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Development sparks anger, tensions

By **ROKSANA AMID**

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At a Planning Board meeting on March 5, the atmosphere inside the packed City Hall chamber was charged with anticipation, tension, and anger over another proposed large-scale mixed-use development in Glen Cove.

The focus of the public hearing was the fate of the North Shore Triangle, which includes Staples, and the proposal for 148 apartments, 37,000 square feet of commercial space for a restaurant and grocery store, and a 370-space garage. After an hour-and-a-half-long presentation of site plans and a traffic study, by KIR Glen Cove 025 LLC, a subsidiary of Kimco Realty Corporation, residents who were concerned about the development spoke passionately about preserving the city's charm and character, and said the project would negatively affect its quality of life, slow the responsiveness of emergency services with added traffic and contribute to gentrification.

"Build it and they shall come," John Perrone, of Glen Cove, said during the public comment portion of the meeting, referring to prior promises made by developers that their projects would benefit city businesses. "We have heard this from developer after developer. It hasn't worked. We are

Staples is a staple project in our community.

JOHN PERRONE
Glen Cove

quickly developing into a community of renters. Staples is a staple project in our community."

The development was originally proposed to the board in 2022. Building heights would range from 45 to 65 feet, with some architectural features reaching as high as 74 feet. It would include the re-establishment of the Highland Road traffic connection, and create more than 11,000 square feet of public plazas and enhanced sidewalks along School Street. Ten percent of the residential units would be designated as affordable housing.

Nick Brown, vice president of development for Kimco, said the aim of the project is to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Roni Chastain/Herald

Marsha Silverman, far left, Capt. Cynthia Robson, Geraldine Hart and Dana Arschin took part in the fourth Female Firsts panel at City Hall. The annual event encourages women to share their stories and advice on how to succeed in male-dominated industries.

Women leaders inspire and share their success stories

By **ROKSANA AMID**

ramid@iherald.com

For decades, women have faced various challenges in male-dominated industries, including discrimination, lack of support, and biased attitudes. Despite these obstacles, many women have shattered the glass ceiling and emerged as leaders in their fields, paving the way for future generations.

When women leaders tell their own stories, they expand the possible narratives for other women and girls, something that City Councilwoman Marsha Silverman understands well.

"Sometimes you just have to open your

eyes," Silverman said as she moderated the fourth Female Firsts conference at City Hall on Tuesday. "Sometimes there are amazing gems and stories right in front of you that you wouldn't even know exist."

The event featured inspirational stories and sage advice from three highly successful women. Geraldine Hart, the associate vice president of public safety and community engagement at Hofstra University, was the senior supervisory resident agent in the FBI's Long Island office, and the first female police commissioner of Suffolk County. Capt. Cynthia Robson is a master mariner, licensed to sail vessels of any tonnage on

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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HERALD SCHOOLS

Glen Cove schools celebrate reading week

Joan Beset, chair of Glen Cove Beautification, held a trash picker in one hand, and a bucket in the other hand while explaining to first-graders at Deasy Elementary School that keeping the environment safe and clean is important to wildlife.

“There’s all sorts of terrible danger to animals from the plastic and other debris” Beset said, referring to the plastic that holds together a six-pack of soda cans. “If you don’t cut them apart animals put their head inside and then they grow around that and then as they get bigger and bigger their necks get stuck on them.”

The presentation comes at the close of Pick a Reading Partner week, held at the four elementary schools within the Glen Cove School District — Connolly, Landing, Deasy, and Gribbin.

Themed “March Madness” and generously sponsored by the PTA, this week-long celebration, organized by the district-wide PARP committee, aimed to ignite a passion for reading among students. As part of this initiative, the read-a-thon is currently underway, with students encouraged to collectively read 40,000 minutes across each building.

Throughout the PARP period, students were treated to activities designed to promote literacy. Highlights of the PARP festivities included celebrated guest author and illustrator, John Sazaklis, known for his contributions to over 100 children’s books, including the beloved Ben 10 series. He engaged students with his inspiring presence at Landing and Connolly Schools.

At Deasy School, renowned children’s author Alyssa Satin Capucilli captivated students with readings from her acclaimed Biscuit series, offering insights into the world of book creation.

Gribbin School was delighted to welcome Claudia Marra, a teacher within the district who also happens to be the author of heartwarming children’s books.

Beset later mentioned that often children develop habits in their early years that set the precedent for their lifestyle as adults. Teaching children how to take care of the environment and foster a love of reading when they’re young will help instill a belief system that is good for the environment and good for their future.

“The earlier you learn about anything, the better it is for society in general,” she said. “I always compare



Courtesy Office of Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck

Deputy Mayor Donna McNaughton read to students during reading week.

recycling to the anti-smoking campaign, and look how few people smoke these days.”

Susan Poulos, the district’s coordinator of social studies, said the program is part of the district-wide initiative to help encourage each student to become better global citizens.

“This is so important for our students to learn because they have to learn how to give back and protect our Earth,” Poulos explained. “So being a good citizen, and helping our students give back and take care of our earth and others is really at the heart of the social studies curriculum.”

—Roksana Amid



When Joan Bessette came for reading week, she brought books and a jar of compost for students like Nathaniel DuBois to look at.



Students at Deasy Elementary were fascinated to learn about the environment and how they can become better global citizens.



Roni Chastain/Herald photos

After showing students a book on wildlife, Joan Bessette explained the dangers of pollution to students at Deasy Elementary.

Nassau makes federal case of trans ban

March 14, 2024 – GLEN COVE HERALD

By PARKER SCHUG

pschug@liherald.com

Bruce Blakeman wants to ban transgender athletes who identify as female from participating in women sports on Nassau County playing fields. But Letitia James says he can't do that.

So, the Nassau County executive is joining Mark Mullen — the father of a female athlete he says is protected by such a ban — to file a federal lawsuit contesting the state attorney general's cease-and-desist order halting Blakeman's efforts to restrict who can be on a sports team.

"What the attorney general was asking us to do was a violation of federal Constitutional law and federal statutory law," Blakeman told reporters in Mineola last week. "Our response was to file a lawsuit, for a declaratory judgment, requiring the attorney general to come before a federal judge and explain why this cease-and-desist order has been issued and the threat of sanctions and litigations against the county, when we in Nassau County are protecting women and girls, who are a protected class under the constitution, and under federal law."

James sent her cease-and-desist letter to Blakeman on March 1, demanding he rescind his executive order banning transgender athletes identifying as female from participating in women's



Parker Schug/Herald

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman says he's filing a federal lawsuit contesting the state attorney general's cease-and-desist order on his ban of transgender athletes identifying as female playing in women's sports on county property.

sports in county facilities. She called the executive order was transphobic and illegal under the state's human rights and civil rights laws.

With the cease-and-desist, James ordered the county to rescind the executive order or face potential legal action.

"Not only will the order impact a wide array of Nassau-based teams and leagues, it will undoubtedly deter inclusive teams and transgender women and girls who participate in women's and girls' sports from other parts of the state who want to participate in sporting events and competitions in Nassau County," James wrote.

A spokesperson from the attorney

general's office reiterated that after Blakeman's news conference, saying the laws protecting people from discrimination are not "up for debate."

"The executive order is illegal," the spokesperson said, "and it will not stand in New York."

Blakeman cited the New York City Marathon as an example where males and females compete exclusively in their own classified groups.

"There is a reason for those classifications," he said. "Males are bigger, stronger and faster. And it wouldn't be a fair competition with females."

The county's action is consistent with the Constitution, Blakeman added, treat-

ing women and girls as a protected class under federal law.

"Transgender women who are biological males are not a protected class under federal law," he said.

And because of that, Blakeman believes his order is not transphobic.

"Transgender athletes can compete freely here in Nassau County, and we welcome it," Blakeman said. "If you're a biological male and you identify yourself as a female, you can play against other biological males. Or, you can play in a co-ed league."

Blakeman posed an idea with reporters of starting a transgender league, something he said his parks commissioner, Darcy Belyea, is open to.

Blakeman issued his executive order last month with County Legislator Samantha Goetz and sports activist Kimberly Ross standing by his side.

The executive order demands sports, leagues, organizations, teams, programs or sport entities operating in county facilities to first designate themselves based on gender makeup, and then only accept athletes who meet that criteria according to what was originally listed on their birth certificate.

While those born male would not be allowed to participate in female teams, the order does not ban someone born female from joining a male team, or for anyone who is transgender from participating on a co-ed team.

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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.

Many residents say 'Staples must stay'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

enhance the area by addressing its “outdated design” and lack of curb appeal, particularly along School Street.

“It also has one unique characteristic that we don’t see at some of our shopping centers, which is that there are a couple of large loading docks that actually face out into the parking lot itself,” Brown said. “Typically, for other shopping centers, you have loading and service areas that are hidden behind, to the rear of the site. Here they face out into the site, and that’s really not ideal, from an aesthetic standpoint, as well as from an operational standpoint.”

Grace Slezak, a broker for Destiny International Realty, approached the board with Nancy Sobeck, who held two poster boards. On them were a list of 22 developers that own a total of 4,900 apartments in the city. Slezak argued that Glen Cove’s population of renters exceeds its ability to accommodate parking in places like the Triangle, which has 148 parking spaces. The lot is used by visitors going to nearby stores, the Hanmaum Baptist Church and the Regency At Glen Cove.

“Now it’s going to have zero (parking spaces),” Slezak said. “Our town is already overdeveloped and already overpopulated. Staples must stay. The children in the school need it. Everyone who wants a computer uses it.”

Two residents voiced their support



Courtesy Kimco Realty Corporation

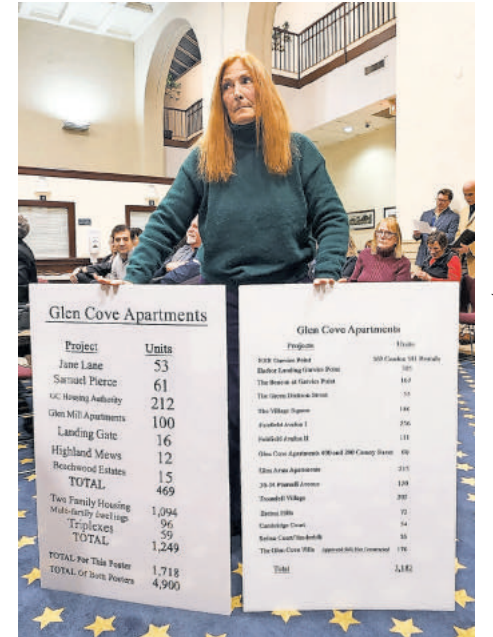
A rendering of the proposed development was shared at the meeting.

for the development. John Robinson, the owner of Glen Cove Massage, said he believed it could alleviate traffic, particularly on Highland Road, and potentially address community concerns about housing costs and the lack of retail options. Robinson said he was wary of the impact of increased truck traffic, but saw the project as an opportunity to create vibrant public spaces like a courtyard, to foster community engagement. The addition of a grocery store,

he said, would significantly benefit the area.

“I feel like I have a bit of an unpopular opinion, but I like this project,” Robinson said. “There’s a lot of opportunity there. I see a lot of people walking from that area to Starbucks, and the AMC area — the location there is very populated.”

But City Councilman Michael Ktistakis said he was concerned about Kimco’s promised grocery store. “Our com-



Roksana Amid/Herald

Nancy Sobeck with posterboards listing the number of apartments in Glen Cove.

munity is at stake,” he said after the meeting. “This is where we have to increase our defenses, and not let them get away with whatever they feel like. “They mentioned the word ‘grocer’ all night long. How could you say there’s a grocer when there’s no building? There’s a lot of deception there.”

The next hearing before the Planning Board has not yet been scheduled.

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Herald file photo

In growing numbers, local villages are passing noise ordinance to curb excessive or unwanted noise in their neighborhoods. But airplanes — perhaps the biggest noisemakers — are beyond local jurisdiction. The Town of Hempstead is working with the Federal Aviation Administration, but with little success.

Defending against an invisible enemy

Can laws solve the problems of noise pollution?

By Nicole Formisano & Will Sheeline

Continuing a series exploring the impact pollution from air, noise and light has on our communities and way of life. Thoughts? Questions? Ideas? Email us at exeditor@liherald.com.

How can local representatives protect people from an invisible, ever-present hazard? That's the question small governments across Nassau County have been trying to answer when it comes to noise pollution — all to varying degrees of success.

"Inevitably, you might be creating a standard that is unfair, that is inequitable," said Kevin Walsh, an attorney who's helped draft noise ordinances for municipalities like Malverne and Farmingdale. "Not because it isn't applied equally, but because it hurts people that don't have a problem with it."

Noise pollution — excessive or frequent noise — is said to come with health risks like increased stress, hypertension and sleep disruption, according to the World Health Organization. But for some communities, dealing with excessive noise is nothing new.

Glen Cove's noise ordinance, for example, has been largely unchanged since 1997, limiting noise that is "clearly audible at 50 feet." Village ordinances for Sea Cliff — dating back to 1995 with updates more than a decade ago — define unreasonable noise as any constant, continuous or repetitive loud sound which "annoys" or "disturbs" the peace and comfort of neighboring residents.

But — despite what neighbors of barking dogs or chronic partiers may

wish — there is no legal definition of "annoying." Noise ordinances often use subjective language, because noise pollution is a subjective experience, Walsh said. Sound that irks one neighbor may be hardly noticeable by another.

Finding a way to differentiate

"It's difficult because it's trying to regulate human behavior," he said. "When you try to regulate people's enjoyment of their existence like this, on relatively subjective degrees, it's a problem."

When someone wants to play music while their neighbor wants their child to go to sleep, where does law enforcement draw the line? The incongruous — yet equally defensible — interests are "making it more and more difficult to get a balance between what is acceptable noise and what is not," Walsh said.

"It's a no-win situation, because, inevitably, you make one person happy. You're making one person sad."

Managing these conflicting expectations can result in local officials walking a tightrope. But Elena Villafane, Sea Cliff's mayor, says that is an inherent part of serving the community.

"So, as with every local government, where you are managing how people reside in a community together, you're always balancing a variety of interests," she said. "Right now, we seem to be at a happy equilibrium."

Finding that balance

So, the question becomes, what is a fair standard to regulate noise? Do municipalities put the noise limit at the lower end to shield more sensitive people, and risk discouraging others from enjoying time outside?

Or do municipalities create more lenient ordinances that allow more noise, and risk leaving sensitive people unprotected?

It's a balancing act Glen Cove has had to grapple with.

"It is a very subjective criteria when one person's noise pollution is another person's 'fun time,' so to speak," said Christopher Ortiz, deputy chief of the Glen Cove Police Department. "So, in that sense, it is difficult trying to precisely determine what is an excessive amount of noise, and it becomes kind of a gray area."

And that "fun time" is on the rise, especially since Covid-19. People these days are spending more time in their backyards since the pandemic, Walsh said.

Malverne mayor Tim Sullivan noticed that trend as well.

"What we found is, during Covid, a lot of homeowners invested in their backyards," Sullivan said. "Whether pools, or outdoor bars and kitchens and sound systems. The backyard has become a renewed entertainment focus of the home."

Sound-measuring technology,

though, has dramatically improved in the decades since those original laws were passed, Walsh said — another reason why more governments across the county are passing updated noise ordinances.

Malverne's noise ordinance, passed in December, limits outdoor music to 80 decibels — about the noise level of a vacuum cleaner — measured at the property line. Glen Cove considers 65 decibels — about the noise level of a conversation — "disturbing," but also allows for subjectivity by employing a standard of whether the noise is "clearly audible" at 50 feet.

Too many variables?

But even something seemingly objective — such as a measurable standard like decibel level — presents new obstacles. A noise level that constitutes a nuisance to one neighbor may not bother another.

Sometimes, Walsh said, police will visit a property that is technically violating the noise ordinance, but the officer will personally find that the sound level or quality shouldn't break the law. So even with a measurable standard, enforcement is subjective.

And the actual sound level isn't the only thing that matters — the source does, too.

Things like fire whistles and barking dogs polarize neighbors, Villafane said. Gas-powered leaf blowers are another malefactor that often earn their own section of noise ordinances.

The city ordinances also differentiate between how much noise various types of properties can make at different

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Noise laws are often subjective, experts say

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times. For example, a private residence can be penalized for making 50 decibels or more of noise after 10 p.m., and before 7 a.m., while a commercial property operating at the same time would need to reach 70 decibels before neighbors can make a complaint.

These different standards for businesses and private residences can sometimes boil over in communities. Because Long Island is very much suburbia, Walsh said, the interests of commercial and residential parts of towns often conflict — commercial districts often create more noise, which is at odds with the interests of residential communities that typically neighbor them.

Fly-by-night (and day) noise

But the arguably biggest culprits of excessive noise may also be the hardest to manage. The constant drone of airplanes flying overhead is seemingly ever-present, but comes with its own challenges.

With John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia airports right next door, neighbors across the county are dealing with the near-constant drone of planes flying overhead.

The Town of Hempstead created the Town-Village Aircraft Safety and Noise Abatement Committee to deal specifically with this nuisance. But try as they might, local government has no sway over the conduct of airplanes — that's all the Federal Aviation Administration.

"Everyone wants airlines to be safe," said James Vilardi, the noise abatement committee's executive director. "But is there a way to maintain the highest levels of airplane safety, and to accom-

modate the residents on the ground that are dealing with the airplane influence? We maintain that there is."

The committee's primary goal right now is to get accurate, specific decibel readings from FAA monitors.

The problem, Vilardi said, is the information the FAA provides right now is warped because the decibel readings are averaged out among neighborhoods.

But if the committee gets the raw data and finds that the decibels violate municipal or federal code, they can appeal to the FAA to make changes.

The FAA, however, is largely unwilling to even acknowledge the noise abatement committee.

"It's difficult to make changes in their policy without them being willing to talk to us," Vilardi said. "We're pushing as hard as we can to get this data so we can have a real conversation with them."

"Unfortunately, it's a problem that our residents face, that our local elected officials do not have the power to directly impact. "There's no way that the supervisor — or the county executive, or even a congressman — can say 'OK, stop flying over Franklin Square.' Or 'fly 20 feet higher.'"

"They just don't have the jurisdiction to do it."

The timeline for progress is in the air, so to speak, until the federal agency finally has a dialogue with the town.

In the meantime, local governments are still striving for progress in the fight against noise pollution using new and updated noise ordinances. Although noise is largely inescapable, its excess can be mitigated when we focus on what we can control, experts say — local government's responsibility to us, and our responsibility to each other.



Herald file photo

Subjectivity often comes into play when it comes to enforcing noise laws. Some things that break the typical decibel limit, like fireworks on the Fourth of July, are more acceptable than others, like loud music at 2 a.m.



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HERALD SPORTS

Hofstra aims for conference tournament

By ANDREW COEN

sports@liherald.com

After just missing out on reaching its postseason conference tournament for a second straight year, the Hofstra men's lacrosse team is sharply focused on extending its 2024 season into the month of May.

The Pride entered the final season game against Stony Brook in a win or go home scenario and fell 11-10 to its Long Island rivals and missed out on a tiebreaker for the final spot in the four-team league tournament to compete for an automatic qualifier into the NCAA Tournament. The Coastal Athletic Association (CAA) preseason coaches poll projects Hofstra to finish fifth in the eight-team conference, which would leave Hofstra just shy once again of the postseason.

"After losing the tiebreaker two years in a row it doesn't sit well with us," said longtime Hofstra head coach Seth Tierney.

Hofstra enters the start of CAA play this weekend at 3-4 following a 21-9 loss to 18th-ranked North Carolina at home last Saturday in the program's first meeting with the ACC power since 2018.

Junior attackman John Madsen (21 goals) and redshirt junior midfielder Rory Jones (16 goals) have paced the offense so far this season. Madsen, a Locust Valley High School graduate, tallied 27 points as a junior, while Jones neatly set a program record for goals in a game with eight in a season-opening 21-9 win against Wagner.

Madsen and Jones lead a deep Hofstra offense featuring multiple scoring options including Colton Rudd, Griffin Turner and Justin Sykes.

A key part of assuring Hofstra is in the offensive end of the field for much



Photos courtesy Hofstra Athletics Communications

Midfielder Rory Jones is off to a strong start for the Pride with 16 goals through seven games, including eight in the season-opening victory over Wagner.

of the game is the play of graduate student faceoff specialist Chase Patterson, who earned preseason All-CAA honors. Patterson led the CAA in faceoff win-

ning percentage at 59.5 percent last year and is at 60 percent through seven games this season.

"He's been very self motivated and won some big face offs for us," said Tierney of Patterson. "He very much thinks like a coach as even after a successful game he finds the negatives, he finds the ones that he missed and he continues to work each week to miss less and less."

The defense is led by redshirt sophomore goalie Sean Henderson, who recorded 19 saves in a 17-13 victory against St. John's on Feb. 13. Graduate student goalie Max May, a Hewlett High School product who previously played goalie at Muhlenberg College, serves as a solid backup behind Henderson and tallied three saves at the end of the Wagner game.

"They push each other every day in practice and no one can take a day off," said Tierney of his two top goalies. "Right now we are staying with what we're staying with, but Max is right there ready to go to help the team when necessary."

The starting defense in front of Hen-

derson features Henry Troy, Will Delaney and Blake Cooling. Graduate student long stick defensive midfielder is also a key component of the defense and earned All-CAA preseason accolades after playing 14 games at North Carolina last season.

The Hofstra defensive unit also features two local players in redshirt sophomore Ryan Kiernan, a Rockville Centre native and Chaminade graduate, along with junior short-stick defensive midfielder Chris Barry, an East Meadow High School alum.

The CAA season kicks off Saturday at Fairfield followed by a March 23 road trip to two-time defending champion Delaware. The conference home opener is set for March 30 against Monmouth at 1 p.m.

Hofstra's late season schedule also includes an April 16 non-league game against Yale at 7 p.m., which will mark the program's first meeting with the Ivy League school since 1995.

"They are a tremendous team with a lot of talent," said Tierney of Yale. "It is another opportunity to sharpen our swords against a quality opponent."



Attack John Madsen, a Locust Valley product, leads the Pride with 21 goals.

BRUCE A. BLAKEMAN
NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE



ANTHONY LaROCCO
NASSAU COUNTY SHERIFF

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HERALD NEIGHBORS

March 14, 2024 – GLEN COVE HERALD



Roni Chastain/Herald photos

Musicians from Friends Academy were on hand to provide the entertainment.

Fun-filled senior citizen prom at Friends

Over 100 local seniors dusted off their dancing shoes for the annual Senior Citizen Prom, at Friends Academy on March 7.

Students happily greeted seniors at tables who were ushered in to play card games, pool all while having meaningful conversations as they got to know each other.

“For the senior members, being able to spend the time with the younger generation is always very uplifting,” Christine Rice, executive director of the Glen Cove Senior Center, said. “The high school seniors show them a level of respect at the wisdom that the senior members have.”



Maryann Zappula and Hugh Stephens spend the evening meeting with longtime friends and catching up.



Mercedes Loayca, left, Cathy Bidofsky and Amanda Clark were among the 100 seniors who enjoyed a lovely evening of music and games together.



Nancy Stepkowski and Alexandra Fodera, a student at Friends Academy, shared laughs and a meaningful conversation.

STEPPING OUT



Classic Irish Soda Bread



Savory Irish Cheese Soda Bread



Soda Bread Muffins



Spring forth by donning some green

Savor the flavor of St. Patrick's Day

By Karen Bloom

Spring is in our sights and we're sure ready for its embrace. The arrival of St. Patrick's Day on Sunday always is a welcome harbinger of the season. Enjoy some of the lively parades nearby, even a concert, and certainly bring St. Patrick's Day into your home with some tasty Irish cuisine. Favorites include corned beef and cabbage, and, of course, soda bread.

Among these quintessential Irish foods, Irish Soda Bread is a tempting quick bread that everyone enjoys and is quite easy to make. It gets its name from the baking soda used as a leavener, instead of yeast. While the traditional version is made with only flour, buttermilk, salt and baking soda, consider adding a modern version to your repertoire.

Classic Irish Soda Bread

- 3 cups pastry flour blend or unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- Heaping 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup currants or raisins
- 1 tablespoon caraway seeds, optional
- 1 large egg
- 1 3/4 cups buttermilk
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted

Topping:

- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 tablespoon coarse white sparkling sugar

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly grease a 9x5 loaf pan. In a large bowl, whisk together the pastry blend or flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, sugar, currants, and caraway seeds.

In a separate bowl, or in a measuring cup, whisk together the egg and buttermilk (or milk and yogurt).

Quickly and gently stir the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients.

Stir in the melted butter.

Spoon the batter into the prepared pan. Draw your finger around the edge of the pan to create a "moat." Drizzle the bread with the 1 tablespoon of milk; the moat will help prevent the milk from running down the sides of the loaf. Sprinkle with the coarse sugar.

Bake the bread for 50 minutes to 1 hour, or until a cake tester inserted into the center comes out clean; the interior of the bread will measure 200°F to 210°F on a thermometer.

Remove the bread from the oven, loosen its edges, and after five minutes turn it out onto a rack to cool. Cool completely before slicing. Wrap airtight and store at room temperature.

Serve with hot tea and organic jam, Irish stew, traditional Irish cabbage dishes, or enjoy on its own!

Savory Irish Cheese Soda Bread

- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons caraway seed
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper, ground
- 1/2 cup shredded Irish Cheddar cheese
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/4 cups buttermilk

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt and seasonings in large bowl. Stir in cheese. Set aside. Mix eggs and buttermilk in medium bowl. Add to dry ingredients; stir until well blended. Spread in lightly greased 9-inch round cake pan.

Bake 30-40 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan on wire rack 10 minutes. Remove from pan. Cool completely on wire rack.

Tip: Make muffins instead of bread. Prepare dough as directed and divide among 12 greased muffin cups. Bake 20-25 minutes, or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Irish Soda Bread Muffins

- 1 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup white whole wheat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 cups currants (first choice) or raisins
- 1/2 to 2 teaspoons caraway seeds, to taste
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup buttermilk, yogurt, or sour cream
- 6 tablespoons butter, melted; or 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- sparkling white sugar, for topping

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly grease a standard muffin pan; or line with papers, and grease the papers.

In a medium-sized mixing bowl, whisk together the flours, baking powder, baking soda, salt, sugar, currants or raisins, and caraway seeds.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the egg, buttermilk (or equivalent) and melted butter (or equivalent).

Quickly and gently combine the dry and wet ingredients; honestly, this won't take more than a few stirs with a bowl scraper or large spoon. As soon as everything is evenly moistened, quit; further stirring will cause the muffins to be tough.

Spoon the batter into the prepared pan, filling the cups about 3/4 full; the stiff batter will look mounded in the cups. Top with sparkling white sugar, if desired.

Bake the muffins for 20 minutes, until a cake tester inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean. Remove them from the oven. Tip the muffins in the pan, so their bottoms don't get soggy. Wait five minutes, then transfer the muffins to a rack to cool. Serve them plain, or with butter and/or jam.



JigJam

When virtuoso Irish playing jumps the pond running through the wide open fields of bluegrass and Americana, JigJam is born. This Offaly- and Tipperary-born band has started the Irish invasion of Americana with an injection of the magic of Scottish folk music. The lads — described as 'The best Irish band in bluegrass' and 'sparkling, infectious' — bring their foot-stomping vibe to Long Island for a lively St. Patrick's Day celebration. Founding members from Offaly Jamie McKeogh (lead singer and guitar) and Daithi Melia (five-string banjo and Dobro) were joined by Tipperary-born Gavin Strappe (mandolin and tenor banjo) in 2016. They've since added Glasgow native Danny Hunter (fiddle) to make up this iGrass (Irish Bluegrass) quartet. With a sounded rooted in Irish music and Irish immigration, the Irish have found their prodigal son in JigJam.

Saturday, March 16, 8 p.m. \$38.14-\$49.48. Landmark on Main Street, 232 Main St., Port Washington. Tickets available at LandmarkOnMainStreet.org or (516) 767-6444.



Blippi

The colorful YouTube sensation known as Blippi is ready to delight preschoolers when The Wonderful World tour visits Tilles Center. Families will dance, sing and learn with Blippi and special guest, Meekah, as everyone discovers how different cities are unique and special. Will there be monster trucks, excavators, and garbage trucks galore? You bet! So get ready to shake those wiggles out and O.J. Twist your way through this musical party. The lively show expands upon creator Stevin John's engaging world that inspires curiosity in young families. Clad in his iconic blue and orange outfit, Blippi — along with best friend Meekah — clearly excites preschoolers with experiences that are relatable and accessible and make learning fun. Kids 4 and younger quickly respond to Blippi's endearing personality as they explore the world around them through adventures that relate to everyday life, involving fire trucks, zoos, animals, and so much more.

Tuesday, March 19, 6 p.m. Tickets start at \$32. Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, LIU Post campus, 720 Northern Blvd., Brookville. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com or TillesCenter.org or (516) 299-3100.

THE \$ SCENE

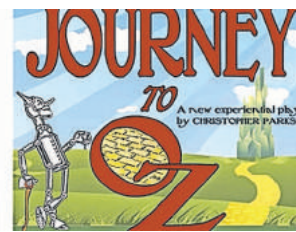
March 23

Comedy's 'Ivy League'

The Ivy League of Comedy is the premier group of stand-up comedians touring America. Known for their elite brand of clever comedy, you've heard their brilliant comedic voices on late-night TV and Comedy Central. Now come see them live when Carmen Lynch, Ryan Reiss and Shaun Eli bring their act to the Madison Theatre, Saturday, **March 23**, 8 p.m.



Lynch, who made it to the semi-finals of NBC's "Last Comic Standing," is known for her deadpan delivery and riffs on life. A rising star from a bi-lingual family, who lived in Spain as a child, she's appeared on a string of late night TV shows. She's also appeared "Inside Amy Schumer," "That Damn Michael Che," "Life & Beth," and the documentary "Hysterical." Funnyman Reiss, also a writer-actor, began his career while attending NYU, and quickly became a favorite act on the scene. He made his network TV debut on "Late Night With Seth Meyers." His quit wit, instant likeability and unique way of engaging any audience have made him one of the most sought-after comics on the club circuit and a favorite audience warm up performer. Eli has rightfully been called one of America's smartest comics. Whether it's a story about dining with a vegetarian or successfully fighting a parking ticket in criminal court, master storyteller Eli shows you that there's hilarity in the ordinary if you approach life with a comedic warp. Even job interviews. For just about anything he's experienced he has hilarious stories at the ready. \$45-\$50. Molloy University, 1000 Hempstead Ave., Rockville Centre. Tickets available at MadisonTheatreNY.org or (516) 323-4444.



Family theater

Inspired by L. Frank Baum's stories, this clever adaptation puts the audience front and center, literally, on the Long Island Children's Museum stage, Friday, **March 15**, 10:15 a.m., noon, 6:15 p.m. (sensory-friendly performance); Saturday, March 16, 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Wednesday and Thursday, March 20-21, 10:15 a.m. and noon. Kids become cast members, singing dancing, and acting on stage alongside the professional cast.

One of the museum's most interactive shows, it received rave reviews in its prior run. Going beyond the traditional telling of the Oz stories, the performance uses personal journal entries and historic newspaper headlines to bring the history of L. Frank Baum and illustrator W.W. Denslow to life. Dorothy, the Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion take the audience with them on this lively, playful trip down the yellow brick road.

\$10 with museum admission (\$8 members), \$14 theater only. Museum Row, Garden City. (516) 224-5800 or LICM.org



On exhibit

Nassau County Museum of Art's latest exhibition, "Urban Art Evolution," is a comprehensive exhibit featuring a diverse range of compositions from the 1980s through the present by creators who were based in the rough and tumble downtown area of New York City known as Loisaida/LES (Lower East Side/East Village) and close surrounding neighborhoods.

Artists pushed the boundaries of what was considered "art" with a primary focus on street/graffiti art. The exhibit's scope, guest curated by art collector/gallerist Christopher Pusey, offers an even broader view from other creative residents, who worked inside their studios but still contributed to the rich fabric of the downtown art scene from different vantage points and aesthetics.

Works include sculpture, paintings, photography, music, and ephemera from many noted and influential artists. Opens **March 23**, on view through **July 7**. Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Dr., Roslyn Harbor. (516) 484-9337 or NassauMuseum.org.

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March
27

Literary conversation

Poet-essayist Elizabeth Schmermund, who is an assistant professor of English at SUNY Old Westbury, reads from her works, as part of Hofstra University's Great Writers Great Readings series, Wednesday, **March 27**, 4:30 p.m.

Her work has appeared in The Independent, Mantis, and Gyroscope Review, among other venues. Her first poetry chapbook, "Alexander the Great," is published by Finishing Line Press. Free and open to the public. Guthart Cultural Center Theater, Axinn Library, South Campus, Hempstead. Register in advance at events.hofstra.edu or call the Hofstra Cultural Center at (516) 463-5669 for more information.

Gold Coast Business Association Gala

Gold Coast Business Association honors five outstanding local nonprofit organizations at its Business in Bloom gala, Thursday, **March 21**, 6 p.m., at the historic Sea Cliff Manor. Enjoy an evening of celebration and community spirit. \$99 per person, includes a delectable dinner and open bar. 395 Prospect Ave., Sea Cliff. Visit GoldCoastBusinessAssociation.com for information and reservations.

Painting Party

Join local artist Jo Gray for a painting party, hosted by Sea Cliff Arts Council, Friday, **March 22**, 7-9 p.m. The fully guided group painting class incorporates creative visualization and breath awareness. All art materials provided. For 21 and over. \$38. 86 Roslyn Ave., Sea Cliff. Visit SeaCliffArtsCouncil.org for more information.

St. Patrick's Day Parade

Everyone loves a parade, Watch the marchers step lively or participate in Glen Cove's St. Patrick's Day Parade, Sunday, **March 17**. It starts at 1 p.m. at Finley Middle School on Forest Avenue, north of Dosoris Lane, and will end at St. Patrick's Church.

St. Baldrick's Foundation fundraiser

Downtown Cafe holds its annual St. Baldrick's Foundation fundraiser, Sunday, **March 17**, at 1 p.m. Support childhood cancer research and treatment by shaving your head. 4 School St., Glen Cove.

Artist showcase

Sea Cliff Arts Council member Kaylin Burger's paintings are on view at Sea Cliff Village Library, through April. She embodies a distinctive perspective shaped by the diverse cultural landscapes of both the east and west.

Enriched by her experiences, Burger integrates elements from both worlds into her work, creating a harmonious fusion of influences that captivates the viewer. Immersed in the familiarity of coastal living, Burger finds boundless inspiration in the ebb and flow of the sea, inviting all to experience a sense of calm. 300 Sea Cliff Ave. Visit SeaCliffArtsCouncil.org.

Comprehensive Plan meeting

The City of Glen Cove is updating its Comprehensive Plan, its official, long-range planning document that provides policy guidance for future growth, development, land use, infrastructure, and services, last updated in 2009. All are invited to the meeting, Tuesday, **March 19**, at 6 p.m. 9 Glen St. Glen Cove.

In concert

Plaza Theatrical welcomes spring with a lively tribute to The Temptations, Saturday, **March 23**, 7:30 p.m. Groove along with The Fellas, in their concert "Just My Imagination," a powerful salute to the Motown icons. Enjoy all those great tunes, including "Just My Imagination," "My Girl," "Papa Was A Rollin' Stone," "Ain't Too Proud to Beg," and more. See the concert at Plaza's stage at the Elmont Library Theatre. 700 Hempstead Tpke., Elmont. \$40, \$35 seniors. Elmont. For tickets, call (516) 599-6870 or visit PlazaTheatrical.com.



March
17

Bird walk

See some birds with the South Shore Audubon Society. All are welcome to join members for the next in its series of bird walks, at Mill Pond Park in Wantagh, Sunday, **March 17**, starting at 9 a.m. The Park is on the north side of Merrick Road, four blocks west of the Wantagh State

Parkway. Meet at the gazebo. Walk leaders, other birders and nature enthusiasts are happy to share their knowledge and experience with you. Bring binoculars. The group will meet at the gazebo. To register, text your name and contact information to (516) 467-9498. No walk if rain or snow. Text regarding questionable weather. For more information, visit SSAudubon.org.

Lecture program

Examine transatlantic slave trade with Philip Misevich, Associate Professor at St. John's University. Friday, **March 22**, 5:30 p.m. at Raynham Hall Museum. He will highlight New York's overlooked role in the transatlantic slave trade, utilizing new data on slave ship movements. Misevich, co-author of "An Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade," contributes to Slave Voyages, an online database documenting 36,000+ voyages. The program is part of the Townsend Talks series, offering insights into various historical topics \$25, \$20 members, \$10 for students with ID. 30 W. Main St., Oyster Bay. Visit RaynhamHallMuseum.org or call (516) 922-6808 for reservations/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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Santos announces bid challenging LaLota

By **ROKSANA AMID**

ramid@iherald.com

Former GOP disgraced Congressman George Santos, who was expelled from the House of Representatives last December, announced on March 7 that he's running for Congress again, this time challenging Republican Congressman Nick LaLota, from New York's 1st Congressional District.

Santos, who attended Pres. Biden's State of the Union address, hasn't lost his knack for dramatic timing, making the announcement of his run on X, formerly Twitter, during Biden's speech.

"New York hasn't had a real conservative represent them since I left office arbitrarily, thanks to (Republicans in name only) empty suits like [Nick LaLota]," the post read. "He is willing to risk the future of our majority and the future of this country for his own political gain."

Additionally, Santos said he witnessed "a frail and feeble president" and that the speech was filled with "spin and deceit."

Santos is the first congressman to be expelled from the House without first being convicted of a felony since the Civil War. And he is the first Republican. More than 300 of his colleagues from both sides of the political aisle voted for his ouster, with another 114 voting against it.

Although Santos swore he'd never run for public office again, telling reporters after his expulsion, "To hell with this place," his recent post on X indicates Santos has had a change of heart.

A scathing 56-page report by the House Ethics Committee released on Nov. 16 details evidence Santos broke federal laws, stole from his campaign and delivered a "constant series of lies" to voters and donors on his way to winning a seat in the House of Representatives. Santos is facing 23 federal indictment charges.

His next court hearing is on Aug. 14

Robert Zimmerman, who ran unsuccessfully against Santos in 2022, said the former congressman would not have an opportunity to primary LaLota.

"Every legal analysis says Santos will be in jail before the election," Zimmerman said. "He publically acknowledged he's plea bargaining with the feds."

Santos was able to attend the president's State of the Union because former members of Congress retain lifetime membership privileges, even after being expelled.

People say they believe there is a reason Santos is running.

"I think he's doing anything he can to keep his name in the paper," said Pamela Panzenbeck, Glen Cove's mayor. "We are glad he's gone," she added, referring to the Republican Party as a whole.

When Santos' falsehoods were first discovered in December of 2022, multiple nonpartisan groups formed to advocate for his removal from office, holding numerous protests at his Queens office. Additionally, dozens of constituents visited Washington to hand-deliver signatures to then Speaker Kevin McCarthy's office insisting Santos be expelled.

Jody Kass Finkel, the founder and coordinator of the nonpartisan group Concerned Citizens of NY-03, said she was relieved when Santos left office. She isn't taking his new bid for public office seriously.

"George Santos at this point is a complete and utter waste of time for everybody," Finkel said. "We all now know that he's a criminal, a charlatan and can't be trusted."

Zimmerman, a Democratic national committeeman, said he's not shocked by Santos' announcement because the federal government reported in their subpoena and indictment that Santos paid for his meals, clothing and lifestyle utilizing campaign donations.

"This will help him to make more Cameos (videos)

Every legal analysis says Santos will be in jail before the election.

ROBERT ZIMMERMAN

Former congressional candidate



Herald file photo

Former U.S. Rep. George Santos announced during Biden's State of the Union he will run for Congress once again.

to make more money to pay for his lawyer," Zimmerman said. "He's also manipulating the media to get attention."

Although several attempts were made, the Herald was unable to reach LaLota by press time.

Additional reporting by Laura Lane.

Exploring depths of resilience, persistence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

any ocean, and the first female master of a tank ship. She was also the first woman to command a ship through the Panama Canal, and is a professor at the United States Merchant Marine Academy. Dana Arschin is the first storyteller at the Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center of Nassau County, in Glen Cove, and a three-time Emmy award-winning journalist.

When the panelists were asked about creating their own opportunities instead of pursuing those that are already available, Robson recalled her first exposure to gender bias when she attended the Regional Science and Engineering Fair held in Houston at age 11. After learning about a maritime scholarship available from Texas A&M University to spend summer at sea aboard the Texas A&M Maritime Academy training ship, the Texas Clipper, she excitedly shared her dream to sail ships with one of the judges at the fair.

"I walked up to one of the judges, and asked, 'How do I earn this award?'" Robson recounted. "He said to me, 'The first

thing you have to do is change your sex, because we'll never allow women.' It was at that point I knew that was what I wanted to do, to sail ships."

Six years later, Texas A&M opened the scholarship to women to join the Corps of Cadets. She recalled, the judges never even approached her project. Although she was devastated by their attitudes, she wouldn't allow herself to be ignored.

"I burst into the judges' chambers and I said, 'Where are those judges from Texas A&M?'" Robson recalled. "They said they picked someone, and I said, 'No, you haven't. You didn't come to my project.'"

When the judges did look at her project, they awarded her first place. Although she was offered an appointment to West Point, she knew she wanted to go to sea.

But throughout her career, Robson encountered numerous instances of

gender bias, and was once told that being a female researcher on a ship was an "experiment." She stressed that creating opportunities for herself rather than waiting for them helped her jumpstart her career.

Asked about the skills she developed to succeed under pressure, Hart reflected on her transition from working with the FBI to the Suffolk County Police Department. She emphasized the importance of accessibility and authenticity in her leadership style, citing her open-door policy and her willingness to connect personally with members of her team, and to engage with officers at precincts.

When she worked with the FBI, she said, she had a couch in her office, and she people would lie down and tell her their problems. When she came to work for Suffolk County, she quickly realized that the communication style she had

Iwalked up to one of the judges, and asked, 'How do I earn this award?'

CYNTHIA ROBSON
Captain

with her colleagues at the FBI wasn't part of the Police Department's culture.

"For me it was getting out there, literally going out to the precincts, meeting with the officers ... any place that I could," Hart explained. "I'd meet them in a parking lot, and we would just gather up in a circle. I would talk to them. I would explain to them that my door is always open."

Arschin talked about her mentor, Emad Asghar, also her former boss at Fox 5, who saw her potential as a journalist, even as a rookie reporter at News12 from 2011 to 2016. He was one of her biggest supporters when she began telling the stories of Holocaust survivors. Arschin also reflected on her time with Andrea Bolendar, a board member from the Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center, who advocated for her to become the center's first storyteller.

"Take that mentorship from whoever you can get it, professionally or from within your family or friends," Arschin said. "And decide which characteristics and which traits from each person you want to take along with you."

Suozzi co-chair border security task force

Congressmen Tom Suozzi and Henry Cuellar launched the Democrats for Border Security Task Force today. The group of 26 House Democrats is dedicated to addressing the country's immigration and border crisis and countering the surge of illicit narcotics threatening communities across the country. Suozzi and Cuellar will serve as co-chairs of the newly formed task force.

"America's southern border and immigration system aren't working, and it is time to fix it. This task force will advocate for commonsense, bipartisan compromise to achieve much-needed and long-overdue comprehensive immigration reform," Suozzi said. "Our approach to the immigration and border crisis is unequivocal; we will work with anybody from any wing of any party if they genuinely care about solving this problem. Too many in politics today are focused on pointing out the problem and keep busy figuring out what tricks they have 'up their sleeves' to weaponize the border crisis. This task force will 'roll up our sleeves' to try to fix it."

"Cities across the country are now feeling the consequences of the humanitarian crisis at the border, something border communities have been dealing with for years," Cuellar, a ranking member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, said. "This crisis is unsustainable, and Dem-



Courtesy Office of Tom Suozzi

Congressman Tom Suozzi will co-chair a group of Democrats to provide a platform for ongoing discussions regarding border security and collaborate with colleagues.

ocrats need a forum to approach border security policy as the GOP continues to play partisan politics with the issue."

The goal of the task force will be to provide a platform for House Democrats

to contribute to ongoing discussions regarding border security and collaborate with colleagues. The task force will hold meetings with administration officials, NGOs, and local officials from bor-

der communities to better inform members of the realities of the border crisis while giving House Democrats a platform to discuss sensible border security measures.

OBITUARIES

Salvatore Anselmo, beloved by his family

Salvatore Anselmo, 87, of Glen Head, died on March 9. Beloved husband of Florence; loving father of John; dear brother of the late Anthony; adored brother-in-law of John Ward (Betty) and the late James (the late Mary Ann Ward). Also survived by several loving cousins and three nieces. Arrangements entrusted to



SALVATORE ANSELMO

Dodge-Thomas funeral home.

Peter Antonopoulos, staple of the community

Peter Antonopoulos, 90, of Glen Cove, died on March 1 of health complications due to his age. A native of Kalavryta, Greece, he was a devoted son to Vasilis Antonopoulos and Violet Papanayatou. He raised and committed his life to his children Karen Montovano, Carol Antonopoulos and the late Bill Antonopoulos. He was a loving grandfather to Tay-

lor Riley and Xander Montovano all of whom never went without family support and love. His family including his son in-law Mike Montovano and his ex-wife Jane Arnoldi, who both lived under his protection and guidance. He was a great supporter of his siblings, Thénia, Elli, George and Achilléa, Catherine and Elefteria. He was also a staple of the community through his dedication to Page One and The View Grill and also as a member of Holy Resurrection Greek Orthodox Church. Funeral arrangements entrusted to Dodge-Thomas Funeral home.

Robert Joel Hochberg, retired architect

Robert Joel Hochberg, 89, of Glen Cove, died on March 10. A retired architect, he was the beloved husband of Linda; loving father of Susan and Lisa; and adored grandfather of Joshua. Service was at Dodge-Thomas Funeral Home, Glen Cove. Interment to follow at New Montefiore Cemetery.



ROBERT JOEL HOCHBERG

Rosemarie A. Ciampi, beloved mother

Rosemarie A. Ciampi, 68, of Glen Cove, died on March 3. Beloved mother of Justin Hudson and David Ciampi; dear sister of AJ, Michael and Mary-Ann; cherished grandmother of Justin, Jasmine and Anthony. Also survived by loving nieces, nephews and godchildren. Visitation at Dodge-Thomas Funeral Home, Glen Cove, on March 16, from 6 to 9 p.m. Interment is private.

Angelo Hagicostas, GCFD member

Angelo Hagicostas, formerly of Glen Cove, died on Feb. 26. Beloved husband of Photine and the late Amy; loving father of Peter (Francine) and Christina Perretta (Sal); adored grandfather of Alexia, Amy and Carmine. Also survived by many loving nieces and nephews. He was a member of the Glen Cove Volunteer Fire Department, a



ANGELO HAGICOSTAS

former City Councilman, City Marshall, and Nassau County CSEA vice president. Arrangements entrusted to Dodge-Thomas Funeral Home.

Arnaldo Arzola, worked for Peter Andrew Furniture

Arnaldo Arzola, 73, of Glen Cove, died on Feb. 28. Beloved husband of Graciela; loving father of Steve and Melissa; long time employee of Peter Andrews Furniture. Arnaldo loved gardening and woodwork. +Arrangements entrusted to Dodge-Thomas Funeral Home.



ARNALDO ARZOLA

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OPINIONS

St. Patrick's is so much bigger than one day

St. Patrick's Day is in reality no longer a one-day festive occasion celebrated on March 17, but an almost three-week-long celebration full of parades, luncheons, dinners and parties.

On Long Island alone there will be more than two dozen parades and hundreds of events this month at Hibernian halls, bars, restaurants and community centers from western Nassau County to eastern Suffolk. And, of course, New York City's parade up Manhattan's Fifth Avenue, drawing a crowd of more than 500,000 and lasting more than seven hours, is the largest Irish celebration in the world.

As a proud Irish-American, I have marched in many St. Patrick's Day parades over the years, including the

city's, where I was grand marshal 39 years ago, and Huntington's, last Sunday, where I was privileged to march with the grand marshal, a longtime family friend, Monsignor Steve Camp.

I remember around the time I was grand marshal in New York's parade, there was discussion about whether, going forward, younger generations would continue to support it. The answer is a definite yes. Attendance is growing every year, and new parades are actually forming elsewhere. The Wantagh parade, for instance, which only began in 2019, draws overflow throngs all along the parade route, up and down both sides of Wantagh Avenue.

This increased interest and enthusiasm is a welcome development at a time when everyday life has become so frenetic and fast-paced, and institutions and traditions are under siege from some and ignored by others. Perhaps it is this societal turbulence that

moves good people to reach out for something that gives them and their families and friends a sense of stability and permanence. And I apply this to all ethnic groups and religions. While

America is generally described as a melting pot, I prefer the late New York Gov. Mario Cuomo's description of our magnificent country as a beautiful mosaic where each group maintains its uniqueness in the large stained-glass window that is America.

Parades are an expression of that uniqueness, and the mosaic. Whether it's the Irish on St. Patrick's Day, Italians on Columbus Day, Germans on Steuben Day, Poles on Pulaski Day, Jews on Israel's Day of Independence, Greeks on Greek Independence Day, Puerto Ricans on Puerto Rican Day or any of the many newer people in our country celebrating their heritage, these parades honor the traditions that combine to make America

such a shining city on a hill.

They also recall the travails and adversities each group had to overcome to become part of the American dream. For instance, the St. Patrick's Day Parade represents so much more than the trivial stereotypes of green beer and leprechauns. The parade is always led up Fifth Avenue by the 69th Infantry Regiment (in which I proudly served), in recognition of this Army unit's predominantly Irish membership protecting parade marchers from being attacked and St. Patrick's Cathedral from being burned down by anti-Catholic nativists in the 1860s.

All races, ethnic groups and religions can point to what they have achieved and what they have overcome in their American experience. That is why celebrating our heritage is celebrating America, which has made it all possible. Happy St. Patrick's Day, and God bless America.

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



PETER KING

One beautiful pane in the stained-glass window that is America.

The challenge of a Supreme Court that isn't supreme

As a lawyer, I have the greatest respect for the American court system. Our country is one of the few in the world whose courts are not used for political vendettas, as is the case in Russia. That system is manipulated by one man, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and there are countless cases in which he has punished his political

enemies by using the judicial system.

There is no question that some judges appointed to our courts have philosophical or personal views that color their decisions. U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon, who is hearing



JERRY KREMER

the case involving former President Donald Trump's handling of classified documents, has appeared to favor him on a number of occasions. Some judicial observers believe Cannon will find ways to stop Trump from being brought to justice before November's election.

Many judges, including those appointed during Trump's tenure, have

shut down multiple attempts to throw out the 2020 election results. Upward of 60 judges have overseen election fraud suits, and all of them have ruled against the team headed by former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani. That gives me, and countless others, a degree of comfort.

Regrettably, that doesn't apply to members of the U.S. Supreme Court, which of late has been dominated by a majority that is willing to bend its decisions to fit its philosophy. Our country has had some Supreme Court majorities that have approached most of their big cases with strong personal views, but in the end have chosen more moderate positions.

During my lifetime, different Supreme Courts have been known as the Warren Court, the Burger Court, the Rehnquist Court. They get those labels based on who the chief justice is, and whether the court is in fact guided by him. In the case of the current court, Chief Justice John Roberts has been unable, in most big cases, to steer the court to positions that fit his philosophy.

Because this court is so strongly

guided by its five ultra-conservative members, there is no doubt that the decisions it will make in some pending cases may have a strong impact on the November election. There are at least six cases yet to be decided that fit into

Will it prevent any prosecution of Donald Trump before the election?

that category. One, which will stir up the pro-choice movement, involves the legality of the Food and Drug Administration's approval of the abortion drug mifepristone. Considering that more than half of the women in America who have abortions use pills, if that legalization is overturned, it will likely lead to nationwide protests.

Another case in that arena involves the legality of restraining orders that prohibit granting gun permits to people with a history of domestic violence. It is universally agreed that spouses should be protected from a spouse with a history of violent conduct. But this court is so wedded to protecting the Second Amendment that it's likely that it could rule in favor of gun owners.

Another case involving guns is the challenge to an executive order by then President Trump that makes it illegal to add a "bump stock" to a gun that

turns it into a machine gun. That order came about as the result of a mass killing at a Las Vegas concert. If you took a national poll on this issue, an overwhelmingly majority would express their opposition to the use of bump stocks. But this is another case in which the court could side with gun rights.

One of the biggest cases the Supremes will soon decide is whether a former president is immune from prosecution for an alleged crime he committed when he was in office. A federal court has written a lengthy opinion denying such immunity, but the Supreme Court has taken the case to put its own imprint on this issue. Some court followers have conjectured that it did so to prevent any prosecution of Trump before the election.

People unfamiliar with the courts often aren't aware of how much mischief a court can create. But sadly, the current highest court in the land has shown that it is anything but a "supreme" court.

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

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HERALD EDITORIAL

Shining light where government remains dark

“**K**nowledge will forever govern ignorance,” President James Madison once said. “And a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.”

Madison may not be the most well-known of the Founding Fathers — not even getting the most prominent of roles in the hit musical “Hamilton” — but it’s hard to imagine an America without him. Not only was he an early advocate of the U.S. Constitution, but Madison is also credited as the author of the Bill of Rights — the first 10 amendments to the Constitution that address, among other things, the freedom of the press — and, by extension, the ability to arm ourselves with the very knowledge he championed.

So it’s fitting that Sunshine Week — this week, when we promote open government and the freedom of information — happens to include Madison’s birthday, March 16. But sadly, more than two centuries later, we still have a long way to go to ensure the transparency in government that the founders promised us.

Established by the American Society of News Editors nearly 20 years ago, Sunshine Week is an important reminder of the vital role transparency plays in a democratic society. It’s vital we protect the public’s right to know.

While New York might lead the nation in many different categories, one area in which the state is not a pioneer is government transparency. In fact, four states have the right to open government spelled out in their state constitutions,

according to the New York Coalition for Open Government, but none of them are New York.

A bill offered by Assemblyman Phil Steck and state Sen. Rachel May would fix that by enshrining access to public information as a fundamental right in the state constitution, because it’s a “necessary and vital part of democracy and public deliberation.”

“The right of the people to inspect and/or copy records of government, and to be provided notice of and attend public meetings of government, shall not be unreasonably restricted,” according to the legislation.

Yet even if that constitutional amendment passed, enforcement would be nearly impossible. Right now, the only way any of us can ensure that government is transparent is by taking it to court. But even if we win, courts are not required to also award attorneys’ fees unless someone “substantially prevails” in such a case — something that is quite subjective and hard to prove.

With that, governments can simply run up legal costs until someone exhausts their financial resources. And if there were a violation of open-government laws, it would never reach a judge.

Instead, the open-government coalition is pushing a bill from Assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal that would create a hearing-officer system to adjudicate those issues and impose penalties.

It’s certainly not a new approach. The open-government coalition points out the small-claims assessment reviews for property tax assessment disputes, in which homeowners complete a simple

application, pay a filing fee, and then have their case decided by a hearing officer. More than 100,000 such complaints made their way through the system in 2020, costing just over \$100 each. The same system is needed for disputes over government records, and Rosenthal is pushing just that. But she has yet to get any support from anyone in the state Senate.

The coronavirus pandemic introduced many of us to livestreaming online — especially when it came to government meetings. Now that we are on the other side of the pandemic, those online streams are not as common. Yet a bill from Assemblywoman Amy Paulin and state Sen. Joseph Addabbo Jr. would require all public bodies to not only broadcast their meetings, but record them, and leave them online for five years.

Even more important is a chance for members of the public to comment at meetings — something that is not guaranteed by the state’s open meetings law, and which a number of organizations don’t make time for. Unfortunately, there’s nothing in front of lawmakers yet to make this happen — but it’s needed.

Sunshine Week is important to remind us that we have some work ahead of us as citizens, but it’s also good to remind government officials that they need to prioritize transparency and accountability as well. It’s vital that we stay informed and engaged, and reach out to our lawmakers so that these bills — and others designed to make our government more open — will indeed see the light of day.

LETTERS

NUMC needs state funding restored

To the Editor:

I write to underscore the critical situation facing the Nassau University Medical Center, as reported in the Herald in recent weeks. Without restoration of state funding that was drastically cut from the hospital in 2020, this vital community resource could be lost.

NUMC stands as a cornerstone of our community, providing vital health care services to hundreds of thousands of patients annually, with a significant portion relying on Medicare or Medicaid. Reductions in state aid — not current leadership — have endangered the hospital’s ability to provide care for Long Island’s most vulnerable populations.

Despite these challenges, NUMC’s team has forged ahead, with those we serve remaining our top priority. Hospital leadership has initiated comprehensive reforms to improve financial health. These reforms are already demonstrating the hospital’s commitment to financial sustainability.

Unfortunately, NUMC, as a safety-net hospital, cannot overcome these challenges alone. It’s paramount for lead-



OPINIONS

Another attack on the middle class

If you ask New Yorkers what they want from their state government, you'll hear the same complaints over and over: Everything has gotten too expensive. Taxes are crushing. Our streets are less safe than they used to be. The migrant crisis is making life worse for everyone.

No New Yorker has ever told Albany, take away my heat. Shut off my hot



**JAKE
BLUMENCRAZ**

water. Please throw away my stove. And yet, believe it or not, those have become the top legislative priorities of the state capital's Democratic machine.

As I write this, Senate bill S2016B and its Assembly companion bill, A4592B, are ready

to strike yet another blow to common sense and the middle class. The legislation is designed, under the guise of environmentalism, to remove hard-fought protections and guarantees that New Yorkers have enjoyed for generations. It takes a jackhammer to Section 30 of the state's Public Service Law, which generally guarantees gas, electric and steam service to residential customers.

S2016B, in its own words, "Removes a

residential customer's legal entitlement to utility gas service." Up to now, ensuring that New Yorkers have access to heat, hot water and the ability to cook was considered necessary. Now... it isn't.

The legislation is a veritable hit list that, among other things, eliminates government support for our public gas infrastructure, and removes businesses' right to utilize that infrastructure. Perhaps most troubling is the power the bills grant to the majority Democratic Party to exercise its power unchecked. Section 7 "acknowledges gas service may be limited or discontinued to facilitate achievement of the (Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act) climate justice and emission reduction mandates. Section 9 gives the "authority to order the curtailment or discontinuance of the use of gas for any customer ... where the commission has determined that such curtailment or discontinuance is reasonably required to implement state energy policy."

There will now be a commission that can cut off gas for a home, a block or even a neighborhood because the commission deems it necessary. And are we to trust that this commission will exer-

cise its powers wisely and fairly? Or will its power be wielded as a cudgel to punish homeowners and districts that don't vote for Democrats? Or perhaps just foolishly and fecklessly, demonstrating that absolute power corrupts absolutely?

Supporters of the bill would say that these criticisms aren't justified because if people can't use gas to keep their families warm, clean and fed, they can use electricity instead. And perhaps, if you've lived a privileged life, that might make sense. But for hardworking Long Islanders who are increasingly squeezed by the cost of,

well, everything, the idea of "just" investing tens of thousands of dollars in new heating, hot water, and stove systems to replace the functional ones they already have — and were encouraged to invest in by the state for decades — is a bridge too far.

When Hurricane Sandy, like any of a dozen other events in recent memory, swept across Long Island, it cut off electricity for large sections of Nassau and Suffolk counties. Many people who didn't have gas had no choice but to abandon their homes until service was restored, because electric stoves, heat pumps and water heaters are just as dead as your lights and TVs when the

power goes out. If everyone switches to electric, what will we do when the next storm hits and we're all sitting in the dark, cold and hungry?

Why is natural gas Democrats' top enemy? Hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers still depend on far dirtier fuel oil or wood for heat and hot water, but instead of offering them subsidies or rules to help them switch, our state government has instead focused on eliminating a successful public infrastructure in which it has invested billions of dollars, and that has succeeded in keeping millions of New Yorkers warm and fed for a dramatically lower environmental cost than the heating oil alternative.

It increasingly feels like we live in a world in which the middle is under siege. Common decency and common sense have gone out the window. The middle class is under unprecedented strain as the cost of everything from a carton of milk to heating their homes continues to rise. At the same time, the political middle ground has evaporated, leaving a polarized political scene more concerned with virtue signaling than effective governing.

The ongoing efforts of the state's supermajority party to eliminate the use of natural gas are the perfect illustration of this new, unfortunate reality.

Jake Blumencranz represents the 15th Assembly District.

LETTERS

ers in Albany to restore the funding in this year's state budget. Without this essential aid, NUMC's capacity to fulfill its mission will be in jeopardy.

I implore our governor, legislative leaders and local state legislators to prioritize our community's health and well-being by reinstating funding for NUMC and ensuring its long-term sustainability.

CARMINE CARMONE
Director of environmental services,
NUMC
Levittown

Peter King, who's to blame for the border crisis?

To the Editor:

I am one of the growing number of American voters who are politically unaffiliated. I have no allegiance to either party or personality cult.

I believe that we have to have a functioning border system. There's a difference between who I believe, and who former Congressman

Peter King believes, is to blame for the border crisis ("Reflections on the special election," Feb. 29-March 6).

The Republicans have historically scuttled any attempts to resolve this issue. There really are many instances of this, but I'll just list a few. In 2013, then House Speaker John Boehner refused to allow a comprehensive reform bill to come to the floor of the House. Recently, a bipartisan bill that had been worked on for months was voted down in the Senate by Republicans, after House Speaker Mike Johnson had numerous discussions with former President Donald Trump and said that it would be "dead on arrival" in the House.

During the Trump administration, one of the most disgraceful border policies separated minor children from their parents and put them in chain-link enclosures to provide photo opportunities for the Republicans. Now Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has spent more than \$150 million to send migrants to so-called sanctuary cities so that other Republican officials can share in the fun. Perhaps that money would be better spent on helping the victims of the recent

FRAMEWORK by Tim Baker



Facing off once more in the grand tradition at South Side High School — Rockville Centre

wildfires in Abbott's home state.

So, Mr. King, I don't believe Republicans want to solve this problem, because they want to use it for political gains. What have you done to encourage your fellow Republi-

cans to solve it? Did you ever work on a bipartisan solution? Just asking.

PEGGY FALLON
Glen Cove



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