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**Introducing the grand marshal**  
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VOL. 33 NO. 8

FEBRUARY 15 - 21, 2024

\$1.00

# SUOZZI RETURNS TO HOUSE



## 'Comeback kid of Nassau County' reclaims seat for Dems

By WILL SHEELINE

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After a contentious special election campaign, Tom Suozzi has won back his old seat in Congress.

The longtime politician, introduced by Jay Jacobs, chairman of the state's Democratic Committee, as "the comeback kid of Nassau County," took the stage at the Crest Hollow County Club

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

### ★ ELECTION RESULTS ★

**Mazi Pilip**  
**46%**

**Tom Suozzi**  
**54%**

Adrienne Daley/Herald  
Tom Suozzi won the special election to replace former Congressman George Santos, flipping New York's 3rd Congressional District.

**HERALD**  
Community Newspapers

# Christine Rice, St. Pat's grand marshal

By **ROKSANA AMID**

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Every year a grand marshal is chosen for the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Glen Cove. This year, Christine Rice, director of the Glen Cove Senior Center, was chosen.

"Christine is very active in our community between the senior center and Nosh; she loves helping others in need," Lisa Forgione, the Glen Cove parade committee chairwoman, said. "As a member of the Glen Cove Senior Center, I see first-hand how every member loves Christine. She is sweet, caring, and cares for our community."

Rice's roots in the Irish community run deep, as she hails from a family with a rich Irish heritage. Her grandfather, who immigrated to the United States from Ireland at the age of 13, played a pivotal role in shaping her family's legacy. Establishing a successful construction company and later overseeing construction projects for the Archdiocese of New York, he epitomized the resilience and determination of the Irish immigrant experience.

"I'm honored that they had asked me to become the grand marshal. I really love Glen Cove," Rice said, while reflecting on her deep connection to the city and its people.

Rice's journey to becoming grand marshal reflects her lifelong dedication

to service, especially among the senior population. Her tenure as chair of the senior center and her involvement with the SAGE foundation highlight her commitment to enhancing the lives of seniors in the community.

A lifelong resident of Garden City, Rice, the sister of U.S. Rep Kathleen Rice, has spent most of her career working not with seniors, but with children, as an elementary school teacher in the Garden City School District. Teaching was her passion, but when her mother began developing Alzheimer's in 1995, Rice became her primary caregiver until she died in 2006. Rice said she treasured the time she spent with her mother, and the interaction between her mother and her own two children showed her the importance of bridging the gap between seniors and younger generations.

Seeking to establish connections with seniors and transform her mother's illness into a positive endeavor, Rice joined the Long Island Alzheimer's and Dementia Center, formerly known as the Long Island Alzheimer's Foundation, in 2014. Here, she assumed the role of director of special events and community outreach. This nonprofit organization is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for individuals grappling with Alzheimer's and related forms of dementia, along with their caregivers. Over the span of five years, Rice dedicated herself to orchestrating the center's

events and fundraisers. She found profound fulfillment in witnessing those grappling with cognitive challenges delight in the events.

Despite her deep affection for her role, Rice felt compelled to seize the opportunity presented by Carol Waldman, the former director at the senior center. During her tenure at the Alzheimer's and Dementia Center, Rice had visited the senior center as part of a tour exploring various senior facilities across Long Island. While some centers primarily offered hot lunches and bingo games, Rice found the Glen Cove center to be a vibrant hub of ongoing activity. The center's distinctive adult day program particularly impressed Rice, prompting her to consider a shift in her career trajectory.

"More than I had already realized, it's important to have our seniors feel cared for, loved, and safe in their older years," Rice emphasized. "With the amount of seniors that we service, we are always looking to enhance our programs and our services."

As grand marshal of the city's St. Patrick's Day parade, Rice embodies the spirit of community and the values of resilience, compassion, and inclusion that define Glen Cove. Her leadership and unwavering commitment to service serve as an inspiration to all who know her, making her a fitting choice to lead the festivities on this special occasion.



Courtesy Roni Jenkins

Christine Rice has been selected as this year's grand marshal for the Glen Cove St. Patrick's Day parade.

Patricia Victoria will serve as this year's aid to the grand marshal, which takes place on March 17, at 1 p.m. This year the parade will return to its traditional route ending outside the Church of St. Patrick, at Glen Street and Pearsall Avenue.

The after-parade party will return to St. Patrick's Parish Hall. Parking will be available at municipal garages, and the shuttle bus will circulate through downtown.

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# Delving into local maritime disasters

By ROKSANA AMID

ramid@liherald.com

An upcoming exhibit at the North Shore Historical Museum to open on Feb. 29 delves into the maritime history of the North Shore, shining a spotlight on shipwrecks and sinkings that occurred during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Unlike the grand scale of the Titanic disaster, these incidents, while not as widely known, left indelible marks on the local communities.

From the tragedy of the Lexington in 1840 to the General Slocum disaster of 1904, and more, the exhibit showcases the stories, photographs and firsthand accounts that have shaped the area's maritime heritage. Notable incidents like the Rye Cliff sinking in 1918 and the William T. Bell loss in 1927 will be featured, offering visitors insights into the diverse range of challenges faced by seafarers and coastal communities.

**W**hile you could say that the North Shore is kind of isolated and small, there's actually a lot that has gone on here and continues to go on and develop.

**AMY DRISCOLL**  
director,  
North Shore  
Historical Museum

"While you could say that the North Shore is kind of isolated and small, there's actually a lot that has gone on here and continues to go on and develop," Amy Driscoll, the museum's director, said. "The history is very diverse. We have shipwrecks and we have estate homes and a lot of industry. Glen Cove was very much an industrial town."

From the solemn reflections on lives lost to the resilience of coastal communities, the exhibit promises to be a compelling journey.

## The Lexington

The Lexington was a paddlewheel steamboat that transported passengers and cargo across the Sound starting in 1835. The ship was commissioned and designed by Cornelius Vanderbilt, the patriarch of the business dynasty, and was considered one of the most cutting-edge vessels of its time.

It is suspected that the ship's smokestack caught fire on the night of Jan. 13, 1840, while it was sailing from New York to Stonington, Connecticut, with between 143 and 154 passengers and crew, as well as 150 bales of cotton. All but four of the people on board were killed in the ensuing conflagration, drowned, or died of hypothermia.

## The General Slocum disaster

The General Slocum disaster occurred on June 15, 1904, when the steamboat caught fire in the East River while carrying approximately 1,300 passengers, primarily German immigrants from Saint Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Poor safety measures, including ineffective life-saving equipment and lack of crew experience, contributed to the tragedy. Despite onlookers' warnings, the crew failed to act promptly. Over 1,000 lives were lost, making it the deadliest disaster in New York City before Sept. 11, 2001. Investigations revealed failures in inspections and emergency preparedness. The incident led to improvements in

Through a curated collection of artifacts, newspaper reports, and personal narratives, the exhibit aims to capture the human experiences and the impact of these maritime disasters. By highlighting these lesser-known incidents, the museum hopes to foster a deeper appreciation for history and the North Shore's enduring connection to the sea.



Roksana Amid/Herald photos

On display at the North Shore Historical Museum are melted and reformed glass bottles from the Rye Cliff wreckage.



Melted pipes and fittings from the ship's engine area give insight into the engineering behind the Rye Cliff wreckage.

maritime safety, including the transfer of responsibility to the U.S. Coast Guard in 1946. Today, an annual ceremony at Tompkins Square Park honors the victims, serving as a reminder of the importance of safety measures in maritime transportation.

## Rye Cliff

The 137.5-foot-long sidewheel steamship was built in Maine and launched in 1898. It was traveling between Sea Cliff and Rye Beach in Westchester County six times a day when, on Sept. 28, 1918, it caught fire at the Sea Cliff pier, destroying the pier in the process. It burned to the waterline before sinking in 25 feet of water in Hempstead Harbor several hundred yards offshore near the mouth of Glen Cove Creek.

The exhibit is a collaborative effort with researchers Bill Bleyer, Adam Grohman, Bradley Golden, and the Village of Bayville Museum and the Village of Sea Cliff Museum. The North Shore Historical Museum, 140 Glen St., Glen Cove, will run the exhibit from Feb. 29 through June.



While some artifacts from ship wreckages are fragile, others like this fork from the wreckage provide a glimpse into the everyday life of a passenger aboard the Rye Cliff.

# Suozzi victory flips congressional district blue

February 15, 2024 — GLEN COVE HERALD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in Woodbury on Tuesday night to thunderous applause, briefly basking in the glow of victory before thanking the crowd and emphasizing that he had won “because the people of Long Island and Queens are sick and tired of political bickering.”

“It’s time to move beyond the petty partisan bickering and the finger pointing,” Suozzi declared. “It’s time to find common ground, and start delivering for the people of the United States of America.”

The election, in which Suozzi captured 54 percent of the vote, easily defeating Republican County Legislator Mazi Pilip, was in the national spotlight as well, with President Biden’s campaign manager, Julie Chavez Rodriguez, and the likely Republican presidential nominee, former President Donald Trump, weighing in on Suozzi’s victory. “Republicans just don’t learn,”

Trump posted on election night on Truth Social, his social media platform. “I have an almost 99 percent endorsement success rate in primaries, and a very good number in the general elections, as well, but just watched this very foolish woman, Mazi Melesa Pilip, running in a race where she didn’t endorse me.”

In a statement, Rodriguez wrote, “Donald Trump lost again tonight. When Republicans run on Trump’s



Adrienne Daley/Herald

Joe Raso, far left, Ian Siegel, Adam Siegel, Gina Raso, Sara Amani Ward and Shiva Amani Ward showed their support for Tom Suozzi.

extreme agenda — even in a Republican-held seat — voters reject them.”

Suozzi addressed the contentious ads that ran during the campaign. Throughout the race, he and Mazi accused each other of lying in the ads, and Suozzi proudly declared that he won “despite

all the lies about Tom Suozzi and the Squad, Tom Suozzi being the godfather of the migrant crisis, despite all the dirty tricks.”

Despite a vigorous campaign by Pilip, Suozzi’s election showed that the 3rd Congressional District is hoping for a return to normalcy following the tumultuous, and incomplete, term of George Santos.

Although at least two pro-Palestinian protesters attempted to condemn Suozzi for his support of Israel at his victory celebration, but the crowd drowned them out with shouts of “Suozzi! Suozzi!” The congressman later pointed to the protesters as an example of the divisions plaguing the district, and the country.

Many of his supporters said they backed him because of his record of delivering for voters and his ability to work across the aisle.

“Tom seems like he can actually get something done,” Ravin Chetram, of Oyster Bay, said. “He doesn’t lean either way. He’s not too progressive, so he can cross lines to the other side. We’ll have real representation for District 3.”

Others pointed to Suozzi’s long political career as the reason for their support. His name recognition, compared with the relatively unknown Pilip, appeared to have been one of the major factors in his re-election.

“I remember Tom when he was a great county executive,” Francine Goldstein, of Merrick, said. “He’s got a big heart and is a smart person.”

Throughout the race, Suozzi touted his decades of experience, and his ability to work with Republicans, as the qualities that made him best suited to fill his old seat.

Suozzi, who left Congress to challenge Gov. Kathy Hochul in the 2022 gubernatorial race, but lost in the Democratic primary, pointed to his long career of fighting for local issues and environmental reforms, as well as his outspoken support for Israel and immigration reform.

Suozzi also emphasized during the campaign that he is a problem solver, and willing to work with anyone in Congress to get legislation passed. Whether he will succeed in a House more divided than ever along partisan lines remains to be seen.

“You won this race because we addressed the issues and found a way to bind our divisions,” he said Tuesday night. “There are divisions in our country where people can’t talk to each other, where they yell and scream. That’s not the answer. We need to find common ground.”

While this was Pilip’s first campaign for office beyond the County Legislature, she still made a strong showing, winning roughly 46 percent of the vote. A former member of the Israel Defense Forces, she sought to win over Jewish voters with her pro-Israel stance, while attempting to lay the blame for the migrant crisis at Suozzi’s feet, but her campaign may have been hurt by her refusal to participate in more than one debates with Suozzi, and her reliance instead on the Nassau County Republican Party.

That clearly wasn’t enough for a district still recovering from the misadventures of Santos. Pilip briefly addressed the crowd that had gathered to support her at the Lannin in East Meadow, con-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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**The Glen Cove Herald** USPS 008886, is published every Thursday by Richner Communications, Inc., 2 Endo Blvd. Garden City, NY 11530. Periodicals postage paid at Garden City, NY 11530 and additional mailing offices. Postmaster send address changes to Glen Cove Herald, 2 Endo Blvd. Garden City, NY 11530. **Subscriptions:** \$50 one-time payment within Nassau County or \$60 outside of Nassau County or by qualified request in zip codes 11542, 11545, 11547, 11548 or 11579 **Copyright © 2024** Richner Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.

# Pilip's congressional dreams dashed in special election

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

ceding the race and emphasizing her determination to continue working for Long Island residents.

"We are fighters," Pilip said. "Yes, we lost. But it doesn't mean we're going to end here. We're going to continue to fight. I'm not going to give up."

Pilip's campaign also heavily relied on support from area Republican elected officials, many of whom stood alongside her at events and rallies throughout the race. Pamela Panzenbeck, the Republican mayor of Glen Cove, reflected that the campaign was always going to be tight, especially against a tough political veteran like Suozzi.

"He's very well known, he's very polite, and in politics for 30 years," Panzenbeck said. "So, you know, it's difficult to beat somebody like him."

The campaign revolved around several key issues facing the district and the country, especially the migrant crisis, the Israel-Hamas war and the U.S. economy.

Edmond Wong, of Douglaston, Queens, said he believed Suozzi was the best man for the job. "We need a good centrist," Wong said. "He will work on both sides on all the issues, including the border, Ukraine and Israel. Let's get a candidate who can bring both parties together."



Tim Baker/Herald



Adrienne Daley/Herald

Mazi Melesa Pilip conceded the special election to Tom Suozzi, but vowed to 'continue to fight.' At right, Suozzi's supporters were unimpressed when several pro-Palestine protesters tried to derail the congressman's speech, chanting 'Suozzi!' repeatedly to drown out the protests.

Additional reporting by Laura Lane and Roksana Amid

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## Communication Devices for Older Adults

While studying the topic of dementia, your writer was surprised to learn that the single most effective preventative measure would be for more of the hard-of-hearing to wear hearing aids. Studies show that only one in six persons who needs a hearing aid actually uses one and the average person waits ten years before seeking treatment for hearing loss.

As discussed previously in this column, social engagement is the number one factor in maintaining one's mental faculties as we age. It makes sense then, that age-related hearing loss, also known as presbycusis, would diminish social engagement leading to social isolation, cognitive decline and anxiety. Quality hearing aids today may be obtained over-the-counter without a prescription. Check your hearing online by googling "free on-line hearing screening", downloading the app Mimi, or visiting hearingnumber.org, sponsored by Johns Hopkins. A visit to an audiologist (covered by Medicare) is recommended, however, to

rule out any physical causes.

Another communication device widely available today, video calling, gives you the benefit of seeing the speaker's facial expressions and lip movements, helping listeners better understand what they're hearing. On video you can watch the same show or movies together, even adding other parties. You can also virtually "attend" an event that you cannot make it to in-person.

Social media is a communication device that allows for social engagement through meeting new people, participating in virtual activities and strengthening current relationships. Research finds that older adults using social media feel less lonely, less depressed and experience a boost in working memory performances. For older adults, visit stitch.net.

For more information, and to find additional tools for the visually impaired and mobility impaired, visit the National Council on Aging website, ncoa.org.

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# 6 Nassau disperses \$6.8M to fight opioid crisis

February 15, 2024 - GLEN COVE HERALD

By JORDAN VALLONE

jvallone@liherald.com

Joined by various health professionals and drug treatment organizations, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman announced the allocation of \$6.8 million for opioid use prevention, education and treatment last week in Mineola. The money will be distributed to health care providers across the county, as well as the Nassau County Police Department.

Drug overdose deaths surged at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, hitting a record high by the end of 2020. Many health experts say the increase was fueled by fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid that is 50 times stronger than heroin.

Catholic Health Services, which is headquartered at Mercy Hospital in Rockville Centre, will receive \$2 million, and the Nassau University Medical Center in East Meadow will receive \$2.5 million.

The county will also allocate \$600,000 per year toward various education initiatives to inform the public about drug abuse and opioid addiction.

At its news conference on Feb. 5, the county showed a recently recorded public service announcement featuring county Health Commissioner Dr. Irene Gelman and Anissa Moore, deputy commissioner of health and human services.

"These public service announcements will start off within the next couple of weeks," Blakeman said, "which will give people in the community the opportunity to know where they can go for help, whether it's treatment, counseling or any educational purpose."

Dr. Larry Eisenstein, former county health commissioner and now the chief public and community health officer at Catholic Health, said the health care network was appreciative of the funding.



Jordan Vallone/Herald

**County Executive Bruce Blakeman announced the allocation of \$6.8 million to help health care providers and the Nassau County Police Department fight the opioid and substance abuse epidemic.**

"We saw that the pandemic exacerbated what was a growing problem with regard to opioid use and mental health," Eisenstein said. "One in four people in this country has a diagnosable mental health disorder."

Catholic Health will embed primary-care physician officers with social workers and case managers to screen patients, and identify earlier those who may be suffering from substance abuse, Blakeman explained.

Eisenstein said the money would be used to "build a center of excellence" and emphasized that the services would be accessible to all.

"We're going to be making services available that if

they don't want to answer us on the spot, they know exactly where to go without barriers," he said. "Catholic Health could not be more excited about this great opportunity — I cannot be more excited about it because preventative health has always been my life's work."

Meg Ryan, acting chief executive officer of NUMC, said the funds are "well needed." The hospital plans to build outpatient rooms, bathrooms, counseling centers, conference rooms and nursing stations on its 10th floor; where there's an inpatient mental health and addiction unit, and to expand facilities on its ground floor, by the emergency room, to treat patients struggling with substance abuse and mental health disorders, Ryan explained.

The county has received approximately \$385 million in coronavirus relief money through the federal American Rescue Plan Act, and over \$92 million in settlements from opioid manufacturers, distributors and retailers.

County Legislator Delia DeReggi-Whitton, the minority caucus leader, said less than \$7 million of that money has been spent. She called Monday's announcement a "disappointment."

"After two years of delays, the agencies that have been promised funding should have been paid in full, and a significant amount of additional funding should also have been released," DeReggi-Whitton said. "Neither have happened."

"To have just paid about one-seventh of our opioid funding more than two years later is an insult to every family that continues to struggle with the opioid epidemic. This money cannot be used for anything else other than addressing opioid addiction, and I feel Nassau must begin distributing this funding at a pace that meets the urgency of this crisis."

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# The hidden danger of noise and light

By Will Sheeline,  
Nicole Formisano  
& Angelina Zingariello

First part in a series

Long Island faces a growing crisis as noise and light pollution become more troublesome.

Noise pollution — characterized by unwanted and harmful sounds — and light pollution — stemming from excessive artificial lights — are pressing issues impacting not just all of us who live here, but also the environment.

The World Health Organization defines noise pollution as disruptive sounds harmful to human health, while the International Dark-Sky Association — a nonprofit that fights to return the stars to our skies — warns that light pollution not only affects the natural night sky, but it also disrupts wildlife and interferes with astronomical observations.

The consistent noise from traffic, airplanes, construction and urban development disrupts daily lives and sleep patterns. Simultaneously, the widespread artificial light from streetlights, billboards, and other sources diminishes the natural darkness at night, impacting stargazing and unsettling nocturnal wildlife.

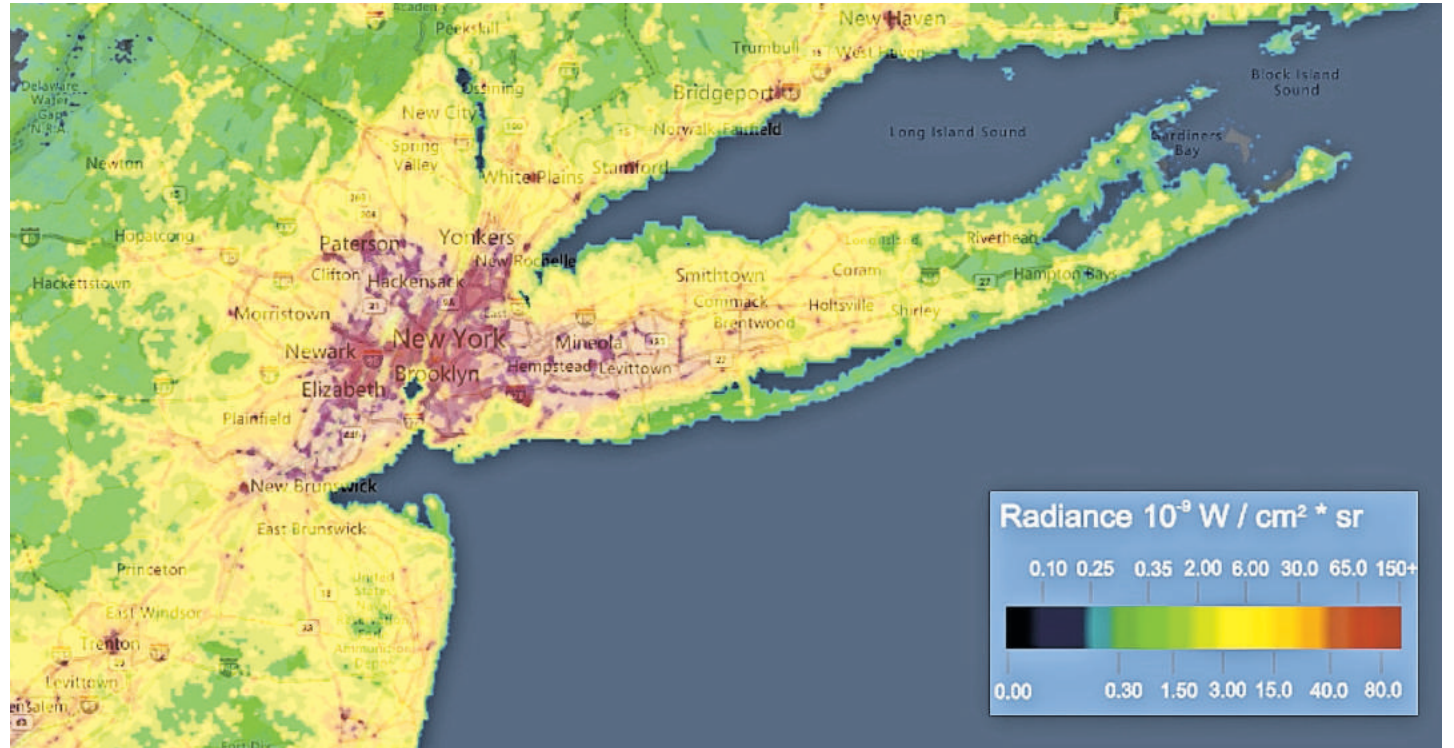
As Long Island tackles these escalating issues, local authorities are actively working to enforce noise regulations and promote responsible outdoor lighting practices, such as the Dark Skies Protection Act, put forth by the Assembly last year. The aim is to strike a balance between the imperatives of urban progress and the preservation of Long Island's unique environment.

Addressing noise and light pollution is vital for protecting human health, according to the WHO, as well as maintaining the integrity of natural ecosystems.

Additionally, research shows the detrimental effects of noise pollution — including more stress, hypertension, and even cognitive impairment in both adults and children. Similarly, excessive exposure to artificial light at night contributes to lower quality sleep and insomnia, and even mood disorders.

These environmental stressors also affect local wildlife populations by altering migration, nesting and foraging patterns, and even disrupting reproductive hormones and behaviors. Fireflies, for example, can no longer find mates in an artificially lit night sky.

"Almost every form of wildlife uses the night for either navigation or mating, or for many ways of regenerating the species," said Susan Serven, a Dark-Sky spokeswoman. "So if you don't have a deep dark night, you have this artificial daylight. It can confuse them, and it



Courtesy Junj Stare, LightPollutionMap.info

Using NASA's Black Marble light product, observers can get a sense how bright different parts of the world really are. While it's no surprise that New York City is one of the brightest spots in the region, it's also clear that light pollution spreads well across Long Island — especially in Nassau County.

can affect their physiology as well."

While it might not get the same attention as other forms of pollution — like air and water — community organizations are teaming up with environmental advocates and researchers to raise awareness and devise strategies against noise and light pollution on Long Island.

The Town of Oyster Bay, for example, mandates that any outdoor light is properly shielded to ensure light is only cast on necessary areas rather than, really, all over the place. They must also be placed on a timer to turn on and off at appropriate times to save energy.

The Village of Malverne passed a noise ordinance last December intended to limit the unnecessary sound neighbors say they experience at all hours of the day.

"Sleep is the biggest factor in all of this," Malverne mayor Tim Sullivan said. "Residents are trying to find peace at night. And if that's disturbed, it has a negative effect on your mental well-being and your physical functionality, which could negatively impact your earnings potential, your family, your home life, and how you generally interact with people on a daily basis."

"My biggest concern, as a father, is when I have a plane flying over my house in the middle of the day, that's excessive. It has woken my daughter up from her nap, and that (nap is) important to her well-being and development."

## Battling light pollution

Once the heart of aviation attracting

the likes of Charles Lindbergh and Wiley Post, Long Island is now a hot spot for the biggest threat to our sky: light pollution.

South Shore neighbors, for example, are all too familiar with the incessant, 24-hour glow to the west that is New York City. But light pollution atlases maintained by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences reveal Nassau County is not without its own blame.

Light pollution is "the human-made alteration of outdoor light levels from those occurring naturally," according to Dark-Sky. And for more than 20 years, Long Island has produced light pollution on par with one of the world's biggest cities: its neighbor, New York.

"We've been losing our night sky for decades," Serven said, adding that more than 90 percent of people throughout the country can no longer see the Milky Way — or even many stars, for that matter — from their backyards.

"We're really the first generation who has lost the night sky."

Some of our biggest contributors, according to Dark-Sky, are streetlights, electronic advertising, and even parking lots — and it's getting worse. Light pollution has risen by nearly 10 percent every year, and is projected to double over the next decade, Serven said.

That over-lighting comes at a cost. Every year, millions of sea turtles that call Long Island home are killed because they mistake endless streetlights and billboards for a glowing ocean horizon with a brightness that rivals the moon. The fireflies that marked summer nights on Long Island now face total extinction, and studies have shown light pollution is largely at fault.

Humans are not exempt from the effects of light pollution. Our circadian

rhythm — or sleep-wake cycle — relies on light cues from our natural world. But in an environment full of blue light from cellphone and laptop screens, our natural clocks are ticking out of sync.

This circadian disruption, studies show, is linked to mood disorders, reproductive problems, cancers and more. It also has drastic effects on our ability to produce melatonin, meaning more people are lying awake at night, often not realizing that the brightness that surrounds them throughout the evening is to blame.

The cost of light pollution is literal, too. Dark-Sky estimates 30 percent of all outdoor lighting in the United States is misdirected — meaning shone on areas that don't require light, often even up into the night sky itself — adding up to \$3.3 billion wasted every year. The energy it takes to sustain those unnecessary lights creates 21 million tons of carbon dioxide every year, which is among the leading contributors to climate change.

And light isn't the only invisible menace draining your health.

## Taking on noise pollution

Noise pollution, is characterized by sounds that reach above the human decibel threshold, the level of sound it takes to cause auditory damage, and has far-reaching effects on our well-being.

Various sources contribute to noise pollution, with cities like Glen Cove and Long Beach bearing the brunt of its impact. Traffic noise — including the incessant honking of horns and the roar of engines — dominates streets, reaching levels as high as 100 decibels — equivalent to a hair dryer or a blender — according to the Hearing Center of Excellence, a program created by the U.S. Defense Department to study and reduce hearing loss among veterans.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE





# Remember when you could see stars in the sky?

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Similarly, air traffic noise, construction sites, and bustling nightlife establishments all contribute to the cacophony of urban-like life.

Lawnmowers and leaf blowers long have been a point of contention between business owners and local governments, such as in the Village of Sea Cliff, which has discussed numerous complaints by both residents and businesses regarding their use in the last two years.

Following nearly two years of research, village officials passed an ordinance in 2022 restricting the days leaf blowers can be used while promoting the use of electric leaf blowers as opposed to louder, diesel versions.

“We needed to balance the public’s right to live in a quiet, bucolic setting versus other residents who hire landscapers to do their work,” Sea Cliff mayor Elena Villafane said. “So, we restricted the gas leaf blowers by prohibition during the spring and summer, and then we’ve limited the hours of electric leaf blowers during the same period to weekdays, business hours. And then, in the fall and winter, you can use both.”

The effects of noise pollution extend beyond mere annoyance, according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency and similar organizations. Prolonged exposure to loud noises can lead to a range of health issues, including hearing loss, high blood pressure and



Will Sheeline/Herald

Even sounds as innocuous as a car muffler can cause long-term auditory damage, especially compounded by the number of cars on the road in cities like Glen Cove and Long Beach.

heart disease.

Moreover, noise pollution disrupts sleep patterns, increases stress levels, and impairs cognitive function, particularly in children according to Matthew Mannis, a noise consultant for AKRF Inc.

“Whether it’s construction noise outside or aircraft flyovers — or even the most mundane things that we take for granted — these everyday noises can be disturbing,” Mannis said.

“We are learning that higher degrees or levels of noise for extended periods

of time can raise anxiety and blood pressure levels.”

For wildlife, noise pollution presents its own set of challenges. Marine mammals such as whales and dolphins — which have been spotted more often around the Long Island Sound as water temperatures have risen — rely on echolocation for communication and navigation, according to National Geographic.

However, the underwater cacophony created by ships, sonar devices and seismic surveys interferes with their ability to perceive their surroundings, leading

to mass stranding and altered behavior.

Awareness and education are essential tools in combating noise and light pollution.

“Light pollution is actually the easiest form of pollution to fix,” Serven said. “Simply turn off any lights that aren’t needed at night. That’s the simplest thing you can do.”

Dark-Sky also recommends neighbors swap unprotected outdoor lights for ones that are shielded or on timers to limit unnecessary light and energy drainage. Plus, more and more regions — including New York — are participating in “Lights Out,” a movement to shut off nonessential outdoor light between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m., during bird migration periods to help lessen light pollution’s effects on wildlife.

Investment in noise-reducing technologies — such as sound barriers and quieter asphalt for roads — can mitigate the impact of noise pollution in urban areas, according to the European Environment Agency, an organization in the European Union that studies data to support Europe’s environment and climate goals. Moreover, fostering a culture of environmental stewardship and responsible noise management is crucial for safeguarding our health and the well-being of wildlife.

“Learn as much as you can, and tell others,” Serven said. “Because it’s critically important. And, the issue is getting worse.”

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# HERALD NEIGHBORS

## There's snowplace like home in Glen Cove

About 8 inches of snow blanketed the North Shore on Tuesday afternoon. The biggest snowfall in two years, the community took the opportunity to break from their routines with work and school, which were closed for the day.

Couples enjoyed the pictur-

esque views at Morgan Memorial Park, while friends and families went sledding and had snowball fights. Although temperatures were frigid, it was the perfect day to create warm memories with loved ones.

—Roksana Amid



Mauricio Moreno and Estephania Estrada visited Morgan Memorial Park after their wedding. Although the couple is from Hempstead, they frequent Glen Cove for its stunning views.



The eight inches of snow was an ideal amount for Zach Lanksbury to go tubing down the city's hills.



Adrienne Daley/Herald photos

Although Leonel Diaz wiped-out while snowboarding, he embraced the thrill of the sport, smiling through the bumpy slope.



Teenagers like Anthony Pietri, 14, took to snowboarding.



Karen Babis enjoyed a brisk walk with her dog Mr. Finnegan as he tried on his new red snow shoes and jersey.

# School district unveil \$112 million budget

By **ROKSANA AMID**

ramid@iherald.com

The Glen Cove City School District unveiled its preliminary budget plan for the 2024-2025 academic year during its first public workshop on Jan. 17. The district estimates a total budget of roughly over \$112 million, an increase of approximately \$4 million from last year's \$108 million budget.

The draft revenue budget, which is subject to change in oncoming months, outlines several key changes compared to the previous fiscal year. The Consumer Price Index, which measures the costs of goods and services over a period, is what drives the allowable levy growth factor for the budget at 2 percent. One of the main sources of revenue for school district budgets, the levy helps fund the appropriation budget. New York state uses a formula to calculate each district's maximum allowed tax levy increase, which is generally capped at 2 percent annually under the tax levy limit law.

"Budgets establish your tax levy, not your tax rate for the community," Victoria Galante, the district's assistant superintendent for business and finances, explained. "Tax rate includes your assessed value and things like that. This just establishes one part of that formula that the city uses to come up

with your taxes."

Before budgets included the tax cap, compiling "wish lists" from various departments developed district budgets. The total was calculated based on state aid, local revenues and sometimes reserves to avoid a tax levy. However, with the tax levy cap, budgets must start with revenue estimates. Districts consider state and federal aid, local revenue, and reserve usage to determine spending limits within the legal tax levy constraints.

The estimated revenue budget for payments in lieu of taxes witnessed a notable decrease, while other revenue streams experienced varied shifts. PILOTs, a type of subsidy used for economic development that allow beneficiaries to make payments that resemble property taxes for a set period of years but are lower than property taxes, declined by approximately 30.7 percent, totaling \$3,682,080. Conversely, revenue from tax on consumer utility bills rose by around 15.4 percent, reaching \$1,500,000. Interest and earnings surged significantly, marking an increase of over 388 percent, now standing at

\$500,000 compared to the previous period.

"A lot of the interest and earnings is where a lot of an increase is coming from," Galante said. "We are getting more interest in the funds we have in our bank accounts."

State aid also saw a substantial uptick, climbing by approximately 8.9 percent, reaching \$27,419,225. Galante emphasized that the district expects to get a finalized amount of aid in April from the governor's office. Other revenues showed a modest increase, consolidating at \$4,588,714.

Expenditure projections reveal significant challenges. Health insurance rose by 13.5 percent, which Galante said is the highest increase the district has ever seen. Insurance overall

increased by 18 percent. Galante explained that dialogue with the district's insurance company point to a combination of "different things that are happening in the world of insurance," which include changes in climate, the child victims act, cyber insurance and liability insurance. Galante also noted that much like how homes increase in property value, the property

value of school buildings has increased, necessitating higher insurance coverage.

"Last year, we saw about a 20 percent increase in insurance," Galante said. "We were hoping it would come down a little bit more but it's not. Hopefully it won't get any higher than that."

Retirement system expenses for employees other than teachers, administrators, and central office staff, rose by 15 percent. The teacher's retirement system saw an increase of 10.25 percent. Furthermore, there are contractual obligations for various employees, including vendors and third-party providers, which naturally incur annual increases. These obligations, including employee-related expenses, are expected to rise consistently from year to year.

"When you look at all these increases, not one thing went down," Galante stated. "Some years, we've had it where at least one or two things may go down. This year, we're not so lucky. Then you think about 2 percent (tax) cap in the formula—there's a lot of percentage that we have to make up."

Future workshops in the coming months will provide more details and updates as the budget numbers were refined and state aid is finalized.

To view the district's presentations for upcoming workshops, visit: [GlenCoveSchools.org](http://GlenCoveSchools.org)

**B**udgets establish your tax levy, not your tax rate for the community.

**VICTORIA GALANTE**  
assistant superintendent,  
GCCSD

## NEIGHBORS IN THE NEWS

### K-Kids members hold a sock drive

During the month of January, the Connolly Elementary School Kiwanis for Kids, known as K-Kids, held a sock drive for those in need.

The 153 pairs of socks they collected were given to Kelly Carson, the representative from the North Shore Soup Kitchen for distribution to those who partake in the meals they serve at their facility.

This is the second year K-Kids held the sock drive, which was opened for the entire school's participation.

Last year over 300 pairs of socks were collected for the homeless.

The project was deemed so innovative that it was spotlighted on the K-Kids NYS website and the club

became a Distinguished Club for this and their many other projects.

Connolly Elementary School K-Kids appreciates the children, and are happy to have given them an opportunity to experience the beauty of giving back to their community.

And they appreciate all of the adult volunteers too, who were able to give so much of their time for the betterment of others.

K-Kids advisors Dora Ricciardi, left, and Maureen Hellman gave Kelly Carson, from the North Shore Soup Kitchen, center, the donated socks collected by Connolly Elementary School K-Kids.



Courtesy Connolly Elementary School K-Kids

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# Outside the classroom

The day's far from over once the school bell rings

Kids nowadays are certainly busier than ever before. The increasingly competitive nature of scholastic life combined with the increase of outside of classroom options available to kids means that kids today are much busier than their school-aged counterparts of yesteryear.

Can after-school programs give your children an academic boost? According to a recent study of after-school programs serving low-income elementary and middle school students, the answer is yes. Students who regularly participated in after-school programs surpassed their peers in academic performance. They also exhibited notable improvements in work habits and behavior.

"These findings underscore the importance of high quality after-school programs and activities for both elementary and middle school youth," explains Deborah Lowe Vandell, PhD, Chancellor's Professor Emerita, University of California at Irvine's Department of Education, and the study's lead author.

It's no surprise that after-school programs can do much more than keep your children occupied during the afternoon. In fact, after-school activities can help them in a variety of ways. Children develop time-management skills, build self-esteem, and practice goal-setting. While it may be tough to squeeze in after-school activities for your children, the benefits

are well worth the extra effort.

**Time management and prioritizing.** Extracurricular activities teach children how to manage their time and prioritize various tasks and commitments.

**Exploring diverse interests.** The school band, drama club, or any sport may be an activity your children are interested in joining. By allowing your children the opportunity to explore diverse interests, you give them the opportunity to discover what they are passionate about. Once your children find an activity that they enjoy, succeeding in the activity could ultimately build their confidence and self-esteem.

**Making a contribution.** Extracurricular activities allow your children to make a contribution to their school or community, which is an important step in preparing them for life outside of academics.

**Building self-esteem.** Mastering new skills can help create confident kids. By participating in after-school activities, they can build their self-esteem in a relaxed setting as their activities provide the opportunity to be successful in something that they are passionate about.

**Setting goals.** Participation in extracurricular activities and programs present opportunities for your children to develop their goal-setting skills. Most involve reaching or achiev-



ing a goal, whether it be the lead actor in the school play, winning the state championship or coming in first place in the science fair. As a result, these activities help encourage students to work toward achieving those goals, while having fun at the same time.

**Teamwork.** Sports teams, clubs and activities, like dancing and music, all require children to work together toward a common goal. By participating in these activities, your children develop the skills they need in order to successfully work with others. In addition, extra-

curricular activities let children to build relationships and socialize with peers who share their interests.

**College applications.** And, of course, after-school activities look great on college applications. In addition to academic performance, colleges want a well-rounded student and look at what activities students are involved in outside of school as a way to fully understand each student.

Photo: Recent studies show a correlation between improved grades, behavior and work habits as a result of students' involvement in after-school activities.

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Learn more about Hofstra Summer Camps at an Open House on **Sunday, February 11, 12-2 p.m.** RSVP at [Hofstra.edu/camp](https://Hofstra.edu/camp).



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# Planning begins to upgrade electrical grid

February 15, 2024 – GLEN COVE HERALD

By KEPHERD DANIEL

kdaniel@liherald.com

With a \$3.26 billion investment, New York Transco and the New York Power Authority unveiled details of its Propel NY Energy project, aimed to fortify Long Island's power grid by potentially bringing new underground electrical transmission and substations to Nassau County.

The Long Island Association's offshore wind committee hosted a discussion last week in Melville, with topics ranging from electrical grid reliability improvements to potential traffic disruptions caused by the work to make it happen.

Propel NY represents a step toward a cleaner, more sustainable energy future for Nassau County and the wider region. After last year's competitive bid process in 2023, the New York Independent System Operator — which monitors the reliability of the state's power system — threw its support behind Propel NY, which is now entering the permitting process. Regulated by Article VII of the New York Public Service Law, the regulatory framework emphasizes environmental impacts, ensuring community involvement.

"We want to make sure that we're all working together ... to make sure that effective outreach and communication is happening throughout the process," said Carrie Gallagher, the Long Island office director for the state's public service department.

That means bringing together not only the Long Island Power Authority and PSEG Long Island, but also the public service department, Transco, and the power authority.

Propel NY aims to bolster the reliability and resiliency of the Long Island power grid, according to officials. That means adding what they are calling bi-



Courtesy Propel NY

**Propel NY Energy — which plans to invest billions in a project burying 90 miles of electrical transmission lines — will discuss exactly where those lines will go in detail with affected communities, residents and businesses.**

directional power flows from Long Island into the statewide grid through 90 miles of new transmission pathways. The goal is to transmit up to 3,000 megawatts of energy from offshore wind projects that could power hundreds, if not thousands, of homes.

An estimated 66 miles of the new underground distribution lines will run across Nassau County, with less than two miles planned for Suffolk.

That includes several separate high-voltage cables from Melville, Island Park, Syosset, Uniondale and Glenwood Landing in Oyster Bay that then would

extend under the East River to the Bronx and the Long Island Sound toward Westchester. The bidirectional line — meaning power will flow in both directions — will help accommodate the influx of renewable energy from offshore wind farms, officials said, with construction expected to begin in 2026, continue on until mid-2030.

Residents, according to power authority vice president Girish Behal, will be "impacted the most by traffic and all the construction that happens. But, in addition to that, it's also the local government and community groups that have an impact on the project."

Propel NY got the go-ahead to begin groundwork needed for construction this past June.

The state's Public Service Commission approved Transco's plan to borrow as much as \$1.4 billion to build power lines. Propel NY looks to harness various clean energy sources — particularly offshore wind — reducing reliance on fossil fuels and promoting sustainability, officials said.

A key purpose of the project, they add, is the need for upgrades to accommodate renewable energy sources like offshore wind, while discussing the current sources of electricity on Long Island and the transition toward offshore wind as a significant clean energy source.

"By 2030, 50 percent of our power will come from one source: offshore wind," said Tom Falcone, the Long Island Power Authority's chief executive. "Right now, it's practically zero."

Half of the 10 turbines already built are now operating, he said, with two more expected to be added to the overall total by March.

At that time, "the first offshore wind project in federal waters will be operational," Falcone said, "but it's the first of thousands. And it's coming very soon."

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# STEPPING OUT



Watch them roar  
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## JURASSIC QUEST

By Danielle Schwab

Walk among the prehistoric giants at Jurassic Quest, where everyone can roam about and glimpse what Earth was like more than 165 million years ago.

Jurassic Quest — that traveling dinosaur experience combining archaeology with the latest tech — returns with its herd to Nassau Coliseum this weekend. This immersive spectacle features a bevy of lifelike dinosaurs — of all shapes and sizes — that are an impressive lot. They transform the arena environment back to the time when dinosaurs roamed, so that visitors can get up-close and personal with the creatures.

The three days of prehistoric adventuring — Saturday through Monday — includes visiting with the lifelike dinos, who'll glare and move about as folks pass by, along with all sorts of related activities. Plus, the playful dino "babies" — Tyson the T-Rex, Trixie the Triceratops and Cammie, the Camarasaurus — always delight visitors.

You'll find exciting curiosities at every turn. Rideable dinos, dinosaur shows, and interactive science and art stations — including a fossil dig — are all part of the experience. The littlest explorers will also enjoy a "Triceratops" soft play area, bounce houses and inflatables.

It's all self-guided, so everyone can go through the activities at their own speed. But it's suggested carving out at least two to three hours to get the most out of the experience.

It all began 10 years ago, created by Texas-based Jurassic Quest, which consults with paleontologists to make the creatures as realistic as possible, and reflect current thinking about how the giant creatures looked and acted.

"Dinosaurs are sort of universal to all people," says Nick Schaefer (aka Prehistoric Nick), one of the expert "dino trainers" and fossil experts, who's been with Jurassic Quest since 2016.

"When guests walk into our pillars, the first thing we have is our exhibit where we have dinosaurs from the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. We have over 165 million years worth of dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures."

One of the more popular components allows kids to become dino-trainers.

"We have the raptor training experience, where we have one of our trainers come out and interact with our guests to help train our full-sized Utahaptor (one of the newest additions to the animatronic pack)," Nick says. "Our guests will give central commands and try to make it listen."

Ever wonder what it's like to ride a dinosaur? Climb

**FUN FACT**

It's estimated that a new species of dinosaur is named every two weeks.



Photos courtesy Jurassic Quest

**Trainer Prehistoric Nick knows his way around a dinosaur skull.**

aboard one — such as the mighty T-Rex — and find out.

Kids also eagerly make their way to the fossil dig, where they can channel their inner paleontologist and study replicated and real fossils like T-Rex teeth, a triceratops horn, and life-size dino skull.

Much like the dinos, Jurassic Quest continues to evolve (without heading to extinction).

"The Quest" — a self-guided dinosaur scavenger hunt and expanded excavation station — add to this year's experience. Visitors can also try to lasso escaped dinos in Rope-a-Raptor, assisting the experienced "Broncobusters" round up the creatures and bring them back to their pens. Also you might want to face off with a notoriously fast Utahaptor in a "Raptor Run" race.

Each dinosaur is painstakingly replicated, from coloration to teeth size, to textured skin, fur or feathers, drawing on the latest research about how we understand dinosaurs and ancient giants of the sea looked and moved. Plant settings, sound effects, lighting and electronics add to the authenticity of the setting.

"We actually have modified a few of the dinosaurs to stay as up to date as we can with the information," Prehistoric Nick says. "One of our dinosaurs, the Spinosaurus, paleontologists are still learning about, and every couple of years, a new paper will come out and change the way it looks. So, we do our best to keep updating it."

Aspects like its snout, posture, and even the tail have been readjusted.

These dino trainers really know their stuff. Prehistoric Nick, who studied archeology in college, shares the team's passion for dinosaurs. He's been involved in excavations, and has participated in paleontological digs in Canada.

"Dinos are often the introductory science for younger kids," Nick says. "I think it's really important to bring a sense of wonder about dinosaurs to the public. Studies have shown that kids who have sustained interest — like a fascination of dinosaurs — have a tendency to do better in STEM fields. So fostering a love of dinosaurs and science and engineering is really beneficial."

Even more that that there's magic in science.

"When guests first come through for the first time, there's this jaw-dropping awe," Nick says. "When they see these full-sized dinosaurs, it blows their mind."



- Feb. 17-18, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.;
- Feb. 19, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Tickets \$32.50-\$52.05 (Use code FOSSIL for 10 percent off admission price); available at JurassicQuest.com or NassauColiseum.com
- Nassau Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale



### Friends of the Brothers

Friends of the Brothers returns with their dynamic tribute to the Allman Brothers. Their powerful celebration of the Allman Brothers, featuring musician closely associated with the original band, continues the brotherhood with passion, committed to the ideals of every night being special and unique. Guitarist/singer Junior Mack has fronted Jaimoe's Jassz Band for 12 years, and starred in the acclaimed Broadway show 'Lackawanna Blues.' Guitarist Andy Aledort played with Dickey Betts for 12 years, has recorded with Double Trouble and Band of Gypsies, and toured with Experience Hendrix. Their first-hand experience with the Allman Brothers Band — and their deep knowledge of the repertoire and the music's roots and heritage — allows them to play with an unrivaled depth. They perform songs from every stage of the Allman Brothers Band's career, backed by a band of inspirational, veteran players.

Friday, Feb. 16, 8 p.m. \$33, \$28.  
Jeanne Rimsky Theater at Landmark on Main Street, 232 Main St., Port Washington. (516) 767-6444, or LandmarkOnMainStreet.org.



### Modi

Get to know Modi when he visits Long Island with his highly anticipated comedy tour, Know Your Audience. Voted 'One of the Top 10 comedians in New York City' by The Hollywood Reporter, and 'The Next Jackie Mason' by The New York Times, he's now one of the circuit's most sought-after performers. Modi has received rave reviews for his charisma and positive message, relatable to both Jewish and non-Jewish audiences. He and his family immigrated to the United States from Israel (at 7), and was raised on Long Island. After graduating from Boston University, he worked as an investment banker until his first open-mic night, where he knew stand-up was his true calling. Equipped with a sharp wit, Modi has become a successful fixture on the comedy scene.

Sunday, Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m.  
\$144.50, \$69.50, \$59.50, \$49.50, \$39.50. The Paramount, 370 New York Ave., Huntington. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com or ParamountNY.com.

# THE \$ SCENE

February 15, 2024 - GLEN COVE HERALD

Feb. 25

## Flogging Molly

Celtic-punk rockers Flogging Molly have hit the road with their "Road to Rebellion" tour, sure to rouse audiences with their anthemic odes to the Emerald Isle, on the Paramount stage, Sunday, **Feb. 25**, at 7:30



p.m. Formed in L.A. in 1997 by Irish expat Dave King, the band got its start (and its name) from local Hollywood bar Molly Malone's, where each week the band performed, grew their following and laid down the blueprint for eventual success. Their infectious Celtic-tinged reels are perfect for dancing along to, for those who love their Irish heritage and those who just want a Expect an elective mix of old favorites, sing-a-longs, rare acoustic numbers and new material strung together by King's cheeky tales and jokes and first-rate musicianship from the legendary seven-piece group. Building a loyal following through endless touring, Flogging Molly has become a staple in the punk scene over the past 20-plus years, kicking off with its riotous debut, "Swagger," and continuing through their additional studio albums. With numerous late-night TV appearances under their belt, a sold-out Salty Dog Cruise through the Caribbean, and a yearly St. Patrick's Day Festival in L.A., the band's juggernaut continues. \$79.50, \$49.50, \$39.50 . The Paramount, 370 New York Ave., Huntington. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com or ParamountNY.com.



## Camellias and more

Shake off the winter blues at Planting Fields Arboretum State Park's annual two-day Camellia Festival, Saturday and Sunday, **Feb. 17-18**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Enjoy light music and be amazed by the variety of colors and gorgeous blooms of these glorious camellias.

Coe Hall is the center of activity throughout the festival, with music, watercolor painting crafts, activities, a typewriter poet, tea tastings, learning experiences for all ages, shopping, self-guided tours of the historic mansion and more.

Learn about Planting Fields rare and extensive collection of hundreds of camellia trees. Both historic and modern plants native to Japan, Korea and China display a wide variety of spectacular flowers including red, pink, white, bicolor and even yellow. \$15, \$10 seniors. 1395 Planting Fields Road, Oyster Bay. Visit [PlantingFields.org](http://PlantingFields.org) or call (516) 922-8600 for more.

## Planning board meets

The Planning Board meets in the main chamber of City Hall, Tuesday, **Feb. 20**, 7:30 p.m. 9 Glen St.

## 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. The art of John Singer Sargent, Childe 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](http://NassauMuseum.org).

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Feb. 15

**'Parallel Perspectives'**

View Molloy University Art Gallery's current exhibition, a duo exhibit displaying artwork of noted Long Island artists Holly Gordon and Ward Hooper. Various complementary paintings and prints are on view. Upon meeting, it became obvious that both Gordon and Hooper were deeply inspired by Long Island's fascinating environment and natural beauty.

Together, they toured the island and captured the same places, each interpreting the scenes in front of them through their distinctive artistic styles. Their creations not only influence one another but also blend unique aesthetics in their collaborative artistic journey.

Gordon and Hooper's partnership yielded numerous accomplishments, one of which was the publication of their book "Parallel Perspectives: The Brush/Lens Collaboration." Through Feb. 16. Kellenberg Gallery, 1000 Hempstead Ave., Rockville Centre. Call (516) 323-3196 or email artgallery@molloy.edu for more

**AARP Tax Assistance**

Free tax help is provided by AARP trained volunteers at the Glen Cove Public Library on 4 Glen Cove Ave, Glen Cove. Wednesdays, through April 10, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Be sure to bring your tax package, W-2 forms, your real estate property tax bill, a copy of your tax return and any other information that might be helpful in correctly filing your tax return. Both spouses must be present for married couples filing joint tax returns. Masks are required to be worn while receiving tax assistance regardless of vaccination status. 4 Glen St. Visit GlenCoveLibrary.org or (516) 676-2130.

**Hooks and needles**

Work on your craft projects with the Bayville Free Library's casual knitting, crocheting, and conversation group, Mondays, 10:30 a.m. No registration. 34 School St., Unit B, Bayville. Visit BayvilleFreeLibrary.org or call (516) 628-2765.

Feb. 25

**Art talk**

Join Scott Defrin, owner of European Decorative Arts in Greenvale for Nassau County Museum of Art's exhibit related program "Collecting Decorative Arts During the Gilded Age; Connoisseurship vs. Decoration," Sunday, Feb. 25, 3 p.m.

New York was the center for collecting during the Gilded Age. More money was spent on fine art, decorative art and interior decoration than at any time in American history. From Carnegie to Frick, and Morgan to Vanderbilt, Defrin discusses the different approaches to collecting among these magnates and how their fortunes helped establish the permanent collections of today's museums.

Limited seating with registration required. 1 Museum Dr., Roslyn Harbor. (516) 484-9337 or NassauMuseum.org.

**On stage**

Princesses and other enchanting heroes and heroines take to the stage, when Plaza Theatricals presents its Winter Princess concert, Friday and Saturday, Feb. 23-24, 11 a.m. Take part in an interactive sing-a-long featuring an array of everyone's favorite winter characters. \$15. See it at The Showplace at Bellmore Movies, 222 Pettit Ave., Bellmore (Friday) or at Elmont Memorial Library Theatre, 700 Hempstead Turnpike, Elmont (Saturday). For tickets, visit PlazaTheatrical.com or call (516) 599-6870.



**Historic Spirits tour**

Explore Raynham Hall, and three generations of Townsend family occupants, with spiritualist healer Samantha Lynn Difronzo, Friday, Feb. 23, 7:30-9 p.m. Robert Townsend, a central member of George Washington's Culper Spy Ring, and British officer Col. John Graves Simcoe, previously occupied Raynham Hall during the Revolutionary War.

Transformed into a Victorian villa in the 1850s, the house offers two eras of interpretation, with the front showcasing the period of the Revolution, and the back preserving a late 19th century aesthetic. Reservations required. 20 West Main St., Oyster Bay. Visit RaynhamHallMuseum.org for reservations and information.

**Book talk**

Christopher Minty, of the University of Virginia, examines the origins of the American Revolution in New York City through the lens of political culture and the development of loyalist networks, Thursday, Feb. 29, 5:30-7 p.m., at Raynham hall Museum. He'll discuss his recent book, "Unfriendly to Liberty: Loyalist Networks and the Coming of the American Revolution in New York City." 30 W. Main St., Oyster Bay. Visit RaynhamHallMuseum.org for more information.

**Library Walking Club**

Participate in Glen Cove Public Library's at-your-own-pace hour walk, every Thursday, at 9:15 a.m. All fitness levels are welcome. Jumpstart your New Year's resolution of better wellness or take the first steps to improving fitness. 4 Glen Cove Ave., Glen Cove. Register at GlencoveLibrary.org or call (516) 676-2130 for more information.

**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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RichnerLIVE's third annual R.E.A.L. Awards will spotlight entrepreneurs, professionals, and visionaries in Long Island's real estate and related industries who have achieved success in their respective roles while also being actively involved in community contributions and advocacy.

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## ON THE ROAD WITH A TAKEOUT QUEEN

## Dessert before dinner to go

Sometimes I think we should rename the main course during our meals “the waiting for dessert course.” I always feel I should eat something substantial before having dessert. But why? Why not eat dessert first and get it over with? With this in mind, I recently enjoyed takeout in new restaurants and fun eateries around town where the main courses were delicious, but the new desserts were the stars of the show. If you have a meal in any of the places below, eat the dessert first, then the entrée.

**Honey's Bistro (6 Railroad Ave., Glen Head)** As you enter this new, bright, and inviting bistro, you'll be greeted by counters filled with daily store-baked peanut butter and cherry jam mud pies, vanilla cream Italian doughnuts, lemon berry croissants, pistachio tiramisu, and much more. Follow it with salads, sandwiches, bowls, and soups. To name a few, there are harissa chicken sandwiches, bowls of hoisin glazed

jerk shrimp, and my favorite: the Caesar salad with Cajun cauliflower florets and crispy chickpeas hiding beneath lettuce leaves. Great bonus: Since the bistro is located next to the Glen Head LIRR train station, order your meal while you're on the train and pick it up as soon as you get off.

**Kissaki Sushi (407 Plandome Rd., Manhasset)** Give a warm welcome to this non-traditional Japanese restaurant with sensational sushi. I think the most interesting dishes are the main courses and desserts that are prepared with combined Japanese and Italian ingredients. Start with the Matcha Tiramisu dessert. It's Italian lady fingers soaking in rich, sweet Japanese matcha dressing, topped with pistachios. Next, move on to the entrée, the Dashi pasta, which is spaghetti wrapped in smoky, creamy Japanese

dashi sauce, topped with sesame bread crumbs. It's such a fun dining adventure.

**Mill Creek Tavern (275 Bayville Ave., Bayville)** Begin your dinner with the rainbow cookie cheesecake—which will be available for a limited time. It's a slice of rainbow cookie cake with a thin layer of cheesecake in the center, topped with raspberry sauce. Choose your next course from a group of comfort foods on the Sunday supper special menu. I plan to float through February with the Hungarian



CATHI TUROW

goulash (featured only on Sundays), chicken potpie, and MCT meat loaf. My choice this week was a very generous portion of shepherd's pie. I ate most of it for dinner, then combined the leftovers with vegetables the next day.

**Subway (Glen Cove, Sea Cliff)** There

are new one-foot-long desserts. Since you won't want to be too full to eat them, start your lunch with the foot-long chocolate chip cookie. Your server will warm it up, so it will be toasty, soft and chewy. The warm foot-long pretzels and churros are yummy, too. Follow your sweet treat with the usual Subway favorites.

**Foster (39 Roslyn Ave., Sea Cliff)** In this popular farm-to-table style restaurant, begin your meal with the dessert of the century — chocolate chip bread pudding. Follow it with two new entrees: house-made linguine with Peconic Bay scallops, fennel and onions and the udon hot pot with mushrooms, bok choy and chili crisp. The creamiest cauliflower soup ever is also amazing.

With menus like these, who in their right mind would ever cook again? See you next month!

Cathi Turow can be reached at: [cturoutakeout@gmail.com](mailto:cturoutakeout@gmail.com)

## THE GREAT BOOK GURU

# Birds of a feather?

Dear Great Book Guru, We are interested in starting a small book club reading only small but extraordinary books filled with thought-provoking ideas. Any suggestions?

Thinking Small

Dear Thinking Small, I just finished in about three hours, the perfect book for you and your friends: “The Vulnerables,” by Sigrid Nunez. In 249 pages Nunez covers aging, friendship, literature, grief, memory, and yes, zoology in a beautifully meditative style.

Set in the first months of the pandemic, the novel tells the story of three “vulnerables” who find themselves in lockdown in a luxurious New York City apartment. The trio includes our narrator, a woman in her seventies, a young college student with a history of psychiatric breakdowns, and a spirited parrot, all vulnerable in different ways.

When her friend finds herself on the West Coast unable to return,

she asks the narrator to care for her parrot who is alone because everyone in the building has fled the city for their second homes upstate. The narrator spends much of her days and nights thinking about her past and present with many references to her favorite authors, especially Joan Didion, Virginia Woolf and



ANN DIPIETRO

Charles Dickens. As a writer herself she questions the value of literature in difficult situations.

Through a series of miscommunications, Vetch, a young, troubled college student, arrives to share the apartment, and the two form a mutually beneficial alliance. Eureka the parrot serves as an ever-present source of muted comic relief.

Throughout this novel, we see evidence that even the smallest acts of kindness and generosity can make a huge difference in people's lives. Highly recommended! ?

Would you like to ask the Great Book Guru for a book suggestion? Contact her at [annmdipietro@gmail.com](mailto:annmdipietro@gmail.com).

## HERALD LEGAL 0215 PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK - COUNTY OF NASSAU DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE FOR HOME EQUITY MORTGAGE ASSET-BACKED TRUST, SERIES INABS 2005-A, HOME EQUITY MORTGAGE ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES INABS 2005-A, V.

VITALI LEGUENKI A/K/A VITALI LEGENKI, ET AL. NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO A Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated October 24, 2023, and entered in the Office of the Clerk of the County of Nassau, wherein DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE FOR HOME EQUITY MORTGAGE ASSET-BACKED TRUST, SERIES INABS 2005-A, HOME EQUITY MORTGAGE ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES INABS 2005-A is the Plaintiff and VITALI LEGUENKI A/K/A VITALI LEGENKI, ET AL. are the Defendant(s). I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction RAIN OR SHINE at the NASSAU COUNTY SUPREME COURT, NORTH SIDE STEPS, 100 SUPREME COURT DRIVE, MINEOLA, NY 11501, on February 28, 2024 at

2:00PM, premises known as 20 VALENTINE STREET, GLEN COVE, NY 11542: Section 31, Block 35, Lot 7: ALL THAT CERTAIN PLOT, PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND, SITUATE, LYING AND BEING IN THE CITY OF GLEN COVE, COUNTY OF NASSAU AND STATE OF NEW YORK Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index # 611401/2018. Ellen Durst, Esq. - Referee. Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 310, Westbury, New York 11590, Attorneys for Plaintiff. All foreclosure sales will be conducted in accordance with Covid-19 guidelines including, but not limited to, social distancing and mask wearing. \*LOCATION OF SALE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DAY OF IN ACCORDANCE WITH COURT/CLERK DIRECTIVES. 144540

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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, February 20, 2024, 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: February 9, 2023 ANDREW KAUFMAN Chairman GLEN COVE PLANNING BOARD 144931

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, February 20, 2024, at 7:30 p.m., at the Council Chambers, City

Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York 11542, when all interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views. The hearing will be on the application of SV110 Development LLC for a special use permit and site plan approval to allow additions to an existing 2 1/2 story mixed-use building and conversion into eight (8) apartments consisting of two (2) studio apartments and six (6) two-bedroom apartments with nineteen (19) accessory parking spaces plus two (2) retail spaces. The property is located at 110 School St., Glen Cove, NY, located in the Glen Cove B-1 Central Commercial District, CBD Overlay, and designated on the Nassau County Land and Tax Map as Section 23, Block 53, Lot 36. 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: February 5, 2024 ANDREW KAUFMAN Chairman GLEN COVE PLANNING BOARD 144930

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## OPINIONS

## I'll never forget Bob Beckwith

**L**ong Island lost an American icon with the passing of Baldwin resident Bob Beckwith last week.

The image of Beckwith standing with President George W. Bush amid the ruins of the World Trade Center days after the Sept. 11 attacks will forever personify America's unyielding courage and quiet determination in the face of horrific tragedy and massive challenge.



**PETER KING**

In the aftermath of 9/11, the deadliest attack ever on American soil, the country was shattered. I traveled to New York from Washington on Friday, Sept. 14. Bush was on Air Force One,

and I was on an accompanying Air Force jet with other members of Congress from New York.

Riding in a government vehicle from LaGuardia Airport to Lower Manhattan, I was struck by how quickly New York had become a ghost town. There was virtually no traffic on its usually congested streets, and just handfuls of pedestrians on otherwise busy sidewalks. We were driven to a corner adjacent to the wreck-

age of the twin towers. Though I had worked in an office building on Vesey Street years before, when the towers were being constructed, I had difficulty getting my bearings amid all the destruction.

We were told that the president was several blocks away, and would be making his way toward us, when we heard a loud roar and cheers of "USA!" This was before the age of social media, so it wasn't until I got home that I saw the video on television of Bush standing atop a damaged vehicle, shouting into a bullhorn that "the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon!" His left arm was wrapped around the shoulder of a strong-faced, quietly confident, veteran New York City firefighter.

This image resonated with me like the iconic photo of the Marines raising the Stars and Stripes at Iwo Jima inspired a previous generation of Americans. At that moment, on Sept. 14, 2001, Americans knew we would not be vanquished. We would fight back with American spirit, determination and courage. Overnight, photos of the scene flew around the world, including to the cover of Time magazine.

In the subsequent days I would talk

with firefighter friends who had worked with Bob Beckwith over the years. Everything they said about him was positive. The most common descriptions of him included "solid," "regular guy," "loyal" and "very patriotic."

Sure enough, when I got to know Bob and his wife, Barbara, I saw that he was all that and more. He gave no indication that his image had been seen by tens of millions of people around the world, or that he had visited Bush in the White House and maintained a friendship with him. He was a thoroughly decent man who was proud to have been a firefighter, and considered himself no more

important than other firefighters.

Often I would be invited to join retired firefighters at monthly breakfasts at a Lindenhurst diner. I was always struck by how Beckwith, an internationally known symbol of 9/11, mingled and sat so unassumingly as just one of the guys, expecting no recognition or special acknowledgment. Rosemary and I became friendly with Bob and Barbara. We visited their home and invited them to ours for Christmas parties. Bob campaigned for me, handing out flyers at shopping centers, appearing at fundrais-

ing events and attending swearing-in ceremonies in Washington.

In November, Rosemary and I visited him when we heard his health had taken a turn for the worse. It was a heartwarming visit. Bob was as sharp as ever, talking with us about his friendship with Bush and how he used his fame to focus public attention on the need to help burned and injured firefighters. He also reminisced about his 30 years of service in the FDNY, without ever making himself the center of the story.

Though he was using a walker that day, he got around easily, using it more as a safeguard than a necessity. As always, Barbara not only joined in the conversation, but had coffee and pastries for us as we sat around the dining room table. Bob wasn't kidding himself. He knew his cancer had spread, and he would be undergoing immunotherapy. But he was both hopeful and fatalistic, hoping it would work while knowing it might not.

Bob Beckwith fought hard to the end and died as he lived, with courage and class. It was my privilege to be able to call him my friend. Bob Beckwith and 9/11. The right man for a historic moment. R.I.P.

*Peter King is a former congressman, and a former chair of the House Committee on Homeland Security. Comments? pking@liherald.com.*

## Stop playing petty political games with county resources

**F**or Nassau County, 2024 is a year of new beginnings — a fact that is evidenced by the ascension of two new legislative caucus leaders and five new legislators. I was looking forward to a fresh start and greater bipartisan cooperation as we confront the county's most important issues.

Unfortunately, our first meeting did not go as I hoped.

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, the federal government allotted funding to help local communities weather the crisis and recover from the many challenges it created. The county received roughly \$385 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds, and, as of Jan. 22, still had around



**DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON**

\$299 million left to allocate. By law, ARPA funding must be allocated by the end of this year and spent by the end of 2026. Otherwise it will be clawed back by the federal government.

Some municipalities have used the money for tax rebates for residents, to launch medical bill forgiveness programs or to establish other initiatives that directly aid small businesses and non-

profit organizations. On the other hand, County Executive Bruce Blakeman has recently stressed two ideas — moving more than \$222 million into the county's operating budget, and using \$10 million to help stage and promote a series of galas and other celebrations of the county's 125th anniversary. By comparison, Blakeman proposed setting aside a relatively small portion of the funding — \$15 million — to support various nonprofits and special districts that deliver ARPA-approved services.

Initially, the minority caucus advocated for the inclusion of roughly \$12 million for worthwhile agencies in our seven districts. When presented with the \$15 million number for the entire county, our hope was to reach a compromise that increased the total to \$19 million, with an agreement to divide the funds equally, with \$1 million for each of the 19 districts. That would have allowed each legislator to help arrange for the distribution of resources to the most severely impacted programs and initiatives to help communities fully rebound from the pandemic.

Ultimately, the majority would not commit to an equitable distribution approach, or even a small increase of the

allocation.

Naturally, this was a disappointing outcome. And recent events have made the absence of an equity agreement a real concern.

For the past several years, applications for grant funding in my district — for fire departments, public libraries, and more — seem to have been stonewalled by the Blakeman administration. During our ARPA negotiations, implications were made that the funding was indeed being held up. The reason? The administration didn't approve of my comments in a recent column, urging it to expedite the delivery of opioid settlement funds to agencies that deliver life-saving prevention, treatment and recovery services.

Specifically, when I argued that the administration's approach is "badly out of touch with the needs of our constituents," it was alleged that I engaged in "personal attacks."

By fast-tracking approval of \$10 million in funding for 125th-anniversary celebrations while opioid funding continued to languish on our ledger books, the administration made its priorities clear: Pointing that out is a policy critique, and I stand by my statement today. I am still dismayed that the county held back hundreds of

**W**e need to make better use of federal funding left over from the pandemic.

millions of dollars in remaining ARPA and opioid settlement funds for as long as it did to bolster its reserves for the sake of impressing rating agencies and potentially generating interest on the funds.

In my opinion, by acquiescing to the administration's wishes, the Legislature's presiding officer, Howard Kopel, missed a relatively easy opportunity to start off his tenure in a good-faith, bipartisan manner. Even after hearing directly from dozens of organizations that would have put those resources to such good use, the majority rubber-stamped the administration's plan and gave every indication that the county executive's office will have the final say on where this \$15 million will be spent. While I hope the office will be responsive to the will of the people and each district will receive a fair share, that outcome is now out of the control of the members of the minority caucus.

Yes, this was an incredibly disappointing start to the year, but it's just that — the start. I'm still optimistic that we will do a better job for the people of Nassau County in the months ahead, and that the county will use this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to give worthwhile organizations that serve our communities the resources they deserve.

*Delia DeRiggi-Whitton is the County Legislature's new minority leader, and represents the 11th District.*

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(516) 569-4000**HERALD EDITORIAL****Saying goodbye to a true American hero**

**“W**hen the terrorists attacked, Bob suited up. And, like so many brave first responders, raced toward the danger to save and search for others.”

Those were the words former President George W. Bush shared in a statement last week about Bob Beckwith, a Queens firefighter from Baldwin who had indeed raced to the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, and ultimately stood with the president a few days later as he gave a rousing speech to the first responders with nothing but a bullhorn in that iconic moment.

Except that Beckwith — who died on Feb. 4, at 91 — wasn't on active duty in 2001. He was 69, and had been retired from the New York City Fire Department since the mid-1990s, following a stellar 30-year career. But it was in his blood to rush and help, and that was the only thing on his mind as he raced to the scene in search of survivors, donning his old firefighter helmet from Ladder Co. 164.

It was by pure chance that the president spotted him that day. But once he did, Bush wanted nothing more than to have Beckwith at his side while he sought to build optimism during one of the country's darkest periods.

“I want you to know that America today is on bended knee in prayer for the people whose lives we lost here,” Bush told the first responders that day, his left arm draped around Beckwith. “For the workers who work here. For the families

who mourn. This nation stands with the good people of New York City, and New Jersey and Connecticut, as we mourn the loss of thousands of our citizens.”

“We can't hear you,” someone shouted from the crowd. Without missing a beat, the president yelled back into the bullhorn: “I can hear you!” earning cheers from those gathered around him.

“I can hear you. The rest of the world hears you. And the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon!”

Afterward, Bush extended his hand to Beckwith, who shook it proudly before stepping off the rubble so he could get back to work.

Beckwith wasn't introduced that day, but that didn't keep the world from knowing who he was. From multiple news reports in the months that followed to the cover of Time magazine, the image of Bush standing with Beckwith demonstrated the resolve of the American people, helping to begin the healing process.

Yet those days were very difficult for Beckwith. Of the 2,977 people who died that day, 343 were FDNY members who had raced into the twin towers as others desperately tried to find their way out. Another 71 were law enforcement officers — primarily from the New York City Police Department — while 55 others were military personnel, most of them killed in the attack on the Pentagon in Washington.

After it seemed the initial danger had passed, another remained hidden among

the rubble, and it attacked every one of those brave men and women who sifted through the debris that day and in the weeks and months that followed. Cancers believed to have developed after exposure to the toxic debris sickened many of them in the years afterward, and claimed many lives. Last September, after the death of former EMT Hilda Vannata and retired firefighter Robert Fulco, the number of FDNY members killed in the aftermath by those diseases equaled the total who died on Sept. 11 itself.

And that number, horrifically, will only grow. The first responders and their families will continue to need our help. And it's imperative that our leaders at both the state and federal level continue to ensure that funding is in place to make that happen.

Bob Beckwith lived to 91, capping an extraordinary life. But even his was cut short by a 9/11-related illness. Something he never would have developed if he had just stayed home that day.

But that wasn't Bob Beckwith. And it certainly wasn't who President Bush saw that day at ground zero. Beckwith was a man who raced toward danger while others ran from it. And retired or not, it wasn't going to stop him.

“I was proud to have Bob by my side at ground zero days later,” Bush said after learning of Beckwith's death. “And privileged to stay in touch with this patriot over the years.”

Rest in peace, Bob Beckwith. You truly do define what it means to be an American.

**LETTERS****Congestion pricing will be good for Long Islanders**

To the Editor:

In his Jan. 18-24 column, “Why can't we be told the truth about congestion pricing?” State Sen. Jack Martins implied that New Yorkers are being tricked into congestion pricing for the benefit of the MTA. Nothing could be further from the truth.

There's no question that charging drivers to enter Manhattan below 60th Street will reduce traffic and speed up buses, taxis and emergency vehicles in what is today the most congested district in the United States. With less traffic comes less air pollution and safer streets. That's what happened in London, Stockholm, Milan and Singapore when they implemented similar programs.

And yes, revenue raised will go to investments in public transit, but Mr. Martins should celebrate that — after all, 80 percent of Nassau County commuters to Manhattan get there by transit. And a third of all Long Islanders' wages are earned in Manhattan.

Investments in the LIRR are good for Long



## OPINIONS

# Unraveling the mysteries of love

**F**orget scary movies or the end of the world — what scares almost all of us the most, by far, is getting a voicemail from a family member, telling you to call back right away because “it’s important.”

My 90-year-old father did that last week, a message I got on my phone as I was walking from what had been an enlightening and productive meeting with a school superintendent. The last several months had been filled with difficult calls like this. My mother’s cancer. My stepmother’s passing. Learning that a former colleague is gravely ill.

I couldn’t begin to imagine what this call might be about. Not wanting to stress as I dialed my dad’s number, I calmed myself by joking under my breath that my parents probably went

out and got married.

“Dad, it’s Mike. What’s wrong?”  
“Nothing’s wrong. But I wanted to let you know your mother and I got married.”

This wasn’t my imagination. This was actually coming from the other end of the line.

“Wait, what? When?”  
“What time is it now?”  
My dad paused for a moment. “Oh, about an hour ago.”

Since my stepmother died, my parents had reconnected. My dad moved from Florida back to where I grew up in Pennsylvania late last year to be closer to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. And my mom happened to already be there, with room in her house for him to live.

Although they divorced in 1998, my parents remained friends. They didn’t have to co-parent or anything — all their kids were grown. But even in the worst of times, if two people truly love

each other, can anything really keep them apart?

That’s a mystery of love — one of many. And it was no coincidence, I’m sure, that all of this took place on the lead-up to Valentine’s Day.

Not much is known about Valentine, except that he lived and died during the third century, ministering to persecuted Christians in the Roman Empire — if you can believe what Wikipedia shares. But so much of Valentine’s story is obscured by legend, and it’s really not clear what led our culture to revere him.

More than 200 years after his death, Pope Gelasius I established a Feast of St. Valentine to take place on Feb. 14, to honor his martyrdom. Centuries later, Geoffrey Chaucer — the English poet who brought us “The Canterbury Tales” — wrote about Valentine in his poem “Parlement of Foules,” linking

him to romance and lovers for what is believed to be the first time.

Love happens to be the language many of us — if not all of us — relate to the most. The power of love can build new worlds or destroy them — and do just about everything in between.

The famed radio psychiatrist Dr. David Viscott once said, “To love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides.” And 20th-century philosopher Rabindranath Tagore described love as “an endless mystery, for it has nothing else to explain it.”

My parents woke up one morning last week and decided between breakfast and buying some groceries that they would give marriage another go, decades after they called it quits.

Love is indeed an endless mystery. But as long as it continues to bring people together — like it did my mother and father once again — keeping it a mystery is worth the price.

*Michael Hinman is executive editor of Herald Community Newspapers. Comments? mhinman@liherald.com.*



**MICHAEL HINMAN**

## LETTERS

Island residents and businesses. Improvements like the Third Track project that Mr. Martins opposed, but the MTA got done — on time and under budget — benefit hundreds of thousands of Long Islanders every day. Congestion pricing will make even more of those possible.

**JOHN J. MCCARTHY**  
*MTA chief of policy and external relations*

### Every vote counted

To the Editor:

On Tuesday my neighbors braved the cold, the wet snow and treacherous roads and sidewalks to perform their civic duty. They came out to vote.

Over 1,000 Sea Cliff residents voted. They walked in with canes, crutches and walkers. They were wet and cold, but they came. They came to make a difference. Yes, even today, a single vote can matter. The puddle in front of my sign-in desk was really a beautiful sight.

Regardless of who you voted for, thanks, neighbors, for the tremendous turnout.

**MIKE THOMAS**  
*Inspector,  
Nassau County Board of Elections*

### Too many L.I. teens are driving distracted

To the Editor:

Recently, a fatal issue has been making headlines on Long Island. While

motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15- to 18-year-olds in the U.S., Nassau and Suffolk are two of the deadliest counties for traffic fatalities in New York. According to the Institute for Traffic Safety and Management, Long Island averages 18.2 roadway deaths per month. That number skyrocketed to 31 in August 2023.

Crashes claimed 243 lives in 2022, 29 percent more than in 2019. On Jan. 2 of this year, on the Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway in North Massapequa, while returning to school after the holidays, Dylan Nuccio went off the road at Exit 5’s northbound ramp, hit a tree, and flipped the car, a crash that took his life.

We at EAC Network, a nonprofit comprising 114 social service programs helping New Yorkers in need, can educate more teen drivers and their parents to decrease these numbers and save lives.

Rachel Lugo, EAC’s division director and the force behind our Driving Equation program, partnered with community agencies and Long Island high schools to promote safe driving and reduce distractions behind the wheel through free educational programs including Second Chances in Occupant Protection for Everyone, or SCOPE, and Teen Driving Equation. Lugo also oversees Safe Start, a program promoting child passenger safety by educating parents and child care providers.

According to Lisa Mirabile, an involved parent, an EAC defensive driving program participant, an EAC Network Board member and the president and CEO of Vertigo Media Group, “The EAC program is invaluable. When a young person receives their license, they

## FRAMEWORK by Tim Baker



Celebrating 60 years since the Beatles first landed — TWA Hotel at Kennedy Airport

don’t realize they’re driving a weapon. EAC’s defensive driving program showed my son — through live examples and testimony from EMTs, police officers and victims — what it’s like to live in the aftermath of catastrophic accidents. The instructor revealed how he lost his own son. It brought my son to tears — he even hugged me. It scared him straight. This saves lives and should be taught in every high school. I’m so grateful that we had this experience. It made my son a respectful driver with no accidents to date.”

As Long Island mourns, swift results are essential. The community must unite, support partners like EAC, and emphasize driver responsibility. It’s time to act. Any Long Island high school interested in free educational driving programs for parents, caregivers and students can contact the EAC Network’s Second Chances in Occupant Protection for Everyone at (631) 648-7100, ext. 210. Together we can reverse the devastating statistics.

**GILLIAN HANNA**  
*Public Relations, EAC Network*

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