Juneteenth Parade Celebrates the Soul of Freedom

By Pat Casey

The White Plains Juneteenth Heritage Committee sponsored the 11th Annual Juneteenth Parade & Festival on Saturday, June 13. Frank Williams Jr., Executive Director of the White Plains Youth Bureau was the Grand Marshal. Golden Seniors Joe Davis, Nancy Fitch, William Moye, and Cornelia Evans were also honored.

The 2015 theme “Juneteenth, 150 Years Later” was intended to highlight the importance of the historical event the Juneteenth holiday marks - the ending of slavery in the United States of America.

In 1865, two and a half years after President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, which became official January 1, 1863, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger landed at Galveston, Texas with the news that the Civil War had ended.

According to the National Registry of Juneteenth Organizations there have been several attempts to explain why it took two and a half years for the good news to be proclaimed in Texas.

The historical record shows that the Emancipation Proclamation had little impact on Texas because of the minimal number of Union troops to enforce the new Executive Order. With the surrender of General Lee in April of 1865, and the arrival of General Granger’s regiment, the Union forces in Texas became strong enough to influence and overcome the resistance both in Texas and in

Former Frank’s Nursery Property Sale
Focus of Monday Community Meeting

Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner held a community meeting Monday evening to familiarize residents with several development proposals that had been submitted to the town for consideration.

In an email before the event Feiner outlined “draft” versions of the proposed projects, advising residents that the process was ongoing and that the contents of the offers “were conditional on approvals being given and on cleanup taking place.” He also said the material being presented at the meeting was for review purposes only and that details were subject to change as part of negotiations.

Feiner noted that the Town Board will be asked, after the meeting, to authorize the town’s broker to negotiate a contract for the sale of the property to the preferred purchaser and use.

Three written offers have been received by the town and a fourth was expected to be presented at Monday’s meeting.

Dollar amounts of the offers were not included in the proposal description because the town’s broker was still negotiating, according to Feiner, although he did indicate that they were all within a similar range.

Therapists Confront Greenburgh Board on Proposed Massage Laws

By Pat Casey

Two proposed laws are before the Greenburgh Town Board to curb prostitution hidden in illicit massage establishments in the town, most prominently on Central Avenue. The public hearing, opened on June 10, attracted several licensed/clinical massage therapists who felt the proposed laws singled them out as professionals unfairly. Fingerprinting and deep background checks were included in one of the proposals.

Many of the therapists speaking at the hearing said their patients were referred to them by medical doctors and practitioners.

Greenburgh resident Bob Bernstein, responsible for one draft, based on a law that the Town of Clarkstown approved in the 1990s (as well as a more recent law on the books in Farmingdale, Long Island), said the existing laws in Greenburgh do not give law enforcement the tools they need to close illegal establishments permanently.

Bernstein’s proposal attempts to license businesses and not just the individual practitioner.

The second proposal, crafted by the Greenburgh Planning Board, tries to tie

Continued on page 2

By Pat Casey

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Juneteenth Parade Celebrates the Soul of Freedom

continued from page 1

It was on June 19th that General Granger delivered the message – Juneteenth is a blended word – from June and nineteenth. Currently Juneteenth is a State holiday observed in 43 states.

In 2014 Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) sponsored a bill to mark the 19th of June as Juneteenth Independence Day in America and thus a federal holiday. The bill passed through the Senate but has yet to be passed in the House of Representatives.

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Former Frank's Nursery Property Sale Focus of Monday Community Meeting

continued from page 1

One offer is for a 100 to 120 unit Assisted Living Facility that would require no zoning changes and would exceed three stories in height. The property would be taxable.

Another bid for a Self-storage Facility would require a zoning change. This proposal would include a smaller building footprint than the residential proposals and would ease up on the cleanup costs because a basement would not be necessary.

Feiner indicated that .5 acres of the property would be donated back to the town for resale or other potential uses such as a solar farm. The property would be taxable.

The third proposal for a Luxury Senior Independent Living Development would require a zone change. The building would be three stories high, comprised of 120 to 140 units, with nonmedical services, including meals, offered to residents. The property would be taxable.

The developer expected to present a written proposal for Monday’s meeting had expressed to Feiner that he was interested in building a 140-unit assisted living facility that would be more affordable than traditional assisted living facilities. “He also would be seeking a zone change for 25 senior independent living residences, and would be willing to enter into a PILOT agreement with the town guaranteeing the tax revenues in the event that the facility becomes non-profit,” Feiner said in the email.

Therapists Confront Greenburgh Board on Proposed Massage Laws

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This is a chronic problem. ”

Licensed massage therapists speaking at the hearing said they wanted to support the community but that a pre-emptive law would be unfair to professionals being singled out who are already monitored by state licensing laws. They suggested the Board look at existing NYS laws and at a specific bill that had passed through the state Senate and was currently in the Assembly.

“Despite all of our efforts, we have been unable to keep these establishments closed permanently,” McNerney said. “This is a chronic problem.”

Licensed massage therapists speaking at the hearing said they wanted to support the community but that a pre-emptive law would be unfair to professionals being singled out who are already monitored by state licensing laws. They suggested the Board look at existing NYS laws and at a specific bill that had passed through the state Senate and was currently in the Assembly.

“It was clear that the massage operations were being used as fronts for prostitution.”

The public hearing was closed. More discussion on the proposed bills is expected at an upcoming work session of the Board.

Congratulations to All College Graduates, Class of 2015!

Take the next step and embark on your graduate studies this September at LIU Hudson at Westchester, a regional campus of Long Island University.

For more than 35 years, LIU Hudson at Westchester has been offering graduate programs tailored to fit the needs of adult learners. Located on the grounds of Purchase College, SUNY, the campus is just a short drive from all of Westchester, Putnam, Fairfield and the Bronx.

Thousands of LIU Hudson graduates hold advanced positions in schools, clinics, hospitals, businesses and in public agencies all over Westchester and beyond.

Meet with a program director to learn how our master’s degree programs and advanced certificates can launch or advance your career in:

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Contact us to schedule a visit: westchester@liu.edu or 914-831-2700
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The Woman’s Club of White Plains held its annual spring dinner on May 19 to honor the 2015 scholarship recipients from White Plains High School. This year nearly 40 applications were received by the Scholarship Committee from eligible White Plains high school seniors. A four-person committee from the Woman’s Club reviewed the applications, which includes an essay by the student as well as a personal interview.

Thirteen students were selected to receive scholarships this year: Valerie Alexander, Alisa Choubay, Caroline Cole, Angelica Duque, Rizza Estacio, Stefanie N. Gaspar, Diana Gonzalez, Olivia Henry, Riana Kadavi, Alana Lyons, Catalina Martinez, Jocelyn Nieto and Melissa Preudhomme. The recipients will be attending various colleges and universities including: Manhattanville College, University of MASS at Amherst, University of Miami, University of California Berkley, and SUNY Cortland.

For nearly 60 years, the Woman’s Club has been offering scholarships to White Plains students, pursuing higher education and raising the funds at an Annual Scholarship Luncheon and Spring Fashion Show held each April. This year the Woman’s Club models showcased fashions from local shops.

White Plains Youth Bureau Honors Fatherhood

The White Plains Youth Bureau held its 3rd Annual Fatherhood Breakfast Awards at Eastview Middle School, Saturday, June 13. The Breakfast honored 12 dads for their leadership, service and for being a role model. David Fuller, a past Fatherhood Honoree was the Keynote Speaker. The program was attended by White Plains Mayor Thomas M. Roach and Youth Bureau Director Frank Williams, Jr. The Honorees were: Narado Burrell, Jason Young, Duchaine Augustine, Richard Daub, Paul Scotman, Liamson Absolu, Kevin David, Anthony Martinez, Sean Brennan, Joshua Brumberg, Dennis Polanco and Darien Gairey.

2015 Season

June 9 – September 1

The Winter’s Tale
A Midsummer Night’s Dream
The Arabian Nights
An Iliad
And
The Tempest

Sustainable Green Living on the Single-Family Side of Town

By Pat Casey

There’s a lot of talk lately about sustainability and green development for municipalities that takes into consideration doing things on the large scale. Nestled gently into a White Plains neighborhood, however, is a living example of how families can create their own sustainable environment right in their front and back yards – on the small scale.

White Plains Councilwoman and Chair of the Sustainable White Plains Committee (SWP), Milagros Lecuona, invited The White Plains Examiner to visit her home to take a look at the Green initiatives she has in place. Lecuona is a firm believer that everyone can enhance the quality of their living environments while establishing life-supporting sustainable practices.

One of the first things you notice at the Lecuona residence is that the birds are singing. Then there’s a bit of awe at how the plantings have been designed to provide a private, almost secluded space, which despite the fact that houses are somewhat close together as in most White Plains neighborhoods, there is the impression of being out in “the country.”

It’s all deliberate. Lecuona has worked hard to create her special space and she wants to share with her neighbors how sustainable and Green practices can become a part of everyday living.

To some extent Lecuona credits her vision with growing up on one of the Canary Islands off the coast of Spain. It was a magical place to live, she says. There were birds everywhere and the people took for granted clean water and pure Earth because they did not waste what they had and knew how to put back into the land what they had taken out.

Most of the projects at the Lecuona house are ongoing – and that’s okay because one of the things Lecuona wants to impress most upon people is that they don’t have to do everything all at once: “They can take it slow and work in the sustainability one project at a time.” And sometimes those projects will be ongoing until they are complete.

One example is the permeable driveway Lecuona has been installing that uses Turfstone with grass that has alleviated flooding in the front area of her property. As an architect, Lecuona has worked with the product on commercial properties where flood mitigation was...continued on next page
Sustainable Green Living on the Single-Family Side of Town

Lecuona designed the pattern for the paving stones herself. The portions of the former driveway that have been dug up are being used to level out a section of the back yard.

The permeable paving requires three levels: soil, sand; the Turfstone or other paving stones and then the planting material – grass.

“I have been trying to get the city to use this technology on some of the parking lots,” she said.

The grass is cut with a weed whacker and a nearby barrel collects rainwater from the house gutters, which is used to water the driveway when needed.

In the back yard Lecuona has several gardens with vegetables and herbs and there are flowering plants and trees everywhere. There is even a composting area where she creates fertilizer for the gardens.

As chair of the Sustainable White Plains Committee, Lecuona has been working with members to bring these and other Green practices to the attention of city administration and residents.

Commissioned by the Mayor SWP advises on responsible, realistic and cost-effective measures for reducing the environmental impact of the activities of residents, visitors, organizations and businesses, as well as of City government itself. Some strategies that have been or are now under consideration include: Encouraging more and safer bicycle riding; Supporting more intensive recycling programs; Exploring new opportunities for using solar power; Using fuel-conserving City vehicles and equipment; Participating in Earth Day and other consciousness-raising events including the “Climate Smart Communities” program.

The SWP meets on the fourth Thursday of the month in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 255 Main Street. Residents are welcome to attend and to submit suggestions to the Committee.

Lecuona says she hopes to see more people become involved.
Girl Scouts Say ‘Thank You’ to the Troops With Their Cookies

By Janine Bowen

Girl Scout cookies are something of an American institution, so it seems only fitting that local troops band together each year to send the treats to those serving overseas as a reminder of home.

On Saturday morning at Westchester Community College in Valhalla, Girl Scouts from across the county spent several hours packing cookies into boxes and decorating thank-you cards to be sent to soldiers overseas.

An event that began in 2002 when volunteer Alison Bergman collected cookies with her own troop, Operation Cookie Drop is now run by the Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson, which includes more than 30,000 members throughout the Hudson Valley who shipped 80,000 boxes of cookies overseas this year.

“It’s so important because all of the troops who can’t be home would love a taste of home, and what better taste (is there) than Girl Scout cookies?” said County Executive Rob Astorino, who attended the event.

Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson CEO Pam Anderson said Operation Cookie Drop is a way for girls to learn about the sacrifices that others are making to protect their freedom. She acknowledged that while some of the youngest participants may not understand the concept of war, they know to express their gratitude when they see a man or woman in a military uniform.

“It’s a way for our Girl Scouts to understand what true service means, to know that people are sacrificing for them and just to say thank you,” Anderson said.

She explained that while the cookies will be shipped out on a barge in the coming weeks, they will likely not reach the Middle East until sometime in August. At that point, the recipients send photos of themselves holding the treats as well as thank-you notes for the girls.

Congresswoman Nita Lowey, who also attended the event, commended the scouts who spent hours in the hot sun packing boxes. She said by helping to take care of military personnel, they are helping to make the world a better place.

“The Girl Scouts are really a key part of our community, a key part of our country, and I am so proud to be part of this event because I (can only) imagine the faces of our veterans when they open those boxes of cookies,” Lowey said.

Several servicemen and servicewomen attended the Cookie Drop, taking photos with the girls and helping out. Master Sgt. Mary Kay Messenger said it was wonderful to see future leaders participating and explained that the event helps to perpetuate the valuable lesson of appreciating service.

“It is overwhelming to see the outpouring and the veteran support,” said Messenger. “We don’t get that today. In school, certain teachers will teach it but it’s important to keep that legacy going.”

During the opening ceremony, the scouts and Astorino honored one veteran, Vito Pinto, the recently retired director of Veterans Affairs for the county. Pinto received a Distinguished Service Award from the county executive and a certificate of appreciation from the Girl Scouts for his service and his contributions to Operation Cookie Drop over the years. Pinto said he was pleased to see the girls continue to participate in the cause. Anderson echoed his sentiments, noting that the event will continue as long as there are troops serving overseas.

“On the one hand it’s a shame that we keep having to send cookies to the Middle East, but while we do we want our brave men and servicewomen to know that we care,” Anderson said.

Congresswoman Nita Lowey and County Executive Rob Astorino were among those who lent their support to Girl Scout troops Saturday for Operation Cookie Drop.
Councilwoman Nadine Hunt-Robinson, NYS Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, NYS Assemblyman David Buchwald, Councilman Dennis Krolian, Youth Bureau Executive Director and Parade Grand Marshall Frank Williams.

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A Collection of Questions About the DEIS for Westchester Avenue Project

I am responding to the request for statements about the potential environmental impact of the proposed “Collection” project on Westchester Ave. My comments below relate to the plans lack of Open Space, of Seating Areas, of Plantings, and Screening near a neighboring building; pedestrian safety; the amount of new retail space planned in the complex; the number of driveways required (that pedestrians will have to cross); the width of the pedestrian sidewalks for entering the complex; location of the dog park for the residential component; location of waiting area for a possible shuttle bus to the railroad station from the large residential component; location of garbage staging and pick-up; location for storing snow.

The plan is noteworthy for its lack of Open Space, lack of Seating Areas, lack of Plantings, and lack of Screening of the proposed large residential building from the existing apartment building at 26 Franklin Ave. What gives White Plains its charm? Trees, parks, plantings, and sitting areas add to the livability and charm of the relatively dense neighborhoods close to the downtown.

The Scoping document for the project very briefly mentions bicycle and pedestrian improvement (see section C-9-C-d), including enhanced pedestrian access from Franklin Ave. to Westchester Ave. But what about those attempting to cross Westchester Avenue? Now and for years, for pedestrians, there is no safe time to cross near the Stop and Shop driveway over to The Container Store (at the corner of Westchester Ave. and Bloomingdale Rd). The WALK sign appears even when vehicles may be making a left turn (going south) from the Stop and Shop driveway. I have been almost hit by a vehicle twice. Could this crossing be made safe before we get into more development on Westchester Ave.? Any new crossings should be completely safe when there is a WALK sign.

Please note the many existing retail vacancies on both sides of Main St. (near the new hotel and near Wal-Mart), between City Place and N./S. Broadway; and also on Post Rd. and on Mamaroneck Ave. The Collection plan includes 236,000 gsf of commercial space. (Some of that is a proposed hotel and a car dealership.) The remaining retail space seems to be at least 14,790 gsf + 46,790 gsf = 61,580). How many driveways will pedestrians have to cross along Westchester Ave.’s east side? Please note that the push-button mechanism for “requesting” a crossing of the Stop and Shop driveway was removed years ago.

How will pedestrians enter the Collection complex, with its multi destinations? The width of the pedestrian sidewalks for entering the complex is... keeping rents as they are and also for increases to help landlords with building maintenance costs.

The next public meeting is scheduled for June 16, 7 p.m. at the White Plains Public Library Meeting Room, 100 Martine Ave., White Plains. The final public meeting will be held June 22, 7 p.m., at City Hall, 255 Main St., White Plains.

Rent Guidelines Hearings to be Held in White Plains

The Westchester County Rent Guidelines Board will hold two hearings this month in White Plains. Rent regulation issues run on both the landlord and renter sides. Attendees are expected to present opinions for and against the plan.

Obituaries

Glenn Dorfler

Angelo D’Antona
Angelo D’Antona, a resident of West Harrison passed away on June 9 at the age of 89. Angelo was born in Italy on June 26, 1925 to the late Gaetano and Magdalena (Gizzo) D’Antona. He married the love of his life Maria Dipietro and settled in West Harrison where he worked as a landscaper since 1954 eventually owning Angelo D’Antona and Son. Angelo loved his family and was a hard worker. Angelo is survived by his loving wife Maria and his son Rocco.

Louise Valuck
Louise Valuck passed away on May 30 at the Sarah Neuman Rehab Center in Mamaroneck. She was 73. Valuck was born May 9, 1942, in Elizabeth, N.J. to Martin and Susan Valuck. After graduating from Battin High School in 1960, she attended Wagner College in Staten Island, receiving a bachelor’s in English. After graduation, she attended NYU and earned a master’s in American literature, then continued her education at Columbia University in earning a master’s in library science. Her early employment years were spent in New York City with Bowker Book Publishing Company.

Valuck moved to White Plains when she began her career with the New York Power Authority. She had a lifelong love of books and puzzles. She enjoyed traveling around the world and had for years been an active member in the Lutheran Church and the Columbia Alumni Association. She will be remembered by all who knew her for her love of her family and friends and her kind and gentle ways.

Valuck was predeceased by her parents. A memorial service will be held on June 19 at 11 a.m. at Emanuel Lutheran Church, located at 197 Manville Rd. in Pleasantville. Donations in her memory may be made to Emanuel Lutheran Church.

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

**Greenburgh Police Department**

**Criminal Mischief.** On the morning of June 1 police responded to a call from St. Joseph Church, Elmsford. On arrival it was apparent that overnight a vehicle had driven through a small area between a sidewalk and small rope chain link fence in order to drive on the lawn and cause damage to the property. Tire tracks were observed from what looked like one vehicle, which struck a mature Japanese maple tree breaking three branches then continued to strike a bench and knock it over. The vehicle sideswiped another tree and broke its right side-view mirror off and left it behind. In addition, the vehicle disrupted one block paver, which caused damage to a small area of pavement of the parking lot. A canvass of the area for similar damage had negative results.

**Suspicious Incident.** One June 1 an Elmsford resident reports that he went out to his vehicle which was parked in the street in front of his home to find it had been ransacked. No items were taken and various items of value were left behind. The ashtray was pulled out and a few items were out of place. The vehicle doors were unlocked and no damage was reported. Report for documentation purposes.

**Harassment.** On the evening of June 1 police responded to a report regarding a party receiving harassing phone calls. The victim said her old neighbor had been calling her house and cell phone leaving harassing messages. She doesn’t know why the caller is doing this and has asked her to stop. Police listened to one of the voice messages in which a female called the victim unsavory names and yelled for her or her husband to answer the phone. Police contacted the caller who said she was in a relationship with the victim’s husband and had been trying to contact him. Police advised her to stop contacting the home and cell phone but the caller refused to listen and hung up the phone. Police advised the victim to speak with her husband about the matter when he returns home and to contact police headquarters if any further assistance is needed.

**Disorderly Conduct.** At about 9:45 p.m. on June 2 police responded to the same residence listed in the above harassment report. A woman could be heard screaming profanities from the rear of the building. She was asked several times to lower her voice but she refused to comply. In the process of asking her to lower her voice, police could see several people looking out their windows as well as one pedestrian looking back and walking away from the scene in a hurry. As police spoke with the offender, who appeared to be intoxicated, she grabbed a gray backpack and placed her hand inside of it. For officer safety, police asked her to remove her hand from inside the bag, but she refused. As an officer reached for the backpack, the offender pulled away and kept digging in the bag. The officer was able to gain control of the bag at which time the offender yelled further profanities. She proceeded to stand up and reach for the bag and began struggling to get it back. Police advised her several times that she could not go in the bag, but she continued to scream, curse and fight with officers. As this occurred she began hitting her head against the chest of one officer and became extremely irate and combative. An ambulance was called and after a brief struggle, the offender was placed in handcuffs. While the offender was being detained she began screaming and cursing for the husband of the harassment victim to come outside. In the process of struggling one officer sustained an injury to his left elbow causing pain and discomfort. Greenburgh Paramedic arrived on scene and transported the offender to the White Plains Hospital Emergency Room for evaluation. The victim gave a written statement about the incident and her husband gave a statement on the Domestic Incident Report due to a prior relationship with the offender. The victims are requesting a Temporary Order of Protection.

**Harassment.** On June 2 a Hartsdale resident went to the Greenburgh Police Department to report that she has been harassed repeatedly over the last two years by an unknown male while she has been exercising. The victim said she is an avid road-walker throughout the streets of Greenburgh, and describes the unknown party that bothers her as another fitness enthusiast who is commonly running the streets of Greenburgh. The victim said there have been at least six separate incidents where the unknown male has snap up behind her and scared her by yelling obscenities such as: “F Off, Get out of my way! You got Nothing!” The victim said the majority of the incidents have occurred on E. Hartsdale Avenue. The suspect is described as a while male in his early 40s who commonly wears color coordinated running outfits. The victim further said that on Saturday, May 30, the unknown male ran up to her from behind and spat at her. Due to these incidents, the victim does not feel comfortable while conducting her morning walks throughout the town. This report for documentation purposes only. The victim was advised to contact police headquarters immediately if any further assistance is needed.

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After a year of great upheaval in my personal and professional domains, having moved to a new residence and expanded space in my office building, I was feeling off kilter. I was a little uncomfortable in my own skin, not sleeping well and working in a tangle of misplaced folders, temporary filing boxes and a jumble of crossed wires.

Six months ago, I moved from my large historic property that for over 40 years had housed my public relations business and domicile to make way for an ever-expanding enterprise after my wife had declared "Enough! I've lived 'above the store' my entire married life and now I'm living inside the store!"

That's when we purchased a new residence at Trump Park in Shrub Oak, which we've been decorating madly, while at our historic property we converted our former living quarters into new offices.

The transition has involved a massive displacement of furnishings and fixtures and the addition of new office equipment to accommodate a doubling of staff, all of which had left me in a state of anxiety.

Perhaps it was not totally accidental that I received a call from the fabulous Deanna Trust, feng shui consultant extraordinaire, about whom I had done a column a while back. The universe has been at work, an exacting interpretation of each room in a home and the office to make sure that I hadn't boîllized my environments with all this moving.

"Come visit me fast, at both places," I implored. "I need to get organized for a feeling of calm."

Within the month she arrived and I had my video production crew on hand to record the process. There was one terrible snag, which I didn't anticipate: my wife Margaret.

I should explain that a happy marriage of nearly a half-century can be built on the attraction of opposites, and my wife doesn't go for this kind of stuff. When Trust mentioned on the phone the night before that she would be bringing many crystals to "paste to the ceiling" of our new home to energize it, I was able to say with full confidence that, knowing my wife, that wasn't going to happen. We agreed that we could work around this issue and I promised that at my office she could plaster the entire ceiling with crystals, like stalactites in a cave, if she liked.

At home, as soon as Trust entered the front door, she told me that the residence was "stable, a happy place, well-designed for good fortune and happiness."

While Donald Trump didn't actually build the building – that honor goes to Louis Cappelli -- he did attach his name to it, and since he has a feng shui consultant for every one of his projects, I'm sure he wouldn't have allowed that unless he were fully confident that the place represented him well.

Trust cleansed and blessed my home quickly, feeling that I had pretty much followed pointers she had given me from a consultation a year earlier. I had made some errors in my bedroom with too much "water" representation in my seascapes paintings -- six of them -- which have to be replaced in favor of 'action' representation. There were other minor tweaks, like having plants in two corners to stimulate good fortune and growth, but nothing that Margaret would consider too weird.

It was then on to the office building where I admitted unabashedly that I want to soar with success. After three hours I was exhausted. There was the creation of an altar, then the most exciting interpretation of each room from our reception area, to my manager's office, other offices, a conference room, my office and the kitchen. There was rearrangement of wall art, wall color suggestions, and a biggie, my office chair, which was not commanding enough it seems. It was suggested that I need a chair that comes up high enough to cover the back of my head. Wouldn't you know, I had just bought an expensive one that didn't have that feature.

There were also loads of crystals to be added in every room, some hanging directly from the ceiling -- one directly at the entrance -- others in corners and some from chandeliers. Certainly prospective clients may wonder about that and ask whether I really believe in it all. I guess I'm like those who say they decide to live a good life not knowing whether there's a heaven or hell, but just in case...

If you feel you want to improve your chances at happiness, good fortune and better health, call Deanna Trust at 973-366-3570 or visit www.trustfengshui.com.

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). 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.

By Bill Primavera

Presenting The Unique Wine Palate of Americans

Americans drink more wine than any other nation. And most of the wine we consume is produced in the United States.

So what wines do we prefer? Is there a national preference for certain styles of wines over others? Do we tend to consume wines produced from a select few grapes or are our palates more expansive? Is there such a thing as a national palate, whereby Americans have honed a common preference for wine tastes, aromas and bouquets?

This week I’ll explore the American palate. From the early days of the democracy, a preference for sweeter styles of wines prevailed. Over the ensuing centuries, we experimented with various styles of wines. But surprisingly, our national taste for wine has changed little since the Founding Fathers tipped Madeira and Cabernet Sauvignon.

But for the 13-year respite when Prohibition put a halt to legal alcohol consumption, Americans appetite for alcohol has grown, yet our preferences have not changed significantly. Today, Americans still prefer fruit-forward wines with mild tannins and acidity. Most Americans who prefer this style of wine don’t think of these wines as having a specific region. Comparatively speaking, Europeans have been drinking far dryer and more sophisticated wines over a much longer period of time.

How is the term palate defined for the intent of this week’s column? According to the Oxford Dictionary, it is “a person’s appreciation of taste and flavor, especially when sophisticated and discriminating.” Certainly, each of us has preferences for a particular grape variety and style of wine. Typically, one’s palate is honed over a number of years and eventually is able to discern nuances beyond taste and flavor.

But can there be a national consensus palate? Apparently so.

The Americans’ national palate has come to dominate the world wine market. As the largest consuming nation, winemakers across the globe clamor to craft their wines to satisfy the palates and wallets of the American market.

What are Americans winemakers producing to satisfy the American populace? The top five grapes grown in Northern California, which accounts for a dominant share of American wine production, are Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Syrah. Do you recognize your drinking preferences in this list?

Across the globe, winemakers are shifting their production to these grape varietals, oftentimes in direct conflict with ages-old vineyard and winery plantings and processes. For example, 50 years ago very few of the top five grapes were grown in Italy. That was before Italian winemakers set their sights on the American consumer. Not only are they now dedicating increased acreage to these varietals, but in a number of instances they have changed the style of wine being produced to meet the profile of the American palate. This has created a debate in wine circles that the Italians (and certain Spanish and French winemakers) have sold out to the Americans and abandoned their centuries-old traditions.

Another reason that Americans consume more wine than any other nation is our penchant for stand-alone wine consumption. In Western Europe, wine is rarely consumed away from the dining table. In the United States, we enjoy a glass of wine as a social lubricant as much as we do as an accompaniment to a meal. The American traditions of the so-called work of wine, group cocktail parties and wine bars are unique amongst wine-consuming nations.

Here’s the rub. Over the centuries, Americans’ palates have been honed to enjoy fruit-forward, balanced wines with low tannins and acidity. These wines tend to be in-your-face fruit bombs that lack subtlety and complexity. When we encounter other styles of wines from around the world, our palates may not be able to discern the nuances and finer characteristics of those wines.

Have American palates been desensitized to enjoy more sophisticated wines? I think not. In spite of efforts from profit-motivated winemakers, and wine critics who prefer big, fruity wines, alternative wines are being produced and should be sought out. Through continuous experimentation, a discerning palate can be developed.
Happenings

We're happy to help spread the word about your community event. Please submit your information at least three weeks prior to your event and include the words “Happenings Calendar Submission” in your email subject line. Entries should be sent to Pat Casey at pcasey@thexaminernews.com.

Tuesday, June 16

Tuesdays at Dorry's. When we think of the perpetrators of the Holocaust we think of some of history's greatest monsters. But were they? With Mitch Polay we will look into the complex behavior of the “Holocaust Perpetrator” through the lens of Franz Stengel, the Commandant of Treblinka Death Camp. We will watch a short film, “Torta Bluma,” and discuss Stengel’s behavior as well as the behavior of other perpetrators. Some primary source documents will be used as well. Mitch Polay has been widely acclaimed for his teaching, and just last week received an Excellence In Education award from the JCY-Westchester Community Partners. We appreciate him at Dorry’s too, and congratulate him. Please join us. No reservations are needed. Presentation is 6 to 7 p.m. Food ordering starts at 5:30 p.m. Dorry’s Diner, 468 Mamaroneck Avenue, White Plains; 914-682-0005.

The College of New Rochelle Graduate Programs Open House. Learn about the college's masters degree and certificate programs in education, human services, art and communication studies and nursing, including masters programs in public administration, art therapy, mental health counseling, marriage and family therapy, family nurse practitioner and many others. Meet with current students, faculty and administrators and a financial aid representative will be on hand to answer questions. College of New Rochelle, Sweeny Student Center, Rooms A and B, The College of New Rochelle, 29 Castle Place, New Rochelle. 6 to 8 p.m. Free. Registration required. Info and registration: 1-800-933-5923 or visit www.cn.edu.


Wednesday, June 17

TILI Shed. The White Plains Take It or Leave It Shed is open 2 to 4 p.m. Located at the Gedney Recycling Yard, 87 Gedney Way, White Plains.

White Plains Farmers Market. Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. located on Court Street between Main Street and Martine Avenue in White Plains.

Saturday, June 20

TILI Shed. The White Plains Take It or Leave It Shed is open 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Gedney Recycling Yard, 87 Gedney Way, White Plains.

Teaching Trails: A Community Path for Environmental Education. Join guided trail experience through the woodland forest. Discover who left that track, which tree makes the best animal home or which plant makes its own heat to help melt through the late winter ice. Program runs about 30 minutes. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 11:30 a.m. Free. Every Saturday and Sunday (except June 14). Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Natural Wonders Meadow Hike. Come from an easy hike through the new native wildflower meadow. Stay “busy as a bee” while learning about the productivity of pollinators and meet some of the local plants and animals that thrive in the meadow. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale 11:30 a.m. Free. Members: $5 per person. Non-members: $8 per person. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Monday, June 22

Wild Encounters Story Time. Nature discovery for youngsters. Enjoy a nature-themed story and discover the wonders of nature while exploring fields, forests or landscaped grounds. Dress for outdoor activity. Except in extreme weather conditions, a portion of each class is spent outdoors. For children three to five years old; with a parent or caregiver. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 1 to 2 p.m. Members: $9 per child. Non-member: $12 per child. Every Monday. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Tuesday, June 23

Seniors Pool Party. Westchester County senior citizens annual Pool Party and Barbecue from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Saxon Woods Pool in White Plains. Rain date is Wednesday, June 24. Sponsored by Westchester County Parks and the county's Department of Senior Programs and Services, the pool party is open to Westchester County residents age 60 and older. Seniors are welcome to bring their young grandchildren. Since the pool will not be officially open, seniors and youngsters will have exclusive use of the facility. Saxon Woods also features the “Andy's Place” playground, which is handicapped-accessible for children with special needs and is fun for kids of all ages. From 11 a.m. to noon, barbecued chicken, tossed salad, potato salad, juice and dessert will be available. Entertainment will be provided by the Stolen Moments Band along with a water aerobics and tai chi class presented by Tai Chi School of Westchester. In addition, free rounds of mini-golf will be available. Participants are welcome to bring any additional non-alcoholic beverages. Seating at Saxon Woods Pool is limited; participants are encouraged to bring chairs for seating. Admission and parking for the event are free; Park Passes are not required for this program. Suggested lunch contribution is $4 for seniors and a $4 fee for children. Call the Department of Senior Programs and Services at 914-813-6380 or 914-813-6423 to check on ticket availability.

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White Plains Rotary Teams with Chef Peter Kelly

By Morris Gut

On Wednesday evening, June 10th, The Rotary Club of White Plains teamed with celebrated Chef Peter X. Kelly and his staff creating a special dining experience/fundraiser for the homeless at Grace’s Kitchen in Grace Church at 33 Church Street.

Grace’s Kitchen was beautifully transformed into a formal dining room with candlelight and fresh flowers by Chef Kelly, his brother Ned Kelly, of Ned Kelly & Co, settings, design and party planners located in Piernmont, and staff from Xaviars Restaurant Group. Dubbed ‘An Evening of Extraordinary Hospitality’ guests were offered a tasting of Black Truffle & Green Onion Risotto, or Salad of Locally Raised Hartsbrook Preserve Lettuces. Entrees included: Roast Filet Mignon of Beef, or Wild Sockeye Salmon with Honey & Sake Glaze. And for dessert: Belgian Chocolate Dome, or Classic Red Velvet Cake.

Business and government leaders acted as host and community. “We want to shine the light on this problem right here in our backyard. It was an opportunity to raise funds to feed more needy families in our community.” More than $5,000 was raised to feed the homeless. For further info and future sponsorships contact: Heather Miller at (914-948-6211), or hmiller@rotarywp.org.

Father’s Day Pig Roast at Gaucho Grill. A Sunday Pig Roast and prix fixe menu will be served on Father’s Day, June 21st. One of the most dynamic restaurants in Westchester, this Argentinean/Latin/Italian themed venue always offers vibrant food and atmosphere, casual yet sophisticated. Proprietors Alan Nussbaum and his wife Maria Rubiano are amiable hosts who watch over this sprawling 225-seat multi-faceted establishment with a diligent eye. There are private and semi-private party facilities for up to 80 guests for all types of occasions. The private banquet room is beautifully appointed. Chef Angelo Magnos specialities run the gamut from hefty steaks, classic Italian dishes and beautifully plated Latin favorites. The Technicolor Sunday Buffet Brunch is a sight to behold and enjoy. Daily Happy Hours in the bar/lounge keep things buzzing. Seasonal outdoor deck facing North Broadway. Open 7 days for lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch. Outside catering.

New Chef, Herb Farm and Vintage Wine at Dubrovnik. Partners Jerry Tomic and Nada Bernic of Dubrovnik Restaurant in New Rochelle recently added award winning Croatian Chef Antonio Selendic to their talented staff. And they have given Chef Selendic plenty of larder to work with. From Jerry Tomic’s family winery in Croatia which has been operating for eight generations, comes a recently arrived shipment of Posip Premium Ivan Tomic 2013, a dry medium bodied wine with fruity accents of dried orange peel and dried figs, reverentially honoring Jerry’s late father Ivan Tomic. It is now ready for tasting by the glass and on the wine list. Meanwhile, the herb farm in the rear of the restaurant is growing beautifully. The rear umbrella deck is a wonderful perch overlooking the herbs, tomatoes and grape vines and soothing fountain. You can also watch as the wood burning brick oven is put to use grilling fresh fish and meats. Delightful and delicious! Open 7 days for lunch and dinner. Party facilities. Valet parking. Dubrovnik, 721 Main Street, New Rochelle 914-637-3777. www.dubrovnikny.com

A Great Happy Hour in Tuckahoe.

Proprietor Michael Cuozzo of Tuck’d Away Bar & Grill in Tuckahoe has been marking his first anniversary with a newly updated menu. His Happy Hours, offered Monday through Friday from 3 to 7 p.m.

Menu Movers & Shakers

have become quite popular. Chef Ken Austria’s reasonably priced menu now includes such small plates as bone-in or boneless wings in a variety of new flavors: traditional buffalo, BBQ, honey BBQ, spicy peanut, Tequila lime, teriyaki, honey chipotle, sweet jerk, garlic parmesan, or Thai chili. The wings fly out of this kitchen, and you can mix and match flavors if you like. There is also Mussels, marinara, fra diavolo, or bianco style ($4); Fried Pork Wontons served with Thai Chili sauce ($4); Pretzel Bites served with optional cheese sauce ($5); beef, Tuck’d, chickpea, or BBQ chicken Sliders (2 for $4); and a Spinach Quesadilla, spinach, goat cheese and mushrooms ($5). New individual Thin Crust Pizzas start at $4. You can wash it all down with a selection of Happy Hour cocktails like tap or bottled beer from $3. There is also a Late Night Menu served Sunday through Thursday 10 p.m. to close; Friday and Saturday, 11 p.m. to close. Open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner. Located near Tuckahoe Metro-North. Tuck’d Away, 90 Yonkers Ave., Tuckahoe. 914-222-9162 www.tuckedaway90.com.

Morris Gut is a restaurant consultant and former restaurant trade magazine editor. He has been tracking and writing about the food and dining scene in greater Westchester for over 25 years. He can be reached at: 914-235-6591. E-mail: gutreactions@optonline.net.
Harper’s to Host Prix-Fixe Dinner Paired with Rare Kentucky Bourbon

By Jerry Eimbinder

A special six-course, whiskey-paired tasting dinner will be held at Harper’s Restaurant and Bar in Dobbs Ferry on June 23.

In a collaboration between Harper’s and Pour, a boutique wine bar and eatery in Mount Kisco that also specializes in craft whiskeys and spirits, a prix-fixe dinner will be offered for $500 per person, including gratuity and tax. The event, which gets underway at 7:30 p.m., will be prepared by Harper’s executive chef Chris Vergara. The menu had not been determined as of last week, but Harper’s owner Justin Montgomery said it would be elaborate.

Six different whiskeys from the Old Rip Van Winkle Distillery in Frankfort, Kentucky, will be offered during dinner. Pour owner Anthony Colasacco will be on hand to answer questions about the whiskey.

“The Old Rip Van Winkle Distillery’s bourbon, often called Pappy Van Winkle or simply Pappy, is a cultural phenomenon,” Montgomery said. “Bourbon connoisseurs have long held it up as one of the world’s best, while limited production has ensured that it also is one of the world’s most sought after bourbons.”

According to Garden & Gun, a sporting life and Southern food magazine, “a growing body of aficionados believe (Old) Rip Van Winkle’s aged bourbons to be the finest whiskeys on Earth.”

Julian P. Van Winkle III, president of the Old Rip Van Winkle Distillery, won the James Beard Foundation Award for Outstanding Wine and Spirits Professional in 2011. His grandfather, known as “Pappy,” started the business in the 1870s.

“Bars and restaurants are limited to the amount of Old Rip Van Distillery whiskey they get by allocation,” Montgomery said, “To put it in perspective, we at Harper’s get one bottle each year.”

The six whiskies being offered were obtained for the dinner by partnering with Pour.

“Pour is one of the very few places in the tri-state area that carries the full selection of Old Rip Van Winkle,” Montgomery mentioned.

The whiskies include the distillery’s most famous products — a 20-year, 90.4-proof bourbon Family Reserve and a very rare 23-year-old 95.6-proof bourbon Family Reserve.

The other whiskies are a 10-year, 107-proof bourbon cited for its smoothness; a sweet bourbon recommended as an after dinner drink; one of the oldest rye whiskies available in the marketplace; and a younger version of the 20-year-old bourbon.

Harper’s is named after Rose Harper, Vergara’s colorful great aunt who died in 2010 at 101 years old. She had a long career in marketing and promotion and was a writer and author. Her achievements included writing “Mailing List Strategies: A Guide to Direct Mail Success,” a book published by McGraw-Hill in 1986.

She is said to have consumed at least two glasses of Scotch daily, beginning at 19 and continuing until she was 91. During Prohibition, Harper drank three glasses per day in silent protest. She often ate two bowls of ice cream in a sitting and during much of her life smoked two packs of cigarettes daily. A bit of a fashionista, she had more than 300 hats in her closet.

A unique attraction of the restaurant during its early days was an impressive display of professional chefs knives, including butchering and boning knives and meat cleavers. The display was dismantled when Vergara needed many of the tools for the kitchen.

Vergara attended the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park and cooked at La Panetiere, a French restaurant in Rye, and at Lincoln Center’s Mediterranean restaurant Picholine before co-founding Meritage, an Italian restaurant in Scarsdale, in 2004. He is also the executive chef and a partner at Saint George, a French bistro in Hastings-on-Hudson. Daily specials at Harper’s include a beer and burger on Monday for $18, half-price wine by the bottle on Tuesday, no corkage fee on Wednesday for customers who bring their own bottles and $1 oysters on Thursday. During Happy Hour (5 to 7 p.m.) draft beer and wine by the glass is half-price.

Harper’s has a poured concrete bar, 90 table seats inside the restaurant and an additional 30 on a secluded patio at the back of the restaurant.

It took over the space in Dobbs Ferry previously occupied by Mimosa in December 2010. Meritage replaced Il Cigno in 2004 and Saint George moved into a site formerly occupied for 33 years by Buffet de la Gare in 2013. Harper’s Bar & Restaurant is located at 92 Main St. in Dobbs Ferry. Call 914-693-2306 or visit www.harpersonmain.com for more information.
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EXAMINER SPORTS

The Tradition Continues: Coqueran Family Honors Late Matriarch at Yankee Stadium

By Albert Coqueran

The Coqueran Family once again remembered the late Matriarch of their family Alyce N. Coqueran by gathering at Yankee Stadium to watch a game in her honor.

The Third Annual Alyce N. Coqueran Memorial Game was held on Wednesday, June 10 at Yankee Stadium as 30 members of The Coqueran Family with friends gathered to watch the Yankees play the Washington Nationals.

Alyce Coqueran was a lifelong Tarrytown resident. She who was born in Tarrytown on June 6, 1926 and passed away in Tarrytown on December 29, 2012, at the age of 86.

Members of the Coqueran Family and friends traveled from Maryland, Virginia, Boston, Connecticut and many areas of New York to remember their late mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, aunt, cousin and friend.

It has become a Coqueran Family tradition to assemble at Yankee Stadium during the first or second week of June to honor the late Alyce Coqueran, who was a Yankees fan, as are many members of The Coqueran Family.

The remembrance game in honor of Alyce Coqueran is a function of Ken Gamble's Opening Day at Yankee Stadium. Gamble sponsors the game, as he follows the tradition of his late father Frank Gamble, who had his own Opening Day for family and friends for many years.

Gamble, a native of the Bronx, brings approximately 500 guests to Yankee Stadium each year on Ken Gamble's Opening Day. Gamble's Opening Day is a Y ankees fan, as are many members of The Coqueran Family.

On Wednesday, June 10, The Coqueran Family with friends celebrated the life of the Matriarch of their family with the Third Annual Alyce N. Coqueran Day, at Yankee Stadium. The late Alyce Coqueran, who was a lifelong Tarrytown resident, is remembered each year by her family at Yankee Stadium.

During the fifth inning of the game on June 10, the Yankees paid tribute to the Coqueran family matriarch and displayed “New York Yankees Remember Alyce N. Coqueran” on the Scoreboard.

Coqueran Family's seats to feature them on the Yankee Stadium Pepsi Fan Marquee, during the game.

After the game, 22 members of The Coqueran Family toasted their late Matriarch with dinner at Esposito's Restaurant, on Mamaroneck Avenue, in White Plains to remember her life and celebrate her birthday of June 6.

Alyce N. Coqueran Scholarship Presented at Sleepy Hollow Awards Ceremony

By Albert Coqueran

The 2013 Alyce N. Coqueran Memorial Scholarship was presented to senior Bethany Christian, at the Sleepy Hollow High School Academic Awards Ceremony, on Monday, June 8.

The $700 scholarship award presented by The Coqueran Family in memory of their late mother Alyce Coqueran is to assist a Sleepy Hollow High School student, who is graduating and going to college with expenses and any other financial obligations.

The Alyce N. Coqueran Memorial Scholarship was one of over 100 scholarships presented to achieving students, during the Sleepy Hollow High School Academic Awards Ceremony held in the school’s auditorium.

The Master of Ceremonies for the awards presentations was Sleepy Hollow Principal Carol L. Conklin-Spillane, who was assisted by Assistant Principal Anthony Baxter. Both Conklin-Spillane and Baxter sponsored scholarships of their own as well.

Other scholarships presented at Sleepy Hollow High School, during their Awards Ceremony included: The Tarrytown Seniors Achievement Award, Robin Birrittel Memorial Scholarship, Dave Bridges Rotary Arts Award, The William Burnette Scholarship, Bobby Checchi Memorial Scholarship and over 100 more scholarships were awarded to deserving students.

Sleepy Hollow School Counselor Patricia Bonitatibus is the Chairperson of the Sleepy Hollow H.S. Scholarship Committee.

White Plains Examiner Sports Writer Albert Coqueran (left) and his sister Dr. Adrienne Coqueran (right), the son and daughter of the late Alyce N. Coqueran, presented the Alyce N. Coqueran Memorial Scholarship to senior Bethany Christian (center), during the Sleepy Hollow High School Academic Awards Ceremony, on Monday, June 8.

The New York Yankees also paid tribute to the late Alyce Coqueran, on Wednesday, June 10, by displaying “New York Yankees Remember Alyce N. Coqueran” on the Scoreboard at Yankee Stadium.

Coqueran Family’s Alyce N. Coqueran Scholarship, at Sleepy Hollow Awards Ceremony.

During the fifth inning of the game on June 10, the Yankees paid tribute to the Coqueran family matriarch and displayed “New York Yankees Remember Alyce N. Coqueran” on the Scoreboard.

Yankees cameraman, Mike “Mikey Strikes” Messina made his way to the
Rods and Roast

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