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Tab Hauser/Herald

THE 34TH ANNUAL St Patrick's Day parade is set for March 19. At a past parade, the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians marched with their banner.

Glen Cove looks ahead to St. Patrick's Day parade

By **ROKSANA AMID**
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St. Patrick's Day celebrations are well known for festive green colors, parading the flag of Ireland and enjoying traditional foods like corned beef and hash.

Glen Cove, one of the nation's first Irish-American settlements, is celebrating its heritage with its 34th annual parade. The inaugural event took place March 5, 1989. Since then, the parade has held the first Sunday after St. Patrick's Day. In all its years, it has remained a nonprofit charitable corporation that relies heavily on sponsors and corporate donations.

The Glen Cove parade was established when Dr. Mildred DeRiggi suggested to her

husband, Donald DrRiggi, that the city start their own parade. From there, Donald approached the City Council, and a parade committee was formed. It is a celebration the city looks forward to every year.

"It gets everybody back outside," Lisa Forgiione, the parade's chairwoman, said. "Everybody's happy that day. It's so nice to see. We feel the love and the happiness as we march past everyone."

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated as a national holiday in Ireland, and is a beloved day in the United States as well. It was first observed in Boston in 1737, but has been celebrated in New York City for over 260 years.

"For me, personally, I think there's nothing

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Casey Sabella takes a stand against Santos

By **ROKSANA AMID**
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For over two months, there have been protests calling for the resignation of embattled U.S. Rep. George Santos. Almost every weekend, there are constituents in the 3rd Congressional District furiously chanting outside Santos' Queens office, demanding he take accountability for his falsehoods.

Organizing these calls for change isn't easy, because protests need structure and a clear message. Protest organizer Casey Sabella, a Glen Cove resident and community organizer with Courage for America, has taken the lead.

The 29-year-old political activist has spearheaded dozens of protests in New York as well as a trip to Washington to deliver petitions to Congress demanding Santos' resignation.

"Politics is an avenue to do good work and make people's lives better," Sabella said, "and I fight for the issues I care about."

She helped the constituents of the congressional district amplify their voices. Sabella is

originally from North Canton, Ohio, a suburban town on the edge of rural America. She earned her bachelor's in political science from Eastern Michigan University in 2016, and her master's in communication from Ball State University in 2018.

She made her way to New York in 2019 after responding to a job listing for Ulster County Democratic Party campaign manager. Sabella's responsibilities included managing field operations, interns and fundraising. She moved to Bay Shore to become a field director for

Jackie Gordon during her campaign for Congress in District 2.

In 2022, Sabella began working for Robert Zimmerman's campaign for Congress as his deputy campaign manager.

She was also looking for another place to live. While hosting an event for Zimmerman in Glen Cove, Sabella met Roni Epstein and Glen Cove Councilwoman Marsha Silverman. When Sabella mentioned she needed a new place to live, Epstein said she knew of an

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Casey Sabella

Sabella works to hold Santos accountable

March 9, 2023 – GLEN COVE HERALD

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

apartment for rent. Together, they saw the apartment and Sabella decided to make Glen Cove her new home.

Silverman said she was impressed Sabella was able to recruit so many students for internships with the campaign, who were known as 'Zimterns.'

"I think that's a testament, both to Robert Zimmerman as a candidate, but also Casey as an organizer to generate that motivation," Silverman said.

Silverman said Sabella is an asset to the Glen Cove community because of her political experience and dedication to educating youth about the political landscape.

Zimmerman said that his field campaign was a great source of pride, and that her ability to cultivate youth's interest in politics helped him be nominated.

The race between Santos and Zimmerman set precedents. Both were the first openly gay candidates to compete in a general election. After Santos won, his falsehoods about his career, Jewish heritage and finances were uncovered, leaving many constituents to ask themselves what happens next.

When it came time to organize protests against Santos, Sabella was approached by Courage for America, "a council of proud Americans speaking out against an extremist agenda," according to their website. They knew Sabella for her past experiences manag-



Roksana Amid/Herald

CASEY SABELLA HELPED organize protests on Long Island that drew attention to U.S. Rep. George Santos's falsehoods. Sabella said she hopes to empower youth to have their voices heard in the political landscape.

ing campaigns and her love for New York made her a good fit for the role.

Sabella started planning one protest with the organization a week before

Christmas although she didn't know where her efforts would take them.

"We weren't thinking three months from now we're going to be planning a

bus trip to D.C.," Sabella said. "In that moment, we were like, what George Santos did is wrong, this New York Times article is alarming, and we have to do something."

While organizing the first protest and petitioning outside libraries and grocery stores in the district, Sabella said she saw that many constituents were angry about the election results. And she was surprised that people from different demographics were united over their anger towards Santos.

From there, Sabella established groups on social media to further help her organize and coordinate with constituents who want their voices heard.

"Casey has been essential in terms of keeping the public pressure on Santos and keeping the media pressure on Santos," Zimmerman said.

"She's not there for self-promotion, she's there because of the urgency, both for our congressional district and in the country to see him expelled from Congress."

Sabella said she will continue to protest until Santos resigns or until the end of his term.

"I think what makes Casey so effective and impactful is the way that she's just a very caring person," Zimmerman said. "That's what it takes to succeed and be effective. That's what makes her so relevant to so many people including me. She really is inspiring."

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North Shore High School alums win big at Grammys

By WILL SHEELINE

wsheeline@liherald.com

A Grammy Award is a musician's dream and two alumni of North Shore High School had their dream come true.

Angelo Antinori, class of 2016, and Eileen Zhao, class of 2022, performed with the New York Youth Symphony, which won the 2023 Grammy for Best Orchestral Performance against stiff competition, including Grammy and Academy Award winner John Williams.

The two North Shore alumni contributed to the symphony's Grammy Award, the first of any youth orchestra.

Antinori, a resident of Glen Head has been obsessed with music since his early childhood. A drummer by trade, Antinori was the principal timpanist, or kettle drum player, for the symphony from 2019 to 2021, and is currently finishing his studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Zhao, of Glen Cove, also had an early passion for music. A violinist, she applied twice for the symphony before making it at the beginning of 2020.

Both artists attributed much of their development as musicians to the excellent training they received at North Shore.

"The North Shore High School Music Department has been absolutely incredible," Zhao said. "Having the support of my teachers and peers really helped to develop a lot of confidence in me as well



Courtesy Angelo Antinori



Courtesy Eileen Zhao

PERCUSSIONIST ANGELO ANTINORI and violinist Eileen Zhao, both North Shore High School alums, had their dreams come true at the 2023 Grammys.

as developing my skills as a musician."

"North Shore was a really great nurturing environment for someone who was destined to go into the arts, and I had a really great time there," Antinori said. "I was in almost every single ensemble at the school that needed drums, which helped give me a really wide range of experience."

In the beginning of Antinori's second and Zhao's first years with the symphony, the coronavirus pandemic struck, derail-

ing the orchestral concert season. Not being able to play live music, the group recorded an album showcasing the works of three Black female composers. The album was not released until 2022 due to supply chain issues, leading to their 2023 Grammy nomination and win.

Despite their shared experiences, the two never met. The age difference meant they never interacted while at North Shore High School. The coronavirus pandemic restrictions forced the band to per-

form in different groups over the course of three days.

The Symphony played a combination of Florence Price's "Ethiopia's Shadow in America" and "Piano Concerto in One Movement," Valeria Coleman's "Umoja" and Jessie Montgomery's "Soul Force."

Both Antinori and Zhao highlighted the importance of performing the music, emphasizing the appreciation of diverse voices in a genre that has traditionally focused on composition by white men.

"All of the pieces give some type of commentary, either directly or indirectly, about the African American experience in America and all of the past trauma and generational trauma that comes with it," Antinori said. "We have a long way to go until we live in a country where racism is a thing of the past."

"It's really important that we highlight this aspect of music that hasn't received the recognition that it really should," Zhao added. "It's important that we help empower others and connect with the things that are going on in our world."

North Shore music teacher and orchestra director Jason Domingo, who worked with both while they were students, was not surprised to hear of Zhao and Antinori's success. "They were extremely talented and extremely hardworking," Domingo said. "Both of them were always entirely prepared, and they set the standard for what's possible for high school musicians."

Funding from grant will jumpstart VFW construction

By ROKSANA AMID

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The walls of the Glen Cove James Donahue VFW Post 347 are still charred from a devastating fire from Aug. 2021. The building's floors are bare and warped, and the smell of smoke still lingers at the 101-year-old structure.

Only a few items were salvaged from the blaze. Post Commander, Henryk Nowicki, said much of the post's nostalgic and irreplaceable items were destroyed, including a 10-foot-long wooden VFW emblem that hung on the wall and a painting of the Morgan Park gazebo by a member's daughter. However, firefighters were able to save some memorabilia from the building's first floor.

With the help of multiple fundraising events and contributions from local businesses and elected leaders like Assemblyman Charles Lavine — who recently secured a state grant of \$120,000 — the post may soon be rebuilt.

Lavine said that the damage to the structure was so extensive that he and others thought it could not be salvaged.

"Thanks to this grant, this building will continue to be a jewel for the City of Glen Cove," Lavine said. "We are very, very proud of that and anything we can do to help the veterans who've done so much to help America and protect America, that's a good day in my book."

Lavine said the funds would most likely be allocated through the state's Dormitory



Roksana Amid/Herald

ASSEMBLYMAN CHARLES LAVINE helped secure \$120,000 to help rebuild VFW Post 347.

Authority, which provides construction and financing for public goods.

"I know that the folks in my ways and means division are working hand-in-hand with us and hand-in-hand with the folks from the VFW to make sure that the administration of the grant is done quickly, and the check is delivered quickly," Lavine said.

The funds raised so far will help start the initial phases of rebuilding. Nowicki said they hope to work first on are the building's electric and plumbing systems.

Although a substantial amount has been raised, there is still an ongoing dispute with

the post's insurance carrier. The cost of repairs was estimated at \$400,000, but their insurance policy is offering only \$140,000.

A complete settlement has not been issued and funding to complete rebuilding the post is still uncertain.

Nowicki said the insurance assessed the damage in October 2021, but he hasn't heard from them since the assessment of damages.

The post was erected in 1920, when many of the city's veterans who fought in WWI joined together to build the post. Throughout the century, the building became a testament to the bravery of the city's men and

women who served during times of war. It has also become a staple for local veterans seeking friendship and to ensure the care of veterans and their families.

The post frequently donated use of their space, especially to essential organizations like NOSH. The nonprofit, an extension of the North Shore Soup Kitchen, started because of record-breaking unemployment rates during state mandated lockdowns during the coronavirus pandemic. NOSH have provided emergency food delivery to the surrounding communities but became displaced after the post's fire.

The extensive damages from the flames resulted in a loss of NOSH's equipment and food inventory — thousands of pounds of food, which NOSH founder Christine Rice said was enough to feed the city for two months. The nonprofit also lost their 23 refrigerators and freezers.

After a year of finding temporary places to store their donated food items, NOSH found a permanent home on 32 School St. in Glen Cove in the fall of 2022.

City Councilwoman Danielle Fugazy Scagliola, who also helped to raise funds to help rebuild the post, said she wants to give back to veterans any way she can.

"This is just a small thing that we can give back and I'm really grateful that we're getting to the point where this is now going to come to fruition," Fugazy Scagliola said. "We're going to have a nicer more beautiful rebuilt building for veterans to enjoy and for the community to enjoy."

Rapper indicted for shooting at Glen Cove Mansion

By **ROKSANA AMID**
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Brooklyn-Based rapper Remy Marshall, also known as Fetty Luciano, was indicted on March 3 for a shooting at an exclusive Glen Cove Mansion pool party July 10, 2022. The 27-year-old is allegedly a member of the GS9 group, a hip-hop collective based in New York City.

Marshall was arraigned before Judge Howard Sturm on charges of criminal possession of a weapon, three counts of assault, attempted assault and reckless endangerment. Marshall pleaded not guilty, and bail was continued at \$200,000 cash, \$400,000 bond or \$2 million or a partially secured bond at 10 percent.

He is due back in court on March 31. If convicted of the top charge, he could face a potential maximum of 15 years in prison. Michael Greubel, a senior assistant district attorney of the narcotics, firearms and gangs bureau, is prosecuting the case. Javier Alberto Solano, Esq., is representing Marshall.

Marshall allegedly got into a verbal argument with someone attending the private pool party, and allegedly left the lobby of the Mansion. Seconds later, he

reentered and approached the same partygoer. Marshall allegedly tried to “pistol whip” the individual in the head with a firearm and the weapon discharged, striking three victims with a single bullet. One victim suffered a gunshot wound to the shoulder and the other victims were struck in the leg and elbow. Each were hospitalized and released.

He’s a very well-known individual.

CHRISTOPHER ORTIZ
Glen Cove Deputy Chief

“We identified him the day after the shooting and were actively seeking him,” Glen Cove Deputy Chief Christopher Ortiz said. “He heard we were looking for him. He’s a very well-known individual.”

Helen Whitehead, assistant director of business development for the Mansion, said at a July 12 news conference that the shooter attempted to gain access to the “Big Fendi Celebrity Pool Party,” but was turned away at the door. The party had been advertised on social media and drew between 150 and 250 people.

Glen Cove Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck said the city had denied a permit for the party, but promoters held it anyway.

Two days after the incident, the state Liquor Authority suspended the Mansion’s liquor license and charged it

with 10 violations of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law.

The charges included failure to conform to the application by operating as a nightclub and failure to obtain local permits for an outdoor event with amplified music.

According to the SLA, when police arrived partygoers were running and pushing to leave the building while employees attempted to mop up blood from the crime scene. Patrons, employees and promoters were throwing boxes of alcohol in their cars and driving away.

Two weeks after the Mansion had its

liquor license suspended they announced they reached an agreement with the state. As part of the agreement, their license was reinstated after a \$50,000 fine.

“Thankfully, the defendant’s alleged reckless actions did not cause life-threatening injuries to the victims and no one else was hurt,” Anne Donnelly, Nassau County District Attorney, said. “I thank the Glen Cove Police Department for their work apprehending this defendant leading to today’s indictment.”

Additional reporting by Laura Lane

Suoizzi takes on co-chair for Actum consulting firm

It’s only been a few weeks since Tom Suozzi retired from his longstanding role as a member of the U.S. House, but he’s already opened the next chapter.

Suoizzi has joined Actum LLC as the company’s co-chair, providing strategic advice to clients and the firm’s executive team out of its New York offices.

The company bills itself as a global consulting firm specializing in strategy, management, execution, communications, government relations, storytelling and narrative development, social media, and more. As a former member of Congress, however, Suozzi is barred from lobbying Capitol Hill for the next two years.

The former congressman, Nassau County executive and Glen Cove mayor joins what Actum describes as an impressive bi-partisan roster of former elected officials across the globe that has joined the company since its founding in 2021. They include former Bronx borough president Ruben Diaz Jr., former White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, former Los Angeles mayor Antonio

Villaraigosa, and former U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer.

“Actum’s exceptional capabilities, global reach and unmatched talent have helped it grow into a powerful platform that gets results for clients,” Suozzi said, in a release. “I am thrilled to join this team as a co-chair of its strategic advisory board, and be part of its continued expansion.”

Fabian Nunez — a managing partner for the firm who also is a former California State Assembly speaker — said Suozzi has a well-earned reputation as a pragmatic problem-solver.

“To be joined by someone of his caliber and experience is a testament to the team we have at Actum, and our remarkable growth as a global consulting firm,” Nunez said, in a release.

Suoizzi announced his departure from Congress to run for New York governor in 2022, ultimately losing his challenge to incumbent Kathy Hochul. Before his entry into politics, Suozzi was a trained CPA and attorney. While in Congress, he was a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, and vice chair of the bi-partisan Problem Solvers Caucus.

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Elder law estate planning provides for (1) your care in the event you become disabled as you age, and who will be in charge of that care, and (2) the passing of your assets on death to whom you want, when you want, the way you want, with the least amount of taxes and legal fees possible. These are the five steps to creating such a plan.

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Step Two: Reviewing the Client’s Assets. IRA’s and other “qualified” assets (i.e. tax deferred) are treated quite differently, on death or disability, from “non-qualified” assets. The determination of the amount and value of all assets, who owns them, and whether they have named beneficiaries are of the utmost importance in planning correctly,

including saving legal fees and taxes.

Step Three: Reviewing Existing Estate Planning Documents. Not having been prepared by an elder law attorney, clients’ documents rarely have adequate provisions to take advantage of the many benefits the law provides for our elderly population. Wills instead of trusts have often been prepared either because the client was considerably younger and a trust was not needed or a trust was needed but the general practice lawyer was unfamiliar with the specifics of preparing a trust.

Step Four: Developing the Elder Law Estate Plan. We are now in a position to determine which persons are best suited to handle your legal, financial and medical affairs on disability or death, what type of plan should be used and how the estate should be distributed — keeping in mind the preservation of harmony in the family.

Step Five: Executing and Maintaining the Plan. Legal documents are explained and executed, assets are retitled and beneficiaries on assets changed in keeping with planning objectives. The client is called in to the law firm every three years to ensure the plan meets the client’s current wishes and conforms with any law changes.

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George Santos update

Ethics Committee will investigate Santos allegations

By **ROKSANA AMID**
ramid@lherald.com

The scandal surrounding U.S. Rep. George Santos has propelled him to unprecedented infamy. His numerous falsehoods, and allegations of fraud against him, have united elected officials on both sides of the political aisle in expressing concerns over his seat in Congress. Most recently, New York Reps. Anthony D'Esposito and Marc Molinaro called for Santos to be expelled from Congress.

The House Ethics Committee, which is tasked with investigating and adjudicating any alleged violations of the House rules and reviewing financial disclosure statements, has opened an investigation into Santos's lies, and alleged unlawful acts have come to light on an almost weekly basis since mid-December. An ethics subcommittee has been designated to investigate his campaign violations and allegations of sexual misconduct.

In a House press release, the Investigative Subcommittee stated that it would have jurisdiction to determine whether Santos engaged in unlawful activity during his 2022 congressional

campaign; failed to properly disclose required information on statements filed with the House; violated federal conflict-of-interest laws in connection with his role in a firm providing fiduciary services; and/or engaged in sexual misconduct toward an individual seeking employment in his congressional office.

Rep. David Joyce, a Republican from Ohio, will chair the subcommittee, and Rep. Susan Wild, a Pennsylvania Democrat, will be its ranking member. Reps. John Rutherford, a Republican from Florida, and Glenn Ivey, a Maryland Democrat, will also be on the panel. The committee has issued a disclaimer that its creation does not indicate that any violation has occurred.

"The House Committee on Ethics has opened an investigation, and Congressman George Santos is fully cooperating," his office's Twitter account stat-

ed. "There will be no further comment made at this time."

In an interview with the British television journalist Piers Morgan, Santos admitted to embellishing much of his resume, including his work and education.

"I've been a terrible liar on those subjects," Santos told Morgan on Talk TV. "What I tried to convey to the American people is, I made mistakes of allowing the pressures of what I thought and needed to be done in order to ... this wasn't about tricking anybody."

Although Santos has admitted to fabricating parts of his resume, he has stated on social media that he has had no part in any criminal wrongdoing.

Until the investigation is complete, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy has said, Santos will remain a member of the Republican caucus in good stand-

ing. Santos has said he plans to serve his full two-year term.

There have been questions about Santos's staff as well. Thomas Datwyler, who Santos claimed in late January was his campaign treasurer, stated that his position and title were listed without his consent, and that he never wanted to work for the congressman.

According to CNN, Andrew Olson has been listed as the treasurer of Santos's political committees since Feb. 21, but remains a mystery to local politicians. According to a recent report, Olson is listed as living at the apartment where Santos's sister lived until earlier this year.

Santos remains an outcast among local politicians. ABC7NY reported on March 3 that three Long Island congressional colleagues spoke to 400 people from the business community at a Long Island Association Breakfast, which Santos was not invited to attend.

"He was never given an invitation because, again, we wanted to have this serious discussion, hear from our members of Congress about what they're working on and do it without any distractions," Matt Cohen, Long Island Association president, told ABC7NY.



U.S. Rep. George Santos



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FIRST CENTRAL SAVINGS BANK

Long Island's top real estate pros honored

Hundreds attend annual Real Estate Achievement and Leadership Awards

By ANA BORRUTO
aborruto@liherald.com

The job of someone in real estate goes beyond just helping clients buy, sell or rent properties. For many professionals, it is about the rewarding feeling of finding a person or family's "forever" home, and seeing their faces light up as they walk through the door.

Individuals in the industry often strive to offer listings or create developments with the goal of enhancing a community and providing potential homebuyers with a lifestyle they have always dreamed of.

The importance of community involvement and advocacy could not ring more true in the room of hundreds of real estate titans and visionaries at RichnerLive's second annual Real Estate Achievement and Leadership Awards last week at The Heritage Club at Bethpage in Farmingdale.

Turn the page for all the winners, and more photos!

"Real estate in my blood," said Kevin Law, partner and executive vice president of Tritac Real Estate, and the keynote speaker of the evening. "I care about this island — I am hoping that the things I do can make a difference, and make this region a little bit better to live, work and play."

This year's REAL Awards honored dozens of professionals in residential and commercial real estate, with some proceeds from the event supporting Habitat for Humanity Long Island — a global non-profit organization whose mission is to bring people together to build affordable, environmentally stable homes for those in need.

Jennie Katz, president and owner of Blue Island Homes, said in her 27 years in the business, the room for creativity is what she finds the most exciting as a broker. For example, she and her business partner, Mark Stempel, are planning to collaborate with interior designers and decorators to stage a truck with all of Blue Island Homes's listings.

"I started my own business with Mark 10 months ago, and it was about being creative and doing something different," Katz said. "It's about passion. It's about working really hard and being honest."

Michael Stanco, a licensed real estate broker for the Stanco Misiti team at Compass, talked about his special project, The Residences at Glen Harbor, which received a residential REAL Award at the event.

In the ever-changing housing market, Stanco said it is crucial to provide people with unique living opportunities such as The Residences at Glen Harbor — an alternative option to typical single-family homes.

Anthony Bartone, managing partner of Terwilliger and Bartone Properties, expressed a similar sentiment and discussed his philosophy of mindfulness when introducing projects to Long Island neighborhoods — specifically the environmental impact.

For example, Bartone's organization pledged to only use native plantings in their developments because of the harmful risk invasive plants pose to the soil.

"It's important that we set all this up to the extent we can for our next generation," Bartone said.

The REAL Awards trailblazer Deidre O'Connell — chief executive of Daniel Gale Sotheby's International Realty — grabbed the audience's attention with her inspirational speech about Realtors pushing through pandemic obstacles these last few years.

She also shared some wisdom for the next generation of homebuyers who may feel a bit anxious when it comes to the prospect of living on Long Island. Statistically, people who buy homes accumulate more money at the end — money they would not have if they put it into renting a place, where there is no return.



MARK STEMPEL, CEO of Blue Island Homes, accepts his REAL Award with company president Jennie Katz and Herald Community Media publisher Stuart Richner.



KEVIN LAW, PARTNER and executive vice president of Tritac Real Estate, delivers the keynote address at the REAL Awards.

"You got to get in the game," O'Connell said. "Young people have to start at the bottom if their income isn't going to get them in at the top. Once you're in the game, you appreciate with the market."

The major sponsors of the night included Easy Tax Credits, Tenantbase and Maidenbaum. Blue Island Homes, Coldwell Banker American Homes and E.W. Howell were gold sponsors of the evening.

Silver sponsors included Ackerman Law, Breslin Realty Development Corp., Coldwell Banker Distinctive Homes, Cronin & Cronin Law Firm, Cushman & Wakefield, Daniel Gale Sotheby's International Realty, Douglas Elliman, GLS, Habitat Abstract, Hayduk Engineering, Heatherwood, Japan Schlesinger Narendran, Lipsky Construction, Long Island Board of Realtors, M&T Bank, Property Shark, R&M Engineering, Ruskin Moscou Faltischek, Sahn Ward Braff Koblenz,



DEIRDRE O'CONNELL, CEO of Daniel Gale Sotheby's International Realty, shared her experiences as a trailblazer at the REAL Awards at The Heritage Club at Bethpage in Farmingdale.

SMR, Stanco Misiti Team at Compass, Terwilliger & Bartone Properties, The Gitto Group, Valley Bank, Weatherstone Mortgage Corp.

"Our second annual REAL awards was another huge success," exclaimed Stuart Richner, chief executive of Richner Communications, which created the REAL Awards. "Where else can you find so many individuals and organizations that fuel our local economy? The award recipients are staples in our communities, and their recognition is well-deserved. I am excited to see all that the future holds for Long Island."



Tim Baker/Herald photos



FATHER/DAUGHTER TEAM GILBERT and Tiffany Balanoff, above, were recognized for Gilbert's work with The Law Offices of Gilbert Balanoff, and Tiffany's job as a licensed real estate agent at Douglas Elliman.

MIRIAM HAGENDORN GETS her REAL Award from Stuart Richner, at left, for her work as a licensed real estate salesperson at Serhant.



DAVID KASNER, BRANCH manager of Coldwell Banker American Homes, at left, and Daniel Williams, president of E.W. Howell Construction Group, at right, get their awards from Stuart Richner.



2023 Real Estate Achievement and Leadership Award winners

Residential

The Residences at Glen Harbor

Michael W. Stanco
Stanco Misiti Team at Compass

Gina Marie Bettenhauser

Coldwell Banker Distinctive Homes
Long Island Board of Realtors

Hilary Becker

Becker Realty Services Inc.

Molly Deegan

Branch Real Estate Group

John & Barbara Gandolfo

Coldwell Banker American Homes

Kevin Leatherman

Leatherman Homes

Donna O'Reilly Einemann

Douglas Elliman Real Estate

Luciane Serifovic

Luxian International Realty

Shawn Steinmuller

Shawn Michael Realty

Mark Stempel & Jennie Katz

Blue Island Homes

Helena Veloso

Douglas Elliman Real Estate

Malka Asch

Coach Realtors

Miriam Hagendorn

Serhant

Ricki Noto

Coldwell Banker American Homes

Scott Wallace

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Heatherwood

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Tiffany Balanoff

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Nicholas Ceccarini

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Alex Lipsky

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Cronin & Cronin Law Firm PLLC

Ryan J. Coyne

Serhant

VincePropertyShark

PropertyShark.com

Habitat Abstract



Tim Baker/Herald photos

HUNDREDS OF HONOREES, guests and sponsored enjoyed refreshments and conversation ahead of the second annual REAL Awards hosted by RichnerLive.



Courtesy Le Selfie



Courtesy Le Selfie

HELENA VELOSO, AT center in pink, has fun with the rest of her Douglas Elliman Real Estate team at the selfie booth at the REAL Awards.



BRYAN McCROSSEN, CENTER at top-left, a partner at Jaspan Schlesinger Narendran, joins strategic marketer and financial educator Jesika Kalika in the selfie booth.

JOHN FRASCELLA, MAIDENBAUM'S residential property tax supervisor, was a major sponsor of the REAL Awards.

THOMAS DeLUCA, SENIOR director and real estate broker at Cushman & Wakefield of Long Island – at left –enjoys a moment before receiving a REAL Award of his own.

It all started the moment she raised her hand

By MALLORY WILSON

mwilson@liherald.com

When Randi Shubin Dresner was 8, she raised her hand during a school assembly — and that one action shaped the course of her life.

The assembly, at McVey Elementary School in East Meadow, was focused on the March of Dimes, an organization that works to improve the health of mothers and babies. Representatives were there to talk about an upcoming walk-a-thon, and they asked students if they wanted to serve as school representatives for the event. Shubin Dresner didn't hesitate to raise her hand.

"I raised my hand at 8 years old, and I never put it down again," she said. "I volunteered through my entire childhood at the March of Dimes, as well as a couple of other organizations."

Shubin Dresner, now 62, is the president and chief executive officer of Island Harvest, the nation's largest hunger-relief organization, based in Melville. The food bank has a wide variety of programs to help feed those in need, from children to seniors and veterans.

She started there in 2001, after meeting longtime Island Harvest board member Stuart Richner, chief executive of Richner Communications and publisher of the *Heralds*, in an elevator at a networking event. At the time, Shubin Dresner was working at the Heckscher Museum of Art. She talked to Richner about the possibility of sponsoring an event the museum was having.

"In the time it took to go from one floor to the next, I introduced myself, told him about the organization that I worked with, and almost got him to become a sponsor of the event," she recalled. "He is and was a board member at Island Harvest, and went back to the organization and said, 'I just met this person — you better call her and recruit her to come to Island Harvest.'"

Shubin Dresner said that she turned the job down more



Herald file photo

RANDI SHUBIN DRESNER, chief executive and president of Island Harvest, has worked in nonprofits since she was a child.

than once before deciding to make the switch to the food bank. "It was an interesting mission that I could relate to, and it was a very small organization at the time," she said. "I was encouraged by the fact that the board recognized that there was a lot of growth potential, and the board put a lot of trust in me and my vision for the organization."

Island Harvest wasn't the first time she explored her potential as a leader: Shubin Dresner has been in the nonprofit sector her whole life. In middle school, she started her own March of Dimes chapter in her basement, and recruited her friends.

"I just liked what they were talking about," she recalled. "I liked their enthusiasm, and their excitement about the work they were doing, and I wanted to be part of it."



At 17, she became a full-time employee at March of Dimes. And from there, she never looked back. Before landing at Island Harvest, she spent time at the Viscardi Center, in Albertson, and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, among other organizations. At the National MS Society, she served as executive director of the Nassau County chapter, and at just 23, she transformed it from a failing organization to an award-winning chapter.

"I knew from an early age that this was going to be my career," Shubin Dresner said. "I loved doing fundraising, I loved presenting and talking at groups, and giving back to the community, and creating programs that support that community."

Many of her early career years were shaped by her time at the March of Dimes and the role models she met there — especially the organization's executive director at the time, Lottie Seligman.

"In the mid- to late '60s, there weren't a lot of women in business," Shubin Dresner said. "I watched (Seligman) and tried to model her in my early years of building my career. The women who were the directors and managers at the organization really taught me a lot. I had really incredible women models in my career."

Now, at Island Harvest, she prides herself on the relationship she has with the board of directors, and how much she's been able to involve her family in her lifelong mission of helping others.

"I'm honored to be in this work," she said. "I'm honored to have this opportunity to work at organizations for an entire career that has an impact on changing lives."



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HERALD
Community Newspapers

STEPPING OUT

A sweet time awaits at the *Chocolate* Expo

By Karen Bloom

Smitten by chocolate, and so much more. Temptations await at the Chocolate Expo's latest edition, ready to entice everyone on March 12.

The popular event is back on Long Island to delight chocoholics at its new location — Hofstra University's David S. Mack Sports & Exhibition Complex in Hempstead, for a day-long foodie paradise. More than 80 vendors — representing Long Island, New England and elsewhere, even international purveyors — will share their sweet and savory wares during this unique food-centric festival.

Founder Marvin Baum says this year's event includes many first-time vendors as well as a diversity of offerings — even some for your beloved pooch. As Baum puts it: "People take care of themselves with special treats, so why not let your pet enjoy some, too?"

Visitors can celebrate and indulge in gourmet chocolates, baked goods, specialty items, cheeses, wines, spirits, hard ciders, craft sodas, and much more. Of course tasting is very much a part of it all — starting from the moment you enter. Guests are greeted by fountains overflowing with dark, white and milk chocolates, in which a selection of fresh fruit, marshmallows pretzels and Rice Krispies treats can be deliciously drenched.

"When you go to these festivals, you remember something you tried that you can't get elsewhere," Baum says. "That's what we try to do with this."

Participating chocolatiers offer chocolate bonbons, chocolate bars, raw chocolate, hot chocolate, chocolate fudge, chocolate novelties, chocolate barks and chocolate-covered goodies, chocolate-covered soft pretzels, even chocolate-covered bacon. Cupcakes, brownies, doughnuts, and assorted cakes are showcased along with other gluten-free offerings and other baked goods, while hot cocoa, wine, and hard ciders, and even chocolate moonshine, will be among the craft beverages available for tasting and purchase.



- Sunday, March 12, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Tickets are \$20 adult, \$15 ages 5-12 or \$30 adult, \$15 ages 5-12 at door; available from TheChocolateExpo.com
- Hofstra University, David S. Mack Sports & Exhibition Complex, Hempstead



"We're really excited to be here," Baum says, noting that his chocolate-fest has emerged from the pandemic renewed and re-invigorated. "We love to work with local vendors and support new businesses by introducing people to them."

These include: The Best Goody Bag, a Valley Stream baker of custom birthday cakes and other birthday-related treats; Peace Love & Hot Chocolate, a purveyor of gourmet hot chocolate kits, based in Island Park; Uncle Jeff's Pecan Pies, a Wantagh baker, who's all about pie — pecan pie that defies imagination; and West Hempstead's Sunflower Bake Shop, which specializes in kosher and vegan baked goods.

If your palate reaches sensory overload, take a break for a while and check out some of the many activities that round out the day. Magician Eric Wilzig, of "America's Got Talent" fame, performs two high-energy "extreme" magic shows on the Expo stage. Actor Paris Themmen — who starred as Mike TeeVee in the original "Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory" film — is on the scene to greet guests from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m., plus he does an interview noon, followed by audience Q&A.

Also appearing is chef Francis Legge, a winner of Food Network's "Beat Bobby Flay" and a contestant on Netflix's "Snack vs. Chef," who will do an on-stage demonstration, while Long Island's DJ Chef, who won Food Network's "Cuthroat Kitchen," does his "Beats & Sweets Interactive Cooking Show," combining his passions for food and music. Kids will enjoy face painting and balloon twisting activities in the Kidz Zone, along with chocolate-themed crafts.

Photos courtesy Chuck Fishman

Take your pick. This year's Chocolate Expo is a showcase of scrumptious bites.



The Ugly Duckling

Lightwire Theater brings a classic tale to the modern stage. Since bursting to national acclaim after appearing as semi-finalists on 'America's Got Talent' and winning the top honors on truTV's 'Fake Off,' Lightwire has gone on to enthrall audiences worldwide with their unique combination of skill and grace as told through the technological innovations of moving light characters. In this unforgettable theatrical experience — created with electroluminescent wire — the beloved story of 'The Ugly Duckling' plays out through a cutting-edge blend of puppetry, technology and dance. Ideally suited to kids through Grade 6, all ages will enjoy this innovative re-imagining of the beloved tale, with its dazzling visuals, poignant choreography and creative use of music ranging from classical to pop.

Saturday, March 11, 11 a.m. \$28. Jeanne Rimsky Theater at Landmark on Main Street, 232 Main St., Port Washington. (516) 767-6444 or LandmarkOnMainStreet.org.



The Sicilian Tenors

The Sicilian Tenors bring their dynamic sound to Tilles Center, ready to put their spin on the classics, and so much more. The three classically trained tenors sing their own interpretations of some of the world's best music in this lively evening. It's a journey from Hollywood to Broadway to Italy as these operatic voices perform a wide selection of beloved songs. Combined with light-hearted fun, Aaron Caruso, Elio Scaccio and Sam Vitale put on an appealing show for everyone — all ages and musical tastes. They are a fresh and accessible take on the great Italian musical tradition. Always in demand, their special blend of classic opera and Broadway hits, along with Rat Pack-type shenanigans is a consistent crowd-pleaser.

Saturday, March 18, 8 p.m. \$52, \$42, \$32. Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, LIU Post campus, 720 Northern Boulevard, Brookville. (516) 299-3100 or TillesCenter.org.

THE SCENE



April
1

Willie Nile

The singer-songwriter visits the Landmark stage, Saturday, April 1, 8 p.m. Nestled somewhere between power-pop and American folk you will find Willie Nile strumming his guitar. A true believer in rock n' roll, over the years Nile has made admirers out of Bruce Springsteen and Pete Townshend who personally requested him to tour with The Who, among others who sing his praises. The New York Times called him "one of the most gifted singer-songwriters to emerge from the New York scene in years." Nile shares the stage with James Maddock; their pairing results in an exciting evening of roots rock. \$42, \$36, \$31. Jeanne Rimsky Theater at Landmark on Main Street, 232 Main St., Port Washington. (516) 767-6444 or LandmarkOnMainStreet.org.

March
11

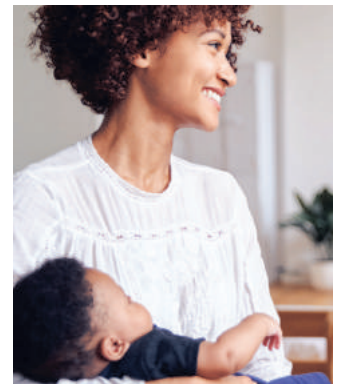
StepCrew

StepCrew brings their Celtic flair to the Adelphi University Performing Arts Center stage, Saturday, **March 11**, 7:30 p.m. The talented cast of dancers and musicians is led by Long Island's Cara Butler and the Pilatzke Brothers, Jon and Nathan. All three are longtime touring members of the acclaimed The Chieftains. The StepCrew boasts Celtic and World music from three world-class fiddle players backed by a five-piece ensemble, featuring three dance styles — Irish, Tap, and Ottawa Valley step dance. Tickets start at \$55, with discounts available to seniors, students, Adelphi alumni and employees. Adelphi University Performing Arts Center, 1 South Ave., Garden City. (516) 877-4000 or Adelphi.edu/pac.

Johnny Mac Band


Enjoy lively tunes with the Johnny Mac Band, Saturday, **March 25**, starting at 8 p.m., at Still Partners. The band is known for their spicy rhythm and blues, phat funk and hot jams, 225 Sea Cliff Ave., Sea Cliff. Visit StillPartners.com for information.

Every
Thurs.



Breastfeeding Support Group

Mercy Hospital offers a peer to peer meeting for breastfeeding support and resources, facilitated by a certified breastfeeding counselor, **every Thursday**, 10:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Bring your baby (from newborn to 1 year) to the informal group setting. All new moms are welcome, regardless of delivering hospital. Registration required. Call breastfeeding counselor, Gabriella Gennaro, at (516) 705-2434 to secure you and your baby's spot. Mercy Hospital, St. Anne's Building, 1000 North Village Ave., Rockville Centre. For information visit CHSLI.org.



PRESENTS

Brain Health Presented By Dr. Kimon Bekelis

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Passport Weekend

Oyster Bay Town Clerk Richard LaMarca's office holds a special one-stop Passport Weekend, **Saturday and Sunday, March 18-19**, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Town Hall North, 54 Audrey Ave., Oyster Bay. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (516) 624-6324.



Book talk

Author David Epstein discusses his most recent book, "Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World," during Gold Coast Public Library's virtual program, Monday, **March 13**, 1 p.m. Register at GoldCoastLibrary.org. For more information, call (516) 759-8300.

Senior Lunch Program

Enjoy visiting friends, with a delicious lunch and chair yoga, at the popular senior program hosted by Mutual Concerns, **every Tuesday**, at Saint Luke's Episcopal Church, at 253 Glen Ave., in Sea Cliff. Those interested in joining the lunch program can call Peggie Como at (516) 675-7239.



On stage

Mo Willems' popular The Pigeon comes alive on the Long Island Children's Museum stage, **Saturday, March 11**, 11:30 a.m.; Thursday and Friday, March 16-17, 10:15 a.m. and noon. Pigeon is eager to try anything. LICM, Museum Row, Garden City. (516) 224-5800 or LICM.org.

Whaleboat Chats

Explore the fascinating history of whaling, **Saturday, April 1**, 11:30 a.m. or 12:30 p.m., at The Whaling Museum & Education Center. Examine the museum's whaleboat, touch a harpoon and more, during the drop-in chat, 301 Main Street, in Cold Spring Harbor. For information, visit CSHWhalingMuseum.org.

Lunch and lecture with Bettina Berch

Examine work of trailblazing female photographers Mattie Edwards Hewitt and Frances Benjamin Johnston, **Saturday, March 25**, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Planting Fields Arboretum. Join author Bettina Berch for a lunch-lecture, at 1395 Planting Fields Road, Oyster Bay. For more information, visit PlantingFields.org.

In concert

Singer-songwriters Kala Farnham and Lara Herscovitch share the bill and swap songs during the monthly Hard Luck Café series, co-presented by the Folk Music Society of Huntington and the Cinema Arts Centre, **Wednesday, March 15**, 7-10 p.m. An open mic precedes the concert, in Cinema's Sky Room, 423 Park Ave., Huntington. \$20. For tickets and information, visit CinemaArtsCentre.org.



'Forever Plaid'

Plaza Theatrical is ready to spring forward with "Forever Plaid," an affectionate musical homage to the close harmony guy groups that reached the height of their popularity

during the '50s, **Saturday, March 18**, 7:30 p.m.; **Sunday, March 19**, 2:30 p.m.; **Thursday, March 23**, 2 p.m. The show features such hits as "Three Coins in a Fountain," "Heart and Soul," "Catch a Falling Star," and "Love is a Many Splendored Thing." It's performed at Plaza's stage at the Elmont Library Theatre, 700 Hempstead Tpke., Elmont. \$49, \$45 seniors. Elmont. For tickets, call (516) 599-6870 or visit PlazaTheatrical.com.



Family theater

Everyone's favorite cat comes to mischievous life in this theatrical adaptation of the Dr. Seuss classic, presented Plaza Theatrical Productions, **Saturday, March 11**, 11 a.m.; **Sunday, March 12**, noon. See what goes on during that rainy day when two siblings are home alone with their pet fish while their parents are out of town, and the tall cat wearing a hat appears. Tickets are \$15. Visit the Plaza stage at The Showplace at Bellmore Movies, 222 Pettit Avenue, Bellmore. For information/tickets, go to PlazaTheatrical.com or call (516) 599-6870.

Having an event?

Items on The Scene page are listed free of charge. The Herald welcomes listings of upcoming events, community meetings and items of public interest. All submissions should include date, time and location of the event, cost, and a contact name and phone number. Submissions can be emailed to thescene@liherald.com.

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1207513

County maps 'not perfect,' but still 'fair'

New legislative districts approved along partisan lines

By ANA BORRUTO
aborruto@iherald.com

After dozens of hearings, months of public input and several heated exchanges among Nassau County lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, a final district map drawing out borders for the 19 legislative districts for the next 10 years has finally passed.

All 11 Republicans of the majority voted for the map, while seven Democratic minority members voted in opposition. For those on the wrong side of the vote, it was a disappointing — but inevitable — end to community members and Democratic officials who have been vocal over their claims of partisan gerrymandering.

“Tomorrow morning, students in Nassau County are going to wake up to a snow day,” Democratic legislator Josh Lafazan said ahead of the region’s first real snowfall of the season. “This legislative body is going to wake up to a lawsuit.

“Our constituents lose tonight, and nobody wins.”

Before the evening vote, some members of the community gathered to express final pleas for the Nassau County Legislature to not approve the map. They claim the map fails to include five majority-minority districts, it violates state and federal voting laws, neglects to consider racial demographics, and dilutes minority votes in communities such as Lakeview and Freeport.

In fact, dozens of Lakeview residents turned up at a previous public hearing sharing stories of their fight for equality and fair representation.

The current map places Lakeview — a predominantly Black community of more than 6,200 people — in a district with predominantly white communities like Malverne, Lynbrook, West Hempstead and East Rockaway.

Scottie Coats said the hearts of her Lakeview neighbor are “hurting” because of this decision.

“I almost went to tears when I saw our hard work being put into a district with Lynbrook and Malverne,” Coats said. “Those people don’t even want us there. They don’t even talk to us.”

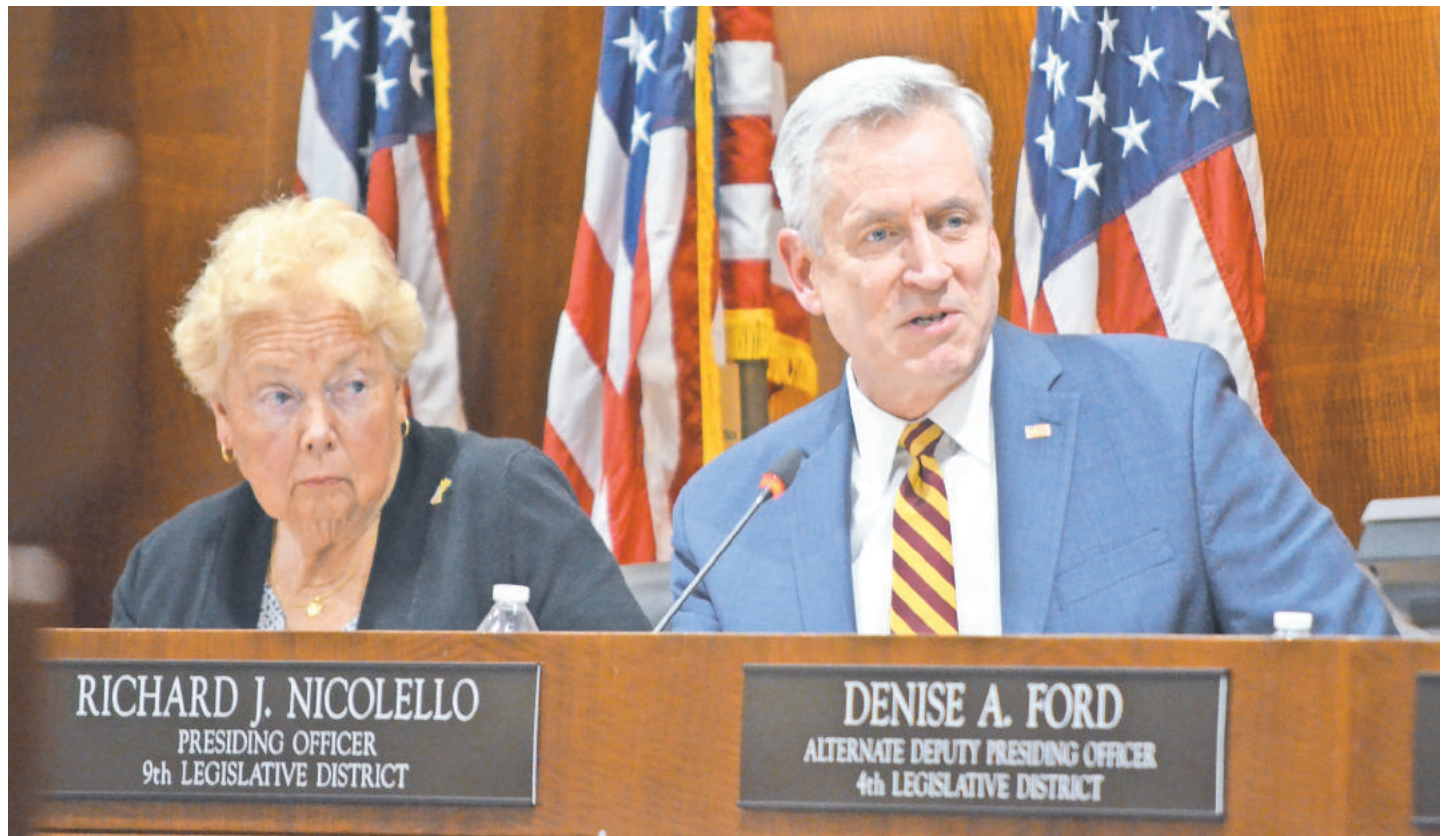
Doris Hicks Newkirk, president of the Lakeview NAACP and former educator in the Malverne school district, said she knows of young Black students who have been told to “go back where they came from,” and called racial slurs.

Lisa Ortiz, one of the founding members of the Lakeview Civic Association, talked about how the Malverne district became the first in the state to be forced into desegregation — more than a decade after the national *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.

For more than 60 years, many representatives of Lakeview and the school district fought to have a street name of a Ku Klux Klan leader removed — only recently accomplishing this feat.

Fast forward to today, the redistricting process is another hurdle the Lakeview community is not backing down on.

“When we think about disenfranchis-



Ana Borruto/Herald photos

NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE presiding officer Richard Nicoletto shared heated exchanges with minority caucus leader Kevan Abrahams over the past few weeks over the new countywide district map. At the final meeting, Nicoletto and 10 other Republican majority members voted in favor of their map, admitting that while it is not perfect, it is fair and protects community interests.



ing — when you think about gerrymandering — you think about making sure that you are silencing a community that has a very, very loud voice,” Ortiz said. “That’s exactly what you’re doing.”

County legislature minority leader Kevan Abrahams called out his Republican colleagues for choosing secrecy over transparency during the redistricting process, especially when it came to the legal fees for the analysis provided by Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders LLP.

“We have the power and the authority tonight to do the right thing,” Abrahams said. “Unfortunately, this map is going to go forward, and this body is choosing to vote for a map that is illegal. None of us want this. I’d rather things get worked out, because ultimately, the lawsuit is

going to cost taxpayers money.”

But presiding officer Richard Nicoletto said numerous changes were made to the map to acknowledge this input. He also admitted not every request was addressed in the final proposal, but in the end, the district lines were considered fair and applicable to state and federal laws.

“Did we make every requested change? No. Is this map perfect? No. But perfection is impossible in redistricting,” Nicoletto said. “This map is a fair map. It provides for equal representation for all our residents, and protects community interests as much as possible.”



SCOTTIE COATS OF Lakeview expresses her anger over countywide district maps at several public hearings before Nassau County lawmakers ahead of them passing a final proposal late last month. For decades, Coats has fought for fair representation in Lakeview, a predominantly Black community placed in a district with Malverne, Lynbrook and East Rockaway.

NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATOR and Democratic minority leader Kevan Abrahams joined his political colleagues voting against a proposed countywide redistricting map last month. The votes weren’t enough, but Abrahams wanted to be on the record for his claims the map represented partisan gerrymandering while violating voting rights protections for minority communities.



PRESENTS

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Blakeman claims a successful first year

By MICHAEL MALASZCZYK

mmalaszczyk@liherald.com

It's been a little more than a year since Bruce Blakeman officially took office as Nassau County executive. Since then, how much has life improved for the nearly 1.4 million people living under his administration?

Significantly. At least according to Blakeman, thanks to his work with the majority party in the Nassau County Legislature. Triumphs Blakeman shared as part of his Feb. 28 State of the County address.

And there was a lot on Blakeman's plate, after taking over for Laura Curran — not all that could be handled at the county level. Inflation. Catalytic converter theft. Support for local businesses. Bringing Nassau out of the Covid-19 era. And challenging some proposals that had made their way down from Albany.

"Our administration increased the boost (of the) Nassau Main Street grants program by an additional \$10 million to support small businesses and keep family-owned businesses in Nassau County," Blakeman said. He also met with professionals and entrepreneurs from a number of communities to begin work on expanding opportunities "for all people so that every community in every person — Black, white, Asian, Hispanic and Latino — share in our county's prosperity."

It is important to invest in local business because Nassau is bigger than 10 states by population, and has a higher gross domestic product than 145 countries, Blakeman said. And there is something in the works that could shake this up even more — the proposed plan to bring a Las Vegas Sands casino to the Nassau Coliseum.

"We are considering this proposal, and I have consistently stated that we would keep an open mind," Blakeman said. But there are conditions.

"It must be world-class, with a luxury hotel and entertainment component," he said. "It must bring significant



Michael Malaszczyk/Herald

IN HIS STATE of the County speech on Feb. 28, Nassau executive Bruce Blakeman praised what he described as a successful first year in office, giving credit to law enforcement and the county legislature for working with him on a number of initiatives to help bring some of his campaign promises to fruition.

revenue to the county and surrounding areas, including construction and permanent jobs. And third, it must have the support of the community."

A cornerstone of the Blakeman administration has been tackling the mass thefts of catalytic converters in Nassau. Some of that concluded in December with "Operation Cat-Track," partnering with Nassau County Police Department commissioner Patrick Ryder to recover \$7 million worth of stolen converters. The operation, Blakeman added, put a significant dent on an organized crime ring responsible for the thefts.

"I especially want to thank Sen. Chuck Schumer for

asking the Department of Justice to help us and send a special response team to mobilize and to help crack down on these thefts," Blakeman said.

While the Republican executive crossed party lines to praise Schumer, he still had some harsh words for Joe Biden, blaming the president's border policies for the current fentanyl crisis.

Democrats closer to home — in his county legislature — took issue with some of what Blakeman said, specifically where the credit should go for the positive direction in the last year.

"While we got off to a very rocky start when the county executive first took office, there has been some progress," County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton said as part of the Democratic response. "I am glad to report that minority-led proposals have been adopted, including a gas tax holiday, (and) tax relief for eligible seniors and disabled homeowners. And just this Monday, property tax exemptions for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers."

However, DeRiggi-Whitton hit Blakeman over the ongoing county tax assessment issue, which remains frozen. Blakeman maintained in the speech that much of the issue with tax assessment is still the fault of the Curran administration, which froze it during the pandemic.

As for fentanyl? DeRiggi-Whitton agreed the crisis must be addressed, but isn't spending time pointing fingers.

"With fentanyl overdoses posing such a major threat, the Minority Caucus has introduced a law which would require low-cost fentanyl detecting strips to be included in every Narcan kit distributed by a county agency," she said of the packages used to help save lives of those suffering opioid overdoses.

"Even though we have seen the potential of this approach in towns, cities and states across the United States, there has been no action by the majority on our proposal to date."

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City ready to celebrate the legacy of St. Patrick

March 9, 2023 – GLEN COVE HERALD

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

that makes me more happy than to be able to march down the streets of Glen Cove as a born Irishman on St. Patrick's Day," said parade treasurer Andy Stafford.

Glen Cove will hold its parade on March 19 at 1 p.m. Parade spectators at this year's event will be treated to an exciting mix of marching groups, including bands of Irish pipers and other musicians, along with vintage cars, costumed performers, fire, and police units and much more.

According to a 1989 issue of the Glen Cove Record Pilot, for the city's first celebration, 35 gallons of green paint was used to augment the yellow lines on the streets along the parade route. Signs proclaiming "Cead Mile Failte," meaning "a hundred thousand welcomes," were on display, commemorating the start of the local tradition.

The celebrations are in honor of Maewyn Succat, who later became the patron saint of Ireland, St. Patrick.

Not much is known about the Britain-Roman saint, but scholars concluded that he was born in the late 4th century, and that he was kidnapped at the age of 16 and taken to Ireland as a slave. He was a slave for six years working in an isolated existence as a shepherd. According to his writings, a voice appeared to him in a dream, telling him it was time to leave Ireland.

It is said that he walked nearly 200 miles from County Mayo, where he was held, to the Irish coast.

After his escape, Patrick apparently experienced a second revelation. An angel appeared in a dream telling him to return to Ireland as a missionary.

Patrick then travelled to modern-day France, where he studied religious instruction under the bishop of Auxerre. After studying for fifteen years, he was ordained as a priest.

When he eventually returned to Ireland to convert the native pagans to Christianity, he did so in such a way to that didn't completely eradicate native beliefs. Since the Irish honored their gods with fire, he used bonfires to celebrate Easter. He also superimposed a sun, a powerful native symbol, onto the Christian cross, creating the Celtic cross.

St Patrick's mission in Ireland lasted approximately thirty years, after which time he retired to County Down. It is said that he died on March 17th in AD 461, and since then, the date has been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day.

The Glen Cove St. Patrick's Day event has become inclusive over the years.

"As the city of Glen Cove has evolved, we've actually had native dancers from various ethnic organizations join because they're part of the fabric of Glen Cove now," Ryan Doherty, the parade's grand marshal, said.



Tab Hauser/Herald

THE McCABE IRISH Dancers wowed spectators during last year's St. Patrick's Day Parade in Glen Cove. Many other groups will take part this year in one of the city's most popular annual events.

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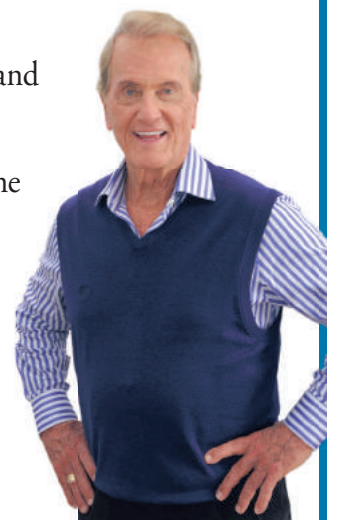
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OPINIONS

The shell game we like to call graduation rates

The good news for the New York State Education Department, and the sobering news for the rest of us, is that state taxpayers remain mostly blinded by educational obfuscations like the high school graduation rate.

The SED released 2022 graduation rates last month, and the percentage of students who collected diplomas on Long Island crept up slightly last year, to 92.6 percent.



**MARK
NOLAN**

Long Island has a higher graduation rate than almost any other region in America. If we were a state, we would have the highest graduation rate in the nation.

“Wow!” you say. “Long Island

schools are second to none!”

Hold on to your mortarboard.

If the graduation rate helps rank schools and compare graduating classes, why complain? It's an easy way to see if your high school did better or worse than last year. It also tells you how your school compares with others.

It's also a remarkably misleading statistic that is sometimes abused for less-than-ethical purposes.

On the surface, graduation rate is simple, determined by dividing the number of students who graduate by the total number of eligible students. But there are all sorts of inside-baseball statistics — such as cohort graduation vs. on-time graduation — that the Education Department, and superintendents around the state, jumble, mix and match in an effort to figure out how to get more diplomas in the hands of teens.

The statistics themselves aren't insidious. Numbers are simply tools. It's the use of the graduation rate to determine school rankings and state funding that makes it so odious. Even worse is what some educators will do to boost the rate.

Ask a high school teacher how many times he or she has been queried by an administrator:

“What does this kid need to graduate?”

“Can we give her extra credit?”

“How many points does he need?”

“He's worked so hard all year — surely there must be something that can be done.”

It's a confidence game. Nudge the numbers, appeal to a teacher's good intentions, and the graduation rate ticks upward.

Floor grades are a neat trick. The

intent of a floor grade — a number that can't dip below 55 or 45, depending on attendance — is to give students a fighting chance to pass a class.

Consider this scenario without a floor grade: A student fails the first two quar-

ters of a class with abysmal grades of 12 and 15 — more common than you might think — so it becomes statistically impossible to pass for the year. The student realizes this, completely gives up, and becomes a discipline problem.

Giving the student a floor grade means that he or she only has to get a grade of 75 for each of the last two quarters to pass the class.

The student sees light at the end of the tunnel, and becomes a model learner.

Alas, crafty students immediately figure out the floor-grade scam. Some students take it as a fall-quarter extension of summer break — while other students bemoan the benefit given to slackers. Floor grades reward laziness and diminish the quality of education needed to graduate.

Floor grades aren't universally used or required, and there are no state or nationwide regulations. Some schools implement them at the end of the marking peri-

od. A grade of 32 miraculously jumps to 55. Other schools prohibit teachers from uploading any grade below 55 for any assignment. A student who does not a jot of work all of September still gets a 55.

See you on the podium in June, Jimmy!

Then there are credit-recovery programs — kids on Chromebooks after school for a few weeks, punching keys to earn class credits — and summer school. Ask a high school administrator what their summer school pass-fail rate is. Derelict students somehow evolve into scholars in the span of six weeks.

Obviously, not every student slacks, not every teacher fudges and not every administrator nudges. But let's be honest about loopholes.

Graduation rate can't measure rigor. Parents largely want their children's diplomas to mean something more than a number. Graduation rate doesn't emphasize philosophy, critical thinking or scientific theory.

So, by all means, toast the graduates this spring with a glass of sparkling cider — and a shot of reality. Not all diplomas are equal, and that graduation rate may be hiding some of your high school's flaws.

Mark Nolan, the editor of the Lynbrook/East Rockaway and Malverne/West Hempstead Herald, taught high school English for 11 years.

They're misleading statistics that are sometimes unethically abused.

Writers will tell the story of our times

In honor of National Reading Day on March 2, I reread Arthur Miller's “The Crucible.” Setting: America, in its earliest days. The settlers of Salem, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, were religious and community-minded, good people who cared for their children and worked desperately to survive in a forbidding environment.



**RANDI
KREISS**

In 1692, these righteous citizens accused, tried and hanged 14 women, five men and two dogs for practicing witchcraft.

Some time ago, I also read Stacy Schiff's “The Witches: Salem, 1692,” a nonfiction history of the time. It has been noted that no his-

torian has ever fully explained what fever possessed the people of Salem. Even Schiff's remarkable history does not answer the question of how the community's paranoia achieved the critical mass that led to hangings.

You know where I'm going with this. We live now in a time of similar group-think and communal delusion. (They nearly hanged Mike Pence!)

In Massachusetts Bay, “eyewitnesses”

offered accounts of teenage girls dancing naked in the woods and reports of broomsticks found high in the trees. Daughters accused mothers and husbands accused wives. Once accused, you either confessed and implicated others, or you were hanged anyway for not telling the truth.

What finally shined a light on that dark summer of 1692, what pried the truth out of the cold foundations of old Salem, was “The Crucible,” Miller's play, which he wrote more than 250 years after the fact.

In writing a work of fiction, Miller revealed the true hearts and minds of the accusers, victims and bystanders. He knew them because he knew human nature, and because he was living through a time of another witch hunt: the great Red Scare of the early 1950s.

Miller was one of the artists accused of ties with communism, and in an essay, “Why I wrote ‘The Crucible,’” he wrote, “The play was an act of desperation.” The accusations of Sen. Joseph McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee, Miller wrote, had “paralyzed a whole generation and in a short time dried up the habits of trust and toleration in public discourse.”

He wrote, “In 1948-51, I had the sensation of being trapped inside a perverse work of art ... in which it is impossible to make out whether a stairway is going up or down. Practically everyone I knew stood within the conventions of the political left of centre; one or two were Communist party members ... I have never been able to believe in the reality of these people being actual or putative traitors any more than I could be, yet others like them were being fired from teaching or jobs in government or large corporations ... The surrealism of it all never left me ... In today's terms, the country had been delivered into the hands of the radical right ... It is always with us,

this anxiety, sometimes directed towards foreigners, Jews, Catholics, fluoridated water, aliens in space, masturbation, homosexuality, or the Internal Revenue Department ... And if this seems crazy now, it seemed just as crazy then, but openly doubting it could cost you.”

Miller's play became a metaphor; even a cliché of that era, when friends betrayed friends and people lost jobs and secret accusations could lead to public humiliation and worse. Miller said that he wrote “The Crucible” because it was what a

Arthur Miller's 1953 play, ‘The Crucible,’ could have been written in 2023.

writer would do to get to the underlying truth of a moment in history. In writing about 1692, he was also writing about 1952.

And now, when we read his play, we are also reading about our time. Once again, America has lost its moorings, and no one can adequately explain or understand 2023, because we are treading water in the midst of it.

We won't have a bead on our own time until the novelists and playwrights create the fictional works that reveal us to ourselves.

Read “The Crucible” again. It speaks to the currents of evil that can sweep away an entire community: irrational fear of “the other,” jealousy, fundamentalist religion, isolation, political manipulation. Miller was writing about Salem and the Red Scare, but he might as well have been writing about Stalin's Russia or Pinochet's Chile, Mao's China or the Khmer Rouge. Or he might have been writing about America today, about QAnon or DeSantis or Trump or Marjorie Taylor Greene, about book bans and racist attacks and antisemitic resurgences.

It is America in 2023. We have run off the rails, again. We need to wait for the novelists and playwrights to find the truth of this moment and bring it to us.

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HERALD EDITORIAL

We must keep government transparent

The middle of March is something many of us look forward to, because it means spring is just around the corner. But this coming week, March 12-18, is known as Sunshine Week. Associations, institutions and organizations connected to journalism will celebrate the initiative to promote open government, which was launched in 2005 by the American Society of News Editors, now the News Leaders Association.

The week coincides with March 16, National Freedom of Information Day, which honors a bill signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1966, allowing members of the public and journalists access to government information in the interest of keeping our leadership transparent.

States across the country have since enacted similar laws, but why is this important? Why should you care?

Because government information is taxpayer-supported, public information, and it belongs to you. Whether it's a public school district, a village, a town, a county, the state, or the nation's highest governing entities, everything said, spent or done there impacts you.

In the midst of the Cold War, with the United States and the Soviet Union locking political horns after World War II, the American government appeared to be suppressing information. That wasn't going to work for John Moss, a newly elected Republican congressman from California. Moss campaigned for increased transparency, but was continuously rebuffed by a government he viewed as acting secretly. People were fired from their jobs and blacklisted for being com-

munists, many without a shred of real evidence.

Moss championed his cause by hosting hearings as chair of a House subcommittee on government information. Support was nonexistent from the majority GOP, but outside Congress, educators, journalists and scientists strongly supported Moss.

Not surrendering, Moss pushed his Freedom of Information Act for over 10 years until, finally, a fellow Republican, Donald Rumsfeld — then a young representative from Chicago — added his name. The act eventually passed in the House and the Senate, and then landed on the desk of Johnson, a Democrat who opposed some aspects of the bill, especially when it came to classified material. Still, LBJ signed the legislation into law on July 4, 1966, making the supposed greatest democracy on Earth the third country to create such a law.

"I sign this measure with a deep sense of pride that the United States is an open society in which the people's right to know is cherished and guarded," Johnson said.

You might live in an incorporated village with a government that includes a board of trustees. You might attend a board meeting at which those trustees vote to spend money to improve a playground. You want to know exactly how that money — your village taxes — will be spent.

You might ask a trustee. Maybe he or she answers your question. Maybe they do not. You want to know more. That is when you can file a Freedom of Information request — the process created by the Free-

dom of Information Act — to obtain that information.

Is it that easy? Usually, yes. Occasionally, however, it becomes a tug-of-war between the government and the party who "FOILs" for the information.

This is what Sunshine Week is about, and why it matters. The information that a government entity possesses does not belong to elected or appointed officials. It belongs to the people they represent.

You.

To promote the message of Sunshine Week, you can write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper — like this one — or help spread the message through social media.

Elected officials, doing their part, could review current public-access laws, introduce legislation to strengthen accessibility to public information, and encourage the training of government employees to help ensure compliance with existing open-record laws.

Grass-roots community organization might organize local forums, sponsor essay contests, or push elected representatives to spotlight the importance of open access to government information.

Teachers can use Sunshine Week to educate students on how government transparency improves their lives and creates stronger communities.

Government transparency was on the mind of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis when he told Harper's Weekly in 1913 that "sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants." Increased openness should be the standard that all government entities strive for. It makes for good governance, and a strong and civil society.

LETTERS

Peter King's return to Washington

To the Editor:

Re Peter King's column last week, "At the Capitol, it was almost as if I'd never left": Mr. King's "bittersweet" tour of his part-time "home" for 28 years is qualified by an expansive "almost."

Since his departure in December 2020, we outsiders have seen members of Congress fleeing the Capitol, election-deniers elected, Marjorie Taylor Greene advocating secession and a national divorce, the meretricious McCarthy spectacle, the frantic shunning of George Santos and the Republican Party's growing angst with its likely nominee. Mr. King apparently did not notice any of this. His visit was a lot like old times, we're told.

Who knew this would be cause for nostalgia?

BRIAN KELLY
Rockville Centre



OPINIONS

The governor's misguided affordable-housing plan

It appears that Gov. Kathy Hochul has made a conscious decision to declare political war on Long Island.

In her proposed statewide mandate to increase the number of affordable homes by 800,000 units over the next 10 years, Hochul seeks to override local zoning control that is directed, in large measure, by the people who live there. For



RONALD J. ROSENBERG

Long Island, home rule defines our region just as much as Jones Beach and rush hour traffic on the LIE. Make no mistake: Hochul's housing plan is taking aim at the Island by imposing a 3 percent increase in affordable housing one way or another.

In an effort to couch it in humanitarian terms, she told the State Legislature, "Housing is a human right." That's bold rhetoric, but in truth, there is nothing in the federal or state Constitutions stating that housing is a basic right guaranteed by government. On the other hand, our state Constitution says, "Effective local self-government" is one of the "purposes of the people of the state." Thus, the governor's intent to allow the state to override local zoning ordinances is contrary

to a basic tenet of our governing document.

If citizens in a democracy wish to support initiatives that provide subsidized housing, then government can invest in efforts such as the New York City Housing Authority. With broken elevators, poorly maintained boilers, lurking crime and other assorted issues, however, you have to admit that NYCHA has proven that government-subsidized housing isn't exactly a panacea. That may help explain why over 30 percent of those renting from NYCHA didn't pay their rent last year.

Hochul had a near-death political experience last fall, when Long Island did not give her a majority at the polls. There are a number of reasons for the Island's antipathy toward her, but one was her earlier call to allow illegal two-family homes to become legal. Yet after retreating from blistering bipartisan opposition to that proposal, she has come back with yet another draconian housing "solution," one driven more by ideology than market forces. Perhaps her call to dismantle local zoning is her punishment for a region where voters found her the lesser candidate.

Nevertheless, in the interest of building a coalition, Hochul has sent Ruth-

Anne Visnauskas, commissioner of New York State Homes and Community Renewal, to meet with Long Islanders in the public and private sectors. In 2017, Visnauskas was appointed president and CEO of the New York State Housing

Finance Agency, the State of New York Mortgage Agency and the State Affordable Housing Corporation. She previously served as Homes and Community Renewal's executive deputy commissioner for Housing Development, the Mortgage Insurance Fund, the Office of Community Renewal and the Office of Faith-Based Community Development Services.

All that is fine, Commissioner, but welcome to Long Island.

Just in case you don't believe our region is specifically targeted in the governor's public agenda, consider the following. Hochul acknowledges that the majority of communities around the state are already hitting or close to achieving her arbitrary affordable-housing targets — except Long Island. For Nassau and Suffolk, she has set a goal of 38,218 new affordable housing units between 2023 and 2025.

This is not to say Long Island doesn't have a housing problem. It does. Far too many municipalities here are shutting

down applications for next-generation housing, creating an unforced exodus of young people who will be needed to power the economy, pay the taxes and build the future. But Hochul's proposed remedy is akin to being held hostage by an Albany now under progressive domination.

If it is passed, it is a certainty that there will be lawsuits, protests and, most important, a response at the voting booths that will jeopardize every elected official who supports the plan. And the political aftershocks will not stop with state and local officials. Much as the issue of crime drove Democrats to cross party lines and vote for Republicans last November, Hochul's assault on the integrity of local zoning may move Long Island voters to overwhelmingly support the Republican who runs against Democratic U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand.

While Gillibrand seems to need a GPS to even find Long Island, she will be within reach of voters who intend to express their seething anger over a Democratic-Progressive agenda that destroys the integrity of suburban home rule. She will be another politician who ruefully discovers that you "don't mess with the Island."

Ronald J. Rosenberg has been an attorney for 42 years, concentrating in commercial litigation and transactions, and real estate, municipal, zoning and land use law. He founded the Garden City law firm Rosenberg Calica & Birney in 1999.

Hochul's draconian housing 'solution' is driven more by ideology than market forces.

LETTERS

**OK, Santos lied.
So does everybody in D.C.**

To the Editor:

I took offense to Rick Herman's letter, "Randi takes on George Santos" (Feb. 23-March 1), asserting that 99.9 percent of the "cuckoos" are Republicans — and I guess he forgot to mention that we're all deplorable and racist.

I feel sorry for Mr. Herman's grandson, who will be influenced by a grandfather who believes that his views are the only ones that matter, and that someone who has a different opinion needs to be silenced and disparaged.

I'm not defending Santos, but politicians, the media, government agencies and the pharmaceutical companies lie to us on a daily basis, so why would Santos think it was a problem to "enhance" his resume? Thankfully, in his case no one died as a result of his lies. We can't say that for some other people in Washington.

For weeks there have been articles in the Herald about Santos. Move on, already. There are a lot more important issues going on in this country (and throughout the world) than Santos lying on his resume. Next election, vote him out.

If you want to start kicking politicians out of office for lying, you might as well start closing the buildings in D.C. There

probably will only be a handful of honest ones left.

BARBARA HALL
Formerly of Glen Cove

**Hochul's budget
takes aim at smoking**

To the Editor:

Gov. Kathy Hochul's 2024 Executive Budget includes critical tobacco-control policies that, if passed, will reduce youth tobacco initiation rates and adult smoking rates, thus ensuring a tobacco-free generation. The elimination of flavored tobacco products from retail shelves is a common-sense action that will greatly improve the health of New Yorkers who continue to use tobacco products.

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in New York. Every year, approximately 4,300 New Yorkers under 18 become daily smokers, with 80 percent of young smokers starting with a flavored tobacco product. Flavored products, including menthol, are enticing to young smokers, and make it more difficult for them to quit once they are addicted to nicotine.

In addition, menthol tobacco products have been disproportionately marketed to Black communities for decades. As a

FRAMEWORK by Tim Baker



Everton Bailey leads the Instrumental Sounds of Praise Youth Ensemble — Hempstead

result, the tobacco industry has profited from the creation of generations of long-term nicotine addiction and devastating health consequences.

Now is the time to take action against Big Tobacco's shrewd and manipulative marketing tactics. I urge the State Legis-

lature to pass the proposed budget and protect young New Yorkers from tobacco-related death and disease.

MAUREEN KENNEY
*Division director, American Lung Association
Hauppauge*

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FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS, Contact
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