



Dems choose Tom Suozzi
 Page 4



Dancer returns to her alma mater
 Page 11



Playing with the best of the best
 Page 12



Kelsie Radzinski/Herald

Giving to the earth during the holidays

Howard Smith helped Allorah Marcedo, left, Eliana Komorov and Anastasia Dressler during a program at Congregation Tifereth Israel's Hebrew school on Dec. 3 create wrapping paper out of recycled materials for their Hanukkah gifts. Story, more photos, Page 10.

Legislator DeRiggi-Whitton will lead Democrats in 2024

By **ROKSANA AMID**

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Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton has been designated by the Legislature's Democratic caucus to serve as minority leader starting next year.

DeRiggi-Whitton, 55, of Glen Cove, won her seventh two-year term representing the Legislature's 11th district with more than 64 percent of the vote in November's election. As caucus leader, she will succeed Minority Leader Kevan Abrahams, who has served in the role since 2012 and is leaving office at year's end after not seeking re-election.

DeRiggi-Whitton's ascension is the latest milestone in her two decades as an elected official. Before she became a legislator, she served for two terms on the Glen Cove City Council, where she earned a reputation as a fiscal hawk and a strident environmental advocate.

As legislator, she helped secure funding for Scudder's Pond — one of the most contaminated bodies of water around Hempstead Harbor due to storm runoff — which will help reduce nitrogen levels in the harbor.

She also helped residents and businesses link up to a new sewage line in Sea Cliff, with reimbursements as high as \$7,500 for their efforts.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Jack O'Neill wanted to 'be a part of something'

By **LAURA LANE**

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Part One of a series.

Jack O'Neill began his days by snorting cocaine. Sometimes the St. John's University freshman would wake up as early as 3 a.m. to do so. Other times at noon. Regardless, his routine was always the same.

"My entire day was focused on using again," recalled O'Neill, now 25. "In the beginning, I was doing a small gram bag of cocaine, and it made me so happy. It made me think about not being judged. If I didn't have the drug, I couldn't function."

children to bring their friends home on weekends, offering their large front porch and backyard for them to gather.

"Ellen always had kids at the house when there was nothing to do in town," said Vicki Walsh, a friend of Ellen's who is an Oyster Bay town councilwoman. "Ellen's house was the one the kids always went to."

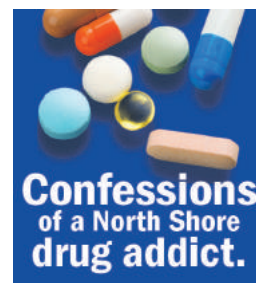
They're a hands-on family."

But as much as Jack liked sports and socializing, he didn't like school. Suffering from anxiety, he found academics difficult. He was granted accommodations, taking his tests in a separate room, where he was given extra time. And he was sometimes pulled out of class to go to resource room, where he would receive additional help, although O'Neill said he never belonged there.

His first day at OBHS wasn't a good one. He hid in the back of his mother's SUV, experiencing what he said was a "full-blown anxiety breakdown."

"At Oyster Bay High School you go in as a seventh-grader, but you see the 12th-graders all

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Something was missing

O'Neill loved sports. He played baseball all four years at Oyster Bay High School, and football, too, until he had two concussions in his sophomore year. The lifelong East Norwich resident never did drugs or drank alcohol, he said, although they were available at parties. And he had many friends.

Jack's parents, Ellen and Jim O'Neill, encouraged their

Will overcome county's 'greatest challenges'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sea Cliff has been dealing with sewage issues for two decades, across five village administrations.

DeRiggi-Whitton also promoted a countywide streetscape project, and said she helped spearhead efforts in both Sea Cliff and Glen Cove to improve the quality of life for residents on Shore Road, with traffic calming measures including radar speed-check devices, a reduction in the number of travel lanes to discourage speeding, and the reconfiguration of on-street parking.

The Democratic caucus, she said, will remain focused on oversight of County Executive Bruce Blakeman's administration; reaffirming the Legislature's role as a coequal branch of government; prioritizing initiatives that will make the county more affordable and protect the environment; preserving public safety; reinvesting in infrastructure; and improving the response to the ongoing opioid crisis.

"Being selected by my colleagues to lead our caucus at such a dynamic time in the history of the Legislature is a tremendous honor, and I am deeply humbled by the trust they have placed in me," DeRiggi-Whitton said in a statement. "I want to thank Nassau County Democratic Committee Chairman Jay Jacobs and my Democratic colleagues for their support and extend my gratitude to my colleague and friend Kevan Abrahams for his guidance and leadership during the last 12 years. I am beyond proud to lead our team into the future, and we are ready to directly confront and overcome Nassau County's greatest challenges."

I am beyond proud to lead our team into the future, and we are ready to directly confront and overcome Nassau County's greatest challenges.

DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON
legislator, Glen Cove

In Glen Cove, DeRiggi-Whitton is a founding board member of the nonprofit First City Project Collective, which seeks to leverage the community-building power of the arts to spark an artistic and economic renaissance downtown. One of the organization's signature events is an annual Toys for Tots drive at Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, which has grown from its roots in Glen Cove to become the charity's largest one-day collection event in the country.

She has also been involved in philanthropic endeavors such as the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation. Since her daughter, Amanda, was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at age 3, DeRiggi-Whitton has been an outspoken advocate for diabetes awareness, treatment and research, and has helped raise well over \$1 million through annual Cooking for a Cure events.

She said she intends to be a "fiscal watchdog," citing concerns about Blakeman's handling of funds from the American Rescue Plan Act and a 2021 opioid-related lawsuit against drug manufacturers and distributors and pharmacies. She believes Blakeman has chosen to put those funds in the county's reserves to avoid the scrutiny of the Nassau County Interim Finance Authority.

"It's really amazing that Mr. Blakeman has chosen not to do anything with it other than hold on to it for his own personal gain," DeRiggi-Whitton said of the funds. "I'm OK with us getting away from NIFA, but not on that idea of holding on to opioid funding."



Courtesy DeRiggi-Whitton

Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton.

Her selection as minority leader will be formalized in January during organizational meetings for the Legislature's 15th term. Under the county charter, the legislator who receives a majority of votes of the body's 19 members becomes the presiding officer, and the runner-up from the opposing party becomes the minority leader.

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O'Neill takes a long trip to hell and back

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the time," O'Neill said. "I was afraid. There was bullying there. Even though I was never hit, it was very intimidating."

At first, he had plans to become a special-education teacher, then a gym teacher. But by the time he was a senior, he no longer wanted to go to college. "I worried I'd have to take standardized tests," he said. "And I felt like I'd have to hide something about myself."

Nonetheless, O'Neill decided to give college a try, and was accepted by St. John's University in Queens. Initially he made many friends there and did well academically. But in the spring of his freshman year, two students in his dorm persuaded him to join a fraternity.

"Two things went through my mind: This seems like a bad idea. But I could be part of something," O'Neill recalled. "I felt like I could be cool and get attention from women."

After being accepted, he moved into a fraternity house off campus. It was September 2018, and O'Neill was beginning his sophomore year.

Finding euphoria in cocaine

At a fraternity party, he was asked if he wanted to do some cocaine. His heart was pounding, O'Neill remembers, but he tried it.

"Immediately I was like, oh, crap, this feels really good," he recalled. "It was immediate

happiness, euphoria. All the anxiety went away. I could care less how thin my arms were, how tall I was. I had done like four or five lines. I went to bed and didn't think anything of it."

The next morning, he went to another party and did more cocaine. The following day, a Monday, he went to another party and did even more.

"I knew I was an addict immediately and it scared me," O'Neill said, "but I was so happy."

On Tuesday he had classes, but when he woke up, he felt horrible. He didn't want to snort any more cocaine, but he realized he needed it. He did a few lines before school, brought more with him to his classes and did it throughout the day.

Everything seemed perfect. Cocaine relaxed him and helped him study and he was doing well in school. But he felt that he needed the drug to succeed.

Then he met someone at a party who was offering free cocaine. He became O'Neill's dealer. His next hurdle was finding the money to feed his habit.

Spiraling downward

In his years at Oyster Bay High, O'Neill always worked, either delivering pizza or as a waiter. He saved practically all of his earnings, roughly \$5,000, to take to college.

"I used up the five grand pretty

I knew I was an addict immediately and it scared me, but I was so happy.

JACK O'NEILL, ADDICT,
East Norwich



Courtesy O'Neill family

The O'Neill family is close, but that didn't stop Jack, far right, from stealing from his father, Jim, far left, to support his drug habit. His brother, Kevin, center, told Jack's drug dealer not to sell him cocaine anymore. The dealer sold Jack Percocet instead.

quickly. In six months it was all gone," he said. "That's when I started asking my mom for money for my frat dues, which I used for coke."

But that wasn't enough money to pay for his habit. O'Neill sold everything he owned on eBay.

"I was a Nike basketball shoe collector all my life," he said. He sold them all. "That still hurts me to this day. But that wasn't enough money, so I started to steal from my parents. I constantly tried to figure out when my parents would be home. I'd look for money stashed, or anything expensive. I figured I'd pay them back later."

He became a recluse, worried that his fraternity brothers would tell his parents how much he was using.

By the spring of 2019, O'Neill no longer attended classes. He didn't leave his bedroom.

"I'd lie to my mom about going to class and playing flag football," he said. "It was one of my favorites things to do,

but I could feel my body not wanting to run. I didn't have a roommate, so I wasn't even hiding my cocaine anymore. I had a padlock on my door."

A former altar boy, he became a compulsive liar, with his top priority being to cover his addiction. That hurt, he said, until he did cocaine. Then it didn't.

In the fall of 2020 he was using more than he ever had. "I didn't care if I lived or died," O'Neill said. "It made me happy."

His fraternity brothers knew he had a drug problem, and threw him out. But they left some of his

things in his room, so he climbed the fence around the building, put up a ladder, climbed onto the balcony and opened the sliding door of his room. Then he sat on the floor, snorting lines of cocaine.

O'Neill was shaking and sweating 24 hours a day, he said, but he couldn't stop using. When he had nothing left to sell, he stole a credit card from his parents,

and charged \$999 to buy cocaine. His parents, who were on vacation, received a fraud alert and called Jack, who told them he had a gambling problem.

"I didn't want them to know I had a cocaine problem," he said. "They changed their credit cards and cut me off. I told my brother I was very sick and just needed a little coke to make me feel better."

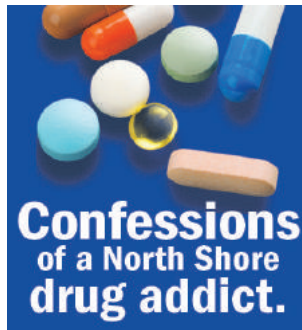
Kevin O'Neill, Jack's younger brother by a year, was also attending St. John's. He went with Jack to meet his drug dealer, and Kevin told him not to sell to his brother anymore, which made Jack angry.

The dealer ignored the angry exchange between the two brothers. He crushed a pill and told Jack to snort it, because it was cheaper.

"Kevin said, 'Don't do it,' but I did," Jack recounted. "I didn't like it more than cocaine, but it got rid of the withdrawal and was only \$30 a pill. I used it for a month, having no idea what was in this pill. I could care less."

A month later, now taking five pills a day, he realized it was fentanyl.

Next week: Part 2.



Suozzi to run in February's special election

December 14, 2023 – GLEN COVE HERALD

By LAURA LANE

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Former Congressman Tom Suozzi of Glen Cove is running again to recapture his former seat on the House of Representatives. He will be the Democrat candidate in a special election, which is required by New York state law to fill the seat in the 3rd Congressional District vacated by Republican George Santos, who was expelled on Dec. 1. The special election will be held on Feb. 13 when voters will have a choice of two candidates, one from each political party. The Republicans have yet to name their candidate.

Suozzi was the congressman for the 3rd Congressional District, which includes the North Shore and parts of Queens, from 2017 to 2023, leaving for an unsuccessful run in the gubernatorial primary, which he lost to Kathy Hochul.

During his six years on the hill Suozzi, a former Glen Cove mayor, and former Nassau County executive, secured millions of dollars for community projects including \$2 million for Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory for its Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Center for Advanced Cancer Diagnostics and \$2 million for Glen Cove Hospital for use in its Geriatric Center of Excellence.

Suozzi, who refers to himself as an environmentalist, increased funding for the Long Island Sound by 1,000 percent,

as well, securing funding for a variety of purposes, including \$300,000 for shellfish seeding.

He said he already knows what he will focus on next if elected.

"The first thing I'll work on is a state and local tax deduction, which isn't a priority anymore," he said. "And I will be more involved in immigration, securing the border. For 40 years this has been going on. We need a bipartisan compromise."

Suozzi has always seen the value of working across the aisle. When in Congress he was a member of the Problem Solvers Caucus — 29 Democrats and 29 Republicans who meet weekly to try and find common ground — and served as the co-vice chair. It is where he built relationships with Republicans, he said. If elected, Suozzi said he will join the group again.

He has already received endorsements from mayors from both parties including Republican Bob Fagiola, the mayor of Lattinatown. Having known Suozzi for decades, Fagiola described Suozzi as rare, someone who is "in it for his constituents, not political gain."

Another Republican, Larry Schmidlapp, the mayor of Centre Island, remembers when Suozzi arranged for a meeting with the mayors from the local villages.

"He asked us about issues that we were dealing with and what he could do

to help," Schmidlapp recalled. "That kind of concern for citizens was unheard of previously. He is great, caring, and available to his constituents. I am with him 100 percent."

But Suozzi will have to address the damage left behind by Santos. Many constituents say they are disheartened, and some are angry that even after Santos was ousted as a charlatan he remained in office. It turned out the political outsider, who had referred to himself as the "full embodiment of the American Dream," was anything but.

A son of Brazilian immigrants, he was the first openly gay Republican to become a congressman as a non-incumbent. That much was true. But his assertions that he had worked on Wall Street at Citigroup and Goldman Sachs as a financier, graduated from Baruch College where he was a volleyball star, was Jewish, had grandparents killed in the Holocaust and a mother who died from a Sept. 11 related illness among so many other fabrications is not.

As further transgressions by Santos were revealed he remained in Congress, even after pleading not guilty to 23 federal charges that included allegations of fraud related to receiving coronavirus pandemic unemployment benefits, misusing campaign funds, lying about his personal finances on House disclosure reports, among other illegalities.

"The whole thing with Santos kinda change my views about politics," Kenny Warren, of East Norwich, said. "I think they should have made him leave in the beginning. They had enough evidence."

Suozzi could see the damage Santos had done in the district. Releasing a statement after Santos was expelled, he tried to offer some hope.

"This is a much-needed step in our journey to repair a broken system," the statement read. "We must move beyond our petty, partisan, performative finger-pointing and address the real problems Americans face. Let's fix this!"

Hopelessness and angst lead to disinterest and disengagement, a threat to democracy, which is one reason why Suozzi decided to run.

"That's a very real concern and I want to work on that because people are so disenchanted," he said. "But you can't



Courtesy Tom Suozzi

Former Congressman Tom Suozzi said people are excited about the Feb. 13 special election where he will be the Democrat's choice.

do it by flipping a switch."

People are concerned about the cost of living, immigration, crime, bad storms, the conflicts in Israel and Ukraine, and the increase in antisemitism and anti-Asian sentiments, he said.

"People has a real sense of dread," Suozzi added. "They look at D.C. as all they seem to be doing is arguing about who is speaker and fighting to keep the government open. It's demoralizing for people. We need to address the real problems people have."

Some residents are relieved that Suozzi is running, like Ingrid Morales, who lives in Oyster Bay.

"People are hurt — they don't know if the next person will do the job," she said. "I'd trust Suozzi. He's been working so long helping people and it's not about him, it's about helping people and doing the right thing. Being trustworthy."

Suozzi had already announced on Oct. 10 that he was filing for a run in the Democratic primary to be held on June 25, 2024. Now he will have an opportunity to take back his seat even sooner, if he wins the special election.

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Book Review:

"Flourish" by Martin E. P. Seligman (Part 2)

For evolutionary reasons, most people are wired to dwell on negative events rather than positive ones. It helped our ancient ancestors survive the far greater and more varied dangers than we face today. As Seligman notes, "So to overcome our brains' natural catastrophic bent, we need to work on and practice this skill of thinking about what went well...every night for the next week, set aside ten minutes before you go to sleep. Write down three things that went well." These may be of varying levels of importance but the "why" is an important element in stimulating gratitude. As the author says, "The odds are that you will be less depressed, happier, and addicted to this exercise six months from now." Professor Seligman describes this and other gratitude exercises that his students report as "life-changing."

Working with psychotherapy and drugs for over forty years, Seligman had never experienced the improvements in mental health that he observed with his positive psychology experiments — all of which led him to the realization of the dirty little secret of drugs and

psychotherapy — they are not about cure, they are about short-term treatments. Not only that, but every drug has the property that "once you stop taking it, you are back to square one, and recurrence and relapse are the rule."

Relieving the patient of suffering misery and negative symptoms — the disabling conditions of life — is not remotely the same as building the enabling conditions of life — to flourish we must have positive emotion, meaning, accomplishment and positive relationships. Seligman found that once he helped a patient get rid of all his anxiety, anger and sadness he never got a happy patient. Instead, he got an empty patient and that is because the skills of flourishing are something over and above the skills of minimizing suffering. Seligman writes "Positive psychology is the study of positive emotion, of engagement, of meaning, of positive accomplishment, and of good relationships. It attempts to measure, clarify and build these five aspects of life...positive psychology is rooted in scientific experience that it works."

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Ktistakis, Zozzaro to serve on City Council

By **ROKSANA AMID**

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The Nassau County Board of Elections has certified the remaining winners in Glen Cove's six-seat City Council race. The votes favor political newcomers Michael Ktistakis, a Republican, and John Zozzaro, who said he is not registered with a political party but ran on the Democratic Party line.

According to the Nassau County Board of Elections, Ktistakis garnered 2,707 of the votes, placing fifth. He is the 30-year operator of All Island Lawn Maintenance in Glen Cove.

"I hope to bring more foot traffic on our city streets," Ktistakis said, "and to work with the youth organizations along with our school district, and City Hall."

Zozzaro, who garnered 2,662 votes, placed sixth. He has owned small various small businesses in the city's downtown with Zozo's Pizza from 1997 to 2001, and the Downtown Cafe from 2003 to 2022. Zozzaro currently owns Pizza Company 7, which he started in 2018.

Zozzaro is one of the board members of the Nicholas Pedone Foundation and has also served as a board member of the Glen Cove Downtown Business Improvement District.

"I want to help people get their voices heard, either through me or helping them to speak up more because I think more involvement is needed," Zozzaro



MICHAEL KTISTAKIS

said. "I'm ready to get to work and start helping everybody in Glen Cove."

Two incumbent Republicans, Jack Mancusi and Barbara Peebles, lost their seats, with Mancusi getting 2,646 votes and Peebles garnering 2,625 votes.

Glen Cove has continued to seesaw between both parties, with Republicans appearing to mostly reverse the Democrats' complete sweep in 2020. The results come two years after Republicans



JOHN ZOZZARO

took over the majority alongside Republican Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck, who was reelected this year.

While Republicans lost their 4-2 majority on the city council, the mayor's vote will still give the party an edge on most city business. The mayor does not vote on the proposed annual city budget.

Council members serve two-year terms and are paid an annual salary of \$10,000.

NEWS BRIEFS

Referendum vote

The Glen Cove Volunteer Fire Department will hold a referendum vote to extend the eligibility for the city's Length of Service Award Program. If the referendum passes, it will increase the number of years in which volunteers can earn service credits from 35 to 50. Every year that they serve, firefighters would have to accumulate 50 credits to qualify for the program, which they can gain by participating in department responses, attending meetings, instructing training courses, drills, sleep-ins and stand-bys, teaching fire-prevention classes, or being elected to officers' ranks.

The referendum vote is scheduled for Dec. 18, from noon to 8 p.m., at Fire Department headquarters, 10 Glen Cove Ave., Glen Cove.

Pictures with Santa

Santa Claus will be spreading holiday magic at the Glen Cove Fire Department. While Santa visits the city's first responders, he welcomes families to take pictures with him. Santa will be available for pictures on Dec. 17 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Fire Department headquarters, 10 Glen Cove Ave., Glen Cove.



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HERALD SPORTS

Hofstra poised to battle for CAA title

By ANDREW COEN

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Despite losing its top scorer off last year's regular season conference championship that pulled off an upset win in the National Invitational Tournament, Hofstra men's basketball has brought back plenty of firepower to make another run at postseason magic.

Aaron Estrada, who won Conference Player of the Year honors his two seasons in Hempstead, transferred to SEC power Alabama for his final year of college eligibility after earning his undergraduate degree at Hofstra. Graduate student guard Tyler Thomas has carried the baton from Estrada, and was leading the nation in scoring at 25 points per game in early December.

"He's our hardest worker and puts in the time it takes to be a great player," said third-year Pride head coach Speedy Claxton, a former NBA point guard who as a collegiate player led Hofstra to a conference title and NCAA Tournament in 2000. "We knew that he was ready for this moment."

Thomas, who transferred to Hofstra from Sacred Heart prior to last season, scored 40 points to go along with eight rebounds in a 97-92 overtime win against High Point on Nov. 22 in the championship game of the Gulf Coast Showcase. He followed that up with 25 points in an 82-63 route against South Florida at home on Nov. 30.

The 6-foot-3 Thomas earned All-Coastal Athletic Association (CAA) First Team honors after ranking second on the Pride in scoring during Hofstra's run last season to a regular season league championship followed by a first round NIT victory at Big Ten foe Rutgers.

Junior guard Darlinstone Dubar has also added a big spark on offense averaging 17.7 points over the first nine games. The All-CAA Preseason Honorable Mention Team selection tallied a career high 30 points in a dominant 102-68 win against Buffalo on Nov. 20.

The offense is quarterbacked by junior point guard Juan Carlos, who has upped



Darlinstone Dunbar has been a steady offensive spark for the Pride, averaging 17.7 points over the first nine games.

his scoring output this season with 18 points in the High Point win and double figures in six other games. He recorded a double-double with 11 points and 10 assists in the South Florida triumph.

"He's a leader and gets everybody involved," said Claxton of Carlos. "They all look to him on and off the court for leadership."

Claxton added plenty of new talent this season including some size inside in 6-10 graduate student Jacco Fritz, who arrived on Long Island after playing 99 games at Canisius College. The Netherlands big man registered 14 points in an 85-76 victory against Wright State on Nov. 2.

The Pride's roster includes two players with local ties in freshman Jayden Henriquez, an East Meadow High School graduate, and sophomore Aiden Best, a Hempstead native and former standout at Lawrence Woodmere Academy.

To prepare his team for what he hopes will be a lengthy postseason run that culminates in the program's first NCAA Tournament appearance since 2001, Clax-



Photos courtesy Hofstra Athletics Communications/Evan Bernstein

Tyler Thomas shot the lights out Nov. 22, scoring 40 points in an overtime victory over High Point.

ton pieced together a challenging non-conference schedule that included a road trip to Duke on Dec. 12. Hofstra will also face St. John's for the first time since the 2009-10 season on Dec. 30 with a noon battle at UBS Arena in Elmont.

"We like playing in these environments," said Claxton, who guided Hofstra to an upset win at 24th-ranked Arkansas in December 2021. "It brings out the best

in them."

The Pride open CAA play Jan. 4 at home against defending CAA champion College of Charleston, who Hofstra knocked off in the teams' lone regular season meeting last year when the Cougars were ranked 18th in the nation. The home conference schedule is also highlighted by a Feb. 1 meeting with Long Island rival Stony Brook.

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Santos' lawyer needs more time to review federal documents

By **ROKSANA AMID**

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In Santos' first court appearance since he was expelled from Congress earlier this month, his attorney, Joseph Murray, argued that bringing the September trial forward while the two parties were in talks to resolve the case would be premature.

Judge Joanna Seybert sided with Murray, saying she would try to move the case "as expeditiously as possible" but that September seemed like the earliest possible date based on her current caseload. She set the next hearing in the case for Jan. 23.

Santos faces a slew of federal charges related to alleged fraud and campaign finance violations, detailed in a pair of federal indictments handed down earlier this year.

Santos, 35, pleaded not guilty to a revised indictment on Oct. 10 that added 10 additional counts. He is now facing 23 charges. Earlier this month Santos became the sixth lawmaker in history to be expelled from the U.S. House of Representatives, a move that left Republicans with a razor-thin majority in the chamber.

In an interview on CBS New York that aired Sunday, Santos said he hadn't ruled out pleading guilty, saying "there's obviously conversations taking place, espe-



Tim Baker/Herald

Former Congressman George Santos, who lied to voters about everything from his wealth, education and family history to being 'Jew-ish' before being elected last year — faces a 23-count indictment that includes allegations of ringing up charges on campaign contributors' credit cards without authorization.

cially after what happened in Congress, and we'll see."

"We should focus on the plea deal. I believe they can be fruitful," Murray told Seybert. He also argued that he found it difficult to keep up with voluminous materials produced by the government during the discovery process.

Santos declined to comment on the case to reporters after his court appearance.



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The one man not laughing over George Santos

By MICHAEL HINMAN

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All eyes — at least in the political world — are on the congressional special election in February to fill the seat that, until last week, was held by the now-expelled George Santos.

“Some candidates have already been floated, like Democrat Tom Suozzi, Republican Jack Martins, and Christophe Misterio, Swiss heir to the Toblerone Chocolate fortune,” late-night host Stephen Colbert said during his “Late Show” monologue Monday night, in front of a doctored picture of Santos with a bushy mustache disguise.

It’s a race that’s now getting laughs. But just a little over a year ago, the contest to replace Suozzi in a district that represents Long Island’s North Shore and parts of Queens was barely noticed, outside of the fact that it’s believed to be the first congressional race in history where both candidates were openly gay.

This was a district — albeit a redrawn one — that Joe Biden won in 2020, and one that had been held by a Democrat since Rick Lazio stepped down in his failed attempt to win a U.S. Senate seat against Hillary Clinton in 2001. It was Robert Zimmerman’s seat to lose, and no one expected that to happen.

But it did. And, at least statistically, it wasn’t even close.

That was a tough loss for Zimmerman, a founder of the Long Island public relations firm ZE Creative Communications. Just weeks later, however, a heavily researched exposé in *The New York Times* would change everything.

There were a number of aspects of Santos’ history that didn’t add up, and *The Times* believed were outright fabrications. Santos didn’t work for the Goldman Sachs investment company. There were no records he attended any of the prestigious schools he claimed, like Baruch College and the Horace Mann School in the Bronx. And it’s likely his net worth was far less than he claimed — to the point where he struggled to pay rent on a simple apartment.

Constituents quickly turned against Santos, and many of his fellow Republicans on Long Island did the same. Many called for his resignation, but Santos brushed it all off. In the meantime, some of the leadership in the U.S. House tried to make Santos as powerless as possible.

“This is all so much bigger than me,” Zimmerman said, at small Great Neck diner he likes to frequent, not far from where Santos’ district office was.

“There’s more at stake than my own hopes and dreams. And for a year now, our congressional district has not had a voice in Congress. We have not had representation. And even as bad as that is, it’s even worse: There was no one there to serve our constituents. And that’s the real travesty of what transpired.”

The race that had ended on Election Day in November really didn’t end after that exposé. Sure, a winner had been declared — and he was seated with the rest of the 118th Congress this past January. But Zimmerman said he was deter-



Courtesy Robert Zimmerman

Robert Zimmerman may have lost to George Santos in his hard-fought congressional race last year, but once the congressman’s fabrications over his life were exposed — he made it his mission to ensure Santos was removed from office, and that confidence in the democratic process was restored.

mined to expose every fabrication offered by Santos, and wouldn’t stop until the congressman was a congressman no more.

“It was a body blow” when Zimmerman lost to Santos, “but I was determined to get off the mat and get back out there. I felt I had an obligation to my values, to the many people who supported me — especially the young people — to get back out there.”

Zimmerman headlined rallies, worked to build a coalition to oust Santos, spread petitions, and talked to reporters whenever he could. Zimmerman also focused his attention on other races, pushing to get fellow Democrats elected.

“I didn’t want them to think I was walking away simply because there wasn’t something for me,” he said. “I wanted them to know I was there for them.”

His phone would ring off the hook from political activists and candidates — but then the people on the other end of the line starting changing dramatically.

“I started getting phone calls — sometimes weekly, sometimes a couple of

times a month,” Zimmerman said.

“They were from so many constituents who weren’t getting a response from Santos — his office — for everything like passport help, or small businesses needing assistance, or senior and veterans needing help.”

Zimmerman convinced some of his old campaign staff to volunteer and help where they could, directing people to the services they needed — something other local congressional members like Anthony D’Esposito and Andrew Garbarino also offered in light of the turmoil surrounding Santos.

“It wasn’t just me,” Zimmerman said. “We had to step up, because the mission of our campaign didn’t end with losing it. In fact, the loss really heightened the importance of what we were doing. It brought us together. It united us.”

Nearly a year and one or two House Speakers later, Santos was kicked out of Congress, and is now reportedly working out a plea deal with federal prosecutors over a number of charges that include wire fraud and identity theft. Gov. Kathy Hochul has ordered a special election race to culminate on Feb. 13.

Democrats have already made their

choice — the last member of the party to hold the seat, Tom Suozzi. Not only has Zimmerman pledged his full backing of Suozzi’s campaign, he didn’t even offer himself as the potential nominee chosen by party leaders.

It’s not that he won’t run again. Zimmerman has long dreamed of serving his country on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives from his days as a Capitol Hill intern. And if the opportunity presents itself, he says he’ll be there. Not just to fulfill his own dreams, but because of what Congress represents.

“People’s confidence in the democratic process was betrayed,” Zimmerman said. “People lost confidence in our democracy. They lost confidence in our system of governance.”

“I used to sit up in the gallery and watch the debates. In those days, in my college years, I never dreamed that a gay kid from Long Island could really be there. But he can. I never stopped believing in our democracy, and we’ll keep fighting to restore confidence in our government, so that many more can dream — and succeed — of being a part of it, too.”

Festival of Lights brightens dark and stormy skies

By **ROKSANA AMID**

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High winds and rain didn't stop the Chabad of Sea Cliff and Glen Cove from celebrating their 22nd menorah lighting on Dec. 10. Despite cold temperatures, the celebration at Village Square was met with enthusiasm, as people danced to music, eagerly waiting to light the menorah, a symbol of hope, resilience, and faith.

The events that inspired the Hanukkah holiday took place during a particularly turbulent phase of Jewish history. Around 200 B.C., Judea — also known as the Land of Israel — came under the control of Antiochus III, the Seleucid king of Syria, who allowed the Jews who lived there to continue practicing their religion. His son, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, was less benevolent, and outlawed the Jewish religion and ordered the Jews to worship Greek gods.

A group called the Maccabees, led by a man named Mattathias and his brothers, revolted against the Hellenistic authorities. By the 25th day of the Jewish month of Kislev — a date that usually falls during December on the Gregorian calendar — this undermanned, untrained group regained control over the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

In the temple, there was an eternal flame that had to remain lit. But when the Jews came into the temple to light the flame, there was only enough oil to



Elisa Dragotto/ Herald photos

Rabbi Sholom Heber spoke of the menorah and its significance to the holiday.

keep it burning for one day. After they lit it, however, a miracle occurred — the lamp remained lit for eight days until the new oil arrived. This is how Hanukkah became known as the “Festival of Lights.”

The menorah lit by the Maccabees in the ancient temple had seven branches — three on each side and one in the middle. The menorahs lit on Hanukkah



Inclement weather didn't stop Rabbi Sholom Heber, left, Rabbi Mendy Heber and Assemblyman Charles Lavine from celebrating the Jewish Festival of Lights.

today have nine branches, four candles on each side for all eight nights of the holiday, and one middle candle used to light the others. The proper term for these nine-branched items is “hanukkiot,” but many people still call them “menorahs.”

This holiday not only observes the rededication of the temple, but also a rededication to God for the Jewish people. Each night of Hanukkah, Jews

light candles in memory of this unforgettable triumph.

Hanukkah usually takes place in December, but the dates change every year. The lunar calendar is shorter than the solar one, so an extra month is added to the Jewish calendar every two to three years to keep the holidays within certain agricultural seasons. This year, Hanukkah began on the evening of Dec. 7 and ends on Dec. 15.

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Making gift wrap out of recycled materials

By **KELSIE RADZISKI**

Correspondent

December is the biggest giving season of the year, and there are ways to give back, not only to loved ones but to the earth as well.

Beth Singer and Howard Smith, designers who develop design-thinking curriculum for kids, held a “Wrap with Scrap” program at Congregation Tifereth Israel for the students in its Hebrew school, Limud, on Dec. 3 to encourage children of all ages to embrace their creativity and resourcefulness. And what better way to do so than to use recycled materials as wrapping paper to package Hanukkah gifts.

“One of the reasons we do this program is because a way to foster innovation is to train the brain to think differently,” Singer explained. “We are hoping that we can train these kids, and as a result their families too, to think about items that they would normally throw in the trash, how they can reuse them.”

The program began with a presentation from Singer and Smith about recycling. They emphasized to the children the importance of reusing materials that would otherwise end up in a landfill polluting the planet, and then went on to explain its relation to the creative project they would be doing.

“We’re going to do crazy wrapping,” Smith said. “Nothing like you’ve ever seen before.”

Singer and Smith had on display examples of previous childrens’ innovative wrapping, including presents decorated with bottle caps, cupcake wrappers and even small toys. Then they encouraged the children to get creative.

“When you wrap with scrap, your package is just as special on the outside



Layla Robbins finished gluing the elaborate wrapping paper that she created in Hebrew class.

as the gift on the inside,” Singer said. “It’s a double gift.”

After the presentation, the children were brought to a large craft room where tables were filled with supplies. There was an abundance of options for them to choose from.

“Strings, paper bottle caps, buttons, candy wrappers, feathers, tchotchkes,

you name it. Anything you’ve ever thrown out is on this table,” Singer said.

The kids were free to explore everything that lay before them and then to begin using their creativity. Singer and

Smith, along with multiple volunteers, walked around the room offering guidance and assistance when needed.

The children were absorbed in their projects, going back to the table to gather more and more materials as they created artistic wrapping paper. Some even included elaborate structures on their packaging.

“The idea is to have kids learn to think ‘Jewishly’ and how helping the world and being environmental is a Jewish value,” Dr. Lisa Aamodt, Limud’s education director, said.

CTI has worked with Singer and Smith on past programs. Another recent program they ran for older students was a lesson on positive graffiti that included having the teens paint a positive graffiti mural in one of their activity rooms. These programs are part of Singer and Smith’s design thinking curriculum.

“Design thinking is a series of problem solving steps not unlike the scientific process where you have a number of steps that lead to breakthrough thinking,” Singer explained.

They started their design business, Beth Singer Design LLC, over 40 years ago creating design thinking lessons for younger children in hope of training their brains to think outside the box.

CTI encourages the design thinking programs and combines them with Jewish principles to further their students’ religious education.

“My motto is teaching children to think ‘Jewishly’ and giving them their own building blocks to build their Jewish identity,” Aamodt said.



Students choose from a wide array of materials for their projects during ‘Wrap and Scrap,’ a program at Congregation Tifereth Israel where children learned how to use recycled materials as wrapping paper to package their Hanukkah gifts.



Noah Edelstein tapes up his Hanukkah gift in recycled tissue paper.

Kelsie Radzinski/Herald photos

Sharing love of dance on the North Shore

By **ROKSANA AMID**

ramid@liherald.com

If you attended the Gold Coast Dance Festival at Morgan Park, enjoyed time at Orkestai Farm in Oyster Bay, or took theatre and dance classes at Long Island University, chances are you've met Nicole Albruzzese, of Sea Cliff. The professional ballerina has helped cultivate the artistic atmosphere that the North Shore is known for.

Now, one year into her role as executive artistic director for the Ohman School of Ballet Albruzzese she will return to the stage as an alumna to usher fans into the world of one of the most complex theatrical, staged ballets, "The Nutcracker."

The 47-year-old has loved dancing since she was 5. Since her parents frequently saw her dancing and singing around their home, Albruzzese's mother followed her maternal instincts and enrolled her daughter in classes at The Ohman School of Ballet, where she began her classical training under the direction of ballet soloist Frank Ohman in 1981.

Albruzzese started her professional career with the New York Dance Theatre at the age of 17 while also on scholarship at Joffrey Ballet School. Her dance career is vast and diverse having performed extensively with Momix and Ballet Hispanico, as well as several regional classical and contemporary companies for a

collective 25 years before shifting her attention toward directing and producing. She's performed on some of the world's most prestigious stages spanning 44 countries across six continents and taught master classes worldwide and was an associate choreographer of the "Dove-Symbol of Peace," featured in the opening ceremonies for the 2014 Sochi Olympics.

Directing the Olympic performance was difficult, but not solely because of the international spotlight. Living accommodations were uncomfortable for international guests, Albruzzese said. Toilets were installed backwards, a food shortage caused weight loss for many of the event's participants, and the Olympic community was aware of the watchful eye of Russian President Vladimir Putin. She remembers sitting in her hotel room, a cup of noodles in hand, realizing that her resilience, experience as a dancer and director prepared her to take on a new role.

"It was the impetus," Albruzzese said about establishing her own company. "It was the exact moment in my life where I said, 'I can go home and do this on my own.'"

In the midst of her years as a full time traveling dancer, Albruzzese craved peace and quiet, and somewhere with lush greenery, a place where she could walk to a village and get to know the community.

"Being on the road was a bit isolating that way," the South Huntington native, said. "Although you do travel with your

community, you don't get to really drop your roots anywhere, but I found those roots in Sea Cliff and in Glen Cove."

Not long after she moved to the North Shore, Albruzzese established Moving On, her own dance company. The company was founded with two objectives in mind: branding through entertainment and "arting" with like-minded individuals. Moving On is best known for their colorful play with fabric, props, costumes, and use of light. Albruzzese said she's always inspired by natural phenomenon and driven to offer unique experiences that challenge the public to unplug and reconnect with one another and the natural world around them. Establishing Moving On helped springboard the Gold Coast Dance Festival, one of the area's most anticipated summer festivals.

"I just wanted people to come together and celebrate each other's similarities through culture," Albruzzese said. "At the heart of culture, you find food, music, and dance, and what's often missing is the dance part."

When she became the artistic director of the Ohman School, Albruzzese knew she wanted to help diversify the world of ballet for youth on a socio-economic level, and reach children who may not be able to afford classes or uniforms. She helped to create Développé, an outreach program initiative and partnership with Hope for Youth on Long Island, which introduces the arts to at-risk youth.



Courtesy Nicole Albruzzese

Nicole Albruzzese will portray Frau Silberhaus in the New York Dance Theatre's rendition of 'The Nutcracker.'

"What it does is offers workshops, performances, free performances, classes, scholarships, mentors, to at risk youth, through our community partners, as well as foster families and young single mothers that are in need," Albruzzese said. "We want to really truly help reach into our communities, to ensure that every child has a shot in this wonderful discipline and community."



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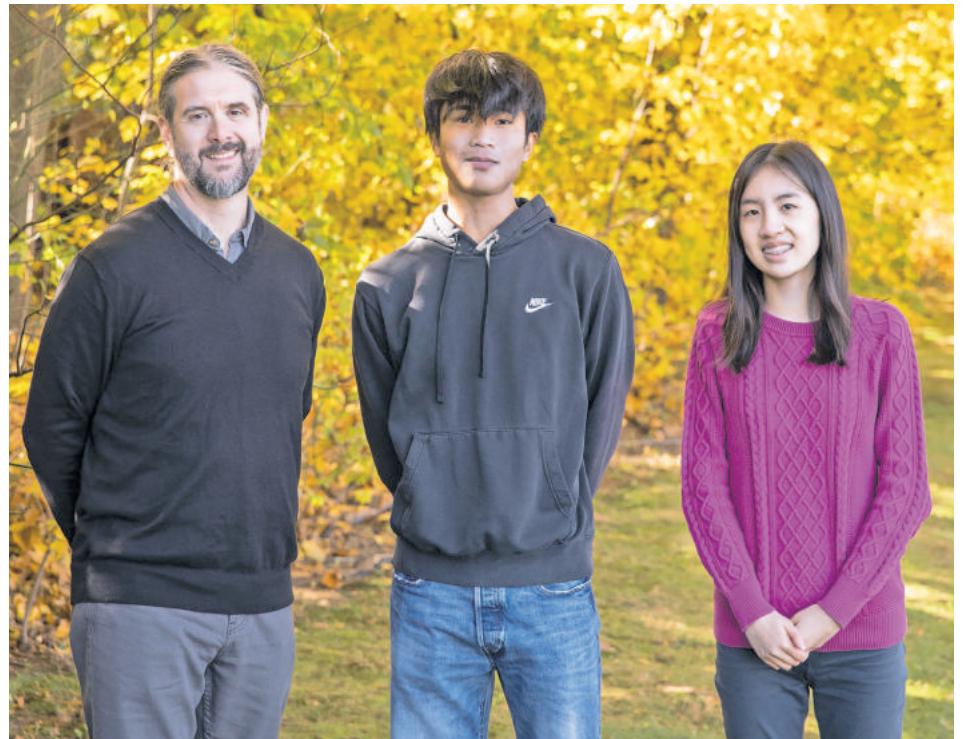
WHAT'S NEWS IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

HERALD SCHOOLS



Photos courtesy Glen Cove City School District

Orchestra teacher Chris Lippe guided Finely Middle School students Mike Merino and Victoria Schnitzer's musical education. Their passion for music led them to join the Long Island String Festival.



High school orchestra teacher James Guarini helped pave the way for Avery Wang and Nicole Lee to join the String Festival Association.

Four Glen Cove students selected for String Festival

Students from Glen Cove City School District were selected for the 2023-2024 Long Island String Festival Association taking place in February 2024. The LISFA experience unites Long Island's highly talented young string musicians. James Guarini, the high school's orchestra teacher, directs Nicole Lee and Avery Wang. Orchestra teacher Chris Lippe guided Finley Middle School students Victoria Schnitzer and Mike Merino.

The Long Island String Festival brings together exceptional string players from Nassau and Suffolk counties school districts to perform challenging orchestral pieces over a few days, culminating in a concert directed by esteemed conductors and educators. LISFA's success is attributed to the dedication of Long Island's string teachers, their talented students, supportive parents, and the quality of conductors who collectively celebrate the power of music.

STEPPING OUT

'Tis the season: 'Tis 'The Nutcracker' The festive tradition always delights

By Karen Bloom

Those sugar plum fairies and various figments of a young girl's imagination charm their way onto local stages. The beloved holiday confection never goes out of style.



Courtesy MCA Photos

The party scene is among the ballet's many dazzling moments.

New York Dance Theatre's 'The Nutcracker'

New York Dance Theatre's 41st season of the holiday classic of "The Nutcracker" — on the John Cranford Adams Playhouse stage at Hofstra University — closely follows the tradition of legenday George Balanchine — from storyline through choreography, sets and costumes.

Throughout the years, Dance Theatre founder Frank Ohman — a former student and soloist under George Balanchine — set his staging after his mentor's iconic Lincoln Center version. The production includes the original Sugar Plum Fairy Pas de Deux by permission of the George Balanchine Trust. In addition, Ohman created original dances and scenes that set his production apart from other local versions.

Through the years, Ohman created original dances and scenes to enhance Balanchine's iconic vision. Now Dance Theatre (and Ohman School of Ballet alum) executive artistic director Nicole Loizides follows her mentor's footsteps in keeping to the Balanchine standard.

New York City Ballet soloist Erica Pereira and principal dancer Daniel Ulbricht are featured as the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier. They join a cast of cast of 80 children, pre-professional and professional dancers to bring the classic story to life.

Children's roles are danced by Frank Ohman School of Ballet students and those at the School of American Ballet (the home school of New York City Ballet).

As an added treat this year, a semi-immersive pre-show experience invites the audience into the Silberhaus home before the curtain rises, with the sights, smells and sounds of the Christmas Eve party that is the setting for the ballet.

Loizides returns to the "Nutcracker" stage for the first time in more than a decade, playing the role of Frau Silberhaus.

This "Nutcracker" season kicks off the company's 50th anniversary on Long Island. "This year's theme is about bringing it home," Loizides says. "We are bringing to light the direction of the school and company as founder Frank Ohman intended. I am rooted in the vision of bringing a new awareness to dance on Long Island — from classical to folkloric to contemporary. Our roots are alive. Our repertoire is expanding. And our outreach is wide. We are bringing new works to life by world renowned choreographers, restaging many of Frank Ohman's classics, and staging works by dance icons including George Balanchine, Antony Tudor, Agnes De Mille and Jerome Robbins."

With the elegant Christmas party scene, the drama of the magical growing Christmas tree, the Battle of the Toy Soldiers and Giant Mice, the live snowstorm, and the brilliant dancing in the Land of the Sweets, this is surely a sparkling production that maintains its enduring appeal.

Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 16-17, noon and 5 p.m. \$45 and \$35 (seniors, children 12 and younger. Hofstra University, John Cranford Adams Playhouse, Hempstead. For tickets, visit OhmanBallet.org, or call (631) 462-0964.

Eglevsky Ballet's innovative 'The Nutcracker'

Long Island's professional dance company, the Eglevsky Ballet, treats families to its inventive staging of Clara at Tilles Center, featuring additional choreography by executive artistic director Maurice Brandon Curry. Curry's interpretation stars starring Boston Ballet principals Ji Young Chae and Jeffrey Cirio Miller as the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier. Also of note, dance celebrity Buddy Casimano joins the cast of more than 60 students and professionals as Dr. Stahlbaum, Clara's father.

The role of Clara is danced by 16-year-old Eglevsky Ballet student Claire Higgins. Claire has been a student at Eglevsky Ballet for the past 10 productions of the holiday classic.

Curry's interpretation is notable for its take on the central first act pas de deux in the prelude to "Waltz of the Snowflakes." Usually performed by a Snow Queen and a Snow King in most productions, in this version, it's Clara and The Nutcracker Prince, who dance to the music (Curry's personal favorite in the ballet).

"Having this pas de deux danced by these two characters intensifies the connection between the two characters," Curry says. "We see the arc of their relationship, and gives the opportunity for Clara's dream to have a more poignant and personal effect on our audiences."

This staging is a vibrant representation of the trajectory in which Curry is leading the organization. Eglevsky has presented "The Nutcracker" as a holiday gift for children of all ages since 1961 — which, according to Curry, makes it the longest, continuously running production on Long Island.

"Eglevsky Ballet has long been known for its approach to this treasured story," he says. "I wanted to delve a little deeper into the characters, and also increase the participation of our incredibly talented academy students with our professional dancers. Also, I've enriched the production with more theatricality and dramatic elements. And with all of this, I have still managed to keep the dancing as the true star of the ballet." As always, the Park Avenue Chamber Symphony, under the baton of maestro David Bernard, performs Tchaikovsky's glorious score.

Eglevsky Ballet is partnering with Birthdays Wishes of Long Island this year, providing a birthday gift and a "Birthday-in-a-Box" for children experiencing homelessness. All who attend are asked to bring an unwrapped toy to donate to the organization.

Saturday, Dec. 16, 1 and 6 p.m.; Sunday, Dec. 17, 2 p.m. \$54-\$84. Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, LIU Post, Route 25A, Brookville. For tickets, visit TillesCenter.org or Ticketmaster.com, or call (516) 299-3100.



Courtesy Liza Voll

The Cavalier and Sugar Plum Fairy are an elegant pair.



Emily King

The soulful pop singer-songwriter visits the Landmark stage on her first solo tour. Emily King has a gift for digging into life's deepest sorrows and uncovering unexpected beauty and illuminating truth. Since the arrival of her Grammy award-nominated full-length debut album 'East Side Story,' the New York City-bred artist has brought ever-evolving levels of depth and nuance to her songwriting, rooting each revelation in her mesmerizing blend of soul, R&B and forward-thinking pop. On her latest album, 'Special Occasion,' King explores the endless dimensions of heartbreak. Her lush vocals serve as the perfect vehicle for her carefully crafted compositions. With pop, rock and those R&B influences, King has quickly become a favorite among fellow musicians and fans alike.

Saturday, Dec. 16, 8 p.m. \$48, \$38, \$33. Jeanne Rimsky Theater at Landmark on Main Street, 232 Main St., Port Washington. (516) 767-6444 or LandmarkOnMainStreet.org.



Home for the Holidays Christmas Celebration

Beloved holiday tunes are combined with a musical cabaret in a joyous spectacle that is the Madison Theatre's holiday concert. More than 45 performers celebrate the 10-year anniversary of this remarkable show, created by artistic director Angelo Fraboni and developed with Bethany Moore. The lively cast includes Molloy University's pre-professional Cap21 Musical Theatre Conservatory students and Broadway performers, along with local kids who celebrate the season with more than 40 songs and dances — all in a fast-paced 90 minutes. Enjoy beloved holiday classics such as 'We Need A Little Christmas,' 'The Most Wonderful Time of the Year,' 'Frosty the Snowman' and 'Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer.' An eight-piece band, led by conductor Aaron Gandy, provides the musical accompaniment.

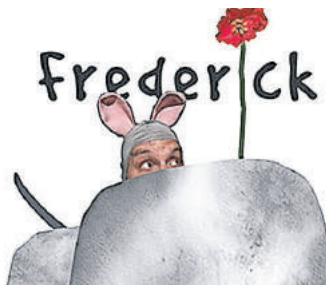
Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 16-17, 2 and 6 p.m. \$4-\$65; also \$85 VIP includes pre-show 'Coco with Santa.' Molloy University, 1000 Hempstead Ave., Rockville Centre, (516) 323-4444 or MadisonTheatreNY.org.

THE SCENE

Dec. 29

Get The Led Out

Get The Led Out rocks out with their tribute to what many consider rock 'n roll's greatest band, in "A Celebration of the Mighty Zep," on the Paramount stage, Friday and Saturday, Dec. 29-30, 8 p.m. From the bombastic and epic, to the folky and mystical, GTLO has captured the essence of the recorded music of Led Zeppelin and brought it to the concert stage. The six veteran musicians who make up the Philadelphia-based group delivers Led Zeppelin live with the all passion and fury these blues-soaked, groove-driven rock anthems deserve. Utilizing the multi-instrumentalists at their disposal, GTLO re-creates songs, in all their depth and glory, with the studio overdubs that Zeppelin themselves never performed. When you hear three guitars on the album, GTLO delivers three guitarists on stage. No wigs or fake English accents, GTLO brings what the audience wants — a high energy Zeppelin concert with honest, heart-thumping intensity with a strong focus on Led Zeppelin's pivotal early years. They touch on the deeper cuts that were seldom, if ever heard in concert. GTLO's approach to performance of this hallowed catalog is not unlike a classical performance. "Led Zeppelin are sort of the classical composers of the rock era," says lead vocalist Paul Sinclair. "I believe 100 years from now they will be looked at as the Bach or Beethoven of our time. As cliché as it sounds, their music is timeless." \$75, \$45, \$30. The Paramount, 370 New York Ave., Huntington. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com or ParamountNY.com.



Family theater

It's a beautiful sunny summer day in the meadow. Leo Lionni's beloved children's books come to life, in "Frederick," on the Long Island Children's Museum stage, Friday, Dec. 15, 10:15 a.m. and noon; Sunday, Dec. 17, 2 p.m.; also Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 20-21, 10:15 a.m. and noon. Mouse friends Nellie, Sunny, Baby, Ernest, and Frederick are playing their musical instruments and having fun singing, until a leaf falls from the sky — autumn is here! Winter will be coming soon. All the mice get to work gathering supplies for winter, except, where is Frederick? He is gathering supplies, too, in his own unique way. With toe-tapping Americana music inspired by bluegrass, gospel, and folk, Frederick is an engaging, energetic story about the power of the arts, community, and that no mouse gets left behind. \$10 with museum admission (\$8 members), \$14 theater only. Long Island Children's Museum, Museum Row, Garden City. (516) 224-5800 or LICM.org.

On exhibit

Nassau County Museum of Art's latest exhibition, "Our Gilded Age," examines the appearances and the realities of an era that mirrors our own in many ways. Like the nation's economy, American art and literature flourished during the Gilded Age. It was an exuberant age of excess with its own secret flaws, including widespread fraud. The art of John Singer Sargent, Childé Hassam, Louis Comfort Tiffany and others adorned palatial residences designed by Stanford White and Ogden Codman Jr., architect of the museum's own quintessential Gilded Age mansion. Drawing heavily upon the local literary history of Long Island, including William Cullen Bryant, Mark Twain (who named the Gilded Age), Walt Whitman, Edith Wharton and others, the exhibition will include paintings, fashion, decorative arts including period silver and china, photographs, manuscripts, first editions and other historic memorabilia. The "Upstairs, Downstairs" approach to the life of a country house brings to life not only the storied conspicuous consumption for which the Gilded Age was infamous, but also the real lives of these many individuals who maintained the palatial estates where that lifestyle was enjoyed. On view through **March 10**. Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Dr., Roslyn Harbor. (516) 484-9337 or NassauMuseum.org.

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Home For The Holidays

Enjoy a rare opportunity to see a stunning and festively decorated Coe Hall in full holiday splendor and spirit, with natural materials sourced from Planting Fields, Saturday and Sunday, **Dec. 16-17**, noon-5 p.m. Experience the magic of the season with holiday music, crafts, activities and more, plus snap a holiday photo with the Grinch! Don't forget to see the Indigenous Tree with ornaments crafted by local students. On Sunday, visitors who wear festive ugly sweaters receive a candy cane. With entertainment by Dave Brown and the Versatiles, and an interactive children's set from Strummin' and Drummin'. Registration required. \$15, \$10 ages 40-12. Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park, 1395 Planting Fields Road, Oyster Bay. For information and to register, visit PlantingFields.org, or call (516) 922-8600.

Santa Run

Sea Cliff Fire Department invites everyone to its annual Santa Run, Sunday, **Dec. 17**. The run starts at Village Hall 10:15-10:25 a.m., moves to Clifton Park from 10:35-10:40 a.m., then the Methodist Church, 10:55-11:10 a.m. and finishes at Sea Cliff School 11:10-11:25 a.m.

Dec. 14

Let's Skate

Get ready to enjoy all the thrills of the snowy season, while staying warm and cozy as Long Island Children's Museum's popular "Snowflake Sock Skating rink returns, now through **Jan. 7**. Slip on "sock skates" and take a spin on the indoor rink, made from a high-tech synthetic polymer surface that lets kids slide around without blades. Kids can stretch, twirl and glide. As visitors step off the "ice" they can jump into winter dramatic play in Snowflake Village. Become a baker in the holiday sweet shop, step inside a giant snowman and serve up some hot cocoa, take a turn in the rink "ticket booth" and "warm up" around a rink side "fire pit." Long Island Children's Museum, Museum Row, Garden City. (516) 224-5800 or LICM.org.



'Scrooge!'

Miserly Ebenezer Scrooge undergoes a profound experience of redemption in Sunrise Theatre Company's production of "Scrooge!," Sunday, **Dec. 17**, noon. Also Saturday, Dec. 23, 11 a.m. Follow along with Scrooge as he learns the true spirit of Christmas in this holiday musical tradition based on Charles Dickens beloved tale. All tickets \$15. Visit the Sunrise stage at The Showplace at Bellmore Movies, 222 Pettit Ave., Bellmore. For information/tickets, SunriseTheatreLI.com or call (516) 218-2782.

Holiday at Westbury House

Old Westbury Gardens' Westbury House offers a festive glimpse of early 20th century holiday merriment, during its final weekend before it closes for the winter, Saturday and Sunday, **Dec. 16-17**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. The "Christmas at Westbury House" celebration reflects what the festive season was like during those opulent decades of the early 1900s when the Phipps family lived there. The period rooms in which John S. Phipps — the eldest son of Henry Phipps, Andrew Carnegie's partner at Carnegie Steel — and his family resided are impeccably decorated with wreaths, mantelpiece drapes, plenty of greenery, and other horticultural arrangements. Take a self-guided tour through Westbury House and view specially decorated rooms for the holidays, have cookies and cider on the West Porch and meet and take photos with Santa while listening to ambient holiday music. The gardens will also be open, along with other special holiday events, including Girl Scouts Chorus, Dec. 16, 1 p.m. \$15, \$13 ages 62+ and students, \$8 ages 7-17. Old Westbury Gardens, 71 Old Westbury Rd., Old Westbury. For information visit OldWestburyGardens.org or call (516) 333-0048.



'Wicked Holiday' concert

Enjoy the season with a trio of Broadway stars, on the Adelphi University Performing Arts Center stage, Sunday, **Dec. 17**, 3 p.m. Alli Mauzey ("Kimberly Akimbo," "Wicked," "Hello, Dolly!"), Jackie Burns ("Wicked," "If/Then," "Hair"), and Sam Gravitte ("Wicked") put a fresh spin on holiday classics along with Broadway hits during "A Slightly Wicked Holiday." Tickets start at \$45, with discounts available to seniors, students, alumni and employees. Adelphi University Performing Arts Center, 1 South Ave., Garden City. (516) 877-4000 or Adelphi.edu/pac.

Holiday Candlelight Tour

Experience how winter holidays were celebrated in Oyster Bay nearly 250 years ago by the Townsends and their neighbors, and those who lived and worked in the family's home, Friday, **Dec. 15**, 5:30-6:30 p.m. A guide dressed in festive finery leads visitors through the evolving holiday traditions, from the simplicity of the Revolutionary War through the opulence of the Victorian era. 30 West Main St., Oyster Bay. Information available at RaynhamHallMuseum.org.

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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Shore Road: Closer to better quality of life

By **ROKSANA AMID**

ramid@liherald.com

Shore Road residents often say they feel their homes shake from passing cars and trucks, and that walking along their neighborhood is dangerous because there aren't as many sidewalks as they'd like. This past year flooding has worsened, leaving many residents to trudge through ankle-deep water. Shore Road residents will see what they will consider a major safety concern upgraded in 2024.

Members of the Nassau County Legislature Rules Committee voted unanimously on Nov. 13 to sign off on funding for traffic engineering services for the expanded Shore Road streetscape, flood mitigation and traffic-calming project in Glen Cove and Sea Cliff. During the Rules Committee public hearing, Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton confirmed that a drainage study will be completed during the next several months as part of a broader scope streetscape project.

"We don't know what's happening with the pipes, and something's happening because it's not draining correctly," DeRiggi-Whitton said. "We have to find out what the problem is before we can address it."

The county has allocated \$2.2 million toward the project in its initial stages. DeRiggi-Whitton urged County officials to proceed with the project as expeditiously as possible. She began the process of securing necessary funding for the initial stages of the streetscape project when members of the Public Works, Finance, and Rules committees of the Legislature voted unanimously to approve \$700,000 in additional bonding for the initial stages of the project in August. The county's Department of Public Works will inspect the outflow pipes and order repairs where they are not functioning properly. The findings will be incorporated into a comprehensive



Courtesy Lora Cusumano

After excessive rainfall, residents of Shore Road frequently walk through ankle-deep water.

drainage study, which will be used to launch the design phase for the approximately \$9 million county streetscape project.

"It's a major problem. The road is now flooding quite regularly, and it's been noted that one of the outflow pipes may have been covered when someone did a sea wall," said DeRiggi-Whitton, who serves on the Rules Committee. "We always knew that drainage would be a part of this project. While it always used to flood, now it's flooding on a whole different level."

Shore Road begins in Glen Cove, coming off Glen Cove Avenue, running along City Stadium Park and turning into the Boulevard at Sea Cliff Beach. Numerous restaurants, homes and businesses line both sides of the

road. Safety concerns became so bad that in 2018, Shore Road resident Lora Cusumano founded the Shore Road Neighbors Group, a Facebook page comprising like-minded residents who came together to affect what they said were desperately needed changes.

But the group has had limited success. Although both the Nassau County and Glen Cove police departments officially monitor Shore Road and had its speed limit reduced from 30 miles per hour to 25, Cusumano says that speeding vehicles, including delivery trucks and other large vehicles, remain a serious problem.

The intersection of Albin Street and Shore Road sees many vehicles rushing to get through. Every day, Cusumano said, she sees near-collisions involving cars that don't come to a full stop. She believes that part of the problem is that some of the motorists are driving down a steep hill. During a typical week, over 15,000 cars travel through the neighborhood. Now, a traffic diet, along with some aesthetic additions like more benches, will be constructed to remind people that they're in a neighborhood and should drive carefully. She said one solution is to narrow the section of the road near Sea Cliff and Tappan beaches.

"Just putting the sidewalks in, which have to be handicap accessible, that in itself is going to narrow the road a little bit, and we're also going to put in designated parking," DeRiggi-Whitton said. "When you're driving, and you see a lane in front of you that's wide and open, subconsciously your mind might say, 'Okay, I'm safe, I can go a little faster,' but when it's a little bit narrower, it kind of sends a signal there's not a lot of space for me to pass so I better slow down."

DeRiggi-Whitton said public forums would be available to residents after engineers make their recommendations. This will give residents more say over how the road should be constructed.

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THE GREAT BOOK GURU

Pet peeves

Dear Great Book Guru,
 What an exciting time of year. Every day seems filled with holiday cheer! I'm looking forward to the Children's Library annual presentation of "The Nutcracker" on Dec. 23 and then of course, the Holiday Duck Hunt on Dec. 30. As always, I'm looking for a good book to have on hand, something short and fast-moving but meaningful.

and especially in her teacher Mrs. Price, a beautifully exotic and charismatic figure.

Justine wishes desperately to be Mrs. Price's "pet," as do all the other girls. When things begin to go missing, and fueled by Price's subtle accusations, suspicion turns to Justine's friend Amy and soon the entire class sees her as the thief.



**ANN
DIPIETRO**

The story takes a very dark turn as rabid racism and misogyny bring tragic results. We are never sure if Justine is a completely reliable narrator, and until the very end, we wonder how the events of 1984 impact her present 2014 existence. A deeply engrossing and disturbing novel with a myriad of moral implications. Highly recommended!

Would you like to ask the Great Book Guru for a book suggestion? Contact her at annmdipietro@gmail.com.

Dear Happy Holiday Reader,

I have the book for you: "Pet," by Catherine Chidgey. It's been on many "must read" lists for 2023. Set in New Zealand, the novel shifts back and forth between two time periods: 1984 and 2014.

Justine Crieve is 12 years old in 1984. Her mother has recently died, and her father and she are grieving in self-destructive ways. She begins to find solace in school with friends

OBITUARIES

Marietta Cipriano, a beloved mother

Marietta Cipriano, 100, of Glen Cove, died on Dec. 6. Beloved wife of the late Marciano; loving mother of Giuseppe, Filippo, Rose, Carmela, Carolina, Michelle, Rochina, Gerardo and Angelina; dear sister of Salvatore D'Ambrosio and pre-deceased by 10 siblings; cherished grandmother of 20 and great-grandmother of 20. Visitation entrusted to Dodge-Thomas Funeral Home of Glen Cove.



MARIETTA CIPRIANO

Enzo Pisano, had a passion for music

Enzo "Salvatore" Pisano, 68, of Glen Cove, died on Dec. 8. He was a stone mason, avid fisherman, and talented bowler, but his true passion was music. Enzo was popular amongst family and friends and was nicknamed the "mayor of Glen Cove." He is survived by five children: Luigi Pisano (Leann), Angelo Pisano, Vincent Ardito, Francesca Pisano, Antonio Pisano (Dominique); grandchildren Liliana, the immediate family.



ENZO PISANO

Peyton, Nicholas and Scarlet Luna; he is loved by his siblings and their children, Guisepppe (Filomena), Rosario (Adele), Francisco, Michele, Alfonso, Teresa Mingione, Anna Mannarino (Rocco), Rena Clarke (David), Maria Mori (Ronnie), and Daniela Berardi (Enzo). Visitation and service entrusted to Dodge-Thomas Funeral Home of Glen Cove. A private burial will be held for

HERALD PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE
 CITY OF GLEN COVE
 BOARD OF ZONING
 APPEALS

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a PUBLIC HEARING will be held by the Glen Cove Zoning Board of Appeals on Thursday, December 21, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers, City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York, when all interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views.

The hearing will be on the application of Steven Grella residing at 6 High Elms Lane, Glen Cove requesting Variances from Sections 280-56 B (6) and 280-45 R (1) of the Glen Cove Zoning Code to construct a new addition on the North side of single-family dwelling. Applicant is proposing a northerly side yard setback of 7.12 feet when the minimum required is 20 ft. The proposed structure also extends above the applicable sky exposure plane.

The subject property is designated on the Nassau County Land & Tax Map as Section 30, Block 73, Lot 04 and located in the City's R-2 Half Acre Residence District. The above application is on file at the city offices located at 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, NY where it may be seen during regular business hours of the usual business days until the time of the hearing.

Dated: November 30, 2023
 BY ORDER OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE CITY OF GLEN COVE
 THERESA MOSCHETTA,
 CHAIRPERSON
 143791

To place a notice by phone at 516-569-4000 x232 or email: legalnotices@liherald.com

LEGAL NOTICE
 CITY OF GLEN COVE
 BOARD OF ZONING
 APPEALS

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a PUBLIC HEARING will be held by the Glen Cove Zoning Board of Appeals on Thursday, December 21, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers, City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York, when all interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views.

The hearing will be on the application of David Nieri residing at 8 Harwood Dr., Glen Cove, requesting a Variance from Section 280-56 B (10) of the Glen Cove Zoning Code to maintain a one-story addition at the rear of a single-family residential premises. The

addition creates lot coverage of 1640.17 sq ft when the maximum permitted is 1500 sq ft, a 1.87% overage. The subject property is located at 15 Cleveland Place, Glen Cove designated on the Nassau County Land & Tax Map as Section 31, Block 014, Lot 02 and located in the City's R-3A One-Residence District. The above application is on file at the city offices located at 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, NY where it may be seen during regular business hours of the usual business days until the time of the hearing.

Dated: November 30, 2023
 BY ORDER OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE CITY OF GLEN COVE
 THERESA MOSCHETTA,
 CHAIRPERSON
 143792

To place a notice here call us at 516-569-4000 x232 or send an email to: legalnotices@liherald.com

LEGAL NOTICE
 CITY OF GLEN COVE
 BOARD OF ZONING
 APPEALS

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a PUBLIC HEARING will be held by the Glen Cove Zoning Board of Appeals on Thursday, December 21, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers, City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York, when all interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views.

The hearing will be on the application of Todd Robbins on behalf of North Shore Day Camp requesting a Variance from Section 280-54 C (8) of the Glen Cove Zoning Code to construct a single-story open pavilion over an existing picnic area. The proposed location for the pavilion is 50 ft from the front yard property line along Crescent Beach Road where no structure shall be closer than 100 ft from any street or lot line.

The subject property is located at 85 Crescent Beach Road, Glen Cove, designated on the Nassau County Land & Tax Map as Section 31 Block 47, Lots 412,413,415,416 and located in the City's R-1A Two Acre Residential District.

The above application is on file at the city offices located at 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, NY where it may be seen during regular business hours of the usual business days until the time of the hearing.

Dated: November 30, 2023

BY ORDER OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE CITY OF GLEN COVE
 THERESA MOSCHETTA,
 CHAIRPERSON
 143793

LEGAL NOTICE

Kindergarten Registration for Kindergarten will begin on January 2, 2024.

Registration packets are available at the following locations:

Full Day Pre-Kindergarten Registration for Pre-Kindergarten will begin on February 5, 2024.

For both Kindergarten and Pre-K registration: Photo ID, proof of residency, and proof of child's age should be attached with the registration packet.

Please have all forms in the registration packet completely filled out.

Drop off completed registration packets with required documentation at our District Office (Thayer House) located at 154 Dosoris Lane during business hours Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Summer hours during July and August are 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.) Please call (516) 801-7008 with any questions you may have.

To enter Kindergarten, children must be five years old on or before December 1 of the school year.

Glen Cove School Website - Our District, Central Office, Registration

District Office (Thayer House) located at 154 Dosoris Lane

School buildings

To enter Pre-kindergarten, children must be four (4) years old on or before December 1 of the school year.

Transportation will not be provided for Pre-K students.
 143788

LEGAL NOTICE
 CITY OF GLEN COVE
 PLANNING BOARD

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a PUBLIC HEARING will be held by the City of Glen Cove Planning Board on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at 7:30 p.m., at City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York, when all interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views.

The hearing will be on the Application of Cove Theatre Realty LLC, seeking a special use permit and site plan approval to operate a takeout restaurant known as Gera's Cakes Cafe

Shop serving Latin bakery desserts, sandwiches, coffee and other beverages, with an emphasis on bakery items, within the 1760 square foot space at the southerly end of the 8411 square foot building located at 82 School St. Glen Cove which is designated on the Nassau County Land & Tax Map as Sections 23, Block 53 Lot 27-28 and located in the City's B-1 Central Commercial District and CBD Overlay Business District.

The above application is on file at the city offices located at 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, NY where it may be seen during regular business hours of the usual business days until the time of the hearing.

Dated: November 30, 2023
 ANDREW KAUFMAN
 Chairman
 GLEN COVE PLANNING BOARD
 143789

To Place A Notice Call 516-569-4000 x232

LEGAL NOTICE
 CITY OF GLEN COVE
 PLANNING BOARD

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a PUBLIC HEARING will be held by the City of Glen Cove Planning Board on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at 7:30 p.m., at the Council Chambers, City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York, when all interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views.

The hearing will be on the application of Vincenzo Dattolo who seeks a special use permit and site plan approval to operate Sea Cliff Gelateria, which is an Italian ice cream shop providing such items as coffee, espresso, gelato and traditional Italian gourmet desserts, in a currently vacant approximate 1083 square foot space of an existing two-story building located at 198 Glen Cove Ave. NY, designated on the Nassau County Land & Tax Map as Section 21, Block 46, Lot-1,6 and located in the City's B-2 Peripheral Commercial District.

The above application is on file at the city offices located at 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, NY where it may be seen during regular business hours of the usual business days until the time of the hearing.

Dated: November 30, 2022
 ANDREW KAUFMAN
 Chairman
 GLEN COVE PLANNING BOARD
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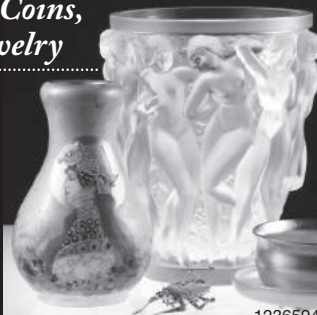
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OPINIONS

It's time for a break from politics

Polls, polls, polls. It isn't even 2024, and we're bombarded with political polls, one after another. President Biden is a goner and Donald Trump is ahead by 25 points, but that's within the margin of error, so it's a statistical tie. Everyone is upset about the economy and the weather and just about everything else. As we



**JERRY
KREMER**

enjoy the holiday season, do we need all of these interruptions in our daily lives?

I recall that, 49 years ago, the little-known governor of Georgia named Jimmy Carter declared his candidacy for president, and all the pollsters laughed. As a member of the

Assembly leadership, I was asked to introduce Carter to the party conferences in 1976. I met him at the Albany airport and escorted him to the Capitol, where he got a tepid reception. I drove him back to the airport and wished him well. Nine months later, he was elected president.

In 1991, Bill Clinton, the governor of Arkansas, declared himself a candidate for the White House. Few people paid much attention to him. In 1988 Clinton had been given a speaking spot at the Democratic National Convention and he spoke for over a half-hour, when he was only assigned 15 minutes. Everyone thought that was so funny that he was invited to appear on Johnny Carson's "Tonight Show." Four years later he was elected president.

What I'm getting at is that right now, no one has the slightest idea what will happen next November. The Republican Party is going through its primary process, which will most likely end with the crowning of former President Trump as its candidate. Biden is juggling two wars, a Republican majority in the House that would like to impeach him — without any evidence, so as to make Trump happy — and a host of other headaches.

Next March, Trump is expected to go on trial for his conduct leading up to the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection. His former chief of staff, Mark Meadows, is expect-

ed to be the star witness against him. Some legal experts think there is a strong possibility that Trump will be convicted by a jury of his peers. How would voters react to such an event, and would a conviction sway enough of

them to make a difference? That will be one of many new factors that the pollsters will have to consider. Right now there are wars in Gaza and Ukraine. Biden has been a strong supporter of both countries, providing them with arms and moral support. Congress is currently in a state of gridlock about helping both countries. What if Ukraine loses the war to Russia? What if

Israel wins its war with Hamas, but is stuck with administering the needs of the people of Gaza? These are two more headaches to throw into the 2024 mix.

Even though former President Trump is favored to win his party's nomination, the picture will look very different if and when he does so. Once he is the candidate, voters will begin to focus on all of his actions and statements over the past few years. It's one thing to talk about wanting retribution

against your enemies, but when you're the nominee, do voters look at you differently?

At this moment, the issue of abortion rights is not front and center. Those favoring a woman's right to choose have won a series of battles in a number of states. Next year the issue will again be prominent in voters' minds, and they will weigh which of the candidates supports their position. Biden's and Trump's stances are well known.

Now, however, it's time to ignore the pollsters and the political columnists. Here's hoping your observance of Hanukkah was memorable, and let's wish the same for Christmas. Keep planning holiday parties. If you're traveling, finish up your packing early. We need a break from all of the distractions coming out of the political world. Let's have some fun, and be happy and healthy. After three years of Covid and so many other distractions, we need a break.

Jerry Kremer was an Assemblyman for 23 years, and chaired the Assembly's Ways and Means Committee for 12 years. He now heads Empire Government Strategies, a business development and legislative strategy firm. Comments about this column? jkremer@liherald.com.

Still standing, cancer treatment and all

My husband is the main character in this story. The recipient of abundant blessings from family and friends, he is festooned in good wishes and prayers these days.



**RANDI
KREISS**

This is powerful juju, and he needs it in his fight through cancer.

Since his diagnosis in May, we have been living a different life. Cancer doesn't happen to just one person; life takes a hard left for

everyone in the family, kids and grandkids, too. A good day, a good time, a good year, all become relative.

My husband, Don, always does things in a big way, so he didn't just get cancer; he got pancreatic cancer, discovered "incidentally" during a routine scan. (He did the scan because of a genetic risk, and I write about this now to remind readers that anyone can test for genetic mutations that might confer a cancer risk. This knowledge has the power to save lives.)

His tiny lesion was discovered very early on a CT scan, confirmed with an MRI and an endoscopic biopsy, and

removed in July in a Whipple procedure, a drastic and super-complex operation that removes the tumor and rearranges your innards. In his case, the procedure was done robotically, over seven hours, with two surgeons. The doctors said he would be in the hospital for a week to three weeks since he's an old dude, and cancer isn't his only medical challenge.

But being an outlier, Don was doing laps around the nurses' station after four days, and they sent him home with more drains than a steam room after five days. They told me I could change the drains; it would be easy. Not easy. A visiting nurse saved the day.

The doctors advised that after the Whipple procedure, his eating and digestion might not be normal for months, or possibly ever. "Small portions. Frequent meals. No spice. No roughage," we were told.

I sat across the table from him at home, expecting some kind of volcanic intestinal eruption, but he just chomped away and digested everything and, in a week or two, started exercising.

In August he began chemotherapy

and immunotherapy. Yes, the surgery and chemo seem like killing a mosquito with a cannon, but even a tiny pancreatic cancer is not your ordinary mosquito. Don is doing it all with grace and remarkable good cheer. He says he's fine, no problems.

One issue is that the steroids they give him with the chemo send him into orbit. He can't stop moving from room to room or making phone calls or rearranging the silverware in the drawer. For two days, he basically flies low around our house, engines roaring, until, on day three, he comes in for a landing. This time is perfect for cleaning windows.

This week, new scans revealed that everything under the hood looks good. No obvious cancer. An excellent finding. "We're lucky so far," the doctor says, luck also being relative. It has taken us many months to accept the uncertainty of this life we are living. We can plan, but not too far ahead. We can get out, but we must dodge sneezing people and other germy situations.

My husband is the warrior, and I am the worrier. I handle the appointments and records and results and communications with all the medical people who are keeping Donnie up and running.

My husband is the warrior, and I'm the worrier. We can plan, but not too far ahead.

This job does not align with my skill set. Toxic stress is baked into the health care system these days; I feel incompetent juggling patient portals, faxed reports and MRI discs.

But it also seems like *really, really* bad form to complain. He's doing the hard work.

You may be wondering, and I don't mind sharing, that despite the robust treatment and particular nastiness of this cancer, we don't talk about it much anymore. We do a pretty good job of doing the day-to-day thing.

We go out occasionally, but mostly I cook, and we see some friends, and we talk about the news, which often makes us feel lucky indeed.

Don keeps the faith with a group of dear friends who are also going through difficult cancer regimens. Perhaps you or someone you love is undergoing treatment. All the stories speak to an abiding resilience in the human spirit.

Each morning, we plan the day. And honestly, we look forward to it, because it's the only day we can count on. In truth, it's the only day anyone can count on.

We don't overtalk this new chapter in our story. But occasionally, in the middle of the night, as if by some silent agreement, we hold hands.

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HERALD EDITORIAL

A tale of two holidays

Two holidays. celebrated by two religions.

Hanukkah, according to the Talmud, celebrates the restoration of the Second Temple of Jerusalem, where a day's worth of oil burned for eight.

Christmas, according to the Bible, commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, in a manger in a Bethlehem stable from a family escaping the tyranny of King Herod.

So much has been said over the years about how different these two holidays are, contrasting the differences between Jews and Christians. But yet, Hanukkah and Christmas — and the observances and celebrations surrounding them — are more alike than we give them credit for.

First and foremost, both are rooted in the same concept: the celebration of a miracle. Following three years of war with King Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a hero of the Jewish faith, Judas Maccabeus, re-entered the desecrated Second Temple with the hope of restoring it. The Seleucid king had defiled almost every-

thing inside except for a single small jar of oil — enough to last a single day.

It was going to take a week for new oil to arrive, but Maccabeus used the oil in the jar anyway. It didn't run out that night. Or the next night. Or the night after that. In fact, the oil continued to burn until the new consecrated oil arrived, helping to restore the temple — and the faith of a war-torn people.

The birth of Jesus should not have happened. According to Christians, the messiah's mother was a virgin. Thus the conception and the ultimate birth of Jesus took place through divine intervention.

The three wise men who traveled to welcome the new baby into the world were inspired by the light of what we now call the Star of Bethlehem. Today, Christians celebrate light with candles and colorful bulbs, reflecting hope, warmth and the triumph of light over darkness.

Sound familiar?

While Hanukkah might not carry the same spiritual weight for Jews as Christmas does for Christians, both holidays

also focus on something very important: family. Dads, moms, daughters, sons, grandparents, cousins — they all gather around the tree on Christmas morning to open presents and share a sumptuous holiday meal.

For Hanukkah, the lighting of the menorah candles involves the entire family, fostering a sense of togetherness.

And we can never forget about kindness and charity. Giving gifts and food to those who wouldn't otherwise have them, and simply gathering to do good things, are aspects of the holidays that are not exclusive to any single religion, but the effort is heightened at this time of year.

Whether you're spinning a dreidel or hanging stockings on the chimney, this is a chance to not only end the year doing good for both your family and your community, but also looking to continue that once January begins.

Take a moment to remember not only the meaning of the holidays, but the spirit of them, too. And focus on finding common ground — all for the greater good.

LETTERS

King was right about our unity

To the Editor:

Re Peter King's op-ed essay last week, "Americans must rediscover our unity": I couldn't agree more. I think it's interesting that in these days, social identity and political identity are nearly one and the same. The Republican and Democratic labels are slung about to not only describe political allegiance, but also personal belief/character. Maybe this is part of the problem? While King's essay provides context from a political perspective, citing how he disagreed with colleagues on a political level but they enjoyed each other's company on a personal level, it delineates the difference between social and political identity.

Part of the issue is the collectivist mindset of hating America that members of the radical left unfortunately perpetuate. I'd like to think it is misconstrued criticism, but that doesn't seem to be the case. As they say, the squeaky wheel gets the oil, and they are vocal about it. I've had the pleasure of traveling to nearly every state, and in my conversations with fellow Americans of all socio-economic and political backgrounds, from California's coast to New England's shores, I recognize that despite the supposed polarity we face in this country, we share the common ground that we are Americans, first and foremost.

The only way to defeat America is from within. That's why there are bad actors out there — they've even infiltrated our own political system — who want to pit countrymen against one another. United We Stand. The United States' motto, E Pluribus Unum, Latin for "Out of many, one," symbolizes the unity of our 13 original colonies. Our Founding



Fathers knew then the significance of unity.

Our country is not without her faults, and should be openly and fairly critiqued — but the only way we move forward is together. So long as the common goal is a better America, our country and her people cannot lose.

KOOROSH LEIBOWITZ
Glen Cove

An open letter to Hofstra's president

Dear Dr. Susan Poser:

I would like to thank you for acknowledging the horrific nature of Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel in your Oct. 9 post, found at <https://news.hofstra.edu>. However, I respectfully request that you give addi-

OPINIONS

Do consequences of crimes still matter?

Is there anything more satisfying than washing your car, and then stepping back and admiring your now pristine vehicle? It's like a fresh coat of paint on a wall or decluttering your desk, even though by week's end the car will be a mess again. It seems we're hardwired to appreciate a fresh start.



**JACK
MARTINS**

This is especially true when it comes to people. We all root for the underdog to turn misfortune around. It's why some New Yorkers support the Clean Slate Law recently signed by Gov. Kathy Hochul. The law automatically seals criminal records for

most offenders, in the hope that people will more easily shake any stigma associated with their convictions. This idea certainly comes from a good place, but there are never any one-size-fits-all answers when it comes to social issues or justice.

The core of this debate revolves

around recidivism — the likelihood that a person will relapse into criminal behavior after completing a prison sentence. The hard, cold facts about the rates of recidivism are shocking. According to the Harvard Political Review, more than 600,000 individuals are released from state and federal prisons each year. Another 9 million are released from local jails. But within three years, two out of three are rearrested, and more than 50 percent go back to jail. That's not good.

These statistics make it clear that a disproportionate number of ex-offenders return to criminal behavior. Now, that might very well fuel a legitimate sociological discussion as to why, but Clean Slate doesn't address those issues. Descriptions of the bill say it's simply for "people who have truly committed to turning their lives around." The question is, how do we know who those people are? With such high recidivism, it's apparent that there are very few of them, so why are we embracing such an across-the-board approach?

For years we allowed judges to seal records using their own discretion. Individuals could apply for certificates of good conduct, relief from civil disability, and expungement of records. Yet promoters of Clean Slate believe it's wiser to hand that authority to legislators in Albany rather than leave it to knowledgeable legal professionals with years of decision-making experience.

And though I wish I had a solution for recidivism rates, I don't, nor does anyone else. While the problem certainly merits our attention, the primary goal of government is to keep citizens safe. Therefore, the more important question for me is how to protect innocent people from becoming victims of that recurrent crime.

The most obvious method, for thousands of years, has been disseminating information. If you're aware of potential danger, you can avoid it. This is as much a universal law of nature as is our love of second chances. That's why we have fire alarms and weather reports.

From that standpoint, this new law is

flawed. It expressly limits a person's ability to size up a situation and make decisions. Further, it hinders an employer's ability to hire and a landlord's ability to protect tenants. Worse, it openly ignores the advice from the front lines, because law enforcement and victims' rights advocates are among those who oppose it.

Consider that our state has emptied prisons faster than any other; a nearly 27 percent drop in the prison population between 2019 and 2022. We've also eliminated bail in many cases, and we're suffering a "smash and grab" epidemic that puts New York City at the top in shoplifting numbers among the nation's largest cities. You might understandably guess that New York has thrown away the idea of there being any consequences at all.

But everyday people still have common sense. They know what's fair, and they understand consequences, putting them squarely at odds with Albany. Simply stated, this law prioritizes the concerns of ex-offenders over the concerns of victims, law enforcement and legal experts. But we can overturn laws that don't work, so this is one I'll be fighting.

Jack Martins represents the 7th Senate District.

Who are the 'people who have truly committed to turning their lives around'?

LETTERS

tional context to your Oct. 18 post.

While you again acknowledged that Israel was attacked by Hamas, the lack of context created false equivalencies between terrorists and those who seek to defend themselves against terror. For example, while I wholeheartedly agree that we should, as you state, "mourn the loss of life in Israel and Gaza," you simply lumped all loss of life together without making a key distinction. While Israel attempts to minimize the loss of civilian life, Hamas deliberately targets Israeli civilians and uses their own people as human shields. Failing to mention this distinction obfuscates the morality of the former and the immorality of the latter.

The problem with moral equivocations such as these is that they stifle critical thinking by sloppily making superficial comparisons, instead of highlighting key distinctions. Moral equivalencies are made for one of three reasons. The first is ignorance. The second is intellectual sloppiness, because it's easier to lop concepts together superficially than to look for differences beneath the surface. The third is to muddy the waters and manipulate the facts. An educational institution should never abuse the concept of academic freedom by manipulating the facts in order to indoctrinate, but rather should educate. It has an academic responsibility to present the facts truthfully, allowing learners to draw their own conclusions.

Your Oct. 18 post also lacked moral clarity. While you are correct in asserting that "there is a complex history and con-

flicting views about the causal underpinnings of the current crisis," you failed to state that these complexities cannot be used as a justification for the Oct. 7 atrocities, such as murder or rape.

The purpose of education should not only be to prepare people for a livelihood, but to make them better citizens. If educational institutions can't make the most elementary distinctions between right and wrong, they are failing in their mission to create an educated citizenry. I encourage you to make a full-throated condemnation of Hamas' actions, as Sheryl Sandberg recently did at the U.N., declaring that "Rape should never be used as an act of war. Silence is complicity ... And in the face of terror, we cannot be quiet."

Sandberg's remarks were echoed by Hillary Clinton's statement: "We must respond to weaponized sexual violence wherever it happens with absolute condemnation."

Given that in their recent testimony before Congress, the presidents of Harvard, MIT and Penn, to their shame, could not unequivocally say that calling for genocide against Jews would violate their schools' codes of conduct, it is more important than ever to speak out clearly against evil. The blatant double standard that allows for Israel and Jews to be demonized must not be tolerated.

RABBI STEVEN SAKS
Congregation Sons of Israel, Woodmere

RABBI STEVEN GRABER
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Saluting the season at the Salisbury tree lighting.

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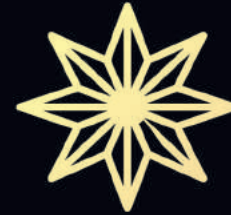
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