**Preliminary Metro-North Crash Report Void of Answers**

By Martin Wilbur

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued a preliminary report Monday on the Feb. 3 Metro-North crash that killed six people but doesn't explain why the SUV driver moved forward into the oncoming train's path.

The two-page report highlighted the main details in the moments leading up to the 6:26 p.m. crash at the Commerce Street crossing in Valhalla after the SUV driver, Ellen Brody of Edgemont, had the railroad crossing gate lower onto her vehicle.

Brody and five passengers in the first car of the train, the 5:44 out of Grand Central to Southeast, were killed when the collision sparked an explosion and fire. The crash also caused sections of the third rail to break apart, piercing the SUV and the underside of the train's first car.

Despite the lack of clues in the communication, the report did state that Brody's 2011 Mercedes 350ML was already in the crossing when one of the gates came down on the vehicle toward the back of the car.

It also stated that in addition to the gates, the crossing had warning lights that activate to warn motorists of an oncoming train.

"The SUV was stopped on the railroad tracks in the highway-rail grade crossing and was positioned in an easterly direction when the railroad crossing gates moved to the closed position," one passage of the report stated. "Witnesses reported the driver of the SUV as being stopped in the crossing prior to the gates lowering. When the gate lowered, it struck the rear portion of the SUV after which the driver exited..."

continued on page 4

**Hit King Pete Rose, ‘Rudy’ to Appear at Mount Kisco ALS Fundraiser**

By Neal Rentz

Area residents will have the chance to meet baseball's all-time hits leader and a football underdog who became a legend at Notre Dame--all for a great cause.

Pete Rose and Daniel "Rudy" Ruettiger, the subject of the 1993 film "Rudy," will be on hand for this Thursday night's Strike Out ALS With Pat Quinn from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. at Grand Prix New York in Mount Kisco.

The event will raise funds for research to battle Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), or more commonly referred to as Lou Gehrig's Disease, a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord.

The fundraiser will benefit Quinn for the Win to help support Yonkers resident Pat Quinn, co-founder of last summer's Ice Bucket Challenge that took social media by storm, raising millions of dollars.

Baseball legend Pete Rose will participate in Strike Out ALS With Pat Quinn this Thursday, Feb. 26 at Grand Prix New York in Mount Kisco.

Pat Quinn, co-founder of last summer's Ice Bucket Challenge that took social media by storm, raising millions of dollars.

continued on page 6

**Gas Leak Displaces Pace Students From Dormitories for Two Nights**

By Janine Bowen

Students at Pace University were evacuated from their dormitories last Wednesday night following a gas leak on the Pleasantville campus.

According to Cara Cea, the assistant director for media relations at Pace, a corroded external gas pipe burst Feb.18 due to the cold weather, resulting in the leak. Heat and hot water in two dormitory buildings, as well as in the university townhouses, several offices, the Goldstein Fitness Center and Kessel Student Center had to be shut off to correct the problem.

About 75 percent of the students affected by the sudden lack of heat were able to go home or find a place to stay off campus while about 100 students stayed with friends on the Briarcliff campus. Another 10 slept on cots in the Wilcox gym.

Students were cleared to return to their dorms on Friday.

"The students were great, the residential life staff was great. They all rose to the occasion and everyone was helpful and cooperative and everything went..."

continued on page 6

**Power of the Flower**

As an annual fundraiser, West Patent Elementary School students purchase carnations and write notes to their friends at school on Valentine’s Day. Last year snow closed school going into the February break, so West Patent parents called Northern Westchester Hospital offering 650 flowers to patients. The effort was so well-received, students this year had the option of buying flowers for friends or patients, so 150 flowers were purchased and handed out to patients and staff, along with personal get well wishes. Pictured, left to right, are Corey, Mia and Melissa Jacobowitz, an NWH nurse and Emma and Madyson Greene who helped with the chores.
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METABOLIC SYNDROME - ARE YOU AT RISK?
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Ask the Doctor
Mitchell Roslin, MD
Director, Bariatric Surgery
Northern Westchester Hospital
nwhsurgicalweightloss.org/DrRoslin

Q: What is metabolic syndrome and how can it damage my health?
A: “Metabolic” refers to the life-sustaining, chemical processes that happen in our bodies. We often speak about metabolism in relation to our body’s ability, or inability, to burn the fat and calories we consume. Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of adverse factors that doubles your risk of heart disease. You are also five times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes.

Factors include: high blood pressure; high triglycerides; low levels of good HDL cholesterol; high fasting blood sugar; and excess weight specifically in your midsection. All factors need not be present for very serious consequences.

Q: What can I do if I have metabolic syndrome?
A: Eating a healthy diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables and other fiber-rich foods, along with exercising at least 30 minutes daily, several times a week, will help control your blood pressure, blood sugar, and weight – all key triggers of the syndrome. However, for people with excess weight in the midsection, losing significant weight and keeping it off can be very difficult.

For some of these people, weight-loss (bariatric) surgery can be the best solution. With the right surgical procedure, obese patients can lose a lot of weight and almost immediately start lowering blood sugar, blood pressure and blood fat counts.

Q: How can I prevent metabolic syndrome?
A: Healthy eating and regular exercise, as I describe above, are great ways to keep the syndrome’s various triggering factors at bay. If you already have some or all of the factors involved in metabolic syndrome, see your doctor. If surgical weight-loss is recommended, Northern Westchester Hospital’s website is an excellent place to explore today’s most advanced, safest and most effective options: www.nwhsurgicalweightloss.org.

Did You Know?
Weight-loss surgery can significantly lower blood sugar, blood pressure and blood fat counts. Reducing or eliminating the need for certain medications.

Find out if weight-loss surgery is right for you. Visit www.nwhsurgicalweightloss.org today and register for free seminar.
Brynwood FEIS Public Hearing Likely to Resume By Spring

By Martin Wilbur

North Castle officials anticipate the public hearing on Brynwood Golf & Country Club’s Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to resume within two months once the developers address issues raised by the town’s consultants.

Earlier this month, the town board accepted reports from BFJ Planning and Kellard Sessions, an Armonk engineering firm, detailing a long series of questions the applicant must answer related to its condominium development and golf course redesign plan.

At the board’s last regular meeting, Supervisor Michael Schiliro said resumption of the hearing could be in March or April, although how quickly the Brynwood developers submit their responses to the consultants’ reports will help determine when it is scheduled.

The updated proposal consists of 63 market-rate condominiums, 10 fee-simple golf cottages and on-site seven affordable units. If the affordable units are built off-site the developers would build 70 market-rate units along with the 10 fee-simple cottages on the 156-acre property on Bedford Road in Armonk. The off-site approach would mean an additional affordable unit off-site, for a total of eight.

On Feb. 9, representatives for Brynwood’s development team updated the town board on the changes that were first outlined last fall and why the project would be a benefit to the community.

“This group, they want to be part of your community,” said attorney Mark Weingarten. “They don’t want to sell to somebody else, they don’t want to sell to build other things. This is their vision, this is what they want to do and they’re hoping you share that vision with them by the time they’re done.”

The property is currently zoned two-acre residential, but the applicant has requested a unique overlay district to allow for the luxury multifamily housing. Under current zoning, the applicant could build up to 49 single-family houses.

Various iterations of Brynwood’s condominium and golf course plan have been proposed since the property was purchased in late 2009. Most of the arguments against the proposals have contended that the project would be too dense and would add to congestion along Route 22. Opponents also protested the inequity of condominiums taxes that are roughly half of a similarly valued single-family house.

As a result, one of the biggest changes proposed is making the condominium units fee simple. The forecasted additional revenues to the town and school district is $904,619, which would be provided by the applicant in an annual payment, according to the BFJ report.

Tax revenue projections now amount to about $1.7 million a year for the Byram Hills School District, $467,000 a year for the Bedford Central School District and $904,619, which would be provided by the applicant in an annual payment, according to the BFJ report.

Various improvements to the site of the current building, that would be part of its proposed condominium development and golf course redesign plan.

An artist’s rendition of Brynwood Golf & Country Club’s new clubhouse, on the site of the current building, that would be part of its proposed condominium development and golf course redesign plan.

"We have the only large-scale and really significantly undeveloped land proposal in this entire area," Tinson said.

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Preliminary Metro-North Crash Report Void of Answers

the SUV, looked at the back of the SUV, then got back in the SUV, drove forward (east), and was struck by the train.

While the preliminary report did not mention how much time elapsed between the time that the gates lowered and the arrival of the train at the grade crossing, in a press briefing days after the crash, NTSB board member Robert Sumwalter said it took 39 seconds.

Other information that was previously dispensed during NTSB briefings also was included in the preliminary report. The train was travelling at 58 miles per hour--under the 60-mile-per-hour speed limit--when the emergency brake was pulled and the train's horn was activated in accordance with regulations. The train's recorder indicated that the emergency brake was activated four seconds before impact, about 300 feet from the SUV, and had decelerated to 49 miles per hour at the time of the collision.

The train and vehicle came to a stop 650 feet after they collided. Twelve 39-foot sections of third rail broke apart and were found inside the first rail car.

The NTSB will conduct a metallurgical examination of the third rail and samples of the lead train car's interior will be examined for compliance with fire safety protection standards.

Metro-North estimated damage at about $3.7 million.

Earlier this month, the NTSB projected that its full investigation could take up to a year to complete.

On Monday, Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (D-Cold Spring), who has written two proposed provisions to the Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act (PRRRA), said officials need to be focusing on the safety of highway-rail crossings.

"Ninety-five percent of deaths involving trains actually happen at highway-rail crossings, and with hundreds of deaths at grade crossings each year, we must look at commonsense improvements at grade crossings — especially at high-hazard crossings we know are dangerous," Maloney said in a statement.

Maloney's two provisions to the PRRRA, which has been passed by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, includes significant investments to improve rail crossings as well as positive train control.

Mt. Kisco Chamber of Commerce Seeks Nominations for 2015 Citizen of the Year

If you would like to nominate someone for the Mount Kisco Chamber of Commerce’s 2015 Citizen of the Year, please submit a letter of recommendation to the chamber explaining why the person you are recommending meets the criteria set forth below.

1. The person should be one who has given one's time and talents to benefit the entire Mount Kisco community.
2. The recipient should be a member of the Mount Kisco Chamber of Commerce or a non-member who lives or has a business in the Mount Kisco zip code area.

The letter must be received by Thursday, Feb. 26 at 5 p.m. in order to be considered by the chamber's board of directors.

Please submit the letter to the chamber's office at director@mtkiscocchamber.com or by fax at 914-666-7663.

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“A Nervous about my two year old starting school for the first time, I signed her up for three days a week. By the end of the first week, at my daughter's request, she was enrolled all five days. The teachers love what they do, and it shows.”

- TINS Parent
Gas Leak Displaces Pace Students From Dormitories for Two Nights

continued from page 1

smoothly,” Cea said.

By Thursday morning, heat had been restored to the Goldstein Fitness Center as well as the Kessel Student Center, which had recently been renovated and had been scheduled to celebrate its grand reopening prior to the incident. A grand reopening will be scheduled for a later date, Cea said.

Pace University reported on its website that two contractors were retained to lay a new gas pipe and boilers were shipped to the campus from Virginia last Thursday morning. After the boilers arrived and were installed, heat was restored to the dormitories by Friday. Before then, students remained at home or on the Briarcliff campus. The students who stayed in the Wilcox gym on Wednesday night were moved to the Briarcliff campus the following evening.

Heat was restored to all buildings by Monday. Classes continued without interruption for the remainder of the week since no classroom buildings were affected by the incident.

Hit King Pete Rose, ‘Rudy’ to Appear at Mount Kisco ALS Fundraiser

continued from page 1

dollars and awareness for ALS research, said Greg McNally, a spokesman for the event. Quinn was diagnosed with ALS two years ago.

In addition to having Rose, the controversial former player and manager who also is the career leader in games played, at bats and singles, Ruettiger, now a motivational speaker, was a popular but undersized non-scholarship walk-on who got the chance to play in one series of downs in his senior year at Notre Dame. He was carried off the field by fans when he sacked the opposing quarterback on the game’s final play.

McNally said it is common for charities to reach out to well-known athletes and celebrities to help draw interest to events such as these. Rose and Ruettiger are easily able to connect with the public.

“Despite his controversial history, Rose remains popular with many baseball fans for his professional accomplishments and his presence is helping to generate interest and excitement about the event,” McNally said.

Meanwhile, people also identify with Ruettiger because of his inspirational story, which sponsors are attracted to, he added.

Tickets to the event are $75; children under 10 will be admitted for $50. That price is available for those who pre-register at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bowling-with-the-boys-pat-quinn-tickets-14992872084. Tickets purchased at the door will be $100.

The event will include food, drinks, bowling, silent and live auctions, a raffle, a Hawaiian shirt contest and photos with Rose.

For an unspecified additional fee, Rose will sign autographs. He will be donating all proceeds from the signing to Quinn for the Win, McNally said. Fans are encouraged to e-mail Pete Kelly at pkkellygreen@gmail.com for additional information about meeting Rose.

It is not known whether Ruettiger will be signing autographs and if there will be any charge if that materializes, he said.

Grand Prix New York is located at 333 N. Bedford Rd. in Mount Kisco.

For more information about Strike Out ALS With Pat Quinn, visit http://room3606.com/q4tw/.

The event is being organized by Quinn’s rugby team, the White Plains Rugby Club. For more information about the Club visit http://www.wprfc.org.
County Wins Round in Court Over HUD in Housing Settlement

By Martin Wilbur

Last week’s unanimous decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit that determined the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) actions are subject to judicial review drew contrasting reactions among two key Westchester officials.

The Feb. 18 decision, which stemmed from HUD’s decision to begin withholding federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money because it concluded the county was noncompliant with portions of the 2009 affordable housing settlement, requires the two parties to return to U.S. District Court Judge Denise Cote. Cote previously ruled against the county in this matter.

In its decision, the Court of Appeals said the agency did not have discretionary power to withhold the funds because there are statutes limiting its authority. HUD had rejected the county’s Analysis of Impediment (AI), which has become a major sticking point between the federal government and the county. As a result, Westchester lost about $7 million in 2011 and $5.2 million each year from 2012-14.

HUD had been demanding that an acceptable AI be filed because some of Westchester’s communities subject to the settlement were found to have potential exclusionary zoning.

County Executive Rob Astorino last week called the ruling a “major victory” for Westchester because it forces HUD to follow the law and not arbitrarily punish the county.

“A lot of people asked, why are we fighting HUD?” Astorino said in a statement last Thursday. “(This) decision is a clear statement that the county was right to defend local zoning.”

While Board of Legislators Chairman Michael Kaplowitz (D-Somers) applauded the court’s decision, he said it may ultimately have little or no effect on the main points of contention. Kaplowitz said the county must still file an AI that is “acceptable to HUD,” but it forces the agency to have to justify to the court why it would not accept the AI and withhold money.

“This was a victory, but it sends us to the same court, it sends us to the same judge that has ruled against us many times before,” he said.

Kaplowitz said the ruling should serve as a good opportunity to reopen negotiations between the two sides to resolve the unresolved points of the settlement and to try and recover some of the lost CDBG money.

All but $750,000 of Westchester’s 2011 CDBG money was reallocated to other parts of the country. The county can now pursue the funds that were not reallocated. However, the $15.6 million money from the following three years is lost, Kaplowitz said.

Earlier this month, Rep. Nita Lowey teamed up with Gov. Andrew Cuomo to announce a deal that allows the county to apply for its 2015 allotment of CDBG money.

Astorino has continually been at odds with HUD saying that the department has been overreaching.

His office’s statement last week added that the county is in full compliance with the settlement, which requires 750 units of new affordable housing units be built by the end of next year. Last year ended with financing in place for 454 units (450 was the benchmark) and 406 units with building permits (350 was the benchmark). All 31 communities have identified potential sites and 223 units are occupied.
Snow Removal Costs Steadily Piling Up in Mount Kisco

By Neal Rentz
This winter has been a nuisance for the Village of Mount Kisco and it has come with a significant price tag.

Last week interim Village Manager Jerry Failla said while the village was still within its budget for snow clean up for the current fiscal year, costs have been mounting. As of Feb. 6, the village had spent $85,000 in overtime and double-time costs for highway department employees due to storm-related work, Failla said. The village had budgeted $120,000 in highway department overtime, he said.

That figure does not include last Saturday’s snowfall and other weather events in the preceding two weeks.

Storm-related costs have not been limited to highway department overtime. Other costs as of early February include about $25,000 for materials and supplies and $2,000 for police overtime.

The village budgeted $80,000 for materials and supplies related to snow removal, Failla said, although some of the bills for salt and other supplies haven't been paid. The village should have a better idea of the where that line stand by the end of this week, he said.

The police overtime is used to get the next shift in earlier or to hold over a current shift to avoid having officers travel during a snowfall.

The village has issued 354 parking tickets to drivers as of last week who illegally parked on the streets during snow emergencies, Failla said. Motorists are supposed to use the village's municipal lots to park during a snow emergency.

Mayor Michael Cindrich said it was important for car owners to move their vehicles during snowfalls to allow plows to adequately clear the streets. Cindrich said he wanted to make sure that the parking tickets are prosecuted in village court and the fines should offset some of the overtime costs related to storm clean up.

If residents learn that a snowstorm of at least three inches is likely "you shouldn't park on the street," Cindrich said.

The list of lots where car owners can park during a snow emergency is listed on the village's website, Failla said. Notices of a snow emergency are also posted on the site, through Nixle alerts and via e-mail blasts.

Mt. Kisco Woman Pleads Guilty in Theft From Customers’ Bank Accounts

By Janine Bowen
A Mount Kisco woman who was a former branch manager at an Ossining bank pleaded guilty Monday to stealing more than $1.4 million from two customers over a five-year period.

Maria Rodriguez, 46, who was formerly employed as the branch manager of the M&T Bank in Ossining, was arrested last year after she began stealing from two account holders in June 2008, according to the office of Westchester County District Attorney Janet DiFiore.

Rodriguez pleaded guilty to one count each of first- and second-degree grand larceny and third-degree criminal tax fraud.

Rodriguez, who knew one of the victims since the 1990s, stole money from the first victim by writing unauthorized checks to cash. In addition, Rodriguez also made unauthorized cash withdrawals from the account and from the ATM with the victim's bank card. Since 2008, Rodriguez stole $1,112,127.40 from the victim.

“Both victims put their trust as well as their money in the hands of someone who they had faith in, but ultimately took advantage of that trust and stole from them.”

The second victim, a 92-year-old retired Village of Ossining police officer, reportedly only dealt with Rodriguez when making transactions at the bank. He was under the impression that he was withdrawing interest only when Rodriguez was making unauthorized withdrawals from his account. Rodriguez stole $256,644 from the second victim over the course of several years, the district attorney’s office said.

The thefts were uncovered after several of Rodriguez’s subordinates at the branch called the bank’s whistleblower hotline to report suspicious activity, which launched an investigation.

Rodriguez will be sentenced on May 20 and faces up to 25 years in prison.

"Both victims put their trust as well as their money in the hands of someone who they had faith in, but ultimately took advantage of that trust and stole from them."
By Neal Rentz

The services provided by Yorktown-based Guiding Eyes for the Blind have a special meaning for Carla Gambescia, the owner of Via Vanti! Restaurant & Gelateria in Mount Kisco.

The restaurateur has family members who are blind, so it’s natural that for the second consecutive year she is hosting a special fundraising event for the school while offering a unique dining experience.

This Sunday, March 1 from 1 to 4 p.m. Via Vanti! will hold Dining in the Dark. Participants will wear blindfolds while they eat a five-course meal and gelato.

The event will also include a meet-and-greet with Guiding Eyes puppy in training Wrangler of “The Today Show” fame. Wrangler is currently being raised on set at NBC’s Studio 1A.

Last year, it proved to be so popular that Gambescia is reprising the event. She hopes to top the $7,000 mark, which was the amount raised from last year’s dinner.

“This year we are offering a different delicious menu with interesting harmonious flavors and flavor contrasts, textures and aromas to heighten the mindfulness of the diners,” Gambescia said. “Not only is Dining in the Dark a fun and unique experience, it’s also for a great cause.”

Participants will be blindfolded before each course and can take off the blindfolds after each dish, Gambescia said. They’ll write down what they thought they ate.

There will be a progression in the food courses from simple to more complex, Gambescia said. Eating without looking at what you are eating is a different experience, she said.

Guiding Eyes, which opened in 1954, is a nonprofit organization that provides guide dogs to people with vision loss and service dogs to children with autism. Guiding Eyes, which is dependent on contributions, provides its services at no charge.

Gambescia, a dog lover, said the animals trained by Guiding Eyes help the blind to live independent lives.

A Guiding Eyes administrator thanked Gambescia for her efforts.

“We are excited for the opportunity to raise awareness of our mission by partnering with Via Vanti!” said Becky Barnes, Guiding Eyes’ manager of consumer relations and graduate support said. “I love being able to share the experience of savoring delicious food without vision.”

Tickets for Dining in the Dark are $75 per person. Seating is limited and reservations are required.

Via Vanti! Restaurant & Gelateria is located at 2 Kirby Plaza in Mount Kisco.

For reservations and more information, call Via Vanti! at 914-666-6400 or visit www.viavanti.com.

Guiding Eyes is dependent on contributions. To learn more about the school, visit www.guidingeyes.org or connect with the school on Facebook and Twitter.
Obituaries

**Helen Knox**

Helen Margaret Knox (nee Hauschild), devoted daughter of Elizabeth “Lillie” Hauschild (nee Grinnon) and Arthur Eugene Hauschild; dedicated sister of the late Walter Hauschild, the late Dorothy Burgoyne, the late Lillian Mackay and the late Arthur Hauschild; caring wife of the late William Knox; devoted mother of Elizabeth Rehm and loving Nana to Kristen Rehm, died on Feb. 13. She was also the beloved aunt to 17 nieces and nephews. She was 87.

Knox was born on Oct. 13, 1927. She retired from St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx where she served for more than 25 years as secretary to the comptroller.

Before retiring, Knox also worked evenings and weekends at the main switchboard of the New York Yankees’ administrative offices at Yankee Stadium. Prior to that, she was a secretary in the catalog department of Sears Roebuck.


**Louise Dente**

She was 54.

Dente was the beloved wife of Jeffrey Dente; amazing sister-in-law of Patti Dente and John Dente; devoted aunt of Chelsey Dente, Tyler Dente, Patti Dente and John Dente; devoted sister-in-law of Jeffrey Rehm; amazing sister-in-law of Jeffrey Rehm; and cherished sister of Tammy and Jack Hutchins.

She was known for her passion and devotion to all the animals on this earth. We will deeply miss her.

Interment will be private and the family requests no flowers. In her memory, donations may be made to the Village Green, Bedford, N.Y. 10506.

**William Walsh**

William J. Walsh of Ocean View, Del. and formally of Pleasantville and Katonah, passed away on Feb. 21. He was 73.

Walsh was born on Oct. 22, 1941, to Wilhelmina Meyn Walsh and John L. Walsh in Mount Kisco. He is survived by his wife, Cecilia (Mahoney); his children, Elizabeth Mills, Colleen Lyle (Brian) and William J. Walsh Jr. (Kate); his four grandchildren, Thomas and Jonathan Mills and Madelyn and Brendan Lyle; and his sister, Margaret Bohl. He was predeceased by siblings Marie Turner, John L. Walsh Jr. and Thomas Walsh.

He was a graduate of Pleasantville High School and Iona College. He was a manager of financial planning for IBM until his retirement in 1992. He served as the managing director for the national IBM accounts with the Randstad Corp. until his retirement in 2013.

Walsh was a lifetime member of the Pleasantville Fire Department, serving as chief from 1977-79.

Visitation is scheduled for today (Tuesday) from 3 to 7 p.m. at Beecher Flook’s Funeral Home in Pleasantville. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 10:30 a.m. at Holy Innocents Church in Pleasantville. Interment to follow at All Souls Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests contributions to Calvary Hospital and Memorial Sloan Kettering.

Police Blotter

**Mount Kisco Police Department**

**Feb. 14:** Officers responded to a report of a disturbance on Maple Avenue at 4:31 p.m. The officers discovered damage to the multifamily residence’s front door, which had been kicked in. Despite the damage, everything checked okay. The tenants on the scene stated that they would contact the landlord to make the repairs.

**Feb. 14:** Report of suspicious activity on Main Street at 11:09 p.m. A 29-year-old man and a 28-year-old woman were found sitting in a car in the Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester’s parking lot. The pair was asked to move from the scene and departed without incident.

**Feb. 15:** Officers responded to a Maple Avenue residence at 1:45 a.m. following the hang up of a 911 call. The officers found two men, 31 and 55 years old, intoxicated. There was no need for further action.

**Feb. 15:** A 34-year-old man who arrived at Northern Westchester Hospital at 3:44 a.m. stated that he was assaulted several hours earlier outside at Las Vegas Sports Bar on South Moger Avenue.

**Feb. 15:** A 28-year-old Mount Kisco man was arrested at 4:39 a.m. and charged with DWI after he was stopped for speeding on Kisco Avenue. The subject was released on $250 cash bail with a court date pending in the village justice court.

**Feb. 16:** A woman who parked her car in the CVS parking lot on South Bedford Road reported at 4:01 p.m. that she was the victim of a petty larceny. She had her purse, which contained an iPhone and $10 worth of quarters, stolen from her car. There are no suspects at this time.

**Feb. 17:** A 31-year-old Pleasantville man was arrested at 3:38 a.m. and charged with seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance, a misdemeanor. The suspect was transported to headquarters after an officer on patrol responded to a report of a fight that he was involved in outside Las Vegas Sports Bar on South Moger Avenue and found that he had a quantity of cocaine in his possession.

**Feb. 19:** Report of criminal mischief at the Hillside School at St. Francis of Assisi Church on Green Street at 3:32 p.m. School staff reported that four windows had been damaged, two with holes apparently from BB gun pellets while the other two windows had cracks. Estimated cost to repair the damage is $1,000.

**Pleasantville Police Department**

**Feb. 14:** Report of a larceny on Washington Avenue at 2:04 p.m. The matter is under investigation. No further information is available at this time.

**Feb. 17:** A Marble Avenue business was reported at 9:44 a.m. to have been the target of a larceny. The matter is under investigation.

**Feb. 17:** A 19-year-old Newburgh man was arrested at 9:34 p.m. and charged with unlawful possession of marijuana, a violation, following a traffic stop on Bedford Road.

**Feb. 21:** A 19-year-old Ossining man was arrested and charged with unlawful possession of marijuana at 3:11 a.m. after a traffic stop on Manville Road.

**North Castle Police Department**

**Feb. 12:** The department received a call from the Mercedes Benz Emergency Response Center at 3:14 a.m. reporting a collision indicator on a vehicle located in the area of Business Park Drive. The caller reported the collision indicator revealed a “severe” level with no response inside the vehicle. Officers responded to the scene.

**Feb. 13:** A Maryland Avenue resident reported at 12:39 p.m. that over the past two weeks eight packages have been sent to him and his family. He believes this could be a scam. The complainant stated that he informed the delivery companies that the packages are being sent to the wrong address. The resident wanted to make this a matter of record and was told to look out for suspicious activity.

**Feb. 15:** Mount Pleasant police reported to North Castle police at 11:56 a.m. that the railroad crossing gate at Virginia Road is broken and it appears a vehicle may have driven through it. The MTA police have been notified and an officer was dispatched to the scene.

**Feb. 16:** It has been reported at 12:15 p.m. that a car parked on Business Park Drive has a smashed window.
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Love Helps Chappaqua Couple Cope With Breast Cancer

By Martin Wilbur

Jeanette Cueva and her husband David Krakow have always been a close couple. But even the closest relationships can be strained when a potentially life-threatening event abruptly alters plans.

In September 2011, while working late one evening, Cueva was contacted by her radiologist that she had been diagnosed with Stage 1 ductal cell breast cancer. It was a shock to the Chappaqua couple and their family that came with little warning.

“My life literally flashed before my eyes,” Cueva said. “I immediately thought of my family, and as a mom I worried about not being around to experience my children growing up. The mere thought of not being able to grow old with David was absolutely devastating.”

Cueva, now 54, had gone for routine mammograms, and although the doctors thought they detected something, they concluded it was probably nothing. Still, the diagnosis blindsided the family.

“When Jeanette called from her office with the news, I was in complete shock and my stomach was in knots,” Krakow said. “Jeanette was always so healthy; we couldn’t believe this was happening.”

Instead of faltering, Cueva and Krakow rallied to support each other and their two children, Isabella, who turns 16 this week, and Max, now 12.

To a significant degree, they credit their professional background—both are psychiatrists—with helping them deal with the upheaval. Since they had similar schedules that allowed them to go to all appointments together. The closeness they showed as a couple beforehand, didn’t waver with the jarring news.

“We went to every appointment together because that’s how we’ve always lived our lives. We have been a team since day one, and cancer didn’t change that,” Krakow said.

Cueva had surgery, then daily radiation treatments every morning for about two months after the children went off to school and before she headed to work. She and her husband shared the responsibility of getting the kids ready each day and they tried to keep the routine as normal as possible.

“We made the decision together not to tell the kids when I was getting treatment to protect them emotionally and we didn’t want them to be scared,” Cueva said. “It was important for all of us to just keep going.”

As a testament to their strength as a family, last year the couple was one of several people featured by The Estée Lauder Companies’ annual Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign, founded more than 20 years ago by the late Mrs. Evelyn H. Lauder. Each year the campaign includes videotaped messages that brings people together with stories of love, gratitude, support and strength and a brochure and press kit that also highlights each story.

The campaign has raised more than $53 million to support global research, education and medical services with nearly $42 million funding 166 Breast Cancer Research Foundation research projects worldwide since its inception.

Cueva said it was initially difficult to relive that experience for the video, but it turned out to be therapeutic.

“Thinking back to the moment we found out I had breast cancer is always hard, and I’m sure you can see me holding back tears while we were filming,” she said. “Being a part of this project and sharing my story was a beautiful experience for me, and one that I don’t often get in my line of work. I spend a lot of time listening to others’ stories and know how therapeutic it can be to share.”

But the chance it provided for the couple to talk to each other was special for them and turned out to help both.

“I was reminded through the process, and continue to be, of David’s amazing, unwavering support,” said Cueva, whose long-term prognosis is excellent.

“I would say that what was really important for me was the fact that I didn’t have to deal with it alone and had David by my side every step of the way. Open and honest communication is the best way to move forward after a diagnosis.”

Jeanette Cueva and David Krakow have grown even closer following Jeanette’s successful battle against breast cancer.
Letters to the Editor

Education is Key in Learning How to Safely Co-exist With Coyotes

This letter is in response to the editorial in The Examiner's Feb. 17 – 23 edition, regarding the Chappaqua coyote committee. I agree with the editor that having two committees is not productive. It’s hard enough for members of one committee to agree, let alone having two. Two separate committees would only cause confusion and serve to divide the community rather than unite.

With that being said, I’d like to remind the Coyote Management Task Force that these creatures were here long before us. This is their territory. Coyotes will not attack people unless provoked. They will go after cats and small dogs that are left outside unattended. This is their nature. Pets should never be left outside alone, unless the owner has his property fenced in.

I have lived in Mount Kisco all of my life, 33 of those years in my present location. I am surrounded by woods on two sides. The Kisco Mountain begins at the end of my backyard property. There are hundreds of acres back there and I have never seen a coyote. I don’t have a dog and my property is not fenced in. I don’t mean to say that they are not in our woods, but they are not in abundance, or we would see them. Are these creatures really a threat?

We choose to live in the suburbs and many of us are lucky enough to live in wooded areas. If people instead chose to live in a populated city area, they wouldn’t encounter these coyotes. I don’t know what they expect.

Education is the key here. Learn about these creatures and their habits, don’t leave your pets unattended outside and come up with a positive plan that allows the coyotes to co-exist with us.

Linda Cindrich
Mount Kisco

Importance of W’chester Med Center Displayed After Metro-North Crash

The recent tragedy on Metro-North focused our attention once again on how fragile life can be. Our hearts go out to the families of those we lost in this terrible accident. As well, we offer our sincere gratitude to all the first responders who were there to assist in every way possible.

What many of us may not realize is that when similar events occur and critical injuries result, severely injured victims have the best chance of surviving when brought as quickly as possible to a Level 1 regional trauma center, in our case Westchester Medical Center. Central to the United States’ well-developed trauma system, Level 1 trauma centers are organizations uniquely qualified and capable of handling the most severely ill and injured children and adults. These centers have the resources, skilled staff, equipment and infrastructure in place to handle the most critical patients.

On Feb. 3, medical center officials issued a special alert, bringing in hundreds of well-trained professionals, opening several fully staffed operating rooms, readying an already busy Emergency Department and putting in place the trauma and support teams to handle what could have been a large number of victims. In the end, the number of severe injuries was thankfully low but all were delivered to teams highly trained in trauma, burn and other specialties associated with this type of incident.

We all too often take for granted the amazing work that is done in our region every day to keep us healthy and safe. Our thoughts continue to be with the victims and families of this incident and the many who were pressed into service and answered the call that evening.

Assemblywoman Sandy Galef, 95th A.D.
Assemblyman Thomas J. Abinanti, 92nd A.D.

Column

Exaggerations Aired at North Castle Meeting Were Untenable

By Richard Panetta

At the Feb. 11, 2015, North Castle Town Board meeting, North White Plains resident Ed Lobermann described the behavior of a “resident” at the Feb. 7 public meeting in North White Plains as “intolerable,” “an episode beyond belief,” “absolutely astonishing” and that “he had never seen anything like it in his life.”

While Mr. Lobermann was careful not to use my name, I have no problem identifying myself as the resident I believe is in question because his characterization was beyond exaggeration. There are only sensationalized generalizations in his description with no specifics.

I did not yell, make intimidating gestures or use foul language. Nor did I make any personal attacks or threaten anyone. I did not try to monopolize the dialogue; in fact, I was only there for five minutes. The only thing I did was utter two sentences in a raised voice with a frustrated tone before leaving the meeting. According to Mr. Lobermann, this constitutes a “tirade.”

The only reason I needed to raise my voice was to insure I was heard above the din of Councilwoman DiGiacinto’s filibustering. I can produce three witnesses that can attest to the fact that the characterization of events was grossly overstated.

My history of regularly attending Valhalla school board meetings from 1999-2010 speaks for itself. In 11 years as one of the most vocal participants, not once was a complaint made about my behavior that even comes close to Mr. Lobermann’s hyperbole-laced account.

His tall tale left out the issue of contention, that issue being the videotaping of the meeting. Had I been allowed to videotape, there would be no controversy and the behavior of everyone from that point on could be confirmed. It would settle the issue of whose version of the event was in question because his characterization was beyond exaggeration. There are only sensationalized generalizations in his description with no specifics.

I should be understood that when discussing controversial issues not everyone speaks as if they’ve been sedated. Some individuals speak more passionately than others. When someone has been treated as disrespectfully as I was at that meeting, an angry infection or a raised voice is not only appropriate, but should be expected. If I sounded frustrated or angry at the meeting it’s because I had good reason to be. I was told I could not videotape the meeting, which is allowed by law. Councilwoman DiGiacinto did not allow me to speak. And someone in the room told me “if I didn’t like it I should leave.”

Mr. Lobermann actually went to the ridiculous extent of suggesting that my behavior posed a “danger” and that there be a police presence in the future. This, in my opinion, escalates the extreme embellishment into a bold-faced lie. His irrational characterization speaks to his lack of credibility. Mr. Lobermann’s fantastic account is more likely attributable to the fact that he is a regular participant of Councilwoman DiGiacinto’s meetings where only a handful of residents attend and have the benefit of expressing their particular concerns.

These monthly meetings should have issues prioritized as to what actions, if any, should be taken by town government to satisfy the needs and desires of all North White Plains residents, not just the few people who attend.

The practice of exaggeration and embellishment have become commonplace at the bimonthly town board meetings. There are plenty of examples archived in the videotaped meetings. This publication, understandably, cannot permit me to detail them because of the sheer volume.

Richard Panetta is a North White Plains resident.
know your Neighbor

Nathalie Dembele
Independent Stylist, Mt. Kisco

By Martin Wilbur

Given the uncertainties of the modern job market, finding your entrepreneurial side might not just be a luxury but a necessity.

Nathalie Dembele had a longtime desire to be in business for herself, yet her search was hastened by a downturn in the economy.

About eight years ago, Dembele moved to Mount Kisco while working in the Human Resources Department for PepsiCo in Somers. Soon after she was out of a job, laid off just as the recession was hitting full force as corporations shed payroll and millions of lives were turned upside down.

Dembele, who was born in Paris but moved to New York with her parents as a child, was always interested in fashion. Several years ago she established her own knitwear company while working various full-time jobs, including as store manager at Frannie’s Goodie Shop in downtown Mount Kisco.

But it wasn’t until two years ago that Dembele recognized a great opportunity by coming across a youtube interview. The subject of that interview was Jessica Herrin, a California mother of two children who had started the company Stella & Dot. Stella & Dot sells boutique-style jewelry and accessories but attracts women as its salespeople who are trying to raise children and who need the income but also the flexibility to work within their family’s schedules.

“I’ve always been interested in entrepreneurs and how to become successful and I watched this interview with Jessica Herrin, who’s the CEO of Stella & Dot, and I was really impressed with how she carried herself,” said Dembele, the mother of an eight-year-old son.

Since April 2013, Dembele has transitioned into the role of independent stylist quite well. She sells jewelry--Dembele describes the merchandise as “affordable luxury”--and accessories, such as scarves, wallets and handbags. Stella & Dot’s items range from $14 to $250 with more than half of the collection under $50, she said.

“What I really enjoy the most is seeing people step outside their comfort zone and try on items they wouldn’t necessarily try on because it’s discreet,” said Dembele, a Fordham graduate who studied economics and business administration.

What Dembele also likes about the company, aside from attractive and affordable products, is that it encourages its partners to be socially responsible. As many as eight times a month she engages in outings for charity. Depending on how much merchandise is sold, the hostess collects rewards points, which are donated to a specific organization.

Last Saturday, she was selling merchandise in the community room at Pinecrest Manor where she lives to help raise funds for the free programs that it offers its residents, such as the computer room and a place for children to go after school before their parents arrive home.

This Saturday, Art of Dressing in Mamaroneck has donated its premises for a show and all of the rewards will go to My Sisters Place. Dembele said she also schedules hostess events and attends vendor shows.

Not having to pressure customers into sales and meet quotas also makes it an enjoyable experience for her.

“It’s not about making a quick sale because in the long run it’ll do me a disservice,” Dembele said. “I want to forge a relationship. Maybe the person won’t make a purchase today, but they can trust me the next time they need something.”

Dembele, who still has family in France but hasn’t been back since 2006, said she feels fortunate that she did follow her first inclination to move out of Mount Kisco once she lost her job at PepsiCo.

Her son enjoys going to West Patent Elementary School and on weekends he often accompanies her on her outings to see customers or attend shows.

“Little businesses like this, little entrepreneurs give life to the local economy because the income that I make goes back to the town, to the economy here,” she said. “I shop here, I live here. When I got laid off from Pepsi, I thought of moving but I stayed here. I like this community, I love Mount Kisco. I love that it’s a family town.”
Summer Camp Offers Free Full Session to Children of Metro-North Victims

By Janine Bowen

Seven children were left without a father following this month’s tragic Metro-North train crash and Kiwi Country Day Camp in Carmel is trying to make life for those children a bit brighter.

Adam Wallach, the owner and camp director at Kiwi Country Day Camp, reached out to New Castle Supervisor Robert Greenstein soon after the crash looking to get in contact with the victims to extend a generous offer. The camp will be offering scholarships to attend a full eight-week session to all of the children who lost a parent in the Valhalla crash.

The sessions cost $5,400 per child, but Wallach said that extending the scholarships felt like the right thing to do. “After the tragedy…we were talking in our office and said maybe we could help make life a little bit easier for the families in any meaningful way to try to help their family through a difficult time,” Wallach said. “Obviously, it will never replace the loss of their parents; it’s just a small way that we can help their family through a difficult time.”

Kiwi, which Wallach describes as an authentic and traditional summer camp, offers a variety of activities to children including zip-lining, archery, art lessons, swim lessons and traditional sports such as basketball and baseball. Wallach hopes that by extending the offer, the children will have a happy memory to look back on.

Three of the passengers killed in the first car of the train, which struck an SUV driven by Edgemont resident Ellen Brody at the Commerce Street crossing, left behind young children. Chappaqua resident Robert Dirks, 36, and Eric Vandercar, 53, of Bedford each had a son and a daughter while New Castle resident Joseph Nadol, 42, left behind three children. Each of those children are not only eligible to attend Kiwi Country Day Camp this summer, but will be invited back each subsequent summer for as long as they want, Wallach said. “I think, in general, when anything happens like this, everybody feels bad and everybody wants to try to help in some way and unfortunately there’s not really a lot that people can do during the situation,” Wallach. “For me, the only way that I can think to help these families in any meaningful way to try to make their lives easier was to provide their kids with a great experience and something memorable that they can do this summer.”

Wallach is not the only one who has stepped up to help the families following the crash. Pleasantville resident Maggie O’Connor has been offering free therapy sessions for anybody affected by the tragedy. Also, a campaign started by Chappaqua Cares, Chappaqua Shares to collect donations for the families of Dirks and Nadol received such an overwhelming response that the organization needed to ask for donations to be temporarily halted.

A fundraiser on the crowd-funding website YouCaring.com for the Robert Dirks Memorial and Family Fund has collected more than $80,000 from nearly 1,000 donors in a little more than a week. The original goal was to raise $63,000.

In a comment on the fundraiser’s page, Dirks’s widow, Christine Ueda, shared her surprise at the level of support she and her children have received from community members. “When I was first facing the reality that Robert was gone, I felt scared and alone,” she wrote to supporters. “You have made me realize that there’s an incredibly supportive community out there with open arms and hearts.”
New Castle Camps Provide Summer Fun for Kids of All Ages

The Examiner will be taking a look at some of the municipal camps in the immediate area that provide one option for families for their children to spend summer. This week the Town of New Castle’s summer camp programs are featured.

By Martin Wilbur

When a family considers a summer camp for their child, very often that could mean choosing a sleep-away camp or one of a wide assortment of private day camps or specialty camps in the region.

But not every child is old enough for sleep-away camp, is ready for it even if he or she is of age or wants to spend much time commuting to a day camp no matter how good the program may be. Sometimes being with friends from school or the neighborhood is what suits a child best after a long school year.

Moreover, there are families who can’t afford the pricier camps or it would pose a hardship, especially if they have multiple children.

In New Castle, like most town camps, balancing affordability with attractive activities is a key challenge, said Robert Snyder, the town’s superintendent of Recreation & Parks, whose department oversees the town’s summer camps.

“You want to find the right price point,” Snyder said. “You’ve got to be able to make the activities enjoyable for the kids. The challenge comes when a kid has been in a camp for a number of years and you have to turn over the program.”

New Castle operates four camps: Tots Camp is for the youngest children (3 to 5 years old); Camp Adventure is designed for children entering grades 1-4; and On-The-Go Camp, a travel camp to various fun destinations, is for children entering grades 5-8. The fourth camp is the Summer Art Camp for children 4 to 7 years old.

Tots Camp, which last year drew 115 children, is offered with four different options. A child can go for a half-day (9 a.m. to noon) or a full day (9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.) for three or six weeks. For three weeks, the half-day sessions will cost $540 while full-day sessions run $825 this year. For six weeks, half-day sessions will be $900 and full-day $1,340.

All weeks run Monday through Friday starting the week of June 29. Camp does not meet on Friday, July 3.

Based at Westorchard Elementary School, a typical day includes arts and crafts, music, story time, outdoor play, including sprinklers when the weather permits.

Recreation Supervisor Brittany Neider said a successful program is fun for the children and also sets a parent’s mind at ease since this is the first camp experience for most of the children.

“One of the biggest things for Tots Camp that I’ve seen is that you really have to talk to the parent,” Neider said. “I’ve gotten a lot of phone calls, a lot of e-mails, a lot of very detailed questions.”

“This is their first camp experience. It’s important that they have a positive

continued on page 18

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experience,” added Snyder. “There’s a comfort level that (the parents) have to have because they let their kids go to camp. There’s more supervised play and instruction as opposed to the older kids who can play on their own.”

Camp Adventure, which operates out of Robert E. Bell Middle School, also runs Monday through Friday (except July 3) for six weeks from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. In addition to sports, games and arts and crafts, there is swimming, trips and special event days. Last year, the camp employed 22 counselors to maintain the eight-to-one campers-to-staff ratio. Three-week sessions cost $645 while the full six weeks runs $1,080.

On-The-Go Camp visits various attractions in the region three days a week (usually Tuesday through Thursday) with more conventional camp activities on Mondays and Fridays. Last year, there were trips to Playland, the Bronx Zoo, Splashdown in Fishkill and Great Adventure as well as days to go bowling or play miniature golf.

Three-week sessions cost $1,020 while the full six weeks runs $1,800. Families also have the option to add a week for $375. Days are typically 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., although some trips return as late as 7 p.m.

For the child who enjoys art, there is the five-week Summer Art Camp at the New Castle Art Center on Hardscrabble Road from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Led by Andrea Samuelson, Alison Boykoff and Barbara Golden, the program centers around a theme explored through storytelling, multimedia art projects and games. There are also outdoor and playground activities.

Tuition is $750; enrollment is limited to 30 children.

Regardless of age level, Snyder said the challenge is to keep the activities fresh, so children who return have something new and exciting to look forward to. After all, town camps such as New Castle’s may be a more local and less expensive alternative, but they also are in competition with private camps.

“If the kids are having a good time, they tell the parents and the parents are happy,” Snyder said. “We’ve gotten good recommendations. We want to put a good product out there. We’re in the service business. We have to provide a service to the community.”

Camp registration starts next Monday, March 2. That evening Recreation & Parks Department staff will be at its Town Hall office to answer questions from parents. For more information about the programs, call 914-238-3909 or visit www.mynewcastle.org.
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The Examiner

My Personal and Frightening Story of Living With Toxic Mold

More than a dozen years ago, Ed McMahon, the famous pitch man and announcer for Johnny Carson, brought to the public’s attention the health problems that can result from living with toxic mold in the home.

After a long legal battle, McMahon was awarded $7.2 million from several companies who were negligent in allowing toxic mold into his home resulting from a broken pipe, sickening him and his wife and killing their dog.

As it happens, I had been aware for some years that I had a mold problem in my home, but not being sensitive to it, I thought it was a minor situation and let it go without remediating it.

It started on Christmas Eve three years ago, before my living room in my antique house was converted to the office of my public relations business. At that time, my daughter said she could no longer sit in that room because she was having an allergic reaction to something there.

To accommodate her discomfort, we moved our holiday get-together into our family room, but at the end of the evening I checked around and found that, indeed, in a corner in an 18th century door-enclosed bookcase-occupation, there was mold forming on my collection of antique books. I simply closed the doors and let the situation just sit.

A month ago, I was curious about a certain book, wondered whether it was in that that bookcase, opened the doors and was shocked to find that the mold had spread from the books onto the shelves. The smell had become somewhat noxious.

By coincidence that very week, I received a call from Valerie Maziarz of Oxygen Sanitizing Systems, who had read one of my articles, to tell me about her environmental services, which included mold remediation. Wow, I thought, how synchronistic. Come right over, I told her.

In short order she was in my living room-turned-office, opened the cabinet, and just from a visual check and the smell, she was aware that the problem was severe.

“You’ve got a green mold forest growing in there. It’s a regular party!” she proclaimed. It seems that the antique books, with its cellulose in the pages, had provided a perfect growing environment for the mold.

The next Friday evening, when the room would be empty for the weekend, Maziarz arrived with her partner, Tom Schassler, and her equipment in tow to literally replace the air in my office.

Here is how the system works. The room was sealed off and generators with ultraviolet light and electric static discharge, produced converted oxygen in industrial–level concentration and quantities treating all surfaces and permeating all cracks, crevices, killing all microorganisms.

The process is 100 percent green, chemical-free and EPA and FDA approved. Besides mold, it eradicates odors, allergens, bacteria and viruses, restoring the environment and improving health.

After 24 hours, Maziarz and Schassler returned with commercial grade HEPA equipment specifically designed to remove all remaining particulates from the air and surfaces. Lastly, the office was treated with an antimicrobial surface protectant.

When I returned the following Monday, I could feel that the air was “cleaner” and wasn’t aware that there was a problem until the problem was gone. This process restored my office environment and salvaged my antique book collection dating to the 1880s.

According to tests taken before and after the process, Maziarz showed me that I had four different mold types in my office, one of which, Penicillium Aspergillus, was highly toxic and there in high levels.

“Does this mean that my years of living with toxic mold in the environment could have affected my health without my knowing it?” I asked.

Yes, I was told, it could have affected my health.

Perhaps my experience, scary as it was, can be an alert to someone reading this. If you know of or suspect that you may have a mold problem in your home, please don’t procrastinate as I did only to wonder to what degree it may have affected your health. Take action immediately and have the problem addressed. Your health is the single most important thing to you.

To reach Oxygen Sanitizing Systems, call 877-244-3080 or visit www.newindoorair.com. God speed.

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 The Home Guru and his team to market your home for sale, call 914-522-2076.

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2-Time Best of Westchester Winner!
Burbio.com

By Colette Connolly

Calendar gridlock was a way of life for Pelham residents Julie and Dennis Roche, the parents of four school-aged boys.

Already drowning in e-mails and flyers to remind them of their children’s school schedule and sports teams’ practices and their own commitments, trying to keep track of it all was taking a toll.

“That until the couple came up with the idea about two years ago of creating a free digital calendar sharing and synchronization platform that allows parents to search, find and add events from important local calendars and permits groups to easily create and share calendars as well.

Originally focused on Pelham and lower Westchester, the platform has been gaining traction recently throughout Westchester, including in Pleasantville, Yorktown and Peekskill and many other communities.

“We wanted to create a solution for group organizers and for people like us who need to speed,” said Julie Roche, Burbio.com’s co-founder.

“Our lives have become so overscheduled, but on the other hand we want to give our kids every opportunity to get involved in different things. What comes along with that is calendar frenzy and chaos.”

The couple found that other busy families were similarly accessing different calendars to locate specific information. They also discovered that there was no platform that automatically compiled different schedules into one place.

In addition, they were still seeing flyers being sent home with their children and newsletters arriving in the mail.

“You can’t even look at it all on a computer,” said Roche, who has a background in marketing and market research. “It is definitely overwhelming.”

Naming it Burbio -- a play on the word suburbia, since the suburban demographic is the company’s primary target market -- was the easy part. Getting the platform up and running was more complicated. Roche, who majored in applied math and computer, “said Roche, who has a background in business development and was helped by her husband, who has a background in marketing and market research.

Behind the Burbio platform is a passion Roche and her husband share--to make local communities more connected and to thrive.

The end product, Roche said, is a calendar system that is simple to use and can be synched with a number of mobile devices as well as with Google and Apple calendars.

They charge for zip code-targeted advertising and sponsored e-mails and will be adding a marketing platform for local merchants to partner with non-profits.

Since those early days, the Roches, who currently have one full-time employee and several part-timers, have acquired users from about 50 Westchester zip codes, in addition to locations in New Jersey and Connecticut.

Users can access the public calendars of more than 1,000 local nonprofits, public school districts, churches, libraries, restaurants, movie theaters, sports leagues and other organizations. They also receive notifications of recommended events and alerts when event information changes.

A recent addition to the platform is a new carpool-scheduling feature. Roche realizes that not everyone can drive his or her child to every event.

“Carpools are convenient and good for the environment,” said Roche, “but they can be really hard to keep track of when there are lots of changes flying around in texts or e-mails.”

To create a carpool schedule, all a user has to do is click on the “Add a Carpool” icon on the Burbio website. Then, whomever created the carpool invites other drivers, all of whom can add or edit driving shifts on the calendar. Each member of a carpool is notified when the schedule changes, explained Roche.

A recent addition to the platform is an alert for carpool invites other drivers, all of whom can add or edit driving shifts on the calendar. Each member of a carpool is notified when the schedule changes, explained Roche.

Behind the Burbio platform is a passion Roche and her husband share--to make local communities more connected and to thrive.

“We like the fact that Burbio is helping people to connect,” said Roche, “rather than replacing the connection.”

For more information or to sign up for Burbio, visit www.burbio.com.
Happenings

Tuesday, Feb. 24

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 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.. Info: 914-273-3857.

Wednesday, Feb. 25

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

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

Mommy 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. Info: Contact Kim Brenner at 914-238-9267 ext. 20.

Senior Benefits Information Center. Counselors offer older adults one-on-one counseling covering a broad range of topics including Medicare health and prescription plans, food stamps, HEAP, EPIC, weatherization, minor home repair and tax relief programs. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 Main St., Mount Kisco. 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Free. Every Wednesday. Info: 914-231-3260.

Support Group for Alzheimer’s Caregivers, Temple Shaaray Tefila and Westchester Jewish Community Services have scheduled this forum to provide a place for caregivers to discuss their feelings, share their experiences and support one another. A specialist from the Alzheimer’s Association will lead the group and provide educational materials and information. All welcome. Temple Shbaaray Tefila Youth Lounge, 89 Baldwin Rd., Baldwin Corners. 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Free. 1 Meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Registration required. Info and registration: Contact the Alzheimer’s Association at 800-272-3900 or visit www.alz.org/hudsonvalley.

Li’l Cooks. A series of hands-on cooking classes for children three to five years old. Mount Pleasant Town Hall Tower Room, 1 Town Hall Plaza, Valhalla. 12:30 to 2 p.m. Also Thursdays 10 to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 to 2 p.m. Info and registration: 914-742-2310 or visit www.MPleasantNY.com/rec.

Chair Yoga With Alka Kaminer. Experience greater flexibility, cardiovascular endurance and improved balance, strengthening and toning of muscles, better digestion, stress reduction, mental clarity, improved breathing, relaxation and an overall sense of well-being. No previous yoga or fitness exercise required. North Castle Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 7 p.m. Free. Potluck dinner at St. Mary the Virgin Episcopal Church, 191 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 5:30 p.m. Free. Bring finger food to share. Info: 914-238-4779.

Thursday, Feb. 26

Let Your Yoga Dance Classes. The popular Kripalu noon dance class is now in Chappaqua! Combines easy dance, gentle yoga and great music. Come join this noncompetitive, heart pumping and joyful experience. Drop-ins welcome. Dance Emotions, 75 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua.10 a.m. $20 per 75-minute class. Every Tuesday and Thursday. Info: 914-238-8974 or email claudiayogadance@gmail.com.


Story Time Playgroup. Join Miss Debbie for a story, music and playtime with toys and books in this new program. Children and a parent or caregiver can continue on next page
**Artisanal Importers Can Tantalize Our Discerning Palates**

By Nick Antonaccio

Having sought out new wines for several decades now, I’ve found that I prefer particular styles of wine and specific wine regions.

This has certainly helped steer me in the right direction when I’m perusing the numerous offerings at my local wine shops. Certainly, the new round of wine apps, a number of which I reviewed in a recent column, is very useful in ferreting out particular wines that align with my personal preferences. However, many of these apps tend to focus on one-off data for specific wines, which, in the aggregate, may not be necessarily aligned with my overall palate.

What I’ve deduced over the continuum of developing my instinctive behavior is that I tend to favor wines offered by select importers.

How does an individual importer influence my wine purchasing decision? This is today’s topic.

Over the past 20 years the universe of wine importing has broadened, from monolithic importers who controlled most of the wine purchased in the United States, to a sophisticated, focused group of smaller importers that supplement the offerings of the mainstream importers. Many of these “artisanal importers” have a passion for particular styles or regions and vigorously pursue wines that express their passions. Their focus is typically on the small producers, who don’t produce enough to garner the attention of the larger importers and distributors.

Thus, certain importers’ names have become synonymous with small producers who offer wines that would not otherwise be available in the marketplace.

If you like the new wines coming from the Bordeaux and Burgundy regions of France, there are artisanal importers who have spent hours in the cramped, damp and poorly lighted cellars of family-owned wineries. Many of them are fourth and fifth generation producers, who finally have the opportunity to offer their finely crafted wines across the Atlantic to a consumer in northern Westchester.

If you like Champagne, there are artisanal importers focused on small producers who offer alternatives to the highly marketed French mega producers, at prices that are highly competitive to the big Champagne houses.

If you like organic or biodynamic wines, there are artisanal importers who search high and low for small producers with simpatico philosophies, bringing these wines into the United States and creating a new awareness of natural wines to the American consumer.

Who are these artisanal importers? Their names are in plain sight. (You can usually find them by looking on the back label of your favorite wines.) Using this research tool as your guide, new vistas will open up: you seek out wines to enjoy.

Several of these artisanal importers are right here in our backyard. Their offerings may or may not be aligned with your preferences, but in the interest of opening new vistas to you, I present them so you may experiment in finding palate-tantalizing offerings.

Chappaqua is home to Serge Doré Selections, the eponymous house whose founder long ago traded constant toil on hot, concrete pavements for traipsing through vineyard rows with sun-warmed soil underfoot. He traded meetings in sterile corporate board rooms for kitchen table meetings in the homes of French winemakers. Today, his offerings from nine French regions have become popular with Americans seeking wines with unique bouquets, aromas and flavors.

Based in Pleasantville, Vintus Wines is focused on small producers around the world who practice the art of the symbiotic relationship with nature. Michael Quinttus and his team state that their goal is “to assemble a diverse, international range of ‘wines of place’ produced by passionate personalities.”

In Mount Kisco, Polaner Distributors is a unique blend of distributor and importer. Although primarily a distributor, they encourage consumers to “open your mind and taste.” Their focus is to “comb the wine world to discover and launch tiny, up-and-coming producers.”

In upcoming columns I will focus on the philosophy and specific offerings from several artisanal importers.

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.

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**Happenings**

**continued from previous page**

spend special time together and make new friends. For children six months to four years old, Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 1:45 to 2:30 p.m. Free. Every Thursday. Info: 914-769-0548 or visit www.mountpleasnallibrary.org.

**Buddin’ Cooks.** A series of hands-on cooking classes for children in grades K-2. Mount Pleasant Town Hall Tower Room, 1 Town Hall Plaza, Valhalla. 4 to 5:30 p.m. Info and registration: 914-742-2310 or visit www.MtPleasantNY.com/rec.

**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.mountkiscolibrary.org.

**An Evening With Ben Lerner: A Lecture, Reading and Conversation.** SUNY Purchase’s School of Humanities presents this program featuring Lerner, a poet, novelist, essayist and teacher. He has published three collections of poetry and two novels, all to great acclaim. "Angle of Yaw," his second book of poetry, was a finalist for the National Book Award and "Leaving the Atocha Station," his first novel, won the Believer Book Award. Neuberger Museum Study at Purchase College, 735 Anderson Hill Rd., Purchase. 4:30 to 6 p.m. Free. Info: 914-251-6550 or visit http://news.purchase.edu/feb-26-an-evening-with-ben-lerner/.

**Home Sellers Clinic.** Thinking of selling your home? Maximize the value of your home through organizing, home improvements, staging, maintenance and working with an experienced real estate agent. Guest speakers are Pleasantville Building Inspector Robert Hughes; Robin Sweeney, real estate attorney; and Linda Becker, home organizer. Sponsored by Donna Edlund and Hans Weber, licensed associate real estate brokers at Coldwell Banker. Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 197 Manville Rd., Pleasantville. 7 p.m. Free. Info: Contact Donna at 914-403-4237.

**Zumba Fitness Class.** Addie-Tuide Performing Arts Center, 42 Memorial Plaza (lower level), Pleasantville. 11 a.m. to noon. Free. ($12 drop-in fee after free trial class). Every Friday. Also Tuesdays from 10 to 11 a.m. Info: Contact Amy Olin at olinamy@gmail.com.

**Junior Cooks.** A series of hands-on cooking classes for children in grades 3-5. Mount Pleasant Town Hall Tower Room, 1 Town Hall Plaza, Valhalla. 4 to 5:30 p.m. Info and registration: 914-742-2310 or visit www.MtPleasantNY.com/rec.

**Carnevale.** The Mount Pleasant Italian American Association presents a night with a great Italian dinner, music and laughter. American Legion Hall, 52 Garrigan Ave., Thornwood. 7 p.m. $30 per person. Snow date: Feb. 28. Info: 914-273-2385. Check payable to the Mount Pleasant Italian American Association and mail to Linda Carpentieri, 2409 Villa at the Woods, Peekskill, N.Y. 10566. (Include telephone number with the check.) Info: 914-227-3854 or e-mail at lindacarp16@yahoo.com.

**Friday Night Cinema: “Twenty One Up.”** Director Michael Apted’s original documentary that examined the lives of several English children every seven years as they transitioned from adolescence into adulthood. Each month we will look at the next installment, culminating in June with 2012’s “56 Up.” This evening’s installment check-in at age 21. Each segment may be viewed independently of the series.

**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.

"Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike." The Small Town Theatre Company presents this Tony Award-winning play, a comedy that examines the relationships of three siblings as they approach what appears to be a series of crossroads in their lives. Hergenhan Recreation Center, 40 Maple Ave., Armonk. 8 p.m. $15. Also Feb. 28. Info and tickets: 914-273-0300 or visit www.smalltowntheatre.com.

**Saturday, Feb. 28**

**MKG Job Fair.** The Mount Kisco Medical Group is hosting this event with full-time and part-time clinical, non-clinical and billing positions available throughout MKMG’s Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess office locations. Learn more about these potential opportunities. Bring your resume for immediate interview. Chappaqua Crossing office’s Pegasus Room (first floor), 480 Bedford Rd., Chappaqua. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free.

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A baby is due to be born any day now, and the couple is looking for a name. They have narrowed it down to a few options and are open to suggestions. The baby will be born in the next few days, and the couple is excited for its arrival. They have chosen a name that they believe will fit well with their future child's personality and background.

The couple is currently searching for a name that will suit their child's interests and hobbies. They are looking for a name that will be unique and memorable, and they are open to suggestions from anyone who has ideas.

The couple has been looking for a name for some time now, and they have found a few options that they like. However, they are still open to suggestions and are looking for something that will be the perfect fit.

If you have a name suggestion for the couple, please let them know. They would be grateful for any ideas that you have. They look forward to hearing from you and are excited to welcome their new addition into the world.
The Calendar: A Seller’s Most Useful Real Estate Tool

By Vicki Jimpson-Fludd

Fancy buyers are not only a better understanding of how the real estate market works, but also know how to use the Internet to their advantage and at their convenience.

Using touch screens on their smart phones, tablets or other Internet-enabled devices, buyers let their fingers do the walking—24/7, anytime and anywhere. Today’s buyers first notice interesting properties online, then drive by to assess the property’s curb appeal, and only after that contact an agent to gain access to the house.

That level of buyer empowerment has not only brought changes to the home search process but also to the price at which a property will actually sell. The seller may set the asking price, but the market—supported by online resources and information—determines the price at which the property will sell.

Potential buyers drive market surges. Think about it: why is spring the best time to sell a house? First, no one wants to be inconvenienced by cold or inclement weather. Second, families with school-age children want to move from their present home after the current school year ends and be settled in their new home before the new school year begins in late August or early September. Other buyers who are not subject to the dictates of the school calendar may not want to disrupt their autumn vacation or their November/December holiday plans.

Pro-active sellers clearly need to be aware of the power of the calendar.

Here are three key time periods:
1. January and February: To be ready to participate in the spring housing surge, focus on preparing your house for sale (de-cluttering, making repairs, staging, etc.)
2. Late February/Early March: While inventory is still low, hire a real estate agent. Make sure your agent not only sets a competitive price as part of a marketing strategy that clearly defines what actions will be taken when and why, but also has high-quality photos taken and posted on high-traffic Internet sites.
3. From the listing date onward, make sure your agent evaluates your property’s progress weekly and makes needed adjustments. The first 30 days are the most important. Pay attention to the volume of traffic generated (i.e. Internet page views, open house visitors, agent-accompanied visitors). If traffic lags, make sure your agent takes corrective action immediately.

Other Keys to a Successful Sale
Make sure your house is “market-ready.” Houses which are in move-in condition and fairly priced receive offers quickly—sometimes within days—and at a higher percentage of the original asking price. Oftentimes, these properties receive multiple offers which bid-up the selling price.

Make sure the photos of your property are high quality, beautifully staged and seasonally appropriate. Properties with unappealing online photos are quickly dismissed by viewers. Buyers can also discern the “undesirability” of a property by noting how long a property has been online. Regardless of the real problem, these properties are quickly eliminated from consideration—without ever having been visited.

It’s important to understand how real estate is sold today. Homeowners who haven’t been in the market for a number of years fail to understand the powerful role that the calendar and the Internet play. Both convey strong, negative messages to buyers about properties that are unreasonably priced.

Price it right. Overpriced houses and those that need work waste your time and money. Buyers know that the market will eventually force the seller to reduce the price or make major concessions to account for the work that needs to be done.

Don’t wait for that “fantasy buyer.” While you are waiting, other buyers are making offers on properties which may be comparable to yours, but competitively priced. One of those buyers could have been your buyer!

So do yourself a favor: add these valuable tools to your real estate tool kit.

Vicki Jimpson-Fludd is a licensed New York State real estate salesperson at Better Homes & Gardens - Rand Realty’s Briarcliff Manor office. You can call or e-mail her with questions at 914-762-1020 ext. 223 or at 914-410-0151 or e-mail vicki.jimpsonfludd@randrealty.com.

Happenings

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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.pleasantvilletfarmersmarket.com.

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: 914-864-0190.

Tai Chi With Larry Attile. Learn specific feldenkrais and chi kung breathing techniques for deep relaxation and apply them to tai chi movement. A hands-on class with a 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. Info: 914-273-3887.

Winter Pack Chat for Kids. Children will learn about the mythology surrounding wolves and the important role they play in the natural world. This is an exciting time for wolves as they search for prey while their growing pups experience their first winter season. Guests will visit ambassador wolves Atka, Alawa, Nikai and Zephyr and the center’s critically endangered red wolves and Mexican gray wolves. Enjoy hot beverages in the woodstove-heated classroom. Dress for cold weather. Wolf Conservation Center, South Salem, 11 a.m. Adults: $15. Children (under 12): $12. Pre-registration required. Info and pre-registration: Visit www.nywolf.org.

Gem Hunt. Discover the treasures of the earth while learning about local gems and crystals. Each participant receives a geode and will learn about local gems and crystals. Visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.


Pound Fitness Program. A 45-minute full-body cardio and stress relief jam session, fusing Pilates, cardio, plyometrics, isometric movements and poses. Using lightly weighted drumsticks called Ripstix™ and combining constant simulated drumming resulting in working the entire body. 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.

Children’s Carnival for Charity. Sponsored by the Harvey School’s Community Service Club, this event is offered for local families with children of grade school age. Featuring a gym full of bouncy stations, traditional carnival games for prizes, fun crafts, hair and nail salons and much more. Have hot dogs and chili for dinner along with baked goods, snacks, popcorn and cotton candy. The Harvey School, 260 Jay St. (Route 22), Katonah. 12 to 4 p.m. Free admission. Tickets for rides, games and activities will raise money for Doctors Without Borders and the All Stars Project, a New York City-based performing arts program for underserved inner city youth. Snow date: March 1. Info: 914-232-3161 ext. 115.


Pound Ridge Historical Society Exhibit and Sale of Quilts. This exhibit and sale of quilts will feature works by Barbara Glah, Judy Gignisi, Nancy Mirman, Sonhild Rodney and Judy Simex, all members of the Northern Star Quilt Guild. The quilts range from a contemporary style to traditional that has been part of the American heritage for centuries. Pound Ridge Historical Society, 255 Westchester Ave., Pound Ridge. 1 to 3 p.m. Free. Info: 914-764-4333 or e-mail info@poundridgehistorical.org.

Chinese New Year Celebration. Celebrate family-friendly activities commemorating the beginning of the Year of the Sheep. Featuring a paper craft workshop where participants can create a Chinese lantern or drum and Kwan’s Kung Fu will perform a traditional Lion Dance, believed in Chinese culture to scare away evil spirits and to bring good luck. For all ages. Pelham Art Center, 155 Fifth Ave., Pelham. 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-738-2525 or visit www.pelhamartcenter.org.
Westlake Girls Earn Their First Trip to the County Center

By Neal Rentz

Westlake High School girls’ basketball coach Sean Mayer said qualifying for the Section 1 semifinals at the Westchester County Center in White Plains for the first time in school history was the goal for his players this year.

The team’s dream became a reality last Wednesday afternoon as the Wildcats broke open a close game with a 21-6 fourth quarter to defeat the Valhalla Vikings 59-38.

The third-seeded Wildcats, who held just a 25-24 lead at halftime, are now slated to meet second-seeded Ardsley in a semifinal on Tuesday afternoon.

The victory meant a lot, especially for Westlake seniors Kathleen Cullen, Faith Lovett and Kaitlyn Schmid, according to Mayer.

“We’ve worked real hard,” he said. “We were in the same spot last year and we lost this game to an excellent Woodlands team. We’re really excited about getting to the County Center. That was our goal and now we have two wins left to a Sectional title.”

Mayer felt Valhalla played his team tough for much of the contest. “This is quite a thrill and Valhalla played one hell of a game,” he said. “They took it to us, they played great defense. Little by little, we just kept extending that lead. We made some shots at the end when we needed to.”

Schmid led the Wildcats with 13 points, while Lovett and Cullen each had 10.

Pleasantville Panthers are headed to the County Center for the Sectional Quarterfinals

By Monica D’Ippolito

The Pleasantville Panthers are headed to the Westchester County Center.

Led by their seniors -- Courtney Sheehy, Josie Amerson, Katie McAllister and AnnMarie DiCarlo -- the Panthers outplayed crosstown rival Briarcliff and secured a spot in the Section 1, Class B semifinals.

“Indescribable, I can’t even think straight,” Sheehy said after the convincing 55-29 win. “Usually I’m not speechless, but right now I really am. It’s been a dream of mine since, I don’t know, third grade, fourth grade, when I first started playing with AnnMarie.”

The fourth-seeded Panthers started the game with an Amerson conventional 3-point play. The senior had her way down on the block all game, as the fifth-seeded Bears couldn’t match up with her size.

“I did at some points, yeah,” Amerson said about having a mismatch on the low post. “They don’t really have the height per se, so I definitely knew that was my opportunity to take advantage of that.”

“It’s tough because they spread you out,” Briarcliff coach Don Hamlin said. “With this group, every day is special, ” said Sheehy, who made four of her seven attempts from the field, finished with 20 points, six assists and four rebounds, began the second half with consecutive 3-pointers that stretched the P’ville lead to 34-16.

“You just feel it,” said Sheehy, who made four of her seven attempts from the arc. “Coach always says, ‘You’re the only one that can take away your confidence’. I mean, I was a little cold in the first period, but you’ve got to keep shooting because no one can take away your confidence. So I just started feeling it, started shooting it. It felt good coming off the finger tips and, you know, swoosh.”

With 5:50 remaining in the game, Briarcliff’s Carly Fanelli cut the Panther lead down to 20 with a 3-point shot. But Pleasantville sank six of seven shots from the line down the stretch and was never threatened.

“The whole idea was try to help the best opportunity to take advantage of that,” Amerson said about having a mismatch on the low size. “I did at some points, yeah,” Amerson said after the convincing 55-29 win.

“My whole game was like passing it,” said Schmid, a team tri-captain, said being a senior made the quarterfinal win especially gratifying.

“We’ve never got a section title, so that was definitely one of our goals,” she said.

Putting a game away in the fourth quarter has been a trademark of this year’s Westlake team in the Section 1 tournament.

“We’ve been notorious for that in the past couple games,” said Schmid, who added that in the fourth quarter “we prove who we really are. Just got to get all the nerves out.”

Sofia Mazza had 16 points and Sam Morilla had 14 for the Vikings.
Bobcats Headed Back to the County Center After Edging Hen Hud

By Andy Jacobs

Over the next few years, Byram Hills freshman Skylar Sinon figures to earn plenty of accolades with his flashy offensive skills.

But last Tuesday evening, it was his big defensive play that helped extend the Bobcats' season another week.

With time about to run out, Sinon came flying toward the left corner to block the last-gasp 3-point shot of Hendrick Hudson's Dylan Fraser and preserve the host Bobcats' tenuous one-point lead. Byram Hills, getting a go-ahead, put-back basket from Matt Groll with 13 seconds left, escaped with a 50-49 victory over the Sailors in a thrilling Section 1, Class A quarterfinal game.

Amid the jubilation after the third-seeded Bobcats earned another trip to the Westchester County Center, where they'll face Somers on Wednesday night, coach Ted Repa admitted his heart was pounding when he saw his young guard leaving his feet to try to deflect Fraser's final shot.

"Yes, very, very nervous," he said. "Very, very nervous. I was like, 'please don't come down on him.' It was just a one-point game, you know. That would've been three (foul) shots. But I don't think he did come down. He got a clean block, thank God."

Only moments before his game-saving block, Sinon had misfired on a runner from right of the lane with the Bobcats trailing by a point and on the verge of exiting the playoffs after a 15-3 regular season and an opening-round win over Nanuet.

But Groll, who hadn't scored a single point before getting three baskets in the fourth quarter, won the fierce battle in the paint for the rebound of Sinon's missed shot and connected on a short jumper to provide Byram with its winning margin.

"I was trying to call a set," said Repa about the Bobcats' last possession of the game. "Skylar had it on the corner and he was able to get a step and he took that running floater. He hit that all year and it rolls out. And our guys just pursued the ball. You know it helps to have 6-7 and 6-6 up there. Matt Groll came up with a huge shot. You could see it in his eyes, he wasn't passing that ball."

The 11th-seeded Sailors got 12 first-quarter points from a hot-shooting Jesse Breeding and built a 15-11 lead after the opening eight minutes. Hen Hud's advantage grew to nine points in the second quarter before the Bobcats closed the half on a 9-2 run, sparkled by Sinon, who finished with 12 points, and Andrew Groll, who matched Breeding with a game-high 15 points.

Trailing 26-24 at intermission, Byram scored the first seven points of the third quarter and held a 38-35 edge as the game headed for the final quarter. The Sailors' Fraser scored five straight points to tie the contest at 40-all just over a minute into the period. But the Bobcats responded with a 7-0 run on baskets by Matt Groll, Sinon and Matt Milone, along with one free throw from Jared Friedberg.

Just when it seemed the Sailors were finished, Nick Marra connected on a 3-pointer with 2:25 remaining. Another free throw by Friedberg gave the Bobcats a 48-43 advantage, but seldom-used Hen Hud guard Jeremy Morris came off the Sailor bench to hit back-to-back 3-pointers in the final minute to lift his team into the lead with 27 seconds to go.

The heroics by Morris came as quite a shock to Repa and the Bobcats.

"We'd never seen him in the scouting report," he said. "I looked to the bench and said, 'who hit it?' and they said, 'Coach, we don't know. He hadn't played all game.' And then he hit another one."

Fortunately for the Bobcats, the game's final moments provided the huge, go-ahead basket by Matt Groll and the clutch blocked shot by Sinon. So now Byram Hills gets to play at least one more game, this time with starting point guard Ross Weinfeld probably back in the lineup after sitting out against the Sailors with an ankle sprain.

"It's awesome, awesome," said Repa about the prospect of playing once again at the County Center. "This is why we do it."
Three Wrestling Standouts Getting Set for State Meet

Tony Pinciario

Matt Grippi has spent many weekends as a spectator at the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Wrestling Championships watching older brothers Joey and Tommy, as well as their Fox Lane teammates.

The Fox Lane freshman could not wait to wrestle varsity so he would get his opportunity to compete on the grand stage -- the Albany Times-Union Center, site of the state championships.

In his third varsity wrestling season, Grippi will be making the trip to Albany as a competitor after receiving a Division I (large schools) wild card in the 132-pound weight class. The New York State Wrestling Championships are Friday-Saturday, Feb. 27-28, in Albany.

Fellow Examiner-area wrestlers, Horace Greeley senior Brock Cvjanovich (Division I) and Pleasantville freshman James Bathon (Division II-small schools) also received wild cards.

Grippi will also look to join Joey and Tommy as top-six place finishers. Joey placed twice in his two years and Tommy placed once, earning his family-leading 200th victory in the process.

"I was really hoping for a wild card," Grippi said. "Last year I had place finishes from the year before, " said Bathon, the 2013 Division II 99-pound champ. "Mr. Bernarducci said I had a good chance because I had a good record and I had place finishes from the year before," said Bathon, the 2013 Division II 99-pound champ.

Bathon received a call from Bernarducci Tuesday, with the good news. "I was excited," said the soft-spoken Bathon. "I looked at it as a second chance to prove myself. This gives me one more chance to wrestle and I want to make the most of it."

Grippi, who lost a heartbreaker to Suffern's Daiton Powell, 2-1, in the Section 1 Division I 132-pound final, took Monday and Tuesday off to rest a stress fracture in his back. He returned to practice on Wednesday, and began to focus on Albany.

Aided by Joey and Tommy, Grippi made sure he questioned his brothers about wrestling at states.

"Just by watching Joey and Tommy wrestle in the state tournament, I have learned a lot," Grippi said. "I have had many conversations with them. They have been telling me to keep my mindset positive. Even though I am going in as a wildcard, let it all out on the mat and don't hold anything back.

"Throughout the whole year I mainly have been drilling with Tommy. I would also drill with Joey. My other brother, Pete, is at college, but whenever he comes home I would drill with him, too."

The older Grippi brothers will be in Albany to watch their little brother wrestle. Cvjanovich, the Section 1 Division I 220-pound runner-up, becomes the second Horace Greeley wrestler in the last two years to earn a wild card. In 2013, Scott Wymbs received one in the 182-pound weight class.

"Upon my loss, I was upset, but my motto is fall seven times stand eight, so I rose up and hoped for the wild card," Cvjanovich said. "Many people were telling me I deserved it. However I believe that in life we deserve only what we can take.

"For that reason I looked at the wild card as a gift that I wanted very badly. I knew I didn't have a ton of points, but I was hopeful I'd have enough to receive the wild card."

Cvjanovich was excited, to say the least, when Greeley coach Mike DeBellis told him last Tuesday.

"When Coach DeBellis first told me, I was warming up my car before leaving the gym Tuesday," Cvjanovich said. "Upon hearing the news, I had to restrain myself from ripping the door off of my car and throwing it into traffic. I was beyond excited."

Cvjanovich said he spent Monday and Tuesday working out, drilling and watching film. He has the good fortune of having three former Section 1 champs in the room in DeBellis and assistant coaches Anthony Tortora and Dan Hall.

A fan the last two years at states, Cvjanovich will now try to become the first Greeley wrestler to place at state since Greg Einfrank in 2006.

"I feel I am ready for states," Cvjanovich said. "I am going to wrestle in the state tournament, my match and I am going to pour my heart out every single match."

Pleasantville's Bathon finished third in the Section 1 Division II 99-pound weight class. Following sectionals, Bathon felt it was a long shot at earning a wildcard. That view changed after speaking to his coach, Bob Bernarducci.

"Mr. Bernarducci said I had a good chance because I had a good record and I had place finishes from the year before," said Bathon, the 2013 Division II 99-pound champ.

Bathon received a call from Bernarducci Tuesday, with the good news. "I was excited," said the soft-spoken Bathon. "I looked at it as a second chance to prove myself. This gives me one more chance to wrestle and I want to make the most of it."
A Viking Second-Half Eruption Ends Fox Lane’s Season

By Andy Jacobs

It took the Fox Lane boys’ basketball team nearly the entire first half to build a double-digit lead over Clarkstown South last Wednesday afternoon.

It took the Vikings’ Justin Rivera little more than two minutes to erase it.

Rivera erupted for 12 consecutive points to begin the third quarter as the Vikings turned a 10-point halftime deficit into their first lead of the game. Clarkstown South then took command in the fourth quarter and went on to a 59-47 victory over the host Foxes in a Section 1, Class AA quarterfinal playoff game.

“He came out and I think he kind of put that team on his back,” said Fox Lane coach Mike Tomassi about Rivera shortly after the fourth-seeded Foxes’ 2014-15 season had come to a disappointing conclusion, just one game shy of the Westchester County Center. “That was definitely the difference there. He came out and his will to win was a lot greater than ours.”

The Vikings’ burly senior forward scored 14 of his game-high 22 points in the third quarter, helping fifth-seeded South overtake the Foxes 21-9 and take control in a contest it once trailed by as many as 12 points. A 16-4 South blitz in the fourth quarter, sparked by star guard Conor McGuinness, proved too much for Fox Lane.

“Maybe they woke up,” said Tomassi after the Vikings outscored his team by a whopping 22 points over the final two quarters. “It seemed like they kind of got us out of our offensive rhythm. They’re a good team, they work hard defensively. They make you work that much harder to get good team, they work hard defensively. They make you work that much harder to get

After the Vikings scored three straight buckets, capped by a Rivera dunk, to close within 11-10, Fox Lane answered with a New 3-pointer and a put-back basket by Alex Olsen and took a six-point lead after one quarter. The Foxes’ margin stretched to nine points 55 seconds into the second period when Anthony Nappi drilled a 3-point shot.

The Fox Lane lead finally reached 10 points when Olsen, who wound up with 15 points and 13 rebounds, dropped in a 3-pointer from just left of the key with 3:15 to go in the half. Nappi followed with a pair of pull-up jumpers a minute apart that each time gave the Foxes a 12-point cushion. But the Vikings’ Rivera wended the half by providing a hint of things to come when he drove for a layup with five seconds left, cutting the Fox lead to 30-20.

“We harped on coming out and winning that first four minutes of the third quarter,” said Tomassi. “We thought that was very important to do.”

Instead, Clarkstown South came back on the floor after the break and instantly got back in the game with Rivera singlehandedly taking over. He scored on a third-try put-back to open the third quarter and soon followed with a trey from the right elbow. Just 30 seconds later, he drove the right baseline for a layup and was fouled. Though he missed the free throw, South was suddenly within just three points.

The Foxes’ slim lead shrank to a single point when Rivera made a steal and scored on a layup. Then with 5:44 left in the third quarter, Rivera drained a right-side 3-pointer that gave the Vikings their first lead all afternoon at 32-30. After Corry answered with a right-corner 3-point shot, a Rivera 15-footer from the right baseline bounced on the rim and dropped through the net.

Redhead provided four straight points that gave Fox Lane a 39-36 edge, but the Vikings then went on a 5-0 spurt before the teams went scoreless over the final two minutes of the period. The lead changed hands half a dozen times in the third quarter but, after Olsen tied the game by making an 18-foot jumper to start the fourth, South was about to take over for good.

McGuinness, forced to sit the final five minutes of the opening half after being whistled for two charges, wound up scoring 13 of his 19 points in the final quarter, starting with a 3-pointer from the left corner that gave Clarkstown South the lead for good with 6:35 remaining.

Fox Lane starting point guard Owen Azrak fouled out with 5:13 left, but a couple of Redhead baskets in the paint still had the Foxes within 50-45 with 2:25 remaining. Their dreams of a trip to the County Center vanished, though, as the Vikings proceeded to score the next seven points, four of them by McGuinness at the foul line.

Corry supplied the final Fox Lane points of the season by hitting two free throws with 40 seconds left. By then, it was obvious that the Foxes’ quest for the County Center was going to end with a home loss in the quarterfinals for a second straight year.

Afterwards, Tomassi was quick to praise the winners for the way they stepped up in the second half.

“They came out and kind of punched us, knocked us down, and said, ‘Hey, we’re here to fight,’” he said. “And we didn’t rise to the occasion today. But still very proud of what we did, you know, losing 12 seniors (from last year’s team), all five starters. I still think we’re one of the better teams in Section 1. But tonight, our shots didn’t drop and tip your hat to them (the Vikings).”

Asked what he had just said to his dejected team following the game, Tomassi answered, “Just to cherish these memories and cherish these moments that happen. Obviously we’re not gonna harp on what we didn’t do or did do in the game. They know what they didn’t do. It’s a tough loss, obviously. I just told them to remember the bonds they made here. Everybody’s gonna go on to different paths in their life, but no matter where you go you’ll always remember where you came from and that’s here.”
Panthers Impress at the Class C Sectionals

Above: The Pleasantville girls 4 x 200 relay team celebrates its victory at last Tuesday’s sectionals at the Armory. From left to right are: Alden Iaconis, Kayla Proctor, Cassidy McCrea and Danielle Murray.

Left: Pleasantville’s boys track and field team captured its first-ever team title at last week’s Class C sectional meet at the Armory. The Panthers’ standout 4 x 800 relay team of, left to right, Patrick Watts, Eric Hughes, Eamon Coburn and JC Yahia earned an invitation to the Millrose Games, where they placed eighth among competition from throughout the eastern states.
By Monica D’Ippolito

Playing its final game at Goldstein Fitness Center this season, the Pace University men’s basketball team fell to Northeastern-10 opponent Adelphi University Saturday afternoon.

The visiting Panthers, despite only two conference wins all year, opened up a 20-point halftime lead and went on to an 89-68 rout over a Setter team that has now dropped 12 games in a row.

“What hurt us so badly in this game,” said Setters coach Pat Kennedy afterwards, “was in those first five minutes, we played poorly and so we couldn’t get that momentum and that ball rolling in that direction. As a result, we were very much out of whack. We did OK in practice for two days, but I didn’t see that coming where we looked dead before the game even started.”

It’s been a rough season for Pace, now 5-22. After playing well against top-tier opponents such as Philadelphia University and Stonehill College, the Setters, plagued by injuries, have stumbled during the second half of their schedule.

“We’ve had so many guys out of games and practice,” Kennedy said. “Our problem is not just being out of games, they’ve been out of practice… I’ve never had a season where, like, five of the top seven guys go through major injuries. Maybe one or two, but never like what we’ve had happen here. It’s kind of strange.”

The Panthers (6-19) came out sprinting against the Setters, trying to get out in transition as often as they could. sprinting against the Setters, trying to get out in transition as often as they could. They started the afternoon knocking out in transition as often as they could.

“On the defensive end, we just made some real defensive mistakes, like bringing our help defense from the wrong position,” Kennedy said. “Say the help defense should come from here and then all of a sudden another guy ran out of his position to almost overcompensate... so the offense and defense was very similar in terms of being out of sorts.”

Adelphi’s Duane Morgan was too much for the Setters on both ends of the floor, finishing with 27 points, 14 rebounds and three blocked shots, while hitting an efficient 8-for-14 from the field.

As for Pace, Mickell had a productive game, shooting 10-for-17 from the field, good for 22 points, while also adding two assists, two steals and two rebounds. DeMello shot 6-for-12 from the field, totaling 16 points, eight rebounds and four assists, while the Setters’ other guard, Bryan Rivers, finished with eight points, six rebounds and three assist. Kyle Pearson tallied 13 points and four boards.

“Khalil is a great, great young man,” Kennedy said. “He does and that’s a good feeling. ”

“When we need those guys to do something. “Kyle had a tough game, even though his stats were good. Kyle is a guy who can have a great game in a situation like that, but they did a nice job of guarding him. (Morgan) I think was spectacular tonight, offensively and defensively. He is a very good player.”

Since it was Pace’s last home game, lone senior Khalil Brown was recognized before the game. Kennedy had high praise for the Rego Park native, who went out in his finale with two points, four rebounds, one block and one steal in 24 minutes of action.

“Khalil is a great, great young man,” Kennedy said. “I think he got a 3.7, 3.8 (grade point average) this semester. He’s a bright, bright guy and he’s going to do great things in his life. We’re going to keep him next year as our graduate assistant. Obviously we all hate the losing, but they’re great kids to work with every day. And when they do great in the class room as well, you know that they have a real future. I know Khalil will be very successful no matter what he does and that’s a good feeling.”

The Setters’ season-finale comes against Northeastern-10 opponent Le Moyne College on Tuesday at 7 p.m., in Syracuse.
Skylar Sinon and the Bobcats Squeak Past Hendrick Hudson in the Section One Playoffs

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