refreshments. First Presbyterian Church, 411 Route 6N (at Scecor Road), Mahopac. The Gift & Thrift Shop is open Thursday and Saturdays 10AM-4PM. For more information please call 845-628-2365 or email presby411@verizon.net.

**Sunday, November 22**

Daniel Jewelers 27th Anniversary Celebration: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. We are offering our customers 30-50% off (excludes Diamond Engagement Rings). Enter our drawing to win a 14K 1.70ct Blue Topaz and a .20ct tw Diamond Necklace Valued at $1,000. Come in and take advantage of our 0% Financing. 1511 Route 22 Lakeview Plaza Brewster.

**845-279-1300**

Star Wars Reads Day will take place at Mahopac Public Library. 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Putnam County Land Trust – Skate in Your Big Back Yard. Brewster Ice Arena at 63 Fields Lane, Brewster. 4:30 p.m. until 6 p.m. Skate in Your Big Back Yard is a fund raising event to support the installation and maintenance of hiking and walking trails on Putnam County Land Trust properties. Putnam County Land Trust is an all volunteer organization that supports almost 10 miles of trails on 15 of its preserves that are open to the public. More trails are planned in the near future. Entertainment will include music during the skating session, a 50/50 drawing, and raffle items. A suggested donation of $10 per adult and $5 per child (12 and under) includes skate rentals. For more information or to make a reservation, please call 845-278-2808 or email us at events@pclnet .

**Monday, November 23**

**Revenerd, Imam and Rabbis welcome all to a Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration.** A program of prayer, poetry and song, followed by a dessert reception. Held at Grace United Methodist Church 7:30 p.m. Please bring a can of food to share with the Putnam Valley Community Food Pantry 337 Peeksskill Hollow Rd. Putnam Valley. Reservations encouraged but not required: events@rtpv.org (845) 528-4774.

*“Your Ruins in their Woods: Historical Archaeology of NYC Lands within the Town of Kent and Olive. 7 p.m. Town of Kent, Town Hall, 25 Sybil’s Crossing, Kent Lakes. Our presenter will be April M. Beisaw, PhD, RPA, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Vassar College. “Your Ruins in their Woods: Historical Archaeology of NYC Lands within the Town of Kent and Olive. The presentation is free and open to the public. FMI: 845 225 8366 or kenthistoricalsociety@gmail.com.*

**Magic Tree House Book Club at Kent Library**

The Book Club for Cooks: 5th Grade and Up Book Club: Every Thursday “Thanksgiving on Thursday”, by Mary Pope Osborne. If you would like to read all about Jack and Annie’s adventures and take part in some fun activities based on the books we read, this is the club for you! Registration is required. You may register for the program by going to www.kentlibrary.org or calling the Kent Public Library at 845-225-8858. The library is located at 17 Sybil’s Crossing, Kent Lakes.

**Support Groups:**

What can you do when someone close to you drinks too much? You might be surprised at what you can learn at an al-anon meeting. For meeting information please call 203-272-3900 or to view site www.westchesterputnamalanon.org

**Alzheimer’s Caregiver Support Group**

Putnam Hospital Center, 670 Stoneleigh Avenue. Carmel. 3rd Thursday of the month & time: 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. caregiving for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease...you don’t have to go it alone. Join us and receive the emotional, educational and social support needed to successfully care for someone with dementia. Free of charge. Registration required. For more information and to register: Call 800-272-3900 www.alz.org/hudsonvalley.

**Cancer Support Available: Support Connection, Inc.** A not-for profit organization that provides free, confidential support services for people affected by breast and ovarian cancer, offers a wide range of free support groups for women with breast and ovarian cancer. Groups focus on topics pertaining to living with cancer through all stages of diagnosis, treatment and post-treatment. They are offered in Westchester, Putnam and Duchess, and by toll-free teleconference. For a complete calendar of groups at all locations, visit www.supportconnection.org. Advance registration is required for all groups; call 914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290.

**Monday’s**

**Paws to Read at Kent Library**

Join volunteers from Therapy Dogs International and their dogs at Kent Public Library, for the Paws for Reading Program, select Mondays in September through November. This program is designed to give children, ages 6-10, the opportunity to gain confidence and improve reading skills by reading aloud to a therapy dog. This is a free event. One-on-one 15-minute sessions are available by appointment only. Registration is required. Once you are registered, you will be called and an appointment will be made. To register call the library at 845-225-8858 or stop by the Kent Library.

**5th Grade and Up Book Club:** Every Third Monday 5:30 p.m. Enjoy reading books at home, then join Miss Jenn and Miss Kathleen to discuss the books and have fun with friends! Registration required. For more information or to register contact the Patterson Library at 845-878-6121 x10 or go to www.pattersonlibrary.org and click Calendar.

**Tuesday’s**

Introduction to Mixed Media at Reed Library, Carmel. Create unique visual art pieces through the combination of watercolor, drawing, and collage techniques program runs through October 27, 10 a.m. to noon. Registration is required, 845-225-2439.
Thursday's

Stories, Songs and Crafts in English and Spanish at Reed Memorial Library Thursday’s pattersonlibrary.org and click Calendar.

For more information or to register contact the Patterson Library at 845-878-6121 x10 or go to www.pattersonlibrary.org and click Calendar.

Friday's:

Fall Reading Puppies: Program runs until December 4 from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Kids in kindergarten through fourth grade can read their favorite book to a guide-dog-in-training. Sign up for your 15-minute session with Miss Jenn! Registration required. For more information or to register contact the Patterson Library at 845-878-6121 x10 or go to www.pattersonlibrary.org and click Calendar.

Book Clubs:

Mahopac Public Library Adult Book Groups: Monday Evening Book group: Meets the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Light Bite Book Group: meets on the third Monday or third Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. Flo Brandon Book Review Group: meets on the first Friday of each month at 11 a.m. Wednesday Evening Crossover Book Group: meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm. Registration is required for the young reader book groups. Register online at www.mahopaclibrary.org, or call 845-628-2009, ext 100

Food Drives:

Food for Fines at Kent Library During the month of November, the Kent Public Library will participate in “Food for Fines”. Library patrons will have $1 waved from current overdue fines for each can or non-perishable food item donated. Donated food may not have passed its expiration date. “Food for Fines” can only apply to Kent Public Library fines, not fines from other libraries, and cannot be used to pay for lost or damaged items. Collected food will be donated to Putnam Community Action Program.

December 12 Event: 5th Toys4Tots Winter Celebration. Brewster Ice Arena from noon-4pm, with the donation of a new unwrapped toy will give families free rental on skates & ice skating from noon-4pm, also 12:30 p.m.-1 p.m. the Magic of Michael Bochar, 2 p.m.-3 p.m live music, and 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Santa & Mrs Claus.

Auditions:

Brewster Theater Company’s Armchair Actors will present a reading of the Christmas classic Miracle On 34th Street at our local libraries. If you wish to participate, contact patsoprano1@verizon.net for a script and join us at the first rehearsal. Rehearsals: Thurs Nov. 19 at 6:30 pm. St. Andrews, 26 Prospect St, Brewster Tues 11/24 at 6:30 p.m. Community Room at Mahopac Library, 668 Rt 6 Mon 11/30 at 6:30 at Mahopac Library. Performances: Mahopac Library Dec. 6 at 2 p.m. Kent Library Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. Brewster Library Tues. Dec. 15 at 7 p.m.

Colley Remembered by Brewster-Carmel Garden Club

continued from page 1 member.

“Lois was an avid gardener, accomplished NYS Federated Garden Club Flower Show Judge and a member of the garden club for more than 50 years,” the statement read. “She was a kind, classy lady who was always willing to share her knowledge with members. Our hearts go out to her family. We will miss her very much.”

Jo Ann Johnston, who is part of the Brewster-Carmel Garden Club, described Colley as “always very dignified, always a lady, always very fun to be around.”

Colley had been in the Brewster-Carmel Garden Club since her 20s when she was a new mother living in Brewster in the 1960s. When other club members had questions, they would go to her for advice.

“She’s just very genuine,” Johnston said. “Very, very lovely.”

Brewster-Carmel Garden Club’s Dimmy Lotrecchiano said considering the type of person Colley was—gentle and philanthropic—it was even more of a shock she would be murdered.

“She was just a very sweet person that you couldn’t believe that this would happen to,” Lotrecchiano said.

Last time Lotrecchiano saw Colley was in September during a flower show the club held. Colley, who was a flower judge for competitions like that, was a crucial person. As a contestant, Colley always had many entries and won multiple ribbons.

Lotrecchiano recalled Colley won a special ribbon that day.

The Brewster-Carmel Garden Club was actually holding a combined meeting with the Lake Mahopac Garden Club when near the start of the meeting, a club member stood up and told everyone she had something to tell them, with her phone in her hand.

She told everyone that Lois Colley had died from a possible homicide, according to news reports. The two clubs bowed their heads together and said a prayer in her name. Lotrecchiano said despite the tragic news, it was for the best that everyone was together to hear the news so they could express their feelings and thoughts on the spot, alleviating some of the grief.

In fact, if Colley were alive, it’s likely that’s a meeting she would’ve attended.

“It was probably the worst news we could have received as a group,” Lotrecchiano said. “Because Lois had been such a part of us for so many years.”
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By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor
@Directrays

Last week, after winning the Section 1 Class D volleyball championship, Haldane senior Nicole Etta admitted it would have been tough to sit down for Thanksgiving dinner with her sisters – Danielle and Lauren – if the Blue Devils hadn’t won the 2015 Section 1 title; something she, and both of her sisters, were a part of during 11 of Haldane’s 13 consecutive sectional crowns.

This week, Etta can sit proudly with her siblings no matter what happens next weekend at the NYS Final 4 in Glens Falls, Haldane’s home away from home; a place the Blue Devils will venture to once again after a clean sweep of Section 9 champion Pine Plains in last Friday’s Region 1 championship at O’Neill High School.

“No words can describe what was going on in all of our minds after every game today,” Etta said after the Blue Devils easily outworked the Bombers by a 25-11, 25-12, 25-8 count and advanced to sixth-straight NSY Final 4, 10th in 11 years. “We knew going into this game that Pine Plains wasn’t going to be easy, they had some good hitters that could put the ball away. Once we got into that gym today though we knew we had a point to prove, we have been proving it all season. Many people doubted us this season, saying we wouldn’t go very far with such a small team.”

That “small” team has played with “large” heart all season, erasing even the slightest bit of self-doubt early on, and by getting the necessary contributions from Nicole Etta (11 kills, seven digs), Brooke Vahos (12 kills, two blocks, seven assists), Marissa DiPalo (six kills) and Melissa Tringali (11 digs, six aces), the Blue Devils have reached the next goal.

“Our goal since the first day of preseason was to prove everybody wrong and show that we can play with the best of teams and that we can emerge victorious,” Etta said. “Going back to Glens Falls for senior year is an amazing feeling.”

It’s a feeling these Blue Devils have acquired taste for, having won a pair of state championships since 2011 and four overall during this seemingly patented run up the Northway. Most of this particular unit has been playing together since eighth grade, making the experience all the more special.

“The best part is we are not just teammates on the court, we’re all friends outside of volleyball,” Etta said. “Playing in the final four with your best friends is something that not everyone can say they did. We play with so much heart on the court, and the passion for the game on and off the court is unexplainable.”

The Blue Devils will work that passion to its very essence this coming weekend, hoping they can attain a fourth NYSPHSAA championship since 2007; the year the greatest Class D team in Putnam County history ripped the rest of the state a new one with the likes of five college-bound senior slammers and setters in Katie McConville (Gettysburg – D-III), Megan Lyons (Southern Connecticut State University – D-II), Rachel Flaherty (St. Anselm – D-II), Jen Lombardo (College of St Rose/Post University D-II) and Danielle Etta (University of Hartford – D-I).

“It is going to be very challenging for the whole team,” Etta said. “Yes, we’ve made it up to states, but that was only part of our goal. We have a point to prove after last year (losing in the state finals). We are going up next weekend with the intent to bring home the gold and prove to everyone and ourselves that we deserve to be where we are. This week we are going to be in the gym as long as we can be, this is the last week we will be playing together and we are going to hold onto every minute of it.”

Haldane will face defending champion Portville with revenge on its mind after it defeated the Blue Devils in last season’s state final.

Whether they take hold of the gold or not, the Blue Devils have exceeded the expectations of everyone but themselves, so don’t be surprised if there’s a bus full of screaming Blue Devils circling Mayor’s Park and the Village of Cold Spring next Sunday just around the dinner hour.

Only Tioga, Mayfield and defending NYS champion Portville stand in their way. Portville and Haldane played a five-set classic in last year’s final. The Portville Panthers and Haldane played an epic final last year when the Panthers trailed 24-22 in the fifth and final set, with Haldane serving for the state championship, but Portville scored the final four points to win, 26-24.
Hen Hud Falls Hard in Five-Set Thriller
Sailors Win First 2, Lose Last 3 in Class B Region 1 Championship

Hen Hud sophomore Zoe Staats shoots a kill back at Owego in Sailors’ grueling five-set loss in Region 1 title tilt last Saturday.

Hen Hud hitter Gillian Stieglitz slams one down in 5-set regional loss to Owego, who recovered from 0-2 deficit to win last 3 games to advance to NYS Class B Final 4.

Sailors celebrate a big point in Regional championship loss to Owego last Saturday at John Jay High.

Hen Hud’s Emily Barthelmes attacks net in regional title loss to Owego.

Hen Hud’s Alicia Nebrzydowski and Niasia Ramsey go up for block in 5-set Regional championship loss to Owego.
Bet on Yvette!

Panas Clinches NYS Region 1 Crown; Glens Falls Here We Come!

By Ray Gallagher

Walter Panas sophomore Yvette Burcescu (5) is about as sure a thing as Panther Coach Joe Felipe can bank on this 18-1 season, and the All-NYS outside hitter got it done when it counted most in the NYSPHSAA Region 1 championship, leading the Panthers past Section 4 champion Horseheads last Saturday in a close four-game match (25-14, 25-27, 25-23, 25-17) at John Jay Cross River High School. Burcescu broke the school’s single season kill record (723) and career kill record (1,463) while Panther Lauren Feeley also snapped the school’s single season record for aces (86) as the Panthers advanced to the Class A state championships at the Glens Falls Civic Center, where they will participate in a four-team pool-play semifinal round Saturday, Nov. 21, at 8 a.m. The unit of Julianna Bottarini, Julia Fields, Taylor Kammerman, Yvette Burcescu, Lauren Feeley, Bridget Walsh, Francesca Giannetta, Jen Braun, Shauna O’Flaherty, Julene Pineda, Demitra Spanos, Melissa Lussier and Sabrina Patriciello will take aim at school history, vying for the program’s first state title in their second visit to the Falls and the NYS Final 4 in the last four years.
Brewster senior Kevin Hazelwood (16:22) capped off his sterling high school cross country career with a seventh-place finish at the NYSPHSAA Class B meet at Monroe-Woodbury High School last Saturday. The Fusco twins (inset photo) of Somers, Greg (16:56.6) and Matt (16:57.6), were nearly conjoined at the finish line and showed just how bright the future is at Somers, placing 20th and 21st on a chilly morning across the Hudson River in Central Valley. The Class B race was won in 15:57.2 by Carthage junior Noah Affolder. Grace Bugara, a junior at Lakeland/Panas, clocked in at 19:11.4, good for 24th place among Class A girls. Teammate Sunjum Nagpaul (19:15.9) was 27th.