By Martin Wilbur

When tragedy strikes, friends and neighbors of an impacted family often respond. Sometimes, though, whatever tangible goods the family needs most, are lacking.

Last week legions of community members and volunteers sprang into action to make sure families of the victims of the Feb. 3 Metro-North crash were properly looked after as they try to cope with the devastating aftermath.

New Castle was one of the communities hit hardest; two of its residents, Robert Dirks and Joseph Nadol, passengers in the train’s first car, were killed in the accident.

"We’re just in the very beginning stages of this investigation," Sumwalt said last Friday. "There’s a lot that needs to be done, yet there’s a lot that has been done."

The five passengers killed were all seated in the train’s first car. They were Eric Vandercar, 53 of Bedford; Walter Liedtke, 69, of Bedford Hills; Chappaqua resident Robert Dirks, 42, of New Castle; and Tomar Aditya, 41, of Danbury. Another 15 passengers were hurt, some seriously. Most were taken to nearby Westchester Medical Center.

Chappaqua Shares organizers Dawn Greenberg and Jessica Reinmann asked that donations be temporarily suspended until something else is needed.

Then there are the Red Cross volunteers, who were stationed near the scene of the crash to provide hot beverages, snacks, water, hand warmers and any other items that were needed by the victims’ families. For more information visit www.chappaqushares.org.

"We are overwhelmed by the amazing response and outreach of the Chappaqua community to help the Dirks family and the others affected by Tuesday night’s tragedy," the organization’s Facebook page stated.

Hall of Scoops on South Greeley Avenue will also be providing special treats for the children.

The immediate response to the drive was so successful that Chappaqua Cares, Chappaqua Shares organizers Dawn Greenberg and Jessica Reinmann asked that donations be temporarily suspended until something else is needed.

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February 10 - February 16, 2015
SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS
Volume 9, Issue 388

HEARTBROKEN
Community, Volunteers Rally Behind Victims’ Families

By Martin Wilbur

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Last week legions of community members and volunteers sprang into action to make sure families of the victims of the Feb. 3 Metro-North crash were properly looked after as they try to cope with the devastating aftermath.

New Castle was one of the communities hit hardest; two of its residents, Robert Dirks and Joseph Nadol, passengers in the train’s first car, were killed in the accident.

Le Jardin, a French bistro on King Street, supplied food for the Dirks family in the days following the disaster, according to the Facebook page of Chappaqua Cares, Chappaqua Shares, an organization that collects donations for those in need in the area.

"We are overwhelmed by the amazing response and outreach of the Chappaqua community to help the Dirks family and the others affected by Tuesday night’s tragedy," the organization’s Facebook page stated.

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Investigators: Crash Investigation May Take a Year to Complete

By Martin Wilbur and Janine Bowen

It may take investigators up to a year to find out why the driver of an SUV moved into the path of the Metro-North train in Valhalla last week killing six people.

National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) member Robert Sumwalt said the agency’s team is expected to return to Washington this week and piece together a timeline of the Feb. 3 accident at the Commerce Street crossing in hopes of determining probable cause.

"We’re just in the very beginning stages of this investigation," Sumwalt said last Friday. "There’s a lot that needs to be done, yet there’s a lot that has been done."

The five passengers killed were all seated in the train’s first car. They were Eric Vandercar, 53 of Bedford; Walter Liedtke, 69, of Bedford Hills; Chappaqua resident Robert Dirks, 42, of New Castle; and Tomar Aditya, 41, of Danbury. Another 15 passengers were hurt, some seriously. Most were taken to nearby Westchester Medical Center.

The driver, Ellen Brody, 49, of Edgemont was also killed. She entered the crossing after the barrier came down on her 2011 Mercedes ML 350 about 6:27 p.m. The driver who was in the car behind Brody’s at the time of the accident reported to investigators that he had turned onto Commerce Street after traffic had been diverted from the Taconic State Parkway.

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Westlake Continues to Roll
See Sports Section
The first responders.

Alec Cecil, a Pelham psychologist who has practiced for 30 years, arrived at the scene in Valhalla at about 9 p.m. The team of eight counselors were there not only to help victims if they needed someone to talk to, but also to console emergency responders.

The counselors were later sent to the family assistance center that was set up at Mount Pleasant Town Hall, where Cecil spoke to several relatives and close friends of victims.

“We did a lot of listening, staying with people and listening to anything that people might be saying,” Cecil said. A difficult task even for someone who is trained to handle crises, Cecil said the immediate goal is to make sure the person takes care of his or her needs. Although families such as those who saw their world torn apart last week are often overwhelmed with shock and grief, counselors make sure to inform people to eat properly, try to get rest and tend to any medical needs.

Perhaps most important, victim’s family members should have company and to talk with others. “People, I find, are remarkably resilient and we remind them to focus on what they need, to do what they need,” Cecil said.

Cecil cautioned for the general public to remember that everyone handles grief differently; there’s no right or wrong way to respond to a traumatic event. Also, some people have delayed responses when they have suffered a loss. They can function well immediately after a tragedy, but when life starts returning to normal for everybody else, family and close friends of victims could find that period the most difficult.

Since many of the communities in Westchester are relatively small and tight-knit, Cecil suggested friends and neighbors to stay in touch to see how families of the victims are doing even months in the future. “It’s a process. It’s going to take time,” Cecil said.

For information on where to turn for counseling, two options are the Westchester County Department of Mental Health at 914-995-5236 or Red Cross Metro New York North at 877-733-2767.
Motorist: Safety Improvements Needed at Commerce Street Crossing

By Martin Wilbur

When Adam Handler heard the news last Tuesday night that a Metro-North train had collided with a vehicle at the Commerce Street railroad crossing in Valhalla, he was transported back nearly a decade and left shaken.

On that day when Handler approached that same crossing, the red lights flashed briefly and a second or two later the heavy wood barrier on his side of the road came down onto the roof of his car.

"I've seen that happen to drivers. You can get befuddled," said Handler, a Brewster resident who had owned a small advertising agency on nearby Stevens Avenue for about 20 years and used the crossing three or four times a week.

It was a nerve-racking experience for Handler but he was fortunate it was in broad daylight and traffic was light at the time. There were no other vehicles behind him, so he quickly gathered himself, put the car in reverse and moved out of the way of danger. He thought perhaps that he failed to notice the red flashing crossing lights as quickly as he should have.

"I didn't want to make a big deal out of it at the time," he said.

However, it wasn't the last time Handler would see that happen. On repeated occasions, there were other drivers who would become trapped, surprised that the arms would descend so quickly and onto a car.

He said some motorists would actually get out of the car, more concerned about damage to the roof of their car when the barrier would come down with a thud than they possible being partially in the path of an oncoming train.

Last week he immediately began wondering if the driver of the 2011 Mercedes SUV, Edgemont resident Ellen Brody, may have become confused at what was happening, when the barrier came down and rested on the back top portion of her car, contributing to an already difficult set of conditions in that area at that time.

Unlike the time it happened to him, Handler said last Tuesday was dark with rush hour traffic and a nearby accident. It also appears that Brody may have been unfamiliar with the territory.

The tragedy has prompted Handler to contact the National Transportation Safety Board with suggestions to improve safety at the location and to reach out to state representatives to help improve conditions at that crossing.

"There are a couple of things they could do to avoid this," Handler said. "It's more a traffic and road issue than an MTA issue."

One step he suggested is for the state or the proper jurisdiction to extend the area off of Commerce Street by building a small lane that runs parallel to the Taconic State Parkway. Currently, there is room for about three or four cars to fit on the short stretch between the parkway and the crossing should the crossing arms come down, which is usually inadequate during rush hour.

Handler's second suggestion would be to put foam on the wooden barriers, since it appears that many drivers are concerned about scratches or dents.

Last week, during his briefings, NTSB board member Robert Sumwalt said that the crossing functioned properly. He also said it took 39 seconds from the time the red crossing lights flashed until the train entered the crossing.

However, Handler hopes that the accident opens the eyes of the authorities to make improvements at the site to make sure it never happens again.
‘Gifted’ Father of Three Lived Life to the Fullest

By David Propper

Joe Nadol was remembered for his adventurous spirit and immense love for family and friends last Saturday at his memorial service at First Congressional Church in Chappaqua.

The 42-year-old New Castle resident was described as “unique, different and gifted.”

Nadol’s younger brother, Ben, said Joe, who was a Harvard graduate, was especially intelligent and never overmatched throughout his years of study, regardless of what level he reached. Ben remarked that whenever his brother walked into a room, he was always the smartest one in it.

That led to professional success, as he was an aerospace and defense equity analyst for JP Morgan, ranked among one of the best in his sector. When giving career advice to others, Ben recalled Joe telling others to do “what makes you happy.”

Nadol’s widow, Jen, eloquently stated how her husband lived his life working hard and playing hard. She said a friend once mentioned to her how Joe had a great balance of “professional success and personal happiness.”

Each August, Jen said they would plan vacations for the entire family, including the couple’s three young sons. They traveled throughout Europe and Asia and were planning a trip to Japan this summer.

Rather than wait to experience what the world has to offer, Joe was always ready to live life to the fullest and even went to the Super Bowl last Sunday to see his favorite team, the New England Patriots, win their fourth Super Bowl in dramatic fashion, Jen Nadol said.

“He was the love of my life,” she said. “And my best friend.”

Joe’s father, Joe Nadol Jr., said his son was always involved in his children’s lives. He made sure to participate in different activities with Joey, 10, Sam, 9, and Jake, 7, and always tried to be a role model for the three of them.

“Eric was just so soft-spoken and was the kindest person, really down to his inner core. He touched the lives of so many people,” said his brother-in-law. “We all should learn from Eric; he wanted to make the world a better place and he did.”

Vandercar ‘Wanted to Make the World a Better Place’

By Janine Bowen

Those who knew Eric Vandercar remembered him as a person who loved to work hard and play hard and as someone who was always ready for an adventure.

In the weeks before his death last Tuesday evening, Vandercar had traveled to Florida with his family, as well as to Jamaica and New Orleans to see concerts. He also took his son to a hockey game.

A graduate of the Wharton School of Business, Vandercar held degrees in business and engineering and earned his MBA from NYU. He married his wife, Jill, whom he met on a blind date, in 1995. They moved to Bedford shortly after the birth of their first child.

Vandercar’s son, Jake, and daughter Sadie, who spoke at their father’s funeral last Friday, fondly taking them to ski in Utah every February, coaching soccer games and going to the movies. Jake Vandercar said that one of the things he would miss most about his father would be running to give him a hug when he came home from work each day.

“[He] was one of the most extraordinary people to ever walk this earth and life is going to be extremely hard without [him],” he said.

An avid music lover, Vandercar attended hundreds of live shows by his favorite bands, including moe. and The Grateful Dead, and recorded most performances to build an extensive library of music. He was an avid audiophile, according to one friend, who noted that Vandercar never listened to MP3s because he felt the quality wasn’t the same.

Other friends remarked that Vandercar was always available to talk when someone was going through a hard time or when they wanted to celebrate. He loved to work with his hands, building a deck on his parents’ home and creating a special charging station for his Tesla car.

“Eric was just so soft-spoken and was the kindest person, really down to his inner core. He touched the lives of so many people,” said his brother-in-law. “We all should learn from Eric; he wanted to make the world a better place and he did.”

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Family, Friends Remember Brody’s Smile, Laughs, Optimism

By Martin Wilbur

Friends and family of Ellen Brody remembered as a perpetually optimistic and caring family person who greeted everyone with a warm smile and infectious humor.

“It struck me in every single meeting, without fail, Ellen was smiling with that huge, warm, Ellen smile,” said Rabbi Benjy Silverman during Brody’s funeral last Friday in Dobbs Ferry.

He said it was symbolic that last Tuesday night was the Jewish holiday of Tu B’shvat, which celebrates trees that provide fruit, shade and oxygen.

“Like a tree, she gave so much more than it takes. Her smile, her energy and her positivity was our breath of fresh air,” Silverman said.

Brody, who worked at ICD Contemporary Jewelry on South Greeley Avenue in Chappaqua, met her husband, Alan, in 1989. He said she was the love of his life and that “our family reveled in her sunshine.”

“Ellen lived life to the fullest and she loved every minute of it,” Alan Brody said.

Her three daughters, Alexa, Julia and Danielle talked about how their mom was their support system and biggest fan and was welcoming of their friends into the family’s house.

“I can only hope that me and my sisters can embody just one ray of her sunshine,” said Danielle, 22, the oldest daughter.

Ellen Brody’s uncle, Sid Greenberg, told a story of when she worked for him and her late father in a family business in Queens before she met Alan. A young man in the neighborhood who was in a wheelchair one day asked Ellen for a date. She accepted.

The next day the young man’s mother came to let her father and Greenberg know how special that night was for him.

“Not just a date but a date with a pretty girl,” Greenberg remembered her saying.

“Walter was an original,” Campbell said in a tribute to him. “Always nattily dressed, his hair just so and his mustache perfect, he seemed to have emerged from another era rather than from an office on the second floor. ”

“Leading Art Scholar Enjoyed Living Life in the Country

By Martin Wilbur

It could be said that Walter Liedtke lived and worked in contrasting worlds.

His home was in Bedford Hills, living on a farm raising horses with his wife, Nancy. He was often up before dawn tending to their horses’ needs before boarding the train to Manhattan each day.

At work, Liedtke, 69, was curator of European paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He was one of the world’s leading scholars of Dutch and Flemish paintings, said museum Director Tom Campbell. That included the museum’s world famous Rembrandts and Vermeers.

“Walter was an original,” Campbell said in a tribute to him. “Always nattily dressed, his hair just so and his mustache perfect, he seemed to have emerged from another era rather than from an office on the second floor. ”

Raised in New Jersey, Liedtke thought he would become a teacher. After earning his master’s at Brown and a doctorate at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, he was on the Ohio State faculty for four years.

In 1979, he received a Mellon Fellowship to study at the Metropolitan Museum. The next year, he became a curator, spending the rest of his career at the museum, where he began producing an impressive list of books and exhibits. He had no plans to retire and loved living on a farm, Campbell said.

At work, it wasn’t only Liedtke’s knowledge that was impressive but the way he was able to convey that knowledge to others.

“He knew those pictures like old friends, and described them with an intimacy and spirit that was mesmerizing,” Campbell said. “In fact, his distinctive voice was among his unique characteristics; careful and deliberate, but somehow lyrical in its unhurried measure.”

“For 35 years, Walter had come and gone from the Met every day, and now that would never happen again,” he added.

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By Martin Wilbur

Robert Dirks was a brilliant scientist who is credited with making significant contributions at D.E. Shaw, a firm that engages in research in computational biology.

As accomplished as he was professionally, friends and family said how much he enjoyed spending time with his family and for playing bridge.

Born in Thailand, where his mother grew up, his family emigrated to the Vancouver area when he was about a year old before settling in Washington state.

He graduated in 2000 from Wabash College in Lafayette, Ind. with a degree in chemistry and math, then went on to the California Institute of Technology for his doctorate in chemistry. Graduate school is where he met his wife, Christine. They had two children, two and five years old and settled in Chappaqua.

Dirks, 36, also spent a year as a postdoctoral scholar at Caltech, where he developed algorithms to design, analyze and engineer nucleic acid devices, according to the website at D.E. Shaw where he worked since 2006.

"Robert was a brilliant scientist who made tremendous contributions to our own research, and to the broader scientific community," the company said in a statement.

The statement also mentioned that he had been an avid chess player when he was younger, and turned to bridge during college, and continued to play with friends. He actually met his wife playing bridge.

A professor at CalTech who oversaw his work, Dr. Niles Pierce, told The New York Times that Dirks was a pioneer whose research enabled scientists to map multiple genes inside organisms, allowing biologists around the world to study how organisms develop. He also developed algorithms that enabled other researchers to engineer their own molecular systems.

"It’s just really rare for someone to have the mind to be able to contribute in such different ways," Pierce was quoted as saying in The Times.

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By Martin Wilbur

Danbury resident Aditya Tomar spent his entire career in the financial sector.

Tomar, 41, was vice president for technology that supported the JPMorgan Chase & Co.’s asset management team. Previously, he had been vice president for Morgan Stanley capital-markets automated trading, his profile on LinkedIn.com stated. Before that, Tomar was vice president at Sanford C. Bernstein & Co. and for Barclays Capital, supporting electronic and algorithmic rates trading.

"Aditya was an extraordinary colleague," JPMorgan said today in a statement that the company released after learning of his death aboard last week’s ill-fated Metro-North train. “His leadership skills, sense of humor and tireless team spirit contributed to a better workplace for all of us in JPMorgan Asset Management.”

Born in New Delhi, India, Tomar came to the United States about 20 ago after graduating from the Indian Institute of Technology in Roorkee with an engineering degree, according to the Connecticut Post. He earned his master’s degree at Miami University in Ohio, his LinkedIn page stated.

Published reports stated that Tomar was married but had no children.

"Everybody has their dream when they come to America," family friend Mina Patel was quoted as saying in the Connecticut Post. "They were living theirs.”
Three-Proposition Mt. Pleasant School Bond Set for March 24

By Neal Rentz

For the second time in four months, Mount Pleasant School District residents will be asked to vote on a major capital projects bond.

The board of education voted unanimously last Wednesday to approve a three-proposition bond that will go before district voters March 24.

Proposition 1 would permit the district to borrow up to $4,996,000 for the expansion of the high school auditorium and music rooms. The auditorium expansion would be a scaled-back version of what was proposed in November.

The second proposition would give the district permission to borrow up to $4,996,000 for the expansion of the high school auditorium and music rooms. The expansion of music rooms is a proposed for Westlake Middle School and Westlake High school.

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The final proposition calls for the district to build a second access road at the middle school/high school campus for as much as $2,685,000.

Board of Education President James Grieco stressed that the three propositions were independent of each other. If one or two of them are approved, the work outlined in those propositions would move forward.

The new bond was broken up into three propositions to “give the community an opportunity to pick and choose,” he said. Grieco and his colleagues understood the new bond would need to be less costly than the $55,855,000 November proposition that was soundly rejected by voters.

“It scared a lot of people off,” he said of the original referendum’s price tag.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Susan Guiney said some of the items taken out of the new bond, such as new classroom lighting and flooring and security upgrades, will be paid for through the capital projects line in the annual budget. Also, the scope of a new student commons area, renovation of the cafeteria and enhancement the lobby and guidance areas have been scaled back. District officials also agreed to eliminate the artificial turf and lights, which many residents opposed last fall, along with lower athletic fields and tennis courts field at the high school.

While a January survey of district residents revealed that 81 percent of respondents would be likely or very likely to vote for an infrastructure and renovations bond, 39 percent of survey respondents said they were not likely to support a bond that included renovations to the high school auditorium, band and chorus rooms and a music computer lab.

About 46 percent opposed a bond that included a second access road for the secondary school campus.

Board members have supported the controversial second access road to the campus because it would allow for easier evacuation in the event of an emergency. Grieco said it made no sense to construct a temporary road, which has been suggested as an alternative.

“In my opinion, it’s money wasted,” he said.

While most of the bond would be dedicated to the middle school and high school, it also would include projects at Columbus and Hawthorne elementary schools, including the creation of additional parking spaces and expansion of the drop-off areas for students at Columbus Elementary School.

Director of Business Administration Lisa Sanfilippo said figures regarding tax impact would not be known until after she met with the district’s bond counsel. The defeated November bond would have raised taxes on the average home about $360 in the first year.

While most residents who spoke during last Wednesday’s meeting were generally supportive of the reconfigured proposal, two expressed reservations.

Resident Yvonne Last said she was concerned that the reduced scope of the new bond would postpone critical projects, triggering a need for another bond.

Another resident, Margaret DeGasperis, said the new bond would further hike already high school taxes. But district officials said Mount Pleasant school taxes were among the lowest in the region.

The March 24 vote will take place from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Westlake High School gymnasium.

Mount Pleasant School District officials are proposing a three-proposition capital projects bond that will go to the voters March 24.
Obituaries

Maria Donato

Maria Donato died on Jan. 30 at Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla. She was 94.

Donato was born on Aug. 19, 1920, in Marcellinara, Calabria Italy. After being raised in Italy, she met and married Luigi Donato, then moved with two of her three sons to Pleasantville.

Donato worked at Aunt Millie’s sauce factory for many years before retiring. She loved to cook, garden, play the harmonica and spend time with her family.

She is survived by her three sons, Saverio (Italia) of Milan, Italy; Joseph (Caterina) of Thornwood and Frank (Judy) of Pleasantville; grandchildren Donato, Daphne and Stella Mollica of Italy and Maria Grasso, Miguelle Donato, Lynn Murray Michael Donato and Kristina Brennan; and her cherished great-grandchildren, Sophia and Greta Donato, Daphne and Stella Mollica, Madison and William Murray, Kyle and Haley Donato and Lila and Declan Brennan; her brother, Alfred Torchia; and sisters Angela Cottini and Lydia Marcella. She was predeceased by sister, Giovanna, and brothers Anthony Victor and Salvatore Torchia. A special thank you to Liz Torchia Luongo who had a special bond with our mother. We will always be grateful for your love.

Visitaton took place on Feb. 1 at Beecher Flooks Funeral Home, Inc. in Pleasantville. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Feb. 4 at Holy Innocents Church in Pleasantville followed by burial at Mount Calvary Cemetery in White Plains.

Roy Salanitro

Roy A. Salanitro of Valhalla died Feb. 3.

He was 94.

He was the husband of Carla (Ansalone) Salanitro, the father of Anne (Edward) Mennona, Alfred (Teresa) Salanitro, the father of Anne (Edward) Mennona, Alfred (Teresa) Salanitro and Francine (Robert) Kenny, the grandfather of seven and great-grandfather of six.

Marjorie Trowbridge

Marjorie F. Trowbridge of Wappingers Falls and formerly of Pleasantville died Feb. 1.

She was 83.

Born in White Plains on Oct. 14, 1931, the daughter of Frederick and Florence (Youngs) Giloth. She attended Pleasantville schools.

She was married to Edward G. Schappert, and Thomas Trowbridge, both of whom predeceased her.

Trowbridge worked as a sales associate for Macy’s for more than 30 years. She was a member of St. John’s Episcopal Church in Pleasantville and enjoyed her family and relaxing with a good Amish book.

Visiting hours were on Feb. 6 at Beecher Flooks Funeral Home, Inc. in Pleasantville where funeral services were also held. Burial followed at Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla.

In lieu of flowers, donations to Guiding Eyes for the Blind, 611 Granite Springs Rd., Yorktown Heights, N.Y. 10598 or the ASPCA would be appreciated.

June Halliday

June V. Halliday, a longtime Thornwood resident, died Feb. 1.

She was 83.

Halliday is survived by her husband, Everett; her daughter, Dale Fielder; her son, Mark; her granddaughter, Rene Fielder; grandson Daniel Fielder; great-grandson Jackson Fielder; and her sister, Marsha Keegan.

Visitation was on Feb. 5 at Beecher Flooks Funeral Home, Inc. in Pleasantville. Services and internment were private.

In lieu of flowers, donations to Rosary for the Blind would be appreciated.

William Richer

William F. Richer died on Feb. 5.

He was 72.

Richer was the beloved husband of Joyce; father of Peter, Cari, Brad, Tim and Lindsay; and devoted brother to Mike, Linda, Sheila and Gerry. He will be dearly missed.

The wake was held at Beecher Flooks Funeral Home in Pleasantville on Feb. 8. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at Holy Innocents Church in Pleasantville on Feb. 9.
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- Sea Scallops, pan seared, poached duck egg, butternut squash, pancetta risotto, port wine & pomegranate glaze

- Handpicked Lump Crab meat, leeks, roasted peppers, wild mushrooms, parmesan crust, saffron aioli

- Burrata with prosciutto di parma, roasted peppers and fig jam

Seasfood trio: oysters(3) clams(3) shrimp(2)

Ceasar Classico: romaine hearts, croutons, white anchovies, shaved parmigiano

SECOND COURSE

- Lobster Lasagna -

Maine lobster, béchamel, scallions, leeks, topped with melted truffled fontina cheese

- Stuffed Chicken Breast-

Bell & Evans French breast stuffed with spinach, sun dried tomatoes, and ricotta with a creamy madera pan au jus

- Surf and Turf Tuscano -

6 oz fillet, colossal shrimp in scampi butter: caramelized onions, and barolo wine sauce

- Strip Steak -

black angus NY Strip, roasted and sliced to order, crispy pancetta wild mushroom ragu

- Salmon Wellington -

Fresh salmon in a classic wellington puff pastry with citrus and fennel burreblanc

THIRD COURSE

- White Chocolate Crème Brule - Flourless Chocolate and Peanut Butter Cake - Tiramisu
Mount Kisco Police Department

Jan. 30: Report of a possible burglary on Britton Lane at 10:44 p.m. The complainant stated that there was an open door in the rear of a business and that an unknown male subject was seen heading into the building before leaving the premises. No items were reported missing from the establishment.

Jan. 31: Report of harassment regarding a dispute over a parking space in the lot behind Frannie's Goodie Shop on Main Street at 3:15 p.m. A male subject who parked his car in a space reserved for the business went to another location. He got upset after he returned when he saw a note left on his windshield. When confronted by an employee at Frannie's, he made some threats. The incident was reported as a matter of record.

Feb. 1: Report of a burglary at Newport Market on Kirby Plaza at 7:28 a.m. A male subject who concealed his face entered the store through a side exit, made his way to the downstairs office and stole about $3,000 in gold coins. The burglar then stole $360 from two cash registers in the store and an undisclosed amount of scratch off lottery tickets.

Feb. 1: A woman was driving behind a slow moving vehicle on Barker Street at 2:35 p.m. when she attempted to go around the car. The driver of the other care threw an object at the woman's car causing a small dent on the passenger side of the vehicle.

Feb. 1: Report of an incident of child endangerment on Oak Ridge Road at 10:47 p.m. The matter is under investigation. No other information was released.

Feb. 2: Police received a report of an intoxicated male on Gregory Avenue at 12:09 a.m. The responding officer spotted the individual, but the subject ran toward his house down the block. The officer caught up to him as he tried to enter his house. The subject, a 19-year-old male, was arrested and charged with unlawful possession of marijuana, a violation.

Feb. 2: Three homeless men, a 36-year-old and two 38-year-olds, were arrested at 2:19 p.m. and charged with drinking in public, a violation, on Carpenter Avenue.

Feb. 5: A male subject arrived at his wife's Carpenter Avenue residence and got into a verbal dispute with her at 5:30 p.m. Police were called and found a white "golf ball-sized chunk" on him. Testing later determined that it was cocaine. The man, a 57-year-old Ossining resident, was charged with seventh-degree possession of a controlled substance, a Class B felony. Before he was arraigned, the suspect was taken to Northern Westchester Hospital after complaining of stomach pains.

Feb. 5: A 45-year-old Mount Kisco man was arrested at 8:06 p.m. and charged with third-degree assault, a misdemeanor, after getting into a fight with his 39-year-old wife at their Gregory Avenue home. The wife reported that her husband punched her in the face. She did not require medical attention.

Pleasantville Police Department

Jan. 31: A 21-year-old Valhalla man was arrested on Marble Avenue at 4:46 p.m. and charged with unlawful possession of marijuana, a violation, following a traffic stop.

Feb. 1: Report of a larceny on Meadow Lane at 4:14 p.m. The matter turned out to be a dispute between two residents. One resident put a lock on the door for a common area and another resident cut it off. No further action needed.

Feb. 6: A 21-year-old Staten Island man was arrested and charged with exposure on Marble Avenue at 1:11 a.m. The suspect was seen urinating on the side of a building.

North Castle Police Department

Feb. 1: A caller from Schriefer's Delicatessen on Main Street reported at 1:02 p.m. that an employee's vehicle had been damaged.

Feb. 2: A General Heath Avenue resident reported at 10:18 p.m. that the bushes in front of her house were damaged, possibly by a vehicle that slid into them during the snowfall.

Feb. 4: Report of a car fire on I-684 at 8:26 a.m. The responding officers reported that there is a car on fire at the location but there are no injuries and no entrapment. The incident was turned over to state police.
GRAND CHAMPION

Eugene Wang, 3rd from left, the 2014 Grand Final North American Table Tennis Tour champion, is presented with his champions check of $3,500 and a trophy by, left to right, Robert Roberts, manager of the Westchester Table Tennis Center in Pleasantville, Bruce Liu, tour organizer, and Will Shortz, owner of the Westchester Table Tennis Center. Wang defeated Bob Chen in a dramatic seven-game final on Feb. 8. Pleasantville High School sensation Kai Zhang lost in the quarterfinals.

P’ville Says Goodbye to High School Senior at Memorial Service

By Martin Wilbur

A memorial service celebrating the life of 17-year-old Pleasantville High School senior Shane Howe drew an overflow crowd to St. John’s Episcopal Church on Sunnyside Avenue last Saturday afternoon.

The service, which drew at least an estimated 400 friends, family and community members, featured scripture and songs, a fitting tribute for someone who enjoyed playing music and being with the people he cared about.

Howe, who died suddenly on Jan. 31, was remembered as someone who had a large circle of friends, many of whom would each call him their best friend.

After the service, several of those who were closest with him in the village and at school said he was always ready to listen to everyone’s troubles and be there for others.

“What I remember most is that Shane always wanted to hear about everyone else’s problems but his,” said Kate O’Brien, who knew him since they were young children.

“He lived around the corner from me and I could call him and go over to his house and sit on his steps for hours with him. He was just so happy to listen. I don’t know, he was really selfless.”

Classmate Ailey Rosenshein said Howe was one of the kindest people she has known, deeply caring about his friends. He would also never say anything negative about people who didn’t care for him.

“One time he let you in to a certain point, if you were close to him at all, he touched your life and your heart so much, and he made such a difference that you can’t help but call him your best friend,” Rosenshein said.

She also recalled how Shane helped set her up with her current boyfriend.

Others talked about how music played a big part in his life, after he first picked up the guitar at about 10 years old.

His uncle, Jim Howe, said his nephew was a special person and especially lit up when he was playing music.

“He was a really talented kid and was really quiet. He just soaked in the world around him and turned it into music,” he said. “It was pretty neat. He was a real talent.”

The school community was informed of Shane Howe’s death on Sunday, Feb. 1 when Pleasantville High School Principal Joe Palumbo e-mailed students and parents. School officials arranged for counseling for any students who felt they needed someone to talk to someone.

Last week Pleasantville police refused to discuss the matter but the case remains an open investigation. The Westchester County Medical Examiner’s office said last week the toxicology report could take upwards of a few months to be completed.

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Investigators: Crash Investigation May Take a Year to Complete

continued from page 1
due to a separate accident, Sumwalt said.

When he approached the crossing, he reported that traffic was “inching along” as the SUV moved onto the crossing and came to a stop. At this point, the crossing arm lowered onto the SUV and hit the back of the car. According to the witness, Brody got out of her car and walked to the arm, then got back into the vehicle and sat there for a moment “as if there was enough time to put on her seatbelt.”

Sumwalt said the 5:44 Southeast-bound Harlem line train from Grand Central Station was traveling at 58 miles per hour--under the 60-mile-per-hour speed limit--before the engineer applied the emergency brake when he spotted the car in the crossing four seconds before impact. NTSB investigators determined the train had decelerated to 48 miles per hour when it collided with the SUV and took another 650 feet to stop, he said.

Sumwalt stated all equipment was functioning properly and procedures were followed by the crew in the seconds before the crash. The train’s horn sounded with the proper cadence--two longs blasts followed by one short blast and another long blast--as it approached the crossing. Thirty-nine seconds before the train approached the crossing, the flashing lights illuminated and the arm subsequently lowered, said Sumwalt. The area also had adequate signage.

Investigators will study the factors that may have led to Brody’s car reaching the tracks. Sumwalt said they will try to determine how familiar she was with the area and if traffic in front of her prevented her from moving forward. In addition, the NTSB is in the process of obtaining her cell phone records, to determine if she was texting or making a call at the time of the accident.

“We do that routinely now in all transportation accidents because we have seen a lot of accidents where this is a factor,” said Sumwalt.

The SUV was registered and passed inspection in December.

The third rail, which broke apart in 39-foot sections after impact, was last inspected in December, according to Sumwalt. One section of third rail pierced the SUV behind the driver while 12 sections broke through the bottom of the first train car and piled up inside.

The NTSB will work cooperatively with MTA police to conduct a thorough inspection of the severely damaged first car of the train. It was removed late Wednesday to the MTA facility in North White Plains.

“This is a very detailed investigation of this car. We’re combing carefully through pieces of ash, debris, pieces of third rail that have penetrated into that rail car and it makes for a very lengthy investigative process because of the severe, burnt-out condition of that car,” Sumwalt said.

County Executive Rob Astorino took a tour of the crash site hours after the accident and was affected seeing the charred wreckage firsthand.

“What I saw on that train is something that I’ll never forget,” Astorino said. “I am amazed that anyone got off that train (alive)."

After the collision, hundreds of passengers were seen evacuating the rear of the train and walking along the Taconic Parkway, on nearby streets or through the snow in nearby Gate of Heaven Cemetery looking for a way to get home, Astorino said.

On a typical weekday, that train averages about 655 commuters, said MTA President and CEO Thomas Prendergast. The train had made its last stop at 125th Street and was scheduled to stop next in Chappaqua, Prendergast said.

For Astorino, the deadly crash hit close to home.

"I was a commuter. This is my home town and I would take (that) train from Hawthorne," he said. "You sit down on the train with your iPad or iPod and you expect to get home safely. This is the last thing anyone would expect to happen."

If anyone has information that could benefit the investigation, they may e-mail witness@NTSB.gov.

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League of Women Voters of New Castle to Host Healthcare Forum

If you became too sick to convey your wishes, would your family, friends or doctors know what kind of medical care you want? Do you struggle with knowing what end-of-life healthcare options are available for family members? Planning ahead can reduce stress and allow greater autonomy when making end-of-life decisions for your family or yourself.

The League of Women Voters of New Castle is hosting a forum on Thursday, March 5 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Chappaqua Public Library theater to start a conversation about palliative care, hospice, advance care planning and other issues to consider when taking charge of present and future healthcare decisions.

For more information please contact the League of Women Voters of New Castle at lwvnewcastle@gmail.com or Amy McNamara at 914-238-8342.

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THERE’S A WORD FOR IT

By Edward Goralski

How Revolutionary. To mark the birth anniversary of Boris Pasternak, born Feb. 10, 1890, the quiz this week features words from Pasternak’s acclaimed novel “Doctor Zhivago.” The 1957 novel is the story of the life and loves of a poet-physician during the Russian Revolution. “Doctor Zhivago” was banned in the Soviet Union until 1988. Hopefully, you will not ban the quiz words from your vocabulary.

1. seethe (v.)
   A) to attempt something  B) be filled with anger  C) take action

2. ignominy (n.)
   A) public disgrace  B) lack of knowledge  C) an idol worshipper

3. salient (adj.)
   A) welcoming  B) beneficial  C) most important

4. grandiloquent (adj.)
   A) worthy of respect  B) divisible  C) expressed in a lofty style

5. samovar (n.)
   A) a decorated tea urn  B) a soldier on horseback  C) a large fur hat

6. perspicacity (n.)
   A) an assumed identity  B) shrewdness  C) trouble

7. arrant (adj.)
   A) utterly  B) going astray  C) passionate

8. anathematize (v.)
   A) to deprive of feeling  B) break down  C) formally condemn

ANSWERS:

1. B. To be filled with intense but unexpressed feeling
2. A. Public disgrace
3. C. Most noticeable or important
4. C. Expressed in a lofty style often to the point of being pompous or bombastic
5. C. Large fur hat
6. C.usually a large teapot, especially of Russian
7. C. Passionate
8. C. Formally condemn
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EMPIRE CITY CASINO
In the Midst of Tragedy, Community, Volunteers Were Exemplary

There are quite a number of good reasons why we’re fortunate to live in Westchester. For many, there are good schools for children and space to have peace and quiet in the yard, all of this within a reasonable commute to New York City.

There’s also a strong sense of community.

In the face of horrific tragedy, finding some good was at times difficult to locate last week. If there was one vitally important area that residents should be satisfied, it is knowing they have dedicated emergency responders. Many of them were from Valhalla and jurisdictions from around the area, who dropped everything to respond to a call where even many professional departments would be severely challenged.

For residents who may not have much contact with the volunteers, it really is extraordinary they risk as much as they do at all hours and in all types of weather. Sure, most of the calls are routine, but every so often there is a really bad incident, whether it be fire or accident, where they are tested to the max.

Another example of indomitable community spirit last week was in New Castle. Two of the six victims from the crash lived in town, a jarring reminder that life can be cruel no matter the address. Within hours of learning of the victims’ identities, volunteers galvanized, some through the local organization Chappaqua Shares, Chappaqua Cares to offer whatever the families needed to manage and cope with their loss.

A big applause should go Le Jardin, the French restaurant downtown which provided food to Robert Dirks’ family. At some point, all of us have experienced loss and have grieved. It turns your world upside down. However, relatively few experience loss in such a horribly gruesome and public manner.

In the weeks and month ahead, as these families try to move forward, keep them and their lost loved ones your thoughts.

Officials Correct to Press for Crossing Improvements

Sometimes elected officials can go overboard calling for new laws every time an incident occurs.

Oftentimes the appeals are heartfelt and justified. Sometimes they smack of opportunism.

This past week officials at every level of government were in the right questioning how to make railroad crossings that require motorists to ride over active Metro-North tracks safer.

Editorial

Letter

Cuomo Has Reneged on His Promise to Taxpayers, School Districts

Before there is any excitement over Gov. Cuomo’s supposed tax saver for the state’s citizens this year, let’s revisit last year’s taxpayer relief:

In April 2014, Gov. Cuomo, with the support of the state legislature, passed a budget that included two components that would lessen the burden of property taxes in New York State for the next three years. Phase 1 of that proposal called on the local taxing authorities to provide budgets that did not increase taxes beyond the “2 percent tax cap levy” limit, and in exchange, all taxpayers would receive a check equivalent to that increase. This was done as an election year promise with the notion that a check on average for $150 would appease us voters rather than returning the MILLIONS in gap elimination money the state has held back (stolen some might say) in aid since 2009.

The Pleasantville School District and all school districts in Westchester heeded the already-in-place mandate for the 2014-15 budget year. (In Pleasantville, all budgets have been under what would have been the tax cap since before the cap’s inception.) To date, most of the taxpayers of the Town of Mount Pleasant’s mailboxes are empty. In fact, most taxpayers around the state have not received these checks.

On Jan. 14, while the state continues to hold taxpayer money with the promised checks AND continues to fail to assist local governments with real tax relief by addressing unfunded mandates, which do not allow local governments or school districts to effectively lower costs, Gov. Cuomo had the gall to actually say these words: “You have to stop spending the way you have been spending.”

Is he joking or did somebody else dismantle the Moreland Commission before it got to close to him and his allies? Take a long, hard look in the mirror, Mr. Governor, pay attention to Albany’s issues first and give the taxpayers of this state back their money, both promised to and stolen from us.

Larry Boes
Pleasantville
Larry Boes is a trustee on the Pleasantville Board of Education.

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.
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Sarah Rand, Art Teacher
Mount Kisco

By Martin Wilbur

There probably couldn’t have been a better place for Sarah Rand to display her photography than at a special exhibit that opened last week in Connecticut.

Since she was about eight or nine years old, Rand has taken countless photos of her life experiences, whether it would be traveling with her family or celebrating what would be considered everyday occurrences.

Rand, 40, entered the 2014 Average Joe Photo Show, which is featured at the Lori Warner Studio and Gallery in Chester, Conn. Of the 10 photos she entered, six were selected to be exhibited. One of her photos, “Nectarine,” was awarded first place in one of two major categories.

“My parents are both artists so I was raised really with an appreciation for natural beauty,” Rand said.

The juried show, which was started in 2013 by two Connecticut women who tie philanthropic elements to the exhibit, required participants to only use a cell phone or other mobile device to take their pictures. Since almost everyone has a cell phone today, the contest and exhibit truly lends itself to the average Joe.

Entrants were also obligated to show water and how it interacts with people in every submitted photo.

Sitting poolside at Mount Kisco’s Brookside Pool one afternoon last August while watching her four- and eight-year-old sons, Rand took a close-up image of her half-eaten nectarine with a portion of the pool in the background.

“How on earth did the photographer make a half chawed fruit appealing?” the judges wrote. “She must have an ‘in’ with Mother Nature --Ms. Rand has sent me off to the fruit market and it’s only 7 a.m.”

Between her love of photography, her parents’ influence and her own training as an artist, Rand has developed a gift of seeing the special within the ordinary. An art teacher for sixth- to eighth-graders at the Wooster School, a K-12 preparatory school in Danbury, Rand said she uses a similar approach to engage her students.

Rand, an Ivorytown, Conn., native, followed in her parents’ career path. Her father is a sculptor and her mother a painter, and both are art teachers. For college, Rand went to the Rhode Island School of Design, where she was an illustration major. She remained at the school to earn her masters in pre-K-12 art education.

After finishing graduate school in 1999, Rand taught at Immaculate Conception School in Tuckahoe for eight years. During her time there, she and her husband, David, a graphic designer, lived in Nyack. They moved to Mount Kisco after Rand got the job at Wooster and her husband needed to commute into the city.

Despite her areas of concentration, Rand’s love of photography has never waned. As part of her bachelor’s degree, she spent part of one semester in Mexico studying darkroom photography.

“It’s taking the time to just appreciate the little things, whether it’s light or shade or color,” Rand said of what she enjoys photographing.

Rand also decided to enter Average Joe Photo Show because of the charitable component. Last year’s inaugural show, and again this year, organizers are raising money for Water.org, an organization that helps supply safe and drinkable water to communities in Third World countries.

Prints of the photos are for sale and the proceeds are donated to Water.org.

For anyone interested in learning more about the Average Joe Photo Show or to see the exhibit, which remains open until Earth Day on Apr. 22, visit www.averagejoephotoshow.com.

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CLOSED MONDAYS
By Jerry Eimbinder

Restaurants offering prix-fixe menus or special menus for celebrating on Feb. 14 are covered in this article. In some cases, the Valentine's Day dishes are also offered on Feb. 13 and 15. At most restaurants, the regular menus or limited versions of it will also be available. Prices shown for prix-fixe menus do not include tax, tip or beverages except where otherwise noted.

Because Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday this year, many restaurants are extending operating hours. Ruth's Chris Steakhouse, for example, will be open for lunch on Valentine's Day, probably the first time in its history it has done this.

Armonk

Amore. Four-course, prix-fixe dinner, $55 per person. Entrees: Osso buco, chicken scarpariello, wild boar tagliatelle, pesce del giorno, seafood cannelloni and garganelli fungi.


Bedford

Campaqna. Wine-paired dinner. Ladies receive a flower and take home a box of chocolate bon bons.

La Cremagliere. Specials: Crawfish bisque, crabmeat salad with grilled shrimp, loin of lamb and grilled lobster.

Briarcliff Manor


Chappaqua

Crabtree's Kittle House. Four-course, prix-fixe dinner, $85 per person. Wine pairing add $50. Entrees: Filet of Florida red snapper and roast filet mignon of beef. $75 per person on Friday and Sunday.

Croton-on-Hudson

Fino. Three-course, prix-fixe, dinner, $37.50 per person. Entrees: Chicken martini, salmonine dijon, veal chop valdostana, red snapper, heart-shaped ravioli, shell steak, linguine with clam sauce. Coffee included.

Dobbs Ferry

Cedar Street Grill. Special romantic cocktails and Valentine's Day Singles Night beginning at 10 p.m.

Half Moon. Three-course, prix-fixe dinner, $65 per person. Entrees: crab stuffed sole, yellow fin tuna, Scottish salmon a la pancha, surf and turf, stir fry, roasted duck, Guajillo rub semi-boneless chicken, 36-ounce steak for two and lobster ravioli.

Elmsford

Rinis. Three-course, prix-fixe dinner, $38.95 per person. Limited a la carte menu available. Entertainmen t at 7:30 p.m. Tony J Jazz Masters Trio with vocalist Louis Vanaria. No cover charge.

Granite Springs

Traditions 118. Seafood tower for two with oysters, clams, lobster, shrimp and crab. Red velvet crepe with ice cream and homemade cannoli filling. Complementary glass of prosecco. Same dishes served at sister restaurant The Rose Room in Mount Kisco.

Hastings-on-Hudson


Harvest on Hudson. Three-course, prix-fixe, dinner, $75 per person. Entrees: Branzino, ravioli, calamatta, veal, John Dory, skate, short rib, chateaubriand for two, duck L'arancia and venison.

The Prime. Four-course, prix-fixe dinner, $45 per person. Entrees: Roast tenderloin, maple glazed dier scallops on bed of spinach, French-cut stuffed chicken breast and dijon crusted Atlantic salmon. Complementary glass of Ruffino prosecco.

Irvington

Chutney Masala. Three-course, prix-fixe dinner, $49.95 per person. Entrees: Saag panner, bainga bharta, chicken tikka masala, lamb vindaloo, tandoori salmon, goat shrimp curry and crab moilee. Free glass of sparkling or house wine.

Il Sorriso. Three-course, prix-fixe dinner, $45 per person. Glass of prosecco included. At least five entrees will be offered including filet mignon and lobster tail.

Red Barn Bakery. Treats, 100-percent organic and non-genetically modified organism for purchase at the counter. Chocolate covered strawberries, heart-decorated cookies, chocolate cheese cake, chiffon cake, macaroons and flourless chocolate cake. Breakfast-in-bed packages can be customized with scones, muffins or other baked goods. Gluten-free and vegan baked goods, in wide varieties, are available.


Katonah

La Fontane. Three-course, prix-fixe dinner, $70 per couple. Entrees: Crab ravioli, grilled petite veal, roasted Norwegian salmon, lemon linguini with clams and artichoke, pork Shank and pappardelle and risotto pescatore.

Larchmont


Mount Kisco

Cafe of Love. Specials: Venison flavored with chocolate grape gastriche, duck ravioli, citrus brandanzo papillote cooked in parchment. Complementary “Passionate sauce” and complementary parsnip and pear soup amuse with caviar come with dinner. Winter menu available.

The Rose Room. Seafood tower for two with oysters, clams, lobster, shrimp and crab. Red velvet crepe with ice cream and homemade cannoli filling. Complementary glass of prosecco.

Via Vantili “All-Aphrodiasic” specials: Veal ossso buco ($30), salmon en brodo ($24), pollo fantastiche ($24), paella ($29), “Italian Stallion” rib-eye, oven-roasted bronzino ($25). Appetizers include a heart-shaped pizzette ($15), his half has spicy sausage, her half has pears, almonds, cheese and honey.

New Rochelle

Alvin & Friends. Entrees: Seared scallops, anise spiced duck breast and braised beef short ribs. Live piano music and roses for the ladies.

NoMa Social. Three-course, prix-fixe dinner, $45 per person. Entrees: Peppered filet mignon, lobster ravioli, slow roasted Amish chicken, black bass a la pancha and slow braised lamb shank.

Ossining


Rye


Scarsdale

California Pizza Kitchen. Special offer for two people: one appetizer, two entrees and a dessert for $32. Entrees: Barbecue chicken chopped salad, pizzas, including mushroom pepperoni sausage pie, and pastas, including garlic cream fettuccine with chicken.

Fig & Olive. Three-course, prix-fixe dinner, $65 per person. Wine pairing add $26. Ladies will receive a rose at the end of their meal. Entrees: Truffle risotto, Chilean sea bass, filet mignon and roasted rack of lamb. Limited a la carte menu also available.

Tarzana

Cellar 49. Wine-paired, prix-fixe dinner/ accommodations package, $359-$369 per couple with lobster risotto and filet mignon with chocolate port wine reduction; paired wines and beers with each course. Includes one overnight accommodation and Biddle Mansion American breakfast for two.


Equis. Five-course, prix-fixe tasting menu, $135 per person. Wine pair, also available: Entrees: Grilled Washu sirloin jus de brasaiage or quail and Hudson Valley foie gras.

RiverMarket Bar and Kitchen. Four-course tasting menu for two, $75. Featuring dishes prepared with products raised and grown in the Hudson Valley.

Ruth's Chris. Three-course dinner, $43.95 per person. Entrees: scallops, six-ounce filet and shrimp, stuffed chicken breast and salmon. Side dishes included. Roses for the ladies and take-home bag of chocolates on Saturday. Godiva chocolate martini (a Godiva chocolate is in this drink) priced at $14 (Saturday only).


Thornwood

Casa Rina. A choice of five three-course special dinners for two.

White Plains

42 The Restaurant. Six-course, prix-fixe dinner, $300 per cou-pl. Entrees: Halibut or filet mignon. Includes a bottle of sparkling wine or wine and "Romeo & Juliet" (manchego cheese and quince fruit).


Sapor. Roses for the ladies. Otherwise, will serve its regular menu.

Yorktown Heights

Don Tomsma's. Guests will receive a complementary glass of prosecco with their entrees.

Thyme Steak & Seafood. Three-course, prix-fixe dinner, $90 per person. Complementary glass of champagne and chocolate rose. Entrees: Murray's chicken breast, Berkshire double-cut pork chop, stuffed sole, salmon, rib-eye and cod. Anyone who wants to surprise a sweetheart will get full cooperation at Plates in Larchmont. The restaurant will hide an engagement ring in the hollow center of a “Ring Ding” dessert normally filled with cream. This practice has been taking place for a long time, and thus far, no one has bitten or swallowed the ring.

According to the National Restaurant Association, Valentine's Day is the second most popular holiday in America for dining out, trailing only Mother's Day.
P’ville School Officials Go Out to Bid on Turf Fields; Undecided on Material

By Janine Bowen

Pleasantville school officials are preparing to open the bidding process for several facilities projects, including the controversial replacement of artificial turf at all three district schools.

During the Feb. 3 Board of Education meeting, architect John D’Angelo explained that to correct the existing drainage issues at the current fields, a shock-absorbing mat will be placed under each new surface to help prevent water from pooling. The mat will also allow the district to explore alternatives to crumb rubber infill, a material made of recycled tires that has been opposed by several parents.

Among the alternatives is EPDM rubber, which is created in a factory. All of the chemical components are known and the surface plays similarly to turf with crumb rubber infill. Its drawback, D’Angelo said, is that it can cost between $260,000 and $300,000 more than crumb rubber.

Parents Advocating Clean TurfGrass (PACT), a group formed last year, has $300,000 more than crumb rubber. Currently, there is no definitive scientific proof linking crumb rubber to cancer, and artificial turf is considered safe by a variety of governmental agencies. Despite this, PACT is asking the board of education to consider natural infill or real grass, the latter of which is not a valid option due to the level of activity on the fields.

"To consider putting down a toxic substance is contrary to the safety of our schools," said resident Helen Meurer.

Natural options include cork or coconut husk, which contain no chemicals, but are pretreated to prevent the growth of mold and bacteria. Trustee Lou Conte requested that D’Angelo find out how the natural infill is treated and if the substance used could be harmful.

D’Angelo said natural turf infill options have lower surface temperatures and absorb moisture better than EPDM or crumb rubber, although the natural products require more maintenance. In hot weather, the natural infill tends to dry out and harden, requiring more frequent watering than other types of turf. Furthermore, the infill tends to shift and needs to be replenished more often.

Director of Athletics John Bauerlein said John Jay High School in Cross River installed turf with a coconut infill but returned to rubber within three years because officials were unhappy with the product. Bauerlein acknowledged that John Jay did not install the shock absorbing mat, something Pleasantville will have.

The final alternative is a polymer-coated sand infill. D’Angelo said that choice is not very popular and was unaware of any districts that used it.

Meurer, who praised officials for looking into alternative infill, suggested that the district also consider Nike Grind, a product that utilizes recycled sneakers. She organizes a drive to collect shoes for Nike Grind each year, but D’Angelo noted that the product might not be a viable option because it’s not widely available on the East Coast.

District officials have developed a more creative solution to infill at Bedford Road Elementary School. The new field there will utilize a cushion with a thick pad underneath for shock absorption instead of infill. D’Angelo explained that the surface is not ideal for competitive sports, but would be sufficient for practice and recess.

“It’s a way of including recreation for students on a surface that won’t have an infill that they could track into the elementary school at lunch," said Superintendent Mary Fox-Alter.

Board members emphasized that although crumb rubber will still be considered for the middle school and high school, no decision has been made. Meurer urged the board to wait another year to install the turf in order to provide more time to research alternatives. However, Trustee Larry Boes said to wait would be disingenuous to residents who approved the $3.5 million bond last May with the expectation that the turf would be installed this year.

Resident John Mueller said access to quality fields is important for keeping students healthy and out of trouble and urged the board to move forward with the project as quickly as possible.

“I would just ask the board to do what the voters asked you to do and we should not put it off,” he said. “I know you’ll do your due diligence and make sure we’re all as safe as we can be.”

D’Angelo said that the four-week bid process for the turf, repairs to the roof and removal of asbestos at the middle school and an expansion of the bleachers is expected to begin this week. Contracts should be awarded by March 24, with work is expected to begin between May 15 and June 29.
Getting Locked Out, Locked Up and Locked In

With my recent move, I learned that hanging on to keys and identifying which key is for which lock is important. I needed to call my local Locksmith-on-Wheels in Yorktown Heights, owned by Eugene and Carl Camia, to open two locked file cabinets with long lost keys.

There was also an unexpected mystery that unfolded before me. Buried deep in the eaves of my attic was a lootlocker that I had placed there more than 40 years ago when I moved into the house and totally forgot about. It was an item my parents had purchased for me when I was 13 years old and being shipped off to military school. It was to hold all my clothes and other possessions for that experience. As an adult, I used it for moving from one place to another and storage.

As I lugged it from its hiding place, I found that it was extremely heavy, locked and had no key. I had no idea what might be in it. My wife guessed that it might be cobblesstones, remembering that I used to collect interesting stones for walkways and patios.

“Oh, right,” I said, “that makes sense, that I’m going to save stones under lock and key.”

On that fateful day for the unveiling of its secret contents, I called together my staff for a “happening” much like that famous non-event that Geraldo Rivera staged for the opening of the Al Capone vaults in Chicago. I didn’t remember any skeletons, figuratively speaking, from my past. When the trunk lid was slowly opened, we found only dense stacks of newspapers, periodicals and manuscripts -- packed tight, much like the famous hoarder Collyer brothers -- dating from 1962 to 1968, obviously the latter year being the date the trunk was closed and locked. I quickly realized that this was my public relations “clipping file,” every publicity placement I made from the beginning of my career, including a blowup of a New York Times clip of my wife and me from our 15 minutes of fame that had gone missing, I thought, forever. I had forgotten how much space was required before paperless storage.

The experience gave me the opportunity to think about the importance of keys and locks and to meet Carl Camia, who told me that his call for lost keys has greatly decreased since the age of keypunch locks and to meet Carl Camia, who told me that his call for lost keys has greatly decreased since the age of keypunch locks and automatic openers. All I have to do now, for instance, is stand near my car with my key in my pocket and my car door opens automatically. Then I just push a button to start it.

Camia told me something interesting, even a little frightening, about home security for people who move from more urban locations where having more than one deadbolt lock is common. We want the same thing here in the country, and when we do, it can be a dangerous thing in case of a fire.

“If a fire breaks out in a house and the second deadbolt lock is in place, the homeowners can panic and not be able to find the key and not be able to get out of the house,” he said. “It’s happened.”

The most commonly used lock now is the Double-Acting Pin Tumbler Lock, modeled after the wooden locks of Assyria. It was first patented by American physician Abraham Stansbury in 1805 and later modernized by Linus Yale of Connecticut in 1848. In the early 20th century, Hungarian immigrant John Junkunc revolutionized the craft with his dial combination locks and went on to make American Lock Company one of the biggest manufacturers of locks in the nation.

Since then, locksmiths have gone on to add features ranging from magnets to electronic sensors and digital keys.

If you get locked out, or something you want gets locked in, or if you move into a new house, be sure to change the lock for obvious reasons and call Locksmiths-on-Wheels at 914-245-0048.

Bill Primavera is a Realtor* associated with William Raveis Real Estate and Founder of Primavera Public Relations, Inc., the longest running public relations agency in Westchester (www.PrimaveraPR.com), specializing in lifestyles, real estate and development. His real estate site is: www.PrimaveraRealEstate.com and his blog is: www.TheHomeGuru.com. To engage the services of Bill Primavera and his team to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.
The best young technologists in the county are being sought to compete in the inaugural Westchester Smart Mobile App Development Bowl. The event is being sponsored by Westchester County, Pace University’s Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems, and the David and Minnie Berk Foundation.

“There is no limit on the creativity that students can apply to the apps,” said County Executive Rob Astorino. “This is a chance for students to showcase their talents.”

Open to college and high school students throughout Westchester and the entire New York metropolitan area, student teams compete to create mobile apps to help with the management and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. The apps can range from simple busy board games that help keep Alzheimer’s patients’ minds occupied, to more complex apps that assist doctors, nurses and other caregivers with daily treatments.

Cash prizes as well as up to five paid summer internships with Westchester county government will be awarded to top teams and students. All of the entries will become part of a library of free apps. Interested student teams must register by Thursday, Feb. 12. To register, visit http://www.pace.edu/seidenberg/mobile-app-development-bowl-2015-challenge, e-mail mobileappcontest@pace.edu or call 914-422-4477.

All registrants are invited to attend a kick-off pep rally at the Westchester County Center on Friday, Feb. 27 at 1 p.m. where teams will be introduced. Students are encouraged to attend a workshop immediately following the pep rally to go over rules and help teams prepare for the contest.

Guidance and support will be made available throughout the competition by Pace University, including free technical resources, instruction and workshops. Schools can send more than one team. Students may form and register independent teams without school affiliation. There is no entry fee.

On Apr. 17 at Pace University’s Pleasantville campus, the teams will demonstrate their mobile apps for review by a panel of expert judges. Astorino will announce the winners.

Why focus on Alzheimer’s and dementia?

Over five million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer’s disease, including an estimated 200,000 under the age of 65. That number continues to grow each year, and experts predict that by 2050 up to 16 million will have the disease. The cost of treating and caring for these patients has become unsustainable.

Therefore, tools such as free apps for caregivers and patients can help alleviate some of the burden these individuals face on a daily basis.

"Westchester County and the David and Minnie Berk Foundation are ideal partners for the Westchester Smart Mobile App Development Bowl," said Amar Gupta, dean of the Seidenberg School at Pace. "They both are committed to improving the quality of healthcare to underserved and vulnerable populations, such as Alzheimer’s and dementia patients. Pace is proud to be adding our technology expertise to make this event a success for years to come."

The Seidenberg School at Pace University has established a telehealth laboratory, where the school serves as a mentor to several incubators and companies. Seidenberg has won several awards in this area: the Pilot Health Tech NYC Award two years in a row, an initiative that supports healthcare IT entrepreneurship; and a multimillion dollar grant in partnership with the county for a remote patient monitoring program. Additionally, the Seidenberg School has secured funding from multiple industry partners to pursue various telehealth issues: data analytics, interoperable electronic health records, telemedicine, social media and clinical trials.

Funding for the Westchester Smart Mobile App Development Bowl was provided by a Westchester County Department of Social Services grant awarded to Pace University to develop mobile apps for Alzheimer’s disease and dementia patients. Future competitions will be geared to developing apps that can serve other groups.

For more information and registration details, contact Elizabeth Foster at mobileappcontest@pace.edu or call 914-422-4477.
February 10 - February 16, 2015 The Examiner

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING MOUNT PLEASANT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a resolution adopted by the Board of Education of the Mount Pleasant Central School District (the “District”) that a special meeting of the qualified voters of said District be and the same hereby called to be held in said District in the Westlake High School Gymnasium, Westlake Drive, Thornwood, New York on Tuesday, March 24, 2015 from 7:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. for the purpose of voting on the following propositions:

PROPOSITION #1

Shall the Board of Education of the Mount Pleasant Central School District be authorized to (1) construct additions to and reconstruct various District buildings and facilities, including infrastructure and site work improvements, and acquire original furnishings, equipment, machinery or apparatus, at a maximum cost of $34,920,000, (2) expend such sum for such purpose, (3) levy the necessary tax therefore, to be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education taking into account state aid; and (4) in anticipation of the collection of such tax, issue bonds and notes of the District at one time or from time to time in the principal amount not to exceed $34,920,000, and the levy of a tax to pay the interest on said obligations when due?

PROPOSITION #2

Shall the Board of Education of the Mount Pleasant Central School District be authorized to (1) construct an addition to and reconstruct the auditorium and related music rooms, including site work, and acquire original furnishings, equipment, machinery or apparatus required for the purpose, at a maximum cost of $4,996,000, (2) expend such sum for such purpose, (3) levy the necessary tax therefore, to be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education taking into account state aid; and (4) in anticipation of the collection of such tax, issue bonds and notes of the District at one time or from time to time in the principal amount not to exceed $4,996,000, and the levy of a tax to pay the interest on said obligations when due?

PROPOSITION #3

Shall the Board of Education of the Mount Pleasant Central School District be authorized to (1) construct a new access road to the District campus and construct grass athletic fields, at a maximum cost of $2,685,000, (2) expend such sum for such purpose, (3) levy the necessary tax therefore, to be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education taking into account state aid; and (4) in anticipation of the collection of such tax, issue bonds and notes of the District at one time or from time to time in the principal amount not to exceed $2,685,000, and the levy of a tax to pay the interest on said obligations when due?

The vote upon such propositions shall be by machine or absentee ballot. The hours during which the polls shall be kept open shall be from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. prevailing time or for as long thereafter as necessary to enable qualified voters who are in the polling place at 9:00 p.m. to cast their ballots. Personal registration of voters is required, and no person shall vote whose name does not appear on the register of the District. If a voter has heretofore registered pursuant to Section 14 of the Education Law and has voted at an annual or special district meeting within the last four (4) calendar years, he or she is eligible to vote at this meeting. If a voter is registered and eligible to vote under Article 5 of the Election Law, he or she is also eligible to vote at this meeting. All other persons who wish to vote must register. Any person may register to vote not less than five (5) days preceding the vote between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the office of the District Clerk, 825 West Lake Drive, Thornwood, New York. The register prepared by the Board of Registration shall be filed in the office of the District Clerk, 825 West Lake Drive, Thornwood, New York and will be open for inspection immediately upon its completion by any qualified voter of the District from during regular school hours on each of the five days prior to the vote, except for Sunday, March 22, 2015. Absentee ballots may be applied for at the office of the District Clerk. Applications for absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk at least seven days prior to the vote if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or on or prior to March 23, 2015, if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter. Absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk not later than 5:00 p.m. on March 24, 2015. A list of all persons to whom absentee ballots shall have been issued will be available in the office of the District Clerk on each business day during school hours until the date of the vote. Any qualified voter may challenge the acceptance of the ballot of any person on such list, by making his challenge and reasons therefor known to the Inspector of Election before the close of the polls.

DATED: FEBRUARY 4, 2015 DISTRICT CLERK MTPLCSD BOARD OF EDUCATION

continued on page 24
Providing a solid strength and conditioning foundation for athletes who want to be physically and mentally fit was the idea behind creating Athletes Warehouse.

The Pleasantville business, which opened last June, aims to educate athletes on how they can keep their bodies in the best possible shape with a program that is specifically designed for them.

Co-owners Scott Lauder and Nick Serio are on a mission to change some of the misconceptions associated with strength and conditioning training. Their focus is on teaching the proper motor and movement patterns associated with exercise, especially for youth.

The 17,500-square-foot facility includes a fully-equipped athletic training center with additional space for personal training of adults. It also includes 6,500 square feet of turf, which is used for baseball and softball skill sessions.

Programs include one-on-one training for children ages 8 to 18, small group training for two to five athletes and team training for six or more. Those who train at Athletes Warehouse usually play a sport in school.

To get the most out of one's body and to compete at an optimum level, Serio said movements like the squat, the dead lift, the push-up and the pull-up must be perfected. Learning to perform exercises correctly is part of a science-based approach that he believes is missing from other training programs.

While the ultimate goal is to push athletes to achieve maximum performance through enhanced power, strength, speed and mental discipline, a key goal is to reduce the risk of injury, a problem that is increasingly common as young athletes spend more time in competitive sports, Serio explained.

Options for adults include daily boot camp sessions that focus on circuit-based cardiovascular fitness and strength exercises as well as personal training sessions. A functional fitness class, which includes power lifting, an introduction to Olympic lifting and metabolic conditioning, will be available soon.

In addition, Athletes Warehouse just launched a barbell club called the Westchester Barbell Coalition for clients who are interested in power and Olympic lifting.

Athletes Warehouse helps many young athletes perfect their training methods to reach their potential and reduce risk of injury.

“Every kid has the opportunity to become an athlete,” said Lauder, whose son trained with Serio before he decided to join the business. “Here, we don't bill you as a specific athlete. You walk in the door and you are an athlete.”

For more information on the many programs available, call 914-741-1802 or visit www.Athleteswarehouse.com.
Tuesday, Feb. 10

English Conversation Mini Course. For speakers of other languages seeking to improve their English. All welcome. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 2 to 3:30 p.m. Free. Tuesdays through March 31. Info: 914-864-0038 or visit www.mountkiscolibrary.org.

Italian Language and Culture With Mara De Matteo. De Matteo, born and raised in Italy, combines lively conversation with grammatical instruction in her classes, creating interactive lessons on the richness of Italian culture, past and present, through real-life anecdotes, literature, personal memoirs, films and photography. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd East, Armonk. 6:30 p.m. Free. Also Feb. 17 and 24. Info: 914-273-3887.

Wednesday, Feb. 11

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 meet new friends and enjoy time with your baby. For newborns birth to eight months old and their moms. Romperee Indoor Playground at World Cup Nursery School & Kindergarten 160 Hunts Lane, Chappaqua, 10:15 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Wednesday. Info: Contact Peggy at 914-960-4097.

Mummy Meet Up. Whether it’s your first child or your fifth, this program is a great way to get out of the house, meet new friends and enjoy time with your baby. For newborns birth to eight months old and their moms. Romperee Indoor Playground at World Cup Nursery School & Kindergarten 160 Hunts Lane, Chappaqua, 10:15 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Wednesday (except holidays) through June.

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 capture 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.

LOVE TO DECORATE? MAKE YOUR OWN BEAUTIFUL PILLOW! Materials, Y outh Lounge, 89 Baldwin Rd., Baldwin School & Kindergarten 160 Hunts Lane, Chappaqua, 10:15 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Wednesday (except holidays) through June.

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Officials Look to Federal Gov't for Improvements to RR Crossings

By Martin Wilbur and David Propper

Elected officials serving parts of the area serviced by Metro-North's Harlem line are pressing the federal government for action to prevent a repeat of last week's accident in Valhalla.

New Castle Supervisor Robert Greenstein, whose community saw two of its residents killed, sent a letter last Friday to U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand requesting federal money to construct an overpass from the Saw Mill Parkway at Roaring Brook Road. He said it is a project that has been talked about for decades but the prohibitive expense has prevented the state and federal government from funding the project.

Greenstein said the site is unique because the Saw Mill interchange at Roaring Brook Road is heavily congested during the morning and evening rush hours and sits close to the parkway and less than a half-mile from Horace Greeley High School.

"During the morning and evening rush hours, traffic converges at this location and routinely backs up over the grade crossing and onto the Saw Mill interchange at Roaring Brook Road," Greenstein wrote in part. "Because of the proximity of Horace Greeley High School, the morning rush hour traffic typically includes a large percentage of young and relatively inexperienced drivers."

During the past 10 years, problems with the train crossing gates have been reported 14 times to the New Castle Police Department, Greenstein said. In addition, there have been numerous accidents near the site.

Greenstein said it was important to highlight the inadequacies of grade crossings, particularly when the issue is in the public's consciousness. Also, a project of that magnitude would need federal money, although he had no estimates on how much an overpass from the parkway at Roaring Brook Road would cost.

"We definitely hope it's a start and it will force people to take some action as well," Greenstein said.

State Sen. Terrence Murphy (R-Yorktown), whose district includes the crash site, the Town of New Castle and many of the stops along the Harlem line into Putnam County, said all levels of government need to work together to make sure grade crossings throughout the Hudson Valley are safe.

"It is our due diligence to learn something out of this," Murphy said. "You get the federal, the state and the county (governments), you get whatever it takes to keep the people safe. That's the most important thing."

Assemblyman David Buchwald said in a statement last week key issues that will be reviewed in the weeks and months ahead include whether Metro-North could have done anything differently last week and what can be done to make railroad grade crossings safer. In addition, potential modifications of train car and track construction should also be looked at.

Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (D-Cold Spring) last Wednesday discussed legislation he's pushing forward that would increase the annual federal funding available to $100 million to move or raise road-level rail crossings to safer locations. He stressed there is work to be done to make railroad crossings safer.

Maloney wants to see the Rail Line Relocation & Improvement Capital Grant Program (RLR) reauthorized. The program hasn't been funded since 2009, and even then it was done so minimally. "It's a good idea that's never been fully implemented," Maloney said. "But it's about time we did it."

There are 5,304 grade crossings in New York, Maloney said. From 2012-2014, there were 81 accidents, 15 deaths and 23 injuries at grade crossings, according to the Federal Railroad Administration Office of Safety.

Maloney, who was the neighbor of one of the victims of the Dec. 1, 2013, train derailment on the Hudson line near Spuyten Duyvil, is also pushing Congress to pass legislation called the Commuter Rail Passenger Safety Act, which would allow commuter and freight rail systems to apply for loans and loan guarantees to invest in positive train control systems.

Positive train control is important, Maloney said, because it gives the train system more time to slow down.

"And that, of course, could be the difference between a minor accident or one like what we saw last (Tuesday) where there's horrific damage and catastrophic lost of life," Maloney said.

ROYAL HANNEFORD CIRCUS CELEBRATES 40th ANNIVERSARY APPEARING AT THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY CENTER

The Countdown is on – It's less than 40 days to the 40th Anniversary Royal Hanneford Circus spectacular at The Westchester County Center in White Plains.

Circus stars familiar and new are on the bill and ready to entertain the thousands of families expected to attend one of the nine performances over the 3 day President's Day Weekend, February 14-15-16. Performance times are 10AM – 2PM and 6PM each day.

The Royal Hanneford Circus is a family tradition at The Westchester County Center providing a "traditional Circus" in 3 Rings! High flyers, The Human Cannonball, The Magical Quick Change, Elephants, Tigers, Bears and Camels and everyone's favorite Grandma….Grandma The Clown, are just a few of the circus stars ready to entertain.

Tickets are on Sale at the Westchester County Box Office, from ticketmaster and ticketmaster.com. All seats are reserved and affordable. Premium seats are $32. Regular reserved seats are $25. There is a discount for groups of 20 or more at select Shows. For information, call the Westchester County Center Box Office- (914) 995-4050 or visit countycenter.biz.

The Royal Hanneford Circus welcomes sponsors TD Bank, America's most convenient bank and The Metro North Railroad, the way to go. The Westchester County Center is a short walk from the White Plains Train Station. Go to MTA.info and click on Metro North Deals and Getaways for ticket offer and travel information.
Happenings
continued from page 24
180 Bradhurst Ave., Hawthorne. Doors open at 6 p.m. Games start at 7:20 p.m. $2 (for one card). Extra game cards may be purchased for $2 or $3 each along with a few specialty games. Every Wednesday.

Art Discussion Series: Robert S. Duncanson. Born in 1821, this African-American artist was a master painter in the Hudson River School. Born in Seneca, N.Y. and creating mostly in Canada, Duncanson’s career spanned pre- and post-Civil War America, but his work was not a political examination of America’s turbulence. Taught as one of the most important artists of color of his time, he is also cited as strong-willed and independent who refused to allow society to dictate what the political content of his work. Led by Professor Valerie Franco. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887 or www.northcastllelibrary.org.

The Gotham Coyote Project. Conservation scientist Dr. Mark Weckel of the American Museum of Natural History will explain how the Gotham Coyote Project is looking to answer why coyotes are here, how many there are and what they eat. Please bring a reusable mug to reduce our ecological footprint. Katonah Village Library, 26 Bedford Rd., Katonah. Refreshments at 7 p.m. (Please bring reusable mug.) Lecture at 7:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-232-1999.

The Great Atlantic Garbage Patch. A plastic bag blows into the Bronx River and washes into the Long Island Sound, so the story begins. But where does it end and what’s the impact? Follow the story of the plastic bag as it moves through our neighborhoods and into our oceans. Learn how garbage is collecting in our oceans, and why a “plastic gyre is dire” is not just for fish and sea birds, but for humans as well. Short informational video followed by a presentation. Presented in partnership with the Sierra Club Lower Hudson Group. Village Library, 26 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 1:45 to 2:30 p.m. Free. Every Thursday. Info: 914-769-0548 or visit www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Read to Rover. Dogs love listening to stories. Come meet Rover and read your favorite story. For children five years old and up. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Every Thursday. Info: 914-864-0130 or visit www.pleasantvillerd.com.

“Brothers of the Black List.” The Ossining Documentary and Discussion Series continues with this film about how school administrators at SUNY Oneonta in 1992 released a list of its black male students to police following an attempted off-campus rape. The controversy that ensued led to the longest litigated civil rights case in U.S. history. Following the screening, join the film’s director Sean Gallagher, Ossining High School’s Jillian McRae and Kirk Allen, a featured subject in the film, for a discussion. Ossining Public Library’s Budarz Theater, 53 Croton Ave., Ossining. 6:30 p.m. Free. Info: Visit www.ossiningdocumentaries.com.

Zumba Fitness Class. Addie-Tude Performing Arts Center, 42 Memorial Plaza, Pleasantville. 7 to 8 p.m. $15 a class. $29 for four classes. $55 for eight classes. Meets every Thursday. Also Saturdays from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Info: 917-215-1720, e-mail AddietudeDance@gmail.com or visit www.Addie-tude.com.

Friday, Feb. 13
Zumba Gold. Try this low-impact approach to Zumba for the older active adult and baby boomer with the same sweaty, fun-filled cardio workout in an easy learning environment. Ongoing classes; drop-ins welcome. Addie-tude Performing Arts Center, 42 Memorial Plaza, Pleasantville. 11 a.m. to noon. $12. Four- and eight-week cards available. Meets every Friday. Info: 914-747-0808 or email instructor at olin.amy@gmail.com.

Friday Night Cinema: “Futile Attraction.” This 2008 independent New Zealand anti-romantic comedy completely takes down reality TV and the whole romantic film genre. What’s a poor director to do when he needs to keep ratings up even though his reality stars are down on the idea of a romance together? This film brings young antipathy to the screen just in time for Valentine’s Day. Post-screening discussion led by Prof. Valerie Franco. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 914-273-3887.

Saturday, Feb. 14
Pleasantville Farmers Market. The market moves indoors featuring vendors with winter-grown produce along with a variety of meats, cheeses, breads and prepared foods. Pleasantville Middle School, 40 Romer Ave., Pleasantville. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Every Saturday through May 9. Info: Visit www.pleasantvillenaturecenter.org.

Mount Kisco Farmers Market. St. Mark’s Church, 85 Main St., Mount Kisco. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Info: Visit https://www.facebook.com/MtKiscoFarmersMarket.

Sahaja Meditation. Led by Peter Simone. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 10 to 11 a.m. Free. Every Saturday. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-664-0137.

Tai Chi With Larry Attlee. Learn specific feldenkrais and chi kung breathing techniques for deep relaxation and apply them to tai chi movement. A hands-on class that is geared to the level of experience of the class. Please wear comfortable clothes and bring a floor mat or towel. North Castle Public Library, 19 Whippoorwill Rd. East, Armonk. 10:30 a.m. Free. Also Feb. 21 and 28. Info: 914-273-3887.

Winter Wolves. Learn about the mythology, biology and ecology of wolf families and discover why this season is such a magical time for packs in North America. Guests will visit ambassador wolves Atka, Alawa, Nikai and Zephyr as well as the centers critically endangered red wolves and Mexican gray wolves. Also enjoy hot beverages in our woodstove-heated classroom. Dress for cold weather. Wolf Conservation Center, South Salem. 11 a.m. Adults: $15. Children (under 12): $12. Also Feb. 16, 18 and 22 at 11 a.m. Pre-registration required. Info and pre-registration: Visit www.nywolf.org.

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 to help melt through the late winter ice. 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.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Pound Fitness Program. A 45-minute full-body cardio and stress relief jam session, fusion Pilates, cardio, plyometrics, isometric movements and poses. Using lightly weighted drumsticks called Ripstix and combining constant simulated drumming resulting in working the entire body. TADA Theatre And Dance Arts, 131 Bedford Rd., Katonah. 11:45 a.m. $20. Every Saturday; also Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. Info: Contact Peggy at 914 960-4097.


Chinese Year of the Sheep. Get an early start celebrating the Chinese New Year. Come meet our resident sheep and goats and learn about our clever and woolly friends. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 2 p.m. Members: $5 per person. Non-members: $8 per person. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Monday, Feb. 16
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.

Disney’s “Aladdin Kids” February Break Workshop. A week of acting, singing and dancing, this workshop will cast, rehearse, tech and perform the 30-minute Disney’s “Aladdin Kids,” all in the span of one week. For children in grades 2-8. White Plains Performing Arts Center, 11 City Center, White Plains. 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day through Feb. 20. Tuition: $350 (includes four complementary tickets to the Feb. 20 performance). Registration required. Registration: 914-328-1600 or visit wppac.com/shows/disneys-aladdin-kids. Additional info: 914-328-1600 or e-mail education@wppac.com.
In the spirit of the upcoming Presidents’ Day weekend -- and in my insatiable search to relate events around me to a wine-centricity -- I contemplated this week's column.

Seeking references to any imbibing habits by our first and 16th leaders, I found the landscape highly polarized.

George Washington brewed his own beer, of which he consumed copious amounts at dinners in his home and at various venues when crafting the Constitution with his fellow Founding Fathers. He was also fond of the fine wines purchased by Thomas Jefferson on his governmental boondoggles to French wineries. And Washington was a fan of the wine rage of Colonial times: Portuguese Madeira fortified wines.

President Lincoln was the extreme opposite. A self-proclaimed teetotaler, he once pronounced his attitude toward on the course of world events.

The proclivities of many leaders came to mind, both indulgers and abstainers, including Napoleon, Stalin, Franklin Roosevelt and George W. Bush. But the one leader, in my mind, that history attributes an indomitable spirit of military prowess and political acumen, equally intermeshed with conspicuous consumption, is Winston Churchill.

Coincidentally, last week marked the 50th anniversary of his death at age 90. With this occasion as inspiration for furthering this week's wine-centric theme, I researched the numerous links between Sir Winston's exploits in the cabinet war rooms and at the dinner table within 10 Downing St.

As British Prime Minister from 1940-45, Churchill led his country from the brink of defeat to victory during World War II. With his vow of "blood, toil, tears and sweat" to Parliament upon taking office, his constituents considered him their savior -- and forgave him for his many excesses.

His excesses?
1. It is well-documented that his typical alcohol consumption consisted of two or three Scotches, several glasses of Champagne, at least two brandies and a highball—each day.
2. At a banquet at the home of the Saudi king, where, for religious reasons, no alcohol or cigars were served, Churchill protested: “My religion prescribes, as an absolute sacred ritual, smoking cigars and drinking alcohol before, after, and, if need be, during all meals and the intervals between them.”
3. Of all libations, he favored Champagne. He once admitted: “In victory I deserve it; in defeat, I need it.”
4. During the war, Churchill visited the White House for weeks at a time, engaging in his smoking and drinking habits into the wee hours of the morning with his drinking buddy. An aide to President Roosevelt admitted that after Churchill's visits, FDR slept for 10 hours a night for three consecutive days.

These excesses were encapsulated in his penchant for inspiring his constituents, at times with classic wit and sarcasm. Here are a few tidbits I gleaned from various sources:

1. “You have enemies? Good. That means you’ve stood up for something, sometime in your life.”
2. “This is the lesson: never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty—never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense.”
3. “Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing has happened.”
4. “He has all of the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire.”
5. Dialogue at a dinner with British politician Bessie Braddock: “Winston, you are drunk, and what’s more you are disgustingly drunk.”
6. “Bessie, my dear, you are ugly, and what’s more, you are disgustingly ugly. But tomorrow I shall be sober and you will still be disgustingly ugly.”

As we remember the accomplishments of these leaders this weekend, consider President Lincoln’s words on drinking. I guess there are exceptions to every maxim.

Nick Antonaccio is a 35-year Pleasantville resident. For over 15 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.
A Score by More

Fox Lane’s Tanner More Celebrates His Late Goal in Last Wednesday’s Win Against Kennedy Catholic