Outgoing No. Castle Planning Chair, Schiliro Squabble Over Appointment
By Martin Wilbur

The outgoing chairman of the North Castle Planning Board charged last week that the decision against reappointing him for another term may have been politically motivated.

Art Adelman, a 12-year planning board member, said he was informed by town Supervisor Michael Schiliro during a face-to-face meeting on Dec. 12 that he would no longer be serving on the board in 2016. He said he initiated the meeting with Schiliro earlier in the month.

Adelman, 76, a Republican who was initially appointed by the late supervisor Jack Lombardi, said he found the reason given to him for a change – to allow a growing number of younger residents who are interested in serving the town – to be a curious one because it has been his experience that many of those residents typically don't have the time to devote to serving because of career and family.

He theorized that Schiliro, a Democrat, was looking to continue to remake the planning board because he may have disagreed with the board’s handling of certain issues and applicants. He named outspoken developer Michael Fareri as one applicant who frequently appears before various boards that is victimized by town board bias.

“I think this is motivated by politics,” Adelman said of the decision to not reappoint him. “There’s little question in my mind that’s what happened here.”

He said he saw political overtones after his recommendation for the town board to consider North White Plains resident Jill Greto was rebuffed. Greto is a Republican; the appointee for that seat, Michael Pollack, is a Democrat, he said.

Adelman said he had an inkling that he continued on page 2

P’ville Looking to Move Forward With Parkway Field Bathrooms
By Arthur Cusano

The Village of Pleasantville is moving forward with long discussed plans to add permanent bathrooms to Parkway Field, and will likely choose to pay for extra utilities for the structure.

Village trustees approved a bid to send out to construct a prefabricated restroom building that will house four new single-occupancy bathrooms to replace the portable toilets currently used at the park.

"That, we hope, will solve a problem that has existed for a few generations," said Mayor Peter Scherer. "Perhaps on the day we have a ceremonial ribbon cutting for the restrooms we can have a ceremonial removal of the porta toilets.”

In November, trustees unanimously voted to approve bid requests for a new restroom facility at the Marble Avenue park featuring full plumbing that would be open to the public. Parkway Field currently has a restroom facility that is opened by the Pleasantville School District during certain school athletic events, but is closed most other times.

Scherer wants the building to also contain space for a possible concession stand that can double as storage space and sinks that would run lines used for water fountains, which the structure will likely not have. Electrical outlets in the building's interior will be accessible to village staff.

The upgrade to the larger model would cost the village an additional $20,000. While organizations like Pleasantville continued on page 4

New Castle, North Castle Among Safest Municipalities in State
By Martin Wilbur

Families have moved to Westchester for decades because of great schools and the security of its communities.

A report released last week from SafeWise, an independent nationally recognized organization that analyzes home security and safety, revealed just how safe it has been.

Seven of the 25 safest municipalities in New York State with at least 8,000 residents are in Westchester, including New Castle and North Castle, which were both rated in the top 10, according to the report. New Castle was rated second safest in the state while North Castle came in sixth.

SafeWise used 2013 data supplied to the FBI and based its conclusions on reports of incidents of violent crimes, such as aggravated assault, rape, murder and robbery, and property crimes, including burglary, arson, larceny/theft and stolen vehicles. The organization then calculated the likelihood of these crimes occurring out of 1,000 people in each municipality.

"People come to our town mostly for the schools," said New Castle Supervisor Robert Greenstein when told of the report. "They're coming here to get the benefit of great schools but they also want to have a nice community to raise their families.”

New Castle was reported to have .11 violent crimes per thousand and .431 property crimes per thousand while North Castle's statistics were .25 and .563, respectively.

continued on page 4
was being phased out last year when his previous five-year term expired. Instead of being reappointed for another five years, the town board decided to appoint him to the remaining year of former member Guy Mezzancello’s term. Mezzancello resigned from his seat after he won a special election in November 2014 for town board.

Reached last weekend, Schiliro dismissed Adelman’s allegations as not being factual and based on conjecture. There has been renewed interest by a cross-section of residents who have inquired about volunteering their time, he said. As a result, Schiliro said he and the board want to tap into that talent and enthusiasm.

“We have so many talented local people who have expressed an interest in the planning board,” Schiliro said. “There are people who want to get involved in the other boards—the zoning board, the ARB. That’s a good thing for the community and it hasn’t happened in all my years on the board.”

The supervisor also denied any insinuation that Adelman was let go because of his age. He said there continues to be number of seniors that serve the town on volunteer boards, including longtime town resident Charles Pound, who in his mid-90s is an active member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

“I’m never going to discriminate because they’re too young,” Schiliro said.

“It’s good to have people who are excited and ready to move into the fold,” he added. Adelman, who is retired from IBM and also had his own accounting firm, said he was disappointed that he wasn’t going to continue on the planning board but is not bitter by the turn of events. He says he has many other activities to keep him busy.

Outgoing No. Castle Planning Chair, Schiliro Squabble Over Appointment

Board of Legislators Chairman Michael Kaplowitz (D-Somers) and Vice-chairman Jim Maisano (R-New Rochelle) announced Monday that they have the support of a majority of their colleagues to continue in their leadership positions for the 2016 and 2017 legislative sessions.

The bipartisan power-sharing arrangement that has been in place for the past two years led to the most productive legislative term in many years. Chairman Kaplowitz and Vice-Chairman Maisano began serving on the Board of Legislators in 1998.

Chairman Mike Kaplowitz, who also represents New Castle and Yorktown, began serving on the Board of Legislators in 1998, the same year that Maisano took office.

“I am happy to continue in my leadership position as chairman of the Board of Legislators,” Kaplowitz said. “I think the confidence that my colleagues have demonstrated in Vice-Chairman Maisano and myself is a direct result of the inclusive, collaborative, professional and fair manner in which we have administered the work of the Board of Legislators for the past two years.

“We have many important issues to address in the next two years like continued compliance with the fair and affordable housing settlement, important capital projects and the transition to a private-public partnership to manage Playland.”

Maison said while disagreements are part of the political process, the board has maintained a decorum the past two years where issues don’t become personal.

“I am very happy to continue serving in leadership at the Board of Legislators with Chairman Kaplowitz,” he said. “Over the last two years, Mike and I have worked hard to maintain an atmosphere of professionalism and collegiality in the way we operate at the BOL.”

The Democratic and Republican caucuses also reaffirmed their respective leaders. Legislator Catherine Borgia (D-Ossining) will remain majority leader and Legislator John Testa (R-Peekskill) will retain the minority leader post. Legislator Alfreda Williams (D-Greenburgh) will be majority whip and Legislator Gordon Burrows (R-Bronxville, Yonkers) will be minority whip.
Astorino Calls Out Feds for Failure to Inform County of Iranian Hackers

Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino last week demanded answers from the Department of Homeland Security about why the county was never informed of a cyber-security breach by Iranian hackers at the Bowman Avenue Dam in Rye in 2013.

“If this information was important enough to be reported to the White House then why wasn’t it reported to me and the county officials who would have been required to deal with the consequences of any terror attack,” Astorino said. “It is unacceptable that in this day in age that I had to read about this in the newspaper. No amount of intelligence information is too small or insignificant when it comes to security.”

On Dec. 21, The Wall Street Journal published a report saying Iranian hackers infiltrated the control system at the Bowman Avenue Dam two years ago, citing unnamed federal officials. According to the report, the White House was notified of the breach.

Despite being a member of the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, Westchester County was never alerted to the potential security risk. Since January 2010, a Westchester County police detective has been assigned full-time to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force to ensure access to the highest levels of intelligence information affecting Westchester and its citizens. Westchester is also part of a separate counter-terrorism zone that includes Putnam County.

The Bowman Avenue Dam, located in the Village of Rye Brook, is owned by the City of Rye and controls water on the Blind Brook flowing south through the city. The dam, which is designed to mitigate flooding, has a computer-operated sluice gate. The reports suggest that while the hackers never took control of the dam, they were able to penetrate the electronics system.

“Even though it is done with computers, this is considered a criminal break-in,” said Public Safety Commissioner George Longworth. “The link to a possible terror threat makes this extremely serious.”

New Law Allows County to Bypass Referendum on $10M Water Projects

A new state law sponsored by Assemblyman Tom Abinanti (D-Greenburgh/Mount Pleasant) and Sen. Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D-Yonkers) authorizes Westchester County to bond sewer and water capital projects over $10 million without the need for a referendum.

Under the previous state Local Finance Law, Westchester was the only county in the state required to conduct a referendum on capital bonding over $10 million. The new law continues the requirement that the Westchester Board of Legislators hold a public hearing before authorizing bonding.

“Capital projects that protect clean water are critical to the health and safety of Westchester residents,” Abinanti said. “Westchester should not be the only county in the state required to face the cost and delay of a county-wide referendum before financing these vital projects.”

“The new law is designed to remove a significant impediment to the county’s improving its water and sewer infrastructure before it badly deteriorates and requires even more costly replacements,” said Abinanti, a former county legislator.

Prior law permitted bonding in excess of $10 million without holding a referendum in limited circumstances. Thus, expensive improvements were often delayed until deterioration was so bad that the state ordered the county to make the repairs – which the county bonded without a referendum.

The state Department of Health supported the legislation, which is effective immediately.

“The referendum requirement threatened the county’s ability to make capital improvements to maintain its water and sewer systems,” Abinanti said. “The new law strikes the right balance – public input at a public hearing without the delay and cost of a referendum.”

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Dad’s Club and AYSO have said they did not want to make the investment, Scherer said they would likely use it if built.

“Part of that is that there’s a sense out there that it’s time for the village to step up and make some investments, which obviously we’re doing,” he said.

Quotes received from the Public Restroom Company of Minden, Nev. lists the cost of the basic unit at $114,245. It would cost $135,580 with a concession stand. Turnkey installation of either building would cost an additional $18,430.

Site installation of the basic unit is estimated at $132,675; with a concession stand would cost $154,010. An additional security system for the building would run about $4,595.

Scherer said they would likely use it if built.

“I feel like it’s decide now to do it or never do it,” Scherer said. “And it feels like a forward-looking thing that will have quite a bit of utility as a place to sell things or register kids or a place for an office for events.”

Trustee Mindy Berard said she was strongly against the concession stand, and the $20,000 would be wasted on something no one seemed to really want. “I think this is an add-on that is not needed,” Berard said. “If you want to make it a locked room that we could throw stuff in, fine. Take out the sink and maybe it would cost us a lot less. You’d have a lot of room and not a concession stand, or another bathroom. I can think of a lot better ways to spend that money than to put in a concession stand.”

Trustees Colleen Griffin-Wagner and Steve Lord said youth groups didn’t oppose the idea but weren’t keen on spending money at this time. “With this under the gun, they weren’t able to think outside the box about how they could use it, but they all really liked the idea,” Griffin-Wagner said. “I like the idea of having a space down there that, if our recreation center was ever moved, we’d have a place of operations down there. I think we could store stuff in there. I don’t think it’s that much money for something that I’d love to see us leverage down the line for camps and maybe generate some revenue.”

Lord said his biggest concern was that the building could be vandalized if it was not properly locked, but that he supported the idea if the facility could be effectively secured.

Village Administrator Patricia Dwyer said the building would be secured and closed for the winter. The building could also store a defibrillator, which she said the town does not currently have on site.

Dwyer said she expected to have estimates from bidders at last night’s (Monday) board meeting. She said it is estimated that the facility would take about three to four months to build. Site work would not begin until the spring.

Other Westchester municipalities that cracked the top 25 were Croton-on-Hudson (11th), Sleepy Hollow (12th), Harrison (18th), Eastchester (20th) and Mount Pleasant (23rd).

The Village of Malverne in Nassau County was ranked as the safest community in the state with just 2.46 property crimes per thousand. However, that village had a higher violent crime rate of .47 per thousand.

North Castle Supervisor Michael Schiliro said he was pleased to find the town high up on the list and credited having neighbors who watch out for each other and a local police department. “It’s nice and it’s just emblematic of so many different things with this community that make it a great place to live,” Schiliro said.

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Pleasantville’s McGuffog Promoted to Assistant Superintendent

By Arthur Cusano

The Pleasantville School District has a new assistant superintendent who is very familiar to faculty and students.

Carolyn McGuffog was promoted by the Board of Education on Dec. 22 to the position of assistant superintendent for educational services.

Trustees accepted her resignation last Tuesday from her prior position of director of educational services before immediately installing her in the new position. The promotion will allow McGuffog to better oversee staff, explained board President Shane McGaffey.

“I think the most important thing for people to understand is when you have the Annual Professional Performance Review or teacher evaluations it’s important that you have someone who is able to evaluate the people they oversee,” McGaffey said. “And with a lot of new regulations and things like that, unless you are an assistant superintendent you can’t oversee some of your staff.”

McGuffog will now enter into her own contract with the district, as opposed to the administrator’s contract she had prior to being promoted, McGaffey added.

“That’s a nice way of saying Carolyn is taking on more responsibility for a new title for no additional money, so thank you,” said Superintendent of Schools Mary Fox-Alter.

Under the new contract that goes into effect Jan. 1, McGuffog will make a prorated $179,195 for the current school year, $182,707 for 2016-17 and $186,288 for 2017-18.

McGuffog started with the district as a guidance counselor in 1993 and was promoted to director of educational services in 2005. She is also the district’s homeless liaison.

Fox-Alter praised McGuffog for putting her heart and soul into her work for the district. The promotion reflected that dedication, she said.

“An assistant superintendent is an incredible statement of position,” Fox-Alter said. “It recognizes a level of study and professional growth, it recognizes a level of correspondence with the board of education and it recognized the ability to effect and implement and advise on policy.”

McGuffog was on hand for the vote and thanked the board and her colleagues for the promotion.

“My staff is truly made up of saints who do very sacred work and I so appreciate them from the bottom of my heart,” McGuffog said. “I’ve had a ton of support from the board of education, I keep coming up with ideas and I’ve been trusted enough to be given the autonomy to implement them. And I think we have the best administrative staff that I could possibly work with.”

Pleasantville Diner Under New Ownership, to Renovate Next Month

By Arthur Cusano

The Pleasantville Diner has been a mainstay in the village since 1937, but the venerable eatery will soon have a new look and a new menu after it closes for renovations next month.

Phil DeRaffele purchased the diner located at 10 Memorial Plaza in November after the death of longtime owner Jack Mourouzis last summer. He said the Pleasantville Diner will shut down for a few days after Martin Luther King Day (Jan. 18) to revamp the menu for modern tastes, with better quality ingredients and no frozen foods.

“We’re going to be modernizing the menu,” DeRaffele said. “We’re going to be adding more appetizers. We’ll be keeping all the diner classics, but we’ll be cutting down the dinner entrees. We’ll be making the entrees fresher and of a better quality, but we’re not raising the prices.”

DeRaffele said he will be adding new American favorites like fruit smoothies and sliders to the menu, as well as more vegetarian and gluten-free offerings for health-conscious customers. He said he also planned to add local delivery service in the coming months.

The 37-year-old New Rochelle native said he has built or renovated 100 diners across the Northeast over the past 11 years, including in Atlantic City, Boston and Baltimore. He owns American Diner Corp., a third-generation family company that specializes in building or remodeling diners. The Pleasantville diner is the first that he will actually own.

“This diner is 15 minutes from my house,” DeRaffele said. “It was available, it’s small and it’s manageable and it’s in good shape, so it was a good opportunity to take my knowledge from all the projects I’ve worked on and apply them here.”

In addition to changing the menu, DeRaffele will be changing the serving plates and the way the food is presented. The booths, tables, floor and carpeting will all be replaced. Additional televisions will be installed and decorations will be updated.

“The last time they renovated was in 2000, so it’s due,” he said. “The things that are staying to me are timeless – the wood paneling, the light fixtures – it gives it a retro diner feel.”

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EMPIRE CITY CASINO
By Arthur Cusano

The Pleasantville School District will hold a community forum on Thursday, Jan. 7 to discuss budget issues as school officials are ready to begin discussions on the 2016-17 spending plan.

Board of education members, who announced the forum at their Dec. 22 meeting, said the meeting will be held in the Pleasantville High School cafeteria at 7:30 p.m. It is open to the public.

Board President Shane McGaffey said early indicators from Albany showed the tax cap next year will be about 0.12 percent, which would equate to a levy increase of $40,000. Superintendent of Schools Mary Fox-Alter said that number is a pittance compared to what the district received for the current year.

"Last year we were allowed to raise $670,000; that’s what we’re up against this year. The GEA was put in place in 2010 to help cover the state’s budget this year. The GEA has not been restored even though there was a freeze in 2008, while another 28 percent have seen increases of 7 percent or less. "This year alone, Pleasantville Union Free School District lost $349,822 due to GEAs for a total GEA state aid loss of $3.6 million and $3.7 million since 2010, McGaffey said. "That’s our money that they’re using to fill their budget deficit that no longer exists, and then we’re put in a position of having to slightly raise taxes," he said.

While Westchester and Putnam are the second highest Regional Cost Index bracket, school districts in the two counties are placed in the same funding bracket as districts in the Catskills where the cost of living is significantly lower. Long Island districts are in the highest bracket.

Last week, trustees agreed to send the letter to the state Education Department (SED) asking for the return of lost funding. The letter was based on a similar correspondence from the Westchester-Putnam School Boards Associations and made available to member districts to use in advocating for aid restoration.

The letter states that 20 percent of school districts in Westchester and Putnam receive less state funding than in 2008, while another 28 percent have seen increases of 7 percent or less.

"It is ironic that 72 percent of the districts in our region are still being shortchanged by over one-third of the GEA money due to them while NY State runs a surplus."

The letter also noted a freeze in foundation aid funding since 2007 that has withheld millions more from districts. While Pleasantville will lose $2 million, the letter states that high-need districts will lose far more. Yonkers, the fourth-largest district in the state behind New York City, Buffalo and Rochester, will lose $40 million, Mount Vernon will lose $22 million and Port Chester will lose $16 million.

The letter also states reductions in costly state mandates that had been promised to help offset the financial burden of the tax cap have not materialized.

The district’s letter was sent to Gov. Andrew Cuomo and local state elected officials. Fox-Alter said other area districts were considering sending similar letters.
Amended Parking Regs to Take Effect at Chap Train Station Lot

By Martin Wilbur

New overnight parking regulations and fine schedules at the train station lot in Chappaqua are set to go into effect after the New Castle Town Board amended the town code at its final meeting of 2015.

Officials decided to clamp down on car owners who leave their vehicles at the train station for days at a time, exacerbating the parking shortage at the town’s lot. The problem is particularly acute in recent winters when some cars have been seen in the lot buried under snow for weeks at a time.

Car owners may only leave their vehicles for more than 48 hours from Nov. 1 to Apr. 1 in metered lots where a permit is required in designated overnight parking areas.

“What we’re saying, if you’re going to be there for more than 48 hours, to park in a designated spot in the back,” New Castle Supervisor Robert Greenstein said during the public hearing earlier this month to amend Chapter 123 of the town code.

The fine for first-time parking violations will be $30, up from what has been $20. Failure to pay a fine for a parking violation within 30 days after the issuance date or after a conviction will result in the fine being doubled. If the fine is not paid within 60 days, the fine will be tripled.

The fine for an expired meter will be $30 and would be reduced by $10 if paid in person by the close of the next business day. The town will also establish a scofflaw list comprised of vehicles with at least three outstanding parking summonses.

Only one license plate is authorized for each metered permit, but up to three license plates can be authorized for each annual restricted parking permit. However, only one vehicle per permit may be parked at a time.

The changes, approved at the town board’s Dec. 15 meeting, will go into effect once the resolution has been filed with the state. That was expected to be in place this week for the start of 2016.

Police Blotter

North Castle Police Department

Dec. 18: Report of a larceny at Whippoorwill Crossing at 3:14 p.m. The North Castle Highway Department reported that an unknown party removed or stole a stop sign and a road closed sign that the department had placed there while the road is being worked on. The highway department wanted to make this incident a matter of record.

Dec. 18: Report of loud music in the area of Pheasant Drive at 9:20 p.m. The responding officer determined that the music was coming from a Half Mile Road residence. The officer spoke with the parties involved who turned off the music. Matter adjusted.

Dec. 19: A party called from Business Park Drive at 4:57 p.m. to report that he is having a verbal dispute with another party and is asking for an officer to intervene. The responding officers reported the situation was under control; one of the parties had left the area prior to their arrival. The complainant did not wish to pursue criminal charges. Witness deposition secured.

Dec. 22: Several callers reported by 6:38 a.m. a power outage and a possible transformer explosion had occurred on Washington Avenue.

Dec. 22: Report of a car striking a utility pole on Whippoorwill Road East at 7:23 a.m. The pole is across the roadway. Numerous callers all stated that the driver appears uninjured. The fire department and EMS were dispatched to the scene.

AG: Two Cab Companies Price Gouged After Valhalla Train Crash

Two local taxi companies were recently fined by the state attorney general’s office for gouging customers immediately following last February’s deadly crash involving a Metro-North train crash and an SUV.

Eagle Car Service, which is based in Mount Kisco, and Intrepid Tax Corp of White Plains were both cited with having inflated fares to a passenger in violation of the state’s price gouging laws.

Attorney General Eric Schneiderman’s office reached settlements with both companies, fining each $375. The companies also were ordered to refund the passenger the amount they had been overcharged.

“In moments of tragedy and adversity, it is incumbent on all of us to look out for our fellow neighbors, and that includes making sure that vital businesses do not engage in price gouging,” said Assemblyman David Buchwald, who organized outreach to Schneiderman’s office after reports of price gouging.

“The idea that someone would try to capitalize on such an unfortunate and unexpected disruption for thousands of commuters is just plain wrong. I am thankful to the area residents who came forward, and I am glad that actions taken by the attorney general have resulted in a positive outcome.”

The wife of one of the victims who was ripped off, Lewisboro resident Julie Alterio, sent a tweet to Buchwald the night of the accident informing him that her husband Michael had paid more than three times the normal fare to get home from White Plains in one of Intrepid’s cars.

Train service on the Harlem line was suspended once the crash occurred leaving thousands of commuters no way to get home. Michael Alterio said he was happy to hear that a clear message was sent by fining the livery services that took advantage of people who were stranded. He was charged $110 to get home last Feb. 3.

“The night of the derailment, I was worried about how I’d get from White Plains to my northern Westchester home,” Alterio said. “It was great to find a taxi, but I did not expect to get gouged.”

The second victim, an unidentified Manhattan resident who was a customer of Eagle Car Service that night, directly submitted a complaint to the attorney general’s office regarding his fare.

Coed Volleyball Tourney Returns to County Center

Registration is now open for the Westchester County Coed Volleyball Tournament, to be held Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 12 and 13 from 7 to 11 p.m. each night.

The tournament is open to men and women, 18 years of age and older. It will be played in round robin format the first night to determine the ranking of each team, with a double-elimination tournament for the championship round on the second evening. The tournament will be played in two levels of competition: recreation and power recreation. Awards will be given to the winning teams and runners up in each division.

The fee is $195 per team, with a limit of 20 teams. Deadline for registration is Friday, Jan. 8.

The Coed Volleyball Tournament is sponsored by Westchester County Parks and Friends of Westchester County Parks, Inc.

The Westchester County Center is located at 198 Central Ave. in White Plains. Parking fees apply.

For more information or to download an application, visit www.countycenter.biz. To receive an entry form by mail, call 914-231-4645.
By Neal Rentz

State Sen. Terrence Murphy (R-Yorktown) outlined some of the efforts the state legislature has undertaken this year to fight against the plague of illegal drugs last Tuesday night before the Mount Kisco Village Board.

Murphy, co-chairman of the Senate’s Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Abuse, said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported earlier this month that more than 47,000 Americans died in 2014 from drug overdoses. That represented a 14 percent increase over 2013.

Fighting heroin use has been one of Murphy’s priorities. “We need to do more,” he said.

Many youngsters are initially addicted through the “over prescription” of painkillers such as Oxycontin, Murphy said. For example, a 16-year-old who has a tooth extraction could be prescribed up to 90 Oxycontin pills, he said.

A key legislative victory this year was expanding drug treatment options for addicts by providing more opportunities to qualify for drug court. Drug court can provide medical treatment for addiction as an alternative to prison sentences.

Mayor Michael Cindrich said the village began a program to offer alternatives to jail time for substances abusers 26 years ago. The efforts of the village justices and resident Mel Berger, head of Mount Kisco’s Drug Council, have made the program a success, he said.

Other municipalities in the state could use Mount Kisco as a model for their own drug courts, Cindrich added.

Murphy touted his initiative to obtain a $250,000 state grant to provide Narcan, a medication used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, to school nurses. “That’s something I’m especially proud of,” he said.

Murphy also addressed other topics at the meeting. He urged for more business friendly policies, including eliminating unnecessary regulation, to encourage greater commercial investment.

Commercial development was a priority when he served on the Yorktown Town Board, Murphy said. The town was successful in attracting new businesses and a major renovation of the Jefferson Valley Mall.

Working on behalf of veterans has been another priority for Murphy. A major piece of legislation signed into law by Gov. Andrew Cuomo declared the Vietnam Veterans of America as a benevolent organization. The group’s new status enables it to provide the same benefits and honoraria that other veterans groups have offered such as the storage of flags and memorabilia for display in the state capitol in Albany, he said.

In his first year as senator, Murphy said he strives to keep open lines of communication with his constituents. “I can’t help you if I don’t know what you want,” he said.

Mount Kisco Recreation is offering various programs for its pre-school-aged residents. Tumbling Toddlers is a movement program for two- to four-year-olds designed to develop a stronger connection between parent and child through hands-on movement activities and the use of song and games. This program, led by LeapSmart™, runs on Thursdays from Jan. 14 through March 10 from 10 to 10:45 a.m. The fee is $150.

Pre-School Yoga is another very popular program for children three to five years old. Your child will learn flexibility, self-confidence, strength and more through the use of calming music and creative games. This program, led by Emily Flay of The Children’s School of Yoga, is held on Fridays from Jan. 8 to March 18 from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. The fee is also $150.

For more information about these programs or to register, contact Mount Kisco Recreation at 914-666-3059.
Editorial

When Life’s Obstacles Become too Much to Bear, Stay Positive

Sometimes it can seem impossible to surmount life’s obstacles, particularly if you have been dealt more than your fair share. But you can often draw on the strength of others for inspiration and helpful advice, especially those who have gracefully overcome difficult trials of their own.

Author and musician Vanessa Leigh Hoffman first learned of the power of her own strength as a teenager when she was undergoing chemotherapy while attending school and writing and recording music.

“One can conquer anything he or she puts a focus on,” said Hoffman, who over the course of her life, endured both stage three Hodgkin’s disease and a car accident that left her in a coma for close to two weeks. “After my accident, I had to relearn to walk, talk, write, sing and do even the most menial tasks.”

While not everyone will have to deal firsthand with that much tragedy, we are all subjected to unexpected challenges in our daily lives. To help, Hoffman is offering some practical insights for coping with everything, big or small.

Be Inspired. Allow your negative experiences to be your inspiration. For example, Hoffman has reprinted some of the great themes of her life in her art. Her new novel, “Treasure,” a fast-paced trilogy, tells the story of two twin boys orphaned and separated at birth, challenging readers to ask critical questions about how our lives are shaped.

“Treasure,” the winner of the Hollywood and Southern California book festivals, was inspired by Hoffman’s real life encounter with President Kennedy’s former chef, a mysterious figure in her life.

Don’t Be Disheartened. Whether it’s discouraging feedback from a teacher or a bleak prognosis from a doctor, don’t let the words of experts, however well-intentioned, define the scope of your potential. After Hoffman’s accident, the medical team caring for her predicted that she would never talk, walk, read or write again. Instead of resigning herself to their expectations, she became a veritable renaissance woman, as a singer-songwriter, businesswoman and author fluent in four languages, amongst other varied pursuits.

Guest Column

Is Your Life in Balance? Healthy Habits to Try in 2016

Is your life in balance? The new year is a great time to take stock of your routine and make improvements where necessary.

Here are some thoughtful habits to consider incorporating into your day in the coming year:

Find Time to Decompress
• If you’re a morning person, get out of bed 30 minutes earlier than normal to wake up with your favorite coffee or tea and think about what you need to accomplish for the day.
• More of a night owl? Spend at least 30 minutes before going to sleep to unplug from technology and relax with a new book you’ve had on your list to read.
• Schedule time for exercise to reduce stress and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Planning workouts ahead of time will make you more likely to stick to them.

Write Everything Down
• Handwritten notes and to-do lists will reinforce your memory of the tasks you need to conquer. They also give you the option to look at what you need to do for the day and prioritize the list. Consider a personal planner, such as those from the popular AT-A-GLANCE collection, which includes a variety of styles that reflect your personality and organizational needs.
• Documenting your day not only keeps you organized, but also provides you with an opportunity to look back and reflect on your life’s accomplishments, memories and milestones from the year.

Balanced Diet, Balanced Life
• Maintaining a healthy, balanced diet will help you feel great, and can increase your focus, energy levels and productivity.
• Plan out your meals ahead of time before going shopping by marking them in a calendar. This will give you more time during the week to cook and prepare meals, without having to make frequent trips to the store or feel tempted to grab take-out. You’ll be more likely to stick with the habit if you love the calendar you use, so consider something easy on the eyes, such as an AT-A-GLANCE fashion planner.
• Cooking your own fresh meals can help keep your bank account balanced, and is often much healthier than food from a restaurant. And spending time in the kitchen is also a stress reliever for some people.

Make a fresh start. The beginning of a new year is the perfect time to make positive changes to how you schedule and organize your time.

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Letters to the Editor

Most Gun Deaths Are Caused by Mental Illness or Emotional Problems

In your recent article on the vigil in Chappaqua (“Chappaqua Vigil Calls for End to Gun Violence Three Years After Newtown,” Dec. 15-21), you listed a quote that 30,000 die by guns each year. More than 50 percent of those are suicides, who, if guns did not exist, would likely employ another method. In the remaining cases, the majority of shootings are internal within ethnic groups. The vast majority of deaths by guns are because of a mental or emotional problem.

Under Obama Care, a vast change in available funds for mental treatment has occurred. However, laws permit the mentally ill to determine their own treatment and there is a lack of resources (despite the funding) for adequate treatment. If you ask any local police force they will tell you they deal with a revolving door of seeing the same people repeatedly with inadequate laws and treatment facilities to handle those with emotional and mental problems.

Erik Nicolaysen
Chappaqua

Letters Policy

We invite readers to share their thoughts by sending letters to the editor. Please limit comments to 250 words. We will do our best to print all letters, but are limited by space constraints. Letters are subject to editing and may be withheld from publication on the discretion of the editor. Please refrain from personal attacks. Email letters to mwilbur@theexaminernews.com. The Examiner requires that all letter writers provide their name, address and contact information.
By Martin Wilbur

Through most of his twenties Michael Blacker was addicted to marijuana. If he tried to stop, Blacker would suffer the extreme effects of withdrawal.

About a decade into his addiction Blacker had a terrifying dream. He rested his head on the pillow one night and heard a voice telling him “You’re going to die, you’re going to die. You better do something about it.”

“I would hear that voice and it would scare me so much, to the point where because I was scared somebody invited me to church,” Blacker recalled. “I went in desperation needing help.”

The house of worship that the friend asked him to accompany him to was the World Evangelism Bible Church, a nondenominational Christian congregation in Danbury. Blacker said during a prayer on his first trip there his hands began to feel hot. The pastor said if anyone had that sensation to step forward. Blacker approached haltingly. The pastor then asked anyone who needed healing to step forward.

Blacker said he couldn’t believe that the church’s clergy was asking him to provide healing when he was the one who attended in search of help. But he liked what he felt. “Something just came over me and there was such a change in my body,” Blacker said. “I don’t know how to describe it. I started praying. Words began coming out of me. I don’t know where they came from but I’m praying for people and I started feeling in the presence of God a different dimension. My whole body was like lifted up.”

The decision to go to church that day helped Blacker set his life course. Church elders asked him to visit parishioners in area hospitals where he would pray for the sick. About five years ago after attending a chaplaincy program and then seminary, Blacker, 53, became a pastor and now leads the church’s Connecticut congregation.

In high school, Blacker started drinking. In college he soon replaced alcohol with marijuana. He went to college – and dropped out – and didn’t want to be involved. He grew up a shy, introverted youngster whose family attended an Episcopalian congregation. He thought of as a future clergy member. He said he is thrilled that he has been able to use his gifts to help people as he was helped more than 20 years ago. He’s certain that it’s in God’s hands.

Perhaps Blacker’s first exposure to the power of prayer came from his paternal grandmother. During his darkest days, which included run-ins with the police, he would periodically visit her in Florida. Blacker would see her pray daily in her house. But it was his grandmother’s unconditional love struck a chord in him.

“She always bought me clothes and never said anything except that I’m praying for you,” Blacker remembered.

Blacker said he couldn’t believe that the church’s clergy was asking him to provide healing when he was the one who attended in search of help. But he liked what he felt. “Something just came over me and there was such a change in my body,” Blacker said. “I don’t know how to describe it. I started praying. Words began coming out of me. I don’t know where they came from but I’m praying for people and I started feeling in the presence of God a different dimension. My whole body was like lifted up.”

The decision to go to church that day helped Blacker set his life course. Church elders asked him to visit parishioners in area hospitals where he would pray for the sick. About five years ago after attending a chaplaincy program and then seminary, Blacker, 53, became a pastor and now leads the church’s Connecticut congregation. He serves in ministry, still visiting the sick and those in drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, providing counseling and speaking publicly – he’s fluent in Spanish and Portuguese – about the power of prayer and the miracles they produce.

One such miracle, he said, was within three weeks after his initial trip to the church he never returned to drugs. That was more than 20 years ago.

“For the first time in a long time my eyes were clear, everything was gone,” said Blacker, who previously owned his own painting and wallpaper business. “I’d been apparently healed, so I never went back to the drugs. I never thought about it.”

During his years in ministry and visiting patients in hospitals, Blacker said he has seen his share of miracles, which he has outlined in a book he wrote earlier this year called “Miraculous Prayers: Home to Get Your Miracle From God.”

Growing up in Bedford, Blacker, a Fox Lane High School graduate, may have been one of the last people anyone would think of as a future clergy member. He said he grew up a shy, introverted youngster whose family attended an Episcopalian congregation. He found church boring and didn’t want to be involved.

In high school, Blacker started drinking. He went to college – and dropped out – and soon replaced alcohol with marijuana. He infuriated his father who cut off all financial help. Perhaps Blacker’s first exposure to the power of prayer came from his paternal grandmother. During his darkest days, which included run-ins with the police, he would periodically visit her in Florida. Blacker would see her pray daily in her house. But it was his grandmother’s unconditional love struck a chord in him.

“She always bought me clothes and never said anything except that I’m praying for you,” Blacker remembered.

Blacker, who is single and plans to finish his college degree, said getting himself clean and finding a purpose repaired his relationship with parents. His message of hope and prayer during interfaith counseling sessions has also endeared him to people of other faiths.

Blacker said he is thrilled that he has been able to use his gifts to help people as he was helped more than 20 years ago. He’s certain that it’s in God’s hands.

“When I wake up in the morning and feel tired or overwhelmed by life’s challenges I wonder why I have that gift,” Blacker said. “The Bible says that when you are in your mother’s womb God knows you and ordained you. He had a plan for your life.”

To learn more about the World Evangelism Bible Church or to contact Pastor Michael Blacker, visit www.webicamerica.org or call 914-299-6254.

Kaitlyn Corbett has always called New York home. Born and raised in Buffalo, she earned her degree in nuclear power engineering at SUNY College of Technology and moved to Peekskill to start her career at Indian Point. Safety is the single most important mission for Kaitlyn and her 1,000 colleagues at the plant, and it’s been the focus of her years of study and training in the nuclear power industry. Every day, engineers are graded on their performance by inspectors from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The NRC recently gave Kaitlyn and the team at Indian Point its highest safety rating — for the fifth year in a row.

Discover more about Indian Point at SafeSecureVital.com
By Arthur Cusano

Sunday mornings are synonymous with church services, but one Pleasantville congregation is attracting parishioners on Saturdays to cater to a changing population.

For the past two months, the Emanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church on Manville Road has held a weekly Saturday series called Faith, Food and Friends at the church starting at 5 p.m.

“A couple of years ago the congregation said we need to keep bringing the message to the people, and we needed to do it in new and creative ways,” said Pastor Paul Egensteiner. “The Lutheran church can be very liturgical in structure, and we needed to do something different.”

The result was a late afternoon weekly meeting that starts with a service, includes music by Music Director Anthony Rispo and ends with a free dinner.

“There are two groups we are focusing on: families in the congregation and the neighborhood and people who then may have little or no experience with church, or a negative experience with church that we can help bring back in,” Egensteiner said.

On Dec. 19, there was a storybook reading for children and gospel readings by church member AnnMarie Olsen. Sometimes the meal is catered by a church member who runs a catering company, preparing anything from Mexican fare to pasta to chicken. Other times members hold a potluck dinner.

“We’re trying to make church less what people think it is,” Egensteiner said. “For some people Sunday morning is great, and that’s what they expect and what speaks to them, and that’s fine, we’re not messing with that. But for other people, they need to hear about God’s love for them in a new way, so we’re trying to communicate that in a very hospitable way. We want people to feel welcome and fed, both spiritually and physically.”

There’s a different theme each month. November was about giving thanks and December’s theme has been tied to the Advent calendar. January will focus on new beginnings.

While the Lutheran population in Westchester is relatively small, Egensteiner said Emanuel Lutheran has maintained a stable congregation. The church’s outreach programs allow members to get involved in the community, he said. There is a choir, a brass group and a book club that discusses popular and religious-themed works.

“We lose people to retirement and movement out of the neighborhood, but we always get new people,” Egensteiner said. “This is a strong church in a wonderful community.”

Parishioner Irene Kogelmann said the weekly event gives her something to look forward to on Saturday evenings. Plus, it’s important to help bring in newer and younger members.

“Our age group is fading away,” said Kogelmann, a 58-year Emanuel Lutheran member. “Many of us were the volunteers in the ‘60s, ‘70s, ‘80s and ‘90s. And the young people aren’t able to do it because they are working, so you don’t have the same kind of cohesiveness we had years ago.”

“The church was huge at that time,” she added. “We had a very charismatic minister, and in the ’50s people were having big families. So our kids grew up here. But there aren’t that many children being born at this point, and young families are finding this place expensive.”

Christine Thompson is another longtime member. Her father, Rev. John Junghan, was the former pastor. She still attends the church event after moving to Putnam County. The Faith, Food and Friends series has also been good for parents who have children involved in other activities on Sunday mornings.

“We want people to hear that message to come to church, “ Thompson said. “The series is ideal for today’s busy families who often have conflicts on Sundays, she said.

“Saturday night after running around and doing what you have to do, you can come to church,” Thompson said. “And they have a meal afterwards, so you don’t have to cook.”

Faith, Food and Friends returns from a one-week Christmas break on Jan. 2. On Jan.16, the church will host a “bring a friend” Saturday, where parishioners are encouraged to invite someone who is not a member.
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Prices valid while inventories last. Good through 12/31.
More Living Using Less Space With Convertible Furniture

In the early days of our marriage, my wife and I lived in a small New York City studio apartment and we had to make the most of what space we had.

Some of our neighbors opened up floor space by slepping on Murphy beds that folded up vertically into the wall. We opted instead to purchase an extra-long convertible sofa, a Lawson-style, upholstered in red velvet, and had that as our regular bed. It followed us through many moves. The daily ritual of folding the sofa up again early in the morning became ingrained in us.

Eventually we settled into our home in the suburbs and acquired a queen-sized bed in its own bedroom. Our old convertible sofa became part of our living room furniture. We imagined that it could still be unfolded for our relatives when they came to visit, but as we already had a separate guest bedroom in our new home, we didn’t need to entertain and have family over as before. I decided to investigate convertible furniture to see if it has evolved from my old city days.

There is no doubt that the fold-out sofa is the classic choice for temporary guest bedding, although many of us dread spending a night over that infamous metal bar that runs across the width of the mattress. Fortunately, a little research on the Apartment Therapy or Consumers Digest websites can give you advice for choosing the newest comfortable brands.

One alternative to the fold-out is a daybed with a slide-out trundle underneath, turning a sofa into two side-by-side twin beds. Another is the ingenious sofa bunk bed, which unfolds upward, revealing a ladder rungs and safety rails. For the more experimental, many manufacturers offer geometric foam pieces that can be rearranged like building blocks into a sofa, a daybed or a low table with extra blocks on the floor for seating. I’m not sure how much I would enjoy picking myself up off the floor after sleeping on that foam, but the younger or more limber among us may want to try it.

Once you know where your guests will be sleeping, it’s time to find them a place to sit and eat. The most traditional way to expand your dining table is to buy one that accommodates extra panels in the center, and perhaps unfold a card table for the overflow.

But if your space is too small for a dedicated dining table, there are still alternatives. One of my favorites is the fold-down table, where one edge is joined to the wall with hinges. When open, the legs unfold down for support, and when closed, the legs and eating surface lie flat against the wall. Some models, available online for the DIYer, reveal medicine cabinet-sized storage when the table is folded down. Other versions, such as those made by IvyDesign, turn the underside of the table into a framed work of art once it is folded up.

Even small furniture items can give you more space when you need it. Not only can sets of end tables nest into each other, but with design ingenuity even chairs and coffee tables can be stored in a similar way.

For the ultimate in space efficiency, one can marvel at the highly-engineered components that make up accordion-style apartments, where sliding and pivoting structures transform one room into three or more. The traditional Murphy bed, for example, not only folds up into the wall, but it might pivot to reveal bookcases and a fold-down table on the other side. What looks like a solid wall might easily slide forward, similar to the mobile shelving in museum archives, to create a new mini-room with bunk beds or other storage that unfold from the newly revealed wall.

While I don’t see myself returning to the days of folding my bed away every morning, I can certainly handle stacking a few coffee tables, matryoskha doll-style, after company leaves. Even this longtime suburban homeowner can adapt to using space in a new way.

Armonk Teen Continues to Make Waves in the Theater World

By Martin Wilbur

It’s fitting that the latest work in the theater for Armonk’s Alex Baron is being involved in a production that tells the story of a 60-and-up dance team.

For Baron, age has made no difference to him or those that he’s worked with in the industry.

Baron, who in the past two years has written and produced a one-act play and produced a full-length Off Broadway show in Manhattan, is an 18-year-old Penn State University freshman enrolled in the school’s Stage Management Program.

With the opening of the pre-Broadway premiere in Chicago this week of “Gotta Dance,” the story of the introduction of the New Jersey Nets’ senior dance troupe to the team’s halftime show in 2007, Baron is on track to become the youngest person with a producer credit for a Broadway show.

“Gotta Dance,” which is starring in the Chicago production Tony Award nominee Andre De Shields, Georgia Engel (best known for her appearances on “Everybody Loves Raymond” and “The Mary Tyler Moore Show”) and Stefanie Powers (“Hart to Hart”), is being targeted for an opening on the Great White Way next fall.

For the past few months, Baron has been working with the award-winning Broadway and film producer Dori Berinstein and noted animated film producer Bill Damaschke, who was chief creative officer at DreamWorks Animation, learning from two of the best about the theater industry.

“The nice thing I get from working with people like Dori and Bill is the experience,” said Baron, who started acting at five years old and was involved in productions when he attended Byram Hills High School. “It’s not to get credits to put on your resume but the experience and the knowledge you get from these credits is what matters.”

He said Berinstein and Damaschke have been receptive to his ideas for “Gotta Dance,” which has about a 20-member cast. Baron has been able to put a younger theater patron's perspective on a show about how a group of senior citizen dancers, known as the NETSional Seniors, learn hip-hop and refuse to be cast aside because of their age. The troupe remains intact even after the Nets’ move to Brooklyn several years ago.

Baron has been leading the social media and marketing efforts for the show to reach the younger generation in hoping that there will be extensive crossover appeal. He said last week he planned to be at the show’s opening last night (Monday).

Baron’s involvement with “Gotta Dance” comes during his first semester at Penn State.

“It’s really special because you’re not getting training in one aspect of the industry but the entire world of theater,” he said of his enrollment in stage management.

Baron has had an upward trajectory with professional theater. In 2013, he wrote and produced the one-act play “Love Behind Bars,” which was performed at the Manhattan Repertory Theatre.

The contacts he made through that show helped him produce the Off Broadway play “Vote for Me,” a musical version of a presidential debate where the audience voted for the candidate of their choice.

Despite his successes, Baron said he stays humble and hopes to continue to learn from everyone that he encounters.

“...the experience and knowledge that I’m getting is unbelievable,” he said.

Howard Meyer Acting Classes to Resume in P’ville

Howard Meyer’s Acting Program in Pleasantville begins its next session of classes starting the week of Jan. 4.

Created 21 years ago, the program is part of Axial Theatre, a professional company of actors and playwrights and appeals to a broad spectrum of students in age, vocation and interest.

“Whether it’s to pursue a professional career on stage and screen or to gain confidence by discovering inner talent, taking a class in acting is a great way to develop new skills,” said Meyer, the founding artistic director of the program.

Meyer described his method of teaching as “learning, exploring and becoming comfortable with the process of creative and personal exploration. We offer students individual and group exercise work, and applications of these exercises to monologues and scenes.”

Students and company members have booked screen and stage roles for feature-length and short films, television series and commercials.

Beginner adult (age 18 up) classes run for six weeks from Wednesday, Jan. 6 through Wednesday, Feb. 17. The cost is $245. Students can register for a 12-week program for a discounted cost of $395.

Intermediate, advanced and master classes are offered by invitation for students previously enrolled in the program.

Teen classes (ages 13-17) start Wednesday, Jan. 6, and run for 12 weeks, ending Mar. 30. Cost is $395. Classes for children (ages 10-12) also start Wednesday, Jan. 6 for 12 Wednesdays. The cost is $385.

Playwriting classes for all levels – beginner through advanced – start Tuesday, Jan. 19, and run through Tuesday, Feb. 23. Cost is $265.

All classes continue throughout the year, with students having the option to register for subsequent sessions after completing the initial session.

On Jan. 29-30, Howard Meyer Acting will present its annual Monologue Workshop program featuring students enrolled in the classes. In the summer, students can sign up for a performance workshop that focuses on one-act plays and excerpts from full-length works. As with the monologue workshop, at the end of the six-week workshop, the students act in front of a paying audience.

Howard Meyer’s Acting Program also offers individual coaching for auditions for school or stage, plus workshops in voice, movement and acting for television.

For more information and to register, call 914-286-7680 or visit www.hmacting.org or follow Howard Meyer’s Acting Program on Facebook.
Tuesday, Dec. 29
Italian Language and Culture. Mara De Matteo, born and raised in Italy and passionate about her native language, she combines lively conversation with grammatical instruction in her classes. She creates interactive lessons on the richness of Italian culture, past and present, through real-life anecdotes, literature, personal memoirs, films and even photography. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 6:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Wednesday, Dec. 30
Master Networker Meeting. Join this high-energy interactive membership network of learning-based, service-oriented entrepreneurs and business leaders. Come be a guest any Wednesday to learn more about this world-class business training and referral program. Mount Kisco Coach Diner, 252 E. Main St., Mount. 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Free. Every Wednesday; RSVP suggested. Info and RSVP: Contact Julie Genovesi at 303-929-7203 or e-mail julie@eurobella.net or just drop in.

Zumba Fitness. Achieve long-term benefits while having a blast in one exciting hour of calorie-burning, body-energizing, awe-inspiring movements meant to engage and captivate for life. For all fitness levels. Dance Emotions, 75 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. Every Monday and Wednesday at 9 a.m. and Saturdays at 10 a.m. Drop in or weekly discount rates available. Info: Contact Peggy at 914 960-4097.

Pound Fitness Program. A 45-minute full-body cardio and stress relief jam session, fusing Pilates, cardio, plyometrics, isometric movements and poses. Using lightly weighted drumsticks called Ripstix® and combining constant simulated drumming resulting in working the entire body. Dance Emotions, 75 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 10:15 a.m. $20. Every Wednesday. Info: Contact Peggy at 914 960-4097.

Senior Benefits Information Center. Counselors offer older adults one-on-one counseling covering a broad range of topics including Medicare health and prescription plans, food stamps, HEP, EPIC, weatherization, minor home repair and tax relief programs. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Free. Every Wednesday. Info: Contact Peggy at 914-960-4097.

Wolves of North America. Learn about the mythology, biology and ecology of wolf families and discover why it’s a special time for packs in North America. Whether the wolves are living on the Arctic tundra or the high desert of the southwest, wolf families are out searching for prey as their pups prepare for their first winter season. Guests will visit ambassador wolves Atka, Alawa, Nikai and Zephyr and the critically endangered red wolves and Mexican gray wolves. Wolf Conservation Center, South Salem. 11 a.m. Adults: $13. Children (under 12): $11. Pre-registration required. Info and pre-registration: Visit www.nywolf.org.


The Explorers Club. A new literacy/activity program this fall, join Miss Debbie to explore a new theme each week (science, art and more) through literacy and hands-on activities. Come read, discover and create. For children five to seven years old. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 3:30 to 4:15 p.m. Free. Every Wednesday. Registration required. Info and registration: www.mountpleasantslibrary.org.

Knitting at the Library. Knitters and crocheters of all skill levels. For ages 10 and up. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 4 p.m. Free. Every Wednesday. Info: 914-864-8041 or www.mountkiscolibrary.org.

Zumba Toning With Amy. Sculpt and tone muscle groups while dancing and shaking toning sticks to the sassy sizzling rhythms of the Zumba. Toning sticks provided. PFX Fitness, 10 Castleton Rd., Pleasantville. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Drop-in fee: $12. Every Wednesday. Info: E-mail olin.amyi@gmail.com.

Thursday, Dec. 31
“Ring in the New Year at Noon.” This sixth annual festive event will feature face painting, arts and crafts, kiddy rides, clowns, wheel of chance, games, snacks, goody bag, raffle prizes, a meet and greet with former New York Ranger Brian Mullen and a 3,000-balloon drop at noon. Families are invited to spend the rest of the afternoon at the complex to complete the celebration. New Roc City, 33 Le Count Place, New Rochelle. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. $5 per family donation at registration (to support the Westchester Children’s Museum). Pre-registration strongly encouraged. Info and pre-registration: Visit www.newrochelledowntown.com.

New Year’s Eve Celebration: Tramps Like Us. Come ring in the new year with the world’s top Springsteen tribute band, an open bar and specialty food items. MTK Tavern, 30 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. $100. Info and tickets: Visit www.mtktavern.com.

Friday, Jan. 1
Eight Annual New Year’s Day Walk. Start off the year and your 2016 bird list with an invigorating walk along the Hudson River shoreline. Dress warmly since it is often cooler by the river. Bring binoculars if you have them. There will also be spotting scopes to share. Walk for an hour or stay longer if you wish and weather permits. Rockwood Hall State Park, Sleepy Hollow. 9 a.m. Free. Info: Visit www.savmillriveraudubon.org.

Saturday, Jan. 2
Pleasantville Farmers Market. The Pleasantville Farmers Market is the largest, year-round farmers market in Westchester, and the one voted “Best of Westchester” in 2014 and 2015 by the readers of Westchester Magazine. With over 40 vendors participating in the indoor market, including special seasonal vendors this month, the delicious good time continues. Pleasantville Middle School, 40 Romer Ave., Pleasantville. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Every Saturday through May 14. Info: Visit www.pleasantvilletown.com.

Adult Coloring. If you’re an adult looking for a relaxing, fresh and new activity that will help bring stress relief to your busy life, try this new coloring class. Drop in anytime. Materials provided. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Free. Every Saturday. Info: 914-666-8041 or www.mountkiscolibrary.org.

Adult Salsa Class. Addie-Tude Performing Arts Center, 42 Memorial Plaza (lower level), Pleasantville. 11 a.m. to noon. Free. $12. Every Saturday. Also Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Info: 917-215-1720 or visit www.addie-tude.com.

Teaching Trails: A Community Path for Environmental Education. Join guided trail experience through the woodland forest. Discover who left that track, which tree makes the best animal home or which plant makes its own heat. Program runs about 30 minutes. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 11:30 a.m. Free. Every Saturday and Sunday. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburgnaturecenter.org.

Pound Fitness Program. A 45-minute full-body cardio and stress relief jam session, fusing Pilates, cardio, plyometrics, isometric movements and poses. Using lightly weighted drumsticks called Ripstix® and combining constant simulated drumming resulting in working the entire body. Jacob Burns Film Center educators will experience like no other. Jacob Burns Film Center’s Media Arts Lab, 405 Manville Rd., Pleasantville. 5 p.m. Free. Every Saturday. Info: Visit www.jacobburnsfilmcenter.org.


Sunday, Jan. 3
Argentine Tango Dances. Great music and dancing on a 3,500-square-foot dance floor. Enjoy a pleasant time with friends. Refreshments served. Broadway 26 Dance, 26 Broadway, Hawthorne. 3 to 6 p.m. $12. Also the third Saturday of each month from 8 p.m. to midnight. $16. Info: 914-725-3023 or 914-481-5101 or e-mail samperial@yahoo.com.

Monthly JourneyDance “Classes for Adults.” JourneyDance is a joyful yet powerful dance practice that offers guided imagery and easy movement suggestions resulting in your unique dance expression. Each 75-minute class consists of a JourneyDance flow followed by a gentle yoga and relaxation sequence. Dance Emotions, 75 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 4 p.m. $20. Pre-registration required. Info and pre-registration: E-mail claudiaiyogadance@gmail.com.

Monday, Jan. 4
Knitting Group. Hats for our servicemen and women overseas and other ongoing projects for care centers and hospitals. Clinton Street Center, 1A Clinton St., Pleasantville. 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Every Monday. Info: 914-769-2021.

Knitting Circle. This group is open to everyone with an interest in knitting. Live, love, laugh, learn and have fun together during these creative journeys. Come share patterns and ideas and celebrate creative spirits together while enjoying the ancient art of knitting. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Free. Every Monday and Thursday (except continued on page 18

We're happy to help spread the word about your community event. Please submit your information at least three weeks prior to your event and include the words “Happenings Calendar Submission” in your email subject line. Entries should be sent to Martin Wilbur at mwilbur@theexaminernews.com.
The Examiner’s Creative Winter Cocktail Guide

By Jerry Einbinder

At many local restaurants, mixologists have enhanced the dining experience by applying bold imagination and artistry to the ancient art of cocktail making. Blending in new ingredients has produced “craft cocktail” alternatives to the Old Fashioned, Manhattan, Bloody Mary and the Cosmopolitan.

The following directory has been prepared for the adventurous drinker seeking creative or exotic winter/holiday cocktails. Since most of the drinks are new, in some cases the establishment has not yet listed a price.

Armonk: Moderne Barn. Rum Toddy. Apple-flavored rum, apple cider, cinnamon stick, cloves, nutmeg, allspice, star anise, butter ($13).


Mount Kisco: Pour. Between the Sheets. Parce 8-year-old Columbian rum, Guillón-Painturaud cognac, Caffo Solero, fresh lemon juice ($14).


Rye: La Panetiere. Russian Ballet. Similar to a vodka sour; vodka, creme de cassis. Shaken ($14).

Scarsdale: Meritage. The Hudson. Hudson Valley wheat whiskey, sweet vermouth, bitter, cherry ($14).

Sleepy Hollow: Bridge View Tavern. BVT Bloody Mary. Crop cucumber vodka, meddled sherry tomatoes, parsley, fresh horseradish with Bloody Mary mix. Served with fresh lemon, olives and crisp celery.


New Year’s Eve Dining and Entertainment Guide, Part III

By Jerry Einbinder

Here is a continuation of The Examiner’s coverage of venues for area New Year’s Eve events. Prices shown are per person and do not include tax and gratuity unless otherwise stated.

Hastings-on-Hudson: Purpl. Passed hors d’oeuvres. The Cookery food station, ice cream sandwiches from Penylick Ice Cream and desserts by As You Wish Catering and pastry chef Rob Jones. Open bar includes cocktails, Champagne, wine and Captain Lawrence beer. Silent auction for work of many artists. Karaoke band. $100 per person; $179 per couple; $425 for a table of eight. 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. or later. Cost is 50 percent tax deductible.

Mount Kisco: Rose Room. A la carte dinner. DJ. Entrées include filet mignon with lump crabmeat, lobster and spaghetti, braised beef ravioli, salmon, shrimp risotto, grilled swordfish, veal chop and chicken cutlet.


White Plains: Royal Palace. Masquerade theme (bring a mask). Three-course dinner. Open bar. Midnight Champagne toast. Party favors, photo booth, belly dancer. Koaetic Sound DJ. $75 per adult in advance or $90 at door. $40 per child (ages 5-12). $65 per person for groups of 10 or more. Opens at 8 p.m.

White Plains: Serafina. Appetizer, entrées include a choice of risotto, filet mignon or branzino and tiramisu for dessert. Party favors, balloons, music and midnight countdown. Welcome Champagne toast. $79.

Yonkers: Alley 810. At Empire City Casino. DJ LAX. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Yonkers: Dan Rooney’s Sports Bar. At Empire City Casino. Rachel Allyn Band, 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Yonkers: Entertainment Lounge. At Empire City Casino. FDR Drive Band, 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Yonkers: Good Time Room. At Empire City Casino. Buffet dinner. Open bar, midnight Champagne toast. Bobby Lynch Orchestra. $150, 9 p.m. seating.

Yonkers: Terrace Room. At Empire City Casino. Four entrance choices. Champagne Toast. Guss Hayes Band. $79 for Empire Club members; $89 for non-members. 9 p.m. seating.

**Happenings continued from page 16**


**Baby Time.** A fun interactive lap-sit story time that includes songs, rhymes and a few very short stories. The experience gives babies an opportunity to socialize and parents a time to share. Recommended for newborns through 12 months old. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 10 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Info: 914-769-0548 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

**Toddler Storytime.** Finger plays, action rhymes, songs and stories to encourage an enjoyment of books and to stimulate early listening, learning and speaking skills. Recommended for children one to two-and-a-half years old. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 10:30 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Info: 914-769-0548 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

**Preschool Storytime.** This interactive story time uses picture books, songs, finger plays, action rhymes and other activities to encourage the enjoyment of books and language. Recommended for children two-and-a-half to five years old. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 11 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Info: 914-769-0548 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

**The Winter’s Tale.** Acclaimed actor-director Kenneth Branagh present an exceptional series of plays that brings together a remarkable group of actors, including Judi Dench and Derek Jacobi and Kenneth Branagh. This timeless Shakespeare tragicomedy of obsession and redemption is reimagined in a new production co-directed by Rob Ashford. Jacob Burns Film Center, 364 Manville Rd., Pleasantville. 6:30 p.m. Members: $25. Non-members: $30. Info and tickets: Visit www.jacobburnsfilmcenter.com.

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**EXAMINER MEDIA Classifieds**

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The Rising Influence of the Millennial Generation

‘compare your personal preferences to theirs’

Much has been written about the Millennial Generation (born between 1982 and 2000), their unique buying patterns, social values and affinity for all things digital. These attributes have influenced entire segments of the economy, social patterns and political ideologies. This uniqueness extends to preferences for wine (for those of legal drinking age). As their numbers and influence increase (they are 75 million strong, larger than the Baby Boomer Generation, born between 1946 and 1964), they have garnered the attention of economists plotting the future and consumer businesses seeking to cater to this generation’s preferences.

I’ve been researching this phenomenon and have distilled the Millennials’ preferences for wine and wine trends. If you are a Gen Xer (1963-1981), Boomer, and have distilled the Millennials’ generation’s preferences. Today, they’ve expanded to three lines and have broadened their appeal to Millennials.

4. The point of entry for new wine lovers has changed. There are now many more brands available in lower price ranges that are starting points for understanding wines. These wines provide an entée into higher priced, higher quality wines, as increasing discretionary income in the future will presumably afford Millennials the luxury of tasting prestige wines.

5. The up and coming winemakers worldwide are increasingly Millennials. For example, Taken Wine Company is a venture of two friends who grew up in famous Napa Valley family wineries. Josh Phelps (Swanson Vineyards) and Carlo Trinchero (Trinchero Family Estates) decided to venture out on their own five years ago to create a line of wines focused on their generation’s preferences. Today, they’ve expanded to three lines and have broadened their appeal to Millennials.

6. Of course, this generation is tuned in to digital marketing at a much younger age than their predecessors. Many Baby Boomers have become immersed in social media and digital advertising, but it is not as natural as it is for the 18- to 33-year-old demographic.

7. Sharing is common in influencing their decisions. Trust in crowd consensus is a common determinant in decision-making. From Airbnb to Uber to Cellar Tracker (for wine reviews), Millennials no longer rely on a few trusted sources. Sharing opinions with the masses has replaced reliance on individual experts.

Lest I mislead you to believe that the Millennials have taken over the economy, the fact is that while they are growing in influence and purchasing power, the Baby Boomer generation is still driving the economy. Baby Boomers are open-minded to new wines and trends, which they deftly track on social media. Their disposable income, as a group, is greater than Millennials; thus, they still hold sway over many advertisers and marketers. In fact, Millennials, as a group, are at a distinct financial disadvantage. They have less wealth and more debt than previous generations did at the same age, due in large part to a shrinking job market, exorbitant student loans and climbing rent prices and home costs.

As Baby Boomers age and “fade away,” the growing influence of succeeding generations has captured the attention of advertisers and the media. In their efforts to prepare for the inevitable, are businesses being shortsighted in estimating the power of today’s Millennials? Millennials are not a singularly unique demographic, but rather the leading indicator of where we are all headed, both the generations ahead of them and those in their rear-view mirrors.

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 instinctive behavior. You can reach him at nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com or on Twitter @sharingwine.
Vikings’ Second-Half Comeback Falls Short Against Hastings

By Andy Jacobs

Even though he’s just halfway through his first season as head coach of the Valhalla boys’ basketball team, Mike Auerbach has already discovered that a heavy reliance on long-distance shooting is sure to produce plenty of peaks and valleys.

“We’re pretty much an outside shooting team,” Auerbach conceded last Tuesday evening, shortly after his Vikings had played their final game of the calendar year. “We don’t get a lot in tight, things we can rely on. It’s kind of who we are. We’ve got to live with it right now until we figure out ways to get easy baskets inside that we can rely on and be more consistent with.”

So maybe it shouldn’t have been much of a surprise that cold-shooting Valhalla had just found itself facing a huge deficit against visiting Hastings before finally catching fire and making a furious comeback late in the third quarter. Though they whittled an 18-point Yellow Jacket lead down to just two, the Vikings wound up with a disappointing 56-49 loss.

“We thought we had ‘em scrambling a little bit there and they were able to make just enough plays down the stretch,” said Auerbach about the victorious Yellow Jackets. “Every time we got it to four, it seemed like they had an answer for us.”

The slow-starting Vikings made just two baskets in the opening quarter, one of them a 3-pointer by Orlando Clarke, and fell behind 14-6. Junior guard Kevin Kelly provided seven of his team-high 16 points in the second quarter, but the Vikings still walked off the floor at halftime trailing 29-20.

“The first half, really, we struggled making shots,” said Auerbach. “And when we do that, we’re not gonna score a lot of points. I was just telling the guys inside we’re gonna have halves like that. But that’s when we need to rely on our defense. Instead of 29-20, maybe it’s 24-20 or 23-20 and we’re feeling a little bit differently about things in the locker room at halftime.

When the second half began, it took Valhalla more than three and a half minutes to make a shot. By then, Hastings had already scored nine points, stretched its lead to 38-20 and made the outcome seem obvious. But the Yellow Jackets never scored another point the rest of the quarter, which ended with the Vikings on a 13-0 run and the home fans in the Kensico gym in an uproar.

The Vikings’ big burst began after stepping up their defense with full-court pressure as Conor Sullivan provided back-to-back baskets, first on a reverse layup and then a 17-foot jumper from the right baseline. A minute later, Terrence Hart, who seemed to be all over the floor diving for loose balls in the third quarter, scored on a put-back. A Hastings turnover soon led to a fast-break layup by Clarke.

Hart drove the baseline for a layup with 48 seconds to go in the period, then Clarke, on a fast break 17 seconds later, added another layup and was fouled. He made the free throw, cutting the Hastings lead to just 38-33. The Vikings could have moved even closer, but Clarke misfired on a 3-point attempt from the left elbow as the buzzer sounded to end the quarter.

“I said to the guys in the locker room at halftime, ‘Let’s win the third quarter,’” said Auerbach. “I didn’t know that’s how we’re gonna have to win it. But, yeah, they fight. They fought hard. We’ve been in that situation before where we’ve been down big and we came back and we made it a game. That was against Hen Hud early in the season. That’s kind of how they are. If we make shots in bunches and we get hot, now we can kind of erase a deficit and we can put up nine, 10, 11 points pretty quickly.”

Unfortunately for the Vikings, they went scoreless for nearly the first four minutes of the final quarter, falling behind by eight points before Kelly finally made both ends of a one-and-one opportunity. A fast-break bucket by Ricky Thomas with 3:13 remaining sliced the Yellow Jackets’ lead to 41-37. Hastings then built its advantage back to seven points as Grant Hevia made a long jumper from the left corner and one of two free throws 13 seconds later.

But Valhalla was hardly finished. A 3-pointer by Kelly with 2:26 to go narrowed the deficit to 44-40. After a layup by Hevia, who finished with a game-high 21 points, Viking sophomore Ethan Bartlett connected on 3-pointer from the right corner. With exactly two minutes left, the Hastings lead was down to 46-43.

The Vikings’ comeback was stalled, though, as Hevia came through with two big baskets 30 seconds apart. The first one, when he grabbed the rebound of his own miss, made a layup and the subsequent free throw after being fouled, may have been the biggest play of the evening.

With 59 seconds on the clock, two foul shots by Kelly moved the Vikings within 51-47, but their chances all but ended 19 seconds later when Thomas missed on a 3-pointer that would’ve cut the lead to one. The Yellow Jackets proceeded to make five free throws in the final 36 seconds to clinch the victory.

“We kept it close for pretty much the whole fourth and then they made a couple of big shots,” said Auerbach. “They made the big one from the corner against us late in the shot clock, made a couple more inside. So, yeah, we hung with ‘em, but they made the plays when they needed them.”

Auerbach is at least hoping the defeat to Hastings will help prepare his young team, with two sophomores and two juniors in the starting lineup, for the league battles to come in January. The Vikings have already played 11 games over the first three weeks of the season, leaving little time for anything more than shoot-arounds and walk-throughs.

“We’re kind of trying to develop practice habits, good game habits, that type of thing,” he said. “Trying to figure out what our identity is. So it’s been a work in progress. But to have seven wins in the first half, I don’t think I could’ve expected much more.”

Valhalla first-year coach Mike Auerbach watches his Vikings battle from behind in the fourth quarter last Tuesday evening.
Briarcliff’s Youth Movement Overwhelms the Eagles

By Andy Jacobs

No, they weren’t giving out crystal balls last Tuesday afternoon at Briarcliff High School. But anyone entering the gymnasium could clearly see into the future as a trio of talented young guards was providing an early glimpse of what Section One foes can expect over the next few years playing against the Bears.

Led by eighth-grader Alana Lombardi and freshmen KC Hamlin and Maddie Plank, the Briarcliff girls’ basketball team overwhelmed the visiting Dobbs Ferry Eagles 75-51 in a game that was all but decided by the middle of the third quarter. Lombardi finished with a game-high 24 points as the Bears closed out the 2015 portion of their schedule and improved to 5-4 this season.

“I’ve never had an eighth-grader that plays like her,” said Bears coach Don Hamlin after watching Lombardi score 11 baskets against the Eagles, two of them from 3-point range. “I’ve really never had ninth-graders that play like the other two. So we’re fortunate. Let’s hope they continue to grow.”

Dobbs Ferry actually took a two-point lead five different times in the game’s opening few minutes. But the three precocious Bears then sparked a 9-0 run over the next couple of minutes that kept Briarcliff in front the rest of the way. It began three minutes into the contest with a bucket by Hamlin, who then gave the Bears the lead for good with a 3-pointer from the top of the key. Lombardi and Plank completed the spurt with back-to-back layups 15 seconds apart.

But the Eagles were still within 19-16 after a pair of free throws by Katelyn Fanning with 1:43 left in the opening quarter and now has classmate Jackie Contento, another Briarcliff freshman, opened the period with a bucket during the second half of last Tuesday’s victory against the Eagles.

Kelly O’Donnell, another Briarcliff freshman, opened the period with a 15-foot jumper and, after baskets by the Eagles’ Allison Burt and the Bears’ Monaghan, Lombardi made a steal and went coast to coast for a layup to restore the 20-point lead.

The Bears made nine baskets in the final quarter and, as it turned out, all but the first one, by O’Donnell, were from the right corner in last week’s home win over Dobbs Ferry.

The Bears’ Kelly Monaghan gets inside for a bucket during the second half of last Tuesday’s home win.

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Eighth-grader Alana Lombardi drives for two of her game-high 24 points in last Tuesday’s victory against the Eagles.

Despite the comfortable lead, though, coach Hamlin was a bit disappointed.

“We kind of need to do a better job playing defense,” he said. “We outscored them, but I didn’t really think our defense was great. We started very slow, defensively. It’s happened the last two games and we were able to win the games. But we need to do a better job with that. Sometimes we have defensive lapses that we’ve got to take care of. You can’t do this all the time.”

Lombardi had 11 of her points in the third quarter when the Bears outscored Dobbs Ferry by just a 16-14 margin. With the Eagles trailing 45-32 midway through the quarter, it was Lombardi who then scored the last nine points in a 10-2 Briarcliff burst. She had three fast-break layups, including two within 10 seconds, and added a 3-pointer from the top of the key.

“She does a lot of good things,” said Hamlin about his youngest player. “She’s at the point defensively. So when she’s really locked in defensively, everybody behind her plays well as well. And she’s long. She looks like this little, skinny kid, but she makes plays.”

The fourth quarter began with the Bears leading by 16 points after Dobbs scored the final five points of the third.

Hamlin about the prospect of finding a tall rebounder under his Christmas tree. “But you can’t worry about what you don’t have. You just have to work with who you have. Most of the time this year, we’ve done a pretty good job on the boards. So it hasn’t really killed us not to have, you know, like a six-foot girl.”

What he does have is an emerging young team that seems to have recovered from the shock of losing leading scorer Carly Fanelli to a season-ending knee injury in the opening game. His daughter, point guard KC, erupted for nine of her 13 points in the opening quarter and now has classmate Plank back in the lineup to offer another tempting option for her passes.

“She’s not scoring as much as she will,” said coach Hamlin about Plank, who wound up with seven points against the Eagles. “If that ever gets going, we’re going to be really dangerous.”
Three of the elite distance runners in the section, Pleasantville’s Eli Waxler and Drew Dorflinger and Briarcliff’s Ryan Gallagher, run stride for stride at the league championships.

Josiah Cobbs tries to get to the basket for the Briarcliff Bears, who reached the Class B championship game at the County Center.

Melissa Giglio of Valhalla clears the last hurdle while competing at the Westchester County Championships.

Matt Neuberger sends a shot toward the goal during a Horace Greeley home soccer game.

Above: Briarcliff’s Maria Capasso bumps the ball as teammate Isabella Pisani looks on during a Bears’ home volleyball match.

Right: Horace Greeley standout swimmer Emma Hadley helped the Quakers claim yet another Section One championship this past fall.

Melissa Giglio of Valhalla clears the last hurdle while competing at the Westchester County Championships.

Left: Fox Lane’s Lindsay West controls the ball during a lacrosse game against host Greeley.

Right: The Valhalla softball team’s six-year title run ended with a loss in the sectional final to Rye Neck.

Frankie Vesuvio’s hitting and pitching led the Byram Hills baseball team to the state championship.

Pleasantville’s Arden McDermott follows the flight of his tee shot on the final hole in a match vs. Croton.

Westlake’s Jason Kalle maintains his balance after breaking a tackle in the Wildcats’ playoff victory over Bronxville.

Horace Greeley field hockey players celebrate a goal on their way to a berth in the Section One championship game.

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Left: Fox Lane’s Lindsay West controls the ball during a lacrosse game against host Greeley.

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Matt Neuberger sends a shot toward the goal during a Horace Greeley home soccer game.

Westlake’s Jason Kalle maintains his balance after breaking a tackle in the Wildcats’ playoff victory over Bronxville.

Pleasantville’s Eli Waxler and Drew Dorflinger and Briarcliff’s Ryan Gallagher, run stride for stride at the league championships.
Byram Hills shortstop Kellen Hatheway played a big part in the Bobcats' march to the state championship.

Josie Amerson of Pleasantville shoots the ball during the Panthers' semifinal playoff game vs. Irvington at the Westchester County Center.

Byram Hills wrestler Luca Errico has the upper hand on his way to winning the title at 99 pounds in the Division 2 meet last winter.

Standout goalie Oscar Marchi helped the Pleasantville lacrosse team capture its first-ever sectional title.

Quarterback Ralph Gonzalez throws a pass for the Valhalla football team, which went undefeated during the regular season.

Above: Bianca Balducci of Pleasantville (left) and Marianna Leone of Westlake battle for control of the soccer ball.

Left: Fox Lane's Taylor Cunneen smacks a backhand return during a singles match against John Jay.

Byram Hills quarterback Lou Filippelli had a record-setting senior season throwing the football.

Fox Lane's Vicky Martinez runs in the sectional cross country championships at Bowdoin Park.

Westlake point guard Natalie Allieri helped the Wildcats reach the County Center last March.

Westlake's Stephanie Rizzo (left) and Kelly Martin rise together for a block during a volleyball match at Pleasantville.

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Nick Sapone (left) and Matt Milone celebrate after the Byram Hills baseball team captured the state championship.